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Manmohan Singh to return to Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan
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Kim Jong-un wants to resume nuclear talks, says Trump
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India takes on West Indies in the second ODI today
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NEARBY



Arun Jaitley stable, say AIIMS doctors

NEW DELHI
Former Union Minister Arun Jaitley is responding to treatment, doctors at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences said on Saturday, a day after he was admitted for complaints of uneasiness and breathlessness.

NEWS • PAGE 10

Man assaulted in U.P. for 'transporting cattle'

NOIDA
A contractor engaged by Ghaziabad Municipal Corporation was assaulted by a mob in Greater Noida over rumours that he was carrying slaughtered bovine, officials said on Saturday. Five of the accused have been arrested, while a search is on for others, the police said.

CITY • PAGE 2

Gurugram inspector held for rape and blackmail

GURUGRAM
A police inspector posted as Station House Officer, Sadar police station in Gurugram, has been arrested for allegedly raping a woman several times over the past one month. The accused, Dalbir Singh, allegedly recorded the act and threatened to make it public.

CITY • PAGE 5

DU principal withdraws books, paper for 'review'

NEW DELHI
Aryabhata College principal Manoj Sinha has withdrawn at least three books and one journal paper for "review" after complaints of plagiarism were lodged against him with the Vice-Chancellor of Delhi University. The move comes about a week after *The Hindu's* report on a complaint of plagiarism filed by a whistleblower with the DU V-C on June 18.

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MAGAZINE • 32 PAGES (TABLOID)
CLASSIFIEDS • PAGES 4 & 6

Certification of seeds to be made mandatory to step up agri output

Barcoding and tracking could hike productivity by 25%, say officials

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ
NEW DELHI

More than half of all seeds sold in India are not certified by any proper testing agency, and are often of poor quality.

The Centre now hopes to mandate uniform certification by pushing through a replacement to the Seeds Act, 1966, in the winter session of Parliament, and also by barcoding all seeds to ensure their traceability.

This could increase overall agricultural productivity by up to 25%, Agriculture Ministry officials say.

Definition changed

"The existing legislation that was enacted over half a century ago needs to be revised urgently. Technology has changed, farmers' expectations have changed, even the very definition of what is a seed has changed. Planting materials such as cuttings,

grafting and tissue culture – all that must also be brought under the ambit of the law," said a senior official, who did not wish to be named.

The main aim of the new legislation, which is ready for submission to the Cabinet for approval, is to bring uniformity to the process of quality regulation. The 1966 Act starts with these words: "An Act to provide for regulating the quality of certain seeds for sale..."

The new Bill removes the word "certain", and aims to regulate the quality of all seeds sold in the country, as



The legislation will make quality regulation uniform.

well as exported and imported seeds.

"Currently, about 30% of seeds are what the farmer himself saves from his crop.

He may re-plant that or sell it locally," said another senior official. He explained that of the remaining seeds which are bought and sold commercially, 45% come through the ICAR system

SPECIAL

and have gone through the mandated certification process.

"The other 55% are sold by private companies, most of which are not certified, but rather what we call 'truthful label seeds'. That is, they are simply self-certified

by the company. We want to remove that category with the new law and mandate certification through a proper lab process for all seeds," he said.

"Truthful label seeds can be disastrous from the farmers' point of view, and should be removed," says Devinder Sharma, an agriculture and food policy expert. He has been engaging with the revised seeds legislation since it was originally proposed in 2004.

"The Bill has been pending for so long, but it is important that companies be

held accountable for the quality of the seeds they sell, and the claims they make. If a seed fails at the germination, flowering or seed-setting process, the company which sold it must be held liable and made to provide compensation," he said.

The new Bill will also raise the stakes by increasing penalties for non-compliance. "Currently, the fine ranges from ₹500 to ₹5,000. We intend to raise that to [a maximum of] ₹5 lakh," said the second official.

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Curbs eased in Srinagar, people throng streets to buy essentials

Banks and ATMs open, govt. employees get advance salary ahead of Eid

VIJAITA SINGH
SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI

Authorities in the Kashmir Valley, where a lockdown entered its sixth day on Saturday, said they had eased curbs on the movement of residents in Srinagar.

"Restrictions have been eased in most parts of #Srinagar," Srinagar district magistrate Shahid Choudhary posted on Twitter. "More than 250 ATMs have been made functional in #Srinagar. Bank branches also open. Advance salary on Eid eve being credited today," he tweeted.

With the administration relaxing the restrictions, hundreds of men and women were seen thronging the streets to buy meat and other essential items for the festival. The markets, however, remained shut.

But for the police personnel of Jammu and Kashmir, who have been at the forefront of the lockdown in the Valley, there was little respite as they continued to face angry and cold stares from residents.



Not much cheer: With restrictions relaxed, Srinagar is returning to normality. ■ NISSAR AHMED

With communication lines down and the Internet blocked, any kind of news, information or rumour was being passed around by word of mouth. For the past week, the Valley was abuzz with murmurs that arms had been taken away from J&K police personnel and that the Central forces had taken over police stations.

When this correspondent toured the city on August 8 and 9, most policemen were seen wielding polycarbonate lathis. The policemen were

deployed along with the armed Central Police Reserve Force (CRPF) troops and were guarding lanes ringed with coils of concertina fencing. However, the policemen guarding installations like government buildings and those providing security cover to officials were seen carrying weapons. In the past three years, 60 policemen have been killed in militant attacks.

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UNCERTAIN CLIMATE • PAGE 11

NC mounts challenge in SC

The National Conference (NC) mounted a challenge in the Supreme Court on Saturday to the changes in the status of Jammu and Kashmir. The changes, it said, had taken away the rights of the citizens without their mandate. It said the legislation approved by Parliament and the orders issued by the President were "unconstitutional".

Congress names Sonia as its interim president

Party says she will hold the post until fresh elections

SANDEEP PHUKAN
NEW DELHI

Ending months of indecision and speculation, the Congress on Saturday named Sonia Gandhi as the interim president of the party to succeed Rahul Gandhi who had put in his papers before the Congress Working Committee (CWC) on May 25.

The decision on Ms. Gandhi's appointment was announced after a marathon second meeting of the CWC, the party's apex decision making body, that stretched for nearly three hours.

No schedule announced

The party said Ms. Gandhi would continue in the post until there are fresh elections but didn't announce a schedule.

The CWC also adopted a resolution to thank Mr. Gandhi for his leadership and efforts to take on the BJP government.

Asked about Mr. Gandhi's mother replacing him, Con-



Sonia Gandhi coming out of the CWC meeting in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

gress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said she was the only leader who could steer the party of out of the crisis.

"Don't take away our right to decide who should lead us," Mr. Surjewala said at a late night press conference.

There were reports that Ms. Gandhi had reluctantly agreed to lead after a consensus eluded the party on a non-Gandhi candidate.

At the CWC meeting earlier in the day, an overwhelming majority wanted

CWC concerned at J&K situation

The CWC on Saturday passed a resolution expressing serious concern over the situation in J&K. Earlier former president Rahul Gandhi said: "It's very important that the Government of India and the Prime Minister makes it very clear and transparent on what exactly is going on in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir."

Mr. Gandhi to continue as the party chief, while some pitched for his sister, Priyanka.

The names of Mukul Wasnik, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Sachin Pilot were also reportedly mentioned.

Though the CWC had urged him to continue as the party chief, Mr. Gandhi stayed firm on stepping down.

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RESIGNATIONS HIT CONGRESS IN ASSAM • PAGE 10

Rains shore up fortunes of reservoirs in 10 days

Idukki, K.R.Sagar and Srisaillam receive steady inflows

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The monsoon forecast is for lower intensity rainfall from Sunday, but the very heavy to heavy rain in parts of Gujarat, south Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu in recent days has brought healthy storage to many reservoirs in the southern States.

Idukki in Kerala, Karnataka's K.R.Sagar and Srisaillam in Andhra Pradesh received steady inflows on Saturday.

Four days of heavy rainfall in Wayanad – which sends water to the Kabini dam – and in the Karnataka ghats eased fears of a deficit in the Cauvery. On August 6, storage in four reservoirs along the river was just 37% of capacity, but by Saturday morning, storage had doubled to 75%. The inflow into K.R.S. dam exceeded one lakh cusecs, enough to fill it in less than three days.

4% increase overnight

Idukki, Kerala's biggest reservoir, improved storage by 4% overnight, touching 34%, which is 503 million cubic metres (MCM) of water against the maximum of 1,460 MCM. Intense rain along the Western Ghats sent big flows into reservoirs



More flow: Water gushing from the Krishnaraja Sagar reservoir in Karnataka on Saturday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

40 feared buried in Kerala village

Two days after a massive landslide struck the hillside village of Kavalappara in Malappuram district of Kerala and the recovery of nine bodies, the villagers' hope of finding 40 persons alive faded by Saturday. The

rescue was suspended following two fresh landslips in the nearby hills in the afternoon. Muddy debris, tough terrain, continuing rain and lack of sophisticated equipment hindered the search. ■ PAGE 8

on the Krishna.

Almatti and Basava Sagar dams on the Krishna had inflow and outflow exceeding five lakh cusecs, or, 45 thousand million cubic feet (tmc ft) of water daily. This surpassed the previous high of 4.5 lakh cusecs in 2005 when large parts of north Karnataka were flooded, said G.S. Srinivas Reddy, Di-

rector, Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre. "Any rain will lead to increased inflow. We expect it to touch six lakh cusecs in the coming days," he said.

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RAIN TOLL RISES TO 57 IN KERALA • PAGE 8
NAVY, ARMY STEP UP RESCUE IN MAHARASHTRA • PAGE 9

Haryana CM's comment sparks row

Rahul calls Khattar's remark on Kashmiri girls 'despicable'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, while speaking about the low sex ratio in his State at a function, stoked a controversy with his remark that "a few people have started saying that girls can now be brought from Kashmir".

His remark invited criticism from political quarters. Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi

tweeted: "Haryana CM Khattar's comment is despicable and shows what years of RSS training does to the mind of a weak, insecure and pathetic man. Women are not assets to be owned by men."

Mr. Khattar tweeted in response: "Weak, insecure and pathetic are adjectives people use for the president of the Congress party."

At a State-level function on Friday, Mr. Khattar said:

"Haryana was infamous due to low birth rate of daughters... Anyone can understand how there could be crises in future if there are fewer girls than boys. So our Minister O.P. Dhankar ji said, we will have to bring them [girls] from Bihar. Now, a few people have started saying Kashmir has been opened, we will bring them from there."

DCW SEEKS FIR • PAGE 3

State OMCs to buy biodiesel made from used cooking oil

Govt. pushes for green fuel as FSSAI order cracks down on reusing oil

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN
NEW DELHI

In a bid to encourage the biofuel sector, Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Saturday announced that the state-run oil marketing companies would procure the entire supply of biodiesel produced from used cooking oil for a three-year period.

The move, announced on World Biofuel Day, means that biodiesel plants using used cooking oil as their raw material will be assured that

their entire production will be procured by the oil marketing companies to be blended with normal diesel. The scheme is being launched in 100 cities across the country.

To pay producers

Under the scheme, the OMCs – Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum – will pay biodiesel producers ₹51 per litre in the first year, ₹52.7 per litre in the second, and ₹54.5 per litre in the third year. The oil companies will also bear the



The scheme is being launched in 100 cities across the country.

cost of transportation and GST for the first year.

The Minister's announcement comes just a day after the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

(FSSAI) directed Food Safety Commissioners to ensure that Food Business Operators (FBOs), whose consumption of edible oils for frying is more than 50 litres per day, stop reusing the oil more than three times.

Mr. Pradhan also launched a 'Repurpose Used Cooking Oil (RUCO)' sticker and a phone app to enable the collection of used cooking oil. Restaurants and hotels interested in supplying used cooking oil can affix the sticker to show availability.

After extending the deadline twice for FBOs consuming more than 50 litres of oil a day for frying to

strictly maintain the usage records and stop reusing the oil more than three times, an August 9 order from the FSSAI has directed Food Safety Commissioners to conduct inspections and ensure that the oil does not enter the food chain again. The order was issued by FSSAI Joint Director (Regulatory Compliance) Pushp Vanam.

The order says all FBOs should compulsorily dispose of their used cooking oil to authorised collection agencies or aggregators and lists eight biodiesel manufacturers enrolled with agency so far.

(With inputs from Afshan Yasmeen in Bengaluru)