

Ex-Chairman of NSCN's Khaplang faction to join NSCN (IM)

Imphal, Aug 20,

As per reported in Economic Times dislodged chairman of Khaplang faction of NSCN, Khango Konyak, along with his loyalists is likely to join NSCN-IM.

Konyak, who was elected chairman last year after the death of octogenarian chairman SS Khaplang, was removed by the outfit recently.

Yung Aung, a relative of Khaplang, was elected as new chairman by a majority vote on August 17 in Myanmar.

The newspaper report is based on the confirmation by a senior NSCN-IM leader, who

confirmed the newspaper that Khango and his supporters will join NSCN-IM, which is holding peace parleys with Centre.

"Presently Khango is coming from Myanmar. We are ensuring that he is not attacked on way," quoted the statement by Economic Times.

While SS Khaplang was Naga from Myanmar, Khango is Konyak Naga from Mon district of Nagaland, a stronghold of the Khaplang faction.

Security analyst observed Aung's selection signals comeback of Myanmar's Nagas in the Khaplang outfit

who abrogated 14-year-old ceasefire with Indian government in 2015 while followed a spate of attacks on security forces, including the killing of 18 army jawans in Chandel.

Khango - born on July 17, 1943 at Yangkhao village - joined the Naga national service in 1963 at the age of 20. He was inducted into the Naga Army after completing basic military training.

In 1966, Khango went to erstwhile East Pakistan on Alee (Foreign) Command. He was promoted as '2nd Lt' in 1976 and commanded 50 cadres who went to China under Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah.

Sena ex-councillor held

Agency
Mumbai Aug 20,

The CBI has arrested a former Shiv Sena councillor from Jalna in connection with the August 2013 murder of rationalist Narendra Dabholkar in Pune, apparently on the basis of a "confession" by suspected shooter Sachin Prakashrao Andure. Shrikant Pangarkar, 40, was detained on Saturday night after Andure allegedly told his CBI interrogators that the ex-councillor was riding pillion on his motorbike when he shot Dabholkar. He was arrested on Sunday night under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, used regularly in terror cases.

Centre to send medicines amid epidemic fears

Agency
New Delhi Aug 20

The Union health ministry said on Sunday it was preparing to send consignments of medicine to Kerala amid concerns that the state may witness outbreaks of dengue, gastroenteritis or leptospirosis as the floodwaters recede. The first load, containing 90 types of medicine in quantities requested by the state, will reach Kerala on Monday. The Centre will also send medical teams that will quickly assess the health situation and suggest measures to prevent and control outbreaks, the ministry said. The ministry has asked Kerala, which has set up over 3,700 medical camps in the flood-affected areas, to intensify daily lookouts for unusual spikes in illnesses. Although the state has not reported any outbreak over the past week, health experts believe the environment will become conducive for epidemic-prone diseases once the floodwaters recede. Among the big concerns is a bacterial infection called leptospirosis that people can pick up from water contaminated with the urine or faeces of several species of rats. The likely portals of entry of the infection are cuts or abrasions in the skin, mucous membrane or conjunctiva. "The magnitude of the inundation and the high population of rats makes an outbreak of leptospirosis highly likely,"



Alexander Joseph, a community medicine expert at the Kerala Institute of Medical Sciences in Thiruvananthapuram, Joseph said a environment contaminated with rodent urine can make people, particularly those walking barefoot or with abrasions or cuts in open skin exposed to water, vulnerable to the infection. Public health experts have long stressed the need for patients and doctors to look out specifically for leptospirosis after extensive flooding because its early symptoms mimic those of viral fever. The infection can, however, deteriorate into life-threatening complications such as liver damage, kidney failure or meningitis. Without a state of alertness, leptospirosis may be wrongly diagnosed, Joseph said. "The clinical course is variable. Leptospirosis may manifest as a sub-clinical illness or a severe,

potentially fatal illness with multi-organ failure," Krishan Kumar Aggarwal, a New Delhi-based doctor and former president of the Indian Medical Association, said. "A high degree of suspicion is required to make the diagnosis." Once diagnosed, leptospirosis is treated with antibiotics. Doctors also expect mosquito populations to soar as the floodwaters recede, leaving behind residues in tree holes or containers that are perfect breeding places for the *Aedes aegypti*, which spreads dengue and chikungunya. "We're watching out for leptospirosis, dengue and gastroenteritis," Joseph Cherian, president of the Cochin branch of the Indian Medical Association, said. "We've set up medical camps across the district and plan to send doctors, nurses and paramedics wherever they are needed."

Abducted 2-year-old rescued

Agency
Guwahati Aug 20,

A two-year-old boy, who was kidnapped by a rickshaw-puller from their home here at Bamunimaidam at 2am on Sunday, was rescued by police from a jungle, about 1km away, where he was abandoned. Krishna was sleeping with his parents in their house in Moila Tanki colony in Bamunimaidam under Chandmari police station when Mantaj Ali sneaked into the house through the window and kidnapped him. He also stole a mobile phone. "The bed was near the window, which was half open. This helped him sneak the child out easily. Ali took the child in his rickshaw but the child fell down and lost consciousness. Ali thought the child had died and took him to a jungle near Bamunimaidam Bihu field and left him there," officer-in-charge of Chandmari police station Biren Chandra Deka said. Around 3am, Krishna's father Ranjit Rout, a paint worker, realised that his son was missing and sought police help. "Ali by then had left for Kamakhya railway station and was planning to catch a train. But when Rout called the



mobile phone which Ali had stolen, Ali said Krishna was with him and demanded Rs 10 lakh as ransom for his release. The family said they did not have so much money but he agreed to bargain and asked him to come to Kamakhya railway station. Then we deployed a policeman to talk to him when he agreed to reduce the amount to Rs 35,000. Around 6am, we sent him and a group of policemen in plain clothes to Kamakhya railway station and when he called Ali, he refused to come to the station. A policeman in plain clothes found Ali talking over the phone near the railway

station and caught him," Deka said. He was brought to Chandmari police station and during interrogation, he admitted that he had kidnapped Krishna. "He led the police team to the jungle. But fortunately the boy was conscious and was rushed to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital. The boy is fine now but he got some scratches on his body," deputy commissioner of police said. Ali, from Bihar, was arrested and booked under Section 363 (kidnap), 369 (kidnapping a child below 10 years) and 380 (theft) of the IPC.

Rain intensity falling : IMD

PTI
New Delhi Aug 20,

The rainfall intensity over Kerala has decreased over the past two days, the meteorology department said on Sunday, adding that there is no alert of heavy precipitation for the next four days in the state.

India Meteorological Department's additional director general Mritunjay Mohapatra said on Saturday the state recorded 9cm of rainfall. On August 16 and 17, the state recorded 19cm and 11cm of rainfall respectively, he said.

"Over the past three days, we have seen a gradual decrease in rainfall in the state," Mohapatra said. The IMD said it is expecting "heavy rainfall" only in Kozhikode, Kannur and Idukki districts.

Kerala has been battered by "exceptionally high seasonal rainfall" since August 1, leading to nearly half of the state submerged. Idukki has reported the maximum number of deaths, with 43 people losing their lives since August 8, according to official estimates.

Back-breaking Kerala mission

Agency

Bangalore Aug 20,

Fingers crossed, Kerala has taken the first tentative steps towards a long march to normality and what is beginning to look like an arduous rehabilitation challenge thrown by floods that have claimed 370 lives since May-end. "The rescue mission is in its final stage and we will make sure the last person is moved to safety. Water is receding in most places, although there is isolated rain. But we need to start the next phase of work right now," chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan said in capital Thiruvananthapuram. The full extent of the task ahead is still not clear although entire townships are feared to have been reduced to mud pits and an initial government assessment has put the damage at Rs 19,500 crore. As many as 7.24 lakh people are now accommodated in 5,645 relief camps in the state. Only when they return home can the extent of the devastation be fully assessed. "So far today (Sunday), 22,034 people have been rescued and 13 deaths reported," the chief minister said. As many as 210 people died in the past 10 days. Rescue and relief volunteers say, on the basis of what they are beginning to see in some places where water is receding, that many houses have been rendered unliveable. Mud several feet thick has piled in rooms and walls have cracked up, exposing the electrical wiring. With the swirling waters getting soiled with



sewage from septic tanks, it is feared that many wells have been contaminated. T.P. Johnny, a 60-year-old resident of a Kochi suburb on the banks of the Periyar river, returned to his home on Sunday to assess the situation. "The entire house is covered with mud. It will take days to clean to make it liveable. All our household articles, including the TV and the fridge, have been destroyed," he told Reuters. The preliminary assessment is that Kerala, which always faced a shortage of day labourers, will require thousands of semi-skilled hands adept at repair jobs. Bengal could be a source of such manpower. Vijayan took care to reassure migrant labourers - the state has 20 lakh such workers, many of them from Bengal. Vijayan said the government would help the migrant workers who may not be in a position to work immediately after being stranded in the floods. "We will not desert them for sure," he said. "We will restore power supply, repair damaged water pipelines and roads and help rehabilitate all. The work will be carried out on a war

footing." He said the initial estimate for road repairs alone was Rs 441 crore. "We have to repair 221 bridges. Even now, 54 bridges are under water." The CPM leader thanked the Centre, other states, companies and individuals who had chipped in and volunteered to participate in the rescue and relief effort. "I know everyone would continue to help us," he said. The government has instructed officials to focus on clearing the debris and garbage carried by the floodwaters to almost everywhere. "Since hygiene is key to preventing contagious diseases, six health inspectors will be posted at each panchayat. As the government does not have so many health inspectors, we will hire the necessary people on contract," Vijayan said. The leader of the Opposition in the Assembly, Ramesh Chennithala of the Congress, offered "full cooperation" to the state government in the next phase too. "We will certainly have some suggestions for the government but we assure our cooperation to help the people,

Search for dry land to bury the dead Several crematoriums under water in Kerala

Agency
Bangalore Aug 20,

With several cemeteries and crematoriums under water in Kerala, a pastor has offered his personal land to people from any religion to bury their dead. As the flood death toll crossed 350 by Saturday, most of the bodies were lying in hospital mortuaries because of the difficulty of finding dry land to bury or cremate the dead. Kuruvila Kulanjikompil Samuel, a Delhi-based independent pastor, said he had donated 25 cents of his personal land in Adoor, Pathanamthitta, to bury people from all faiths. "I believe in humanity and this (funeral) is a basic need for all humans from every community," he told *The Telegraph* on Sunday. While Adoor itself is unaffected by the floods because of its altitude, Samuel said his land was located even higher and "never gets flooded". A government source said cremations could start on the riverbanks once the floodwaters receded. But the issue is with burials, which can only be done at

designated burial grounds. The Mar Thoma Church has broken with practice by allowing a flood victim to be buried on the compound of his home, from where the water had receded, since the local churchyard was still submerged. "We bury our dead in cemeteries at the church. But in this case the church grounds were under waist-deep water," Reverend John Mathew of the Mar Thoma Youth Centre in Adoor said. The parish church had to seek special permission from the Kottayam-based Church head to have the man buried at his home in Puliyoor, Chengannur, one of the worst-hit areas. Reverend Mathew said he was not sure how many cemeteries were available for burials in the flood-hit areas. "What I know is that lots of bodies are still in the mortuaries at various hospitals. We are hoping the water will recede in two or three days," he said. The municipal crematorium for Hindus in Thirupunithura, Ernakulam, has not received any bodies over the past few days. "It's



become difficult for people to bring their dead to the crematorium as the surrounding areas are under water," the crematorium's contractor, Sujil, told this newspaper. Sujil runs a second crematorium in Cheranallur near Edappally in the same district, but that too is cut off by the floodwaters. "The crematorium is at a higher location, but all the roads leading to it are completely flooded," he said. Sujil said the situation in Aluva was worse as the crematorium

itself was submerged, but the one in Ernakulam city was fully functional. "People have been taking their dead to any available place for cremation, for this is not something that can be postponed indefinitely," he said. In flooded Vaikom town in Kottayam, where several people have died, the local municipality is trying to locate dry patches of municipal land. "Once we find some dry patches we can start cremations," a municipal official said.