



IN BRIEF
Call to shelve road through tiger reserve
GUWAHATI
A Maharashtra MLA, Bhimrao Tapkirhas, wrote to the Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu urging him not to pursue a proposed highway through the 'nationally important' Pakke Tiger Reserve. Activists in the State have also opposed the idea of the 40 km elevated stretch through the reserve.

Bill to amend Banking Regulation Act
NEW DELHI
In a bid to address weaknesses in cooperative banking sector, the Parliament is likely to clear a Bill to amend Banking Regulation Act to bring multi-state cooperative banks under effective regulation of RBI during the Budget session.

Minor raped by teacher undergoes abortion
JASHPUR
A government schoolteacher in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district allegedly raped a 13-year-old student, following which she became pregnant. The accused, Rashid Anwar Khan allegedly also forced the girl to undergo abortion. Khan is absconding, police said on Friday. PTI

'Madurai AIIMS will come up as per schedule'
RAMANATHAPURAM
Assuring that an All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) will come up in Madurai as per schedule, Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Sunday said the Centre would extend all necessary support to the health sector. Laying the foundation stone for a medical college, he said the funds had been earmarked.

Over 160 rapes reported on railway premises
NEW DELHI
Over 160 rape cases have been reported on railway premises, including 29 on board running trains, between 2017 and 2019, an RTI query by activist Chandra Shekhar Gaur has found. PTI

India is host to 457 migratory fauna, shows latest CMS list

While birds make up the bulk of such species, there are 24 species of migratory fish in India, according to scientists

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA
With new additions to the wildlife list put out by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), scientists say that the total number of migratory fauna from India comes to 457 species. Birds comprise 83% (380 species) of this figure.
The Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) had for the first time compiled the list of migratory species of India under the CMS before the Conference of Parties (COP 13) held in Gujarat recently. It

had put the number at 451. Six species were added later. They are the Asian elephant, great Indian bustard, Bengal florican, oceanic white-tip shark, urial and smooth hammerhead shark.

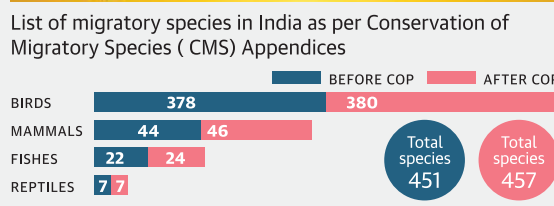
India's role
"We had compiled a list of the 451 species of migratory animals found in India. With the addition of new species to the CMS Appendices, the number is now 457," said Kailash Chandra, ZSI director.
Globally, more than 650 species are listed under the CMS appendices and India,

with over 450 species, plays a very important role in their conservation, Mr. Chandra said.

Gopinathan Maheshwaran, who heads the avian section of the ZSI, said that birds make up the bulk of migratory species. Before COP 13, the number of migratory bird species stood at 378 and now it has reached 380.

According to Mr. Maheshwaran, the bird family *Muscicapidae* has the highest number of migratory species. "The next highest group of migratory birds is raptors or birds of prey, such as eagles,

The roving lot



owls, vultures and kites which are from the family *Accipitridae*," he added.

Mr. Maheshwaran said that the country has three

flyways (flight paths used by birds): the Central Asian flyway, East Asian flyway and East Asian-Australasian flyway. Another group of birds

that migrate in large numbers are waders or shore birds. In India, their migratory species number 41, followed by ducks (38) belonging to the family *Anatidae*.

The estimate of 44 migratory mammal species in India has risen to 46 after COP 13, said Lalit Sharma, who heads the wildlife section of the ZSI. The Asian elephant was added to Appendix I and the urial to Appendix II.

"The largest group of mammals is definitely bats belonging to the family *Vespertilionidae*. Dolphins are the second highest group of mammals with nine migratory species of dolphins listed," he added.

Mr. Sharma pointed out

that COP 13 has focussed on transboundary species and corridor conservation.

Fish make up another important group of migratory species. Before COP 13, the ZSI had compiled 22 species, including 12 sharks and 10 ray fish. The oceanic white-tip shark and smooth hammerhead shark were then added, said K.K. Bineesh, a ZSI scientist. The total number of migratory fish species from India under CMS now stands at 24.

Seven reptiles, which include five species of turtles and the Indian gharial and salt water crocodile, are among the CMS species found in India. There was no addition to the reptiles list.

Three killed as goods trains collide in Madhya Pradesh

Both were operated by NTPC to ferry coal

SIDHARTH YADAV
BHOHAL

Three persons were killed when two goods trains of the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) collided in Singrauli district of Madhya Pradesh on Sunday morning.

"The persons were operating one of the trains carrying coal from NCL mines to an NTPC plant in Rihand Nagar of Uttar Pradesh, when another train coming from the opposite direction collided into it around 5 a.m.," District Collector K.V.S. Choudary said.

Wagons derailed
Families of the deceased may get compensation by the NTPC. The cause of the accident was yet to be ascertained. "The NTPC is investigating the matter," said Mr. Choudary.

Thirteen wagons of one of the trains and an engine jumped off the tracks follow-



Fatal crash: Thirteen wagons of one of the trains and an engine derailed after the collision. The trains were operating on tracks meant only for coal transport. PTI

ing the collision.

Three bodies were pulled out from the engine, said Singrauli Additional Superintendent of Police Pradeep Shende.

The deceased were identified as Rasheed Ahmed, 65, and Mandeep Kumar, 26, both hailing from Uttar Pradesh, and Ramlakhan Bais, 29, a local resident,

While the trapped bodies had been recovered from the spot, the tracks, meant only for coal transport, were being cleared of carriages using cranes and trucks.

Mr. Shende said that it seemed that the accident occurred either due to an error on part of the drivers or because of some fault in signaling

Meanwhile, East Central Railway's Chief Public Relations Officer, Rajesh Kumar, in a statement said the Indian Railways has nothing to do with the accident.

The accident took place in the Merry Go Round system completely owned and operated by NTPC, Rihand, he said.

(With PTI inputs)

Water crisis looms large in Himalayan regions, study finds

Report flags rising dependence on springs

JACOB KOSHY
NEW DELHI

Eight towns in the Himalayan region of Bangladesh, Nepal, India and Pakistan were nearly 20%-70% deficient in their water supply, says a survey that appears in the latest edition of the journal *Water Policy*.

The researchers surveyed 13 towns across these countries to understand the challenges of the urban denizens of these regions. Unplanned urbanisation and climate change are the key factors responsible for the state of affairs, the study underlines.

Short-term strategies

The places surveyed are extremely dependent on springs (ranging between 50% and 100%) for their water, and three-fourths were in urban areas. Under current trends, the demand-supply gap may double by 2050, the researchers warn.

"Communities were coping through short-term strategies such as groundwater



Disappearing fast: Degradation of natural waterbodies is evident across the region, the report states. FILE PHOTO

extraction, which is proving to be unsustainable. A holistic water management approach that includes springshed management and planned adaptation is therefore paramount," Dr. Anjal Prakash of the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad, India, said in a statement.

"Across the region, the encroachment and degradation of natural waterbodies (springs, ponds, lakes, canals, and rivers) and the growing disappearance of traditional water systems (stone spouts, wells, and lo-

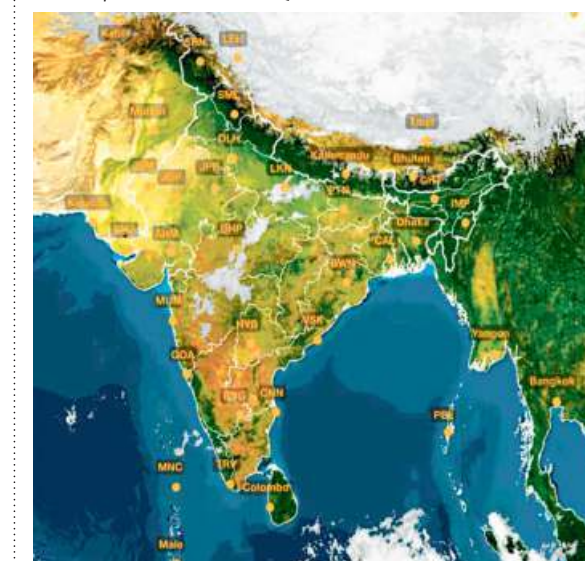
cal water tanks) are evident," an accompanying press note underlines.

Although only 3% of the total Hindu Kush Himalayan population lives in larger cities and 8% in smaller towns, projections show that over 50% of the population will be living in cities by 2050, placing "tremendous stress" on water availability.

Rural areas have typically garnered much of the attention in terms of development and issues surrounding urban environments have been "sidelined," the authors note.

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 Monday: Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning likely at isolated places over Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Odisha, Assam, Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	...	33.0	14.0	Kozhikode	0.6	36.0	25.0
Ahmedabad	...	35.0	19.0	Kurnool	...	35.0	23.0
Aizawl	...	22.0	9.0	Lucknow	0.4	29.0	16.0
Allahabad	...	33.0	17.0	Ludhiana	...	34.0	24.0
Bengaluru	...	32.0	20.0	Mangaluru	...	35.0	26.0
Bhopal	...	27.0	16.0	Mumbai	...	32.0	17.0
Bhubaneswar	...	32.0	19.0	Mysuru	...	32.0	21.0
Chandigarh	...	27.0	11.0	New Delhi	18.6	28.0	14.0
Chennai	...	32.0	25.0	Patna	...	29.0	16.0
Coimbatore	...	34.0	23.0	Port Blair	...	31.0	25.0
Dehradun	...	26.0	13.0	Puducherry	...	32.0	23.0
Gangtok	...	16.0	7.0	Pune	...	33.0	17.0
Goa	...	34.0	23.0	Raipur	...	32.0	19.0
Guwahati	...	29.0	13.0	Ranchi	...	30.0	16.0
Hubballi	...	32.0	20.0	Shillong	...	18.0	8.0
Hyderabad	...	32.0	19.0	Shimla	16.2	17.0	3.0
Imphal	...	27.0	10.0	Srinagar	...	8.0	4.0
Jaipur	...	30.0	16.0	Thiruvananthapuram	...	32.0	25.0
Kochi	...	33.0	25.0	Tiruchi	...	35.0	23.0
Kohima	...	25.0	15.0	Vijayawada	...	34.0	21.0
Kolkata	...	30.0	19.0	Visakhapatnam	...	31.0	24.0

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}	PM ₁₀ CODE
Ahmedabad	67	77	37	98
Bengaluru	48	66	66	75
Chennai	28	19	23	94
Delhi	16	47	45	108
Hyderabad	2	61	54	103
Kolkata	13	55	23	269
Lucknow	6	52	75	223
Mumbai	81	72	13	54
Pune	55	20	85	84
Visakhapatnam	42	36	79	97

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.
PM_{2.5} & 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 to review list of monuments under ASI

Sites under State govts. likely to be added to list

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

The number of monuments under the Centre's protection could increase as the government is planning to conduct a review of those under the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the ones protected by the State governments, Union Minister for Culture Prahlad Singh Patel has said.

At present, 3,691 monuments nationwide are protected by the ASI, with the highest number, 745, in Uttar Pradesh, according to his reply in the Lok Sabha on February 10.

Mr. Patel said he would hold a meeting with the State Ministers for Culture. A source in the Ministry said the meeting could take place by March-end.

The list of the Centrally protected monuments had not seen a substantial increase in many years, and important sites under the State governments could be added to the list, the Minister said. On the other hand, he added, there were some monuments that could be removed from the Central list and placed under the



Currently, 3,691 monuments across India are protected by the ASI.

State governments.

"The list of Centrally protected monuments can go up to 10,000. In Tamil Nadu alone, there are about 7,000 temples, many of which are hundreds of years old. On the other hand, there are some monuments under the ASI that can be shifted to the State list," he said.

The Minister said there were some sites that could be moved from the Central list allowing development works in their vicinity. He was referring to the ban on construction within 100 metres of a Centrally protected monument and regulated construction within 100-200 metres under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958.

The Act protects monuments and sites that are over 100 years old.

GST collection in February up by 8% at ₹1.05 lakh cr.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The government on Sunday said it has collected ₹1.05 lakh crore as Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue in February, up by 8% over the same month last year.

However, the collection in February was lower than the ₹1.10 lakh crore collected in January 2020.

"The gross GST revenue collected in the month of February, 2020 is ₹1,05,366 crore, of which CGST is ₹20,569 crore, SGST is ₹27,348 crore, IGST is ₹8,503 crore and Cess is ₹8,947 crore," the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

The government had settled ₹22,586 crore to CGST and ₹16,553 crore to SGST

from IGST as regular settlement. "The total revenue earned by Central Government and the State Governments after regular settlement in the month of February, 2020 is ₹43,155 crore for CGST and ₹43,901 crore for the SGST," the statement added.

The GST revenues in February from domestic trans-

sactions grew by 12% over the same month last year.

Lottery offer

The government is planning to launch a monthly lottery, ranging from ₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore, under the GST from April 1 by conducting lucky draws for invoices of all business to customer transactions, said an official.

This lioness gave foster care to leopard cub in Gir national park

It is a rare case of cross-species adoption: study

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

A lioness in Gujarat's Gir National Park gave foster care to a leopard cub for more than a month. A study has noted their short-lived bonding as a rare case of foster care between two competing feline species.

Elephant seals and sea lions are known to adopt orphans of their own kind. The animal kingdom has two reported cases of cross-species adoption in the wild - that of a young marmoset by a family of capuchin monkeys in South America and a melon-headed whale calf by a bottlenose dolphin.

But the lioness-leopard relationship in Gir, a semi-arid deciduous forest covering 1,800 sq km, has intrigued a quartet of conservationists and wildlife officials, who published their findings in *Ecosphere*, an open-access journal.

"Lions and leopards coexist but not in harmony, and there was this lioness rearing the leopard cub as her own to stimulate intriguing behavioural questions," Stotra Chakraborty, one of the



Unlikely bond: The lioness restricted her forays because the cub was less mobile. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

four authors of the study told *The Hindu* from the University of Minnesota, U.S.

The researchers observed the relationship for 29 days, during which the leopard cub died on February 11, 2019. There were no external wounds on the carcass found near a waterhole, implying that the mother or any other lion did not kill it. An autopsy revealed the cub was suffering from congenital femoral hernia.

"We spotted an old female leopard in the location where we first detected the leopard cub with its foster lion family. Although we could not assess the lactating state of this leopardess, it is possible that she was the

cub's biological mother but had abandoned it," Mr. Chakraborty said.

The researchers found the lioness restricted her forays because she had young cubs that were less mobile, especially the leopard cub.

Maternal and hormonal instincts of the lioness, as a lactating mother who lost her first litter of two cubs, could have overridden her recognition or the lack thereof for an "unusually spotted cub".

Her relationship with the leopard cub qualified as a formal adoption, unlike a similar but one-day association reported from the Ngorongoro conservation area in Tanzania in 2017.

Illegal arms licences: CBI arrests two

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, Rajiv Ranjan, along with another official, for alleged involvement in the issue of illegal arms licences in the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir.

The other accused has been identified as Itrith Husain Rafiqui.

The arrests have been made in a case registered in May 2018.

It was alleged that during 2012-16, the then Deputy Commissioners of various districts of Jammu and Kashmir, including Kupwara, had fraudulently issued bulk arms licences in lieu of monetary consideration.

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY
Invites Prospective Vendors for a VENDOR OUTREACH PROGRAMME
on 11-03-2020 at 09.30 Hrs. To familiarise new vendors about business potential with ICF and vendor registration of ICF. Exhibition materials is also organised. All Manufacturers are invited.
Venue: Dr. Ambedkar Arangam, Konnur High Road (Opp. to ICF East Colony), Integral Coach Factory, Chennai - 600 038.
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