



The World Indigenous Peoples' Day was observed at Girmil Line Panighatta in Mirik on Thursday. -- Deep Milan Pradhan

Flood situation 'grave' in Kerala; 20 dead, 22 dams opened to drain out excess water

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUG 9 /-- Heavy rains in Kerala today claimed 20 lives, leaving a trail of destruction across the southern state. With water levels rising in various dams and reaching almost its maximum capacity, shutters of at least 22 reservoirs in the state have been opened to drain out excess water. Of the total deaths, 11 people were killed in a massive landslide in high range Idukki, six in northern Malappuram district, two others in Kannur and one in Wayanad district since last night, disaster control source said here. Five members of a family were killed in Idukki's Adimali town. Two persons were pulled out alive from the debris by the locals and

police, they said. For the first time in the last 26 years, a shutter of the Cheruthoni dam of the Idukki reservoir, considered the biggest arch dam in Asia, was opened by noon today with the water level touching 2,398.98 ft. The full reservoir level (FRL) of the dam is 2,403 ft. Four shutters of the Idamalayar dam in Kochi district were opened this morning and people living in the banks of Periyar river and its other tributaries were asked to be vigilant as the released water was likely to inundate low-lying areas. The government has asked tourists not to go to high range areas and dam sites. Talking to newsmen after a review meeting, chief minister Pinarayi

Vijayan said the flood situation in the state was "very grim" and it was for the first time in the history of the state that 22 dams have been opened at a time following the water level reaching its maximum capacity. The annual Nehru Trophy boat race, scheduled to be held at Punnamad Lake in Alappuzha district on August 11, has been postponed due to floods, Vijayan said further. "There is a possibility of water level increasing in Kuttanad in the district in the event of the Kakkil reservoir lifting shutters. So, the boat race has been postponed. The new date will be announced later," he added. The chief minister also informed that an

assistance of Army, Navy and Coast Guard has been sought and six more columns of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) had been requested to be deployed in the flood-hit areas. "The flood has caused large-scale damage across the state. Water levels in rivers are on the rise. Thus, there is a need to open the shutters of many dams," the chief minister said. The deployment of Navy helicopter has been sought for the rescue of those stranded in the remote areas of Wayanad district, he said. The Left leader added the services of Army and NDRF had also been sought in the worst-hit Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad and Idukki

districts. A 24x7 monitoring cell has been set up at the Secretariat here to coordinate the relief works with various district collectors. Members of the Central team, who are in the state to assess the damage, held a meeting with the chief minister this morning. Vijayan said the state would submit a detailed memorandum to the Centre seeking financial assistance for taking up relief works. Meanwhile, many places in Malakkad town were under flood water. High range roads in Idukki and Wayanad were damaged due to landslides and uprooting of trees, causing traffic blocks. Educational institutions have declared a holiday in Idukki, Kollam and other districts of the state.

Protesters disrupt road traffic in parts of Maharashtra over Maratha quota stir

MUMBAI, AUG 9 /-- Maratha agitators disrupted road traffic in some parts of Maharashtra today as part of their statewide protests over reservation demand, while Internet services were suspended in seven rural tehsils of Pune district to prevent rumour-mongering. Despite an appeal from Maratha community leaders to observe a peaceful bandh, protesters blocked roads and burnt tyres in some places, a police official said. Two groups of protesters clashed when someone allegedly shouted slogans against Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray at Kranti Chowk in Aurangabad district, a police official said. According to him, a group led by Sena district chief Ambadas Danve objected to the slogans, following which members of both the sides beat up each other. "One person was injured in the incident but we brought the situation under control. We separated the groups and dispersed their members," the police official said. Agitators attacked the gate and a cabin at the Pune district collector's office and damaged some light bulbs in the premises, a police official said. Superintendent of police Sandip Patil said Internet services were suspended in seven rural tehsils of Pune district to prevent rumour-mongering.

Man in Pak jail for 36 years to walk free next week, says Jaipur MP

JAIPUR, AUG 9 /-- A Jaipur resident who is languishing in a Pakistan jail for 36 years is likely to be released next week, according to the local MP here. Minister of state for external affairs V K Singh told a delegation led by Jaipur MP Ramchandra Bohra in New Delhi today that Gajannand will be set free on the eve of Pakistan's Independence Day. The minister has assured us that Gajannand would be released from the jail in Lahore on August 13, Bohra said. He said the man, now 68, was sentenced to two months in prison but languished there because he did not have consular access over the years. Jaipur (Rural) police were told in May that Gajannand is in Lahore's Kot Lakhpal jail. The police received a request for the verification of his nationality

Govt workers withdraw strike

MUMBAI, AUG 9 /-- The Maharashtra government employees, who had gone on a three-day strike over various demands including salary hike, withdrew their today after receiving positive assurances from the state administration. Around 17 lakh Class-3 and Class-4 employees of the state government were on strike since Tuesday over their various demands, including implementation of recommendations of the Seventh Pay Commission

and filling up of vacant posts. "We held discussions with the chief minister and the finance minister in the past and with the chief secretary today. The government has agreed to most of our demands," Milind Sardeshmukh, president of the organisation which called for the protest, told news agency PTL. Sardeshmukh claimed the situation in the state was not good, in view of protests by the Maratha community over its demand

for reservation and the health and other emergency services being affected due to the strike by government employees. "Our first priority is to help people and so, we have taken a step back. The government has assured us that our demands will be fulfilled," he said. The Class-3 and Class-4 government employees from various departments, including zilla parishads, teachers and state-run corporations, took part in the three-day strike. Chief minister Devendra

Fadnavis had said last week that recommendations of the Seventh Pay Commission will be implemented for state government employees from January 2019. "The arrears of the Seventh Pay Commission will be given with retrospective effect from January 2016, while the Dearness Allowance will be given retrospectively for the last 14 months," Fadnavis had said after holding a meeting with various employees' unions.



In the Lachen Mangan MLA Challenge Open Football tournament 2018 on Thursday Dzungu Football Federation won the match against Sikkim Police 2-1 to enter the semi-final. The Man of the Match trophy went to Ong Tshering of Dzungu Football Federation. -- DEEPAK SHARMA

Search for 9 missing crew members of capsized fishing boat in Kerala continues

KOCHI, AUG 9 /-- The Indian Navy and Coast Guard today continued their search for the missing crew of a fishing boat which capsized after it was hit by a merchant ship at high seas some 24 nautical miles off Mumbambam harbour near here. The fishermen went missing after the boat was hit by the ship on Tuesday. At the time, 14 fishermen were on board the boat. Three fishermen were killed and two injured in the incident, police had

said. The boat had 11 fishermen from Tamil Nadu, two from West Bengal and one from Kerala. "No missing person has been located as yet," a defence spokesperson said here. The spokesperson said the Indian Navy and Coast Guard have pressed into service their ships and aircraft to search and locate the nine missing fishermen of fishing boat 'Oceanic'.

Kerala fisheries minister J Mercykuttyamma held a meeting with representatives of civil administration, Navy and Coast Guard last night to review the rescue operation being carried out in the high seas. According to a government release, the minister said the search operation would continue till the fishermen were traced. Four ships and three helicopters of the Navy and Coast Guard were continuing their rescue mission, government sources said. "As regards the search at sea, the navy has recommenced aerial search since morning. An ALH

helicopter was sent early in the morning followed by a Dornier aircraft by Coast Guard, besides all the ships in the area since yesterday," the defence spokesperson said. During the air search on Wednesday, a 10-metre capsized boat, identified as 'Al Ma Rahan', was found in the area, a defence release said. Offshore patrol vessel INS Sunarya was also deployed in the diving team on board, has joined the rescue effort.

Sikkim Police enters semi-final of 1-Day Open football tournament

SANJAY AGARWAL

RANGPO, AUG 9 /-- In the second quarter final match of the 72nd Independence Day Open football tournament organized by Independence Day Celebration Committee Rangpo at the Rangpo Bazar play ground between Sikkim Police and Biswadeep Club Rangpo, Sikkim Police won the match via tie-breaker and entered the semi-final of the tournament. On Sunday, Shelter Home in Ashthubia Nagar, which is run by former district BJP Mahila Morcha Chief Rama Mishra, district magistrate Shambhu Kumar found that 15 women were registered but only one woman was present there, officials said. The shelter home manager said the other registered women had gone out for work. During the check at the other shelter home in Achalpur, sub-divisional magistrate Satya Prakash Singh found 12 women missing. Out of the total 15 who were registered, the caretaker of this home, Neha Praveen, said they were not getting external funding and the shelter was being run with their personal resources. The district magistrate said 20 women in total were found missing and a probe is on in the matter. The inspection at the shelter homes were conducted at the back of recent cases in the shelter homes of Deoria in Uttar Pradesh and Muzaffarnagar in Bihar. (PTI)



Police was awarded the Man of the Match trophy. On Friday, the third quarter final match between Himalayan Football Club Gangtok and Jaistwal Brothers would be played, publicity in charge Mani Kumar Pradhan informed.

26 women found missing from shelter homes in Pratapgarh

PRATAPGARH, AUG 9 /-- At least 26 women were found missing from two shelter homes in Pratapgarh during surprise checks conducted by the district administration, officials said today. During the inspection Jagrati Shelter Home in Ashthubia Nagar, which is run by former district BJP Mahila Morcha Chief Rama Mishra, district magistrate Shambhu Kumar found that 15 women were registered but only one woman was present there, officials said. The shelter home manager said the other registered women had gone out for work. During the check at the other shelter home in Achalpur, sub-divisional magistrate Satya Prakash Singh found 12 women missing. Out of the total 15 who were registered, the caretaker of this home, Neha Praveen, said they were not getting external funding and the shelter was being run with their personal resources. The district magistrate said 20 women in total were found missing and a probe is on in the matter. The inspection at the shelter homes were conducted at the back of recent cases in the shelter homes of Deoria in Uttar Pradesh and Muzaffarnagar in Bihar. (PTI)

StateNotes

Fighter plane's tyre burst at Jodhpur Civil Airport

JODHPUR, AUG 9 /-- Air traffic at the Jodhpur Civil Airport was affected for nearly an hour today following a fighter aircraft tyre burst, officials said. No damage, however, to the aircraft has been reported but the runway was damaged to some extent. "A tyre of a fighter aircraft got burst on the runway at about 12.25 pm, after which the runway was taken under control by the air force staff," defence spokesperson Col. Sombit Ghosh said. He refused to divulge further details about the incident. However, according to the airport sources, the tyre of the aircraft burst when it was back from a regular sortie and was taxiing.

2 bike accidents claim 6 lives in UP

PRATAPGARH, AUG 9 /-- Six people were killed in two separate accidents in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh city, police said today. Three persons were injured when their bike was hit by a tempo in the city -- around 160 km from Lucknow -- last night. Arvind Kumar Singh (32), Arun Kumar Dubey (30) and tempo driver Abdul Karim (30) were rushed to a hospital, where they succumbed to injuries, said Pratapgarh superintendent of police (SP) Dev Ranjan Verma. In the other incident this morning, two bikes collided against each other, killing Badri Prasad Yadav (70), Kedar Nath (75) and Jitender (35), while a woman got injured, the SP added.

2 held with ammunition in Delhi ahead of 1-Day

NEW DELHI, AUG 9 /-- Ahead of Independence Day, two suspected arms peddlers were arrested with arms and ammunition, police said today. The accused have been identified as Mohammad Azim, a resident of Malda in West Bengal and Aas Mohammad, a resident of Shamli in Uttar Pradesh, said Sanjeev Kumar Yadav, deputy commissioner of police (Special Cell). Aas Mohammad was arrested yesterday while Azim was arrested earlier this week, the police said. Two carbines, 50 pistols and as many cartridges were recovered from their possession by personnel of the special cell of Delhi Police. The accused were involved in supplying arms to Delhi-based criminals for the last four-five years.

BJP politicising NRC issue, says Chandy

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUG 9 /-- Senior Congress leader Oommen Chandy has alleged that the BJP was politicising the National Register of Citizens (NRC) issue in Assam, instead of addressing the anxiety expressed by the Opposition over the list. "The BJP is not taking that genuine citizens do not become disenfranchised, the government has adopted a very insensitive approach," he claimed in a Facebook post. Chandy, an AICC general secretary in charge of Andhra Pradesh, claimed: "A BJP MLA from Telangana has advocated shooting those people who refuse to leave the country. Yet, the BJP has not taken action against him, implying that the party concurs with his views." BJP MLA from Telangana T Raja Singh Lodhi had on July 31 said illegal Bangladeshi settlers and Rohingya should be shot if they do not return to their countries like gentlemen.

BJP corporators attend birthday bash before Major Rane's body reaches home

MUMBAI, AUG 9 /-- The BJP was left red-faced after a video went viral showing its MLA and corporators attending a birthday party in adjoining Mira Road township at a time when people were expecting the body of Major Kaustubh Rane, who attained martyrdom in Kashmir. The video, telecast by a Marathi TV channel, shows BJP legislator Narendra Mehta and a dozen BJP corporators from the Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation celebrating the birthday of party corporator Anand Manjekar in the township on Tuesday night. The celebrations happened a day before the body of Major Rane, who was killed in Jammu and Kashmir during an operation to foil an infiltration bid, reached Mumbai. Mehta was quick to tender an apology on the incident. "What happened (the birthday bash) is extremely unfortunate. It shouldn't have happened," he said. "All of us have expressed regret for it. This is not a political issue," he told the channel. Asked why the party was not cancelled despite the entire township mourning the martyrdom of its resident, Mehta said the event was pre-planned. Talking to news agency PTL, NCP spokesperson Nawab Malik said: "This is the height of shamelessness on part of BJP public representatives. This incident has exposed the true face of BJP. The legislator and corporators who attended the party should be expelled by the party." "Those attending the party have given a flimsy excuse that they were not aware of Major's death. But the reality is some of them had gone to his residence earlier to offer their condolences and from there they had straightway headed to the party venue," he said. (PTI)

Grand Inauguration
We have Opened a New Branch @ CBD, Kolkata on Thursday, 2nd August, 2018
STAR Health Insurance
The Health Insurance Specialist
at 75C, Park Street, 4th Floor, Kolkata - 700016
Grace the occasion with your presence.
Star Health and Allied Insurance Co. Ltd.
Atin Kumar Roy Zonal Manager
Tapash Mazumdar Area Manager