



M.P. police arrest 6 for Vyapam scam

BHOPAL
Madhya Pradesh police's Special Task Force (STF) filed FIRs against six persons in the Vyapam scam. STF chief and Additional Director General Ashok Awasthi said after receiving complaints that some of the accused had not faced any action, a probe was ordered in September this year. **PTI**

Woman thrown off train in Uttar Pradesh

BAREILLY
A woman was pushed from the women's coach of a moving train on Friday near Pitambarpur station. The victim was allegedly harassed by an unidentified man and on opposing him, he thrashed and pushed her out of the train. "The victim has been identified as Jyoti. She has been admitted to the District Hospital," said the police. **ANI**

Gardener found with assets worth ₹1 crore

BHUBANESWAR
Vigilance sleuths in Odisha have unearthed properties worth over ₹1 crore in possession of a gardener Udhav Behera, working in the State government, allegedly disproportionate to his known sources of income, an official said. Gold ornaments and over ₹1.5 lakh in cash were also recovered, he said, adding that a search operation was carried out after complaints were received. **PTI**

Dalit man's shop torched over inter-caste marriage

BETUL
Tension prevailed at a village in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district after a Dalit man's shop was set on fire following his marriage with a woman from an OBC community, police said on Saturday. Seven people were arrested under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and prohibitory orders were imposed on Bisanur village, an official said. **PTI**

Gehlot, Pilot lead flag march on foundation day of Congress

Pledge to protect the Constitution, fight against the BJP govt.'s 'anti-people' policies

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT JAIPUR

Congress workers, led by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Deputy CM Sachin Pilot, took out a flag march from Shaheed Smarak to the Pradesh Congress Committee's headquarters here on Saturday to mark the party's 135th foundation day. The participants pledged to protect the Constitution and fight against the "anti-people" policies of BJP-led government at the Centre.

'Save India'
The march was organised with the theme of "Save India, Save Constitution", as the party workers raised slogans against the Centre's policies, which, they said, had put the nation into turmoil and created unrest across the



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, PCC chief Sachin Pilot and senior leader Avinash Pandey during the 135th party foundation day celebration in Jaipur on Saturday. **PTI**

country. Mr. Pilot, who is also the PCC president, hoisted the Congress flag at the headquarters and administered an oath to the Preamble of the Constitution. In addition to the Ministers and MLAs, the presidents of District Congress Committees and office-bearers of the party's frontal organisations

also attended the function. The Congress workers sang the national song and repeated the words, "We, the people of India, having solemnly resolved...", after Mr. Pilot while taking oath. Addressing the gathering, Mr. Gehlot said the Congress party had a legacy of sacrifice for the country, which was being ques-

Ahmedabad-Mumbai Tejas to ply from Jan. 19

The train will run six days a week

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA NEW DELHI

The second privately operated IRCTC's premium Tejas train, which will ply between Ahmedabad and Mumbai, will be launched on January 17, sources said on Saturday.

As with the first Tejas Express, which runs on the Delhi-Lucknow route, the Railway will compensate the passengers if the train gets delayed.

The first commercial run of the Tejas train will be on January 19.

It will ply for six days a week with Thursdays off for maintenance, the sources added.

All passengers traveling on the train will be provided with Rail Travel Insurance



There will be no tatkal or premium tatkal quota in the train.

of up to ₹25 lakhs, free of cost by the IRCTC, including an exclusive coverage of ₹1 lakh against robbery during the travel period of passengers, said sources.

There will be no tatkal or premium tatkal quota in the train, they said.

SIDHARTH YADAV BHOPAL

Amid enduring protests by villagers against another coal mine project in their vicinity, an environmental panel of the Central government has sent back the proposal to seek clearance to operate a coal mine in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh, citing "hasty" submission of information – that too "incomplete" and "incorrect".

The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC), during its meeting in early December, decided to "return the proposal in its present form" to the Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited (Mahagenco) to operate the Gare Palma Sector-II coal mine in the Tamnar block, with 22 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) open cast and 1.6 MTPA underground capacity. In September, during a

public hearing for 2,245 project-affected families in 14 villages, residents highlighted the impact of the existing projects on groundwater and air quality, besides damage to fields due to spillage of fly ash, cracks in houses caused by blasting and fires in coal mines and stockpiles.

Hundreds of them claimed that their consent was falsified and protested on the spot, resulting in the police booking 54 of them.

Clarifications sought

Seeking clarifications and inputs on 20 points, the EAC has asked for compliance report on the issues raised during the hearing with a "certain timeline and allocation" and a social impact assessment study for the proposed displacement of tribals and the Scheduled Castes.

Furthermore, the company has to provide details re-

Cong. leader shot dead in Vaishali

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE HAJIPUR (BIHAR)

A Congress leader was shot dead by bike-borne assailants on Saturday morning in Bihar's Vaishali district, the police said.

The accused shot Rakesh Kumar, a former vice-president of Youth Congress, at the Cinema Road here.

According to the information, Kumar was on his way to a gym when the assailants fired at him from point blank range and shot him dead. The police have launched a probe.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Raghav Dayal said, "The assailants fired four bullets at Rakesh Kumar. He died on the spot."

After the incident, hundreds of people gathered at the crime scene and started raising slogans against the police. They also vandalised a police vehicle.

Locust attack under control: Gujarat govt.

'Over 5,000 hectares cleared'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA AHMEDABAD

Much of the locust swarm which invaded north Gujarat's Banaskantha district has been destroyed by spraying 4,900 litres of pesticides over 5,000 hectares, the State government said on Saturday.

The few remaining locusts have moved to Jalore district of Rajasthan, an official said.

A huge swarm of locusts invaded the State's Banaskantha district bordering Rajasthan two weeks ago, feeding on crops such as mustard, castor and wheat.

Punamchand Parmar, Additional Chief Secretary, State Agriculture department said that eight teams of central government officials had been deployed in Jalore to tackle the invasion.

"So far, we have surveyed



A huge swarm had invaded a district in north Gujarat two weeks ago.

10,000 hectares ... The insects were destroyed over 5,000 hectares by spraying pesticides," said Mr. Parmar.

The farmers whose crops were destroyed will be compensated under the State Disaster Response Fund provisions, under which ₹6,800 are paid per hectare if 33% of crop or more is damaged, said Mr. Parmar.

Mahagenco's mining project in Raigarh put on ice

Panel flags 'incorrect' details; affected families claim consent for coal mine operation was falsified



Heavy losses: Fly ash from power plants has affected many agricultural fields in Raigarh district. **SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

lating to the impact on villages present in the core zone (not proposed to be displaced) of the mine, from where coal will be transported to three thermal power plants in Maharashtra to help "reduce the gap in demand and production of electricity" in the State. As for impact on water, a

company will need to seek permission from the authority concerned.

The project, with an area of 2,583.48 hectares, will entail the diversion of 214.87 hectares of forest land. While 80% of the land (2077.69 hectares) is agricultural, settlements are spread across 90 hectares.

'Beyond capacity'

Recently, a five-member panel set up by the National Green Tribunal found the Tamnar-Gharghoda region, which has 13 coal mines and 12 power plants, close to exceeding its environmental carrying capacity.

The team also highlighted the negligence by the existing projects, with at least 27% of the fly ash from power plants being dumped in low-lying areas in a highly unscientific manner, destroying agricultural fields.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Sunday: Cold day conditions likely in many pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha and Jharkhand. Dense fog likely in some pockets over sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala.....	19.0	12.0	Kozhikode.....	34.0	26.0		
Ahmedabad.....	25.0	10.0	Kurnool.....	32.0	21.0		
Aizawl.....	2.0	18.0	6.0	Lucknow.....	12.0	5.0	
Allahabad.....	12.0	5.0	Madurai.....	32.0	20.0		
Bengaluru.....	28.0	18.0	Mangaluru.....	37.0	24.0		
Bhopal.....	21.0	6.0	Mumbai.....	31.0	18.0		
Bhubaneswar.....	26.0	10.0	Mysuru.....	30.0	19.0		
Chandigarh.....	11.0	5.0	New Delhi.....	13.0	2.0		
Chennai.....	31.0	23.0	Patna.....	15.0	5.0		
Coimbatore.....	30.0	21.0	Port Blair.....	30.0	23.0		
Dehradun.....	19.0	4.0	Puducherry.....	30.0	20.0		
Gangtok.....	10.0	3.0	Pune.....	27.0	18.0		
Goa.....	35.0	24.0	Raipur.....	23.0	9.0		
Guwahati.....	22.0	10.0	Ranchi.....	19.0	6.0		
Hubballi.....	28.0	21.0	Shillong.....	13.0	4.0		
Hyderabad.....	27.0	18.0	Shimla.....	14.0	4.0		
Imphal.....	8.8	18.0	5.0	Srinagar.....	9.0	-6.0	
Jaipur.....	21.0	3.0	Thiruvananthapuram.....	33.0	23.0		
Kochi.....	32.0	25.0	Tiruchi.....	30.0	21.0		
Kohima.....	17.0	4.0	Vijayawada.....	30.0	21.0		
Kolkata.....	21.0	11.0	Visakhapatnam.....	30.0	22.0		

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing							Yesterday
CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	
Ahmedabad.....	76	61	30	.....	.....	.....
Bengaluru.....	12	65	94	.....	94	.....
Chennai.....	39	55	51	.....	86	.....
Delhi.....	16	65	96	470	439	.....
Hyderabad.....	3	76	52	167	134	.....
Kolkata.....	21	67	51	321	214	.....
Lucknow.....	28	24	63	392	.....	.....
Mumbai.....	11	44	49	189	150	.....
Pune.....	77	29	81	185	132	.....
Visakhapatnam.....	9	40	58	148	.....	.....

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.
NO₂: 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