Private doctors can now teach in medical colleges

Medical colleges, except AIIMS institutions, PGI Chandigarh and JIPMER, can now appoint private doctors, including overseas citizens, to teach MBBS and postgraduate students, said a government notification. PT

PAN-Aadhaar linking can be done till March 31

The Central Board of Direct Taxes has extended the deadline for linking PAN and Aadhaar to March 31 from December 31, according to the Income Tax department's tweet on Monday evening.

Consumer Affairs Ministry official booked

The CBI has booked a Consumer Affairs Ministry official and three others, including a woman who allegedly conspired with him, for an approval on weights and measures lab in lieu of monetary consideration.

Sabarimala opens for Makaravilakku

The Ayyappa temple was opened for the Makarvilakku festival on Monday. Head priest (Melsanthi) A.K.

Sudheer Namboodiri opened the sanctum sanctorum in the presence of chief priest Kandararu Maheswararu Mohanararu and devaswom authorities at 5 p.m.

Three die in fire at Kandla storage terminal

Three persons died in a fire accident at a chemical storage terminal in Kandla on Monday. The incident took place when welding work was on at the storage tank of M/s IMC Terminal, a Chennaibased company.

Overall green cover rises, but northeast records a dip

Sharpest decline in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Mizoram, says ISFR report

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The forest cover in the country increased by 3,976 square kilometres (sqkm) but with the sharpest declines in the northeastern States of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Mizoram, according to the 2019 edition of the India State of Forest Report (ISFR) that was made public on Monday. At 7,12,249 sqkm, the forest cover constituted 21.67% of the nation's geographical area or 0.12% more than last year.

The ISFR, a biennial exercise, assesses the forest and tree cover, bamboo resources, carbon stock and forest fires. The top three States showing an increase in forest cover are Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala.

Tree cover, defined as

patches of trees less than 1 hectare and occurring outside the recorded forest area, grew by 1,212 sqkm. Tree and forest cover together made up 25.56% of India's area. In

the last assessment it was

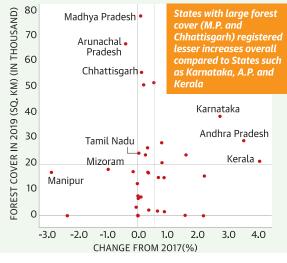
'Not a concern now'

Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar said the declines in the Northeast we-"yet a matter of concern." The States had a much higher proportion of forest than most States Mizoram (85.4%), Arunachal Pradesh (79.63%) and Nagaland (75%) – and the declines in forest were still small. The Centre had policies in place to address this over the long

He explained the decline in tree cover inside forests as

Greener cover

Forest cover in Kerala grew by 4.05%, the most in the country, while the largest decrease of 2.88% was recorded in Manipur



due to tribal populations getting "land titles" (patta) and the rise in trees outside the forest area as due to an increase in tree plantation and

afforestation activities.

The report, however, shows that the quality of this forest - in terms of the canopy density of the trees comprising forest patches – is wavering. While 1,755 sqkm of 'moderately dense forest' (MDF) became 'Very dense forest (VDF), 2,782 sqkm of MDF regressed into lower quality 'open forest (OF),' Scrub forest' or 'Non forest.'

The forest cover within the Recorded Forest Area, or that which has been officially classified by States or the Centre as 'forest,' showed a 330 sqkm decrease, but 'forest' outside such recorded area increased by 4,306 sqkm. Tree outside forest was found to comprise nearly 29.38 million hectares, which was 36.4% of the total tree and forest cover in the country. Maharashtra had the largest extent of such tree outside forest.

The nation's tree and forest cover has largely hovered from 21-25% and is short of the National Forest Policy, 1988, which envisages 33% to

'Ujjwala scheme reduced reliance on forest wood'

Most fuelwood removed in Maharashtra

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Union Environment Ministry has credited the Ujjwala scheme, which provides free cooking gas to extremely poor families, with 'possibly' reducing the demand for fuelwood.

The India State of Forest Report, 2019, - that biannually also assesses the tree cover – also surveyed 1,110 villages, which are on the fringes of forests, to assess how much fuelwood, fodder, small timber and bamboo villagers use.

The use of these products according to the Forest Survey of India – was a major source of "impairment

WEATHER WATCH

to forest productivity" but wasn't adequately assessed. In their assessment of vil-

lages in 31 States and Union Territories, 8,52,90,000 tonnes of fuelwood, 105,30,39,000 tonnes off fodder, 584,8204 cubic metres of small timber and 18,34,000 tonnes of bamboo were collected annually by those living in the

forest fringes. The maximum fuelwood was removed in Maharashtra - 95,39000 tonnes - followed by Odisha and Rajasthan.

The highest removal, per person, was in Nagaland followed by Himachal Pradesh and Tripura.

Families wait in fear after police assault cleric, students

Maulana Husseini severely injured; several pupils including minors remain in custody

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In yet another instance of police excess on December 20, when protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), 2019, turned violent in western Uttar Pradesh, a respected Shia cleric of Muzaffarnagar Maulana Asad Raza Husseini was detained, stripped and brutally assaulted by the

Sources in the police said, after the protests turned violent near the Mahavir Chowk, some of the miscreants sought shelter in the hostel of the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Taleem Saadat Bahra, of which Maulana Husseini is the rector. It was while trying to nab the miscreants that the policemen turned their ire on students and the

Evewitnesses' account and local media reports said the knee caps of several students including minors were broken in the police assault. The Maulana was stripped and brutally beaten, leaving him with injuries on his hands and legs.

"They were taken to the Civil Lines police station where they were beaten up alleged Salman Saeed, Congress leader and son of former MP Saeeduzzaman. Mr. Saeed said it was only after the intervention of higher officials that the Maulana was released in the early hours of December 21.

"As his clothes were

soaked in blood, the police asked for a fresh set of clothes to be brought before his release," he said.

The cleric, who was honoured by the Vice-President earlier this year for his contribution to education, refused to talk on record as did his son.

Local sources say some students are still under judicial custody and the families didn't want to jeopardise their case by lodging a complaint against the police.

'Totally uncalled for'

Naseem Zaidi, advocate and a prominent member of the Shia community in the city, who was instrumental in the release of the Maulana, said, "Seventeen students including three minors are still under judicial custody. The police have promised that the minors would be released in a couple of days and others would get bail under Section 169 of Cr.PC (lack of evidence). Right now, we are not in a position to do anything more."

According to Mr. Zaidi, the police had recorded the arrest of 27 miscreants from the Saadat Hostel, besides detaining 48 students and the Maulana and his son. "So, we can't deny that there were no miscreants in the hostel. However, the procedure demanded [that] once the police entered inside the hostel, students should have been separated from miscreants. And beating the principal of a school was totally uncalled for," he said. Superintendent of Police

(City) of Muzaffarnagar Satpal Antil said the family of the Maulana was in touch with the administration and the remaining students would be released soon. "We were up against a mob of 50,000 on December 20 and some of the miscreants took refuge in the hostel. They were pelting stones and firing at the police. In trying to control the situation, a few could have gone overboard. Nobody was tortured in police custody," Mr. Antil claimed.

constituted and those who wanted to lodge a complaint could do so without fear.

IIT-G offers new tech to

GUWAHATI

CBI official.

tap energy from water

Indian Institute of Technolveloped materials that can produce energy from flowing or stagnant water in households. The decentralised energy model involving a large number of small generation devices can generate energy in every household and the excess energy thus produced can be evacuated to energy-deficient areas nearby, the team led by Kalyan Raidongia of IIT-G's Department of Chemistry said.

The team employed "electro-kinetic streaming potential" to harvest energy from flowing tap water and "contrasting inter-facial activities" entailing different types of semiconducting materials to generate power from stagnant water.

which may be harnessed through miniaturised generators," he said.

devices with doped graphene flakes for generating power by dipping in a bucket of water or any stagnant water source to "complementary charge transfer activities". Graphene is the sheet produced by oxidation followed by reduction of natural graphite flakes.

"We modified graphene in such a way that its electron density is manipulated; even stagnant water in contact with this form of graphene can produce energy," Dr. Raidongia said.

"We use a lot of water in our daily lives. Water stored in buckets and water flowing from taps can potentially be used to produce energy if such nano-generators can be developed further."

The other members of the team are Jumi Deka, Kundan Sana, Suresh Kumar and Hemant Kumar Srivastava. Their findings were published in the journal, ACS Applied Nano Mate-

Panel moots on-demand examinations

out any age or eligibility restrictions, it said.

uation reforms was set up in May 2018 and chaired by Bharati Vidyapeeth Vice-Chancellor M.M. Salunkhe. In its report released last week, it suggested the development of question banks, relative grading, higher weightage to internal assessments and full choice-based credit transfer in higher education in-

One of the novel suggestions to enhance flexibility comes in the form of ondemand examinations. "Assessment can take place when the learners consider themselves ready to appear. Thus readiness depends on the learner and not institutions," said the report. "This system might help reduce the number of failures [and] malpractices in examinations.'

This would initially aid students of distance education programmes. The initiative envisions extensive use of technology and automation and question papers drawn from ques-

mended that all autonomous or high-ranked institutions start following a relative grading system, instead of the current absolute grading system, thus allowing for comparative performances peers and reducing the stress of failures. It added that students should have the freedom to opt for courses beyond their core

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY

Forecast for Tuesday: Cold day conditions in a few pockets with severe cold day conditions in isolated pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi and West Uttar Pradesh.

ITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
gartala	–	28.4	9.7	Kozhikode		35.2	25.6
hmedabad	–	25.8	12.5	Kurnool		30.1	19.5
izawl	–	–	5.9	Lucknow		12.3	6.7
llahabad	–	9.1	5.0	Madurai		32.0	21.4
engaluru	–	28.1	17.5	Mangaluru		29.9	22.6
hopal	–	22.4	7.0	Mumbai		30.3	20.2
hubaneswar	–	25.0	10.6	Mysuru		28.9	18.1
handigarh		13.8	3.5	New Delhi			
hennai	11.6	29.6	21.8	Patna		15.8	7.4
oimbatore	–	30.8	20.2	Port Blair		30.0	25.3
ehradun		19.7	3.8	Puducherry			
angtok		–	–	Pune			
oa		32.7	24.5	Raipur			
uwahati		25.1	7.9	Ranchi			
ubballi		29.0	19.0	Shillong			
yderabad							
nphal				Srinagar			
aipur				Thiruvananthapuran			
ochi				Tiruchi			
ohima				Vijayawada			
olkata				Visakhapatnam			

(Rainfall data in mm: temperature in Celsius) Pollutants in the air you are breathing

.39 ..134 .10014 .33 ..151 17 .57 109 ..487 .465 ..2 .75 .44 ..161 .128 Hyderabad 20 .75 .47 15 .24 .77 11 .44 .56 79 .31 .87 20 .75 15 .24 11 .44 ..303 .205 ..383– ..242 .173 ..143 ..112

observation made at level of pollution. In contrast, Nashik, Maharashtra recorded a satisfactory AQI score of

 $Visakhapatnam \ ..- \ ..- \ .51$ 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

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

बाबासाहेब भीमराव अम्बेडकर विश्वविद्यालय BABASAHEB BHIMRAO AMBEDKAR UNIVERSITY (A Central University) Vidya Vihar, Raebareli Road, Lucknow-226025 Website-www.bbau.ac.in, Contact : 0522-2440822

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details. All the advertisements issued earlier, if any, for any of the above mentioned vacancies, stands cancelled. Date of Commencement of ONLINE Application: 01/01/2020

Last Date of ONLINE Application: 31/01/2020 (23.59.59 hrs)

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₊ No pension if staffer resigns, says SC It says voluntary retirement is different

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

An employee who has resigned from service is not entitled to pensionary benefits due to a worker who has voluntarily retired, the Supreme Court held. A Bench of Justices D.Y.

Chandrachud and Hrishikesh Roy, in a recent judgment, referred to the past verdicts and said resignation and voluntary retirement, though voluntary on the part of an employee, operated differently and had dissimilar consequences.

"One of the basic distinctions is that in the case of resignation, it can be tendered at any time, but in the case of voluntary retirement, it can only be sought for after rendering the prescribed period of qualifying service," the judgment said.

"Another fundamental distinction is that in the case of the former, normally retiral benefits are denied but in the case of the latter, the same is not denied. In the case of the former, permission or notice is not mandat-



ed, while in the case of the

latter, permission of the employer concerned is a requisite condition," the court said, referring to a past judg-

'Distinct consequences'

Justice Chandrachud, who

authored the verdict, said

"The decision to resign re-

sults in the legal consequences that flow from a resignation under the provisions. applicable These consequences are distinct from the consequences flowing from voluntary retirement and the two may not be substituted for each other based on the length of an employee's tenure."

CBI raids J&K sites in arms licences scam

The CBI on Monday con-Gurugram, Noida and Mo-

"Premises of the then Deputy Commissioners/ District Magistrates of Kupwara, Baramulla, Udhampur, Kishtwar, Sopian, Rajouri, Doda and Pulwama are being searched," said a

Among them are 2007 and 2010 batch IAS officials Yasha Mudgil and Rajiv Ranjan. While Ms. Mudgil held the charge of Baramulla and Udhampur, Mr. Ranjan was posted in Kupwara.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ducted searches at 13 locations in Srinagar, Jammu, hali, including the premises of two IAS officials, in connection with the issuance of about 2 lakh arms licences in the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir.

The searches pertain to an ongoing investigation of two cases, particularly from 2012 to 2016, involving allegations that arms licences were issued to nonresidents in lieu of illegal gratification.

Team uses electro-kinetic streaming

RAHUL KARMAKAR

A team of researchers at the ogy-Guwahati (IIT-G) has de-

Dr. Raidongia said the electro-kinetic materials have not been harnessed until now. "We demonstrated when fluids stream through tiny channels that are charged, they can generate an electrical voltage,

The team also fabricated

Railways look to AI for security solutions ₹500 crore from the Nirb-

haya fund. In addition, we

kept about ₹2,000 crore

from the railway fund for

coaches.' The Chairman said in all there are about 58,600 coaches run in the mail express trains in the country and Indian Railways intend to put CCTV in the corridors and above the door.

"By March 2022, all stations will be covered. And among the coaches planned... in the first phase, tenders have been invited for 7,020 coaches and also for 6,100 stations. This should be done by next year... the remaining coaches will be done by March 2022."

the face of criminals and nab

recognition software to track criminals SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT In order to make rail travel safer, the Indian Railways is

National transporter plans to use facial

banking on artificial intelligence-based technology solutions. The national transporter plans to install CCTV across thousands of its stations and trains, and use facial recognition system to identify people with criminal records and miscreants. "Security is very impor-

tant for railways. A big step towards that is the CCTV surveillance across our stations and train coaches," Railway Board Chairman V.K. Yadav told a press conference here on Monday. Mr. Yadav said the Rail-

ways also intend to use artificial intelligence (AI) and face recognition software to stop criminals. "In the morning (Mon-

day), we also had a meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee... it was suggested, that in addition to all the CCTVs getting installed, we should have AI and face recognition software, and use analytics to recognise



technology across thousands of stations and trains.

The Railway Board Chairman also pointed out that this year, the first railway commando battalion 'CO-RAS' to tackle the menace of terrorism and naxalism in

them," he said.

railways has been formed. The Railways have over

6,100 stations; the CCTV surveillance system was installed this year at over 500 stations. "As far as the budget is concerned, we got

specialisations.

He said an SIT had been

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

A national board may be established to conduct ondemand examinations at me undergraduate degree level, a University Grants Commission panel has recommended. Starting with distance programmes for popular degree courses, on-demand examinations should be open to all, with-

The UGC panel on eval-

tion banks. The panel also recom-