

NEWS ALERT

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INDIAN EXPRESS

PIONEER

STATESMAN

TELEGRAPH

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CHILD WELFARE

HINDU, OCT 8, 2018

‘Child sex abuse: Ease filing of FIRs’



Victims must face no age bar: Maneka

Union Minister for Women and Child Development Maneka Gandhi has asserted that adult survivors of child sexual abuse must be allowed to file an FIR at any point in their lifetime.

In a letter this month to Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad, a copy of which has been reviewed by *The Hindu*, Ms. Gandhi wrote that her Ministry was “of the view that cases of child sexual abuse can be reported by the victim at any time and law enforcement agencies would

be required to take appropriate action on the complaint of such victim.” She added: “I shall be grateful if the above could be ratified by the Law Ministry.”

The Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) lays down the time limitations for filing a complaint after an offence has taken place, also known as the statute of limitation. However, there is no time bar for crimes that would attract a jail term of more than three years.

Legal experts say that the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 — the law that deals with sexual crimes against children — lacks clarity on the statute of limitation.

“POCSO Act does not provide for any period of limitation for reporting the sexual offences,” Ms. Gandhi wrote in her letter. “In fact, Section 19 of the Act makes it mandatory for any person including the victim to report such offences.”

CIVIL & POLITICAL RIGHTS

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 13, 2018

India elected to UN Human Rights Council for 3 years, gets highest number of votes

India received 188 votes, the highest polled by any of the 18 countries elected so far.



India was elected with the highest number of votes by the General Assembly to the influential Human Rights Council on Friday with a pledge to combat intolerance.

India received 188 votes, the highest polled by any of the 18 countries elected in the voting. This is the fifth time India is elected to the Geneva-based Council, the main body of the UN charged with promoting and monitoring human rights.

India's presence on the Council will be important because the previous UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Raad Al Hussein asked the body to facilitate an international commission of inquiry into allegations of human rights violation in Kashmir.

His successor Michelle Bachelet and Secretary-General Antonio Guterres have backed Zeid's recommendation, which Pakistan – a member of the Council – is campaigning for.

So far, no other country has backed Zeid's call for the investigation.

Bangladesh, which is at the frontlines of dealing with the Rohingya crisis, was also elected with 178 votes to the Council to fill one of the five vacancies for three year terms from the Asia-Pacific region.

The regional group endorsed five countries, which matched the number of seats open for election this year, and they were the only countries on the ballot. The other regional candidates were Bahrain, Fiji and the Philippines. Thirteen other countries representing the other four regions were also elected to the Council.

In January India will join China and Nepal, besides Pakistan, which were elected to the 47-member Council in previous years to serve three-year terms.

When it nominated itself for the Council, India showcased its position as “the world's largest democracy (and) India's secular polity.”

It pledged that it will continue to support international efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

In the nomination pledge, India also presented a broader approach to human rights, emphasising climate justice, health and poverty alleviation.

India was among the first batch of 47 countries elected to the Council in 2006 soon after it was set up and received an initial one-year term instead of three to facilitate a rotating roster of vacancies each year.

It was again elected in 2007, 2011 and 2014 to three-year-terms.

Countries can be elected for only two consecutive terms and India took a year's break when its term ended in 2017.

Elections were held by secret ballot in the 193-member General Assembly on Friday, although the number of candidates for all the five regions matched the vacancies making it a formality.

On the 47-member Council the seats are allocated based on "equitable regional distribution" giving the Asia-Pacific region a total of 13 seats, with some coming up for election every year.

The African region also has 13 seats, while East European region has six, West European and others seven, and Latin American and Caribbean eight.

The United States withdrew from the Council earlier this year after its Permanent Representative Nikki Haley questioned its legitimacy because of the presence of several dictatorial regimes violating human rights on it

CRIME

HINDU, OCT 8, 2018

Enter 'sextortion', now a reality in India



Criminals are collecting browsing history of those visiting porn sites and using it for extortion

'Sextortion', a cyber crime which has been observed in the West, has officially arrived in India.

The Cyber police in Mumbai have received at least five complaints over the last two months where citizens, after visiting pornographic websites, found themselves being extorted with records of their online activities as leverage.

Cyber police officers said that sextortion is done using various methods. One modus operandi consists of chatting with an unsuspecting victim posing as a girl and getting them to send compromising pictures of themselves, which are then used for blackmail. Another involves placing links on pornographic websites which, if clicked on, record the victim's activities. A particularly serious form of sextortion also includes extorting sexual favours from the victim instead of money, officials said.

According to Mumbai Cyber police officials, two women and three men have approached them over the last two months with similar complaints. “The victims, in their complaints, have stated that they visited certain pornographic websites, after which they received emails within a day or two. The emails had their full names and all the logs of the content that they had watched, along with a message demanding money in the form of bitcoins. The emails went on to say that all the victim's social media account details had been obtained, and that the entire record of their pornographic activities would be exposed on all these platforms,” a Cyber Crime officer said.

“Although only five people have approached us, we suspect there are more such victims in Mumbai and other cities. One of them even tried sending money via bitcoin but could not do so. It is possible that those who are well versed in the bitcoin system have already paid the extortionists. The problem is once someone bows down to such elements, the demands only keep increasing,” another officer said.

The Cyber police are still investigating how the perpetrators managed to record the activities of their victims, and suspect that they may have installed back door programmes on the websites for this purpose. In the

absence of official complaints, the scope of the investigation gets limited, officers said.

DEFENCE

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

BrahMos engineer arrested for leaking sensitive data: Police

The agencies are probing if Nishant Aggarwal (27) leaked sensitive data pertaining to the supersonic cruise missile, Brahmos, to his 'handler', who is suspected to be from Pakistan.

A SENIOR systems engineer with BrahMos Aerospace was arrested on Monday on espionage charges in a joint operation carried out by the Uttar Pradesh Anti Terrorism Squad (ATS) and Military Intelligence (MI). The agencies are probing if Nishant Aggarwal (27) leaked sensitive data pertaining to the supersonic cruise missile, Brahmos, to his 'handler', who is suspected to be from Pakistan.

BrahMos Aerospace is a joint venture between India's Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's Military Industrial Consortium, NPO Mashinostroyenia. According to its website, "the company is responsible for designing, developing, producing and marketing BrahMos with active participation of a consortium of Indian and Russian industries".

Aggarwal's Facebook profile states that he studied at the National Institute of Technology, Kurukshetra, and also worked as a research intern at IIT Roorkee. At BrahMos Aerospace, he worked as head of

the hydraulics-pneumatics and warhead integration (production department), and headed a 40-member team including personnel from systems, engineers, technical and technology R&D group. Last month, he was awarded the ‘young scientist award’ by DRDO.

According to police, Aggarwal’s name cropped up during the interrogation of BSF jawan Achutanand Mishra, who was arrested last month for allegedly spying for Pakistan’s ISI. Mishra, according to sources, was honey-trapped by a woman who claimed to be a defence correspondent from Pakistan. The two were in touch since 2016. During the course of this probe, the ATS came across two more Facebook accounts which had women on their profile pictures and were seen to be in touch with Aggarwal.

“He was contacted through Facebook by two women who offered him a job. We are probing if he was honey-trapped. He was chatting with these two for the last two years, and, so far, we have found that the IP addresses of these accounts are Pakistan-based,” said Inspector General, UP ATS, Aseem Arun. “We were investigating three FB accounts... We found two more people from Kanpur were approached in the same manner, but we have not found anything solid on which we can make any arrests. We are still digging,” said Arun.

According to sources, a team of UP ATS and the Maharashtra ATS had been camping since Sunday in Sonegaon, in Nagpur, where Aggarwal stayed in a rented accommodation.

“During the searches, a lot of material was seized and these are being studied. The police have also seized his laptop. Aggarwal has been

confronted with the leads received so far from technical surveillance and a search of his house,” said a senior official. The raids began in the early hours of Monday and continued till late afternoon, the official added.

“We found confidential information pertaining to defence and security on Aggarwal’s personal laptop, which is a crime under the Official Secrets Act. When Aggarwal was confronted on why such sensitive data was on his laptop, he was unable to give a satisfactory response. We suspect that he had procured this information to pass it on to his handlers who identified themselves as females... He was in touch with them for the last two years and we have managed to get the history of their conversations,” said the official.

A team was also sent to Aggarwal’s house in Roorkee, from where a computer was seized.

The seeker technology determines the accuracy of a missile. In March this year, BrahMos successfully flight-tested with an indigenous seeker.

Aggarwal, who was interrogated at an undisclosed location in Nagpur, will be produced before a local court for his transit remand, and will be taken to Uttar Pradesh. He has been booked under sections of the OSA and Information Technology Act, 2000.

DISASTER

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT10, 2018

9 dead, 12 injured after gas pipeline blast in Bhilai Steel Plant in Chhattisgarh

Bhilai Steel Plant is operated by the state-run Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL).



Nine people were killed and 14 others injured on Tuesday in a blast at the Bhilai Steel Plant of state-owned SAIL in Chhattisgarh's Durg district, police said. The explosion took place around 10:45 am in a gas pipeline connected to the coke oven section of the plant in Bhilai town, around 30 km away from the state capital.

“Five of the injured are very serious and are admitted in the district hospital. The figures (of the dead) could rise,” inspector general of police (Durg Range) GP Singh said. “We are waiting for the post-

mortem report of the bodies and after that we will register a case under section 304 (causing death by negligence — and start the investigation,” said Singh.

The blast took place around 10:45 am following a fire in a gas pipe line of Coke Oven Battery Complex No 11 during a scheduled maintenance job, SAIL said in a statement.

“There was an uneven pressure in the gas pipeline for last two days and it needed to be attended,” said SP Dey, president of Bhilai unit of Centre for Indian Trade Union. “The maintenance was to be done as per the protocol but when the joints in the pipeline were opened, the blast took place leading to fire”.

“The explosion took place about 40 feet above the ground and all the employees including the protocol workers sustained injuries. Nine of them died on the spot,” said Puran Lal, an eyewitness who sustained minor injuries in the incident.

“Most of the bodies could only be identified through a DNA test,” said Dey.

In June 2014, six persons, including two deputy general managers, were killed and many others affected when a poisonous gas leaked in the plant, he said.

New agency PTI quoted Union Minister of State for Steel Vishnudeo Sai as saying that a four-member high-level committee has been constituted (by SAIL) to probe the incident. Adequate compensation will be given to the families of the deceased, Sai said

Chhattisgarh Governor Anandiben Patel and chief minister Raman Singh condoled the death of employees and wished for speedy recovery of the injured. “I extend my deepest condolence to the family members of the deceased,” Patel said in her condolence message.

Chhattisgarh Revenue Minister Premprakash Pandey, state Congress chief Bhupesh Baghel and other party leaders besides senior company officials visited the injured in the hospital.

Former chief minister Ajit Jogi’s party, the Janata Congress Chhattisgarh (J), has demanded a compensation of Rs 1 crore for the kin of each of the deceased.

As per SAIL’s website, the Bhilai Steel Plant is India’s sole producer and supplier of world class rails for the Indian Railways.

PIONEER, OCT 11, 2018

Odisha evacuates 3L people

As Cyclone Titli intensified into a "very severe cyclonic storm" over the Bay of Bengal and inched towards the coast with speeds going up to 165 kmph, the Odisha Government on Wednesday evacuated over 3 lakh people living in low lying areas in five coastal districts.

The State Government, which has been on its toes, geared up its machinery to face the calamity which is likely to make a landfall close to Gopalpur early on Thursday.

"We have already evacuated three lakh people and more may be shifted to safer places in view of the very severe cyclone," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik told reporters after reviewing the situation twice during the day.

Evacuation was carried out from five coastal districts of Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara.

Meanwhile, in a video conference with Union Cabinet Secretary P K Sinha, Chief Secretary A P Padhi informed that the state has taken precautions to deal with the situation.

Of the 15 teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), 13 have been deployed along with the Orissa Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) at vulnerable places.

"We are fully prepared to face the calamity," Padhi told reporters after the video conference in which chief secretaries of West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh also took part.

In its latest bulletin, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the very severe cyclonic storm, over west-central Bay of Bengal moved north-northwestwards with a speed of about 11 kmph during the past 6 hours and lay centered at about 180 kms south-southeast of Gopalpur and 130 km southeast of Kalingapatnam of Andhra Pradesh.

"It is very likely to intensify slightly further in the next 6 hours. It is very likely to move north-northwestwards and cross Odisha and adjoining north Andhra Pradesh coasts close to Gopalpur around morning," said H R Biswas, Director of the Meteorological Centre, Bhubaneswar.

Thereafter, it is very likely to re-curve northeastwards, move towards Gangetic West Bengal across Odisha and weaken gradually, Biswas said.

After landfall, Titli is likely to maintain the intensity of cyclone till the evening of Thursday, while moving northeastwards across Odisha, Biswas said.

As a result, the gale wind speed of 60-90 kmph is very likely to prevail over interior parts adjacent to south coastal Odisha till Thursday afternoon and wind speed of 60-70 kmph gusting to 80 kmph over interior districts adjacent to north coastal region from noon to night.

It also said rainfall would be accompanied by gale wind speed reaching 140 to 150 kmph and gusting to 165 kmph along and off Odisha and north Andhra Pradesh coasts.

Apart from making all arrangement for rescue and relief operations, the Chief Minister also ordered closure of all schools, colleges and anganwadi centres on Thursday and Friday in view of the IMD's forecast of heavy to very heavy rainfall across the State.

The chief secretary said NDRF and ODRAF personnel have been positioned in vulnerable districts.

"We have not yet sought help of Army. If required, we may go for it," Padhi said.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

IMF projects India's growth at 7.3% in 2018, 7.4% in 2019

If projections are true, then India would regain the tag of fastest growing major economies of the world, crossing China with more than 0.7 percentage point in 2018 and an impressive 1.2 percentage point growth lead in 2019.



The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday forecasted a growth rate of 7.3 per cent for India in the current year of 2018 and that of 7.4 per cent in 2019. In 2017, India had clocked a 6.7 per cent growth rate.

“India’s growth is expected to increase to 7.3 per cent in 2018 and to 7.4 per cent in 2019 (slightly lower than in the April 2018 World Economic Outlook [WEO] for 2019, given the recent increase in oil prices and the tightening of global financial conditions), up from 6.7 per cent in 2017,” the IMF said in its latest World Economic Outlook report.

This acceleration, the world body said, reflected a rebound from transitory shocks (the currency exchange initiative and implementation of the national Goods and Services Tax), with strengthening investment and robust private consumption.

Also read | [IMF cuts world economic growth forecasts as import tariffs, emerging market issues bite](#)

India’s medium-term growth prospects remain strong at 7¾ per cent, benefiting from ongoing structural reform, but have been marked down by just under ½ percentage point relative to the April 2018 WEO, it said.

If projections are true, then India would regain the tag of fastest growing major economies of the world, crossing China with more than 0.7 percentage point in 2018 and an impressive 1.2 percentage point growth lead in 2019.

China was the fastest growing economy in 2017 as it was ahead of India by 0.2 percentage points. For the record, the IMF has lowered the growth projections for both India and China by 0.4 per cent and 0.32 per cent, respectively, from its annual April’s World Economic Outlook.

Released in Bali during the annual meeting of the IMF and the World Bank, the IMF’s flagship World Economic Outlook said its 2019 growth

projection for China is lower than in April, given the latest round of US tariffs on Chinese imports, as are its projections for India.

In China, growth is projected to moderate from 6.9 per cent in 2017 to 6.6 per cent in 2018 and 6.2 per cent in 2019, reflecting a slowing external demand growth and necessary financial regulatory tightening, the report said.

The 0.2 percentage point downgrade to the 2019 growth forecast is attributable to the negative effect of recent tariff actions, assumed to be partially offset by policy stimulus, it said.

Over the medium term, growth is expected to gradually slow to 5.6 per cent as the economy continues to make the transition to a more sustainable growth path with continued financial de-risking and environmental controls, it noted.

“Owing to these changes, our international growth projections for both this year and next are downgraded to 3.7 per cent, 0.2 percentage point below our last assessments and the same rate achieved in 2017,” the report said.

The growth rate of United States for 2018 is 2.9 per cent and that of 2019 has been powered to 2.5 per cent.

In India, the report said, important reforms have been implemented in the recent years, including the Goods and Services Tax, the inflation-targeting framework, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, and steps to liberalise foreign investment and make it easier to do business.

“Looking ahead, renewed impetus to reform labour and land markets, along with further improvements to the business climate, are also crucial,” it said.

According to the World Economic Outlook, in India, reform priorities include reviving bank credit and enhancing the efficiency of credit provision by accelerating the cleanup of bank and corporate balance sheets and improving the governance of public sector banks.

In India, a high interest burden and risks from rising yields require continued focus on debt reduction to establish policy credibility and build buffers.

“These efforts should be supported by further reductions in subsidies and enhanced compliance with the Goods and Services Tax,” the IMF report said.

It also said inflation in India is on the rise, estimated at 3.6 per cent in fiscal year 2017/18 and projected at 4.7 per cent in fiscal year 2018/19, compared with 4.5 per cent in fiscal year 2016/17, amid accelerating demand and rising fuel prices.

The report said that aggregate growth in the emerging market and developing economy group stabilised in the first half of 2018.

Emerging Asia continued to register strong growth, supported by a domestic demand-led pickup in the Indian economy from a four-year-low pace of expansion in 2017, even as activity in China moderated in the second quarter in response to regulatory tightening of the property sector and nonbank financial intermediation, it said.

ENERGY RESOURCES

HINDU, OCT 8, 2018

Two Indian oil PSUs place orders for Iranian crude

The companies go ahead despite U.S. call for sanctions

Two Indian state-run oil companies have placed orders for Iranian oil to be delivered in November, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said on Monday.

The move comes in apparent defiance of U.S. sanctions targeting Iran's crude oil exports that come into effect on November 4.

The Indian government has repeatedly requested Washington for a waiver of these sanctions for India, but has not received an affirmative response so far.

“Two days ago, two of our companies have placed orders with Iran for oil for the month of November,” Mr. Pradhan said at the inaugural conference of the Energy Forum.

“The question is, has the waiver been granted or not. We don't know if the waiver has happened or not, but the Indian companies have gone ahead and booked the order,” he said.

The two companies in question are Indian Oil Corporation and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals, with a total order quantity of

1.25 million tonnes of crude, according to an official in the Petroleum Ministry.

The U.S. embassy did not respond to requests for a response to the Minister's statement.

On November 4, a second round of U.S. sanctions against Iran will target the oil industry, and impose penalties on oil companies, refineries, insurers and transport companies dealing with Iran.

Sanctions deadline

According to an executive order (EO 13846) issued by President Donald Trump, all American and non-American entities were given a six-month “wind-down” period from May 2018, in which to “zero out” all transactions with designated Iranian oil companies and port operators.

Although countries like Turkey, Russia, and China have indicated they will go ahead with their oil trade with Iran, the European Union will probably accede in a large measure, given the exposure of their companies to the U.S. banking system.

India had thus far not publicly articulated its stand on the issue, but with the advance orders placed for November, has made it clear that India will not “zero out” its oil intake from Iran. While private companies like Reliance and Nayara Energy (Essar) have had to drastically reduce their purchases, public sector companies, who are more immune to U.S. strictures, and already have alternate banking arrangements and a “rupee-rial” mechanism, are staying the course for now.

Mr. Pradhan also said he had spoken to Saudi Arabia's Oil Minister two days ago regarding the higher oil prices and how prices should not be set with the interest of producing countries but also by keeping consuming countries' interests in mind.

“The way certain major economies are handling their domestic currency, all the major currencies of the world are affected by this. These are the two factors affecting oil prices. The Indian government is working on this and I am confident gradually things will be normalised,” the Minister said.

He also categorically stated that the government's directive to oil companies to absorb a ₹ 1 per litre hit to the price of petrol and diesel was not a reversal of the deregulation of oil prices.

However, he added that state-run oil companies must look beyond their profits to easing people's burden.

“The basic point is that they are all government companies,” Mr. Pradhan said. “Profitability is their motto, but public interest is also their responsibility.”

ENVIRONMENT

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 12, 2018

Seers take Save Ganga agitation forward

Swami Gopal Das on Friday started indefinite hunger strike at Matri Sadan to take forward the save Ganga crusade started by environmental activist GD Agarwal, who died at a Rishikesh hospital on the 112th day of his fast.

Das started the agitation with a number of seers declared their support saying they will continue the peaceful path of protest against the government's inaction. Swaroopanand Saraswati, the Shankaracharya of Jyotirmath Peetham, said the community of seers will carry forward Agarwal's agitation and ensure his "unaccomplished mission is realised".

Akhil Bharatiya Akhara Parishad national president Mahant Narendra Giri Maharaj said Agarwal's demise was "a major blow to the country and the cause of Ganga".

During his fast Agarwal had donated his body to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh. He had signed affidavit before two witnesses — Brahamchari Dayanand and the seer's nephew Chetan Garg — on August 28, said AIIMS officials.

"He had already decided to donate his body to AIIMS. And we simply followed the procedure. Nowhere had he mentioned that the body shall

be taken out for last respects to be paid,” Dr Ravi Kant, AIIMS director said.

Environmental activist Anil Prakash Joshi, who is also founder of Himalayan Environmental Studies and Conservation Organisation, said they are all collectively responsible for his death. “Why should just a person sacrifice his life for Ganga? He wasn’t on fast for himself. Had we collectively come up with a strong voice on the Ganga issue, the government wouldn’t have been insensitive like this,” he said.

Rahul Gandhi, Nitin Gadkari condole GD Agarwal’s death

Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party on Friday condoled GD Agrawal’s death. Congress president Rahul Gandhi tweeted, “He sacrificed his life for saving the Ganga. Saving the river is equivalent to saving the nation. We will never forget him and we will take his fight forward.”

Union minister for water resources, river development and Ganga rejuvenation, Nitin Gadkari on Friday said in a statement, “Prof Agrawal’s death is an irreparable loss for the country. His dedicated service to the environment and to River Ganga will always be remembered....”

PIONEER, OCT 15, 2018

Niti Ayog favours green cess

The Government's top think tank, Niti Ayog has favoured imposing a "green cess" from tourists to arrest the environmental degradation caused by the rising footfalls in the Indian Himalayan region.

The Niti Ayog proposal in its recent 'Report of Working Group II Sustainable Tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)' follows observation that the region annually records about 100 million tourists and the number is expected to increase to 240 million by 2025, putting huge pressure on resources.

The 'green cess' will help boost revenue services as well as ensure sustainable development of the region that stretches about 2,400 km across the northern border of India, covering an area of about 500,000 sq km, as per the report. It also suggested payments for environmental services (PES) such as charging entrance fees from tourists and services sector as a long term solution within the tourism industry.

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh , Jammu & Kashmir , Manipur, Meghalaya , Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal are the part of the IHR.

The report notes that though all mountain states have developed tourism/eco-tourism policies and master plans but not all of them address challenges such as climate change, inadequate solid waste management, air pollution, degradation of watersheds and water sources

and loss of natural resources and biodiversity and harness opportunities that change brings.

Also, sustainable aspects of tourism development in the IHR, such as carrying capacity of potential destinations, do not find enough resonance in planning long-term investments.

The think tank also noted that the movement of Indian tourists is increasingly becoming individualistic as standards of living have gone up and people travel to IHR landscapes as and when they want. “As a result, traffic congestion and air and noise pollution, overbooked hotels, non-availability of parking places, and local water and energy security are becoming recurrent problems, even in smaller towns such as Dharamsala.

“Even trials of control mechanisms to restrict the number of visitors to very fragile sites (e.g. Rohtang Pass from KulluManali or Amarnath Yatra), have not yielded desired results as people find alternative routes and means to reach such sites.

“Even Sikkim, which has good experience with ecotourism, is increasingly challenged by mass tourism,” as per Vikram Singh Gaur from NITI Aayog and Dr. Rajan Kotru from International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development(ICIMOD), the lead authors of the report. Among other contributors were Ashok K Jain (NITI Aayog), Sejal Worah (WWF India) and Mridula Tangirala (Tata Trust).

Not only the panel has favoured ‘tourism tax’ as being imposed by many countries like Bhutan as sources of revenue, it also suggested PES

schemes that offer financial incentives for locals to provide a wide range of ecosystem services untouched by normal market transactions.

The panel has also called for carrying out tourism development management of Destination Carrying Capacity as the destinations have their own limited natural and heritage resources and infrastructure.

PIONEER, OCT 15, 2018

67% people unaware of emergency kits, disaster preparedness in Kerala: Survey

The people of Kerala, the State which has an enviable record in several human development indicators, have largely been found to be unaware of precautionary measures and emergency kits to be used at times of disasters with two-thirds of respondents of a survey pleading ignorance.

The findings in the State-wide survey held just over two months after the State was devastated by unprecedented floods of a century have prompted the organiser, Kerala State Literacy Mission (KLSM), to pitch for a "disaster management literacy programme".

The State is known for its high literacy, lowest infant mortality and highest life expectancy rates among others.

Yet according to the survey, 66.77 per cent of people, cutting across cities and villages, were unaware of precautionary measures and emergency kits to be used at times of disasters.

The detailed report of the survey-How and What the Flood-Affected Kerala Thinks-carried out by the KLSM, was released by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan at a function here on Saturday.

At least 20.02 per cent of people, who took part in the survey, had not even heard about climate change, though it is one of the most discussed topics globally, it says.

Only 43.74 per cent of people were aware of different forms of natural disasters such as drought, flood and earthquake, while just 8.43 per cent knew that cyclone is a form of disaster, the report said.

The initiative, carried out with the support of about 50,000 students pursuing the mission's equivalency programmes on October 2, covered over 2.91 lakh households in all the 14 districts of the State.

Besides men and women, the survey covered over 35 transgenders also, the mission sources said.

At least 66.77 per cent of people were unaware about the emergency survival kits that can be used during the time of disasters, the survey report said.

Director of Literacy Mission P S Sreekala said it was also interesting to note that 41.86 per cent of people did not have an idea about the precautionary measures to be taken during the time of emergencies.

Carried out as part of the rebuilding initiatives of the State Government post the August deluge, the survey was aimed at assessing the public's scientific knowledge on climate change, disaster management and environment-friendly lifestyle, she said.

Based on the report, the Literacy Mission has submitted a set of recommendations to the Government.

One of the major proposals was to introduce a disaster management literacy

programme in the State, Sreekala said. Disaster management, emergency preparedness and climate change should be made part of the public education system, she said. Floods and rains had claimed at least 493 lives and left a trail of destruction during this year's South West Monsoon in Kerala.

HIGHER EDUCATION

PIONEER, OCT 15, 2018

Central university teachers allege ‘gag order’



With government service rules kicking in, they can't bring out publications taking a critical view of policies.

Writings of eminent academics taking a critical view of contemporary policies — such as demonetisation, GST, job creation, legislation or foreign policy — may soon be a thing of the past, if the writer teaches at a Central university.

With the University Grants Commission writing to all Central universities some months ago that service rules applicable to Union government servants should also apply to Central universities,

criticism of government will henceforth constitute a violation of service rules.

The Central Civil Services Conduct Rules make the point clear: “No government servant shall, in any radio broadcast, telecast through any electronic media or in any document published in his name or anonymously, pseudonymously or in the name of any other person or in communication to the press or in any public utterance, make any statement of fact or opinion which has the effect of an adverse criticism of any current or recent policy of the Central government or a State government.”

These rules when applied to the academia will hit publications and also critical enquiry in the classroom, scholars said.

“It will be an excuse to harass people. You can’t give a lecture, publish articles and books. You will have to see, for instance, whether an academic paper hampers relations with a foreign country. It may well be non-enforceable but can be used to harass people,” Professor Madhavan Palat, who has taught at Jawaharlal Nehru University, told *The Hindu*. “We will have the kind of publications that military men write, which are mainly technical in nature.”

Indeed, many economists had critiqued demonetisation in 2016 and 2017. The critiques included a book *Demonetisation Decoded* co-authored by three JNU economics Professors.

Eminent historian K.N. Panikkar said, “It will be the end of the university. It is meant to be a place for ideas to flourish.”

Flight of talent

A Professor who did not wish to be named said that the rule could lead to a flight of eminent academics to private universities.

“However, even private universities cannot afford to irk the government,” Professor Palat cautioned.

“Academic freedom in class for a critical discussion on policies may suffer, something that disciplines like law, political science, economics or journalism, may bear the brunt of,” said a Central university Professor who did not wish to be named. There are already rumblings of dissent, with the Federation of Central Universities Teachers’ Associations issuing a statement: “Several of the new Central universities created by the Central Universities Act, 2009 have adopted the CCS Conduct Rules. The Central University of Kerala recently invoked CCS Conduct Rules to suspend a faculty member for a Facebook post criticising the university administration for getting a student arrested. Now, the net is being cast wider to include the older Central Universities — the most recent case being the imposition of CCS Conduct Rules in Jawaharlal Nehru University.” The statement saw the move as “curtailing democratic rights to participate in a host of activities”.

HEALTH SERVICES

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

Parliamentary panel to look into implementation of Ayushman Bharat

The panel will also look into the functioning of AIIMS and other such institutions, and affordability of cancer and duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) treatment.



parliamentary panel will examine the implementation of the Narendra Modi-led government's flagship healthcare scheme Ayushman Bharat and may call top Health Ministry officials to brief its members on the programme.

The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) has two broader objectives — creating a network of health and wellness infrastructure across the country and providing insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per family annually benefiting more than 10.74 crore families.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health, headed by Samajwadi Party leader Ram Gopal Yadav, has decided to examine the implementation of the scheme.

Besides it, the panel will also look into the functioning of AIIMS and other such institutions, and affordability of cancer and Duchenne muscular dystrophy (DMD) treatment.

Ayushman Bharat was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from Jharkhand on September 23.

Since its roll-out, over 50,000 poor people have availed benefits of the scheme, touted as the world's largest health insurance programme, Union Health Minister J P Nadda had said.

The PMJAY will provide cashless and paperless access to services for the beneficiary at the point of service.

The scheme will target poor, deprived rural families and has identified occupational category of urban workers' families — 8.03 crore in rural and 2.33 crore in urban areas — as per the latest Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC) data.

Over 14,000 hospitals, both public and private, have been empanelled for the scheme, and as many as 32 states and union territories have signed MoUs with the Centre and will implement the programme.

Telangana, Odisha, Delhi and Kerala are among states which have not opted for the scheme.

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

First PMJAY surgery in Delhi could help a man walk again

On Monday, a laminectomy was performed on Pappu Singh under PMJAY — the first such surgery in Delhi since the scheme was launched by the Prime Minister on September 23 in Jharkhand.



With only Rs 3,000 remaining in her purse last week, Vimlesh (40) had lost hope. The sum was not enough to fund her husband's spinal surgery at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital, where he was rushed from UP's

Moradabad on October 1. After a few days in the emergency ward, Vimlesh and her husband Pappu Singh (45) were informed by officials that they were entitled to the recently launched Ayushman Bharat — Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

On Monday, a laminectomy (in which space is created by removing the back part of a vertebra that covers the spinal canal) was performed on Singh under PMJAY — the first such surgery in Delhi since the scheme was launched by the Prime Minister on September 23 in Jharkhand.

While the Delhi government has not agreed to be a part of the scheme, hospitals in the capital that are funded by the Centre will provide healthcare under PMJAY. “My husband and I work in a quilt factory in Moradabad and earn Rs 8,000 a month... on September 26, he met with an accident and broke his back. He can’t walk or sit. After he didn’t get proper treatment in Moradabad, I brought him to Delhi,” she said.

Vimlesh recalled that last week, an ‘Ayushman Mitra’ told her about the scheme and its benefits. “He said treatment will not cost a rupee. I just had to submit his [Aadhaar](#) and ration cards, and one unit of blood,” she said.

From Moradabad, Vimlesh carried two steel plates, a pair of salwar-kameez, ID cards and Rs 10,000 she had borrowed. “I got my husband treated at a private hospital before bringing him to Delhi and borrowed money from relatives. If I had known about the scheme earlier, I wouldn’t have this loan on me,” she said.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 13, 2018

With 50 cases, India's biggest Zika virus outbreak sets off alarm bells

Since the incubation period of the virus is one week, more cases are expected to surface over the next seven days before the results of the containment measures implemented by the government.

Fifty cases of zika virus have been confirmed in Jaipur in India's biggest outbreak of the disease to date, and epidemiologists say it's critical to contain mosquito breeding over the next week to ensure the infection doesn't spread to create new epicentres. There have been no deaths.

Since the incubation period of the virus is one week, more cases are expected over the next seven days before the results of the containment measures — which now include quarantining all the students living in Rajput Hostel in neighbouring Sindhi Camp after three students tested positive — rolled out over the past week show results.

Eleven pregnant women are among those infected with zika virus.

The virus puts the unborn children at risk of microcephaly, a birth defect in which the baby's head is smaller than normal because of abnormal brain development.

The first person to test positive on September 21 was an 85-year-old woman with no travel history from the densely-populated Shastri Nagar neighbourhood.

The health ministry has not established the epidemiology, but suspect the outbreak was started by an infected tourist.

“Apart from vector (mosquito) control measures, India needs to improve surveillance for symptoms, not just at airports but also bus terminals and other ports to ensure the outbreak remains localised and is quickly contained,” said Dileep Mavalankar, director, Indian Institute of Public Health, Gandhinagar.

“The number of cases is expected to increase for another week, but there has been no exponential increase in cases, like it happened in Brazil in 2015. Containment efforts over the next week will determine how the outbreak shapes up,” said a health ministry official, who was a member of the expert team tracking containment measures.

The biggest challenge now is containing the outbreak in Rajput Hostel, which is infested with *aedes aegypti* mosquitoes that spread zika, dengue and chikungunya. “The average lifetime flying distance of *aedes aegypti* mosquitoes is 400-500 metres, so if a zero *aedes* zone is created using larval control and fogging, the outbreak can be contained,” he said. “There is a busy bus terminus and several hotels near the hostel, which creates the risk of an infected person travelling out to create new epicentres,” he said.

Zika has been reported in 86 countries, with the biggest outbreak occurring in Brazil in 2015. It was first reported in India in Gujarat in February, 2017, when three people tested positive in Ahmedabad, which was followed by one case in Krishnagiri district in Tamil Nadu in July of the same year.

The symptoms include high fever, rash, joint and muscle pain, headache and conjunctivitis (red, itchy eyes), but 80% of the infected persons have mild or no symptoms. It has not caused severe disease or death, with pregnant women being the most at risk. The treatment is generic and there is no vaccine.

Containment measures have been rolled out within a 3-km radius of the first case in Shastri Nagar neighbourhood of Jaipur, where 250 teams are surveying each home for people with fever, the health status of pregnant women, treating lab-confirmed cases in hospitals for two weeks, and using Temefos for mosquito larval control and fogging to kill adult mosquitoes.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 13, 2018

India-China special representative dialogue to focus on managing Line of Actual Control

The India-China special representative dialogue on boundary resolution will be held outside Beijing between Chinese State Councilor Wang Yi and India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on November 23-25 with the focus on managing the 3,488 kilometre Line of Actual Control.



The India-China special representative (SR) dialogue on boundary resolution will be held outside Beijing between Chinese State Councilor Wang Yi and India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on November 23-25 with the focus on managing the 3,488 kilometre Line

of Actual Control (LAC) and preventing any Doklam-like flare-ups in the future. The venue of the dialogue is to be decided.

According to the diplomats based in New Delhi and Beijing, the 21st round of dialogue will not discuss any new initiatives with the Indian general elections five months away, but focus on reviewing the decisions made in earlier rounds of talks with a bilateral commitment to keep the LAC incident-free and peaceful.

The ambit of the special representative dialogue has grown beyond the initial focus of boundary resolution since 2009, and the diplomats said there is a possibility that the two interlocutors may touch the ramifications of US-China trade war as well as mounting trade deficit on the Indian side in its dealings with China.

The Strategic Economic Dialogue between NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Rajiv Kumar and his Chinese counterpart is already seized of the trade issues.

The special representative dialogue is significant as Wang Yi is senior to the foreign minister of China and Ajit Doval virtually heads the national security establishment including the high-power Defence Planning Group and Strategic Policy Group.

While the hotline between India's and China's defence ministers is a work in progress, Doval is in constant touch with Councilor Wang to ensure that there is no misunderstanding on the borders or on a global matter such as the Indo-Pacific or Afghanistan.

The meeting of the two will also follow the meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang at the East Asia summit on November 13-15.

After the Doklam flare-up last year was addressed by some deft diplomacy by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Peoples Liberation Army and the Indian Army have held numerous border meetings to contain tempers, and trans-LAC incursions by the PLA have come down by 20% this year as compared to 2017.

The Indian Army too has taken a step further by not deploying battalions posted on the aggressive Line of Control with Pakistan to the China border.

“The next special representative dialogue comes at a critical juncture for both India and China as the international situation, both in its political and security dimensions, is undergoing unexpected shifts and will impact both countries. There is an opportunity to revisit the boundary issue but more importantly to look for opportunities to work together on regional and global issues of common concern,” said Shyam Saran, former foreign secretary and an expert on China.

PIONEER, OCT 15, 2018

Trump's new aggression at UNGA

By Manan Dwivedi



The core refrain of the American intent apart from the present entreaty at the United Nations General Assembly is that the US is not retreating inside a cocoon but it is being more practical and business like in factoring in the transactional costs with the rest of the nations. Trump declared, as he had done in his campaign trail, that there can be no more free lunches from the American fold

The practice and theoretical rendering of the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) is here to stay in the larger international system. In the context of international organisations, as an aftermath of the World War-I, the lengthening shadow of then empty seat at the Council of the League of Nations (LON), still holds a grim grain of relevance.

American President Woodrow Wilson aimed to make the United States a member of the LON and also as a key player in the international arena. As the American Senate rejected the President's offer of a legislation to make US a member of the League's Secretariat and the Council, the argument which became fetid was that the lengthening shadow of the American empty chair had a final debilitating impact upon the future of the League of Nations as it lost its legitimacy and power sans America's formalised presence. This year the green Granite backdrop of the General Assembly witnessed a mixed narrative for the entire panoply of world states.

American President Donald Trump deftly occupied his seat of power at the United Nation's General Assembly with the American representative, Nikki Halley, by his side and charted out his "Novae World Order" with quintessential American and national interest oriented talk. He eclectically congratulated the nations of the larger world in having stuck to the task of ameliorating the human security conditions. He categorically hailed the Indian nation for being a true blue historically "Free society set-up" which had left no stone unturned to elevate the impoverished section of the denizens, who, were mired in the quicksand of poverty, malnutrition, disease and unemployment. Much earlier in the National Security Strategy of 2017, President Trump had egged on India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to assume a globally acceptable leadership role playing for the Indian nation and to move up the ladder of being a superpower.

The SDGs are not a new grain of salt as they have their roots hidden in the global welfare idiom of the Indian state's pantheon and also in the

entrepreneurial zeal of the United States of America. The American President in his UNGA address in New York charted out the trajectory of allies and foes alike, which, the US is confronted with in the contemporary context. He appreciated the entire world as part of global war on terrorism for having extricated out the ISIS in nations such as Syria and Iraq. He earmarked Iran as the key threat for the entire West Asian and the global comity of nation states. He declared Iran and its attendant established under Khomeini as being the global sponsor of terrorism in West Asia and beyond. Last year, the American President in his UNGA address to the world had solicited international cooperation to get rid of the “Rocket Man” Kim-Jong-Un. North Korea’s riddance was the last year’s pet peeve but with the Trump-Kim summit becoming the nom de plume of demilitarisation and disarmament, the attention is focused on Iran with new sanctions being slapped on it.

Along with the American strategic ire comes the declaration to the Iran’s trade partners not to do commerce and trade with Tehran as that would attract sanctions, but nations such as Turkey have ignored the Trump’s clarion call despite a fracas delimiting the horizons of the US-Turkey relations. But, in a manner, President Trump recognised the multilateral nature of the international system with gory consequences for the forces inimical to America’s interests.

He declared as he had done in his campaign trail, that, there can be no more free lunches from the American fold, and the European nations and others will have to pay up for the American security umbrella ushering in, “Accountable Securitisation” as the smooth sailing factor for the world’s larger well-being.

The drawing of frontiers and fences is akin to what President Trump premises his larger policy on. The President congratulated his establishment for having signed a new trade deal with Mexico in the context of what President calls as the “slighting of the sovereignty” for Washington. The narrative of global cooperation with the clarion call to be co-equals in contributions to international organisations was one of the oft-repeated refrains of the Presidential communication to the larger world of recalcitrant nation States, both in the context of spatial terrorism and geo-economics. Still, the new role playing envisaged for New Delhi is a “first” in many senses that nations such as India can act as bridges to the orient and can play a domineering role in the upkeep of balance of power and peace in the Asian continent.

Power, prosperity and peace, emerged as the tripod-foundational elements of the US foreign policy which included a moral-liberal entreaty to the larger comity of nations. President Trump castigated the brutal regime of Bashar-Al-Assad and congratulated the reforms being undertaken in Riyadh along with the stability role play for Israel in a new West Asian regional order in the near future. Inis Claude’s seminal work on the United States is now read more as a classic text and its title itself pinpoints towards the larger role of the United Nations as the Book is titled “From Swords into Ploughshares.”

The Washington Post writes that the initial part of President Trump’s Speech consists of boasts straight out of the hyperbole of his Presidential campaign trail. The poser can be that how can, “addressing the threats facing the World and talking about a vision to usher in a lifeline to the

larger humanity” be equated with plane jane rhetoric and mumbo jumbo?

President Trump was not wrong in declaring that United State’s economy had added 10 trillion dollars in wealth and unemployment had receded by half and the stock market is at an all-time high in American history. He contended, “The United States is a stronger, richer and safer country” now with the 2018 military budget being augmented to 716 billion dollars, an improvement over 700 billion dollars in 2017. The idiom being the stratagem to increase the girth and the striking might of the American Defense establishment.

In a way the unilateralism, with its precedent, patriotism, is the bulwarks of President Trump’s twin pegs of foreign policy and governance. Still, the US might be withdrawing as of now, but not into a self-imposed shell as President Trump believes in his own Monroe Doctrine of the contemporary times. The core refrain of the American intent apart from the present entreaty at the United Nations General Assembly is that the US is not retreating inside a cocoon but it is being more practical and business like in factoring in the transactional costs with the rest of the nations. Thus, akin to his National Security Strategy of 2017, the UNGA speech was a reiteration of what the United States intends to mete out to the rest of the comity of nations which might have its stereotypical bluster but is definitely well-conceived and well delineated. The new liberal order of the Demos is here to stay even if it appears hardnosed to some of the other forces in the World system. With issues such as Jude aspirant Bret Kavanaugh rankling the domestic political firmament and allegations arising from a few domestic quarters, President Trump can

count on a novae veneer to his foreign policy which has characteristically concluded that it is not only Moscow, but a blithe Beijing too which has unwelcomingly intervened in the American electoral process.

The United Nations General Assembly utterings spell a new aggression with an intent to clarify the American approach in a fast changing comity of nations which is something on the lines of the, “New World Order” approach of President George Bush in the year 1991.

(The writer teaches International Relations at Indian Institute of Public Administration, Delhi)

NAXALISM

HINDU, OCT 8, 2018

Naxalism will be wiped out in three years: Rajnath



Says only 10-12 districts affected now

Home Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said the menace of Left-wing extremism (LWE) would be wiped out from the country in about three years.

Addressing troops of the Rapid Action Force (RAF), a special unit of the CRPF, on the occasion of its 26th anniversary celebrations here, Mr. Singh said their action should be rapid and quick but never “reckless”.

Speaking at the CRPF camp here, he said districts affected by Naxal violence had come down to 10-12 from 126 some time ago.

Commends CRPF

“The day is not far, may be in a time period of one, two or three years, that Left-wing extremism will be eliminated from the country and this would happen due to your [CRPF] determination, courage and hard work and that of the State police forces,” he said. “I congratulate you on the kind of work you have done in the LWE theatre of the country,” Mr. Singh said.

The Minister said the force had killed 131 Maoists and militants, apprehended 1,278 and effected 58 surrenders during this year.

Talking about the specific role of the RAF, during riots and protests, the Home Minister said all the police forces are like civilised units and they should never do anything that will label them as “brutal.”

POLICE

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

Uttar Pradesh Police training begins: 200 constables get lessons on conduct, crowd control, handling crime scenes

Four classes on behavioural training, weapon handling, crowd control and basics of forensics were held on the first day.

Two hundred police constables participated in a 12-day behavioural training programme that started Monday at the Lucknow police lines. Four classes on behavioural training, weapon handling, crowd control and basics of forensics were held on the first day.

ADG (Lucknow zone) Rajeev Krishna had earlier said that the decision to start this course was taken by him after the recent murder of Apple area sales manager Vivek Tiwari in Lucknow, who was shot dead by a constable, so people can develop a sense of trust in the police.

“The training module is designed to train our policemen on how to behave and work in different conditions. It is also to impart moral training. The police have to set an example of good conduct and behaviour,” state DGP Om Prakash Singh told the media while inaugurating the programme. The first class was taken by ADG Krishna on the subject of behaviour and how to talk to a person approaching the police with a problem.

“The key objective is for policemen to understand their role in society. The first lecture was focused on that. I am sure the programme will help our constables behave better...When on field they are busy with one thing or another, but here, for the next 12 days, all they have to do is learn,” said Inspector Ramesh Singh Yadav, who was on duty at the programme.

The constables were also taught about public order, handling a lynching incident, and crowd control. “In 2010...when I was posted in Noida and the campaign under [Arvind Kejriwal](#)’s India Against Corruption (IAC) was at its peak...we got information that Kejriwal and hundreds of his supports had gathered for a protest. We had no previous intelligence and no time to prepare. However, we used all our policing experience and arrested Arvind Kejriwal that time. We not only had to control the crowd, but also the people on social media,” said Lucknow SP (West) Vikas Chandra Tripathi, who also took a class.

“When you teach someone something citing your personal experiences, they listen with concentration. I loved the response I got from the constables and hope they can take something good from my experiences in the field,” Tripathi said. In the classes taken by forensic expert A K Tiwari, the constables were introduced to an accident situation, and were given instructions on how to surround the spot, mark clues, take photos and keep the crowd away. The situation created for the constables was very similar to the Vivek Tiwari murder case.

POLITCS & GOVERNMENT – JAMMU & KASHMIR

HINDU, OCT 8, 2018

J&K civic polls | Valley gives cold shoulder; records 8.3% turnout



Polling at a slow pace in Kashmir Valley but brisk in Jammu

Srinagar - Amid threats from militants and boycott calls by separatist groups and the two main regional parties, polling began for 422 of the 1,145 wards in the first phase of urban local bodies elections in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday. A total of 1,204 candidates are in the fray.

The second phase covering 384 wards is scheduled for October 10, the third covering 207 wards on October 13 and the last phase covering 132 wards on October 16. The counting of votes will be done on October 20.

The last [election](#) to the municipal bodies in the state was held in 2005 through secret ballots and the five-year term expired in February, 2010.

Kargil recorded the highest turnout of 78%

Just 8.3 per cent of the electorate voted in the first-phase of the urban local body polls in militancy-wracked Kashmir Valley, while Kargil recorded the highest turnout of 78 per cent, an official said.

Polling in 83 wards of the valley which began at 7 am, ended at 4 pm amidst tight security. “Only 7,057 voters of the 84,692 eligible persons turned up to vote in the wards which went to polls Monday. The polling was by and large peaceful,” the official told *PTI*.

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

J&K local polls: In north Kashmir, Kupwara records highest turnout

While the media was given an easy access across the Valley, it was barred from covering the polling in Handwara and Kupwara, with the officials citing “security of voters”.

It is 11.30 am. The shops are shut and gun-wielding police and paramilitary personnel are out on the streets. People are occasionally walking into polling station at Government Boys Higher Secondary School in Handwara town. But by now, 129 votes out of 445 have been

polled. By the end of polling time, Kupwara district recorded highest voter turnout in the Valley at 32.3 per cent.

While the media was given an easy access across the Valley, it was barred from covering the polling in Handwara and Kupwara, with the officials citing “security of voters”.

The Kupwara district of north Kashmir, a stronghold of BJP ally Peoples Conference led by Sajad Lone, has two municipal committees — Handwara and Kupwara. Eighteen wards went to polls on Monday and 18 polling stations were set up in the two towns. Forty-seven candidates were in the fray here.

At the Handwara polling station, a 47-year-old woman said: “I am here because the candidate is known to me. He has promised that he will solve the local problems in the area.”

On Monday, several barricades were set up by the police to prevent media from entering into Handwara district. Deputy Commissioner, Kupwara, Khalid Jehangir, said they decided not to allow media to enter into the district as there was a threat to the voters. Later, following intervention by senior J&K government officials, media was allowed to enter the town.

In nearby Kupwara town, permission was not given to media to enter into poll stations.

POLLUTION

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 9, 2018

From energy to infrastructure, IPCC lists four pathways to curb global warming

As of now, the world is striving to prevent the temperature rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius, in accordance with the stated objective of the Paris Agreement of 2015.



IT IS possible to keep the increase in global average temperatures to within 1.5 degrees Celsius of pre-industrial times. But for that, the world would need to bring down its greenhouse gas to about half of its 2010 levels by 2030, and to net zero by about 2050, a new report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has said.

As of now, the world is striving to prevent the temperature rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius, in accordance with the stated objective of the Paris Agreement of 2015. To meet that target, the aim is to reduce greenhouse

gases by only 20 per cent, from 2010 levels, by the year 2030 and achieve a net-zero emission level by the year 2075.

Net-zero is achieved when the total emissions is balanced by the amount of absorption of carbon dioxide through natural sinks like forests, or removal of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through technological interventions.

In its earlier reports, which have formed the basis of global action, the IPCC has said that climate change could have “irreversible” and “catastrophic” impacts if the global average temperatures were allowed to rise beyond 2 degrees Celsius.

The latest report, released in Seoul Saturday at the end of a week-long meeting, was requested by various countries in 2015 to explore the possibilities of keeping the temperature rise within 1.5 degrees Celsius. This was the key demand made by a number of smaller and poorer countries, especially the small island states, which face the maximum risks from the impact of climate change.

The IPCC, a global body of scientists that makes periodic assessments of science related to climate change to make projections about the future, has presented four pathways through which the 1.5 degree target can be achieved. In each of the pathways, the global average temperature is projected to overshoot the 1.5 degrees Celsius target by some amount before returning to that level before the end of this century.

Each of these pathways is also dependent on some amount of Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR), a reference to physical removal of the stock of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to reduce its concentrations.

Technologies for CDR are still undeveloped and untested. Varying amounts between 100 to 1000 gigatons (billion tonnes) of carbon dioxide would need to be removed from the atmosphere in these four pathways, the report says. The world currently emits about 47 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.

“CDR would be used to compensate for residual emissions and, in most cases, achieve net negative emissions to return global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius following a peak,” the report notes.

The IPCC report says each of these pathways will require “rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems”.

The report, which includes contributions from 91 authors and review editors from 40 countries, will be a key scientific input in the upcoming Katowice Climate Change Conference in Poland in December.

“One of the key messages that comes out very strongly from this report is that we are already seeing the consequences of 1 degree Celsius of global warming through more extreme weather, rising sea levels and diminishing Arctic sea ice, among other changes,” said Panmao Zhai, co-chair of IPCC, Working Group I, in a statement.

The report also lists several specific advantages of keeping the global temperature rise within 1.5 degrees celsius from pre-industrial levels.

For example, by 2100, global sea level rise would be 10 cm lower with global warming of 1.5 degrees compared with 2 degrees Celsius. The likelihood of an Arctic Ocean free of sea ice in summer would be once

per century with global warming of 1.5 degrees, compared with at least once per decade with 2 degrees Celsius. Coral reefs would decline by 70-90 percent with global warming of 1.5 degrees, whereas virtually all (over 99 per cent) would be lost with 2 degrees Celsius.

In addition, the report also points out that “climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, and economic growth” are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius and increase further with 2 degrees Celsius.

The assessment refers to climate models that project “robust differences in regional climate characteristics” between present-day and global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius, and between 1.5 and 2 degrees Celsius.

These differences include increase in mean temperatures in both land and ocean regions, hot extremes in most inhabited regions, heavy precipitation in several regions, and the probability of drought and precipitation deficits in some regions.

RAILWAYS

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 10, 2018

7 dead, more than 20 injured after Delhi-bound Farakka Express derails near UP's Rae Bareli

Chief minister Yogi Adityanath has taken cognisance of the train derailment, and directed the district magistrate, police and health authorities to provide all possible relief and rescue.



Seven people were killed and about 20 others injured after five coaches of Delhi-bound MLDT NDLS Express derailed near Harchandpur area of Rae Bareli district in Uttar Pradesh early on Wednesday, officials said.

The train number 14003 was going to New Delhi from Malda town in West Bengal.

Yadav said officials of Rae Bareli's district administration have already reached the spot and started the rescue operation. He said National

Disaster Response Force personnel from Lucknow and Varanasi have also rushed to the spot.

Officials of the Northern Railways (NR) said accident relief trains from Lucknow and Varanasi districts have been already rushed to help detach the derailed bogies and repair the damaged track would start.

They said a portion of railway track was uprooted from its original position after the accident.

Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath has directed the district magistrate (DM) and superintendent of police of Rae Bareli to provide all possible relief to the stranded train passengers.

PIONEER, OCT 11, 2018

Cabinet approves Productivity Linked Bonus for Rly employees

Benefitting around 12 lakh Railway employees, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved payment of productivity-linked bonus (PLB) equivalent to 78 days' wages to all eligible non-gazetted Railway employees, excluding RPF and RPSF personnel, for the 2017-18 financial year. The Cabinet also allotted Rs3074 crore for the establishment of two new permanent campuses of the Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research (IISER) in Tirupati and Behrampur.

The productivity-linked bonus to railway employees has been estimated at Rs2,044.31 crore, a statement said. The wage calculation ceiling prescribed for payment of PLB to eligible non-gazetted railway staff is Rs7,000 per month and the maximum amount payable per eligible

railway employee for 78 days is Rs17,951, it said. Productivity-linked bonus is paid each year before the Dusshera and Puja holidays.

For the year 2017-18 PLB equivalent to 78 days' wages will be paid, which is expected to motivate the employees for working towards improving the performance of the Railways, the statement said.

The construction of the two campuses of IISER shall be completed by December, 2021. The total cost likely to be incurred is Rs3074.12 crore," an official statement said.

"The creation of two posts of Registrar, one in each IISER, has also been approved. Both the IISERs will be constructed in area of 1,17,000 sqm which will have complete infrastructural facilities for 1,855 students each," it added.

The IISERs will provide top quality science education at the undergraduate and postgraduate level, PHDs and Integrated PHDs. "They will carry out research in frontier areas of science and will enable India move towards a knowledge economy by attracting best scientific talent as faculty and prepare a strong base of scientific manpower in India," the statement said.

REGIONALISM

HINDU, OCT 8, 2018

Amid exodus, Gujarat CM Rupani assures workers



Attacks continue on labourers from Bihar, U.P., M.P.

Even as violence against migrant workers from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh continued in parts of Gujarat, Chief Minister Vijay Rupani on Monday assured them that they would be protected by the police.

Since the attacks broke out in six districts in north Gujarat following the rape of a toddler allegedly by a migrant worker, more than 20,000

migrant workers have fled the State, affecting industries where they constitute a large chunk of the labour force.

The police have arrested 431 persons and lodged 56 cases after over 100 incidents of assaults or attacks on Hindi-speaking workers in Mehsana, parts of Ahmedabad, Sabarkantha, Banaskantha and Patan. Police have also arrested 15 persons for spreading hate messages against migrants on social media platforms.

Mr. Rupani told media persons that the situation was under control and the police would continue to provide security to migrants. “We are committed to maintaining law and order, and people can call police in case of trouble. We will provide them security,” he said in Rajkot.

In Gandhinagar, junior Home Minister Pradeepsinh Bhagwatsinh Jadeja held a meeting with top officials. and later told media persons that the Centre was apprised of all steps taken by the administration to ensure safety of migrant workers.

“I also appeal to people not to be misled by those who are inciting them for political gains,” Mr Jadeja said, adding that additional forces have been deployed in industrial areas for the security of migrants.

Meanwhile, industries associations in Gujarat have asked authorities to ensure safety of workers as the exodus has begun to affect production. In Mehsana, Himatnagar and Sanand industrial estates, officials said several thousand migrant workers have returned home.

The BJP and Congress have blamed each other for the violence following the the rape of the infant. BJP leaders and ministers have

blamed Congress legislator Alpesh Thakur and his Gujarat Kshatriya Thakor Sena for starting the agitation against migrants.

However, on September 24, before the rape incident, Chief Minister Rupani had said that the state would bring a new law to make it mandatory for industries to hire 80 % locals.

Going local

“Those who set up industry in Gujarat, including the service sector, will have to ensure that 80% of the jobs are given to local Gujaratis. The State government is in the process of making such a law,” Mr Rupani had said in Gandhinagar.

WOMEN

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 13, 2018

As govt decides to set up panel on #MeToo cases, PM Modi says must respect women

The government intends to set up a committee that will look into the legal and institutional framework that is in place for handling complaints of sexual harassment at work and advise the ministry on how to strengthen them.

A daughter not only has the right to live but also the right to honour, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday, amid a nationwide debate on sexual harassment of women following the MeToo online campaign — an issue that his cabinet colleague Maneka Gandhi said could be taken up by a new committee of former judges and lawyers.

The Prime Minister was speaking about his ‘Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao’ (save the daughter, educate the daughter) programme at a function of the National Human Rights Commission. “Some narrow-minded people considered a girl child as unwanted and killed them in the wombs,” Modi said in his address, referring to the banned practice of foeticide.

The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign, he said, had led to an increase in the number of girl children in states such as Haryana and Rajasthan.

“Many innocent lives found their right to live. (But) the meaning of life is not just breathing. Honour is equally important,” he said.

His comment came hours after Maneka Gandhi said the women and child development (WCD) ministry will set up a committee to examine all issues emanating from the ‘#Metoo’ movement which has spread to India and in which women have recounted stories of their sexual harassment by men in positions of power. The government has come under pressure from the opposition Congress and activists to fire junior minister for external affairs MJ Akbar, who has been accused by several former colleagues of sexual misconduct during his years as a newspaper editor.

“I believe in the pain and trauma behind every single complaint. Cases of sexual harassment at work must be dealt with a policy of zero tolerance,” the WCD minister said.

The committee will look into the legal and institutional framework that is in place for handling complaints of sexual harassment at work and advise the ministry on how to strengthen them. It will comprise senior judicial figures.

“The plan is in its infancy. The guidelines, norms etc. have yet to be drawn up. The idea has just been floated and is being considered by the ministry. The committee will comprise four retired judges. More details will be divulged by next week,” a senior ministry official familiar with the matter said on condition of anonymity. Gandhi said the committee will have four retired judges and a lawyer. It will hear all complaints and give its recommendations.

“I congratulate the ministry of women and child development on this decision. This is an amazing decision. I do hope women come forward

in large numbers with their testimonies,” said senior advocate Indira Jaising.

In an official statement, Gandhi said in order to ensure harassment-free workplaces — covering all ages, full-time, part-time, public and private sector, organised and unorganised sectors, including domestic workers, students, apprentices, and even women visiting an office — the government had put in place an effective legal and institutional framework through The Sexual Harassment of Women At Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

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