

IN BRIEF



Paris clamps down on old diesel vehicles

Paris on Monday banned all diesel vehicles aged 13 years or over from the city centre, the latest move in a campaign to tackle pollution. Diesel vehicles over 18 years and petrol vehicles over 21 years are already banned in the city. A Greenpeace report listed Paris as the worst western European capital for small particle air pollution in 2018. AFP



Warren Buffett donates \$3.6 billion to charities

NEW YORK
Warren Buffett is donating roughly \$3.6 billion of Berkshire Hathaway Inc stock to five charities, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the biggest contribution in Mr. Buffett's plan to give away his fortune. The donation will boost the total amount Mr. Buffett has given to the charities to more than \$34.5 billion. REUTERS



Kim Kardashian to rename 'Kimono' brand

WASHINGTON
Pop culture icon Kim Kardashian West said on Monday that she will change the name of her new "Kimono" line of underwear, after being accused of cultural appropriation. She had faced backlash from many Japanese for "disrespecting" their traditional outfit. AFP



A 3,000-year-old stone bust of Tutankhamun is set to be auctioned. AFP

Tutankhamun auction in U.K. sparks outcry

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

A 3,000-year-old head sculpture of an eternally-young Tutankhamun, the Egyptian pharaoh, goes under the hammer this week in London despite an outcry from Cairo.

Christie's expects the 28.5 cm (11 inch) brown quartzite relic from the private Resandro Collection of ancient art to fetch more than £4 million (\$5.1 million) on Thursday.

But Egyptian authorities overseeing the north African country's unparalleled collection of antiquities want to see the auction halted and the treasure returned. "The Egyptian embassy in London requested the British foreign affairs ministry and the auction hall to stop the sale," Egypt's Foreign Ministry said on June 10. Former antiquities minister Zahi Hawass said that the piece appears to have been "stolen" in the 1970s from the Karnak Temple complex of Egypt's great monuments. "They have not shown any legal papers to prove its ownership."

"Ancient objects by their nature cannot be traced over millennia... It is important to establish recent ownership and legal right to sell which we have clearly done," Christie's said.

Soon, first of its kind audiovisual archive on the northeast

Shillong will house the non-commercial venture, where users can access cinema, documentaries and anthropological material from October

NAMRATA JOSHI
MUMBAI

It was three years ago, while making his film *La Mana* ("Not allowed") on his marriage to a Khasi woman and the anxieties in the hill tribe in general about such mixed marriages, that filmmaker Tarun Bhartiya came face to face with the difficulties in procuring archival footage and relevant images and videos for his subject. "There are very few places to go to for accessing the visual history of the northeast," he said.

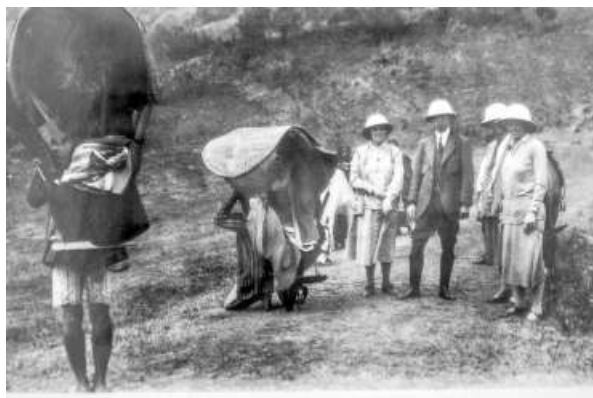
A representative of the Sakakawa Peace Foundation, Japan, who was attending a seminar in Guwahati with Mr. Bhartiya, suggested that he commenced research on it, and thus the base for the North East India Archive was

laid. Come October and the first of its kind, public, non-commercial audiovisual archive on and in the northeast will be formally functional.

Addressing access

It will be situated at the Department of Mass Media, St. Anthony's College, Shillong, where students, scholars, researchers, filmmaker and film enthusiasts would be able to access the material offline. The archive will also have a digital/web platform of its own.

Supported by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, the launch will be held at St. Anthony's College and simultaneously announced at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival (YIDFF). To mark the



Welsh missionaries being transported from the Bangladesh plains to Khasi hills by human porters. *SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

launch, YIDFF will have a special section of films from northeast India this year, titled 'Rustle of spring, whiff of gunpowder: From the North East India Archives', and curated by Asako Fujioka.

An important component

of the archive will be the cinema of the northeast. There are also news reels and Films Division documentaries, and footage from early local cable news channels. "It's difficult for filmmakers and students to ac-

cess even each other's films," says Nathaniel Nampui Majaw, Project Director of the archive and Assistant Professor in the Mass Media Department of St. Anthony's College. "We are not even able to access films from the States next door," said Mr. Bhartiya — a gap that the archive hopes to plug.

Mr. Bhartiya, who is the research consultant for the project, has also gathered material from sources such as the Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge, the British Library and the National Library of Wales. Veteran Manipuri filmmaker Aribam Syam Sharma has already pledged all his films to the archive. There is one available roll of the first Khasi film made by a Khasi filmmaker — well-

known historian Hamlet Barreh's *Ka Synjuk Riki Laihew Syiem*, on the 30 chiefs who founded Khasi society. A film conservation workshop will be held in December under the tutelage of filmmaker and founder-director of the not-for-profit Film Heritage Foundation, Shivendra Singh Dungarpur.

User-friendly

Besides films, the archive will also feature audiovisual material of anthropological value, like a set of pictures of indigenous people taken by Welsh Calvinist missionaries from late-19th and early-20th centuries from the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth. There is also a 1919 documentary on tea, and *Headhunters*, a BBC documentary on the Nagas.

"It won't just be a repository but [a] properly catalogued [archive] for easy access," said Mr. Bhartiya, a native of Bihar who grew up, married and settled in Shillong. "Users can interact with the images and offer multiple levels of information."

Mr. Majaw concurred, "It's not just about collecting material and putting it under lock and key." An interactive space has been conceptualised for the users. "They can have their own vision, and create their own narratives and playlists from the material available," he added.

In preparation for the formal start of the archive, a northeast India Archive Summit will be held in Shillong on July 19 and 20.

Insect apocalypse: German bug watchers sound alarm

Insects, comprising two thirds of terrestrial species, are dying at alarming rates

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KREFELD

For almost 30 years they passed as quirky eccentrics, diligently setting up their insect traps in the Rhine countryside to collect tens of millions of bugs and creepy crawlers.

Now, the group of German entomology enthusiasts can boast a world-class scientific treasure: evidence of what is described as one of earth's worst extinction phases since the dinosaurs vanished.

Insects, which comprise two thirds of all terrestrial species, have been dying at alarming rates, with disastrous impacts on food chains



Martin Sorg checking bottles of collected insects in Krefeld, Germany. AFP

and habitats, researchers say.

The home of the Amateur Entomology Society of Krefeld on the Dutch border is a former school building where thick curtains block

out the sunlight.

Inside, in glass cabinets are stored thousands of butterflies, their wings bleached by time, along with exotic fist-sized beetles and dragonflies, brought back from around the world by amateur collectors.

Treasure trove

Traditionally, "entomology was mainly about drying and collecting rare specimens," says the society's president Martin Sorg.

"Since 1982, the traps we manufacture ourselves have been standardised and controlled, all of the same size and the same material, and they are collected at the

same rate in 63 locations that are still identical," explains Mr. Sorg.

If he is visibly proud of the society's research, the outcome terrifies him. In the test period, the total biomass of flying insects here has plummeted by 76%.

To demonstrate the rapid decline, a lab technician holds up two bottles — one from 1994 containing 1,400 gm of trapped insects while the newest one just 300 gm.

"We only became aware of the seriousness of this decline in 2011, and every year since then we have seen it get worse," said Mr. Sorg, the man who sounded the alarm.

Vessels set sail as Japan resumes commercial whaling

The country brushes aside outrage, calls it a Japanese tradition

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KUSHIRO

Japan began its first commercial whale hunts in more than three decades on Monday, brushing aside outrage over its resumption of a practice that conservationists call cruel and outdated.

Five vessels from whaling communities left port in northern Japan's Kushiro and by afternoon, a first whale had been caught.

The country's Fisheries Agency said it had set a cap for a total catch of 227 whales through the season until late December.

The hunts come after Japan's withdrawal from the International Whaling Com-



Big catch: A captured Minke whale is unloaded after commercial whaling at a port in Kushiro, on Monday. REUTERS

mission, a move slammed by anti-whaling activists but welcomed by Japanese whaling communities.

Whaling has long proved

a diplomatic flashpoint for Tokyo, which says the practice is a Japanese tradition that should not be subject to international interference.

'Wellbeing buses': a home for London's homeless

Occupants can sleep, dine and cook

REUTERS
LONDON

An inviting massage table, a snug chair, a sunlit field of grass this is not a holiday resort but one of London's famous double-decker buses, which this summer will house up to 40 homeless people.

A fleet of four decommissioned buses has been converted by British-based social enterprise Buses4Homeless into a shelter for homeless people, with spaces for sleeping, dining, cooking, job training and relaxing.

"The most crucial thing for anyone is shelter, having a place to stay," said Buses4Homeless founder Dan Atkins, from the buses' temporary site in Croydon, south London.

"And that's what's sorely missing in London as the number of beds in night shelters gets slashed and housing remains unaffordable for too many," he added. Homelessness has been rising in England for nearly a decade amid rising private rents, a freeze on welfare benefits and a shortage of social housing.

Rough sleeping in London rose by 18% over the last year, hitting a decade high of 8,855 people, a database funded by the mayor of London showed in June, the ma-

majority of whom were new to bedding down in parks or doorways.

Mr. Atkins, who devised the initiative after seeing a friend sleeping in a coach luggage compartment, said he wanted to "understand how and why people become homeless, and help reintegrate them into society".

The buses which were donated by transport company Stagecoach will provide a three-month programme during which passengers can learn to cook, receive basic business training or enjoy a yoga class.

Alternative shelter

Slouched on a wooden bench on the grass-covered top of the fleet's "wellbeing bus", a man in his fifties animatedly types on his mobile phone. Mr. James, homeless since threats from a drug-dealing neighbour forced him to leave his Brixton flat last October, has been sleeping on one of the buses after meeting Atkins although the shelter has not officially opened yet. "It was either leave (my home) or end up dead... but the housing association never found me another flat," said Mr. James, whose name has been changed to protect his identity.



All aboard: Four decommissioned buses were converted to provide shelter to 40 homeless people. BUSES4HOMELESS

Centre of attraction



A model presenting a creation by Iris van Herpen during the Women's Fall-Winter 2019/2020 Haute Couture collection fashion show in Paris on Monday. AP

Finally, aircraft carrier *INS Viraat* to be scrapped

Navy has been incurring expenditure on its upkeep and provision of electricity and water

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Over two years after it was decommissioned from service, aircraft carrier *INS Viraat* is going to be scrapped, Parliament was informed on Monday. Efforts to keep it intact by converting it into a museum or other means have not been successful.

"*INS Viraat* could not be handed over to any State government because of non-receipt of a self-sustaining financially complete proposal. Thus, in view of considerations of safety, security etc., a decision to scrap *INS Viraat* has been taken in due consultation with Indian Navy," Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik said in a



In unison: A file photo of Navy personnel performing yoga on the deck of *INS Viraat* in Mumbai. PRASHANT NAKWE

written reply in the Rajya Sabha.

"The Navy has been incurring expenditure on its upkeep, on services such as

provision of electricity and water, and repairs till date," Mr. Naik said.

The carrier was in the news in the run-up to the

Lok Sabha elections a few months back as Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed in an election speech that former PM Rajiv Gandhi had used *Viraat* for a holiday in 1987 along with his family. However, this was promptly rejected by the top brass of the Navy a day later. They stated that Rajiv Gandhi was onboard on an official trip en route to Lakshadweep.

There had been demands from various quarters to not let *Viraat* go the *INS Vikrant* way, India's first carrier that was eventually scrapped. Several States had submitted proposals, but none of them fructified. Andhra Pradesh, headed by former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu,

had made several attempts. It submitted a proposal in October 2016 for the conversion of *Viraat* as an aircraft museum, including tourist and hospitality components on a commercial basis through a joint venture with the Centre. But the Defence Ministry rejected the proposal two months later.

Maharashtra's proposal

In 2018, the Maharashtra Cabinet approved a proposal to convert the carrier into a museum and hospitality centre on a public-private partnership (PPP) basis, but there were no takers.

INS Viraat, a Centaur class aircraft carrier, was commissioned in May 1987.

Think of Jesus when online, says Church

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

The Church of England on Monday urged christians to follow the example of Jesus when interacting on social media, as it launched a new digital charter to create a "positive atmosphere" online.

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby visited the British headquarters of Facebook to launch the charter, which asks individuals and churches to pledge to be truthful, kind and welcoming online. "Social media has transformed the way we live. As christians we are called to engage in a way which is shaped by the example of Jesus," he said in a statement before the visit. "Each time we interact online we have the opportunity either to add to currents of cynicism and abuse or to share light and grace."