

Climate, calamity linked to culture: Modi

NEW DELHI, OCT 3 /- / A clean and green environment is at the root of this government's policies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said here Wednesday as he was presented the UN's Champions of the Earth Award by United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres. Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron were jointly awarded the UN's highest environmental honour for their pioneering work in championing the International Solar Alliance and promoting new areas of cooperation on environmental action, according to a statement from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In his address, Modi said climate and calamity are linked to culture, and it will be difficult to avoid calamity as long as concerns for the climate do not become a part of culture. From agriculture and industrial policies to building houses and construction of toilets, the need for a clean environment has been driving his government's programmes, Modi said.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing a function after receiving the 'Champions of the Earth' award, in New Delhi

India's commitment to environment has only increased, he said, adding that his government is working to bring down "emission intensity" by 20-25 per cent in the next two years against its 2005 figure and by 30-35 per cent by 2030. "We have also pledged to get rid of single-use plastics by 2022," he said in his speech. Citing ancient Hindu shlokas and texts, the prime minister also referred to India's traditions to assert that respecting nature had always been part of Indian society. He said his government has succeeded in changing people's behaviour accordingly, an apparent reference to 'Swachha Abhiyan' (clean-

ness mission). The honour bestowed on him is a recognition of India's tribes living in forests who respect trees more than their lives, his fishermen who capture only as much fish as they need to earn their living and farmers whose lives are intertwined with the cycle of seasons, he said. It is also an honour for Indian women who have worshipped trees as gods. "Reuse and recycle" have always been a part of their lives, the prime minister said. Indians have always treated nature as a living organism, he said.

The poor are the worst victims of climate change, he said, adding that his government has been pursuing policies to further quicken the rate of economic growth to give them a life of dignity. Crores of people have come out of extreme poverty in the past few years, Modi said. Cutting-edge technology and renewable energy are the basis of his government's "smart city" project, while "per drop, more crop", soil health card and organic farming are a priority in agriculture, he said. Modi said he had spoken about "climate justice" during the Paris agreement, which was signed in 2016 with an aim to deal with cli-

mate change. The whole world has committed to it but a lot needs to be done to execute it on the ground, he added. The UN Secretary General said technology is on the side of those who believe in a green economy. "We are recognising a statesman who understands the issue of climate change and understands the benefits of climate action. He knows the problems and also works to solve them. A green economy is a good economy. Technology is on the side of those who believe in a green economy. Those who believe in a grey economy have a grey future," Guterres said.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraaj said the prime minister had asserted on the world stage that India would always adhere to its commitments and complete various targets before time. "It is such a thought process that is being honoured today. PM Modi has always believed that we can conserve our environment and move on the path of development. I remember him saying if we face power shortage we will look to the rays of the Sun and

work on solar energy," she said. "The award is a fitting recognition of his leadership towards making our world a cleaner place. He was firm that the agreement in Paris has to stay and the world must come together," she added. The Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Harsh Vardhan, said that the government has introduced several policies and programmes and Swachh Bharat Mission has been one of the world's biggest people's movements successful in making remarkable strides in cleanliness and sanitation, in environmental protection and uplift of the poor and downtrodden.

"Today, our villages are becoming cleaner and deaths due to diarrhoea are history. The government has pledged to eliminate single use plastic by 2022," Harsh Vardhan said. Referring to the "Green Good Deeds" - a social movement to protect environment and promote good living in the country, the Environment Minister urged the people to undertake one 'Green Good Deed' everyday. Champions of the Earth is the highest UN honour in the field of environment. The award recognises outstanding figures from public and private sector as well as civil society, whose actions have brought about a positive impact and a transformation on environment. The Champions of the Earth award was launched in 2005 and is presented in five categories: Lifetime Achievement, Policy Leadership, Action and Inspiration, Entrepreneurial Vision and Science and Innovation. Since its inception thirteen years ago, the awards have recognised 84 laureates. (PTI)

Cross-border firing quadruples along IB in Jammu, BSF suffers maximum casualties: Data

NEW DELHI, OCT 3 /- / Incidents of unprovoked firing from the Pakistani side along the international border (IB) in Jammu has quadrupled this year as against 2017 and the figure was the highest in the past five years, according to official data. The latest data accessed by PTI also shows that the Border Security Force (BSF) suffered the maximum casualties this year - 12 deaths and 40 injured. The data shows that till September this year, a total of 486 incidents of cross-border firing have taken place along the IB in Jammu as compared to 111 last year. The corresponding figures for the previous three years were 204 (in 2016), 350 (in 2015) and 127 (in 2014). Twelve BSF personnel have been killed in these incidents this year, including the brutal killing of Head Constable Narender Singh last month. Singh was shot dead and his throat slit when his team went towards the border to cut thick and long elephant grass near their border post in Ramgarh sector of Jammu.

A "record-high" number of 40 jawans have been injured in these incidents this year and these figures are the highest in the past five years, the data said. A BSF jawan was also killed along the small portion of the Line of Control (LoC) that falls in Jammu this year, the data said. While the BSF is deployed under the operational command of the Army along the LoC, it is controlled by the Indian Army. Last year, two personnel of the border guarding force were killed and seven injured due to sniping and mortar shelling incidents along the IB while three BSF personnel were killed and 10 injured in such incidents in 2016. Similarly, a BSF jawan was killed and five were injured in 2015 while two men were killed and 14 were injured in 2014 at this frontier in Jammu and Kashmir. A senior official of the force said in view of the recent killing of the BSF jawan along this frontier by Pakistani border security forces (PBF), the force has asked the forward units along the IB to be on "extra alert and vigilant". "The relations between the two countries and their security forces are strained for quite some time now. It is, therefore, expected that the hostilities may rise and audacious attacks can be launched by the other side. The forward units hence have been asked to be very very cautious," the official, who did not wish to be identified, said. Former BSF Director General K K Sharma, who retired last month, had told reporters during his last press conference here on September 28 that they were witnessing a "more aggressive stance" of the opponent along the IB in Jammu and Kashmir after Imran Khan took over as Pakistan's prime minister. (PTI)

Swaraaj, Guterres discuss UNSC reforms, climate change

NEW DELHI, OCT 3 /- / External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraaj Wednesday met United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and discussed key issues such as UN Security Council reforms and climate change. Guterres, who arrived here Monday on his maiden visit to India as the head of the world body also presented Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the UN Champions of the Earth Award on Wednesday. "Working in close synergy with the highest organ of multilateralism," EAM Sushma Swaraaj welcomed UNSC anti-negotiations. Had productive discussions on issues related to climate change, UNSC reforms and Guterres' interest in "India's interest," Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar tweeted after Swaraaj's meeting with Guterres. Guterres' visit coincided with the commencement of events marking the 149th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and he also participated in the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention on Tuesday. (PTI)

CPI, CPI(M) choose separate paths in Telangana polls

HYDERABAD, OCT 3 /- / The CPI and CPI(M), traditional Left allies in the country, have chosen separate paths for the coming assembly elections in Telangana. The two parties, part of the broad-based alliance of opposition Congress, TDP and Telangana Jana Samiti (TJS), which was formed to contest the polls, while the CPI(M) will contest under the umbrella of the Bahujan Left Front (BLF). The BLF comprises 28 small parties, though many of them may not contest the state polls. The BLF's agenda is social justice and alternative policies to strengthen education, health and other sectors in the government. CPI(M) state secretary Tammini Veerabhadram told PTI Wednesday CPI(M) had one seat in the recently dissolved 119-member Telangana Legislative Assembly. The party is likely to contest 20 to 23 assembly segments. He also said the Left parties have traditionally been strong in Khammam, Warangal and Nalgonda districts of Telangana.

Veerabhadram said the BLF promises to keep health and education completely in the government sector. Distribution of land and housing for poor are also part of the agenda. The BLF also promises to open 'Bahujana Bhojana Canteens' (subsidised canteens for the poor) in rural areas. "To ensure political representation of backward communities, BLF promises to give 60 seats (among the 119) to backward classes," Veerabhadram said. The BLF also promises to ask a leader belonging to backward classes would be made chief minister if the coalition comes to power, he said. When asked if CPI(M) and CPI choosing different paths would hurt Left unity in the long run, the CPI(M) state secretary claimed it was the CPI which chose to go separately. "It was their decision to join the Congress. Right from the beginning, we did not have the political policy to join Congress. We have always asked CPI and Kodandaram (of TJS) to join the Left parties. We are still asking them," he said.

The stated objective of the alliance of Congress, TDP, CPI and TJS is to defeat the TRS and such exercises have been done in the past, either to defeat the Congress or the TDP, he observed. Veerabhadram said the objective to safeguard the Communist movement was missing in efforts to form the ruling party in erstwhile Andhra Pradesh in recent decades, and now in Telangana. This has weakened the Left, prompting his party to take an independent line now, he added. (PTI)

India launches 'Operation Samudra Maitri' to help tsunami-hit Indonesia

NEW DELHI, OCT 3 /- / India has launched a massive operation to provide assistance to the earthquake and tsunami victims in Indonesia, dispatching two aircraft and three naval ships carrying relief material to the country, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday.

'Operation Samudra Maitri' for humanitarian assistance was launched after a telephonic conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Indonesian President Joko Widodo on October 1, and following Indonesia's acceptance of international aid, the MEA said in a statement. Two Indian Air Force aircraft - C-130J and C-17 - departed on Wednesday morning with medical personnel and relief material.

The C-130J aircraft is carrying a medical team along

with tents and equipments to set up a field hospital. The C-17 aircraft is carrying medicines, generators, tents and water to provide immediate assistance, the MEA said. Three Indian Navy ships - INS Tir, INS Sujatha and INS Shardul - have also been mobilised to carry out humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR). These ships are likely to reach the Central Sulawesi province of Indonesia on October 6, the ministry said.

The death toll in Indonesia's twin quake-tsunami disaster, which decimated parts of the central Indonesian island of Sulawesi, has already climbed to nearly 1,400.

The magnitude 7.5 earthquake struck at dusk on Friday and generated a tsunami said to have been as high as five metres (nearly 20 feet) in places. (PTI)

BJP leader from Telangana appointed director in Airports Authority of India

NEW DELHI, OCT 3 /- / Senior BJP leader from Telangana Kasam Venkateswarlu was appointed non-official independent director on the board of Airports Authority of India (AAI) Ltd Wednesday, an order issued by the Personnel Ministry stated. Venkateswarlu, at present vice-president of the Telangana BJP, has been appointed to the post for three years, it said. Senior party member Balraj Nune, who is central and state coordinator of Telangana BJP, confirmed to PTI Venkateswarlu's appointment to the AAI board. It is not for the first time that a BJP

leader has been appointed on the board of a central public sector undertaking. In the past, some of the party's leaders including Syed Zafar Islam and Shazia Ilmi have been given such postings. Islam, a national spokesperson of the party, was last year appointed non-official independent director of Air India for three years. Ilmi, a former leader of Delhi BJP, Minister Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party, was in January appointed independent director in Engineers India Ltd. At present, she is the vice-president of the BJP's Delhi unit.

Trio win Nobel Chemistry Prize for research harnessing evolution

STOCKHOLM, OCT 3 /- / US scientists Frances Arnold and George Smith and British researcher Gregory Winter won the Nobel Chemistry Prize on Wednesday for applying the principles of evolution to develop enzymes used to make everything from biofuels to medicine. Arnold, just the fifth woman to clinch chemistry's most prestigious honour, won one half of the nine million Swedish kronor (about 1.01 million or 870,000 euros) award, while Smith and Winter shared the other half. "The 2018 Nobel Laureates in Chemistry have taken control of evolution

and used it for purposes that bring the greatest benefit to humankind," the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences said. The trio used the same principles of evolution - genetic change and selection - to develop proteins used in a range of fields. "They have applied the principles of Darwin in test tubes. They have used the molecular understanding we have of the evolutionary process and recreated the process in their labs," the head of the Academy's Nobel Chemistry committee, Claes Gustafsson, told reporters. "They have been able to make evolution many 1000s

of times faster and redirect it to create new proteins," Arnold, 62, who has survived breast cancer and is a single mother to three sons, is a professor of chemical engineering at the California Institute of Technology. Her method of rewriting DNA to mimic evolution has helped solve problems such as replacing toxic chemicals like fossil fuels. As a result, renewable resources like sugar cane are being converted into biofuels. More environmentally friendly chemical substances are being developed, improving everyday products such as laundry and dishwashing deter-

gents to enhance their performance in cold temperatures. "The most beautiful, complex, and functional objects on the planet have been made by evolution. We can now use evolution to make things that no human knows how to design," Arnold said in 2016. "Evolution is the most powerful engineering method in the world, and we should make use of it to find new biological solutions to problems," she said. "Instead of pumping oil out of the ground for making gasoline, now we can use sunlight stored in plants." Meanwhile, Smith, of the University of Missouri, and Winter, a 67-year-old genetic engineer at the MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology at Cambridge, developed an "elegant method" known as phage display, where a bacteriophage - a virus that infects bacteria - can be used to evolve new proteins, the jury said. Pharmacists for rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis and inflammatory bowel diseases have resulted from their research, as well as antibodies that can neutralise toxins, counteract autoimmune diseases and cure metastatic cancer. "The discoveries by George Smith and Greg Winter are having an enormous impact, particularly on medicine with antibody drugs that have fewer side effects and are more efficient," Goran Hansson, the chair of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, told reporters. Alfred Nobel, who created the prizes in his will, was himself a chemist, and devised his famed awards in part to atone for inventing dynamite. Arnold, Smith and Winter will receive their prize from Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf at a formal ceremony in Stockholm on December 10, the anniversary of Nobel's 1896 death. Last year, the honour

KIDS CORNER

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WordWheel

No. 19

D	R	I
E		
L		?
L	A	

Insert the missing letter to complete an eight-letter word reading clockwise or anticlockwise. Solution No. 18: SADISTIC

5x5

Insert the missing letters to complete ten words - five across the grid and five down.

No. 19

A	T			
A		L		W
	L		S	
E				D
H			R	

OUR SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 18 (Other combinations may occasionally be possible.)

Reference: C.O.D. 1995

Word-BUILDER

No. 19

R	D	E
	N	T

How many words of three or more letters, including plurals, can you make from the five letters, using each letter only once? No foreign words or words beginning with a capital are allowed. There's at least one five-letter word.

TODAY'S GOALS: Good - 8 Excellent - 11 Amazing - 13 SOLUTION 18: den, dens, end, ends, ens, pen, pens, send, spend, sped