

IN BRIEF



'No parallel government, only following rules'

PUDUCHERRY
Denying charges of running a parallel government in Puducherry, Lt. Governor Kiran Bedi on Wednesday said she is a public servant and is bound to act as per law. Speaking to reporters at a function here, the Lt. Governor said, "I am not permanent here nor am I here to compete but only to serve as per law and with the objective to make the Union Territory better."

Bengaluru techie who killed mother held

BENGALURU
The Bengaluru police on Wednesday tracked down and arrested software engineer Amrutha Chandrashekar, 33, in Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, where she was hiding with a male friend after allegedly stabbing her mother to death and attacking her younger brother with a knife in their house at K.R. Puram. The alleged crime took place early on Sunday morning. "We have arrested the accused and are escorting the accused and her friend back to Bengaluru," said a senior police officer.

Maharashtra says no to imported onions

MUMBAI
Increase in the production of onions leading to reduction in the price has forced the Maharashtra government to write to the Centre to cancel the earlier request for imported stock. The letter is aimed at protecting the interests of the onion growing farmers. The letter was sent by Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan.

PM pitches for boost to defence exports

'Start-ups and MSMEs will be given emphasis'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LUCKNOW

India became the world's largest arms importer as it did not utilise its capacities to full potential after Independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated on Wednesday and asserted that India was looking to achieve defence exports worth ₹35,000 crore in the next five years.

"Post Independence, we did not use our defence opportunities and abilities to the full potential. Our policies and strategies remained focused on import. India thus became the largest arms importer in the world," Mr. Modi said at the inaugural of the 11th Defexpo. After 2014, the government had undertaken several policy reforms, he pointed out.

Mr. Modi talked about India turning into a manufacturing hub for military platforms and noted that



On target: Prime Minister Narendra Modi holding a rifle during a visit to the DefExpo at Lucknow. •PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU

defence manufacturing had found new energy. "In the last two years, defence exports worth ₹17,000 crore has been achieved; it is up from ₹2,000 crore in 2014," he said.

A long-term integrated defence plan was being conceptualised with emphasis on start-ups and Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises (MSMEs). Two hundred defence start-ups were likely to come up to give a push to indigenisation. "Defence manufacturing will not only

make us self-reliant but also ensure we are prepared to help friendly countries in the region if required," he said.

Mr. Modi declared that India's ambitions in the defence sector were not directed against anyone. "India has been a trustworthy partner of peace."

Mr. Modi also spoke about the importance of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

He said his government had created a road map to increase its usage in the defence sector.

Navy will have its third Scorpene sub this year

'All six deliveries will be made by 2022'

DINAKAR PERI LUCKNOW

The third Scorpene submarine, *Karanj*, will be delivered to the Indian Navy by December and all six submarine deliveries would be completed by 2022, Nicolas de La Villemarque, Vice President India, Asia and Pacific of Naval Group, said on Wednesday.



Karanj at a shipyard in Mumbai. •VIVEK BENDRE

Mr. Villemarque said discussions were on to fit Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) modules on all Scorpene beginning 2023. "The Scorpene submarine has the ability to be equipped with an AIP system. The first AIP will be equipped during the first refit of the first Scorpene," he said in a conversation with *The Hindu* at Defexpo 2020, which began here on Wednesday.

Talks were underway with the Defence Research

and Development Organisation (DRDO), Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and the Navy. A design agreement was expected to be signed with the DRDO by the year end, he stated.

Karanj was launched into water in January 2018 and is currently in advanced stages of sea trials. The first Scorpene, *Kulvarti*, was commissioned in 2018. The second Scorpene *Khandari* was inducted in September last year.

SC firm on opening command posts to women

Government note had cast doubts on women officers matching up to men in physical prowess

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Women should not just strive to equal men but go far ahead of them, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

This comes just a day after a written note of the government, represented by Mr. Mehta, in the Supreme Court, cast doubts about women officers matching up to men in physical prowess and their ability to take command posts in the Army.

"Why do women strive to be equal to men when they are and can be far ahead of them?" Mr. Mehta told a Bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and Ajay Rastogi during an urgent mentioning.

"We would like to see the government implement that," Justice Chandrachud responded.

The Bench said a will and a change of mindset on the part of the government would definitely see women officers rise to command

posts in the Army. There were many services in addition to combat posts.

'More challenges'

The note containing the government's views on permanent commission for women officers in the Army said the "physiological limitations" of women officers, lower physical standards of women officers compared to men, prolonged absence due to pregnancy, children's education, husband's career prospects, etc, were great

challenges for women officers to meet the exigencies of service.

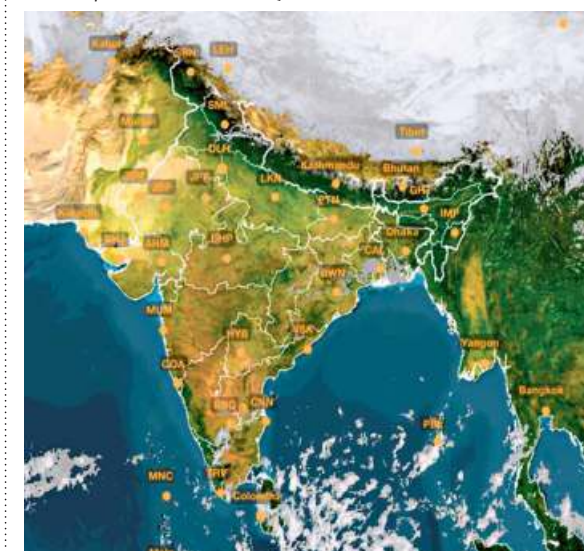
Besides, the note stated, the "composition of rank and file being male predominantly drawn from the rural background with prevailing societal norms, troops are not yet mentally schooled to accept women officers in command of units."

It said, "Officers have to lead from the front. They should be in prime physical condition to undertake combat tasks. Inherent physio-

logical differences between men and women preclude equal physical performance resulting in lower physical standards. Physical capacity of women officers in the Indian Army remain a challenge for command of units."

Army units were a "unique all-male environment". Presence of women officers would require "moderated behaviour", the note said. Thus, the posting of women officers in all-male units had its own "peculiar dynamics", it noted.

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 Thursday: Thunderstorm accompanied with hail/lightning very likely at isolated places over Chhattisgarh and with lightning at isolated places over Vidarbha, Odisha and Jharkhand.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...	26.8	12.9	Kozhikode	...	34.2	23.9
Ahmedabad	...	29.2	11.1	Kurnool	...	34.1	21.2
Aizawl	...	23.1	8.5	Lucknow	...	23.2	08.5
Allahabad	...	23.1	9.0	Madurai	...	33.8	23.2
Bengaluru	...	30.4	18.5	Mangaluru	...	33.9	22.7
Bhopal	Mumbai	...	30.6	15.3
Bhubaneswar	...	28.6	19.0	Mysuru	...	31.5	16.8
Chandigarh	...	19.8	7.0	New Delhi	...	21.2	07.6
Chennai	...	31.2	21.2	Patna	...	24.0	09.9
Coimbatore	...	32.4	22.6	Port Blair	...	30.0	21.8
Dehradun	...	20.2	5.0	Puducherry	...	00.8	31.0
Gangtok	...	10.4	5.4	Pune	...	30.7	16.5
Goa	...	31.5	21.3	Raipur	...	23.4	16.8
Guwahati	...	25.1	09.8	Ranchi	...	24.6	12.6
Hubballi	...	32.0	18.0	Shillong	...	14.7	04.1
Hyderabad	...	32.7	19.8	Shimla	...	11.7	00.4
Imphal	...	21.4	04.7	Srinagar	...	10.7	-3.9
Jaipur	...	23.7	10.7	Thiruvananthapuram	...	33.0	23.9
Kochi	...	33.0	24.0	Tiruchi	...	33.2	23.7
Kohima	...	15.6	5.8	Vijayawada	...	33.2	21.8
Kolkata	...	26.8	15.9	Visakhapatnam	...	04.3	29.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	62	71	29	160	124	...
Bengaluru	13	28	110	45	69	...
Chennai	57	23	51	165
Delhi	25	86	100	352	292	...
Hyderabad	02	60	40	78	87	...
Kolkata	31	114	27	258	192	...
Lucknow	09	52	50	352
Mumbai	19	126	33	96	188	...
Pune	87	26	79	129	105	...
Visakhapatnam	06	73	52	113	114	...

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

CPCB pulls up 14 coal plants

They have not complied with deadline to limit sulphur dioxide emissions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has pulled up 14 thermal power plants for not complying with a December 31, 2019 deadline to limit sulphur dioxide emissions.

These are 5 plants in Haryana, 3 in Punjab, 2 in Uttar Pradesh, 2 in Andhra Pradesh, 2 in Telangana and 1 in Tamil Nadu with a total capacity of approx 15 GW that have missed the deadline.

Phased-approach

To limit particulate matter (PM), sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxide emission from thermal plants, India put in place a phased-approach that directs 440 coal-fired units - responsible for about 166,000 MW of power - to put in place measures to limit pollution by December 2022.



Air score: Coal-fired plants have been directed to put in place pollution control measures by December 2022. •FILE PHOTO

However, 11 plants in a 300 km radius of Delhi were to comply by December 31, 2019 because of the poor air quality in the city as well as the surrounding Gangetic plain.

Some of them claimed to have set in place the process for acquiring flu-gas desulphurisation technology

where as others said they were yet to award tenders. Only one of these plants has actually implemented technology to limit emissions.

Plea in NGT

Non-compliance by the thermal power plants is an ongoing dispute being contested at the National Green Tribu-

nal through a petition filed in April 2017.

There is an ongoing case in the Supreme Court regarding the extensions given to these plants.

The 14 plants have been given until the end of this month to explain to the CPCB why they have not complied with the norms and why action should not be taken.

The CPCB has the power to impose steep fines or shut a unit under the provisions of the Environment Protection Act. As per Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) estimates, these norms can help reduce PM emissions by about 35%, nitrogen oxide emissions by about 70%, and sulphur dioxide emissions by more than 85% by 2026-27 against a business-as-usual scenario with no pollution control technologies.

WHO busts myths and fake messages on coronavirus

'No scientific basis to garlic and sesame oil treatments'

JYOTI SHELAR MUMBAI

Busting the myths and fake messages circulating on social media, the Public Health department of Maharashtra on Wednesday said consuming more garlic, curry leaves or cow's urine would neither treat nor prevent one from the novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection.

The officials urged people to instead follow good hand hygiene, have coughing and sneezing etiquette and eat nutritious and well-cooked food.

"Messages claiming that garlic, curry leaves and cow's urine can prevent or treat nCoV are being circulated in the name of doctors, medical institutions and the Health department. They are all false," said Health Mi-



Sylvie Brian

treatment have no scientific basis, he said.

The World Health Organisation also took to social media to spread awareness and bust such misleading claims. On garlic, WHO said it is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties but there is no evidence that it has prevented people from contracting the 2019 nCoV.

On sesame oil, it said: "Sesame oil is delicious but it does not kill nCoV." Some forwards have warned people against eating Chinese or preserved foods etc.

"It is important to tackle misinformation as soon as possible. When there is an unknown, people try to fill in the void," WHO's Dr. Sylvie Brian said at a press meet in Geneva on Tuesday.

'Can't tigers be punished for eating cows?'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA PANAJI

After the issue of tiger killings was discussed in the Goa Assembly on Wednesday, NCP MLA Churchill Alemao asked why tigers shouldn't be "punished" for eating cows when humans are punished for the same.

A tigress and three of her cubs in Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary were allegedly poisoned by locals after they lost cattle to the big cats. During a discussion in the Assembly, Mr. Alemao asked, "What is the punishment for a tiger when it eats a cow? When a human being eats a cow, he is punished." He said poor families often depended completely on their livestock.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said compensation would be given to those who lost their cattle.

Kunal Kamra's namesake has his flight ticket cancelled

U.S.-based passenger allowed to fly after showing ID proof

ADITYA ANAND MUMBAI

In a comedy of errors on February 3, a U.S.-based passenger also going by the name of Kunal Kamra, the stand-up comedian who has been barred from flying four top Indian carriers, had his what's-in-a-name? moment after initially being denied entry into an Air India flight from Jaipur to Mumbai.

Mr. Kamra, visiting India for a family function, was in for a shock when told at the airport that his ticket stood cancelled and that he was no longer "valid to fly".

Airline officials said that the system showed the PNR as being cancelled, since his name was Kunal Kamra and matched every letter in the name of stand-up comedian,



Comedian Kunal Kamra tweeted 'Collateral damage' after hearing of the incident.

who was the actually barred passenger.

The Boston resident was made to produce multiple ID proofs before being allowed to fly by Air India. Though grateful for prompt assistance from airline staff and being allowed to board after a quick re-issue of his ticket at the airport itself, Mr. Kamra was concerned that the onus of proving that he was

not actually the barred passenger fell entirely on him, just because they shared the same name.

Having learnt from this experience, Mr. Kamra, who was to later fly Indigo from Mumbai to Delhi reached out proactively to the airline and ensured that his ticket was not auto-cancelled by the system based on the name in the PNR.

Air India spokesperson Dhananjay Kumar said, "Stand up comedian Kunal Kamra is banned from boarding Air India. This is mentioned in our system, which is why his name was automatically rejected. But after verification of all the credentials of the passenger, we allowed him to board the flight."

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IMPORTANT DATES
Website opens for online submission of applications 01.02.2020
Last date of online submission of applications (website closes at 23:59 hours on 23.03.2020)
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