

Google rectifies mistake, shows entire J&K as part of India



The search engine Google has amended its maps to show the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir as part of India. The correction came in response to the notice is-

sued by minister of state for communications and IT Sachin Pilot to Google Inc for showing Pakistan-occupied Kashmir as part of the neighbouring country. After Pilot noticed the lapse, the ministry wrote to the website that maps available through www.google.com/insights showed certain parts of J&K as part of a different country. The notice said that wrongful

depiction of Indian map could attract action under Sections 69A and 79 of the IT Act. Sources said the website had corrected the maps in its memory though a few pages would take some time to upload. It sets right what is a sensitive issue in the country. The showing of PoK as part of Pakistan had attracted strong comments from various sections.

Harvest festival Onam is being celebrated by Keralites in country

Kerala celebrates Thiruvonam on Aug 23, 2010, the most important day of the Onam festival. Thiruvonam marks the culmination of the ten day Onam festival. People irrespective of religion or caste celebrate the festival, one of the most colourful and spectacular of all festivals in the country. The festival is one of the great unifiers of the state, promoting the ideals of secularism. People believe that it is on this day that King Mahabali, who was sent to the netherworld by Lord Vishnu, visits his subjects. Onam is celebrated to impress upon the visiting King of the prosperity of his land. Homes are spruced up, elaborate pookkalam or floral carpets are laid to welcome the king. The highlight of the day is the Onasadya or Onam feast, which takes place this afternoon.

People wearing new clothes thronged temples early this morning all over the state. The Sabarimala and Guruvayoor temples witnessed heavy rush. A large number of devotees visited the Thrikkakara Temple in Kochi, associated with the Onam legend. The ten day long Onam festival at the temple draws to a close on Monday evening.

Onam is the biggest festival in the Indian state of Kerala. It falls during the first month of the Malayalam calendar which is Chingam (August-September) and marks the homecoming of the legendary King Mahabali. The festival lasts for ten days and is linked to many elements of Kerala's culture and tradition.

Intricate flower carpets, elaborate banquet lunch, snake boat races and the kaikottikkali dance all play a part in the festival.

Onam is an ancient festival which still survives in the Modern times. Kerala's rice harvest festival and the festival of rain flowers which fell on the Malayalam month of Chingam celebrated the annual visit from pathalam of King Maveli. Onam is unique since king Maveli is revered by people of Kerala from prehistory.

The celebrations of Onam start on Atham day, 10 days before Thiruvonam. The 10 days are part of the traditional Onam celebrations and each day has its own importance in various rituals and traditions. Earthen mounds, which look somewhat like square pyramids, representing Mahabali and Vamanan (an Avatar of Vishnu) are placed in the dung-plastered courtyards in front of the house and beautifully decorated with flowers. Known as 'Onapookkalam', it is a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms with one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. It is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. (In a similar manner North Indians make something called "Rangoli" which is made of powders of various colors.) When completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little fes-

toons is erected over it.

Atham- The first day of Onam Celebrations

Chithira- The second day of Onam Celebrations

Chodi- The third day of Onam Celebrations

Vishakam- The fourth day of Onam Celebrations

Anizham- The fifth day of Onam Celebrations

Thriketa- The sixth day of Onam Celebrations

Moolam- The seventh day of Onam Celebrations

Pooradam- The eighth day of Onam Celebrations

Uthradom- The ninth day of Onam Celebrations

Thiruvonam- The tenth day of Onam Celebrations

Normally Onam celebrations ends by Thiruvonam. However two following days after Thiruvonam is also celebrated as Third and Fourth Onam. The third Onam is called as Avvitom which marks the preparations of King Mahabali for his ascension to heavens. The main ritual for the day is to take the Onattappan statue placed in middle of Pookalam for past 10 days and immense in nearby rivers or seas. The pookalam will be cleaned and removed and marks the finale to the Onam celebrations. The day is also important, as it marks the great dance of lions, known as Puli Kali where men in costumes of lions, dances and make a procession around the town of Thrissur in large groups. The Puli-kali can mark the end of traditional Onam celebrations.

Slum population to rise by 19% by 2011: Report

There will be about 19 percent increase in the Slum population in the country by end of 2011. It was 75.26 million in 2001 and is expected to touch over 93 million by 2011. The assessment is based on the census of slum population in over five thousand cities and towns across the country.

These details are part of Pronab Sen Committee report released by the Minister for Housing and Urban Poverty alleviation Ms. Selja in New Delhi today. The Committee was appointed by the government to look into various aspects of slum statistics. It has recommended adoption of appropriate indicators for identifying the slum.

The committee submitted its report on 30th of last month. Ms Selja said that the committee has also recommended for formulation of a policy for counting the slum population even in cities having less than 20 thousand population. This she said is important to achieve the goal of slum free India under the Rajiv Awas Yojna.

ICC rejects Pak's conspiracy Theory

The ICC on Friday rejected Pakistan's conspiracy theory behind the suspension of three of its players in connection with the 'spot-fixing' scandal and said clear indications were given about the impending action. It also said the three cricketers have a "case to answer" but refused to specify the charges against them. Addressing a press conference in London, ICC CEO Haroon Lorgat dismissed a question that the action was taken to keep Pakistan out of international cricket. "The very reason I met your High Commissioner Wajid Hasan was to give a clear indication that we are coming to a conclusion and that we will be serving a notice. I differ with Pakistan High Commission interpretation of the meet. I indicated to

him about issuing the notice," he said. Earlier in the day, Hasan attacked the ICC saying it had taken an unethical decision and sought to insinuate that ICC President Sharad Pawar had a hand in it. After suspending the trio of Pakistan Test skipper Salman Butt and pacers Mohammad Aamir and Mohammad Asif, the ICC said after "due diligence", it is clear that the players have to explain themselves following a sting operation in which a bookie claimed to have paid them money for bowling no balls in a Test match against England. "The press suggested this week that why didn't the ICC act immediately?" "The conclusion was that it was an arguable case against the players. We cer-



tainly came to the conclusion that they have a case to answer to our disciplinary commission," he added. Lorgat said the ICC would be "decisive" in its action against guilty players but only after establishing their guilt. "We promise to be decisive. We got a week for due diligence. We have got to be very mindful of the interviews that are going on right now with the police."

South Africa condemns Madagascar's Ravalomanana verdict

South Africa has strongly criticised Madagascar over the life sentence passed on exiled President Marc Ravalomanana last week. Such sentences would not help end Madagascar's political turmoil, said International Relations and Cooperation Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane. Mr Ravalomanana is in exile in

South Africa after being toppled in March 2009.

He was sentenced for the killing of some 30 people during street protests.

Those who died were supporters of Andry Rajoelina, who took over the government with the support of the army after Mr Ravalomanana fled.

Mr Rajoelina's government has not been internation-

ally recognised and South Africa is leading efforts to end the political stand-off. Ms Nkoana-Mashabane hinted that the judge's decision may have been politically influenced. The former president's defence lawyers walked out on the trial shortly after the hearings began, saying the court was being used by Mr Rajoelina's administration.

India, China sign agreement to establish hotline between PMs

In a significant step in taking their bilateral relations to a new level, India and China have signed an agreement to establish a hotline between Prime Ministers of the two countries. The agreement was signed by External Affairs Minister S M Krishna and his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi after their first round of talks in Beijing. This is the first time in recent years that India has established a dedicated hotline facility with any country. Under the agreement, dedicated phone lines will be set up in the Prime Minister's office of the two countries. This would enable Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Chinese counterpart Wen Jiabao to hold direct conversations whenever they want. The decision to establish the hotline was reached during a meeting between Singh and Chinese President Hu Jintao in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg in June last year.

After the over an hour-long meeting, Krishna said the establishment of hotline facility showed how close India and China were with each other.

The Minister said the discussions between him and Yang were "purposeful and indeed satisfying."

"We want to have continued, sustained and cordial relations with China. That has been one of the priorities of India's foreign policy. That purpose has been subserved by my visit to Beijing," he said.

India, Australia sign education deal to expand partnership

Human Resource Development Minister Kapil Sibal on Thursday after signing a major deal on education with Australia said Indian students continued to come to Australia for higher studies and the government had not "prevented them" from doing so.

New Delhi wants to take the "relationship forward" with Canberra, Sibal told reporters.

A joint ministerial statement was signed to expand the education exchange programme.

An India-Australia Education Council comprising experts from both countries will now be set up.

The relation between India and Australia had soured following the fatal stabbing of Nitin Garg on 2nd January in Australia.

A travel advisory had also been issued to Indian students coming to Australia.

Sibal on Thursday told reporters that he believed the attacks on young Indians had declined.

"The fact that I am here suggests we want to take the relationship forward, it does not mean that we are not concerned about what's happening here. The advisory obviously was given at a point in time when the incidents were at a height...students are still coming to Australia, we have not prevented them," he said.

"I think the Australian government is taking strong steps in that direction to prevent those thing happening."

The international student numbers were down nationally 3 percent and 12 percent in Victoria.

Cabinet approves divestment in SAIL

The Union Cabinet approved divestment in SAIL to mobilise a total of Rs 16,000 crore through both Further Public Offer and sale of government equity.

Solar Impulse plane aims for night record

Pilot Andre Borschberg is about to undertake a journey he hopes will make aviation history.

He is about to take off from a Swiss airfield in a solar-powered plane and attempt to fly through the night. Robotic craft have achieved this feat before now, but never a manned one. Borschberg's HB-SIA aeroplane will have to generate enough energy through its 12,000 solar cells during the day to sustain its battery-driven engines during the dark hours.

It will take off from Payerne in the west of Switzerland and aim not to return to the ground for 24 hours.

The record attempt is the latest step in the Solar Impulse project, which Mr Borschberg leads with his business partner and fellow adventurer Bertrand Piccard.

Dr Piccard famously made the first non-stop circumnavigation of the globe in a balloon in 1999.

The pair want to prove that solar power has a practical future in aviation and, more generally, in powering society at large.

The HB-SIA has the look of a glider but is on the scale - in terms of its width - of a modern airliner.

The aeroplane incorporates composite materials to keep it extremely light, and uses super-efficient solar cells, batteries, motors and propellers to keep itself in the sky.

The vehicle was unveiled last year and has since been undergoing daylight trials. The first full day flight was completed on 7 April.

If Mr Borschberg's night flight proves successful, the Solar Impulse team will go after more records.

The HB-SIA will be succeeded by HB-SIB. It is likely to be bigger, and will incorporate a pressurised capsule and better avionics.

The group plans to use this vehicle in two years' time to make the first manned transatlantic solar flight, followed in 2013 by an even more daring

Post the divestment the government equity in the public sector undertaking would come down to 69 per cent from 85.82 per cent.

Home Minister P Chidambaram said the divestment will help raise Rs 8,000 crore each for government and SAIL.

The sale will happen in two tranches, with each tranche having a 5 percent government stake and a 5 percent fresh equity issuance.

The first tranche is expected to fetch the government \$1.8 billion at the current market price of around 244 rupees (\$5.45) per share.

"After (the sale of) both tranches are completed, government stake would be 69 percent," Home Minister P. Chidambaram said.

The federal government hopes to raise around \$9 billion through stake sales in state-run firms in the 2010/11 fiscal year that began on 1st April.

First oxygen-free animals found

Scientists have found the first animals that can survive and reproduce entirely without oxygen, deep on the floor of the Mediterranean Sea.

The team, led by Roberto Danovaro from Marche Polytechnic University in Ancona, Italy, found three new species from the Loricifera group.

He told BBC World Service they were about a millimetre in size and looked like jellyfish in a protective shell.

"We plan to go back and see if there are new surprises for us," he added.

It is a real mystery how these creatures are able to live without oxygen because until now we thought only bacteria could do this

Professor Roberto Danovaro

One of the three new Loriciferans (so-called because of their protective layer, or lorica) has already been officially named Spinoloricus Cinzia, after the professor's wife.

The other two, currently designated Rugiloricus and Pliciloricus, have still to be formally described.

They were discovered in the course of three oceanographic expeditions conducted over a decade in order to search for living fauna in the sediment of the Mediterranean's L' Atalante basin.

The basin, 200km (124m) off the western coast of Crete, is about 3.5km (2.2m) deep and is almost entirely depleted of oxygen, or anoxic.

Eggs included

Bodies of multicellular animals have been found previously in sediment taken from an anoxic area - or "dead zone" - of the Black Sea, Professor Danovaro told BBC News. But these were believed at the time to be remains of organisms which had sunk there from adjacent oxygenated areas.

The new species are less than a millimetre in size. What the team found in the L' Atalante dead zone was three species of living animals, two of which contained eggs. Although it was not possible to extract the animals alive in order to show that they could live without oxygen, the team was able to incubate the eggs in anoxic conditions aboard on the ship.

The eggs hatched successfully in a completely oxygen-free environment.

"It is a real mystery how these creatures are able to live without oxygen because until now we thought only bacteria could do this," said Professor Danovaro, who heads Italy's Association of Limnology (the study of inland waters).

"We did not think we could find any animal living there. We are talking about extreme conditions -

circumnavigation of the Earth.

India Offers Assistance of US \$ 25 Million to Pakistan for Flood Relief

India announced an additional USD 20 million assistance to Pakistan for flood relief as the neighbouring country is grappling with the worst floods in recent times. The announcement by External Affairs Minister Shri S. M. Krishna in the Parliament comes in the wake of Pakistan's readiness to accept India's initial aid offer of 5 million US dollars which is to be routed through the United Nations.

"As a more concrete assessment of the damage inflicted by this natural disaster and the urgent needs of the people of Pakistan emerges, government has decided to increase its assistance to Pakistan from USD 5 million, announced earlier, to 25 million US dollars," Shri Krishna said in a suo motu statement.

He further said that of the total aid, 20 million US dollars would be contributed to the 'Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan' launched by the UN office for the coordination of humanitarian efforts.

The balance 5 million US dollars would be contributed to the World Food Programme for its relief efforts in Pakistan, Shri S. M. Krishna said.

India had offered USD 5 million aid to Pakistan during EAM's telephonic talks with Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on August 13.

Pakistan has been severely affected by the massive floods that have caused widespread damage to life and property. The recent floods are being described as the worst in that part of the world in last 80 years. According to the latest figures given by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 17.2 million people have been adversely affected by these floods. Death toll has reached over 1600. More than 1.2 million houses have

full of salt, with no oxygen.”

The team made three oceanographic expeditions over a decade

The discovery of the new Loriciferans represents, he said, a “tremendous adaptation for animals which evolved in oxygenated conditions”.

Dead zones in the world’s oceans, he added, were expanding all the time.

Commenting in the journal BMC Biology, Lisa Levin of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography said that before this discovery, “no one had found [animals] capable of living and reproducing entirely in the absence of oxygen”.

“Loriciferans are rarely reported,” she noted.

“Whether they were overlooked or are exceedingly rare and thus not sampled is unclear. Perhaps scientists have been looking for them in all the wrong places.”

Considering the implications of creatures which can exist without oxygen, she said that greater study of animal-microbe interactions in the extreme environment of Earth’s oceans could help answer questions about the possibility of life existing on other planets with different atmospheres.

United States and Russia sign a treaty to slash their nuclear warheads by one-third

President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev today signed a treaty to shrink their nations’ nuclear arsenals, the biggest such pact between the former Cold War foes in a generation.

Tenaciously negotiated by even the leaders themselves, the treaty commits their nations to slash the number of strategic nuclear warheads by one-third and more than halve the number of missiles, submarines and bombers carrying them.

In a lavish chamber within the Czech capital’s presidential castle complex, the two presidents put their names to history. The treaty must be now be ratified by Russia’s parliament and by the US Senate, where the White House lobbying effort is under way.

The new treaty will shrink the limit of nuclear warheads to 1,550 per country over seven years. That still allows for mutual destruction several times over. But it is intended to send a strong signal that Russia and the US - which between them own more than 90 per cent of the world’s nuclear weapons - are serious about disarmament.

Nepal and China agree on Mount Everest’s height

China and Nepal have agreed a solution to a long-running disagreement over the height of Mount Everest. They agreed that the world’s highest mountain - which traverses the border of the two countries - should be recognised as being 8,848m tall. The Chinese previously argued it should be measured by its rock height. Nepal said it should be measured by its snow height - this is four metres higher. During talks in Nepal’s capital Kathmandu, China accepted that claim. This means the official overall height of Everest is now designated as 8,848m. Nepal also recognises China’s claim that the rock height of Everest is 8,844m.

Correspondents say that while thousands of people have climbed the mountain since the first ascent in 1953 by Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and Edmund

been damaged or destroyed besides widespread damage to infrastructure, crops and livestock. All four provinces of Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir have suffered the consequences. Latest reports indicate that the flood situation in Sindh continues to deteriorate, even as flood waters recede in Punjab.

We cannot remain unconcerned with this grave humanitarian crisis of enormous magnitude in our immediate neighbourhood. I had telephoned the Foreign Minister of Pakistan on August 13, 2010, and conveyed deepest sympathies and condolences to the people and Government of Pakistan, on this natural disaster, on behalf of the people and Government of India. As a gesture of solidarity with the people of Pakistan in their hour of need, I had also conveyed Government’s offer of assistance of US \$ 5 million for provision of relief material from India for the flood victims in Pakistan.

Prime Minister called Prime Minister of Pakistan Yusuf Raza Gilani on August 19, 2010, to express his sorrow and to condole the deaths resulting from the huge floods in Pakistan. Prime Minister conveyed that the Government of India had already made an offer of assistance and was ready to do more to assist in the relief effort.

Pakistan has conveyed its deep appreciation of India’s offer of assistance. While mentioning that the United Nations has launched a flash appeal soliciting contributions from the international community to assist the people affected by the floods, Pakistan requested on 27 August that India may channel its contribution to the flood victims through the UN.

As a more concrete assessment of the damage inflicted by this natural disaster and the urgent needs of the people of Pakistan emerges, Government has decided to increase its assistance to Pakistan from 5 million US Dollars, announced earlier, to 25 million US Dollars. Out of this amount, 20 million US Dollars would be contributed to the ‘Pakistan Initial Floods

Hillary, its exact height has been disputed ever since the first measurement was made in 1856.

The broadly-accepted height of 8,848m was first recorded by an Indian survey in 1955. It measured the mountain’s snow cap, rather than the rock beneath it.

But geologists say that the estimates of both countries over the height of Mount Everest could be wrong.

They say that the mountain is becoming higher as India is gradually pushed beneath China and Nepal because of shifting continental plates.

In May 1999 an American team used GPS technology to record a height of 8,850m - a figure that is now used by the US National Geographic Society - although it has not been officially accepted by Nepal.

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) is mandated to provide the nation with best possible services in forecasting the monsoons and other weather/climate parameters, ocean state, earthquakes, tsunamis and other phenomena related to earth systems through well integrated programmes. The Ministry also deals with science and technology for exploration and exploitation of ocean resources (living and non-living), and play nodal role for Antarctic/ Arctic and Southern Ocean research. The Ministry’s mandate is to look after Atmospheric Sciences, Ocean Science & Technology and Seismology in an integrated manner.

The Earth Commission, under which the Ministry of Earth Sciences works in Mission Mode based on Commission structure, is responsible for formulating policies, oversee implementation of policies and programs in mission mode, and ensure the necessary interdisciplinary integration.

Shri Prithviraj Chavan is the Hon’ble Minister of State with Independent Charge for Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Dr. Shailesh Nayak is the Secretary MoES and Chairman, Earth Commission .

The various Units under the Ministry of Earth Sciences are: India Meteorological Department (IMD), National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF), Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) Pune, and Earthquake Risk Evaluation Centre (EREC) under the Atmospheric Sciences and Seismology sector; National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) Chennai, National Centre for Antarctic & Ocean Research (NCAOR) Goa, Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) Hyderabad, Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate (ICMAM-PD) Chennai, and Centre for Marine Living Resources & Ecology (CMLRE) Kochi under the Ocean Science & Technology sector.

MoES aims to create a framework for understanding the complex interactions among key elements of the Earth System, namely ocean, atmosphere and solid earth, by encompassing national programmes in Ocean science, meteorology, climate, environment and seismology.

British Airways and Iberia sign merger agreement

British Airways and Spanish airline Iberia have signed a deal to merge and create one of the world’s biggest airline groups. The merger, which was provisionally agreed in November last year, is expected to be completed by the end of this year.

In a statement, the two companies said the merger would benefit shareholders, employees and customers. It is expected to save the airlines 400m euros (\$533m; £350m) a year.

Emergency Response Plan’ launched by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The balance of 5 million US Dollars would be contributed to the World Food Programme for its relief efforts in Pakistan.

Prime Minister has rightly said that in such times of natural disasters, all of South Asia should rise to the occasion and extend every possible help to the affected people. We remain committed to assisting the people of Pakistan in all possible ways in this difficult hour.

Merkel candidate Wulff wins presidency on third attempt

German Chancellor Angela Merkel’s candidate for president has finally secured victory after a dramatic three rounds of voting.

Rebel votes in the ruling centre-right coalition twice deprived Christian Wulff of an outright win against challenger Joachim Gauck.

But Mr Wulff won the third round with 625 votes to 494 for Mr Gauck.

Although the role of president is largely symbolic, the protracted vote is seen as embarrassing for Mrs Merkel.

Chancellor Merkel’s popularity is falling and her government is riven by infighting.

Today her candidate won - but Angela Merkel remains under pressure, he adds. Mrs Merkel’s instinct will be to fight on, but a Germany with a less confident leader could be a blow to Europe which is looking to its strongest country to help lead it out of recession

After the final vote in the Bundestag chamber of the Reichstag building, Mrs Merkel expressed confidence in her candidate.

“Ladies and gentlemen, an eventful day has ended and Christian Wulff is the president of the Federal Republic of Germany,” she said. “This was our nomination, out of conviction, because we believe that he will represent this country as president in a wonderful

Geetha Johri's report

As the Central Bureau of Investigation closes in on former Gujarat minister of state for home Amith Shah in connection with the Sohrabuddin fake encounter case, it is said that the agency has relied a lot on the report by the Gujarat crime investigation department. It was this report by then CID boss Geetha Johri that blew the lid off the role played by several police officers of Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh in the encounter. Vicky Nanjappa investigates

How it all began

In the year 2006, under inquiry number 66/2006, an inquiry officer by the name V L Solanki submitted a report to the inspector general of police, Gujarat state CID (crime), that he along with KK Pandya and CV Christian had visited Hyderabad on July 2, 2006.

They also visited Nagda, Ujjain and Indore between July 24 and 27, 2006. During their visits the statements of the relatives of Sohrabuddin and also certain photographs of Sohrabuddin and Kausar Bi were obtained.

The statements of the relatives prima facie conclude that on November 22-23, 2005, Sohrabuddin and his wife Kausar Bi were travelling from Hyderabad to Sangli in a bus.

The inquiry officer also recorded the statements of several witnesses. These witnesses who were co-passengers in the same bus identified the deceased and they said the duo were sitting in seat numbers 29 and 30.

It is also clear from the statement that around 1.30 am, at about two kilometres ahead of Tandola village, a Qualis van bearing registration AP-11 (complete number not known) intercepted and stopped the bus; in the meantime, a Tata Sumo also reached there.

Two persons got down from the Qualis and said it was a police checking. Three men with revolvers also got down from the Tata Sumo and entered the bus and picked up two men and one woman.

It is also said in the inquiry report that on November 24, 2005, Rajasthan police officials named Dinesh M N, superintendent of police, Udaipur; Abdul Rehman, police inspector, Pratapnagar police station; Himanshu Singh, sub-inspector; and Shyam Singh, sub inspector; met DG Vanzara, deputy inspector general, operations, Gujarat Anti Terrorism Squad, and other police officers and discussed about the activities related to Sohrabuddin.

Vanzara admitted that on an intelligence input regarding the whereabouts of Sohrabuddin, a team consisting of Dinesh M N and Rajkumar Pandiyan, superintendent of police, ATS, laid a trap for Sohrabuddin between Narol and Vishala toll naka

on the highway.

On November 26, 2005, around 520 hours, Sohrabuddin came on a motorcycle at the place of offence and was identified by N H Dabhi, police inspector, who tried to stop and apprehend him. But Sohrabuddin slipped and opened fire on the police party and tried to escape. In counter, the police team fired at Sohrabuddin and was rushed to civil hospital where he was declared dead.

In this connection an FIR (1st C.R. No. 5/2005 u/s 120B, 121, 121A, 122, 123, 307, 186, 224 of IPC and Sec. (I-B) A of Arms Act and Sec. 135 of B.P. Act) was lodged in the ATS police station itself. The ATS themselves investigated the matter and filed a closure report in the form of abetted summary.

It is important to note here that normally such cases of police firing are registered at the local police station whereas the ATS has been declared a special police station for registering offences against the state, Arms Act and NDPS Act.

It is further significant to note that the said FIR alleged that Sohrabuddin was likely to kill Bharatiya Janata Party leaders.

Second Interim Report of Preliminary Inquiry No. 66/2006 dated 7/12/2006

The enquiry officer recorded the statements of the below mentioned witnesses which is part of this report:

One of the persons who was travelling on November 22-23, 2005, in the same bus as a co-passenger with his family said that a Qualis car overtook and stopped the bus. Two persons carrying weapons came out of the Quallis, and thereafter a Tata Sumo came.

Three persons, who were looking like policemen, came inside the bus, and said that it was a police checking and took away two men and one woman from the bus. The said witness identified by photographs that out of the three, two of them were Sohrabuddin and his wife Kausar Bi.

Third Interim Report of Preliminary Inquiry No. 66/2006 dated 15-16/12/2006

The Inquiry Officer in his third interim report mentioned the versions of the following witnesses:

A resident of Ahmedabad in his statement dated December 15, 2006, stated that on November 25, 2005, his motorcycle no GJI DM 8039 was stolen from outside his residence and he lodged an FIR of the said incident at Amraiwadi police station. After two to three days, the said witness came to know from a newspaper report that his motorcycle was lying in the ATS office and was recovered from a person who was killed in a police encounter.

A resident of

Gandhinagar in his statement dated December 14, 2006, stated that on November 23, 2005, M L Parmar, deputy superintendent of police, ATS, called the witness on mobile and asked to arrange for a farmhouse for a secret investigation. Constable Santram Sharma made an arrangement of a farmhouse named Disha Farm, Jamiyatpura village, near Adalaj, Gandhinagar, belonging to Girishbhai Chhotalal Patel.

On November 24, 2005, M L Parmar called Sharma on mobile at around 1830 hrs and asked the location of Sharma, who was at Koba circle in Gandhinagar. Parmar requested Sharma to be there and in 10 to 15 minutes.

Parmar came in a Qualis which had a light over it. A white colour Maruti car also came along with the said Qualis, in which a driver and three persons were sitting.

Parmar requested Sharma to show the farmhouse and they reached there between 1845 and 1900 hrs. At that time, an employee of the farmhouse was also present.

Sharma stated that some policemen came out of the Qualis with a man whose face was covered and was handcuffed. There was a woman along with them in a burkha.

They were taken to the office of the farmhouse. At that time some more policemen also got down from the Maruti car. Chaube was a policeman in the said team.

On November 25, 2005, Sharma visited the farmhouse, where the door of the office was closed and outside three to four policemen were present in plain clothes.

On November 26, 2005, at around 0800 hrs Girishbhai called Sharma and requested to take the lady with burkha from the office of the farmhouse to any other place.

Sharma requested the same to Parmar, and at around 1000 hrs, on the instruction of Parmar, the lady with the burkha was taken in a Maruti with some policemen.

On the same day, at around 1115 hrs, Parmar called Sharma on his mobile and requested him to come to the civil hospital along with a respectable person.

So Sharma, along with a friend Naresh Patel went to the civil hospital and went to the postmortem room and met Parmar. Parmar showed them a dead body with a bullet wound on his head and made Naresh Patel a *panch* witness.

Thereafter, Parmar informed Sharma that he is the same person who was kept at Disha farm along with a woman with burkha and as the Rajasthan police came to take him, he tried to escape and was shot dead in an encounter. His name is Sohrabuddin and he had come to kill Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi. The said wit-

ness Sharma identified Sohrabuddin and Kausar Bi from the photographs.

Girishbhai Chhotabhai Patel, owner of Disha Farm, in his statement corroborated the aforesaid story and statement of Satish Sharma. Dineshbhai Visabhai Koli (Patel), an employee of Disha Farm in his statement corroborated the aforesaid story and statement of Satish Sharma and Girishbhai Patel. Nareshbhai Ranchhodhbhai Patel, the *panch* witness corroborated the aforesaid story.

zFourth Interim Report of Preliminary Inquiry No. 66/2006 dated 22/1/2007

The inquiry officer again visited Hyderabad and this time Geetha Johri too was present. They conducted an inquiry of the cleaner of the bus who identified the deceased persons.

The inquiry officer thereafter came back to Ahmedabad and on January 17, 2007, recorded a statement of Ajaykumar Bhagwandas Parmar, an armed police constable, who was working in ATS from 2002 to March 2006 as a personal assistant of Rajkumar Pandiyan.

Parmar stated that on November 20, 2005, while he was on duty in the office of ATS Ahmedabad, at around 1700 hrs Pandiyan instructed him to be ready to go out for some operation for two to three days along with Dabhi.

On 20/11/05 Dabhi and the other officers arrived at Hyderabad in a private Qualis car. After reaching Hyderabad, Dabhi from his mobile called Rajkumar Pandiyan and after talking to him, went to the CISF office at Hyderabad and also went to the residence of Radhakrishnan (an IPS officer of Gujarat cadre, now on deputation to CISF, Hyderabad), ex-SP Gandhinagar, where they reported to Rajkumar Pandiyan who was present there.

Santram Sharma, a commando stayed along with Rajkumar Pandiyan and the other four persons, ie, Dabhi, Jadeja, Ajaykumar Parmar and Gurdayalsingh stayed in CISF's rooms.

On November 22, 2005, Dabhi contacted Pandiyan and then they met up at the IPS mess in Hyderabad where the latter was staying. Later Dabhi instructed Parmar to make two fake number plates for the Qualis and the same was prepared at Hyderabad.

Rajkumar Pandiyan instructed Parmar to meet him at the ATS office after having his dinner, and as per the said instruction, Parmar reached the ATS office.

Thereafter, on November 26, 2005, at around 03.30 hrs in the night DIG Vanzara, Pandiyan, Dabhi and the officers of Rajasthan police and some police personnel in the government vehicles left the ATS office.

At around 04.00 hrs in the night Dabhi called Parmar and instructed him to bring the Hero Honda motorcycle lying in the backyard of the ATS office to the Narol circle.

In about 25 minutes,

Parmar reached the Narol circle, where the vehicles of ATS including the vehicles of Vanzara and Rajkumar Pandiyan were parked and all the aforesaid officers were present there.

At that place, ie, between Ahmedabad circle and Vishala circle toll naka near main feeder GEB line, Vanzara, Pandiyan and Rajasthan SP Dinesh M N were discussing something.

At that time in a Maruti car, Parmar, Chaube brought Sohrabuddin there. At that time, a sub-inspector of Rajasthan police took away the above-mentioned motorcycle brought by Parmar, drove it for a short distance and jumped from the motor cycle, and the motorcycle fell down. At that time Sohrabuddin was pulled out of the Maruti car by Chaube and was thrown on the road. Police Inspector Abdul Rehman from his service pistol fired two rounds, ASI Ram Singh one round, ASI Himanshu Singh two rounds and PI Dabhi three rounds on Sohrabuddin.

Sohrabuddin was lying in a pool of blood. Thereafter Vanzara instructed Parmar to take Sohrabuddin to the civil hospital. During this operation, Sohrabuddin did not fire any round from any weapon.

It is also stated by Parmar in his statement dated January 17, 2007, that subsequent to the encounter of Sohrabuddin, Kausar Bi, who was brought along with him, was not seen. It is stated by Parmar that after two-three days of the said encounter, he was told by Jadeja, the driver of ATS, that Kausar Bi was burnt and killed in mountains near DIG Vanzara's Hillol village of Sabarkantha district.

Another witness, a head constable, in his statement of January 19, 2007, stated and corroborated the aforesaid facts disclosed by Parmar.

The killing of Tulsiram Prajapati

Tulsiram Prajapati was at that time lodged in Central Jail, Udaipur and was brought under escort of Udaipur police to attend a date in the court of 13th Metropolitan Magistrate, Ahmedabad, in connection with an offence registered. After the hearing, Prajapati was escorted back in a train on December 27, 2006, at about 0205 hours. The train was stopped at Himatnagar. It transpires that two men allegedly fired and threw chilly powder in the eyes of the policemen and thereby succeeded in securing the release of Tulsiram Prajapati.

Having escaped, Tulsiram Prajapati, as per police records, was allegedly next sighted in Banaskantha district on December 28, 2006, at 0500 hours and was killed in a police encounter.

In brief, as per the FIR, on December 28, 2006, at 0500 hours, Pandya, Police Sub-Inspector of Special Operation Group, Banaskantha district along with a posse of policemen consisting of Rajasthan and Gujarat police were pa-

trolling in Ambaji town, and at 0430 hours they proceeded towards Sharhad Chapri road.

At that time they saw three individuals tried to stop a Matador car, which was travelling ahead of them. The Matador did not stop. The three individuals then tried to stop the police jeep as they came abreast.

At that point of time, as per the FIR, ASI Naransinh Fatehsinh Chauhan recognised one of the three persons as Tulsiram Prajapati, who took out a weapon from his waist and fired at the jeep.

As per the police version, the bullet hit the mud-guard on the left side of the jeep. All the three then started running away and on being chased, two individuals escaped under the cover of darkness, whereas one individual, namely Tulsiram Prajapati, stopped running, turned back and fired at the police party.

In return PSI Pandya fired two rounds while ASI Naransinh Fatehsinh and PC Yudhveersinh Nathusinh of Rajasthan police also fired, which injured Tulsiram Prajapati, and on being brought to Ambaji Hospital, he was pronounced dead.

The above case of police firing and resultant death of Tulsiram Prajapati appears to be highly suspicious for the following reasons.

It is not possible for nine people inclusive of a police driver to sit in one jeep and proceed for patrolling in the manner narrated in the FIR. The constraint of space makes this impossibility.

The FIR does not specify where ASI Naransinh Fatehsinh was sitting in the jeep, which enabled him to identify the deceased Tulsiram Prajapati.

At 5'0 clock on a winter morning, it is very dark and this version that ASI Naransinh Fatehsinh, identified Tulsiram Prajapati does not seem plausible, even if, as claimed, he recognised Tulsiram Prajapati from the headlight of the jeep.

It is absolutely impossible to believe that Tulsiram Prajapati and his alleged accomplice would ever stop the police jeep. Every police jeep in Gujarat has a yellow light blazing on top of the vehicles and it is not possible to believe that any genuine fugitive would ever stop such a vehicle.

There is no obvious reason as to why Tulsiram Prajapati should loiter and be around Ambaji area of Banaskantha district. It is also strange that those who have weapons will also use chilly powder. It is not a coincidence that Banaskantha district comprises of Border Range of which DG Vanzara is in-charge. In fact, Vanzara was transferred out of ATS on December 13, 2006, and resumed duties in Border Range immediately. It is learnt that he personally spoke to Vipul Agarwal, superintendent of police, Banaskantha district, who is a novice and young officer and arranged the said encounter.

Dutch become 1st NATO member to quit Afghanistan

Chitra Singh Rajput

The Netherlands became the first NATO country to end its combat mission in Afghanistan, drawing the curtain Sunday on a four-year operation that was deeply unpopular at home and even brought down a Dutch government. The departure of the small force of nearly 1,900 Dutch troops is not expected to affect conditions on the ground. But it is politically significant because it comes at a time of rising casualties and growing doubts about the war in NATO capitals, even as allied troops are beginning what could be the decisive campaign of the war.

Canada has announced it will withdraw its 2,700 troops in 2011 and Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski has promised to pull out his country's 2,600 soldiers the year after.

That is likely to put pressure on other European governments such as Germany and Britain to scale back their forces, adding to the burden shouldered by the United States, which expects to have 100,000 troops here by the end of next month. President Barack Obama has pledged to begin withdrawing American troops starting in July 2011. But Defense Secretary Robert Gates told ABC's "This Week" broadcast Sunday that only a small number of troops would leave in the initial stage.

The end of the Dutch mission took place amid bad news from Afghanistan — including rising casualties and uncertainty over a strategy that relies heavily on winning Afghan public support through improved security and a better performance by Afghanistan's corrupt and ineffectual government. July was the deadliest

month of the nearly 9-year war for U.S. forces with 66 deaths. U.S. commanders have warned of more losses ahead as the NATO-led force ramps up operations in longtime Taliban strongholds in the southern provinces of Kandahar and Helmand, which accounted for most of last month's American deaths. Two more international service members were killed Sunday in fighting in the south, NATO said without specifying nationalities.

The Dutch departure was sealed after Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende's government collapsed earlier this year over disagreement among coalition members on whether to keep troops in Afghanistan longer. His Christian Democrat party suffered heavy losses at parliamentary elections in June.

Twenty-four Dutch soldiers have died in Afghanistan since the mission began in 2006. Most of the Dutch soldiers were based in the central province of Uruzgan, where they will be replaced by soldiers from the U.S., Australia, Slovakia and Singapore. The Dutch pioneered a strategy they called "3D" — defense, diplomacy and development — that involved fighting the Taliban while at the same time building close contacts with local tribal elders and setting up numerous development projects.

Dutch troops, some of them riding bicycles, mingled closely with the local population and often did not wear helmets while walking around towns and villages as a way of winning the trust of wary local tribes.

"The international community and NATO are helping Afghanistan to stand on its own legs so the country can defend itself against

extremists who want to use it as a breeding ground for global terrorism," Foreign Minister Maxime Verhagen said in a message to Dutch troops.

NATO spokesman Brig. Gen. Josef Blotz played down the significance of the Dutch move, saying it did not signal a weakening of coalition resolve.

"The overall force posture of (NATO) and of the Afghan security forces is increasing," Blotz told reporters. He noted the surge of mostly U.S. forces that have recently taken control of key areas in Helmand and Kandahar provinces from British and Canadian forces.

The American move into those areas is part of a bid to bolster security in Kandahar city, the biggest urban center in the south and the Taliban's former headquarters. The U.S. move into areas around Kandahar was largely responsible for the spike in casualties over the past two months.

An escalation in fighting is likely to lead to a rise in civilian casualties, undermining support for the coalition among ordinary Afghans. A minibus full of civilians struck a roadside bomb in southern Afghanistan early Sunday, and Afghan officials said six of those on board were killed. At least 270 civilians were killed in the fighting in July, and nearly 600 wounded — a 29 percent increase in civilian casualties over the previous month, according to Interior Ministry spokesman Zemer Bashary. U.N. figures show that the Taliban are responsible for most civilian deaths through suicide attacks and roadside bombs.

Nevertheless, many Afghans still blame the coalition, arguing that without foreign troops, the Taliban would have little reason to mount attacks.

More than 200 Afghans marched through Kabul on Sunday to protest the alleged deaths of 52 civilians in a NATO rocket attack in the south. NATO has repeatedly disputed the allegations of civilian deaths, and Blotz said Sunday that a joint assessment team has only confirmed that between one and three civilians may have died in the July 23 attack in the Sangin district of Helmand province.

Protesters carried photos of children allegedly killed or wounded in the missile strike and shouted "Death to America! Death to NATO!"

"We should not tolerate such attacks. The Americans are invaders who have occupied our country in the name of fighting terrorism," said 22-year-old Ahmad Jawed, a university student. He said the Afghan government was equally to blame for failing to exert control over NATO troops. "We don't have a strong enough government to protect the rights of the Afghan people," Jawed said.

In a letter to NATO-led forces, the top U.S. and coalition commander, Gen. David Petraeus, reminded his troops they cannot succeed in turning back the Taliban without "providing (civilians) security and earning their trust and confidence."

"The Taliban are not the only enemy of the people," Petraeus said in the letter. "The people are also threatened by inadequate governance, corruption and the abuse of power — the Taliban's best recruiters." Petraeus told his troops to "hunt the enemy aggressively" but "use only the firepower needed to win a fight." "If we kill civilians or damage their property in the course of our operations, we will create more enemies than our operations eliminate," he said.

Editorial

DEVELOP INDIA

Year 2, Vol. 1, Issue 107, 22-29 August, 2010

Recommendations on "Efficient Utilization of Numbering Resources in India" Released

Recommends integrated numbering scheme for fixed and mobile services by 31st december, 2011. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) yesterday released the recommendations on "Efficient Utilization of Numbering Resources in India".

The existing National Numbering Plan 2003 (NNP 2003) that was designed for 750 million connections including 450 million mobile connections and was designed to last till 2030, has come under severe strain with the mobile numbers having crossed that mark in 2009 itself. With the number of subscribers likely to exceed 1 billion by 2014, the situation calls for an urgent review to facilitate continued availability of numbers with minimum disruption to any service. The recommendations propose a solution in this regard.

In the recommendations, TRAI has proposed that the existing 10-digit numbering scheme should be continued to avoid inconvenience to the customers that would accompany any move to shift to an 11 digit numbering scheme. Giving a two pronged strategy, TRAI has recommended that India should migrate to an integrated numbering scheme for fixed and mobile services by 31st December, 2011. In other words both fixed line and mobile phones will have a 10-digit number. This would make available enough numbers to cater to expansion of existing services and introduction of new services for the next 30-40 years. This integrated numbering will also facilitate extension of number portability to fixed lines.

Till the integrated scheme is implemented the dialling of intra-circle calls from fixed lines to mobile will be with '0' prefixed. This would enable exploitation of spare capacity available in the sublevels of existing Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA) codes, to the extent of about one billion numbers without affecting any telephone number or STD code.

Telephone numbers are a precious resource and should be utilized efficiently. In order to prevent accumulation of unutilized numbers by the service providers, the Authority has proposed that the service providers should not have more than 3 million unutilized numbers, in a service area, at the time of requesting a new block of numbers.

For making allocation of numbers more efficient, TRAI has recommended automation of the allocation process. This would help service providers in getting allocations online.

Once the recommendations are accepted, TRAI proposes to go ahead with the work of preparation of detailed plan for migration to the integrated numbering scheme.

Number resources have always played a central role in telecommunications and have acquired an important economic dimension with the liberalization of the telecommunications sector. Correspondingly significance of numbering as a regulatory instrument has also increased considerably with adequate, fair and transparent access to numbers becoming an essential part of ensuring a competitive telecommunications market.

Get

Online subscription of

DEVELOP INDIA

english weekly newspaper

contact

8800506832

Or

deposit 500/- in our accounts no. 003701546808 or 22750100006086 for one year

DEVELOP INDIA english weekly

The new company will be called International Airlines Group, but the BA and Iberia brands will continue to operate as normal.

The company will have its headquarters in London, with BA shareholders retaining 55% ownership of the company.

In total, the group will operate 419 aircraft, flying to more than 200 destinations, and carry a total of 62 million passengers a year, BA said.

TIMELINE: BA-IBERIA MERGER

1998: BA takes stake in Iberia as part of co-operation deal

2003: BA and Iberia begin working together on routes between the UK and Spain

2007: BA heads a consortium of investors in a takeover bid for Iberia

2007: BA withdraws its bid, arguing that the “friendly terms” essential to the bid were no longer there

2008: BA calls off merger talks with Australia’s Qantas, boosting the chances of an Iberia merger instead

2009: BA and Iberia announce preliminary agreement on merger

2010: Merger deal is signed. The deal will go ahead subject to regulator and shareholder approval

BA chief executive Willie Walsh said the merger would be good for customers.

“The merged company will provide customers with a larger combined network,” he said.

Iberia’s chairman and chief executive Antonio Vazquez said the merger was a key move.

“This is an important step in the process towards creating one of the world’s leading global airlines that will be better equipped to compete with other major airlines and participate in future industry consolidation,” he said.

The merger is seen as a chance for the two airlines to cut costs following two very tough years for the airline industry.

Both BA and Iberia are expected to report heavy losses this year, with BA predicted to announce its biggest annual loss since privatisation.

The airlines are also regarded as a good match, having few overlapping routes.

The merger will also allow the company to compete more effectively with other European giants including Air France-KLM and Germany’s Lufthansa.

The signing of the merger deal follows reports on Wednesday that two US airlines - US Airways and United Airlines - were also in talks over a possible merger.

New alliances

Analysts welcomed the move in light of the current economic environment in which global airlines are struggling for survival.

“The merger makes huge sense for passengers and airlines alike. It will allow participating airlines to spread their cost base, something they desperately need to do,” said Ashley Steel, global chair for transport and infrastructure at KPMG.

Aviation analyst Laurie Price gives his reaction to the deal

Along with other observers, Mr Steel said that the merger was a stepping stone towards a transatlantic alliance with American Airlines.

The new partners may even cast their net wider, said Stephen Furlong at Davy Stockbrokers: “The tie-up with American is the next thing on BA and Iberia’s agenda now and this agreement brings that closer, but they are probably looking at European and Asian carriers too.”

The Unite union, which represents thousands of

way.”

Mr Wulff, the Lower Saxony state governor and a deputy leader of Mrs Merkel’s Christian Democratic Party, sounded an optimistic note after his election, saying: “I’m looking forward to this responsible position.”

It was only the third time in German post-war history that a presidential election has gone to a third round.

Mr Wulff will succeed Horst Koehler, who resigned a month ago.

‘Debacle’
In the first round he was 23 ballots short. Then in the second round, he fell eight votes short of an absolute majority.

Mr Gauck, a non-partisan civil rights campaigner put forward by the centre left, appeared close to tears as his supporters applauded his result in the third ballot, which needed a simple majority.

But the biggest cheers came from Mrs Merkel’s supporters when it was clear Mr Wulff had won.

In the special session of the parliament, 1,244 representatives could take part. Half were federal legislators and half state-parliament nominees.

Much of Germany’s media saw the longest presidential vote in German history - stretching into around nine hours - as a setback for the chancellor.

The daily Handelsblatt called it a “debacle” and Die Zeit called the result a “humiliation” for the government.

Bild, the mass-circulation daily, said it was a “massive slap for the ruling coalition”.

Susanne Hoell, political editor for Suddeutsche Zeitung, said: “One thing has become clear out of all this - support for Merkel in her own coalition has withered away dramatically.

“She will likely be able to carry on until the end of her term but these will be three lost years for our country.”

CHRISTIAN WULFF
· Aged 51, he is a deputy leader of Angel Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union (CDU)
· Governor since 2003 of the northern state of Lower Saxony where he leads a CDU and Free

BA workers, said it supported the deal, but “not at any cost”.

“Mergers mean synergies, and synergies usually mean job losses and the levelling down of terms and conditions,” said Steve Turner, Unite national officer for civil aviation.

He said workers must be consulted on any “key decisions” about their future.

BA is currently in negotiations with Unite to prevent further strikes by cabin crew, who went on strike for seven days last month over pay and working conditions.

Pension problem

BA and Iberia are expected to complete the merger by December, subject to approval from regulators and shareholders.

One stumbling block could be BA’s pension problems. Its two final-salary pension schemes have a combined deficit of £3.7bn, which it needs to cut.

Last month, the airline agreed plans with unions to increase pension contributions to close the deficit.

But those plans still need to be agreed with pension trustees and the pensions regulator. They could yet insist that BA pays in more money to fill the deficit. If Iberia is not happy with those demands, a specific clause in the contract allows it to call off the merger deal. Plans for a tie-up between BA and Iberia date back long before the current troubles in the airline industry.

The two airlines first began working together in 1999 following the privatisation of the Spanish flag-carrier. BA currently has a 13% stake in Iberia.

Mothers are now legal guardians

In yet another step towards making the laws of the country free from gender bias, Parliament has passed a Bill that will give equal right to women with regard to guardianship and adoption of children.

The Lok Sabha today passed a Bill, which provides for mother to be appointed as the guardian along with the father so that the courts do not appoint any other person as a guardian of minor if either of the parents is fit for the purpose.

Under the existing laws, only the father is considered to be natural guardian of the child in a Hindu family for adoption and guardianship and only unmarried, divorced women and widows are allowed to adopt a child.

Under the provisions of the Bill, the mother with the consent of the father and vice versa will also have equal rights to give in adoption of their children. In the existing laws, a married woman could not take an adoption of a son or daughter merely on the basis of her marital status. To bring in the changes, the Bill seeks to amend a few of the clauses in the Hindu Adoptions and Maintenance Act of 1956 and the Guardians and Wards Act of 1890. The Rajya Sabha had passed Personal Law amendment bill on Tuesday.

In his reply to a brief discussion on the bill, the Law and Justice Minister, Veerappa Moily described it as historic bill. He said there was a need for bringing a comprehensive legislation for the betterment of women. He said that there was a growing demand for making laws, which are free from social bias. He admitted that discrimination did exist and there was a need to change this attitude.

India to overtake China GDP in 2013: Report

India will overtake China’s GDP growth between

Democrat (FDP) coalition

· Widely seen as a moderate conservative

· He was born in Osnabrueck and is a trained lawyer

Sharad Pawar to take over as ICC President

Former BCCI chief

Sharad Pawar will take over as International Cricket Council President on 1st July, becoming the second Indian, after Jagmohan

Dalmiya, to occupy the top post. Pawar taking over as the seventh ICC President, succeeding Englishman David Morgan, who concludes his two-year term at the end of the week, the governing body said in a statement.

Dalmiya was the first Indian to be elected for the post in 1997.

US to cut \$4bn in Afghan aid over corruption fears

Page last updated at 02:26 GMT, Thursday, 1 July 2010 03:26 UK

E-mail this to a friend
Printable version
Mr Karzai’s government has faced numerous allegations of corruption US lawmakers have voted to cut almost \$4bn (£2.7bn) in aid to the government of Afghanistan, after allegations of corruption.

It comes after the Wall Street Journal reported that huge sums of cash had allegedly been flown out of Kabul international airport in recent years.

Military operations and humanitarian aid will not be affected by the cuts.

But critics fear the move could threaten crucial infrastructure projects in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, Gen David Petraeus, who has replaced Gen Stanley McChrystal as the commander of US forces in Afghanistan, is on his way to brief US allies at Nato headquarters in Brussels.

No overwriting on cheques after 1st Dec: RBI

The RBI directive to banks, asking them not to honour cheques with

2013-2015. Global investment firm Morgan Stanley has said in a report that it is likely that India and China will achieve growth rates of close to 9 per cent by 2012. India's GDP growth is inching closer to China's and it is estimated to be 8.5 per cent in 2010.

Morgan Stanley's Chief Economist for China Qing Wang said China's growth will move towards 8 per cent by 2015. The report says India's growth will accelerate to a sustainable 9-10 per cent by 2013-15, outpacing China's growth. India is expected to remain the highest growth economy among large countries over the next 20-25 years.

Centre starts centralised monitoring system for trial run of new communication traffic tracker

India has begun tests of its indigenously built centralised monitoring system (CMS), which can track all communication traffic — wireless and fixed line, satellite, internet, emails and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) calls — and gather intelligence inputs. The ministries of defence, law, finance, home, telecommunications and IT will soon seek Cabinet approval for implementing this system across the country.

Planning for CMS, which was aimed at strengthening the country's internal security apparatus, began in 2007 but the project was put on a fast track after the Mumbai attacks, when the terrorists received orders via VoIP (internet telephony).

The centralised system aims to be a one-stop solution against the current practice of running several decentralised monitoring agencies under various ministries, where each one has contrasting processing systems, technology platforms and clearance levels.

This CMS is modelled on similar setups in several Western countries — for instance, in the US, the National Security Agency monitors all communication traffic while in the UK, this is undertaken by the Government Communications Headquarters. The CMS is also considered as India's equivalent of UK's upcoming Interception Modernisation Programme (IMP) — a massive expansion of its current communications surveillance facilities for the internet age.

At present, the country's monitoring system works as follows. With no centralised system in place, officers of the Vigilance Telecom Monitoring (VTM) cells of the DoT assist the different security agencies which monitor mobile, fixed, satellite and internet services offered by both private and government companies. The VTM cells also act as the technical interface between telecom service providers and security agencies.

Rising Indian middle class

The Asian middle class, powered by India and China, is fast replacing Europeans and Americans as the global consumers who anchor the world economy, says a new study by the Asian Development Bank.

India's booming middle class — or, those who spend anywhere between \$2 and \$20 (93 to 930) a day on purchasing power parity basis — is now spurring consumption and innovation in the country, said the study, The Rise of Asia's Middle Class, released.

However, more than three-fourths of India's 274 million-strong middle class face the risk of slipping back into poverty in the event of a major economic shock as they are in the lowest spending bracket of \$2-4 (93-

overwriting, will come into effect from 1st December instead of the earlier scheduled date of 1st July.

The new rule is intended to prevent fraudulent withdrawal of money and expedite clearance of cheques, the apex bank said in its latest circular.

RBI has advised banks to create awareness among customers about the new norms, which were aimed at preventing fraud, besides expediting clearance of cheques where CTS (Cheque Truncation System) is used.

Under CTS, image of cheque is sent to clearing house for transfer of funds.

When contacted, an RBI spokesperson said, "The notification regarding cheque truncation system which prohibits alteration will come into effect from 1st December, 2010. There is no mention of 1st July."

The central bank in February had come out with circular on 'Standardisation and enhancement of security features in cheque forms' detailing the norms for image-based processing of cheques.

RBI had said that fresh cheques should be issued by customers in case of change in payee's name or amount (whether in figures or words).

Changes, however, could be made with regard to date.

The new norms will not apply to those cheques, which are cleared by clearing houses that use Magnetic Ink Character Recognition (MICR) or non-MICR system.

Also, it added, the norms will not be mandatory for over the counter collection of funds or for direct collection of cheques outside the Clearance House Arrangement.

President Gives Away Sports and Adventure Awards

The President, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil gave away Sports and Adventure Awards at a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhawan today. The function was attended by several Union Ministers including the Defence Minister Shri A.K.

186) a day. Over the next two decades, the Indian middle class population is expected to touch one billion, it said.

And 55% of the world's middle class will be in Asia by 2030, up from 25% now.

The study found that Asia's consumers spent an estimated \$4.3 trillion (in 2005 purchasing power parity dollars), or about one-third of OECD consumption expenditure, in 2008 and by 2030 will likely spend \$32 trillion, comprising about 43% of the worldwide consumption.

China had 817 million people, or 63% of its population, in the middle class bracket in 2008.

Auction for 3G Spectrum

Auction for 3G services was held in all 22 telecom circles. The total reserve price kept for spectrum auction was Rs. 14,330 crores for 3G services and Rs. 5,250 crores for BWA services. Total amount raised by the Government through spectrum auctions is Rs. 67,718.95 crores from 3G services and Rs. 38,542.11 crores from BWA services. This amount includes the share of MTNL/BSNL.

Money raised through the spectrum auctions has been credited into Consolidated Fund of India as non-tax receipts. The additional expenditure of Government is based on the overall resource position comprising tax receipts, non-tax receipts and capital receipts. While it is correct that non-tax receipts have increased due to increased 3G and BWA spectrum auction receipts, the final outcome on tax receipts, other non-tax receipts (excluding 3G & BWA receipts) and capital receipts would be known in due course. However, Government is committed to meeting its deficit target of 5.5% GDP laid down in BE 2010-11.

The Ministry of Communications & Information Technology has requested Ministry of Finance to consider favourably the request of BSNL/MTNL for reimbursement of spectrum charges paid towards 3G spectrum. However, Ministry of Finance has not acceded to the request since the terms of allotment of spectrum to both BSNL and MTNL was that they would have to pay a onetime spectrum fee at a price equal to the highest bid, as determined through the auction of 3G services which was also incorporated in the Notice Inviting Application (NIA) for the auction and also to maintain level playing field with other service providers.

Ban on Mobiles Manufactured in China

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has not issued any orders/guidelines in respect of ban of mobiles manufactured in China and operating in the country for want of valid International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) number. However, Department of Telecom (DOT) has issued instructions to Telecom Service Providers that calls from mobile handsets with any IMEI number which is not available in the latest updated IMEI database of Global System for Mobile Association (GSMA) alongwith without IMEI or all zeroes IMEI are not processed and rejected with effect from 24 Hrs. of 30th November 2009.

Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU)

Indian Institute of Science and Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, are the only two institu-

Antony, the Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports Dr. M.S. Gill, the Minister of Tribal Affairs, Shri Kanti Lal Bhuria, the Minister of New & Renewable Energy Resources, Dr Farukh Abdullah and Shri Parkashbapu Patil, Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports, and several eminent sports persons.

Ms. Saina Nehwal, who was to receive the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award this year for her sterling performance in Badminton, could not attend the ceremony because of her sports engagements.

Shri Satish Pillai (Athletics), Shri Kuldeep Singh (Wrestling) and Ms. Anita Chanu (Weightlifting) were conferred Dhyan Chand Awards for the year 2010, for their contribution to sports by their performance and efforts to promote the sports. The award carries a statuettes, citations and cash prize of Rs 5 lakh each.

The President also gave away Dronacharya Awards for the this year to Shri A.K. Kutty (Athletics), Shri Subhash B. Aggarwal (Billiards & Snooker), Shri L. Ibomcha Singh (Boxing), Shri Ajay Kumar Bansal (Hockey) and Captain Chandrup (Wrestling) in recognition of their meritorious achievements in the field of coaching. The award carries a statuettes, citations and enhanced cash prize of Rs 5 lakh each.

Shri Joseph Abraham (Athletics), Ms. Krishna Poonia (Athletics), Shri Dinesh Kumar (Boxing), Shri Parimrajan Negi (Chess), Ms. Jhulan Goswami (Cricket Women), Shri Deepak Kumar Mandal (Football), Shri Sandeep Singh (Hockey (Men), Shri Dinesh Kumar (Kabaddi), Shri Sanjeev Rajput (Shooting), Shri Rehan Jehangir Poncha (Swimming), Shri Kapil Dev K.J. (Volleyball), Shri Rajeev Tomar (Wrestling), Shri Rajesh Chaudhary (Yachting) and Shri Jagseer Singh (Paralympic Athletics) were conferred Arjuna Awards for the year 2010, in recognition of their outstanding achievements in the respective field of sports. Ms. Jasjeet Kaur Handa (Hockey Women) also an Arjun Awardee, could not

tions to make it to the list of the top 500 universities, in Shanghai Jiao Tong University's 2010 edition of ARWU.

What ARWU factors in is how many Nobel Prizes or Fields Medals (Nobel equivalents in maths) have gone to alumni and staff, how many papers have been published in Nature and Science, and the total number of papers indexed in Science Citation Index-Expanded and Social Science Citation Index. Indian schools fare very poorly on all these counts.

India to push for early opening up of services sector with ASEAN

The proposed services and investment agreement between India and Asean hasn't made much headway due to the trade block's reluctance to open up a large number of services to Indian companies and professionals.

So far, most Asean members have made offers in just four-five of the more than 150 services categories and are hesitating to give commitments on allowing easier movement of professionals.

India and Asean have already implemented a bilateral free trade agreement in goods early this year with the intention of extending it to services and investment by the end of the current calendar year.

The delay in talks is disappointing for India as it expects to gain much more in services than from goods as Asean has also not agreed to India's demand for a separate chapter on liberalising movement of professionals and are yet to come up with specific offers in the area. India hopes to make inroads into several areas such as education, medicine & healthcare and accountancy and architecture once the norms are liberalised.

India's Golfer Arjun Atwal win PGA Tour

India's leading Golfer Arjun Atwal made history, as he became the first Indian to win on the PGA Tour. Atwal won the Wyndham Championship held in Greensboro, USA. Earlier, Arjun Atwal had won on the European, Asian and nationwide tours. But this is the first time he won on a PGA tour, bringing laurel to the country. Atwal is based in Orlando. He will get a two-year exemption on the US tour by the virtue of his win at Wyndham Championship. Atwal won the championship by one stroke.

The 37-year-old Arjun Atwal finished at 20-under-par 260 to beat American David Toms (64) by one stroke. He expressed joy and happiness over his success and vowed to keep up the momentum in future.

Joint Education Council between India and Australia

The India-Australia Education Council is to bring together government, academia, business and industry of both the countries to enhance bilateral collaboration in the education sector. The subject of safety and well being of students of both the counties is being taken up during bilateral meetings at various levels. An Indian delegation led by the Minister of Human Resource Development visited Australia from 6th to 10th April 2010 held extensive discussions with various dignitaries from the Federal Government of Australia as well as State Governments of Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria regarding the safety and well being of Indian students in Australia. The Minister urged the Austra-

lian authorities to take stringent measures to stop such attacks and also to apprehend the culprits in recent incidents. The Australian Government has undertaken various measures for protection and safety of Indian students including introduction of an International Students' Care Service, deployment of additional forces, amendments in sentencing laws and empowering police forces to combat violence and anti-social behavior. The Premier of New South Wales also assured the Union HRD Minister of early establishment of help line for international students, including Indian students, to access in distress.

With a view to recognize, the contribution made to sports development by entities other than sportspersons and coaches, the Government has instituted last year , a new award "Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar", which has four categories, namely, community sports development, promotion of sports academies of excellence, support to elite sportspersons and employment to sportspersons.

The Services Sports Control Board was conferred upon Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar Award for the year 2010, under the category of Community Sports Identification and Nurturing of Budding Young Talent. The Defence Minister, Shri A.K. Antony received this Award.

The Khel Evam Yuva Kalyan Vibhag, Government of Madhya Pradesh also received the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar for Establishment and Management of Sports Academies of Excellence. The Chief Minister of the State Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan received this award. The Award was also conferred upon the Services Sports Control Board for Employment of sportsperson and sports welfare measures. The same Award was also conferred upon Tata Steel Limited for Financial Support for Sports Excellence. The Award carries a trophy and citation.

As a result of switchover to current year format, two universities have been selected for Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy (MAKA). For the year 2008-09 , Punjabi University, Patiala has been awarded Trophy while Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar has been awarded for the year 2009-10. Both the universities received a cash prize of Rs.10 lakh each and Rolling Trophy along with a small replica of the MAKA Trophy for retention by the

Penalty on telecom Service Providers

Amendments were issued in December, 2009 in the Licence Agreements of all telecom service providers for security related concerns. As per these amendments, the Licensee(s) have to apply to the Licensor for security clearance, along with the details of equipment(s) as well as details of equipment(s) suppliers and manufacturers including Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM), before placement of the final purchase order for procurement/upgradation of equipment/software for provisioning of telecommunications services under the licence and that it shall also include any such activity by the franchisee, agents or person of that licensees. In addition, Licensee is required to submit a self certification with Licensor (DoT) that the equipment/ software proposed for procurement/ upgradation is free from black boxes, malware, trapdoor and remote/hidden attack through computerised command and control and adequate steps and mechanisms for adequate security against any subversive activity by company/ manufacturer/ vendors involved in the supply chain have been taken and are in place. If the Licensor/Government of India at later stage, after security audit of the above said equipment/software procured by them for use in their network for providing licensed services, finds that the self certification as above is incorrect, then they agree to accept a penalty of upto Rupees Fifty Crore as per Licence Agreement for each such procurement. In such an event, on hearing from Licensor/GoI, they shall immediately uninstall and remove the equipments/software from the network for providing licensed services and follow any other direction from the Licensor/ Government of India in this regard in the interest of National Security.

Recently, amendments in the Unified Access Services (UAS)/ Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS)/ Basic Services License Agreements and template of agreement between telecom service provider and vendor of equipment/software/services has been issued on 28-07-2010 in consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs, to addresses the security concerns in procurement of equipment from foreign vendors. Accordingly, in the event, any security breach is detected at later stage after deployment/installation of equipment as a result of security audit or in any other manner, the relevant equipment supplied by the vendor shall be taken out of service and penalty of Rs. Fifty crore for each Purchase Order shall be imposed on the Licensee. In addition, a penalty of 100% of contract value shall be levied by the Licensor on the licensee. The Licensee shall deposit the penalty and additional penalty with the Licensor within 30 days of the Notice. The Licensor may also at its discretion blacklist the vendor from making any supply deals with Indian Operators.

Universities. While Punjabi University will keep the trophy for the first six months, Guru Nanak Dev University will keep the trophy for next six months.

The President also conferred Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Awards for the year 2009 to recognize the contribution and performance of the awardees in the field of adventure sports. Ms. Chandraprabha Aitwal was given Life Time Achievement Award. HC Kamlesh Kumar Bounthiyal for Land Adventure, Wg. Com. Jai Kishan for Air Adventure and Shri Sufyan Sheikh for Water Adventure were also awarded. The award carries cash prize of Rs 5 lakh and Bronze Statuette along with a citation.

Delhi Metro's Central Secretariat-Qutub Minar line opens

Gurgaon got a little closer to North and central Delhi on Friday with the opening of the Central Secretariat-Qutub Minar Metro corridor cutting the travel time between Connaught Place to the satellite city to just 50 minutes.

The 12.53-km fully underground corridor that passes through some of the densely-populated areas of south Delhi, which have been deprived of the Metro comfort till now, was integrated with the already operational Qutub Minar-HUDA City Centre line.

Editorial & Corporate Office
Sector 15, Nayabans, NOIDA
RNI
UPENG/2008/26617
Publisher, Editor & Owner
D.S.Rajput
Year 2, Vol. 1, Issue 107, 22-29
August, 2010
Place of Publication &
Registered Office
331/240 A, Stainly road
Nayapura,
Allahabad (N.P.)
Printing Press and address
Academy press, Daraganj,
Allahabad (U.P.)
website:
developindiagroup.com
E-mails
developindiamediagroup@gmail.com
developindia2011@gmail.com
civilservicesminerva@gmail.com
Editorial No. -
8800506832