

PM Modi receives UN's 'Champions of the Earth Award', says Indians committed to saving environment

Agency
New Delhi Oct 3,

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday received the United Nation's highest environmental honour, the 'Champions of the Earth Award' from United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, at a ceremony in Delhi. He is among the six winners who got the award today. "It is an honour for Indians. Indians are committed to saving the environment. Climate and calamity are directly related to culture; if climate is not the focus of culture, calamity cannot be prevented. When I say 'Sabka Saath', I also include nature in it," Modi said. After conferring the award to PM Modi, Guterres in a tweet said: "The world needs bold leadership on climate action. I

thank India for setting an example and was pleased to present Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the Champions of the Earth Award." The award was announced Wednesday for his "unprecedented pledge to eliminate all single-use plastic in India by 2022." Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron were recognised in the 'Policy Leadership Category' for their "pioneering work in championing" the International Solar Alliance and "new areas of levels of cooperation on environmental action", the UN Environment Programme said. The Cochiti International Airport took home the 'Entrepreneurial Vision' Award for its leadership in the use of sustainable energy. "Cochiti is

showing the world that our ever-expanding network of global movement doesn't have to harm the environment. As the pace of society continues to increase, the world's first fully solar-powered airport is proof positive that green business is good business," the UNEP statement said. The other winners include environmental and indigenous rights defender Joan Carling and the 'Beyond Meat and Impossible Food' in the Science and Innovation category for their popular, plant-based alternative to beef and "their efforts to educate consumers about environmentally conscious alternatives." China's Zhejiang's Green Rural Revival Programme was awarded for the Inspiration and Action for the

"transformation of a once heavily polluted area of rivers and streams in East China's Zhejiang province." Past winners have included Afroz Shah, who led the world's largest beach cleanup and won the award in 2016, Rwandan President Paul Kagame also won the same year, while former US Vice-President Al Gore won the award in 2007. Ocean Cleanup CEO Boyan Slat won in 2014, while scientist-explorer Bertrand Piccard, and developer of Google Earth Brian McClendon won the award in 2013. Addressing an event in Rajkot on Sunday, Modi had said cleanliness was an important aspect of Mahatma Gandhi's life and the father of the nation was the most deserving candidate for the UN green award.

AR organises Maiden educational tour to Imphal for students of border village



IT News
Imphal, Oct 3,

The Assam Rifles, "Friends of the Hills people" has organised an Educational Tour to Imphal for the students of St Mary's School, Behiang of Singhat Sub Division. The educational tour will include places of historic and scientific importance such as War Memorial, War

Cemetry, Botanical Garden, Science Centre, INA Museum and Loktak Lake. The tour was flagged off from Singhat today with full pomp and celebrations and a total of 40 students and 12 teachers are participating in the tour. The entire tour will be completed in one day wherein the students will get a glimpse of the heritage and the history of the beautiful city of Imphal

which they otherwise only see on TV and in videos. These small steps by the Assam Rifles will motivate more and more students to join schools and would also make them aware of the latest happenings in the state. This noble initiative would go far in maintaining peace and harmony in the region which the younger generation can look forward to.

Sabarimala verdict: No review petition, will provide protection to women visiting shrine

Agency
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Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Wednesday said the state government will not file a review petition of the Supreme Court verdict lifting the age restriction on entry of women to Sabarimala temple. "We are a law-abiding society and we have to follow the Supreme Court orders," CM Vijayan said. Vijayan said the state will ensure facilities and protection to women devotees visiting the shrine. "Women police

personnel from Kerala and neighbouring states will be deputed to ensure law and order. Women who want to go to Sabarimala cannot be stopped," Vijayan said. On Tuesday, thousands of people, mainly women, marched on the streets of Pandalam to protest against the Supreme Court ruling. People were chanting *Ayyappa keerthanams*. This was followed a call by the erstwhile royal family of Pandalam, which has a considerable stake in the traditions and rituals at the

temple and the newly floated Ayyappa Dharma Protection Samithi. The protest march in Pandalam against the SC verdict on Sabarimala. (Express Photo by Leju Kamal) R R Varma, a member of the erstwhile Pandalam royal family, said that around 50,000 people turned up for the march. "This is a strong message for everyone regarding the concern of the Hindu faithful, including women, in the Sabarimala issue. The turnout was spontaneous, we had just

announced it through mass media," he said. Meanwhile, the Congress party's central leadership said Tuesday that it supports the Supreme Court's decision to allow women of all ages to enter Sabarimala temple in Kerala but argued that the party's Kerala unit is free to express its opinion depending on "sensitivities" of the state. On Monday, the party's Kerala unit had argued that the Travancore Devaswom Board, which manages the temple, should file a review petition against the judgment.

Andhra Pradesh MLC M V V S Murthy dies in car accident in US

Agency
Amaravati Oct 3,

Veteran Telugu Desam Party leader, educationist and member of Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council M V V S Murthy died in a road accident in the USA, the party announced here Wednesday. He was 76. He also served as a member of Lok Sabha from Visakhapatnam for two terms from 1991 to 1996 and 1999 to 2004. Murthy and three others were killed in a car-truck collision on the highway near Alaska in the US, where he had gone to take part in the GITAM Alumni meet on October 6. The MLC was on his way to a wildlife sanctuary when the accident occurred on Monday afternoon (US time). Telugu Association of North America members are coordinating with the US authorities to bring the TDP leader's body back to the state. Murthy had been an active leader of the TDP since 1983 and had a close association

with the party's founder-president N T Rama Rao. He founded the Gandhi Institute of Technology and Management (GITAM) at Rushikonda near Visakhapatnam, which has now been granted a "deemed-to-be university" status with campuses in Hyderabad and Bengaluru. He served as Chairman of Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority from 1987 to 1989 and lost the 1989 Lok Sabha election. In 1991, he was elected to Parliament from Visakhapatnam for the first time and again in 1999. A doctorate in economics from Andhra University, Murthy established many colleges in his native East Godavari and other districts. He also owned a soft drinks bottling plant in Visakhapatnam and became popular as 'Goldspot' Murthy. He was elected to the Legislative Council in 2014 from the Visakhapatnam Local Authorities constituency. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, his deputies K E Krishna

Murthy, N China Rajappa, Council Chairman N Md Farooq, Assembly Speaker Kodela Sivaprasada Rao, ministers and MPs condoled Murthy's death. "I was shocked to learn about the death of Murthy. His services as an MP and an MLC are memorable. His death is a deep loss to the field of education and also politics. It is a personal loss to me," Naidu said in a message. He also expressed anguish over the death of many TDP leaders in road accidents. Deputy Chief Minister Krishna Murthy recalled that he and Murthy were elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time in 1991. "I lost a good friend," he said. Ministers Yanamala Ramakrishnudu, K K Venkata Rao, Kalava Srinivasulu, Sidda Raghava Rao, N Lokesh, MPs Kesineni Srinivas, Kanakamedala Ravindra Kumar, MLA Nandamuri Balakrishna, former MP C Ramachandraiah and several others condoled 'GITAM' Murthy's death.

Junaid Khan lynching: Main accused granted bail by Punjab and Haryana HC

Agency
New Delhi Oct 3,

15-year-old Junaid, his brother and two cousins were attacked in June 2017 on a Mathura-bound train. (File) The main accused in the Junaid Khan lynching case was granted interim bail by the Punjab and Haryana High Court on Wednesday. With the latest order, all the accused in the case

are now out on bail. Naresh Kumar, the accused, has been in judicial custody since July 8, 2017. According to the order passed by Justice Daya Chaudhary, the interim bail has been granted only in view of the stay ordered by the Supreme Court on the proceedings of the case before the trial court. His lawyer had argued that the accused has remained in jail for more than one year and should

be granted an interim bail. On June 7, a Sessions Court in Faridabad had dismissed the bail plea of Naresh while stating that the allegations against him are of serious nature and "there is every possibility for pressurising of the prosecution witnesses" in case he is granted bail. "The accused cannot take the ground of parity for the reason that he has been shown as the

main accused and the causing of injuries with sharp edge weapon have been attributed to the present accused." Additional Sessions Judge Narendra Sharma had said in his order. The judge in the order had also mentioned that he has found substance in the prosecution argument that mere long custody does not make the accused entitled to bail.

Meghalaya Over 1.4 lakh children vaccinated for Measles-Rubella till October 1

Courtesy
Shillong, Oct 3,

The Meghalaya government had officially launched the Measles-Rubella Campaign on Monday. Over 1 lakh children in the state were vaccinated for the diseases till October 1. The Measles-Rubella Campaign has received a positive response with over 1 lakh children being vaccinated for the diseases till October 1. "As of October 1, a total number of 1,40,577 children have been vaccinated," Secretary of Health and Family Welfare department, Pravin Bakshi informed here on Tuesday. It may be mentioned that the government had officially launched the Measles-Rubella Campaign on Monday. "Despite the campaign having been officially launched yesterday, there



were five districts who have done a soft launch of the campaign on September 24," Bakshi said. He further lauded the efforts of the Deputy Commissioners and District Medical and Health Officers and the cooperation of the school authorities and various social organisations which has led

to massive response to the campaign in the state. Interestingly, two of the Deputy Commissioners came forward to get their children vaccinated on the day when the campaign was launched. The Meghalaya Government had a vaccination target of around 13 lakh children between the age of 9 months

and 15 years while nationally the figure stands at about 41 crores. As per the official figure, the total number of children vaccinated so far is around 11 crore throughout the country. It may be mentioned that East Jaintia Hills clocked the most impressive coverage figures of 41% immunization which was closely followed by West Jaintia Hills with 37% and West Khasi Hills 22 %. When asked on the steps to dispel the rumours surrounding the vaccination, Bakshi said that they had made an impassioned appeal to parents and teachers not to believe in rumours or even circulate misinformation. It may be mentioned that Indian Association of Paediatrics, World Health Organization and UNICEF have certified that the vaccines are completely safe.

More Jet Airways employees hit by salary default

Agency
Mumbai Oct 3,

After delaying salary to its pilots and engineers along with senior management, Jet Airways has now defaulted on the payment of September salary to other categories of employees as well, an airline source said Wednesday. The Mumbai-based full-service airline, partially owned by UAE national carrier Etihad Airways, has been facing financial problems for quite some now. The Naresh Goyal-controlled airline is struggling to mop up funds to meet its payment obligations, including salaries

to its over 16,000-strong workforce. "We generally get our salary on the 1st of (every) month. Last month, the airline had paid to all employees except senior management, pilots and engineers on time. "But this time (September), they have failed to pay even to other categories of employees such as manager and above levels," the source said. The source said the employees in A1-A5, O1 and O2 grade, or whose salaries are up to Rs 75,000 per month, were paid on October 1, while the rest of the staffers in the M1, M2, E1 and above grades have not been paid yet.

A query sent to Jet Airways on the issue did not elicit a written response. On September 6, the full service airline informed senior employees that their salaries would be paid in two instalments till November. The salaries for August was to be paid in two instalments 50 per cent by September 11 and the remaining by September 26. Though the private carrier paid the first tranche on time, it could disburse only 50 per cent amount of the second instalment on the designated date and deferred the payment of rest 50 per cent to October 9.