

News In Brief

Rain plays havoc in K'taka

Bangalore, Nov 8 (UNI) Normal life was thrown out of gear in many parts of Karnataka due to incessant rain under the influence of cyclone 'Jal' with five people killed and reports of house collapse and crop damage from various parts of the state.

Khel Ratna to Saina

New Delhi, Nov 8 (UNI) Sports Minister M S Gill gave away Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award for the year 2010 to ace shuttler Saina Nehwal at a simple ceremony here today.

"As she (Saina) was in Paris taking part in World Championship when the National Sports Awards were conferred by the President of India on 29th August, 2010, she could not receive the Award on that occasion. "In view of this, the Award was conferred on her today," the Sports Ministry said in a statement.

Text of Obama's address to joint sitting of parliament



courtesy: ALL VOICES

New Delhi, Nov 8 (UNI) Text of US President Barack Obama's address to the joint session of India's Parliament made at its Central Hall today: "Mr Vice President, Madame Speaker, Mr Prime Minister, Members of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, and most of all, the people of India.

I thank you for the great honour of addressing the representatives of more than one billion Indians and the world's largest democracy. I bring the greetings and friendship of the world's oldest democracy-the USA, including nearly three million

proud and patriotic Indian Americans. Over the past three days, my wife Michelle and I have experienced the beauty and dynamism of India and its people. From the majesty of Humayun's Tomb to the advanced technologies that are empowering farmers and women who are the backbone of Indian society.

From a Diwali celebration with schoolchildren to the innovators who are fueling India's economic rise. From the university students who will chart India's future, to you-leaders who helped bring India to this moment of promise.

At every stop, we have been welcomed with the hospitality for which Indians have always been known. So to you and the people of India, on behalf of me, Michelle and the American people, please accept our deepest thanks. Bahoot dhanyavad.

I am not the first American president to visit India. Nor will I be the last. But I am proud to visit India so early in my presidency. It is no coincidence that India is my first stop on a visit to Asia, or that this has been my longest visit to another country since becoming President.

United States and India - bound by our shared interests and values - will be one of the defining partnerships of the 21st century. This is the partnership I have come here to build. This is the vision that our nations can realise together.

My confidence in our shared future is grounded in my respect for India's treasured past-a civilization that has been shaping the world for thousands of years. Indians unlocked the intricacies of the

human body and the vastness of our universe. And it is no exaggeration to say that our information age is rooted in Indian innovations-including the number zero. India not only opened our minds, she expanded our moral imagination.

With religious texts that still summon the faithful to lives of dignity and discipline. With poets who imagined a future where the mind is without fear and the head is held high. And with a man whose message of love and justice endures-the Father of your Nation, Mahatma Gandhi. For me and Michelle, this visit has therefore held special meaning.

Throughout my life, including my work as a young man on behalf of the urban poor, I have always found inspiration in the life of Gandhiji and in his simple and profound lesson to be the change we seek in the world. And just as he summoned Indians to seek their destiny, he influenced champions of equality in my own country, including a young Martin Luther King.

Rs.89 crores has been disbursed to farmers across the country



courtesy: JUGAARINDIA.COM

New Delhi, Nov 8 (UNI) Agriculture credit of Rs 89, 687 crore has been disbursed to farmers across the country till June in 2010-11 as against credit flow target of Rs 375,000 crore.

Credit disbursement in 2009-10 was to the tune of Rs 366,919 crore (provisional figures) against the target of Rs 325,000 crore.

The flow of agriculture credit since 2003-04 has consistently exceeded the target. Agriculture credit flow has gone up from Rs 86,981 crore in 2003-04 to Rs

366,919 crore in 2009-10, according to an official release issued here today.

Government has taken several measures for improving agricultural credit flow and bringing down the rate of interest on farm loans. Agriculture credit plays an important role in improving agricultural production, productivity and mitigating the distress of farmers. From Kharif 2006-07, farmers are receiving crop loans up to a principal amount of Rs 3 lakh at seven per cent rate

of interest. In 2009-10, an additional one per cent interest subvention was provided to those farmers who repaid their short term crop loans as per schedule. The subvention rate for timely repayment of crop loans has been raised from one per cent to two percent from the current fiscal, thus bringing down the effective rate of interest for such farmers to five per cent per annum. The limit of collateral free farm loan has also been increased from Rs 50,000 to Rs 1,00,000.

As part of government initiative to provide Kisan Credit Card to all the eligible and willing farmers in a time-bound manner 9.48 crore KCCs have been issued till June this year. The State Governments have been advised to launch an intensive branch or village level campaign to cover all eligible and willing farmers.

Minister threatens to cancel licence to IPPs

Bangalore, Nov 8 (UNI) Karnataka Power Minister Shobha Karandlaje today said Independent Power Producers (IPPs) who had taken licence to produce power from the Government but failed to commission their units would be asked to surrender it.

Speaking to reporters here, Ms Karandlaje said after she took over as minister, she had cancelled eight such licences for failing to start their units.

Sensing a scandal in not investing any money even after getting government's nod to install power units, the minister said, "I will review the whole issue shortly before initiating any actions." She said Government had issued

hundreds of licences to produce power upto 25 MWs to establish either hydel or wind power units in the past. Replying to questions, the minister informed that electricity supply companies had several hundred crores of rupees for having supplied power to irrigation pumpsets free of cost.

"I have appealed the Chief Minister to release a minimum of Rs 100 crore to ESCOM's which were suffering from shortage of funds," she said. She said Karnataka, is facing severe power crisis and purchasing about 900 MWs of power daily to bridge gap between demand and supply. "Due to widespread rains, the demand for power has come down sharply from 145 MU's to 108 MU's daily," she said.

Harbhajan maiden test ton drives

India to a draw

Ahmedabad, Nov 8 (UNI) Feisty off-spinner Harbhajan Singh's superb maiden century (115) and his 163-run partnership with VVS Laxman (91) saved the match for India after the hosts were bowled out for 266, leaving New Zealand to chase down an improbable 295 runs in the last session of the first Test at the Sardar Patel Gujarat Stadium, Motera, here today.

The seventh wicket partnership between Harbhajan and Laxman yielded 163 runs. Laxman missed his century by nine runs when he got out leg before wicket to Daniel Vettori.

At 15 for five and 65 for six yesterday, India appeared to be staring defeat in the face, but Laxman and Harbhajan saved the blushes for the hosts.

Ross Taylor snapped up Harbhajan but not before the feisty cricketer smacked 115 runs to dig India out of troubled waters.

Harbhajan's 115 came after facing 193 balls and was studded with 11 fours and three sixes. While Laxman was all

grace, piercing the field with deft glances and cover drives, Harbhajan was ready to attack the bowling stepping down the track to hit the spinners over the top.

However, Laxman was unlucky to miss his hundred when he was adjudged leg before wicket to Vettori by umpire Steve Davis. But in the replays, it was showed that the ball hit the bat before hitting the pads.

Laxman made 91 after facing 253 balls with nine boundaries to leave India on 228 for seven. In the next ball, Steve Davis once again got it wrong when he adjudged Zaheer Khan leg before to Vettori again of an inside edge onto the pads to leave India on 228 for eight.

Harbhajan then completed his first ever Test hundred in style hitting Vettori for a six. He reached his hundred after facing 165 balls with 10 fours and two sixes. The home team expectedly had a sedate start in the morning, the first four overs yielding just five runs. Harbhajan lived dangerously early on - he

could have been run out by Daniel Vettori, while Brendon McCullum grassed a touch chance in close. There was frustration for the Black Caps as Laxman drove Vettori inches short of the bowler, then Harbhajan edged Jeetan Patel inches in front of slip. Laxman launched Patel just short of the leg-side boundary for a four which brought up his half-century, and Harbhajan followed suit soon after.

Harbhajan's half century came in just 79 balls with five boundaries and a six. He became the fourth batsman in the history of the game to score fifties in both innings of the match batting at number eight.

The visitors suffered another near miss as an edge from Harbhajan off Chris Martin did not quite reach Ross Taylor at slip.

Two balls later Harbhajan charged down the wicket and hit Martin cross batted over the bowlers head for a boundary.

Earlier, at close on day four, India were struggling at 82 for six in 40 overs.

Thomas appointed as Chief Vigilance Commissioner

New Delhi, Nov 8 (UNI) The Supreme Court today decided to scrutinise procedure adopted by Union government in appointing Mr P J Thomas as the Chief Vigilance Commissioner (CVC).

A bench comprising Chief Justice S H Kapadia, Justices K S Radhakrishnan and Swatanter Kumar directed Attorney General G E Vahanvati to place before the court all relevant materials and documents which were considered for his appointment as the CVC.

The AG has been directed to produce the records within two weeks.

Earlier, appearing for the petitioner NGO — Centre for Public Interest Litigation, counsel Prashant Bhushan alleged Mr Thomas had been appointed CVC in spite of the fact that he is under the CBI scanner for his alleged involvement in the 2G spectrum scam in which Union Telecom Minister A Raja is the main accused.

Mr Thomas was Telecom Secretary at the time.

Alleging that Mr Thomas was also chargesheeted in palmolein oil import scandal,

the petitioner contended that a person with 'such dubious credentials' can not be appointed CVC as the CVC must be "a man of unimpeachable integrity and reputation.

International Eco Seminar in Bhopal

Bhopal, Nov 8 (UNI) The city-based Search and Research Group will conduct a seminar on 'Technology and Environment' here on December 4 and 5.

Organising Committee Chairperson Monica Jain and Vijay Joshi said here today that more than 200 papers were received from universities and research bodies.

Participants from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Dubai, United States, United Kingdom, Canada, The Netherlands and other countries are registering themselves.

November 15 is the last date for submission of papers and November 22 the final date for registration.

The bus stopped near the bank and as the trunks were being by Shivaraj, Shivayogi and Mohankumar, they were attacked by one Thoushik of Aleem Nagar with a knife severely injuring Mohankumar.

The other two suffering minor bruises. Alert driver of the bus, Doddabasappa, overpowered the assailant while the other three held on to the cash trunks firmly. Police took Thoushik into custody.

Mohankumar was rushed to KR Hospital and later shifted to Apollo BGS Hospital where his condition was said to be out of danger.

India not afraid of 'K' word: PM

New Delhi, Nov 8 (UNI) India today said it was ready to discuss all issues with Pakistan, including the 'K' word, (Kashmir) but asserted that talks could not go on simultaneously with the "terror machine" still very active.

The remarks by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh came in response to visiting US President Barack Obama's comments that it was in the interest of both India and Pakistan to reduce tension.

The two leaders were addressing a joint press conference after their delegation-level talks here.

Mr Obama, while refusing to mediate between the two countries, said the US could not impose solutions on India and Pakistan but would be happy to play any role to reduce tensions in the region.

"Dialogue between India and Pakistan may not begin on the particular

flashpoint (Kashmir)...I believe that it is in the interest of India and Pakistan to reduce tensions between themselves and the US cannot impose solutions to these problems," the US President said.

Mr Obama was asked whether the US would like to play any role between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

The Prime Minister said India would be happy to engage with Pakistan but stressed that terrorism flowing from that country had to be stopped.

"You cannot talk simultaneously with the terror machine active as before," he added.

"...We are not afraid of the K-word in discussions with Pakistan...India is committed to resolving all problems with Pakistan but simultaneously Pakistan should ensure that it moves away from terror-induced coercion..." Dr Singh said.

CRIME

Rs 10 Cr Heroin confesticated

New Delhi, Nov 8 (UNI) The crime branch of Delhi police have arrested two alleged members of an international drug racket, including a Nigerian, and seized heroin worth Rs ten crore from them.

"Sanjeev Kumar, a resident of Punjab, was apprehended from near Akshardham temple and 4.049 kg of fine quality heroin worth Rs 8 crore in international market was recovered from his possession on November 3," police said today.

The crime branch arrested his (Sanjeev's) another associate, a Nigerian, with 1.011 kg heroin worth Rs two crore on November 7, by acting on special information. "The accused Sanjeev, after sustained interrogation, disclosed that he used to procure the consignment of heroin from his counterparts in neighbouring countries," police said.

It also said the Nigerian, Dinebari Debari, came to India in 2003 and was arrested for drug trafficking in 2006. "Dinebari was in jail for about a year. After his release on bail, he again started the drugs trafficking and since then he has been living in India," it said.

A cases has been registered at police station (special cell), Lodhi Colony. Further investigation is in progress.

Robbery at KSRTC foiled

Mysore, Nov 8 (UNI) An attempt to rob Rs 40 lakh was foiled by an alert KSRTC driver here today.

Police said Shivaraj, Accounts Supervisor Prasanna and Shivayogi, both cashiers along with Mohankumar, all staff of KSRTC Rural Bus Depot, had set out along with trunks filled with cash from the Depot for depositing at the neraby Vijaya Bank.

CARTOON CORNER

