

International

Encephalitis claims 25 in India

HYDERABAD, Nov 1: At least 25 people, mostly children, have died of Japanese Encephalitis and another 100 are ill in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh, where hundreds have died of the disease in past years, reports AP.

That state government is trying to import a Chinese-made vaccine to treat the disease, or inflammation of the brain, but Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said the national government has not given clearance to bring the vaccine into India.

Deaths have been reported from 11 districts in the state and most of the victims are children under 15 years old.

Japanese Encephalitis is known to spread from pigs to humans through mosquito bites.

The state said it had begun spraying in all the affected districts and moving pig farms away from villages. Pig owners have been warned that stray pigs will be killed if they are found in residential areas.

Similar tactics were used last year, but the disease is striking new areas this year.

Museum of Indian Art reopens in Berlin

BERLIN, Nov 1: Europe's only and exclusive 'Museum of Indian Art' has reopened here after a two-year renovation that cost an estimated 10 million dollars, reports PTI.

"We are happy and very lucky to have so many priceless Indian exhibits under one roof," museum director Marianne Yaldiz told PTI.

Indian exhibits elsewhere in European museums are showcased as part of main collections, Yaldiz said.

The displays in the museum have been radically restructured because the time had come to depart from the obsolete jewelry-store style of presentation," she said.

The collection of 400 pieces from a total inventory of 20,000 objects extends from prehistoric objects in terracotta and stone sculptures of Buddhist, Jain and Hindu divinities, to miniatures, finely crafted objects in wood, metal, ivory and jade, clay sculptures, manuscripts and large format murals.

The work on display, which covers a period of almost 4000 years, forms an impressive record of the most significant streams in Indian culture and history, a museum official said.

The work on display, which covers a period of almost 4000 years, forms an impressive record of the most significant streams in Indian culture and history, a museum official said.

ULFA rebels kill five policemen

GUWAHATI, India, Nov 1: Tribal guerrillas killed five unarmed policemen posted at an abandoned airport in the north-east Indian state of Assam, police said today, reports Reuters.

The rebels belonging to the separatist United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) escaped after attacking the police party at Rupsi airport, about 290-km (180 miles) east of the state capital, Dispur.

The policemen were armed only with batons, an officer said, adding that this was being investigated.

The outlawed ULFA has been fighting for independence for the past 21 years. It accuses the federal government of exploiting Assam's rich mineral resources and neglecting the local economy.

Shops were closed and streets deserted in Guwahati, the main commercial city, today following a strike called by the youth wing of the regional party that rules Assam.

The Assam Yuva Parishad said it had called the strike across Assam to protest against the rising violence in the state.

Law to get the lazy out of couch into gymnasium

SHANGHAI, Nov 1: The Communist authorities in the eastern Chinese city of Shanghai are preparing laws to prod out-of-shape residents off the couch and into the gym, state media said today, reports AP.

The Shanghai Sports Bureau will use funds from the city's sports lottery to build mass fitness areas, with fitness equipment for jogging, gymnastics and weightlifting, the Shanghai Daily reported.

The Standing Committee of the Shanghai People's Congress has produced a feasibility study for a mass fitness programme for local residents which harks back to the days of the cultural revolution when loudspeakers playing revolutionary songs woke city dwellers for exercise each morning.

Twenty years of snowballing economic growth on China's east coast have piled on the pounds (kilograms), leaving more than half of Chinese aged between 35 and 59 overweight, according to government surveys.

Now the government is seeking to turn the tide. Each company and government institution will have to schedule some time for employees to exercise during work hours, according to a draft regulation which will be discussed before the end of the year, the paper said.

US forces in S Arabia, Kuwait put on highest alert

'Credible threat' of attacks against unspecified targets

WASHINGTON, Nov 1: US forces in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were put on the highest alert Monday because of a "credible threat" of terrorist attacks against unspecified targets, the Pentagon said Tuesday, reports AP.

In both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, US forces are now on the highest alert level, which is threat condition delta, Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon said.

"It is due to credible threat information involving unspecified targets," he said.

The latest actions raised to five the number of countries in the region where US forces have gone to the highest alert level in response to threats since the October 12 bombing that killed 17 US sailors and crippled a billion dollar destroyer in the Yemeni port of Aden.

Threat condition delta normally is invoked either after a terrorist attack has occurred or intelligence indicates a terrorist attack against a specific location is likely.

US forces in Bahrain and Qatar were put on the highest alert level on October 21 in response to multiple threats of attacks against specific locations, and US forces in Yemen went to threat condition delta immediately after a small boat blew a 12 by 12 meter hole in the USS Cole.

The last time US forces in the region were put on threat condition delta was after the 1998 bombings of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that killed 224 people.

In a related development, the navy said no US warships have

gone through the Suez canal since the suicide attack on the USS Cole.

"The Cole was the last ship to transit the Suez," said Lieutenant Meghan Mariman, the navy spokeswoman. "We have not sent any other ships through there since the US attack on the Cole."

US officials, meanwhile, have been holding talks with Egyptian authorities about security at the canal and whether it is "appropriate for the perceived threat," another Pentagon official said.

"Everything is pretty much on hold right now," said a Navy official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We have not diverted any ships to go around Africa, but also have not sent any ships through the Suez."

Bacon, however, denied that a decision has been taken to keep US warships out of the canal, and said that only one ship had been scheduled to go through it after the Cole.

That ship -- the USS Donald Cook -- has now been assigned to escort the Norwegian ship that will haul the Cole back to the United States.

The Pentagon is considering routing the Blue Marlin around Africa, a five to six week voyage, rather than make the two to three week voyage home through the canal, said Navy Lieutenant David Gal, a Pentagon spokesman. He said no decision has been made.

The Cole was still being loaded onto the Norwegian ship Tuesday and would not be ready to begin the voyage home for several days, officials said.



Russian President Vladimir Putin approaches the grave of Russian writer and Nobel Literature laureate Ivan Bunin at the Russian cemetery in Sainte-Genevieve-des-Bois, outside Paris yesterday. The President visited the Russian cemetery during the last day of his official visit in France. -AFP photo

UN resolution to put women in decision-making positions

UNITED NATIONS, Nov 1: The UN Security Council adopted its first resolution recognizing the importance of putting women in decision-making positions at every level of peace-making and peace-building, reports AP.

In an unprecedented resolution adopted unanimously Tuesday, the council also called for the prosecution of crimes against women, increased protection of women and girls during war, and the appointment of more women to UN peacekeeping operations and field missions.

"The intertwining forces of gender inequality and conflict threaten international peace and security," said Noeleen Heyzer, executive director of the UN Development Fund for Women.

"Today, members of the Security Council established a new precedent for the 21st century. Without international action, women caught in conflicts have no security of any kind. And without women's full participation, the peace process itself suffers," she said.

Heyzer hailed the council's call for Secretary-General Kofi Annan to carry out the first-ever study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, and the role of women in solving conflict and rebuilding shattered nations.

While the council has passed resolutions on civilians and children in armed conflict, it has never focused exclusively on the impact of war on women and girls or on the need to include women in all peace-related activities.

"The Security Council has taken an important step to reaffirm women's vital role in all levels of peacekeeping, to ensure that gender perspectives are taken fully into account in all peace efforts, and to protect women and girls in conflict," said Assistant Secretary-General Angela King, the secretary-general's special adviser on women.

Last week, the Security Council held its first meeting on "Women, Peace and Security" at which some 40 nations spoke. Many noted that women and children are the primary victims of war, that often their rights are not protected, and that their participation in peace efforts has been undervalued.

The resolution adopted Tuesday states "the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building" and "the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security."

It calls on the United Nations and member states to increase representations of women at peace tables.

Legless veteran saves 16 children from drowning

HANOI, Nov 1: A 60-year-old man who lost both legs in the Vietnam War saved 16 schoolchildren from drowning in the Mekong Delta last week, newspapers reported today, says Reuters.

The Saigon Times Daily said disabled boatman Le Van Muoi did not hesitate when a small ferry capsized in the rough waters of a branch of the Mekong River in Tien Giang province on October 23.

It said Muoi, who uses two stools attached to the stumps of his legs to get around on land, used his strong arms to haul the terrified 10-15 year old schoolchildren from the river, which was swollen by flood waters.

Floods in the Mekong Delta this year have been the worst in four decades and have killed 429 people, 303 of them children.

Threatened US envoy leaves Indonesia

JAKARTA, Nov 1: US Ambassador to Indonesia Robert Gelbard left Indonesia today, an embassy official said, one week after the embassy here was closed to the public because of security threats, reports AP.

"He'll be gone for a while," the official said, refusing to reveal for how long or where Gelbard had gone.

"The trip is of a personal nature and it was planned well in advance," he added.

The embassy has been closed to the public since last week because of what the US state department and the embassy called a "credible threat" to the central Jakarta compound.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab revealed last week that in addition Gelbard had received a personal death threat.

The closure came amid an acrimonious war of words between Gelbard and senior politicians including Shihab and Defence Minister Mohammad Mahfud.

Mahfud has accused Gelbard of trying to influence the choice of Indonesia's new army chief, and intervening in the deportation of an American tourist accused of spying.

The embassy in a press release issued on Friday, denied the charges and accused some senior Indonesian officials including Mahfud of trying to undermine the relationship between the two countries.

Anti-US sentiment has been on the rise in Indonesia since the latest eruption of Middle East violence. Muslim groups here accuse the US of supporting Israel.

Italian tanker carrying toxic chemicals sinks

Experts warn of environmental catastrophe

CHERBOURG, France, Nov 1: An Italian tanker carrying 6,000 tonnes of toxic chemicals sank off the French coast near Britain's Channel Islands Tuesday, raising fears of a second environmental catastrophe on the Brittany coast, reports AP.

The Italian-registered levoli Sun went under as it was being towed towards Cherbourg, on France's Channel coast, after taking on water in rough seas on Monday.

It sank in waters about 70 metres deep, about 19 kilometres northwest of Alderney, one of the Channel Islands, maritime officials said. A helicopter safely evacuated the 14 crew members on Monday.

Environmental experts warned of an ecological disaster similar to the one that devastated the western French Atlantic coastline last December following an oil spill caused by the sinking of the tanker Erika.

Maritime authorities said the levoli Sun was carrying 4,000 tonnes of styrene, which is highly toxic, corrosive and insoluble in water. It was also carrying 2,000 tonnes of less toxic chemicals for the US oil company Exxon Mobil.

"The navy has deployed air and sea assets to keep an eye on the site of the shipwreck and detect any pollution," authorities said in a statement, noting late Tuesday that forces had not detected "significant" levels of pollution at the site.

French Transport Minister Jean-Claude Gaysot said in Paris the tanker could slip into a trough 160 meters deep, potentially complicating future efforts to prevent chemical spills from the tanker.

Gaysot denounced the economics of cheap maritime transport, which he said sacrificed human safety and environmental protection.

"There is a future for maritime transport if you ban (dangerously unsafe) ships with underqualified crews," he said.

President Jacques Chirac said it was "not acceptable to continue allowing such vulnerable ships to take to sea with dangerous cargo."

The French leader was to travel to Cherbourg early Wednesday to discuss the situation with local officials.

Chirac, whose country currently holds the presidency of the European Union, said he had called European Parliament president Nicole Fontaine and asked that parliament urgently adopt measures aimed at reinforcing European maritime security.

Fontaine said Tuesday parliament would debate the measures at the end of November, two weeks earlier than originally scheduled.

Environmental groups meanwhile warned of an impending ecological disaster and pointed the finger at RINA, the Italian classification firm that gave a clear bill of health to the levoli Sun and had also cleared the Erika prior to last year's accident.

"Enough is enough," said Bruno Rebelle, head of Greenpeace France. "All ships inspected by this firm should be prevented from taking to sea until the company changes its way of doing business."

RINA said in a statement sent to AFP in Rome that there was no comparison between the levoli Sun and the Erika, since the levoli Sun -- a little over 10 years old -- was "built according to strict security criteria."

Greenpeace said it was sending one of its ships to the site to monitor water pollution levels.

Air force destroys Tiger rebel camp: 40 killed

COLOMBO, Nov 1: Air force MIG-27 and Kfir fighter jets destroyed a Tamil Tiger rebel camp south of Trincomalee port, killing at least 40 militants, a military spokesman said today, reports AP.

The rebel camp, knocked out on Monday, was used as a base to stage attacks in the area, said military spokesman Brig. Sanath Karunaratne. He said a guerrilla suicide assault on the Trincomalee port on Oct. 23, which left at least 20 combatants dead, had been launched from the camp.

He said, "The air force saw a large cloud of smoke rising from the destroyed camp," 230 kilometres northeast of the capital, Colombo. He said 40 rebels were believed to have been at the camp, 15 kilometers south of Trincomalee port.

There was no comment from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who have fought 17 years to create a separate homeland in the north and east for the Tamil minority, saying they can only prosper separately from the Sinhalese who dominate the government, military and education.

Mobs of Tamils rampaged in the country's central highlands last weekend after a Sinhalese mob of 3,000 massacred 25 Tamil inmates at a government-run rehabilitation camp. The government deployed soldiers on the streets of three towns and imposed a 24-hour curfew, which was lifted Tuesday.

In her first televised speech since the latest ethnic tension, President Chandrika Kumaratunga appealed for peace Monday night.

"It is our objective to create, to gather, all ethnic communities within a strong economy where every citizen could coexist peacefully," Kumaratunga said. "We are appealing to this country to act with restraint."

Myanmar launches crackdown on Indian rebel camps

GUWAHATI, India, Nov 1: The Myanmar army has launched a crackdown on Indian separatist guerrillas holed up inside the country, rebel leaders said today, reports AP.

The outlawed National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) said one of its training camps located inside Myanmar had been torched by government troops.

The NSCN is fighting for an independent tribal homeland in India's northeastern state of Nagaland, bordering Myanmar.

Myanmarese troops have launched an offensive since October 15 against us," Kivoo Zimomi, the self-styled "prime minister" of the NSCN, told AFP by telephone from his hideout somewhere in Nagaland.

"We have shown the utmost restraint and have not retaliated as the Myanmarese troops would indulge in indiscriminate harassment of the common Naga people living there if we do so," Zimomi said.

Myanmar troops on October 25 shot dead five Indian frontier guards along the border.

Myanmar later apologised, saying the troops had mistaken the guerrillas.

Zimomi said thousands of Christian Naga people had fled across the border into India last month, alleging persecution by the military junta.

The Naga people, mostly from villages in the Sagaing district of northern Myanmar, crossed into Nagaland's Mon district "as their houses were set ablaze," the NSCN leader said.

"There has been large scale torture of the Nagas, forcing many of them to desert their villages and take shelter either in the jungles or in parts of Nagaland."

ROK FM to visit Japan:

South Korean Foreign Minister Lee Jung-binn will visit Japan next week to discuss North Korea, Lee's office said Wednesday, reports AP from Seoul.

During his Nov 6-7 visit, Lee will meet with his Japanese counterpart, Yohei Kono, to discuss Seoul's thawing relations with North Korea and Tokyo's ongoing normalization talks with the communist country, it said. Lee also will pay a courtesy call on Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, the office said. After an eight-year suspension, Japan and North Korea resumed normalization talks in April this year. They ended another round of talks in Beijing on Tuesday without any concrete agreement.

Chhattisgarh CM sworn in:

The chief minister of India's newest state, Chhattisgarh, was sworn in amid tight security during the wee hours of this morning, reports AP.

Just after midnight, Ajit Jogi, who was formerly chief spokesman for the main opposition Congress party, took the oath of office in the capital of the new state, Raipur. Amid all the pomp and fireworks, press reports spoke of a heavy security presence following threats by Maoist insurgents to disrupt the ceremony. Chhattisgarh became India's 26th full-blown state by shearing a region the size of Greece with a population of 17.6 million off the massive central state of Madhya Pradesh.

Govt of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
Local Govt Engineering Department
Hospital Road, Majdee Court
Noakhali-3800

Memo No:- LGED/XEN/NOA/GAPSCS/2000/3211 Dated: 24.10.2000

Tender Notice

No-06/2000-2001 (GAPSCS/01)

- The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a grant from the KFW of Germany towards the cost of the Construction of Govt Primary Schools-cum-Cyclone Shelter and intends to apply part of the grant to cover eligible payments under the contract for following 3 (three) groups of works listed below:
- On behalf of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) as represented by the Executive Engineer, LGED, Noakhali District invites sealed tender from eligible tenderers for the construction and completion of the works listed below (SI No 8). Full instruction for tenderers are contained in volume 3 of the tender documents.
- Interested tenderers may obtain further information from and inspect the tender documents at the office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Hospital Road, Majdee Court, Noakhali District, or at the office of the Upazila Engineer, LGED, Upazila Sadar/Companigonj/Hatiya, District Noakhali.
- A complete set of bid documents may be purchased by any interested tenderers on the submission of a written application to one of the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Tk 2000/- (two thousand) for each set. The tender documents will be available during office hours up to 19.11.2000.
- Tenders shall be valid for a period of 90 (ninety) days after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security (earnest money) in taka in the form of Demand Draft, Pay Order or Sanchaya Parta in favour of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Noakhali District as mentioned under SI 8.
- All tenders must be delivered to tender boxes kept at the office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, District Noakhali and office of the Upazila Engineer, LGED, Upazila Sadar/Companigonj/Hatiya, Noakhali District up to 1-30 PM on 20.11.2000.
- Tenders will be opened in the presence of those tenderers' representatives who choose to attend at 2.00 PM on 20.11.2000 at the office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Noakhali District and Upazila Engineer, LGED, Upazila Sadar/Companigonj/Hatiya, Noakhali District.
- List of works as stated below:

Group No	Name of work	Bid security (earnest money in Tk)	Price of schedule	Eligible contractor	Time for completion of work
01/00-2001	Construction of Musapur Primary School-cum-Cyclone Shelter (3 Nos class room+1 No teachers room) under Companigonj Upazila, Noakhali.	2.5% of the quoted amount.	2,000/-	Contractor should apply in writing for purchase of tender documents and must submit with their application of the renewal certificates for FY-2000-2001 as class "A" and "special" category contractors enlisted under LGED, interested class "A" and "special" category contractors should have at least two certificates of completion of a single work to the amount of minimum Tk 50.00 lakh, which are executed within last 5 years.	9 (nine) months.
02/00-2001	Construction of Burir Char Parchim Zorkhali Primary School-cum-Cyclone Shelter (3 Nos class room+1 No teachers room) under Hatiya Upazila, Noakhali.	-do-	2,000/-	-do-	-do-
03/00-2001	Construction of West Sullukia Primary School-cum-Cyclone Shelter (5 Nos class room+1 No teachers room) under Sadar Upazila, Noakhali.	-Do-	2,000/-	-Do-	-Do-

DFP-26163-29/10 G-1921

Bashir Uddin Ahmed
Executive Engineer.