



A Philippine marine soldier takes a selfie with his phone during their arrival from Marawi at an airport area in Metro Manila, Philippines

ECHO WORLD



Mamata Banerjee at a meeting with ministers and senior officials of the government to take stock of the situation arising out of the outbreak of Dengue in the state—Shyamal Maitra

ISRO to launch 30 satellites in one go in Dec

BENGALURU, OCT 30 /- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said today it will launch 30 satellites in a single mission on board its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) in December. The mission, whose main payload would be Cartosat-2 series earth observation satellite, will be the first PSLV mission after the unsuccessful launch of navigation satellite IRNSS-1H in August. "We are planning our next launch in the second half of December, all things in place... It will be a satellite along with other co-passengers," ISRO Chairman Kiran Kumar told reporters here. PSLV-C40 will be used for the launch from the spaceport in Sriharikota, about 100 kilometres from Chennai. The mission will be a combination of 25 nano satellites, three micro-satellites and one Cartosat-2 series satellite, along with "maybe" one university satellite. ISRO officials said. They said most of the co-passengers of Cartosat-2 series satellite would commercial satellites from foreign countries, including Finland and the US. On August 31, India's mission to launch its backup navigation satellite IRNSS-1H onboard PSLV-C39 ended in a failure after a technical fault on the final leg following a perfect launch.

AT A GLANCE

Tunnel for diverting Brahmaputra water?

BEIJING: Chinese engineers are testing techniques that could be used to build a 1,000-km tunnel, the world's longest, to divert water from Brahmaputra river in Tibet close to Arunachal Pradesh to the parched Xinjiang region, a media report said today. The move, that is expected to "turn Xinjiang into California", has raised concerns among environmentalists about its likely impact on the Himalayan region, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

State chief secy to chair review meet

KOLKATA: State chief secretary Moloy Dey will preside over a review meeting with secretaries of all departments of the state government on Tuesday to take stock of the progress of all the Centrally funded schemes going in the state. This is aimed at monitoring such schemes and give proper fills where they are lagging behind.

Mamata talks tough on dengue, says would not hesitate to dismiss civic bodies failing in efforts

KOLKATA, OCT 30 /- Chief minister Mamata Banerjee today said she would not hesitate to dismiss those civic bodies who were failing in their efforts to check the spread of dengue, the scourge that has so far claimed 40 lives in the state. "I have asked the civic bodies to be alert. If I find any municipality or corporation not putting in enough effort even after receiving funds from the state government, we shall take action. If needed we will dismiss that board," she said at a media conference at Nabanna, the state secretariat. Mamata, who is also the health minister, claimed that only 13 people have died in state-run hospitals in West Bengal. "It's because of climate change that Dengue has become a serious menace. In private hospitals and nursing homes, 27 people have died allegedly of dengue. We are probing those figures," she said. She also said that so far 40 people have died in the state be-

cause of vector-borne diseases. The chief minister also accused a section of the media for carrying wrong information supplied by some private healthcare units without verification. "We have already cancelled the licence of three pathological labs for wrong reports. There are vested interests of those who are against our setting up of the health commission," she said. The chief minister also said Dengue death figures in other states are higher than that in West Bengal. "Gujarat is a smaller state than Bengal but as many as 435 people have lost their lives there. The figure is 695 for Maharashtra, 230 for Rajasthan, 165 for UP, 141 for Madhya Pradesh, 80 for Assam, 83 for Odisha. Even Kerala that is a very small state compared to Bengal has witnessed 111 deaths," Mamata said. The chief minister also criticised the Opposition parties in West Bengal for indulging in "petty politicking" over the issue. "When I was in the opposition, we used to hold camps for awareness against malignant malaria", she stated.

Rahul chairs meeting to chalk out plans for stir during demonetisation anniversary

- Says, PM hit country with 'torpedoes' of note ban, GST
- BJP hits back, says Cong pursuing politics of lies

NEW DELHI, OCT 30 /- Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi today chaired a meeting of party general secretaries to chalk out plans for the first note ban anniversary, being observed as 'Black Day' across the country, party leaders said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced on November 8 last year that notes of higher denomination had been scrapped. According to sources, Rahul will discuss planformationwide protests on November 8. The day is being observed as 'Black Day' by other opposition parties as well. Top Congress leaders are attending the meeting convened at the party headquarters. The Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi today attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he had destroyed the country's economy with two 'torpedoes' - note ban and GST. The Prime Minister had

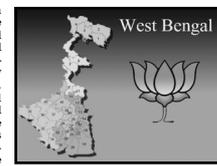


hurt and sadness these two decisions have caused," he told newsmen after holding two meetings here of top Congress leaders on demonetisation and GST. Hitting back at the Opposition party, the BJP said today that the Congress opposition to demonetisation was understandable as "corrupt policies" of its government militated against a transparent economy now being pursued by the Modi dispensation. BJP spokesperson G V L Narasimha Rao also hit out at Rahul Gandhi over his criticism of the GST, saying his stand "reeks of hypocrisy and doublespeak" as his party had claimed that the new tax regime was its branchchild. He also accused the Congress of pursuing "politics of lies", saying it is committing a "fraud" on people as its state governments were a party to every single decision taken at the GST council.

BJP to revamp party organisation in state at grassroot level

KOLKATA, OCT 30 /- The BJP has decided to revamp the party's grassroot organisation in West Bengal with an eye on the panchayat polls in the state scheduled next year. BJP national general secretary Kailash Vijayvergiya, who is in charge of Bengal, will be meeting various leaders in the districts and chalk out a strategy for the panchayat polls. A road map will be prepared on how our party will counter the

Trinamool Congress at the booth level. The last panchayat polls in the state had witnessed violence and TMC may resort to it again. We will chalk out a plan to counter such violence so that people can vote freely and fairly," a senior BJP leader said. According to him, Vijayvergiya will personally take stock of the ground level situation especially at the booth level and will make changes in the plan, if needed, in consultation with the state leadership. The



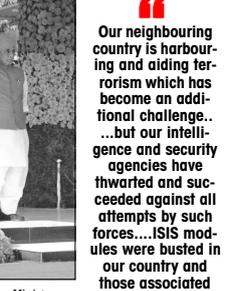
A road map will be prepared on how our party will counter the Trinamool Congress at the booth level

state leadership has prepared a list of booths according to the votes polled by the BJP in the last few elections. "A list of booths has been prepared and it has been graded according to votes received by the party in the last few elections", he said adding that booths where the party has fared well have been marked as Grade A. BJP state general secretary Sayantan Basu said panchayat election is of immense importance to the party.

India not unaffected by global terrorism: Govt

HYDERABAD, OCT 30 /- Noting that India is not "unaffected" by global terrorism, Union home minister Rajnath Singh today said the country's intelligence and security agencies have so far foiled all nefarious plans of terror group ISIS. The next five years would be crucial for resolving challenges related to terrorism and communalism, especially in Jammu and Kashmir, the North-East and the left-wing extremism-affected areas, he said while addressing IPS probationers at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy (NPA) here. The graduating cadets should be aware of the threats from such problems, Singh said. "Today, the world is engulfed by the fear of terrorism and nuclear arms. Outfits such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda are killing innocent people across the globe and the home minister said. "Our country is not unaffected by these developments. Our neighbouring country is harbouring and aiding terrorism which has become a radical ideology through the Internet. But our intelligence and security agencies have thwarted and succeeded against all attempts by such groups to carry out terrorist attacks or other kinds of disruption", he said. Singh said: "ISIS modules were busted in our country and those associated with it

were arrested, foiling all their plans. Compared to other countries, a very small number has been impacted due to ISIS's radical ideology, thanks to our strong social and rich cultural values.



Union Home Minister, Rajnath Singh taking salute at the Passing Out Parade of IPS Probationers at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy, in Hyderabad

The credit goes to our countrymen." The home minister also flagged the menace of fake news and attempts to spread radical ideology through the Internet. The home minister advised the IPS probationers to follow four principles - hard work, honesty, positive attitude and judicious decision-making in their career. Singh also announced a grant of Rs 5 crore for the NPA Welfare Society on this occasion.

Pak Army's support to terrorism unacceptable, says DGMO

NEW DELHI, OCT 30 /- Pakistan Army's support to terrorism is unacceptable and India will continue to take all retaliatory measures to respond to such acts, Indian Army's director-general of military operations (DGMO) told his Pakistani counterpart today. In an unscheduled conversation with Lt Gen A K Bhatt over the hotline, Pakistani DGMO Maj Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza accused the Indian security forces of resorting to unprovoked firing along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir. However, Bhatt said retaliatory firing by Indian troops has only been carried out in response to "unabated support" provided by the Pakistani Army to armed terrorists, who infiltrate across the border and target Indian Army posts. "The Indian Army has only been carrying out such retaliatory measures as requested by the Pakistani side. The Indian DGMO told his Pakistani counterpart that while the Indian Army will continue its efforts to ensure peace and tranquillity on the borders, it will continue to respond to the terrorists by the Pakistani Army was the prime reason for any "collateral damage". "He reiterated that this support to terrorism by the Pakistan Army is unacceptable and the Indian Army will continue to take all retaliatory measures as well as retain the right to punitive response to such provocative acts of aggression from the Pakistani side," the Army said. It said Gen Bhatt also clarified that the Indian Army always maintains impeccable standards of professionalism and does not target civilians.

India, Italy sign 6 pacts

NEW DELHI, OCT 30 /- India and Italy today inked six pacts, including on boosting cooperation in the energy and trade sectors, after extensive talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Italian counterpart Paolo Gentiloni on key issues such as terrorism and cyber crime. The two leaders also discussed ways to strengthen the bilateral political and economic relations, apart from deliberation on strategic international and regional issues. Addressing a joint media event with Gentiloni, Modi said they discussed wide-ranging issues, including the energy and trade sectors, and agreed to enhance cooperation. The Prime Minister also noted that there was a huge potential for enhancing India-Italy trade ties. After the Modi-Gentiloni meeting, the two sides signed six pacts to deepen cooperation in the fields of railways sector, safety, energy and promoting mutual investments, among others. Italy is India's fifth largest trading partner in the EU with a bilateral trade of USD 8.79 billion in 2016-17, as per official figures. India's exports to Italy were at USD 4,960 billion, while its imports were at USD 3,89 billion, resulting in a trade imbalance of USD 1 billion in favour of India.

SC to set up Constitution bench to hear pleas against Aadhaar

- Questions Bengal gov't for challenging Act by Parliament
- Will obey apex court's directive: Mamata

NEW DELHI, OCT 30 /- A Constitution bench would be set up to hear a clutch of petitions challenging the Centre's decision to make Aadhaar mandatory for availing various services and government welfare schemes, the Supreme Court today said. A bench, comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud, said the larger bench would commence hearing on these petitions in the last week of November this year. Earlier today, the apex court questioned the West Bengal government for filing a plea challenging the Centre's move to make Aadhaar mandatory for availing benefits of various social welfare schemes while asking how a state can challenge the mandate of Parliament. It also asked West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee to file the plea as an individual. Recently, a nine-judge Constitution bench had held that the Right to Privacy was a Fundamental Right under the Constitution. Several petitioners challenging the validity of Aadhaar had raised the issue that the scheme was violative of privacy rights. Senior advocates Gopal Subramaniam and Shyam Divan, appearing for those opposing the Aadhaar scheme, had sought urgent hearing on the petitions.

The Centre had on October 25 told the apex court that the deadline for mandatory linking of Aadhaar to avail the benefits of the government schemes has been extended till March 31 next year for those who do not have the 12-digit biometric identification number and were willing to have it. Questioning West Bengal over its plea to challenge the Centre's move, the bench said: "How can a state file such a plea. In a federal structure, how can a state file a plea challenging Parliament's mandate?" Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Mamata Banerjee-led West Bengal government, told the court that the plea has been filed by the labour department of the state as subsidies under these schemes have to be given by them. "You satisfy us how the state has challenged it. We know it is a matter which needs consideration," the bench said adding the Centre's move can be challenged by an individual but not by states. "Let Mamata Banerjee come and file a plea as individual. We will entertain it as she will be an individual," the top court said. However, Sibal maintained that the state was entitled to file such a plea but that they would amend the prayer in the petition. Meanwhile, the bench issued notice to the Centre on a separate plea filed by an individual challenging the

linking of biometric phone numbers with Aadhaar. The court has asked the Centre to file its response on the plea in four weeks. The West Bengal government challenged the provision which says that without Aadhaar, the benefits of social welfare schemes would not be extended. Later today, the West Bengal chief minister said she will "obey the directive of the Supreme Court and said she could file a plea in individual capacity. "The judges have given their directive and we will obey that. I don't think there is any problem. We appreciate it," Mamata told newsmen at the state secretariat today. The chief minister said that her government had gone to the court because it had "some grounds". "We had some grounds. We accept the court's observation. There is no problem. Some individuals have already applied," she said. Earlier, the Centre had told the apex court that the deadline for mandatory linking of Aadhaar to avail benefits of various government schemes has been extended till March 31 next year for those who do not have the 12-digit biometric identification number. It had said that the deadline extension from December end till March 31, 2018, would apply only to those who do not have Aadhaar and are willing to enroll for it.