



IN BRIEF
Former IAS officer P.S. Krishnan dead
NEW DELHI
Former Secretary to Government of India P.S. Krishnan known for his work in empowering Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Socially and Educationally Backward Classes, passed away in a hospital here on Sunday. He was 86.

Govt. gives nod for 4 medical device parks
NEW DELHI
The government has approved setting up four medical device parks with a view to support Make in India initiative and provide world-class treatment at affordable prices. The parks will be set up in Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, sources said, adding that Uttarakhnad and Gujarat have also approached the Centre for such parks. PTI

Maruti Suzuki cuts production by 21%
NEW DELHI
Maruti Suzuki India, the country's largest carmaker, reduced its production by nearly 21% in October — the ninth consecutive month it has lowered its output. As per a regulatory filing, the company produced 1,19,337 vehicles in October 2019 as against 1,50,497 units in the same month last year. Production of passenger vehicles, at 1,17,383 units, was down 20.8% from 1,48,318 units in the year-ago period.

MMTC told to import one lakh tonnes of onions
NEW DELHI
In a bid to tame soaring onion prices, the Centre on Friday asked public sector trading agency MMTC to import one lakh tonnes of onions for distribution between November 15 and December 15. The MMTC has already issued a tender to import 2,000 tonnes of onions from Dubai and is exploring options in Egypt, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, officials said.

'Bulbul' leaves a trail of destruction

Modi, Shah promise Centre's help

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT KOLKATA

West Bengal Disaster Management Minister Javed Khan said 2.73 lakh families were affected in Cyclone 'Bulbul' and 1.78 lakh people moved to relief camps in nine places. At least 2,473 houses were destroyed and 26,000 partially damaged.

Mr. Khan said 46,000 tarpaulin sheets were distributed to people whose houses were damaged in the cyclone.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday and assured her of help in relief operations. Mr. Shah said 10 teams of the National Disaster Response Force had been deployed in West Bengal and six in Odisha. Additional 18 teams were kept on standby.

Ms. Banerjee cancelled her trip to North Bengal and said she would conduct an aerial survey of the affected areas around Namkhana and Bakkhali when the weather cleared.

"Later, I would take a meeting at Kakkdip with administration to review relief and rehabilitation measures of the cyclone-affected people. I am also planning to visit the cyclone-affected areas of Basirhat of North 24-Parganas on 13 November, 2019," she tweeted on Sunday.

The storm is likely to weaken into a deep depression and then into a depression as it moves east-northeastwards over coastal Bangladesh, the Indian Meteorological Department said on Sunday.

(With PTI inputs)



Heavily hit: Scenes of destruction in the Bakkhali area in West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district. At least 2,473 houses were destroyed in several coastal districts. ■ ANI



10 dead, 21 lakh shifted in Bangladesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA DHAKA

At least 10 people were killed and 25 injured as Cyclone Bulbul smashed into the low-lying areas of Bangladesh on Sunday, bringing in its wake torrential rains coupled with gales.

The cyclone packed winds of up to 120 kilometres per hour (kmph) when it made a pre-dawn landfall before weakening into a deep depression, forcing the authorities to evacuate over 21 lakh people from the low-lying areas of

the country.

Disaster Ministry secretary Shah Kamal said they initially planned to evacuate 14 lakh people to 5,000 cyclone shelters. However by Saturday midnight, the figure rose to over 21 lakh.

Airports shut down

The authorities have ordered a temporary ban on boat and ferry movements on internal riverine routes and coastal waters, besides closing air traffic operations near coastal airports for nearly 24 hours.

At least eight people in seven coastal districts have been reported dead from a combination of falling trees, collapsed houses and illness after the cyclone ripped through southern Bangladesh, *bdnews24.com* reported.

The Health Directorate's Health Emergency Operation Centre and Control Room confirmed the death toll on Sunday, the report said, adding that 25 people have been injured in the cyclonic storm.

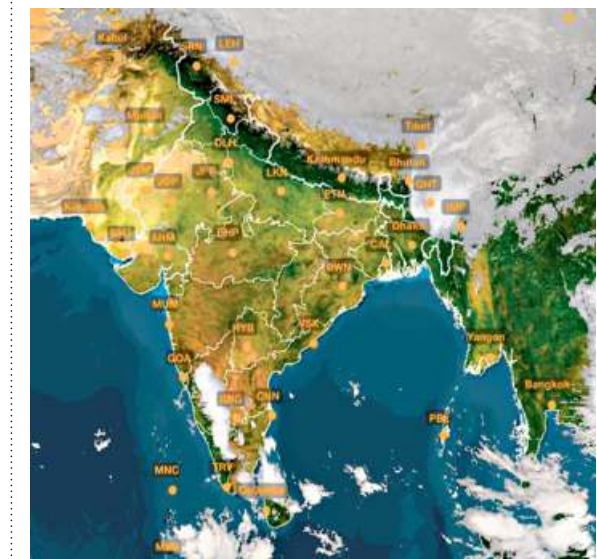
The Met office on Saturday issued its highest "great signal numbers" 10 and 9 for the southwestern and south-eastern coastlines, prompting authorities to launch a massive evacuation campaign. However, on Sunday the office lowered the number to 3.

Army called in

The government suspended weekend leave for government officials in 13 coastal districts on Saturday. Troops of the army were also called in to supplement preparedness for the cyclone.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.30 HRS)
Forecast for Monday: No warning issued by IMD till November 14, 2019. From November 15 to 17, isolated to scattered rain/thundershowers likely to occur over some parts of south peninsular India and the islands; isolated to scattered rain/snow likely to occur over Western Himalayan Region; weather likely to be dry over the remaining parts of the country.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	8.9	24.0	22.0	Kozhikode	—	34.0	25.0
Ahmedabad	—	33.0	21.0	Kurnool	—	34.0	23.0
Aizawl	2.0	26.0	15.0	Lucknow	—	31.0	17.0
Allahabad	—	32.0	17.0	Madurai	—	33.0	24.0
Bengaluru	—	30.0	20.0	Mangaluru	—	32.0	24.0
Bhopal	—	29.0	15.0	Mumbai	—	31.0	23.0
Bhubaneswar	—	30.0	20.0	Mysuru	56.4	29.0	20.0
Chandigarh	1.0	28.0	13.0	New Delhi	—	28.0	15.0
Chennai	—	34.0	26.0	Patna	—	32.0	21.0
Coimbatore	—	33.0	23.0	Port Blair	0.1	31.0	24.0
Dehradun	—	29.0	13.0	Puducherry	—	33.0	24.0
Gangtok	—	20.0	13.0	Pune	—	31.0	16.0
Goa	—	32.0	23.0	Raipur	—	30.0	20.0
Guwahati	1.6	27.0	21.0	Ranchi	—	25.0	17.0
Hubballi	—	29.0	19.0	Shillong	13.0	19.0	13.0
Hyderabad	—	32.0	19.0	Shimla	—	20.0	9.0
Imphal	4.3	22.0	17.0	Srinagar	—	5.0	1.0
Jaipur	—	29.0	18.0	Thiruvananthapuram	0.1	34.0	24.0
Kochi	—	31.0	25.0	Tiruchi	—	34.0	25.0
Kohima	9.2	22.0	12.0	Vijayawada	—	33.0	22.0
Kolkata	91.7	28.0	22.0	Visakhapatnam	—	32.0	24.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

CITIES	SO ₂	NO _x	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	—	178	43	114	117	—
Bengaluru	—	9	24	113	104	—
Chennai	—	1	20	30	—	—
Delhi	—	8	29	57	369	277
Hyderabad	—	15	56	30	257	—
Kolkata	—	13	9	13	28	36
Lucknow	—	3	37	36	312	—
Mumbai	—	16	68	21	135	151
Pune	—	79	11	64	58	57
Visakhapatnam	—	—	78	—	—	—

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Panipat, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 358 indicating a severe level of pollution. In contrast, Eloor, Kerala recorded a healthy AQI score of 32.

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.
NO_x: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.
CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.
PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Centre gets responses to draft Social Security code

Govt. had asked for public suggestions

DAMINI NATH NEW DELHI

The draft code on social security, which subsumes eight existing laws covering provident fund, maternity benefits and pension, is being further worked upon after a recent round of public consultations, officials of the Labour and Employment Ministry have said.

A draft of the social security code, one of the four codes that are part of the Centre's labour reforms agenda, was published on September 17 for public comments and suggestions till October 25.

Officials said over 400 comments or suggestions have been received. The draft might be finalised in time for the session of Par-

liament beginning on November 18, an official said.

However, many trade unions are against the proposal for provident fund, pension and insurance funds to be administered by a central board, and a national pension scheme that employees can opt for.

Recently, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), an affiliate of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, said it had rejected the draft code in its comments submitted to the Ministry. The BMS said in a statement that the first draft had provisions for the right to social security for all and establishment of a central apex council, headed by the Prime Minister, but these were missing from the latest draft.

Indian economy facing challenges, says Sitharaman

She was speaking at the launch of a book on global finance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday unveiled a book on global finance and said it suggests solutions for challenges that the world and Indian economy is currently facing.

Launching the book titled *The Rise of Finance: Causes, Consequences and Cure*, Ms. Sitharaman said it will help "understand the current economic situation facing both the world and Indian economy".

The book is co-authored by the Dean of IFMR Graduate School of Business V. Anantha Nageswaran and senior managing director at



Nirmala Sitharaman

Global Innovation Fund Gulzar Natarajan.

'Challenging time'

"... this will be a book that is very relevant to those of us sitting on the policy-making

Study moots lowering the age of consent

'It will protect teens from social stigma'

JAGRITI CHANDRA NEW DELHI

A new study calls for a need to distinguish between self-arranged marriages among older adolescents and forced child marriages to protect teens from social stigma, parental backlash and punitive action.

The report titled *'Why Girls Run Away To Marry - Adolescent Realities and Socio-Legal Responses in India'* is based on a qualitative study of 15 girls, aged 15-20, from Jaipur, Delhi and Mumbai, who had been in a consensual romantic relationship. Some of these resulted in self-arranged marriages. The participants included those who entered into a romantic relationship when they were aged 12-19 years. These case studies involved intra- and inter-caste and interfaith relationships with boyfriends who were older and younger than 18. These cases were from between 2010 and 2016 to assess the impact of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012.

The study — authored by Madhu Mehra and Amrita Nandy and published by Partners For Law in Development — makes a case for an age of consent that is lower than the age of marriage to decriminalise sex among consenting older adolescents. This will protect them from the misuse of law for enforcing parental and caste controls over daughters.

In most of the studied cases, a couple elopes fearing opposition from parents, resulting in a situation where families approach the police, who then book the boy for rape under POC-SO and abduction with the intent to marry under the IPC or the Prohibition of

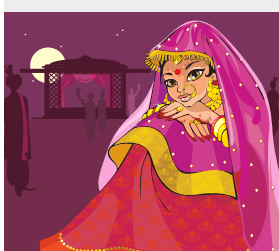
Young & vulnerable

A look at the number of different case scenarios cited in the study

7 cases saw boys facing rape/kidnap charges and girls being sent to shelter homes

4 cases saw boys disappearing for different reasons, including fear of police action. Two later rejoined their girlfriends

11 girls had to face hostility from parents; some of them even cut off ties



Child Marriages Act (PCMA).

In one case a couple was terrorised by the spectre of caste violence. In at least three cases, the girl gets married but her parents refuse to accept it. There were also three cases where the boy abandons the girl fearing punitive action following a police complaint by the girl's parents.

The study also records that while girls face restrictions on their mobility, premarital relations and sexuality, the same was not true for boys of the same social milieu, who enjoyed greater freedom.

The study also assumes significance when the government has been discussing amending the PCMA to declare all child marriages null and void ab initio. In its current form the law only permits one of the consenting parties to seek annulment of their marriage as children until two years after they turn adults (in case of minors, their parents can seek annulment).

UNLF chief freed ahead of scheduled date

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

Rajkumar Meghen, chairman of the Manipur-based extremist group United National Liberation Front (UNLF), was freed from the Guwahati Central Jail on Saturday, a day ahead of his scheduled release.

A special trial court of the NIA in June 2016 had sentenced him to 10 years rigorous imprisonment under the IPC and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

"The UNLF chairman got remission of some months for his contribution in setting up a library, a music school for the inmates and construction of a rock garden inside the Guwahati Central Jail premises," a jail official said.

Guwahati residents rally to save 300 trees

Proposed bridge poses a threat to the habitat of some rare birds, they say

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

Residents of Guwahati along Brahmaputra's southern bank formed a human chain on Sunday to demand re-designing of a proposed bridge across the river, that entails the axing of some 300 trees that are home to some rare birds.

Many children of the area took part in the demonstration that was inspired by the protests against the proposed axing of 2,500 trees in Mumbai's Aarey Colony.

Sunday's human-chain protest was a follow-up of the Coordination Committee of Citizens' October 30 memorandum to the State Finance and PWD Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for re-designing the proposed bridge to save the trees and the riverfront.



The demonstrations were inspired by protests in Mumbai against the axing of trees in Aarey Colony. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"We have come to know that the PWD (Road) has started work on the bridge for connecting Bharalumukh (central Guwahati) with North Guwahati (on the opposite bank of the Brahmaputra). We appreciate the developmental activities

carried out by the State government, but at the same time we desire that our ecosystem should not be disturbed," the citizens' body said.

Green lungs at risk

The committee said that ac-

cording to the detailed project report on the bridge, the Bharalumukh end of the bridge would lead to the "destruction" of two adjacent "green lungs" of the city — the Sankardeva Park and the Azan Pir Park — situated on the riverfront at a critical bend of the Brahmaputra.

"These trees are home to many rare species of birds and help maintain the ecological balance of the area. We are not against the bridge, but it should be constructed in such a way that the parks and the valuable trees are saved," a committee member said.

The proposed bridge is to come up at the east of the Sarraighat rail-road bridge across the Brahmaputra and west of a newly-constructed ropeway near the Gauhati High Court.