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In the lush tea gardens of Assam's Nagaon district, workers are seen meticulously spraying insecticides on tea plants as part of routine pest control measures aimed at protecting the crop and ensuring a healthy yield

Constable killed during action against sand mafia

BALRAMPUR: A constable was mown down by a tractor carrying illegally excavated sand in Chhattisgarh's Balrampur district following which a police official was suspended for negligence in duty, officials said on Monday. Constable Shiv Bhajan Singh, the victim, was part of a team visiting the area under Sanawal police station limits on Chhattisgarh-Jharkhand border on Sunday after receiving information about encroachment, said an official. As they reached the spot, they learnt that some people were illegally mining sand in the Kanhar river in Libra village, the official said. When the police team reached the site and tried to detain some persons engaged in illegal mining in the riverbed, Singh was mown down by a tractor. He died at hospital, the official added.

Medical college student dies by suicide in Pune

PUNE: A 19-year-old AIIMS Bhopal student allegedly ended his life here on Monday citing academic stress among the reasons, police said. Utkarsh M. Shingne, the deceased, belonged to Maharashtra's Beed district and was studying at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Bhopal, said an official. He allegedly slit his throat in the bathroom of a flat in Wanowrie area, said Rajkumar Shinde, deputy commissioner of police. "At 10.15 am the control room received a call that the body of a young man was found in the bathroom at Panchratna Housing Society.... Investigation revealed that Shingne was suffering from depression and was under medication for the past few months," the official said. The note cited a change in curriculum, class attendance and academic stress as some of the prime reasons for the action.

3 brothers among 5 killed in road accident in Gujarat

AHMEDABAD: Five persons, including three brothers, were killed after their sports utility vehicle (SUV) collided with a car near Dholera town in Gujarat's Ahmedabad district on Monday, police said. The accident occurred near Sandheda village around 3 pm, in which three others were injured, a Dholera police station official said. "A speeding SUV collided with a car coming from the opposite direction on a highway connecting Ahmedabad to Bhavnagar. A total of six men were travelling in the SUV, while two women were in the car when the accident occurred," the official said. Of them, three brothers and their cousin from the SUV, who were on their way back to Ahmedabad from Bhavnagar, died in the accident. The fifth victim - a woman - was going towards Bhavnagar in the car, he said.

Allahabad HC junks Elvish Yadav plea against chargesheet

PRAYAGRAJ: The Allahabad High Court on Monday dismissed YouTuber Elvish Yadav's plea challenging a chargesheet and criminal proceedings against him in the snake venom case. The chargesheet alleges consumption of snake venom as a recreational drug at "rave" parties by people, including foreigners. Justice Saurabh Srivastava dismissed Yadav's petition after considering the statements in the chargesheet and the FIR and said the veracity of such allegations would be tested in the trial. Appearing for Yadav, senior counsel Navin Sinha and advocate Nipun Singh, argued the person who filed the FIR against Yadav was incompetent to file it under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Yadav, the counsel said, was neither present at the party which allegedly took place in Noida nor anything was recovered from him.

Hyderabad couple on way to Shirdi killed in car-truck collision

JALNA: A couple from Hyderabad died and five persons, including three children, were injured when their car collided with a truck on the Solapur-Dhule highway in Jalna district of Maharashtra, police said on Monday. The victims were travelling to the holy town of Shirdi when the accident occurred around 11:30 PM on Sunday in Ambad tehsil. The deceased duo was identified as G. Ram (42) and his wife, G. Madhuri (39). The impact of the collision was so severe that the car was completely mangled, making rescue operations challenging for local people and police. The police had to bring a JCB machine to extricate bodies, an official said.

Delhi builder arrested for siphoning off crores from private bank

NEW DELHI: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police has arrested a real estate developer for allegedly cheating and siphoning off crores of rupees from a private bank, police said on Monday. The accused, Anil Mithas (52), a resident of Noida, is the director and majority stakeholder of a real estate group, the police said. The private bank had sanctioned loans of Rs 100 crore and Rs 65 crore in 2016 and 2017 for the construction of projects in Noida and Gurgaon by M/s Unnati Fortune Holding Limited (UFHL). However, it was found that Mithas had allegedly misrepresented facts and siphoned off the loan amount.

UK's immigration crackdown to impact Indian students, workers

PTI, LONDON: There was a mixed reaction as British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Monday set out tighter new rules to clamp down on soaring immigration figures, which is set to impact Indians as one of the largest groups of student and skilled worker visa applicants to the UK.

The new rules, framed in a new Immigration White Paper, doubles the standard qualifying period for settlement status in Britain to 10 years and imposes stricter English requirements, with assessments of improvements in language skills embedded within the visa rules for applicants and their dependents.

Overseas student visas, a category dominated by China and India, will witness a tightening of the post-study Graduate Route visa offer from the current two years to 18 months.

"While we are relieved



that the Graduate Route has been preserved, albeit with a reduced duration, we urge that its implementation, and that of the wider reforms, be approached with care, clarity, and collaboration," said Sanam Arora, chair of the National Indian Students and Alumni Union (NISAU) UK.

The organisation flagged concerns about the impact on Indian students, the largest users of the Gradu-

ate Route with an aim of acquiring international work experience at the conclusion of their degrees.

"Panic must not be allowed to set in among current and prospective students. Immediate clarity is needed on who is affected and how," NISAU said.

The group also called for better alignment between student and skilled worker routes, another category dominated by Indians and set to face tougher mini-

mum salary requirements. "We are pleased to see recognition of our long-standing calls for better alignment between immigration and skills, and we strongly support the push for greater transparency and accountability in education agent practices, for which we have laid out very clear asks," added Arora.

Almost every UK visa category is set to be impacted by the White Paper, with the Health and Social Care visa - led by Indians and other South Asian applicants - in line to be axed.

"The closure of the Health and Care Worker visa to new applicants has been framed as a response to growing exploitation, but with the numbers of visas granted to first time entrants already dwindling, it is but a distraction," said Dr Dora-Olivia Vicol, CEO of the UK's Work Rights Centre.

13 dead, 14 injured in trailer-truck collision in Raipur

PTI, RAIPUR: Thirteen people, all women and children, died, and 14 were injured in a collision between a trailer and a goods truck in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, police said on Monday.

Four children and nine women died in the accident that took place late Sunday night near Saragaon on Raipur-Balodabazar road in Raipur district.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of the deceased.

Raipur Senior Superintendent of Police Lal Umed Singh said 35 persons, mostly members of a family, were returning from a family function in Bana-Bansari village when the goods truck they were travelling in collided with a trailer

coming from the opposite direction and went on to hit another heavy vehicle.

After getting information about the accident, a police team was sent to the spot, and the injured were taken to Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar Hospital, Raipur.

District collector Gaurav Singh said district administration officials also reached the spot. Police have registered a case, and the matter is being investigated, the collector said.

Chief Minister Sai expressed grief over the incident and announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of the deceased and Rs 50,000 each to the injured persons.

Sai has instructed officials to ensure proper treatment for the injured persons.

ISRO chairman: 10 satellites ensure citizens' safety, security

PTI, IMPHAL: ISRO Chairman Dr V Narayanan said that 10 satellites are continuously working for a strategic purpose to ensure the safety and security of the country's citizens.

Speaking at the convocation ceremony of the Central Agricultural University in Manipur's Imphal on Sunday, he said India is becoming a "vibrant space power" and will have its first space station by 2040.

"Today, 433 satellites of 34 countries are lifted from India and placed into orbit...I am also happy to inform you that today, 10 satellites are continuously working 24/7 for a strategic purpose to ensure the safety and security of the citizens of the country," the ISRO chief said during the programme.

His comment came amid the military conflict between India and Pakistan. The country launched Operation Sindoor on

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early May 7 to destroy terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack last month.

India and Pakistan had on Saturday announced reaching an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect.

Narayanan also said, "If we have to ensure the safety of our country, we have to serve through our satellites. We have to monitor our 7,000 km-long sea-shore. We have to monitor

the entire northern part continuously. Without satellite and drone technology, we can't achieve that." He said the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is developing a satellite for G20 countries to study climate change and air pollution and monitor weather.

"Today, to our credit, we have developed a generation of launch vehicles. We had our first satellite in 1975. From there, till today we have conceived and built 131 satellites of various types and capabilities," he said.

UN Global Road Safety Week: WHO urges members for safer road design, lower speed limits

PTI, NEW DELHI: The WHO has urged all member states, the civil society, the private sector and communities to push for people-centred mobility policies, safer road design, safe vehicles and lower speed limits on the occasion of the 8th UN Global Road Safety Week.

The UN Global Road Safety Week is marked biennially, starting on the third Monday of May.

This year, the theme urges the world to make walking and cycling safe for everyone.

Walking and cycling are

an integral part of the multimodal transport systems in the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2020-2030, Saima Wazed, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia, said.

They also promote healthy and sustainable cities and lifestyles, she added.

"Globally each year, road-traffic crashes take a devastating toll on our communities, claiming the lives of nearly 1.2 million (12 lakh) people and leaving up to 50 million (five crore) more with non-fatal injuries. These tragedies are

not mere statistics. They are the loss of children, parents and loved ones, and are largely preventable," Wazed said.

"Road-traffic injuries are now the leading cause of death among young people aged five to 29 years, and they continue to be a pressing public health concern in our WHO South-East Asia Region," she said.

"In 2021 alone, our region accounted for more than 3.3 lakh deaths from road crashes, representing 28 per cent of the global total," she added.

IMD forecasts heatwave in Bengal, heavy rain in north

PTI, KOLKATA: The IMD on Monday forecast heatwave conditions in several districts in the southern part of West Bengal, while heavy rain is likely in the sub-Himalayan region of the state for the next few days.

There will not be any major change in day temperature over the districts of West Bengal during the next four to five days, and thereafter it will gradually fall by two to three degrees during the subsequent two to three days, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Heatwave conditions are likely in one or two places in Paschim Bardhaman, Bankura, Jhargram, Paschim Medinipur and Birbhum districts in south Bengal till May 15.

Expired ammunition explodes during disposal in Indonesia, killing 13

AP, JAKARTA: An explosion during the disposal of expired munitions in Indonesia's West Java province on Monday killed at least 13 people, including four soldiers, military officials said. The cause of the blast was not immediately clear.

Members of the Indonesian army were carrying out the disposal of unusable and expired ammunition - which had been stored in a military warehouse centre - in an environmental conservation area in Sagara village of Garut district. The initial explosion was shortly followed by another blast, said Maj. Gen. Kristomei Sianturi, the Indonesian military spokesman.

Nine civilians and four army members were killed, Sianturi said, adding that several other people were being treated for various injuries.

The cause of the inci-

dent is still being investigated, with a focus on whether the standard procedure for ammunition disposal was followed, Sianturi said. The location - vacant land under the management of West Java's Natural Resources Conservation Agency - is far from residential areas and often used for munitions disposal.

However, such activities often attract the attention of nearby residents, who often take metal fragments, copper or scrap iron from grenades and mortars, Sianturi said, "And there might be an unexpected second explosion after that."

Local television footage showed an explosion lighting up the sky and thick black smoke, followed by a second blast a few minutes later. Another video showed ambulances evacuating the injured victims and the dead.

SACRED PROCESSION



Devout Catholic faithful carry a revered image of Virgin Mary through the streets of Panchimalco during the vibrant Flower and Palm Festival procession, held in the town of Panchimalco, El Salvador

Kerala CM assures timely rehabilitation of landslide survivors of Wayanad

PTI, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday assured the timely completion of rehabilitation initiatives for landslide survivors in Wayanad.

He also directed the officials to urgently provide the monthly rent for their accommodation, according to a statement from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO).

The directive was issued during a meeting held to assess the progress of construction work on the proposed township for survivors from the Mundakkai and Chooralmala hamlets of Wayanad, which were devastated by a landslide last year, it said.

A timeline has been set for obtaining administrative, technical, and financial approvals for the township's construction, the statement said.

"The rehabilitation of those affected by the landslide in Mundakkai and Chooralmala will be completed on time," the statement quoted Vijayan as saying after the meeting.

During the meeting, Vijayan also directed officials to complete all necessary procedures related to the permitted cutting of trees, reorganisation of the power distribution systems, and other related tasks.

He further instructed them to expedite the steps for providing assistance from the Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund, deploying officials, and removing debris from water bodies to ensure smooth water flow, the release added.

In addition to the CM, Cabinet ministers K Rajan and K N Balagopal, Chief Secretary A Jayathilak, and other senior officials attended the meeting, the CMO statement added.