

# IAF plane to bring Indians from Iran

The C-17 Globemaster aircraft has a specialist medical team on board

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**  
India sent an IAF transport aircraft with a specialist medical team on board to Iran on Monday night to bring back Indians stranded in the coronavirus-hit nation.

According to the Indian Air Force, its C-17 Globemaster military aircraft left for Iran from the Hindon airbase at 8.30 p.m.

"An IAF C-17 'Globemaster' aircraft got airborne today at 2030 hrs from Hindon airbase to airlift Indian citizens from Iran. The aircraft has a specialist medical team on board. Indian citizens will be flown to Hindon where medical facilities including quarantine have been set up," the IAF tweeted.

The C-17 aircraft "will return to India in the early hours tomorrow [on Tuesday] morning. IAF is ensuring the required operational and medical measures are in place for an expeditious and safe return of Indian citizens from Iran," it said in another tweet.

About 2,000 Indians are living in Iran, a country that has witnessed increasing numbers of COVID-19 cases in the last few days.

According to latest reports, 237 people have died of the virus infection in Iran

while the number of positive cases stands at around 7,000.

It is the second such evacuation by the C-17 Globemaster in the last two weeks.

On February 27, 76 Indians and 36 foreign nationals were brought back from the Chinese city of Wuhan by the aircraft of the Indian Air Force.

The aircraft had also taken a consignment of medical supplies to China to help it deal with the crisis.

The C-17 Globemaster is the largest military aircraft in the Indian Air Force's inventory.

The plane can carry large combat equipment, troops and humanitarian aid across long distances in all weather conditions.

Three days ago, a Mahan Airline plane brought swab samples of 300 Indians from Iran to India.

The Union Health Ministry was initially considering setting up a laboratory in Iran to test Indians living in the country for coronavirus. However, the plan was shelved due to logistical issues.

According to reports, the number of cases of novel coronavirus worldwide has crossed 1,10,000 in 100 countries and territories with more than 3,800 dead.



**Rescue mission:** The C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft being loaded with facilities to quarantine the passengers before it took off from Hindon airbase. ■ ANI

## Jaishankar makes surprise J&K visit

**PEERZADA ASHIQ  
SRINAGAR**

Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar arrived in J&K on a surprise visit coinciding with the return of 41 locals stranded in COVID-19-hit Iran and China on Monday.

Mr. Jaishankar met here the parents and families of students stranded in Iran.

"I assured them [the students] that our embassy in Iran is monitoring their welfare. We are committed to facilitating their early return to India," he said.

Over 500 Jammu & Kashmir residents, especially students, are believed to be

trapped in Iran after India decided to stop flights to the country following the outbreak.

Scores of students have been uploading SOS calls online since then.

**Traders assured**

He also met the representatives of the bodies associated with hotels, tours, travels and houseboat owners.

"I heard a clear message from them that they are ready for the forthcoming tourist season," he said.

"I promised them that the government would strongly support tourism promotion

efforts, domestically and internationally," he added.

The Minister used the trip to make a first-hand assessment of the situation in Kashmir.

It was his first extensive tour since the Centre had revoked J&K's Special Status on August 5 last year.

He also visited the volatile Baramulla in north Kashmir and met locals and e-inaugurated a number of projects.

He also made a surprise visit to the Srinagar passport office, run by the MEA.

His visit was kept under the wraps till he arrived in J&K's summer capital.

## Bollywood faces the heat over COVID-19

**NAMRATA JOSHI  
MUMBAI**

*Baaghi 3*, at ₹17.5 crore net, may have logged in the highest opening day collections for a Hindi film in 2020 so far, but it is also the first to face the adverse effect of the COVID-19 outbreak.

According to the box office forecast of trade magazine *Super Cinema*, the opening day range for director Ahmed Khan's *Tiger Shroff* starrer had been projected at a much higher range - between ₹26 and ₹28 crore - than what has been delivered. "Weekend was better but the trends have been lower than expected, the collections have been affected nationwide," says Amul Mohan, editor of the magazine.

Shailesh Kapoor, CEO of media consulting firm Ormax Media, concurs. Ormax's opening day projections for the film starring Shradha Kapoor (in picture) had also been substantially higher at ₹21 crore. Its projections for the forthcoming *Suryavanshi* stand at a whopping ₹30.8 crore.

However, in a virus-less market, the

same figure for the Rohit Shetty biggie starring Akshay Kumar, would have been even higher at about ₹36 crore, says Mr. Kapoor.

He predicts a 15-20% impact on the big ticket Hindi films in the coming months and an even bigger one on the medium and small films.

Delhi-based exhibitor Sanjay Mehta, however, thinks there are several factors eating into the earnings of *Baaghi 3* and other recent Bollywood films.

"The low pre-holi period and board exams have come in the way and *Baaghi* is a predominantly youth-oriented franchisee," he says. The law and order, violence and protests have affected business in Delhi; the late evening and night shows are running empty in Uttar Pradesh.

According to Mr. Mehta, things will come to a head if things go out of control in the weeks ahead and if the government decides to shut down theatres temporarily.

According to Mr. Kapoorit's possible changes in release calendar are more worrying and will throw things in a tizzy.



### Prepare quarantine facilities, CAPFs told

**NEW DELHI**  
The Government of India has directed the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) to prepare quarantine facilities with a bed capacity to admit over 5,400 people to deal with cases of coronavirus across the country, officials said on Monday. These forces have also been asked to create 75 isolation wards as part of preparations to combat possible large-scale outbreak of the virus. ■ PTI

### Qatar bans entry of people from 14 countries

**MUMBAI**  
Qatar has banned the entry of travellers from 14 countries, including India, to prevent the spread of the COVID-19. In a statement Qatar Airways said: "Under the direction of government authorities of the State of Qatar, entry to Qatar is temporarily suspended for all those travelling from Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Syria and Thailand." ■ PTI

### 400 placed under quarantine in Jammu

**SRINAGAR**  
Around 400 people have been put under surveillance in Jammu after a 63-year-old woman tested positive for COVID-19 on Monday. Earlier, the J&K administration termed two patients as "viral heavyload cases". "The woman's test has come positive. She has a travel history to Iran. We await the final report of another patient," said an official.

## 'Fall in percentage of school education funds for SC, STs'

**PRISCILLA JEBARAJ  
NEW DELHI**

After several years of rising trends, the Centre has reduced the percentage allocation of funds for education of schoolchildren from SC and ST communities as well as for the north-eastern region in the coming year. A parliamentary panel expressed concern that any shortage of funds for these marginalised communities

could be critical, especially given that more than one in five SC and ST students drops out of school at the secondary level.

For at least three years, the amounts allocated to these groups have been on the rise in comparison to total allocations for the department. However, the percentage allotted to these communities dipped in 2020-21.

Out of a total ₹59,845 crore allotted to the Department of School Education and Literacy, 17.16% went to the Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCSP) in comparison to 18.14% the previous year. For the tribal sub-plan, the allocation was 9.8% in comparison to 10.3% the previous year, while the North Eastern Region (NER) received 8.7% in comparison to 9.2% the previous year.

## Madras HC dismisses M.P.'s plea on GI tag for basmati rice

Madhya Pradesh has challenged the exclusion of 13 districts from a map submitted by APEDA

**MOHAMED IMRANULLAH S.  
CHENNAI**

The State of Madhya Pradesh and the Madhya Shetra Basmati Growers Association have lost two separate cases filed by them in the Madras High Court in 2016 challenging the exclusion of 13 districts in the State from a map submitted by the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) seeking Geographical Indication tag

for basmati rice grown in the Indo Gangetic Plain.

Justices R. Subbiah and C. Saravanan dismissed both writ petitions on the primary ground of maintainability after stating that the Geographical Indications Registry (GIR) had already issued GI tag certificates to APEDA by accepting its claim that basmati rice was grown only in the States of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Uttarakhand apart

from 26 districts in Uttar Pradesh besides Jammu as well as Kathua.

The judges pointed out that after the filing of the present petitions in 2016, challenging an order passed by the Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) in Chennai, the GIR had passed an order on March 15, 2018 accepting APEDA's application. Since two more writ petitions had been filed in 2018 challenging the grant of GI

tag to APEDA and those cases were still pending, adjudication of present petitions had become merely academic, they added.

### 4 weeks' suspension

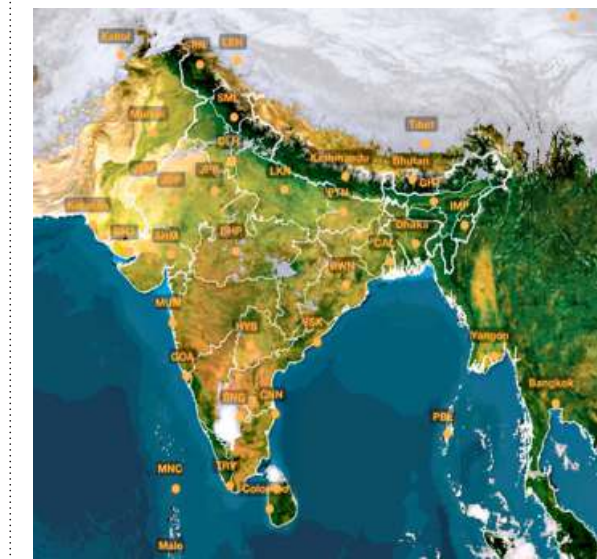
However, after the pronouncement of the verdict, the judges suspended the operation of their order for four weeks at the instance of the petitioners' counsel who intended to take the judgment on appeal to the Supreme

Court. The issue dates back to November 2008 when APEDA, a statutory body, filed an application before an Assistant Registrar of Geographical Indications in Chennai seeking GI tag for basmati rice.

In 2010, Madhya Pradesh opposed APEDA's application on the ground that the application excluded 13 districts including Morena, Bhind, Gwalior, Sheepur, Dattia, Shivpuri and Guna.

### 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 Tuesday:** Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Chattisgarh, western Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, eastern Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Odisha and Jharkhand.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...	31.0	16.3	Kozhikode	...	36.2	26.4
Ahmedabad	...	33.3	18.9	Kurnool	...	35.2	24.5
Aizawl	...	22.1	12.0	Lucknow	...	26.9	13.2
Allahabad	...	27.7	12.3	Madurai	...	36.8	25.6
Bangalore	...	32.9	21.6	Mangaluru	...	34.7	24.6
Bhopal	...	28.2	15.2	Mumbai	...	...	21.1
Bhubaneswar	...	32.0	21.6	Mysuru	...	33.9	22.6
Chandigarh	...	23.6	11.4	New Delhi	...	25.2	12.4
Chennai	...	32.7	23.8	Patna	...	...	...
Coimbatore	...	35.2	24.5	Port Blair	...	30.4	22.4
Dehradun	...	25.3	8.3	Puducherry	...	32.6	24.0
Gangtok	...	15.6	7.9	Pune	...	34.7	18.5
Goa	...	33.0	21.4	Raipur	...	...	18.0
Guwahati	...	...	...	Ranchi	...	26.6	12.5
Hubballi	...	33.0	21.0	Shillong	...	18.6	6.8
Hyderabad	...	31.2	21.8	Shimla	...	17.4	5.6
Imphal	...	25.3	14.2	Srinagar	...	11.4	2.7
Jaipur	...	...	14.4	Thiruvananthapuram	...	34.7	25.5
Kochi	...	2.0	32.6	Tiruchi	...	36.1	24.0
Kohima	...	19.4	9.0	Vijayawada	...	...	...
Kolkata	...	30.7	19.5	Vizakhapatnam	...	32.6	26.0

**Pollutants in the air you are breathing**  
Yesterday  
In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Vapi, Gujarat recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 201 indicating a severe level of pollution. In contrast, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 27

**Air Quality Code:** ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)  
SO<sub>2</sub>: 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<sub>2</sub>: 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 and confusion, unconsciousness and even death.  
PM<sub>2.5</sub> & PM<sub>10</sub>: 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 notifies contaminated sites

With 27 spots, West Bengal tops list

**JACOB KOSHY  
NEW DELHI**

There are 128 sites in India contaminated by toxic and hazardous substances, according to a March update by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). West Bengal led the list with 27 sites followed by Odisha at 23. Including those, there are 324 sites that may be contaminated, with 196 still awaiting an investigation and confirmation.

The Union Environment Ministry has been monitoring - and has begun to commission clean-up jobs - at sites known to be contaminated. Twenty sites in 6 States have seen agencies prepare a detailed project reports, or a plan of action, to clean up sites. Such action follows

## 30 acquitted in transistor blasts case

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

Over three decades after 69 people were killed and 127 injured in a series of transistor bomb blasts across north India, a Delhi court has acquitted 30 of the 49 accused owing to 'defective, lopsided, unfair' and 'faulty investigation'. Additional sessions judge Sandeep Yadav said the investigation suffered from various lacunae. He also said that the accused could not be convicted in the 35-year-old case on the basis of evidence collected during such faulty investigation.

orders by the National Green Tribunal (NGT). There are four such sites in Kerala (Eloor-Edayar), Odisha (Ganjam, Orichem) Tamil Nadu (Ranipet), Uttar Pradesh (Rania, IPL and Deva Road), West Bengal (Nirba village), Madhya Pradesh (Ratlam).

These incidents include oil contamination due to leakage of underground oil pipelines of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited in Tamil Nadu, pesticide and heavy metal contamination in creeks at Eloor, Kerala, chromium contamination at Rania, improperly disposed electronic waste lying on the banks of river Ramganga, Moradabad and mercury contamination of the soil at Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu, and Ganjam, Odisha.

### भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
Tender ID: 2020\_AAI\_45221\_1  
E-Tender duly filled in and digitally signed are hereby invited for granting License for "Tour Operator cum Hotel reservation counter at Domestic Arrival Terminal at Chennai Airport" for a period of Three (03) years with Minimum Reserve License Fee (MRLF) of ₹ 3,33,500/- (Rupees Three Lakhs Thirty Three Thousand Five Hundred only) per month with Annual Compound Escalation plus all applicable taxes and Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) of ₹ 2,50,000/-. The tenders are to be filled online and technical documents are to be scanned and submitted through e-portal only. Any changes in the Tender schedule, corrigendum, etc. shall be available only on the website and will not be published in newspapers. The last date of e-tender downloading - 27.03.2020 upto 1530 hrs, uploading 27.03.2020 upto 1530 hrs. Opening of Technical bid through e-portal - 30.03.2020 at 1530 hrs and opening of Financial bid through e-portal 08.04.2020 at 1530 hrs. For further details, please visit AAI website www.aai.aero / portal address https://etenders.gov.in portal or contact the office of Jt. GM (Commercial), Airports Authority of India, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Operational Offices, Chennai Airport, Chennai - 600 027, Contact No.: 044-2256 0528/4239/4613.

## Convict's death sentence commuted over mental state

Man killed three children aged between eight and four after his wife eloped

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court has commuted the death sentence of a man who murdered three children aged between eight and four, concluding that he was suffering from "extreme mental disturbance" at the time of the "abominable crime".

A three-judge Bench of Justices U.U. Lalit, Indira Banerjee and M.R. Shah said

the convict was motivated by revenge. He was unable to bear the blow of his wife's elopement with the children's uncle.

"It is true that a larger number of criminals go unpunished, thereby increasing criminals in society and law losing its deterrent effect... It is true that the court must respond to the cry of society and settle what would be the deterrent pun-

ishment for an abominable crime... Sometimes it is stated that only rights of criminals are kept in mind and the victims are forgotten," Justice Shah, who wrote the 68-page judgment for the Bench, acknowledged.

However, Justice Shah said death penalty was a rarest of rare punishment. While awarding death, the courts must strike a balance between the mitigating and

aggravating factors, which depend on the facts and circumstances of each particular case. In this case, the mental state of the convict, Manoj Suryavanshi, trumped over the aggravating factor that his crime was an "abominable" one.

However, the top court, sentencing him to life imprisonment, said he would not be eligible for remission for the next 25 years.

**STATE INDUSTRIES PROMOTION CORPORATION OF TAMILNADU LIMITED**  
19-A, RUKMINI LAKSHMINATHY ROAD, EGMORE, CHENNAI - 600 008.  
CIN U74999TN19715GC005967

**Tender Notice NIT.No.45/CW/DO/T.No.65/2019-20, Dt.06.03.2020**  
For and on behalf of State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited, sealed tenders are invited under "Two Cover System" for the following work from Class-I State Level Contractors registered in State/Central or Quasi Government Organisations having experience in similar nature of works. Tenders will be received upto 3.00 PM on 10.04.2020 and the same will be opened on the same day at 3.30 PM.

Name of Work	Approx. value of work	EMD
Providing Street light arrangements to the internal roads and high mast light arrangements, construction of AO Block building and compound wall at SIPCOT Industrial Growth Centre, Gangaikondan in Tirunelveli District.	Rs.435.00 lakhs	Rs.2,27,500/-

The tender Schedule can be Downloaded at free of cost from the website [www.tenders.tn.gov.in](http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in) and [www.sipcot.in](http://www.sipcot.in)

DIPR/1264/TENDER/2020 SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, SIPCOT, CHENNAI-8

**Tamil Nadu Urban Finance and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited**  
(A Government of Tamil Nadu Undertaking)  
No.490/1-2, Anna Salai, Nandanam, Chennai - 600 035.  
Phone No.044-24329800, 24329801. Fax: 044-24350814, E-mail: projsec.tufidco@tn.gov.in

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
Lr.No.TUFIDCO/AMRUT/1055/AM (M)/2019 Date: 10-03-2020

**Invitation of Bids for Establishment of Programme Management Unit (PMU) to provide Handholding support to TUFIDCO for implementation of AMRUT, Smart Cities Mission and Other Schemes in Tamil Nadu.**

TUFIDCO invites Bid from eligible and willing firms for 'Establishment of Programme Management Unit (PMU)' to provide Handholding support to TUFIDCO for implementation of AMRUT, Smart Cities Mission and other schemes in Tamil Nadu.

The Bid Document for the above assignment may be downloaded free of cost from the websites: <http://www.tenders.tn.gov.in>, [www.tufidco.in](http://www.tufidco.in) from 11-03-2020 onwards.

**Last Date and Time for Submission of Bids: 15-04-2020 - 3:00 p.m.**

Any clarification in this regard may be obtained from Dr. R. Murugan, Deputy General Manager, TUFIDCO, Chennai. Contact No.044-24329800, 24329801. Additional Chief Secretary/Chairman and Managing Director

DIPR/1263/Tender/2020

**INSTITUTE OF WOOD SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**  
(INDIAN COUNCIL OF FORESTRY RESEARCH AND EDUCATION)  
18<sup>th</sup> Cross, Malleswaram, Bengaluru - 560 003.

No. 6-115/IWST/GCR/2020/Chair of Excellence/ ADVERTISEMENT Dated: 09.03.2020

Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST), Bengaluru invites application for engagement of **CHAIR OF EXCELLENCE** under the discipline "Forest Products" for a period of twelve months that may be further extendable by a maximum period up to twelve months. The last date for receipt of application is **15th April 2020**. The interested may apply by sending their bio-data and other details to this office. For more information regarding qualification, scope of work, Terms of Reference, please visit website <http://iwst.icFRE.gov.in> and [www.icFRE.gov.in](http://www.icFRE.gov.in)

**Sd/- DIRECTOR**

**SOUTHERN RAILWAY  
CHENNAI - 600 008**

**MATERIAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**  
E - Tender Notice for the Supply of Stores No. 20 / 2020  
Dated: 09.03.2020

Southern Railway has implemented an e-system. All advertised tenders will be dealt through e-procurement system only. No manual offer / postal offer will be entertained. These tenders can be accessed under the link [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) -> SR -> COS

Sl. No.	E-Tender No.	Description	Tender Closing date & time
1	82/20/5060/EOT	6 Quad telecom cable	31.03.2020 @ 14.30 hrs.

Railway reserves the right to issue any corrigendum to the tenders. Important Notice to Vendors: e-procurement is in the link [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in).  
**Principal Chief Materials Manager**

**THE HINDU**  
**LET US KNOW YOU BETTER**

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