

Business and Politics in Muslim World

India
Sadia Khanum
25 Sep to 1 Oct 2010

Presentation Date: 6 October 2010

Report # 139

Summary (Page # 4-6)

National Report

Politics:

- Centre unveils 8-point formula for Kashmir
- Advani sidelined on Ram temple issue
- Resolve Ayodhya dispute or accept verdict: Pranab
- Political parties happy uncertainty is over
- A significant step, says BJP
- Congress cautious
- Left parties react cautiously
- Don't see it as a victory or defeat: Congress

Ayodhya Verdict:

- RSS praises SC for spiking effort to derail Ayodhya verdict
- Ayodhya verdict on Sept 30: PM appeals for peace
- Ayodhya litigants welcome end of suspense
- High Court awards two-thirds of disputed Ayodhya site to Hindu parties, one-third to Sunni Waqf Board
- Panchayati justice that takes away legal rights of Muslims: Rajeev Dhavan
- Muslim groups disappointed
- Force of faith trumps law and reason in Ayodhya case
- Hindu Mahasabha to challenge verdict
- Historical evidence ignored, say historians

Minorities' Issues:

- Muslim groups want code for women in Kerala polls

Hindu Fundamentalism:

Insurgency Movements:

- Huge arms haul from Maoist hideouts

Economic Front:

- India can expand sans US: Montek
- India Inc to PMO: Can't reserve jobs, hurts merit
- India to grow 8.7 per cent in 2011: ADB
- Food inflation up at 16.44%

Foreign Relations/Geo-strategic developments:

- Obama's visit 'defining moment' in Indo-US relations
- India, Japan to have first military talks

Military

Indian Occupied Kashmir:

- "4,000 security men injured in 3 months of Kashmir violence"
- Geelani 'saddened' by Ayodhya title case verdict

Social front:

- Maternal mortality: India's claims debunked
- Urban food security has deteriorated in many States, says report

Information Technology:

- Negative news: Finally govt on 'SMS alert'

Regional Report

Central India (Hindi Heartland)

Politics:

Social front:

Economic Front:

The North

Politics:

- Punjab has failed to secure funds for flood protection work: Khaira

Social front:

Economic Front:

The East

Politics:

- Reservation for OBCs up in West Bengal

Social front:

Economic Front:

The South

Politics:

- Historic, says Yeddyurappa

Social front:

Economic Front:

West India

Politics:

Social front:

Economic Front:

National Summary:

National Report

Politics:

Centre unveils 8-point formula for Kashmir

The Centre will appoint a group of interlocutors, under the chairmanship of an eminent person, to begin the process of sustained dialogue in Jammu and Kashmir with political parties, groups, students, civil society and other stakeholders. The decision to begin the process of sustained dialogue was part of an eight-point initiative taken at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Saturday. The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Briefing journalists on the slew of measures finalised, Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram said the decisions were based on the report submitted by him to the Prime Minister and the inputs of the all-party delegation that had visited Srinagar and Jammu on September 20 and 21. Mr. Chidambaram had led the 39-member all-party delegation to the State. In a step aimed at reaching out to the people of the State, the Centre would advise the Jammu and Kashmir government to release all students detained for stone-pelting and similar violations of law, and to withdraw all charges. Mr. Chidambaram said the Centre would request the State government to immediately convene a meeting of the Unified Command to review deployment of security forces in the Kashmir Valley, especially in Srinagar, with particular reference to deescalating those at bunkers and checkpoints in the city and other towns. He said the Unified Command would review notifications issued for disturbed areas. Replying to a question, he said that withdrawal or dilution of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) was not discussed. He said the government would grant an ex gratia of Rs. five lakh to the family of each of those killed in civil disturbances in Kashmir since June 11. He said the Centre would also advise the State government to review cases of all Public Safety Act (PSA) detenus and withdraw detention orders in appropriate cases. Replying to a question, the Home Minister said there were 84 persons under judicial custody, 110 under police custody and 51 had been detained under the Public Safety Act since civil disturbances began in the Kashmir Valley in June. He said that 108 persons had lost their lives in civil disturbances. The Centre would request the State government to take steps to immediately reopen all schools, colleges, and universities, hold special classes and ensure that examinations are conducted on schedule for the current academic year. (The Hindu)

Advani sidelined on Ram temple issue

For some, especially those who are part of the Hindutva forces, L.K. Advani was the 'hero' of the Ram temple movement he launched with his now famous or infamous 'rath yatra' from the Somnath temple in Gujarat to Ayodhya on September 25, 1990. Now, exactly 20 years later, the very same Hindutva forces have completely sidelined the man

as the country braces itself for a judicial verdict on the 61-year old Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute. It was on December 22/23, 1949 that an idol of Ram Lalla was placed surreptitiously at dead of night under the central dome of the 16 {+t} {+h} century Babri Masjid, demolished by the Hindutva forces led by Mr. Advani and a horde of others on December 6, 1992. And for nearly a decade from 1989 to 1998, when the Bharatiya Janata Party was in power, the Ram temple was the centrepiece of its “nationalist ideology.” Ironically, Mr. Advani was deliberately kept out of key strategy meetings on Ayodhya held over two days earlier this month at the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh headquarters in Jhandewalan. He was not present even at the core group meeting convened by BJP president Nitin Gadkari on September 24, when a resolution was adopted blaming “judicial delays over 61 years” for the “failure” to construct a Ram temple at Ayodhya — as if it was the judiciary's job to fulfil the party's election manifesto promise of mandir wahin banayenge. A senior party leader told The Hindu just a few days ago that the RSS — the BJP's mother organisation — had got the party “to admit it was a mistake to politicise the Ram temple issue, as the BJP did,” a mistake, which was not to be repeated this time when the verdict is expected, that is, if the Supreme Court were to lift the stay on delivery of the pronouncement by the Allahabad High Court's Special Bench in Lucknow. Though Mr. Advani rushed to the Somnath temple on Saturday to mark the anniversary of his ‘rath yatra’, as he has been going every year, no party leader of any importance went with him. He was accompanied by his family members and Uma Bharti, who he, as BJP president, had expelled from the party. Ashok Singhal, the other ‘star’ of the temple agitation — from the Vishwa Hindu Parishad stables – has said publicly “those who had politicised the issue [meaning Advani]” should “repent” for this sin. Apparently, he has told the RSS that Mr. Advani must be kept at arm's length from anything that has to do with the Ayodhya dispute and the Ram temple. The ‘sants’ mentored by the VHP — who are now to lead from the front on this issue — have made it plain they will not tolerate another bid to play politics with the Ram temple, although it is clear that this group is itself not above playing politics. Vasudevanand Saraswati of Jyotishpeeth, who chaired a high-power committee meeting here on Friday, said if the government failed to deal with the law and order problem that might arise following the verdict, it should go and make way for another government. Why was the ‘hero’ — or the ‘villain’ or the ‘anti-hero’ — of the temple agitation sidelined? An RSS member, close to the leadership, agreed that the BJP did gain enormously from Mr. Advani's 1990 ‘rath yatra’ but, he added, the “cause of the Ram temple suffered as the issue became thoroughly politicised.” Then there are others in the sangh parivar who refuse to link the big electoral jump in the BJP's fortunes in 1991 to just the ‘yatra’ and Mr. Advani's temple politics. The BJP's tally in the Lok Sabha jumped from 2 in 1984 to 85 in 1989 “before the ‘yatra,’” they point out. The big leap in 1989 was the direct result of the party's seat-sharing arrangement with the Janata Dal that had forged ahead on the Bofors card and its supporting the 1989 V.P. Singh government from outside. In the 1991 Lok Sabha election, held post-‘yatra’ and after it was halted and Mr. Advani arrested by the then Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav at Samastipur on October 23, 1990, the BJP gained just under 40 seats more to reach the figure of about 120. It was more the direct fallout of upper castes running to the party in a reaction to V.P. Singh's Mandal politics than the result of Mr. Advani's temple plank. The Ram temple as an issue simply buttressed the benefits that accrued to the BJP from Singh's

backward caste politics, but was not the sole reason for its electoral gain that year. As for the BJP rule at the Centre from 1998 to 2004, the story is well known. “Compulsions” of coalition politics led it to abandon the temple cause, leading to heartburns in the other self-styled Ram bhakts who hated the stark fact that Mr. Advani rose to power and fame riding on his Ram chariot but abandoned the Lord once he was installed as number two in the Cabinet. (The Hindu)

Resolve Ayodhya dispute or accept verdict: Pranab

Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Monday said contesting parties in the Ayodhya title suit have to resolve the issue through discussions or accept the court verdict. "The two contesting parties who filed the Ayodhya title suit have to resolve the matter among themselves through discussions. If it is not possible, then the court verdict has to be accepted," Mukherjee told reporters. (The Indian Express)

Political parties happy uncertainty is over

The political parties on Tuesday appealed for calm and asked people not to be provoked, following the Supreme Court's green signal to the Allahabad High Court to deliver the verdict on the Babri Masjid title suits. From the right to the centre and the left of the political spectrum, parties said they were relieved that the uncertainty was over. Law Minister Veerappa Moily dismissed as speculation that the government wanted to delay the verdict. AICC general secretary Janardhan Dwivedi welcomed the order and said the party had always held that the issue should either be resolved through mutual talks or the court order should be obeyed. BJP spokesperson Prakash Javadekar expressed “satisfaction” that the verdict would be out. CPI(M) general secretary Prakash Karat said after the 1992 Masjid demolition, it was clear the dispute could not be resolved except through a judicial verdict. Atul Anjaan of the CPI regretted that the Supreme Court had entertained the last-minute bid to delay the High Court verdict when all efforts towards a negotiated settlement had failed over the last 20 years. (The Hindu)

A significant step, says BJP

The Ayodhya verdict was welcomed and greeted with a quiet sense of joy by the Bharatiya Janata Party and the larger sangh parivar headed by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh here on Thursday as they felt it had paved the way for construction of a Ram temple at the disputed site, vindicating their long agitation on the issue. But the parivar lost no time in indirectly saying Muslims should give up one-third of the disputed area over which the verdict has upheld their legal right. On the face of it, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat talked about the need to see the verdict “not as a victory for one group or defeat for another, but an opportunity to forget ill-will and hard feelings that were the result of past conflicts.” But the almost direct appeal to Muslims to give up the one-third share of the disputed area given to them by the court could not be missed as he asked them to become “collaborators in organising the necessary constitutional and practical means” for building a grand Ram temple. After a core committee meeting, the BJP asserted that the verdict, “which upholds the right of Hindus to construct a temple in the garbh griha [sanctum sanctorum] is a significant step ... towards construction of a grand

temple at the birthplace of Lord Ram.” It lauded the “expert opinion” that there were remains of a religious Hindu structure at the site where the Babri Masjid stood. The party believed the verdict would open a new chapter in national integration. After the meeting, attended by party president Nitin Gadkari and other leaders including Sushma Swaraj and Arun Jaitley, L.K. Advani read out a statement. Murli Manohar Joshi said acceptance of the verdict by all would be a fitting reply to the “enemies of India.” In the morning itself, RSS sources made it clear that Mr. Bhagwat would give the ‘line’ of the sangh parivar and no one from the BJP or the VHP would speak before he did. That is exactly what happened. Pravin Togadia of the VHP spoke after Mr. Bhagwat and only later did the BJP go into a huddle before coming out with the statement, more or less echoing what Mr. Bhagwat had said. (The Hindu)

Congress cautious

Taken aback by the long-awaited judgment in the Ayodhya title suit case, the United Progressive Alliance government swiftly made yet another appeal for “peace and tranquillity,” even as the Congress responded cautiously to the verdict pronounced by the Allahabad High Court. Government sources told that they were worried that this verdict could — in the long-term — revive the sangh parivar's dormant Ramjanmabhoomi movement, and provide the Bharatiya Janata Party with an issue yet again. It was against this backdrop that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in a public appeal on Thursday evening, underscored that “status quo will be maintained” at Ayodhya “until the cases are taken up by the Supreme Court.” Earlier, Congress media committee chairperson Janardan Dwivedi told journalists that people should “welcome and respect the judgment,” but if anyone had any “reservations” about it, the Supreme Court's doors were open for them. (The Hindu)

Left parties react cautiously

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) said on Thursday that while there may be questions on the nature of the verdict in the Ayodhya case, the judgment needed to be fully studied. In the country's secular democratic system, the judicial process, which included recourse to the Supreme Court, should be the only way to resolve the issue, the party's Polit Bureau said in a statement. It appealed to the people to maintain peace and communal harmony and not fall prey to provocation. Communist Party of India national secretary D. Raja said the split verdict showed that there were complicated issues and the judgment needed to be studied in detail. If any party felt aggrieved, legal course of appeal was available. But at the same time, he cautioned that there should be no public demonstration by taking to the streets either in joy or sorrow. The CPI(ML) Liberation said the judgment failed to provide a satisfactory resolution of the dispute. “Going beyond established legal considerations to settle a title suit, the verdict seems to have based itself more on political grounds,” it said. Aggrieved parties did have the right to appeal to the Supreme Court for a reconsideration of the judgment and the country awaited its verdict. Secular progressive forces would have to remain alert to thwart attempts by the sangh parivar to use the verdict to fuel its long-standing campaign against secularism and democracy, it said. (The Hindu)

Don't see it as a victory or defeat: Congress

For Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, it was a long and tense day. As details of the Allahabad High Court judgment came in late on Thursday afternoon, he was closeted with political colleagues at 7 Race Course Road. Once the import of the verdict became clear, he convened the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) and immediately after that he conferred with members of the Congress Core Group, the party's apex decision-making body — a body that includes Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her Political Secretary, Ahmed Patel. The two rounds of discussions dwelt on the legal, political and administrative implications of the judgment. Union Law Minister Veerappa Moily was a special invitee to Thursday's CCS meeting to provide a legal perspective. It was after these two meetings that Dr. Singh issued a public appeal, his second in a fortnight, for peace and tranquillity, in the wake of the court verdict. With the Centre the Receiver of the 66 acres in Ayodhya, Dr. Singh, in his appeal, underscored the fact that “status quo will be maintained” in Ayodhya “until the cases are taken up by the Supreme Court.” But even as the government was bracing itself for any fallout to the judgment, at the Congress headquarters, media committee chairperson Janardhan Dwivedi, advising circumspection, said the judgment should not be interpreted either as a victory or defeat for any of the parties concerned. Advising people not to celebrate or mourn the verdict, he quoted from a Sanskrit sloka, advising devotees of Ram to follow his example, accepting adversity and good times with equanimity. Avoiding any direct comment on the judgment, Mr. Dwivedi said, “There are moments in the life of an individual, society and nation, when one's wisdom, wishes, tolerance and reasoning are put to test.” (The Hindu)

Ayodhya Verdict:

RSS praises SC for spiking effort to derail Ayodhya verdict

The RSS on Tuesday said the Supreme Court has done the "right thing" by dismissing a petition seeking deferment of the Allahabad High Court judgement on the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title suit. "Whatever the Supreme Court has said is the right thing. A deliberate attempt was made to derail the judicial process by approaching the Supreme Court," RSS leader Ram Madhav told reporters here. He said the petitioner had no locus standi in the title suit and the apex court had done the "right thing" by dismissing the plea. A Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice of India S H Kapadia on Tuesday dismissed a petition filed by Ram Chandra Tripathi seeking deferment of the Allahabad High Court judgement on the title suit contending that attempts should be made for an out-of-court settlement of the issue. "It (petition) deserves dismissal. Now that the petition is dismissed, the whole country is looking forward to the High Court verdict," Madhav said. The High Court verdict would be "one step forward in this legal process", he said adding "rest of the things will be deliberated upon afterwards." (The Indian Express)

Ayodhya verdict on Sept 30: PM appeals for peace

Amid apprehensions of trouble after the Ayodhya title suit verdict, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Friday appealed to the countrymen to maintain peace and harmony irrespective of the nature of the judgement. "I think whatever be the nature of judgement,

I think everyone should make every effort to maintain peace, harmony and tranquility in the country," Singh told reporters after releasing a book at his residence. Singh was asked about his message to the countrymen in view of the sensitive judgement on Ram Janambhoomi-Babri Masjid title suits to be delivered by Allahabad High Court on Thursday. He said his message was contained in the appeal issued by Cabinet over a week back. Wary of extreme reactions, the Cabinet had adopted a resolution which said that the judicial recourse will not end till all sections are satisfied and further legal remedies would be available. "There should be no attempt whatsoever made by any section of the people to provoke any other section or to indulge in any expression of emotion that would hurt the feelings of other people," the resolution had said. "It goes without saying that the judgement needs to be treated with the utmost respect. At the same time, we must remember the fact that the judgement, at this state, is one step in the judicial process. The determination of the issues need not necessarily end with this judgement unless it is accepted by all parties," it said. The resolution had said "in case any of the parties feels that further judicial consideration is required, there are legal remedies available which could be resorted to." Meanwhile, the apex court's order came after two hours of arguments on the deferment plea filed by Ramesh Chandra Tripathi. Tripathi wanted more time for parties to work out an out-of-court settlement. Earlier, Attorney General G E Vahanvati had said the uncertainty surrounding the verdict should not be allowed to continue. (The Indian Express)

Ayodhya litigants welcome end of suspense

The cloud of uncertainty that hung over the Ayodhya verdict, to be delivered by the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, has lifted. On the face of it, almost all parties to the dispute, the wary litigants battling it out in courts over six decades, are looking forward to the early delivery of the verdict, even if they are unsure of the outcome. Zafaryab Jilani, counsel for the Sunni Wakf Board, and S. Shahbuddin, member of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board's Committee on Babri Masjid, would not hazard a guess which way the verdict would swing. But they were one in categorically stating here on Tuesday that they would honour the verdict, whichever way it went, while reserving their constitutional right to appeal to the Supreme Court in the event of an adverse order. They welcomed the end of uncertainty and the end of any further delay of a verdict that has been in the making for the last 61 years. Mr. Shahbuddin lamented: "All these years successive governments have failed to assert that irrespective of the outcome of the judicial process — after the final verdict comes from the Supreme Court — they would ensure its implementation. That has created all manner of doubts, although we have stated many times we will not flinch from facing the consequences of an adverse judgment." Mr. Jilani said he was awaiting the verdict with "neither hope nor despair but with a view to accepting what is delivered." They will not celebrate the verdict if it is in their favour, nor would they greet it with sadness, if it is adverse, and above all, they express the hope that peace will prevail. In stark contrast, there was an air of pessimism in the offices of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, where top leaders of the organisation were on Tuesday openly expressing fears about an adverse judicial verdict from the High Court. Giriraj Kishore and Pravin Togadia have made it clear that they cannot accept a verdict other than one that would favour and facilitate the building of a "grand Ram

temple” on the disputed site. Mr. Togadia did add that the VHP — through the other ‘Hindu’ litigants — would “indirectly participate in the constitutional and legal process” of appealing to the Supreme Court in the event of an adverse verdict, but “will not wait” to start a “movement on the ground in favour of building a Ram temple even if the High Court verdict was adverse.” “From today you will not see us in Delhi. We will be going to different areas,” Mr. Togadia said, indicating that “without waiting for the final verdict from the Supreme Court,” the VHP led by the committee of ‘sants’ (mentored by it), would start to mobilise people in favour of constructing a Ram temple. “We cannot countenance any other finality on this issue,” he said.

Six-decade legal battle

The verdict to be delivered on Thursday will mark the second important landmark in the legal battle that has spread over six decades — the first round went to the litigants claiming to represent the Hindu community when, by a judicial verdict, the locks of the Babri Masjid were opened in 1986 to allow regular ‘pooja’ of the Ram Lalla deity installed there in the dead of night of December 22/23, 1949. Muslims were simultaneously forbidden to come anywhere near the disputed structure, some of the parties to the dispute pointed out. Then in 1992, despite a status quo order of the Supreme Court, the Masjid was demolished by thousands of ‘kar sevaks’ led by the VHP, the BJP and their affiliates. The Hindu Mahasabha, a party to the dispute, has announced a ‘havan’ and a ‘yagnya’ at 11 a.m. on September 30 — prayers for a verdict favouring the building of a temple. (The Hindu)

High Court awards two-thirds of disputed Ayodhya site to Hindu parties, one-third to Sunni Waqf Board

Sixty years after the matter first went into litigation, a Special Full Bench of the High Court of Allahabad has ruled that the disputed land in Ayodhya where the Babri Masjid stood for 500 years until it was demolished in 1992 shall be divided into three parts. A two-thirds portion is to be shared by two Hindu plaintiffs and one-third will be given to the Sunni Muslim Waqf Board. By a 2-1 majority verdict, plaintiffs representing Lord Ram, the Nirmohi Akhara and the Waqf Board were declared joint title-holders of the property. The Bench asserted that the portion under the central dome of the demolished three-dome structure where the idol of Ram Lalla had been kept in a makeshift temple was the birthplace of Lord Rama “as per faith and belief of the Hindus.” The Bench of Justice S.U. Khan, Justice Sudhir Agarwal and Justice D.V. Sharma dismissed the suit filed by the Sunni Waqf Board for possession of the Babri Masjid because it was time-barred. It cited faith as the basis to declare the site the janmasthan of Lord Ram, but ordered a three-way partition on the basis of historical use of the site by Muslims and Hindus. The Waqf Board said it would file an appeal in the Supreme Court against the judgment. Waqf Board counsel Zafaryab Jilani told a media conference here that the All India Muslim Personal Law Board would decide when to file it. The Bench clarified that even though all the three parties are declared to have a one-third share each in the property, minor adjustments could be made — for which the adversely affected party would be compensated from the adjoining land acquired by the Central Government.

Dissenting judgment

Mr. Justice Sharma, however, did not agree with the one-third formula. According to him, the outer courtyard was in the exclusive possession of Hindus for worship, and in the inner courtyard (in the “disputed structure”) “they were also worshipping” and hence they had exclusive rights to the entire site. In his dissenting judgment, Mr. Justice Sharma categorically stated that “the disputed site is the birthplace of Lord Ram.” He wrote: “Place of birth is a juristic person and is a deity. It is personified as the spirit of divine worshipped as birthplace of Lord Rama as a child. Spirit of divine ever remains present everywhere at all times for anyone to invoke at any shape or form in accordance with his own aspirations and it can be shapeless and formless also.” Mr. Justice Agarwal ruled that the “area covered under the central dome of the disputed structure is the birthplace of Lord Rama as per faith and belief of Hindus.” Mr. Justice Khan did not rule categorically on this point. He merely noted that “for some decades before 1949 Hindus started treating/believing the place beneath the central dome of the mosque to be the exact birthplace of Lord Ram.” However, he ordered that the portion below the central dome “be allotted to Hindus in final decree.” Mr. Justice Agarwal and Mr. Justice Sharma said the mosque was built after the demolition of a Hindu temple. Mr. Justice Khan disagreed, noting that “the mosque was constructed over the ruins of temples which were lying in utter ruins since a very long time before the construction of the mosque and some material thereof was used in the construction of the mosque.” However, both Mr. Justice Agarwal and Mr. Justice Khan agreed that the building that existed until 1992 was a mosque. But Mr. Justice Sharma disagreed: “The disputed building was constructed by Babar... against the tenets of Islam. Thus, it cannot have the character of a mosque.” Talking to reporters, Mr. Jilani described the judgment as “partly disappointing and against the settled principles of law and evidence adduced by the Muslim side.” He hoped that peace and tranquillity would prevail in the country and the issue would not be taken to the streets. Ramjanmabhoomi Nyas president Mahant Nitya Gopal Das also said the Hindu side was expected to approach the Supreme Court. (The Hindu)

Panchayati justice that takes away legal rights of Muslims: Rajeev Dhavan

Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan was critical of the judgment delivered in the Ayodhya title suits on Thursday, saying: “This is panchayati justice which takes away the legal rights of Muslims and converts the moral sentimental entitlements of Hindus into legal rights.” Mr. Dhavan said the destruction of the Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992, had taken place on a Muslim site, and this fact could not be disputed and rendered invisible by pretending that Muslims were not entitled to the site in any way. “If this panchayati solution is to be endured, the degree of Muslim entitlement should have been left intact so that the site belonged to them,” he said. Mr. Dhavan said the destruction of the Masjid was akin to the demolition of the Buddha statues at Bamiyan in Afghanistan, and people would say that India's secular justice was majoritarian in nature without lending dignity to India's minority. Endorsing Mr. Dhavan's views, senior advocate P.P. Rao said: “It is difficult to appreciate how the property can be divided by the court while dismissing the suits. This is nothing but a panchayati type of justice. “If the court accepts that the Waqf Board is entitled to one-third of the land, it can't dismiss the suit. If the court dismisses

the suits, it can't give only a portion of the land. The court has gone beyond the prayers in the suits. When no one had asked for division of the land, how can the court divide the land into three portions? There are prima facie grounds for the parties to go for appeal to the Supreme Court as all of them are aggrieved over the division of the property.” Senior advocate K.K. Venugopal, however, wanted time to go through the full judgment and said: “It is a statesmanship-like judgment and it is good for the country.” Senior lawyer Harish Salve said: “Going by the gist of the judgment which is available, two of the judges constituting the majority have come to the conclusion that the Hindus and Muslims were in joint possession and have been declared to be joint owners. On that basis, on account of the cross suits, they have ordered a partition — on a one-third each basis. “It has used the judicial discretion available to a court to recognise the significance of the existing de facto temple on the disputed spot and held that that must go to the Hindus. There is no legal principle preventing judges to exercise statesmanship as long as it is within the framework of the law. A full comment is possible only after analysing the judgment.” Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi expressed satisfaction over the judgment and said: “I think it is a political kind of solution. It has given something to everybody. This seems to be the just possible solution in respecting the sentiments of all parties. We should be progressive on these issues and accept the judgment.” Senior advocate M.N. Krishnamani expressed happiness over the verdict on the grounds that it recognised the findings of the Archaeological Survey of India that there was a Hindu religious structure under the site. Mr. Krishnamani appealed to Muslims not to go to the Supreme Court, and to give up the one-third land that had been given to them so that a temple for Lord Ram could be built. President of the All-India Bar Association Adish Aggarwala said: “By this judgment everybody has won. No one has lost. This judgment can be practically implemented. Although it is a religious matter and somebody will go to the Supreme Court, I am certain that the Supreme Court will affirm the judgment as it is in the interest of every citizen of India. This will reflect the spirit of religious tolerance.” Director of the International Council of Jurists S. Prabakaran welcomed the judgment, saying that it would ensure communal harmony in the country. Mr. Prabakaran wanted both religious communities to accept the verdict in a spirit of give and take and implement the directions to pave the way for the construction of a full-fledged temple for Lord Ram and a mosque on the one-third area of land to be allocated to Muslims. Advocate Wasim Qadri, while welcoming the judgment, said: “It shows the respect and faith in the judiciary and democracy in this country. This is a victory of governance as per rule of law and constitutional scheme. Though I am not a party, being a like-minded person, this is one way of settling the dispute. This is a good signal for India.” (The Hindu)

Muslim groups disappointed

Muslim groups on Thursday reacted with disappointment to the dismissal of the Sunni Central Waqf Board (SCWB) suit and the three-way division of disputed land ordered by the Allahabad High Court in the Ayodhya title suits. SCWB lawyer Zafaryab Jilani said the Board, the main litigant on behalf of Muslims, will appeal against the decision in the Supreme Court: “The High Court's formula of one-third land is not acceptable to the Waqf Board and it will go to the Supreme Court.” Yusuf Muchhala, convener of the legal cell of the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), said the SCWB's suit was

dismissed for being time-barred — a technical ground. He said there were several inconsistencies and baffling points in the verdict. The court dismissed the suit and ruled that the mosque had been constructed by demolishing a temple while simultaneously allotting a third of the land to the Waqf Board: “If this is the case, why give us any legal relief? Why allot us any land?” Mr. Muchhala said prima facie the three judgments appeared to be a mix of facts, principles and mythology. Reacting to the ruling that the spot under the central dome of the mosque was the Ram janmasthan because it was held so by Hindu belief and faith, he said: “A court of law has to go by hard facts and the provisions of the law. There is no scope to go by theology.” He, however, added that the matter would come to a “full stop” with Muslims accepting the decision once the apex court gave its final verdict. He also said he was gladdened by the mature and calm response of the people to the verdict. “What is important is that we as a nation have matured. This reflects the faith of the people in the Constitution.” (The Hindu)

Force of faith trumps law and reason in Ayodhya case

The Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court has made judicial history by deciding a long pending legal dispute over a piece of property in Ayodhya on the basis of an unverified and unsubstantiated reference to the “faith and belief of Hindus.” The irony is that in doing so, the court has inadvertently provided a shot in the arm for a political movement that cited the very same “faith” and “belief” to justify its open defiance of the law and the Indian Constitution. That defiance reached its apogee in 1992, when a 500-year-old mosque which stood at the disputed site was destroyed. The legal and political system in India stood silent witness to that crime of trespass, vandalism and expropriation. Eighteen years later, the country has compounded that sin by legitimising the “faith” and “belief” of those who took the law into their own hands. The three learned judges of the Allahabad High Court may have rendered separate judgments on the title suit in the Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi case but Justices Sudhir Agarwal, S.U. Khan and Dharam Veer Sharma all seem to agree on one central point: that the Hindu plaintiffs in the case have a claim to the disputed site because “as per [the] faith and belief of the Hindus” the place under the central dome of the Babri Masjid where the idols of Ram Lalla were placed surreptitiously in 1949 is indeed the “birthplace” of Lord Ram. For every Hindu who believes the spot under the central dome of the Babri Masjid is the precise spot where Lord Ram was born there is another who believes something else. But leaving aside the question of who “the Hindus” referred to by the court really are and how their actual faith and belief was ascertained and measured, it is odd that a court of law should give such weight to theological considerations and constructs rather than legal reasoning and facts. Tulsidas wrote his Ramcharitmanas in 16th century Ayodhya but made no reference to the birthplace of Lord Rama that the court has now identified with such exacting precision five centuries later. The “faith and belief” that the court speaks about today acquired salience only after the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bharatiya Janata Party launched a political campaign in the 1980s to “liberate” the “janmasthan.” Collectives in India have faith in all sorts of things but “faith” cannot become the arbiter of what is right and wrong in law. Nor can the righting of supposed historical wrongs become the basis for dispensing justice today. In 1993, the Supreme Court wisely refused to answer a Presidential Reference made to it by the Narasimha Rao government seeking

its opinion on whether a Hindu temple once existed at the Babri Masjid site. Yet, the High Court saw fit to frame a number of questions that ought to have had absolutely no bearing on the title suit which was before it. One of the questions the court framed was “whether the building has been constructed on the site of an alleged Hindu temple after demolishing the same.” Pursuant to this question, it asked the Archaeological Survey of India to conduct a dig at the site. This was done in 2003, during the time when the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance government was in power at the Centre. Not surprisingly, the ASI concluded that there was a “massive Hindu religious structure” below, a finding that was disputed by many archaeologists and historians. The territory of India — as of many countries with a settled civilisation as old as ours — is full of buildings that were constructed after pre-existing structures were demolished to make way for them. Buddhist shrines made way for Hindu temples. Temples have made way for mosques. Mosques have made way for temples. So even if a temple was demolished in the 16th century to make way for the Babri Masjid, what legal relevance can that have in the 21st century? And if such demolition is to serve as the basis for settling property disputes today, where do we draw the line? On the walls of the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi can be seen the remnants of a Hindu temple, perhaps even of the original Vishwanath mandir. Certainly many “Hindus” believe the mosque is built on land that is especially sacred to them. The denouement of the Babri case from agitation and demolition to possession might easily serve as a precedent for politicians looking to come to power on the basis of heightening religious tensions. Even assuming the tainted ASI report is correct in its assessment that a Hindu temple lay below the ruins of the Babri Masjid, neither the ASI nor any other expert has any scientific basis for claiming the architects of the mosque were the ones who did the demolishing. And yet two of the three High Court judges have concluded that the mosque was built after a temple was demolished. From at least the 19th century, if not earlier, we know that both Hindus and Muslims worshipped within the 2.77 acre site, the latter within the Babri Masjid building and the former at the Ram Chhabutra built within the mosque compound. This practice came to an end in 1949 when politically motivated individuals broke into the mosque and placed idols of Ram Lalla within. After 1949, both communities were denied access though Hindus have been allowed to offer darshan since 1986. In suggesting a three way partition of the site, the High Court has taken a small step towards the restoration of the religious status quo ante which prevailed before politicians got into the act. But its reasoning is flawed and even dangerous. If left unamended by the Supreme Court, the legal, social and political repercussions of the judgment are likely to be extremely damaging. (The Hindu)

Hindu Mahasabha to challenge verdict

The Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha (ABHM), one of the early litigants in the Ayodhya title suits, on Thursday said it would challenge the Allahabad High Court order to divide the “Ramjanambhoomi” land into three parts. “We have decided to challenge the decision to divide the Ramjanambhoomi land into three parts,” said State president of ABHM Kamlesh Tiwari. (The Hindu)

Historical evidence ignored, say historians

With the three judges pronouncing differing opinions on the historical and archaeological aspects of the case in the Allahabad High Court's judgement on the disputed land in Ayodhya, many leading historians have been left bemused. "It's not a logical judgement with so many parts going 2-1. One does not accept the logicity of the judgement," said Irfan Habib, a noted historian and a former Chairman of the Indian Council of Historical Research who earlier taught at the Aligarh Muslim University. He noted that the verdict seemed to legitimise the events of 1949, when an idol was placed inside the mosque, by constant references. On the other hand, by minimising any mentions of the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992, the court seemed to be disregarding it, he said. He also expressed surprise that two judges questioned the date of construction of the Babri Masjid, as well as the involvement of emperor Babar or his commander Mir Baqi, since there had been clear inscriptions to this effect before the demolition. "Things that are totally clear historically, the court has tried to muddy," he said. "The historical evidence has not been taken into account," said D.N. Jha, history professor at the Delhi University. Noting the judgement's mention of the "faith and belief of Hindus" in reference to the history of the disputed structure, Dr. Jha asked why the court had requested an excavation of the site. "If it is a case of 'belief,' then it becomes an issue of theology, not archaeology. Should the judiciary be deciding cases on the basis of theology is a question that needs to be asked," he said. Professional archaeologists also noted that the judges did not seem to rely heavily on the Archaeological Survey of India's court-directed excavation of the site in 2003, at least in the summaries of their verdict available on Thursday evening. "Somewhere, there is doubt about the credibility of that report," said Supriya Verma of the Jawaharlal Nehru University, who acted as an observer during the ASI excavation. She noted that neither Justice Sudhir Agarwal nor Justice Dharam Veer Sharma even referenced the ASI report to support his conclusion on the existence of a temple on the site before the mosque was built. "It is almost as though they themselves were not convinced by the evidence. They are clearly conceding that there was no archaeological evidence of a temple or of its demolition...It is a judgement of theology," she said. Another observer of the ASI excavation, Jaya Menon of the Aligarh Muslim University, noted that the ASI report itself did not provide any evidence of a demolition, and only asserted the existence of a temple in its conclusion. "So I don't know on what basis they made their judgements," she said. The ASI report had been criticised by many archaeologists for ignoring evidence such as animal bones, which would not have been found in a temple for Ram, and the existence of glazed pottery and graves which indicated Muslim residents. (The Hindu)

Minorities' Issues:

Muslim groups want code for women in Kerala polls

For the first time in Kerala, 50 per cent seats would be reserved for women in an election, as polls are held for local self-governing bodies next month. But the Muslim women who get the tickets might have to adhere to a moral code of conduct, drawn up by prominent community organisations. The Samastha Kerala Jam-Iyyathul Ulema, Kerala's largest Muslim community organisation, has put forward conditions for women candidates during campaigning. Samastha supports the Indian Union Muslim League, which is an

ally of the Congress at the Centre and in the state. At the Centre, the IUML is represented by E Ahamed, the Union Minister of State for Railways. According to sources, with many of its cadres belonging to the Samastha, it is not really averse to the morality guidelines. The “code of conduct” specifies that women not share immediate space with men on dais during campaigning, not shout slogans or take part in marches, and that they wind up their campaign before dark. The Samastha also said that while it continues to be against the 50 per cent reservation for women in local bodies, it has accepted it as “a bitter pill prescribed by the government”. The Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, which has allowed its women cadres to contest under the banner of locally floated development committees, also has its share of conditions, though theirs is a toned-down version. Women can take part in election rallies but strictly within the “confines suggested by Islam”, should observe “decency” while mingling with men, and should avoid “vulgar dressing”, says Jamaat Kerala Ameer T Arifali. On the other hand, the pro-Left Sunni Muslim leader Kanthapuram A P Aboobacker Musaliyar, who too has considerable clout in the community, has made public his reservations about women attending public functions, including election campaigns. According to Samastha leader and state general secretary of its youth outfit, Samastha Kerala Sunni Students Federation, Nazer Faizy Koodathai, “Women mingling with men would lead to moral anarchy. They should not sit beside men at campaign venues.” He added that there was no order as such on guidelines for women candidates. “We are launching a campaign among women candidates and political parties, especially the IUML. The issue had been unofficially discussed with IUML leaders. Since a major chunk of IUML cadres belong to the Samastha, we have asked the party to give necessary directions to women candidates. Yet, we cannot comment on how the women candidates would take up the guidelines. We are here to discharge our duty to the community,” Koodathai said, adding that several other community organisations are toeing the same line. The IUML, the largest Muslim political party in Kerala, isn’t about to question the guidelines. “Orthodox and extremist elements in the community are still against women contesting elections. Hence, the party cannot field Muslim women without accommodating the concerns of conservatives,” a senior IUML leader said. “We would ensure that women candidates do not breach the dress code (covering the entire body, except the face and hands). The IUML wants to present women candidates in a manner acceptable to orthodox groups.” (The Indian Express)

Hindu Fundamentalism:

Insurgency Movements:

Huge arms haul from Maoist hideouts

In what is being claimed to be the biggest ammunition haul since the beginning of the anti-Maoist operations in Paschim Medinipur district in June 2009, the police on Friday recovered a huge cache of gelatine sticks, ammonium nitrate and several firearms after raiding different rebel hideouts. Two Maoist squad members were also arrested. Raids were conducted in the Lalgah, Jhargram and Nayagram areas, based on information gathered from two Maoists who were arrested in a murder case. (The Hindu)

Economic Front:

India can expand sans US: Montek

Emerging economies can expand at a "reasonable pace" in the next four to five years even if growth in developed nations is moderate, Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia said. India's economy is forecast to grow by 8.5 per cent this year, he said in his keynote address at the World Capital Markets Symposium organised by Malaysia's Securities Commission. However, he expressed the hope that India's GDP growth rate will go up to 9 per cent in the near future. He said developing countries will be able to maintain strong economic growth rates, even though the primary drivers have slowed down. Ahluwalia also noted that India needed to pump in a lot more into its infrastructure development programme. Commenting on the state of the world economy, the Planning Commission Deputy Chairman said that growth was anaemic and there were fears of a global slowdown. He noted that growth in the US, the world's biggest economy, has been sputtering, but emerging markets were doing well. (The Indian Express)

India Inc to PMO: Can't reserve jobs, hurts merit

Corporate India, led by the presidents of the country's three biggest industry lobbies, CII, FICCI and Assocham, have told the Prime Minister's Office that they will not be able to reserve 5 per cent jobs for people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. T K A Nair, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, had last month called a meeting of the chamber chiefs to discuss if they would ask their members to set aside jobs for the disadvantaged sections. But the chiefs — CII's Hari Bhartia, FICCI's Rajan Mittal and Assocham's Swati Piramal — rejected the idea. Companies, they said, would do their best to improve employability of SCs and STs, but quotas will not serve the purpose of affirmative action. Chamber executives who declined to be quoted said the PMO's intervention was expected because the corporate sector had earlier refrained from making any commitment to a Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) proposal pushing the case for reservation. In July, the DIPP, under Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma, had written to the three chambers asking them why the government should not insist on a 5 per cent job quota for the disadvantaged sections. The DIPP had then suggested that companies enjoying government incentives may be asked to proactively tap the disadvantaged sections for meeting 5 per cent of their incremental employment needs. But corporate India saw it as the first step towards legalising a quota regime in the private sector, and shut itself to the idea. The DIPP had asked the three chambers to submit their views on the suggestion. While chamber presidents would not come on record on the issue given the political sensitives involved, sources in the chambers said companies felt they were already doing their bit through adopting villages and supporting skill development to improve employability. Some like the Tata Group have also begun to factor in a positive bias towards disadvantaged sections in recruitment. The Tatas pay their recruitment agencies extra commission for identifying talent within the SCs and STs. A senior CII executive said that while there may be some merit in the politicians' arguments for quotas, giving statutory backing to private sector reservations would force companies to recruit SC and ST candidates at the cost of competitiveness. "Such a measure will endanger merit," said the executive. (The

Indian Express)

India to grow 8.7 per cent in 2011: ADB

Growth across Asia and the Pacific will be the fastest this year since 2007 as the region recovers strongly from the global crisis, but will moderate in 2011, the Asian Development Bank said on Tuesday. Developing Asia, a diverse group of 45 economies including China, India, Tajikistan, Samoa, and Indonesia, would grow 8.2 per cent in 2010 and 7.3 per cent in 2011, the ADB said in its update of its 2010 Asian Development Outlook. The 2010 growth forecast has been revised up from 7.5 per cent in April and a forecast of 6.4 per cent a year ago; the 2011 forecast is unchanged from April. "The return of investors' risk appetite for emerging market assets and the strong economic recovery have combined to bring a surge in capital flows to developing Asia," the ADB said. Those flows -- both portfolio and direct investment -- reflected strong fundamentals and confidence in long-term reforms and growth potential, but also carried risks such as potentially destabilising markets and complicating policy setting. "The prospect of reversal of inflows remains a possibility in the medium term as monetary tightening in the US and the eurozone narrow the interest rate differentials with developing Asia," the bank said. "Asian authorities should therefore consider appropriate policy measures to manage a surge in capital inflows and to encourage stable long-term capital flows." The ADB said Asia would also benefit from greater coordination to overcome fears of losing export competitiveness through unilateral currency strength. "While price stability must remain the overriding objective of monetary policy, the global crisis highlights the need to prevent asset price bubbles through improved coordination between financial regulation and monetary policy to the region."

CHINA STEADY, ASEAN UP

The ADB maintained a forecast of 9.6 per cent growth in China this year, supported by exports and domestic demand, and expected it to ease slightly to 9.1 per cent in 2011. Indian growth was expected to pick up slightly to 8.7 per cent in 2011 from 8.5 per cent this year, driven by domestic demand, company profits and favourable financing conditions. Forecast growth for the 10 economies of Southeast Asia has been revised up to 7.4 per cent in 2010 -- the fastest since 1996, before the Asian Financial Crisis -- from 5.1 per cent. "The world economy is experiencing considerable uncertainty, though, and there are signs that economic activity across Southeast Asia is starting to decelerate," the ADB said, forecasting regional growth in 2011 at 5.4 per cent. Central Asian economies were benefitting from buoyant oil and metal prices, and remittance inflows, but the ADB said there were exceptions to the regional improvement. "Country-specific circumstances, such as devastating floods in Pakistan, the ongoing political impasse in Nepal, and political unrest in the Kyrgyz Republic will weigh on future growth," the bank said. (The Indian Express)

Food inflation up at 16.44%

Food inflation stood at 16.44 per cent for the week ended September 18, the fifth straight week of a steady climb. Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee expressed concern at the rising prices of essential items. (The Hindu)

Foreign Relations/Geo-strategic developments:

Obama's visit 'defining moment' in Indo-US relations

India and the US dubbed President Barack Obama's visit to India in November as a "defining moment", during a bilateral meeting between External Affairs Minister S M Krishna and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. During the 30 minute meeting, both the leaders discussed several issues including Afghanistan, floods in Pakistan, climate change talks, Indo-US nuclear co-operation and sanctions on Iran. "A defining moment in the history of our bilateral relations," is how the two leaders described Obama's visit, according to Robert Blake, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia. Blake further pointed out that the Obama administration realised that "everyone had a stake in India's emergence as a global power" and described the "reciprocal visit" as "momentous and consequential". Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was Obama's first state guest, last year. Blake described the rest of the meeting as "very friendly and useful," and also noted that Security Council reform would also be discussed during Obama's upcoming visit. Blake, however, did not indicate, which way the US was leaning, and only said that the reforms were "under discussion". Clinton thanked India for its commitment to Afghanistan and the developmental assistance it had provided. Both the leaders agreed that New Delhi and Washington needed to work closely on climate change related issues ahead of the conference in Cancun, at the end of the year. Clinton told Krishna that US felt that the sanctions against Iran were working and hoped that the international community would support these sanctions. Commenting on Indo-Pak ties, Blake said there were bound to be "irritants" in the "complicated relationship" shared by India and Pakistan. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, this week, called for US intervention in Kashmir. Blake, however, noted that the Kashmir issue was not discussed at the meeting. Clinton noted that she looked forward to meeting Defence Minister A K Antony and Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee. Blake and US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs William Burns, will be visiting India before Obama's first presidential visit to the country. (The Indian Express)

India, Japan to have first military talks

India and Japan will have their first army-to-army talks aimed at reviewing the present status of engagements, military cooperation and military security issues, starting here on Tuesday. The dialogue comes at a time when Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Pradeep Naik, began a three-day goodwill visit to Japan that started on Monday. Air Chief Naik will meet his counterpart, the Chief of Japan Self Defence Force, General Kenichiro Hokazona. Major General Koichiro Bansho, Director-General of Policy and Planning, leads a three-member delegation that will interact with his army counterparts, defence sources said. The talks will conclude on October 1. Japan becomes the ninth country with which the Indian Army has bilateral dialogue. So far, it engages in talks with Australia, Bangladesh, France, Israel, Malaysia, Singapore, the United States and the United Kingdom. India and Japan last year agreed on a Defence Action Plan. It aims at holding regular meetings between the defence ministers, annual official-level defence

policy dialogue, annual military-to-military talks, regular reciprocal visits of the service chiefs and ground-to-ground staff talks, Navy-to-Navy staff talks, and developing an annual calendar of defence cooperation and exchanges. In July this year, for the first time, India held talks in the 2+2 format (Foreign and Defence Secretaries from both sides) with Tokyo suggesting an increase in the levels of security dialogue. This enabled a detailed review of the security environment and positive discussions on all elements of the Action Plan. The two sides had also decided to step up maritime cooperation by expanding the joint exercises to include the navies from both countries and stepping up cooperation in anti-piracy operations off the Gulf of Aden. (The Hindu)

Military

Indian Occupied Kashmir:

“4,000 security men injured in 3 months of Kashmir violence”

Nearly 4,000 police and Central Reserve Police Force personnel and 504 civilians were injured in the violent clashes in the Kashmir Valley in the past three months. This was stated by the police in response to reports in a section of media that clashes has left 2000 people injured. A police spokesman said the 504 civilians suffered injuries when security forces were engaged in controlling scores of law and order situations. Of them, 156 were injured in Srinagar alone. In Kulgam district, four sustained injuries. At the same time, “in the hundreds of violent incidents of stone-pelting and arson resorted to by miscreants, 2660 police personnel suffered injuries, both grievous and other.” Again, Srinagar district topped with injuries to policemen (640). It was followed by Baramulla (503) and Handwara (42). Similarly, 1351 CRPF personnel suffered serious and other injuries. “Besides, one policeman lost his life in mob violence. One SHO Pattan Fayaz Ahmed was injured when militants fired at a mob,” the spokesman said. During this period, 78 pieces of built-up property, comprising 44 offices of various departments, 29 police stations, and five police posts were set ablaze. “Mobs set on fire and damaged 31 government vehicles, including 22 police vehicles. Not only this, 23 houses of policemen were torched or damaged, and nine private vehicles of policemen set ablaze. However, in the S.K. Institute of Medical Sciences (SKIMS) alone, 599 people were reported injured in the last three months. It is the biggest tertiary hospital in Srinagar. Sources in the hospital said 599 people, who received firearms injury, were admitted to the hospital. Of them, 23 died of their injuries. The hospital is still treating 31 people. Despite curfew and strikes, the hospital has treated nearly one lakh patients. “We certainly faced difficulties but our staff braved them even at the risk of their life,” SKIMS director Abdul Hamid Zargar said. During this period, 3080 surgeries were conducted and 5682 underwent CT scan and MRI tests. A number of doctors faced humiliation at the hands of security forces while reaching the hospital. Some were caught in stone-pelting incidents. Figures show that 46 ambulances, including those of Sri Mahraja Hari Singh Hospital, Bone and Joint Hospital and Directorate of Health Service were damaged in stone-pelting. (The Hindu)

Geelani 'saddened' by Ayodhya title case verdict

Hard-line Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani on Thursday said that he was saddened by the verdict of the Allahabad High Court on the Babri Masjid title suits. "It is not tolerable and it has hurt the sentiments of Muslims," he said without elaborating. He asked the people to follow the programmes of the All-India Muslim Personal Law Board and the Babri Masjid Action Committee. Moderate Hurriyat leader Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said that the verdict was "disappointing" and "it is politically motivated." "Though the court accepted that the temple was not demolished when Babri Masjid was built, in 1992 the Masjid was demolished by Hindu fundamentalists and this time around these forces have influenced the decision of the court as well," he added. The Mirwaiz termed one-third of the land being given to Muslims as appeasement. Kashmir's Grand Mufti, Mohammad Bashiruddin, suggested that the Waqf Board should move the Supreme Court against this verdict. (The Hindu)

Social front:

Maternal mortality: India's claims debunked

New United Nations global maternal mortality estimates contradict the Indian government's claim that it is "on track" to meeting U.N. goals for reducing maternal mortality, according to Human Rights Watch. "The Indian government should stop playing number games with women's lives," said Aruna Kashyap, Asia women's rights researcher at Human Rights Watch, in a press statement. "The Indian government is dangerously misleading the public, and itself, about the nature of progress on maternal health." An assessment by the World Health Organisation and other U.N. agencies found that even though India is "making progress" in declining maternal mortality, it is not "on track" to meeting its goal under the U.N. Millennium Development Goals. The 2008 figures, the latest global estimates, were released in advance of the U.N. Summit on Millennium Development Goals on September 20, 2010, at the U.N. The U.N. agencies also found that maternal deaths in India, along with countries like Afghanistan, Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, and Tanzania together accounted for 65 per cent of all global maternal deaths in 2008. In May, the Indian government contested the report of the U.N. special rapporteur on health, and disputed his contention that India would fail to meet its U.N. goal for reducing maternal mortality. "Going by the rate of decline in the past and comprehensive efforts being made across the country, it appears that India is on the right track with regard to MDG-5," the government said at that time. The Indian government continues to focus on the number of women who give birth in a health facility, known as 'institutional deliveries,' as a measure of progress on maternal health. But this approach gives an erroneous picture about progress on maternal health, Human Rights Watch said. The Indian government stated that maternal health in the country had considerably improved because 10 million women had given birth in health facilities in 2009 and into 2010. Under its flagship National Rural Health Mission and Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), or safe motherhood scheme, the Indian government uses cash incentives to encourage women to give birth in health facilities. The government does not, however,

measure the number of women who survive the delivery and the post delivery period, a much more accurate measure of success. For many women, the tragedy of maternal mortality and morbidity continues. Repeated health system failures – poor transport, referral mechanisms, emergency obstetric care, and continued care in the post-partum period – hamper delivery of care to pregnant women, Human Rights Watch said. The death of a woman in the streets of New Delhi in July is a case in point, the statement pointed out. News reports said that she had given birth unattended on the pavement, lay there with no assistance for four days in dirty rain water, and then died. In a report in October 2009, Human Rights Watch detailed why using the number of institutional deliveries as a measure of progress on maternal health is misleading. Many women told Human Rights Watch that health workers were asking them to say they delivered in a health facility to receive the cash incentive, promising to split the money. In reality, the women had delivered at home. Due to poor access to emergency transport, many women died on their way to a health facility. This is not reflected in the figures, and little has been done to improve emergency transportation. Most hospitals that Human Rights Watch visited were able to conduct only normal deliveries. Even health facilities-designated comprehensive emergency obstetric care centres did not have emergency obstetric facilities. Women were routinely referred from one hospital to another, until they reached a far-flung medical college hospital for care, assuming they were able to reach such a hospital in time. Further, many poor women had to spend considerable amounts of money to reach a health facility and secure care. (The Hindu)

Urban food security has deteriorated in many States, says report

The urban food security situation has deteriorated in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, while Punjab showed a marginal worsening till 2006, says a Report on the State of Food Insecurity in Urban India released here on Friday by Union Urban Development Minister Jaipal Reddy. "Indicators such as the percentage of anaemia amongst women and children, the percentage of women with chronic energy deficiency and the percentage of children stunted or wasting, worsened for India as a whole and for a number of States between 1998-2000 and 2004-06," the report said. Chronic under-nutrition among women significantly increased in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu. It however, improved in poorer States such as Bihar and Orissa. The period of economic reforms and high GDP growth has not seen a clear improvement in urban food security across all States, the report points out. "Taking into account the fact that urban inequality has worsened since 1991, the implications for the food security status of the urban poor or slum dwellers are worrying to say the least," said the report prepared jointly by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and the World Food Programme. Mr. Reddy presented the first copy of the report to Rajya Sabha member Mabel Rebello. At the same time, it points out that urban food security improved in Bihar, Kerala, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The improvement has been marginal in Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. The three States that have seen a spate of farmers suicides in the decade from 2000 —Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka — find themselves in the category where urban food insecurity has worsened between 1998-2000 and 2004-06. Significantly, the report, that has covered 18 States, singles out Uttar Pradesh for

dramatic improvement and suggests it is worth exploring. Other States with poor indicators earlier such as Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have made significant improvements in their urban food security status. The report suggests targeted interventions to improve employment opportunities so as to enhance access to food. It also suggests improved access to safe drinking water and sanitation as a key to addressing the issue of food absorption and, above all, strengthening of the Public Distribution System. M.S. Swaminathan hoped that the proposed Right to Food Act would fulfil Gandhiji's hope for the country's poor to get food with dignity. "There should be a decentralised grid of foodgrains to address hidden hunger and under-nutrition. With necessary awareness, analysis and action hunger can be eliminated." WFP representative Mihoko Tamamura pointed out that mere availability of food in urban markets did not guarantee food security for the poor and expressed the hope that the report would facilitate a "more rational allocation of resources in the poorest urban areas." (The Hindu)

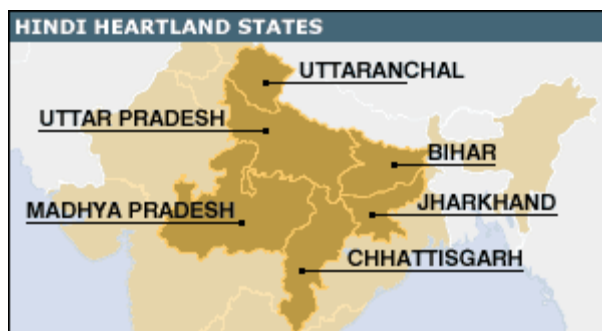
Information Technology:

Negative news: Finally govt on 'SMS alert'

Facing media whiplash on several counts — not the least the Commonwealth Games — the government has finally realised that its response needs to be fast and immediate. The Information & Broadcasting Ministry has asked its officials to send an 'sms' informing higher-ups whenever a negative news item appears in any media, particularly TV, as soon as possible. Currently, every morning, a Departmental Publicity Officer (DPO) reads all major national and regional dailies, scans broadcast channels, and briefs the Principal Director General (PDG). Now, I&B has brought out a notification telling DPOs to inform the PDG whenever "an important negative news item" pertaining to their ministry is published or telecast. The DPOs have been told that the information be sent via an SMS or the PDG be telephoned in case of an important development. A DPO said the notification was nothing out of the ordinary, but simply streamlines procedures. (The Indian Express)

Regional Report

Central India (Hindi Heartland)

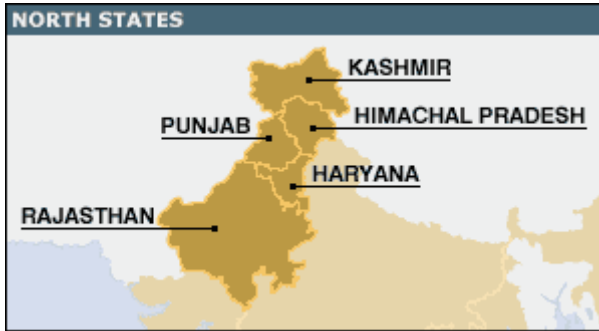


Politics:

Social front:

Economic Front:

The North



Politics:

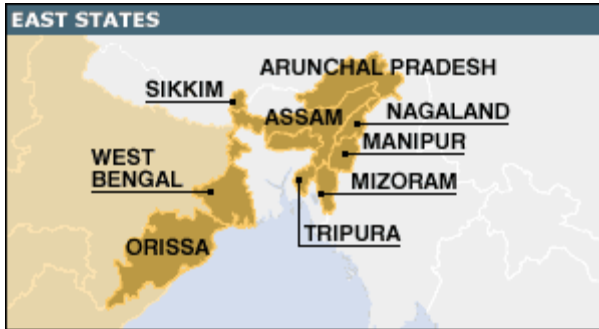
Punjab has failed to secure funds for flood protection work: Khaira

“Despite suggestion from the Centre, the Punjab government has failed to secure funds for flood protection work,” said Congress MLA from Bholath Sukhpal Singh Khaira, while addressing the media here on Sunday. He said he had received a letter from the Union Ministry of Water Resources, which talked about the “callous and indifferent attitude” of the Punjab government. Funds for flood protection work can be secured under the flood management programme (FMP) of the Government of India’s Ministry of Water Resources. Khaira said he had sought Rs 10.24 crore for Bholath constituency from Pawan Kumar Bansal, the Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Water Resources, through a letter dated July 27, 2010. A letter dated September 6 from the minister, a copy of which was provided to the media, said the Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Government of Punjab, submitted separate schemes for flood protection work located on Beas river, including one scheme pertaining to Bholath constituency, to the Central Water Commission (CWC) in February 2009 for techno-economic appraisal and requested for Central assistance under the flood management programme, a state sector scheme.” As per the guidelines issued by the ministry for the FMP, the minister wrote, such schemes were required to be formulated as an integrated project covering the entire river to avail the Central assistance. “The state government was advised in July 2009 by the CWC to integrate these schemes, but the state has not responded,” said the letter. Khaira said while the state government always blamed the Centre for not allocating funds to carry out flood protection work, the communication from the Union minister clarified that it was the state that had not cared to send an integrated proposal for each river as per the FMP guidelines, because of which no funds could be released by the Union government. (The Indian Express)

Social front:

Economic Front:

The East



Politics:

Reservation for OBCs up in West Bengal

West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee on Friday announced increased reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the State from the existing seven per cent to 17 per cent. He said a notification has been issued to reserve government jobs under this policy which also classified the backward classes into two separate groups. This move takes reservation up to 45 per cent in West Bengal. Around 3.15 crore people constituting 39 per cent of the State's population are under OBC classification. While one section called 'more backward' would get a 10 per cent reservation, the other section classified as 'backward' would get seven per cent quota. Of the 56 groups under 'extra backward' category, 49 belong to the Muslim communities, West Bengal Minister for Backward Classes Development Jogesh Burman said. The sub-grouping has been done based on a sample-study conducted by the Anthropology Department of the Calcutta University. The study pertained to a survey of 1.1 lakh households. On the timing of the announcement, Mr. Bhattacharjee said at a press conference: "It is merely coincidental. This has no connection with the (ensuing) elections; we have done this from our social obligation". The Chief Minister said that while the certificates would be given from Monday, following the official decision, block-level camps would be organised by the State Government on October 8 and 11 to take the decision to the people while also distributing certificates. "Reservation is not the only solution, we have to create equal opportunities," he added. (The Hindu)

Social front:

Economic Front:

The South



Politics:

Historic, says Yeddyurappa

Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa termed the verdict on the Ayodhya title suits historic. “I hope everyone will welcome it with an open mind.” Mr. Yeddyurappa said the verdict had done justice to the followers of all faiths. It was hoped that everyone would extend cooperation in building a Ram temple respecting the sentiments of the majority of Indians. In this situation, “I fervently appeal to all the citizens of Karnataka to cooperate with us in maintaining peace, order and harmony. I also request the media not to publish, broadcast or telecast any provocative reports or live debates and cooperate with the government in maintaining law and order.” (The Hindu)

Social front:

Economic Front:

West India



Politics:

Social front:

Economic Front:

BUSINESS AND POLITICS IN THE MUSLIM WORLD

News Monitoring Report No. 139 on South India

Reference period: Sep.24-Oct 01, 2010

Presentation: Oct.06, 2010

Rushdy Nizar

Andhra Pradesh

News Headlines

Political Issues

- Naidu lashes out at Rosaiah govt
- Krishna district bandh call evokes partial response
- "Pandu " murder mystery deepens; Rs 200-cr land deal suspected
- TDP Telangana leaders to protest outside Sonia's house

Economic Issue

- Rosaiah moots employment-intensive tourism projects

Social/Humanitarian Issue

- Funds for Tribal hostels will be released: Andhra Pradesh CM
- Piped cooking gas for GHMC consumers
- Satyam Computer fraud now estimated at USD 1.75 billion
- Virtusa gets Technology Center in Hyderabad
- US consulate announces 1 year scholarships to US Community Colleges
- Unrest at Govt General Hospital over patient's death
- Minister lays foundation of senior citizens' centre
- SAHI organizes 'Walk To Hear'
- 141 ft Gandhi greeting card to display at America on Oct 2
- Over 7.5 lakh surgeries performed under Arogyasri
- Spl Task Force for containing viral fevers: Minister

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

- Merchant power status to Hindujas will harm state: Lok Satta
- Comprehensive law to protect lakes and nallas
- 6 per cent agriculture growth in AP: Minister

Geo-strategic Issues

- India has no threat from China: Pallam Raju

Karnataka

Political Issues

- PDK to protest against Kannada organizations
- Zilla and Taluk Panchayaths Polls would be held as per schedule

Economic Issue

Social/Humanitarian Issue

- Historic judgment, says Yeddyurappa
- Omidyar supports Janaagraha with USD 3M grant
- Two multi-skill development centres to come up in Karnataka: Minister
- Nearly 7000 rounded up in Karnataka as precautionary measure
- Karnataka on high alert; bans protests, demonstrations
- Madani's judicial custody extended till Oct 12
- TCS seeks 100 acres in Bangalore to set up campus
- Kannada would be of no interest if religious places demolished
- Meet to focus on infrastructure for heli-ambulance

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

- Drinking water project with World Bank help
- Duchess of Cornwall arrives in Bangalore for rejuvenation
- Scientist calls for new innovations to double food production

Geo-strategic Issues

- Renewed focus on coastal security: Raju
- GE Aviation emerges lowest bidder for LCA

Kerala

Political Issues

- Notification issued for Kerala Civic Polls
- Arabic teachers to launch state-wide stir
- IUML in Kerala hesitant to comment on Ayodhya verdict
- Balakrishna Pillai predicts UDF win in local body polls
- BSP to contest alone in Kerala

Economic Issue

- Kerala ignites thought process aims global market
- Kerala Lottery Case: Singhvi withdraws

Social/Humanitarian Issue

- Pak, Chinese writers to participate in literary festival
- Prohibitory orders clamped, three held in Kerala
- A year after Thekkady boat tragedy, no probe, no case
- Security tightened in Kerala ahead of Ayodhya verdict
- Kerala CM's plea to Vayalar for return of Malayalees in Saudi Arabia

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

- Kerala to host 'cool jacket' designing contest
- Cancel tender to Korean firm: Oommen Chandy
- MAM ready to clean public places: Mata Amritanandamayi Devi

Geo-strategic Issues

- Motorcycle rally flagged off for coastal security

Tamil Nadu

Political Issues

- PDK to protest against Kannada organizations
- 12 Nigerians held for staying without passport, visa
- TN Govt 'betraying' Sri Lankan Tamils: Vaiko
- Group clash in Congress
- AIADMK to lead Opposition stir on people's issue

Economic Issue

- Japanese delegation to sign MoU with Tamil Nadu this year
- Growing Sino-Indian ties will bring peace: Stalin

Social/Humanitarian Issue

- DMK MP's daughter among 4 students to test positive for swine flu
- Tamil Nadu steps up security ahead of Ayodhya verdict
- 750 members of Jeeva Labour Union arrested: Neyveli strike
- 80 Teachers arrested
- IUML to honour TN CM with 'Man of Harmony Award'
- Global Hospitals launches hypertension clinic
- 1,000 NLC contract workers held

- Flight suffers bird hit, pilot ensures safe landing
- Committee constituted for celebrating Teresa's birth centenary

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

- Sterlite plant closure may lead to inflow of sulphuric acid from overseas
- 2,000 hens crushed to death as poultry farm collapses

Geo-strategic Issues

Report Summery/ Andhra Pradesh

Political Issues

Leaders of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) decided to hold 'Chalo Delhi' Oct 24 to press the demand for formation of separate Telangana. From Andhra Pradesh's Telangana Monday decided to stage a sit-in outside the residence of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) chairperson Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi next month to demand separate statehood to the region. Former minister and TDP legislator N. Janardhan Reddy Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) chief K.Chandrasekhara Rao would lead the protest. "It is Chandrababu Naidu who has conspired to stop formation of Telangana state and the TDP leaders from the region should stage dharna outside his house," he said. He alleged that Naidu, who hails from Rayalaseema region, the central government made an announcement Dec 9 last year.

The Krishna district bandh call, given by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) to protest against the brutal murder of its leader, Chalasani Venkateswara Rao alias Pandu yesterday, in Hyderabad, evoked partial response in the city. All commercial establishments remained closed, while banks, government offices and petrol filling stations were functioning as usual. Some educational institutions remained closed while some were functioning. The police suspect the murder was fallout of a possible commission in an Rs 200-crore land deal in Cyberabad and Visakhapatnam areas.

Telugu Desam President and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu today criticized the K Rosaiah-led Congress government in Andhra Pradesh as law and order situation had deteriorated and the administration had collapsed.

Economic Issue

Planning Rs1, 500 crore investments on tourism infrastructure, Andhra Pradesh Government is setting up a mega park near Nagarjuna Sagar. The State Government was looking for a 16 per cent growth in the state over 129 million tourists in 2009-2010, ahead of releasing its new tourism policy. Dr Rosaiah has approved the final draft of the New Tourism Policy after discussions with Tourism Minister J Geetha Reddy, Chief Secretary Mr. S V Prasad and Secretary Tourism Jayesh Ranjan at camp office today.

Around 400 acres of land has been identified for this project in Nagalvaram village, Macherla Mandal of Guntur District. Through this project AP expecting to attract more international tourists to the State & make many job opportunities.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

In order to give a unique and exclusive space to society elders, the Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA) has decided to set up a Senior Citizens' Centre Rs 5.60 crore and the construction period would be of 18 months. Suggested by the Andhra Pradesh Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister A Ramanarayana Reddy in this Port City.

Apollo Hospitals and Society to Aid the Hearing Impaired (SAHI), an NGO striving to help poor children with hearing impairment, organized 'Walk to Hear' to express solidarity with the hearing impaired on the occasion of International Deaf Day.

The US Consulate General, with funding from the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has invited applications from eligible candidates for the Community College Initiatives Program. The opportunity to study at a community college in the United States to develop professional skills. Candidates from economically disadvantaged background will be given preference. Eligible fields for the program including Agriculture, Applied Engineering, Business Management and Administration; Health Professions, including Nursing; Information Technology; Media; and Tourism and Hospitality Management.

Virtusa Corporation (NASDAQ: VRTU), a global IT services company, on Wednesday announced the inauguration of its new state-of-the-art Advanced Technology Center (ATC) in Hyderabad. Virtusa has invested approximately Rs. 75.30 crores in setting up the new center. Inauguration ceremony was graced by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K. Rosaiah is built on over 6 acres of land, and when fully built out would provide a 6000 seat capacity.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K Rosaiah today agreed to release funds for the improvement of tribal welfare hostels and other schemes taken up by the department Emphasis would be given to tribal welfare schools and hostels. Due to identify the gaps and interventions required for improving literacy in tribal areas. There are 1313 tribal welfare institutions with a total strength of 2, 98,600 students.

Petroleum, Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), Chairman, and Mr. L. Man Singh today assured Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K Rosaiah that piped cooking gas will be supplied to the people of GHMC area in two months time,(The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) comprises the erstwhile Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, plus 10 municipalities & 8 panchayats in Ranga Reddy district and 2 municipalities in Medak district) The APGIC will be approaching PNGRB

for city gas distribution network for the remaining districts in the state, starting from West Godavari, Krishna, Warangal, Karimnagar, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram and East Godavari.

As many as 7, 51,165 surgeries had been performed in Andhra Pradesh under the government's health scheme "Arogyasri" under which free medical treatment is provided to people Below Poverty Line at corporate and government hospitals. Amount spent on "Arogyasri" during the last five years was more than Rs 2171 crores.

Special Task Force teams would be formed to contain the spread of viral fevers, dengue and malaria, Minister for Arogyasri Pitani Satyanarayana said here today. Rs 3.11 crore had been provided to the GGH here and in Machilipatnam under Arogyasree Scheme.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

Andhra Pradesh Major and Medium Irrigation Minister Ponnala Lakshmaiah said the state government has achieved 6 per cent growth in agriculture and is working on long term strategies to increase the food production in the state, and it was really good for 65 per cent people who depend on it.

Andhra Pradesh government will bring in comprehensive law to protect lakes and nallas from encroachments Chief Minister K Rosaiah said today. The officials concerned informed the Chief Minister that all tanks in and the surrounding areas in the city were full and further rains would inundate the nearby localities also putting many unauthorized dwellings also in danger's CM ordered the concerned authority to initiate necessary steps on a war footing to prevent inundation of low lying areas and colonies, traffic bottlenecks and spread of epidemics.

Geo-strategic Issues

Minister of State for Defense M M Pallam Raju on Monday dispelled notions of insecurity along the areas bordering China, and asserted India has no threat from China. "In terms of deterrence capabilities we are building up. We do all that we can to protect our nation's interest and in terms of Strengthening the border infrastructure and strengthening the capabilities on the border. Diplomatic ties between India and China have become increasingly fraught over an unsettled border, the disputed Kashmir region and the competing global aspirations of the world's most populous nations.

Report Summery/Karnataka

Political Issues

Periyar Dravida Kazhagam (PDK)& has announced that it would lead several Tamil organizations in Tamil Nadu in a protest against Kannada linguistic organizations which have announced that they would foist a flag in Hogenakkal area to claim that it belongs to Karnataka. Dharmapuri district unit of PDK Secretary K Vedyappan and Tamil National Communist Party (TNCP) West Zone Secretary claim being made by Kannada organizations would erode the good relations and sense of brotherhood between the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. They alleged that several Kannada organizations had been creating misunderstanding claiming that Hogenakkal belonged to Karnataka

Karnataka Rural Development Minister Jagadish Shettar today said the elections to Zilla Panchayaths and Taluk Panchayaths would be held as prescheduled and there was no proposal to postpone them. State Election Commission declares the date for the election; the government would get ready to conduct the polls.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yeddyurappa today termed the Allahabad High Court verdict on Ram Janma Bhoomi - Babri Masjid as "historic judgment". Mr. Yeddyurappa said the verdict has done justice to the followers of all faiths. It is hoped that everyone will extend cooperation in building the Srirama Temple respecting the sentiments of majority of Indians.

Police rounded up 7000 potential trouble makers in the last two days as part of security arrangements for the impending Allahabad High Court judgment on Ayodhya title suit today. Across the 30 districts of Karnataka and the BJP government which has banned public gatherings, celebrations and bursting of crackers for the next two days. Deploying 80,000 policemen in the state, out of which 18,000 were placed in Bangalore city alone. Though state remained on high alert but normal life was not affected. Schools and colleges would remain closed for the next two days & government offices functioned normally.

Karnataka government today said two multi-skill development centres to be set up at Bangalore and Gulbarga at a cost of Rs 64 crore. Would admit 3,400 candidates for eight courses, including electronics, automobile, mechatronics, environment engineering and construction, ranging between one and four years. Germany's GTZ Corporation would provide technical and other logistics assistance. The candidates would be employed in various industry enterprises globally, especially in Germany and India.

A city court today extended till October 12 the judicial custody of Abdul Nasser Madani, one of the accused in the 2008 Bangalore serial blast case. The leader of Kerala-based People's Democratic Party and 12 others, who are lodged in the central jail. Magistrate extended their judicial remand by another 14 days. While four of the 32 accused were killed in an encounter by the Central Crime Branch of the city police on the

Kashmir borders a few years ago and four others are still absconding, the remaining are in jails in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh respectively. (2008 Bangalore serial blasts occurred on 25 July 2008 in [Bangalore, India](#). A series of nine bombs exploded in which two people were killed and 20 injured. This was followed by the [2008 Ahmedabad serial blasts](#) occurring on 26 July 2008, Kerala politician [Abdul Nasser Madani](#).^[30] His wife [Soofiya Madani](#) was arrested by Kerala Police on 19 December 2009 on the ground that she had taken an active role in Kalamassery Tamil Nadu state transportation corporation bus burning case. She has also confessed to Kerala Police, her involvement in organizing the bus burning and planting bomb near Coimbatore press club in retaliation to poor treatment of her husband in Coimbatore jail).

India's top IT bellwether Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has approached the Karnataka government for 100 acres of land near Bangalore international airport to set up a huge campus in this tech hub. Another Steel project's land acquisition for setting up Tata Metaliks' Rs.15, 000-crore steel plant with three million tones per annum capacity at Haveri in central Karnataka is progressing without a hitch," Baligar said. On refinancing USD 5.4 billion debt raised to partly fund the acquisition of the British steel major Corus.(Corus is a subsidiary of [Tata Steel](#), part of [India's Tata Group](#), one of the world's [largest steel producers](#), with headquarters in [London, England](#). The Company was formed from the merger of [Koninklijke Hoogovens N.V.](#) with [British Steel Plcon 6](#) October 1999. It was once a constituent of the [FTSE 100 Index](#), but was taken over by Tata in 2007).

Daxina Kannada, known for many religious centres attracting a large number of pilgrims, may lose a number of religious structures if the Supreme Court's order to demolish every temple, church, mosque and other religious structures included in the unauthorized religious construction list, is implemented. According to revenue department sources here as per this 833 religious structures have been marked for demolition. Of the 833 religious structures, temples form the majority at 640 with the rest being 151 mosques, 32 churches, and 10 Jain temples. The revenue department's statistics reveal that 350 acres of land in the district was occupied by illegal structures.

The fourth national seminar on 'helicopter emergency medical services and development of heliports/helipads' in this tech hub Tuesday will focus on building infrastructure for helicopter ambulances. According to state-run Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd, there is an urgent need for about 100 heli-ambulances across the country to provide emergency medical services and another 80 for disaster management. "But at Rs.200, 000 per trip, heli-ambulance service is cost prohibitive if hired privately and becomes affordable if hospitals and service operators join hands to provide such a life-saving mode. India has a fleet of 260 private copters, including 40 used for oil and gas exploration. In contrast, the US has a whopping 11,860 choppers, Canada 1,675 (rotorcraft) and Japan 940.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

Well-known scientist and Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE)

distinguished professor Dr K V Raghavan today underlined the need for special attention to new innovations in food production in order to double it by 2017. He said there was a big challenge before the country to increase food production as it had not increased since the last decade. This situation was most alarming and needed new technologies in food production. He said the total turn over from agriculture production was Rs 8, 30,000 crore with an annual growth of 10 per cent. An India stand fifth in terms of production in the world the food production contributes six per cent to the GDP of the country However. Investment in food processing and research and development was very less at Rs 1,303 crore which was 0.15 per cent, the food processing level was just two per cent compared to China where it was 80 per cent and 30 per cent in a small country like Thailand. Now the government has plans to increase food processing to 20 per cent and value addition to 20 to 35 per cent.

Karnataka Rural Development Minister Jagadish Shettar today announced that 500 village panchayat areas in 11 districts in the state would be provided safe drinking water from World Bank drinking water project. The people have to contribute 10 percent of the total cost and the Gram Panchayats five per cent.

Camilla Parker, the Duchess of Cornwall, arrived in the city today for a four-day stay at an up market health spa for rejuvenation. The visit of Prince Charle's wife marks gaining popularity of the tech hub as a top notch destination for global medical tourism. She will later join her husband at Delhi for the inauguration ceremony of Commonwealth Games on October 3. Soukya, a 30-acre integrated holistic healing centre, incorporates the ancient medicine systems of Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Naturopathy, yoga, meditation, ayurveda and other traditional forms of therapy. High security arrangements had been put in place with the help of Scotland Yard last week. The private spa also hosted the Duchess of York Sarah Ferguson in 1997.

Geo-strategic Issues

There had been a renewed focus on coastal security after the 26/11 terror attack on Mumbai with Coast Guard and Indian Navy strengthening their monitoring and surveillance systems, Minister of State for Defense Pallam Raju said today. Numbers of Coast Guard vessels were being increased and the Centre was also encouraging the states to have patrol boats, he added.

US aircraft engine maker GE Aviation today edged past its competitor Euro jet by

quoting the lowest bid for supply of improvised GE F-414 engines for the home made "Tejas" Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mark-II. The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), a DRDO, had designed and developed the indigenous trainer-cum-combat jet. The multi-million dollar contract to supply nearly 100 engines had been bitterly fought between the two aviation majors and earlier Euro jet, offering its EJ200 engines, was tipped as having the edge. But ultimately the US-based company, incidentally ahead of President Barack Obama's visit to India in December, prevailed by quoting the lowest bid and is all set to win the contract. Price negotiations and contract finalization will be worked in the next two months, Prahlada said. "GE Aviation will deliver 20 GE-414 engines from 2014 and the rest will be manufactured in India under transfer of technology to our defense establishments. "We have decided to go for a new engine for the LCA Mk-2 after the Indian Air Force (IAF) sought a better engine with higher rate of performance in terms of speed, thrust and vector than GE-404 engines being used in LCA Mark-1," Prahlada pointed out. The IAF has placed an order with the defense behemoth Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) to supply 40 Tejas fighters. The GE-414 engines will be developed by the Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) in Bangalore in collaboration with other DRDO agencies

Report Summery/Kerala

Political Issues

The stage has been set for the local body elections in Kerala with the State Election Commission issuing the notification today. The elections to the Local Bodies in the State would be held in two phases--on October 23 and 25.

The Kerala Arabic Teacher's Federation (KATF) will take out a state-wide 'jatha' in protest against the 'anti-language' policy adopted by the CPI (M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) Government in the state. Talking to newsmen here today KATF General Secretary K Moinkutty said the recent government order canceling the Arabi, Urdu and Sanskrit examinations was a testimony to this policy also he accused the LDF of adopting similar anti-language policy whenever it assumed office in the state. Indian Union Muslim League State General Secretary P K Kunhalikutty would flag off the march at Cherkala in Kasargod district on October 5. The 'jatha', after traversing through all the 14 districts, would culminate with a Secretariat march at Thiruvanthapuram on October 11,

he said & the leader of the Opposition in Kerala Assembly Oommen Chandy would inaugurate the function, he added.

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) state President Panakkad Mohammedali Shihab Thangal in Kerala was apparently hesitant to comment on Ayodhya title suit verdict delivered by the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court today as he was busy with work relating to the ensuing civic polls in the state. Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh has also welcomed the decision of the Allahabad High Court for observing that Ram Janam Bhoomi belonged to Lord Ram. " Now, it is the time for the Muslim community to come forward and pave way for construction of a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya," the former BJP leader said, while reacting on the HC verdict. Sunni Central Waqf Board, whose suit have been dismissed by majority decision of the special bench of the Allahabad High Court here, is expected to move to the Supreme Court within next a few days. He said it was a positive decision of the court, admitting that mosque existed at the disputed site.

Kerala Congress (B) Chairman R Balakrishna Pillai today claimed the results of the local body elections would go in favour of the Congress-led UDF in the State. Attending a Meet-the-Press Programme, organized by the Press Club here, he said the results of the local body elections would be a setback for the CPI (M)-led LDF due to its alleged anti-people policies and corruption in funds utilization. Alleging the State had diverted development funds, allotted to the local bodies by the Centre, he said the development process was inactive in the State.

Kerala BSP leader Neela Lohida Dasan Nadar today said his party would contest alone in the forthcoming local body elections in the state , he said his party would not support the major parties, CPI (M), Congress or BJP in these elections. Announcing the list of candidates, he said the party would extend its support to parties like PDP and others, based on local adjustments.

Economic Issue

Department of Industries and Commerce of Kerala design and produce is 'Cool Jacket', which can protect laborers from sun burn and problems caused by high temperature, is expected to bring more global attention, especially in the gulf countries. Lakhs of Keralites as well as people of other states in the country employed in the Gulf

countries are the major victims of sun burn. A few north Indian states also face the threat of sunburn. In Kerala also this has become a serious problem as the atmospheric temperature rose to 50 degree Celsius in the hot summer in recent years. Experts say that materials like dry ice and special fabric can be used to produce the Cool Jacket. "Our initiative is to develop and promote entrepreneurial skill, igniting the thought process of developing need-based products and its marketing and to bring out an array of global products," Additional Chief Secretary T Balakrishnan said.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

Three Pakistani writers and a Chinese writer would be among the literary figures who will participate in the Kovalam Literary festival to be held here on October 2 and 3. Mohammed Hanif, the author of international best seller "Case of Exploding Mangoes", debut novelists Ali Sethi (The Wish Maker) and H Naqvi (Home Boy) are the Pakistani writers who will be participating in the two-day festival Chinese writer Lijia Zhang, the author of the best seller "Socialism is great" will hold a reading session from her book at the festival. Deborah Baker-Ghosh will also conduct a reading session from her forthcoming book "The Convert: A Parable of Islam and America". Basharat Peer, graphic novelist Sarnath Banerjee and Manu Joseph would be among the Indian writers who will participate in the event.

Exactly a year ago, 45 people died when a Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) boat sank at the Wild Life Reserve here around 3.30 p.m. But the judicial inquiry into the accident is yet to begin and the Crime Branch of the state police has not found the cause of the tragedy. The boat carried 87 passengers against its capacity of 76. The toll would have been more if the locals had not acted promptly.

Security has been tightened in Kerala ahead of the pronouncement of the verdict on the Ayodhya title suit tomorrow. Security had been beefed up at public places like railway stations, airports, shopping malls and bus stops, he added.

Kerala Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan today urged the Overseas Indian Affairs Ministry to take necessary steps to make use of the Saudi Arabian government's six-month amnesty for hundreds of illegal foreigners overstaying their visas. The Saudi government had announced a six-month amnesty for hundreds of illegal foreigners overstaying their visas and they would be allowed to leave the Kingdom without

punishment.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

Opposition leader in Kerala Assembly Oommen Chandy today asked Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan to cancel the tender given to a Korean company for implementing the Centrally-sponsored programme to curtail transmission loss and energy theft. In a letter to Mr. Achuthanandan, he said the state had lost about Rs 52 crore in awarding the tender to the Korean company. Korean company was awarded the tender for the software for curtailing transmission loss and arresting energy theft even after Omnegate Systems Ltd had bid the lowest.

Spiritual leader Mata Amritanandamayi Devi today said the Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM) is ready to take up the responsibility of cleaning public places and constructing bathrooms and toilets in every town in the country if it gets support and cooperation of state governments as appeared in various foreign media about the lack of cleanliness at the Commonwealth Games venues, has damaged the country's image," she felt. "Environmental cleanliness and hygiene are a part of development and cultural refinement. For this to happen, we need to plan widespread awareness campaigns. We should erect more signboards on environmental cleanliness at public places, bus stands and roadsides," she pointed out.

Geo-strategic Issues

A motor cycle rally was organized by Rear Admiral S Y Srihande, Chief of Staff Southern Naval Command at Coastguard District Headquarters, here today. The rally aims to spread the message of coastal security awareness amongst the coastal population & bulwark against any external threats from the sea.

Report Summery/ Tamil Nadu

Political Issues

Periyar Dravida Kazhagam (PDK) has announced that it would lead several Tamil organizations in Tamil Nadu in a protest against Kannada linguistic organizations which have announced that they would hoist a flag in Hogenakkal area to claim that it belongs to Karnataka. Dharmapuri district unit of PDK and Tamil National Communist Party (TNCP) West Zone claim being made by Kannada organizations would erode the good relations and sense of brotherhood between the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Hogenakkal Protection Committee had appealed to Karnataka Government to prevent the Kannada organizations from entering Hogenakkal and creating misunderstanding between the two states.

Twelve Nigerian nationals were arrested for staying without having valid passport and visa here, police today said. A local resident, regarding dispute with a Nigerian national, who threatened him of dire consequences on September 26, police last night arrested Romeo Davis Onderi (25). During interrogation, it was revealed that he did not have valid documents to stay here. On further enquiry, police arrested 11 other Nigerians who were staying with him without valid passport and visa.

Marumalarchi DMK General Secretary Vaiko today alleged that DMK Government in Tamil Nadu has done yet another 'betrayal' to the Sri Lankan Tamils by not giving its consent to the Union Government to lift the ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Mr. Vaiko pointed out that the Tamil Nadu Government led by Chief Minister M Karunanidhi, who himself claimed as a saviour of Tamils, had written to the Union Government that if the ban on the LTTE was lifted, there might be severe law and order problem on the Indian soil. He said MDMK and other like-minded parties would continue their efforts to declare Mahinda Rajapakshe as a war criminal and they would achieve this at the international level.

Union Shipping Minister G K Vasani were injured when a group of Congressmen, belonging to the Union Home Minister P Chidambaram's group and led by Karur District Congress President Bankubramnain allegedly attacked them during meeting to discuss arrangements for the proposed visit to Tiruchirapalli by Congress President Sonia Gandhi on October nine. Trouble began when Mr. Veeralamalai, an alleged supporter of G K Vasani hailed his leader shouting "Long Live, Vasani" while TNCC President K V Thangabalau was addressing the meeting. Provoked, the workers belonging to other faction led by District President Subramaniam shouted "Long Live, Sonia Gandhi".

The Opposition in Tamil Nadu, led by AIADMK, will launch a joint agitation with its allies to highlight issues concerning the welfare of the people. Discussions in this regard were held by AIADMK supremo J Jayalalithaa along with CPI (M) leaders at her Poes Garden residence in the city today, to highlight the problems being faced by the people.

Economic Issue

Stating that the economic co-operation and relations between India and China were becoming stronger, Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister M K Stalin today exuded confidence that closer economic ties between the two Asian giants would bring peace and prosperity to the region though both China and India, missed the first wave of industrialization & also he pointed out that Great Chinese scholars like Fahien and Hiuen Hsang visited India. Indian monk Bodhi Dharma visited China in ancient times", he said. Addressing a function organized by Lakshmi Machine Works (LMW) and launching its product, Ring Frame LR60 AX, produced in China by LMW where LMW has now become a multi-national company and has floated a company at Vogiyang Economic Development Zone, Giyangsu Province in China. Lauding LMW as a leading textile machinery manufacturer in India, holding 60 per cent of Indian textile machinery market.

A Japanese delegation is expected to visit here sometime late October or early November and sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu government for partnering in some infrastructure projects like ports, Chennai Metro Rail, building of Chennai-Bangalore industrial corridor," Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Director General Shinya Fujii said. The number of Japanese companies in Tamil Nadu is steadily increasing. From 70 companies in 2008 the number went up to 169 in 2008-09 and now it stands at 304.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

Four medical college girl students, including the daughter of a DMK Member of Parliament (MP), tested positive for influenza A (H1N1) virus. Medical tests confirmed that all the four students were suffering from swine flu. This is for the first time that swine flu was reported in South Tamil Nadu after the outbreak of the influenza in the State.

Security in Tamil Nadu has been tightened ahead of the Allahabad High Court

verdict on the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute in Ayodhya. Around 70,000 security personnel have been deployed to maintain peace in the state.

About 750 members of the Jeeva Labour Union, attached to the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) courted arrest today after the failure of seven rounds of talks, as the indefinite strike by contract workers of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) entered the tenth day today. Intensifying their stir, pressing a ten-point charter of demands, including wage settlement, medical facilities and union recognition. Meanwhile, the Jeeva Labour Union today chalked out plans to hold picketing agitations at 100 places in this district. Though 13,000 contract workers were on strike for the past ten days, Power generation and mining remained unaffected as the regular employees expressed solidarity with the management.

Police today arrested 80 teachers, including 32 women teachers belonging to the Confederation of Tamil Nadu Self-Financing Minority schools for violating police permission and continuing their agitation due to long pending demand of government's aid to minorities schools, withdraw section 14 (A) of the Tamil Nadu Private Schools Regulation Act immediately and to extend the government aid to all the minorities schools which were started in the state after 1991.

Tamil Nadu unit of Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has decided to honour Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M Karunanidhi with 'Man of Harmony Award' (Nallinakka Nayagar Virudhu) this year. IUML National President and Union Minister of State for Railways E Ahamed and former Lok Sabha Member and IUML State President professor K M Khader Mohideen said the meeting hailed the Center's eight point package towards bringing peace in Jammu and Kashmir and hoped that all sections of the people would cooperate for implementing it. The IUML leaders said the meeting welcomed Tamil Nadu Government's decision to amend Marriage Registration Act and appealed to the government to give proper importance to Urdu language in its uniform education process. They claimed the membership drive in Kerala evinced good response and 16 lakh members were enrolled there & where they hope in Tamil Nadu at least 10 lakh, the IUML would field its ten candidates in the ensuing Assembly elections in Bihar.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

The Madras High Court Tuesday ordered immediate closure of the Sterlite Industries' Tuticorin smelter plant for violating various environmental laws and causing pollution & due to the closure of Sterlite Industries' Tuticorin smelter plant closure is likely to result in increased inflow of sulphuric acid from South Korea and neighboring Andhra Pradesh into Tamil Nadu and Kerala, say industry officials, the prices of copper in the international market will increase due to the sucking out of Sterlite's capacity. As copper is the main product, overseas companies may increase their output. This would increase the supply of by products like sulphuric acid," the official said. The Tamil Nadu and Kerala market for sulphuric acid is estimated to be in the region of around 1,500 tonne per day (tpd), excluding the demand from fertilizer units & where the current

sulphuric acid price ranges around Rs.3, 500 per tonne. Sterlite Industries will appeal against the Madras High Court order closing down its copper smelter plant in Tuticorin.

About 2,000 hens were crushed to death when a private poultry farm, housing thousands of chickens, collapsed due to heavy rain at Dharapuram in Tiruppur district of Tamil Nadu early today.

Detailed Report

Andhra Pradesh

Political Issues

TDP Telangana leaders to protest outside Sonia's house

Leaders of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) from Andhra Pradesh's Telangana Monday decided to stage a sit-in outside the residence of United Progressive Alliance (UPA) chairperson Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi next month to demand separate statehood to the region.

The Telangana TDP leader's forum, at a meeting here, decided to hold 'Chalo Delhi' Oct 24 to press the demand for formation of separate Telangana.

Former minister and TDP legislator N. Janardhan Reddy told reporters that they would also seek an appointment with Gandhi to urge her to immediately take steps for carving out a Telangana state. "We will also stage a dharna outside the residence of the Congress president," he said.

However, Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) chief K. Chandrasekhara Rao advised TDP leaders to hold a protest outside the residence of their party president N. Chandrababu Naidu.

KCR, as Rao is popularly known, said in Karimnagar that Gandhi had already agreed to the demand for separate Telangana state.

"It is Chandrababu Naidu who has conspired to stop formation of Telangana state and the TDP leaders from the region should stage dharna outside his house," he said.

He said the TDP leaders should make Naidu submit a representation to the Srikrishna committee seeking a Telangana state.

He alleged that Naidu, who hails from Rayalaseema region, instigated leaders of TDP and Congress in other regions to create hurdles in the formation of Telangana after the central government made an announcement Dec 9 last year.

KCR's latest attack has intensified the war of words between the two parties over Telangana.

Naidu, who recently faced protests from Telangana activists during his visit to the region last week, remarked that KCR was daydreaming of coming to power.

Krishna district bandh call evokes partial response

The Krishna district bandh call, given by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) to protest against the brutal murder of its leader, Chalasani Venkateswara Rao alias Pandu yesterday, in Hyderabad, evoked partial response in the city.

All commercial establishments remained closed, while banks, government offices and petrol filling stations were functioning as usual. The city buses were running as usual. However, some educational institutions remained closed while some were functioning.

Some cinema theatres cancelled their noon shows. So far no untoward incident was reported, police said. Similar was the situation in district headquarters of Machilipatnam, Gudivada and other towns.

Meanwhile, talking to media, TDP senior leader and MLA Devineni Umamaheswara Rao said TDP President and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu would attend the funeral which would be held this afternoon at Ventapragada village, about 20 km from here.

A host of political leaders, including Animal Husbandry Minister K Parthasarathi, former Minister and Congress party leader Devineni Rajasekhar and former MP Gadde Ramamohan paid their last respect to the slain TDP leader.

"Pandur" murder mystery deepens; Rs 200-cr land deal suspected

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader from Krishna district Chalasani Venkateswara Rao alias Pandu was killed in an apartment of Yusufguda area in the city today. The police suspect the murder was fallout of a possible commission in an Rs 200-crore land deal in Cyberabad and Visakhapatnam areas.

S R Nagar Police was alerted of Chalasani Pandu's murder at Swapnalik Perl apartment with the watchman indicating Pandu's close associate Mahinder Reddy as a possible suspect.

Chalasani Pandu, who had unsuccessfully contested thrice, twice as TDP candidate against Dairy Development Minister Parthasarathi from Vuyyuru Assembly constituency, was in the thick of 'settlement' issue and had shifted his base to Hyderabad recently after the Vijayawada police had cautioned him from interfering in land issue.

The city police was working on leads provided by the watchman and others had already dispatched a special team to Vijayawada as it indicated that Mahinder Reddy and others were seen in his apartment late last night.

The crime scene indicated there was an intense struggle before Pandu was battered to death with heavy object. The police also suspected possible involvement of a close associate. Pandu's body was sent to Gandhi Hospital for autopsy.

Naidu lashes out at Rosaiah govt

Telugu Desam President and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu today came down heavily on the K Rosaiah-led Congress government in Andhra Pradesh, saying that the law and order situation had deteriorated and the administration had collapsed.

Talking to newsmen at Gannavaram Air Port near here, he alleged political murders in the state reflected the ineptness of the government in maintaining law and order.

"The political system, law and order and the administration have collapsed. Nobody fears the system. It has become a free-for-all in the state," he alleged.

Condemning the brutal murder of senior TDP leader Chalasani Venkateswara Rao alias Pandu yesterday in Hyderabad, he cautioned that more such murders might take place, if the government did not take firm steps to curb them.

Expressing concern over the "lawlessness" in the state, the former Chief Minister pointed out that young girls were being killed and acid poured on them in the name of love and the culprits simply surround the police without fear. This indicates the declining law and

order situation in the state.

"Even when Mr. Rajasekhara Reddy was the Chief Minister, the seeds of mining rowdyism and land grabbing mafias were sown", he alleged.

Later, Mr. Naidu went to the Ventraprgada village, about 20 km from here and paid his respects to Venkateswara Rao and consoled the bereaved family.

The funeral of the slain TDP leader took place at Ventrapragada village, about 20 km from here. Thousands of people including Mr. Naidu, several MLAs MLCs and leaders attended it.

Economic Issue

Rosaiah moots employment-intensive tourism projects

Planning Rs 1,500 crore investments on tourism infrastructure, Andhra Pradesh Government is setting up a mega park near Nagarjuna Sagar on the lines of Brindavan and Lalbagh.

The State Government was looking for a 16 per cent growth in the state over 129 million tourists in 2009-2010, ahead of releasing its new tourism policy, according to a press release here today Chief Minister K Rosaiah has asked the Tourism Department and Tourism Development Corporation to prepare a master plan for employment-intensive projects to achieve the twin objectives of promoting tourism and creating job opportunities, both direct and indirect.

The Chief Minister said the year 2011 will be observed as 'Visit Andhra Pradesh' year in recognition of the roll out of dynamic tourist promotion initiatives in the realm of adventure, pilgrimage and beach tourism to attract more international tourists to the State.

Dr Rosaiah has approved the final draft of the New Tourism Policy after discussions with Tourism Minister J Geetha Reddy, Chief Secretary Mr. S V Prasad and Secretary Tourism Jayesh Ranjan at camp office today. He will release the new policy on September 27.

The release said Andhra Pradesh proposes to develop a sprawling, modern garden on the

lines of Brindavan in Mysore and Lalbagh at Bengaluru at Nagarjuna sagar. Around 400 acres of land has been identified in Nagalvaram village, Macherla Mandal of Guntur District. The Chief Minister said, "I want this park to be both a tourist and an educational destination unique in the entire south India.

Wherever possible such employment-intensive tourist projects should be promoted to provide jobs to skilled, unskilled and poor and illiterate people in rural areas." He said Andhra Pradesh's tourism policy would be the best in the country.

The Chief Minister also congratulated officials of the Tourism Department and APTDC for putting the state on the top of tourism map of the country with a record number of 129 million tourists in 2009-10.

He expressed happiness that the tourism sector had achieved a 16 per cent growth last year and retained its top position once again.

"With the new initiatives and focused tourism policy, I have no doubt that Andhra Pradesh will continue as a preferred destination of both domestic and international tourists and retain its top position," he said.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

Minister lays foundation of senior citizens' centre

In order to give a unique and exclusive space to society elders, the Visakhapatnam Urban Development Authority (VUDA) has decided to set up a Senior Citizens' Centre, the foundation for which was laid by Andhra Pradesh Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister A Ramana Rayana Reddy in this Port City.

Mr. Reddy laid down the foundation stone yesterday on a 1,600 square yard land on the picturesque beach road at Sea memorial.

Speaking after laying the foundation stone for the Centre, he said the estimated cost of the project, which also includes a guest house is Rs 5.60 crore and the construction period would be of 18 months.

"The project is to express gratitude to senior citizens in recognition of their contribution to the society," VUDA Vice Chairman B Sreedhar said on the occasion. VUDA feels the project as its social obligation and the overwhelming support from senior citizens led to its materializing, he added.

Several members of the senior citizen organizations were present at the function.

The Minister also inaugurated the 150th anniversary celebrations of Bheemunipatnam Municipality Pylon, Indoor stadium and new road works at Bheemunipatnam, Popularly known as Bheemali, a second Municipality in the country, which will complete 150 years of its formation on February 9th next year.

Dutch had started this municipality as a voluntary municipal association on February 9, 1861.

SAHI organizes 'Walk To Hear'

Apollo Hospitals and Society to Aid the Hearing Impaired (SAHI), an NGO striving to help poor children with hearing impairment, organized 'Walk to Hear' to express solidarity with the hearing impaired on the occasion of International Deaf Day.

The walk which started from KBR Park and ended at Apollo Hospitals was flagged off yesterday by Secunderabad MLA Jayasudha. Andhra Pradesh Chief Information Commissioner Jannat Hussain, Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad A K Khan, Tollywood star Smitha, Ms Sangita Reddy, Executive Director, Apollo Hospitals, Dr E C Vinay Kumar, Secretary, SAHI also participated in the program.

Several hearing impaired children, students, corporate employees and concerned citizens joined the walk. SAHI donated ear plugs for traffic policemen in the city to Mr. Khan on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Jannat Hussain said, "we should try to support SAHI as much as possible in its noble Endeavour. We should try to spread awareness amongst parents of 3 to 5 year old children about free cochlear implant surgeries done under Arogyashree and the free screening and tests done for neonatals by SAHI."

Unrest at Govt General Hospital over patient's death

The situation in Government General Hospital here suddenly turned tense this morning following the death of a woman few hours after delivery and the relatives starting agitation blaming the doctors and even roughed up a doctor on duty.

The doctors launched a counter agitation boycotting the duties except those of emergency nature. The deceased Voleti Durga Gowry (22) was admitted to the hospital yesterday and delivered a girl child around 2030 hrs. But, due to excessive bleeding, she died at midnight.

The relatives of all fishermen community of Yetimoga area gathered in large numbers at the hospital and refused to take the body unless action was taken against the erring doctors.

However, the Government Doctors Association led by Dr Raghavendrarao, on the other

hand, maintained that there was no lapse whatsoever on the part of the doctors on duty and every effort was made to save her life till last minute. They demanded arrest of those who assaulted the doctor on duty.

After intervention of former MLA Vanamadi Venkateswerarao, who hails from fishermen community, the relatives called off their stir and took the body around noon.

The Collector has asked the additional Joint Collector B Ramarao to conduct a detailed inquiry into the incident and submit a report.

US consulate announces 1 year scholarships to US Community Colleges

The US Consulate General, with funding from the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has invited applications from eligible candidates for the Community College Initiatives Program.

The one-year program offers youth from Andhra Pradesh, without a university background, the opportunity to study at a community college in the United States to develop professional skills.

This is the second year that the US Consulate General Hyderabad has sought applicants. Last year, seven applicants from Andhra Pradesh were selected and are now studying in the US.

The United States Government provides funding for round-trip airfare to the US, tuition costs, health benefit plan and cultural enhancement activities for selected candidates.

To apply to the program, candidates must have completed secondary school education; have two years work experience in the field in which they are applying. They must also have English language skills that will provide a basis for enrolling in academic course work following two months of intensive English language study in the US.

Candidates from economically disadvantaged background will be given preference. Candidates holding a master's degree are ineligible to apply.

Eligible fields for the program including Agriculture, Applied Engineering, Business Management and Administration; Health Professions, including Nursing; Information Technology; Media; and Tourism and Hospitality Management.

Virtusa gets Technology Center in Hyderabad

Virtusa Corporation (NASDAQ: VRTU), a global IT services company, on Wednesday announced the inauguration of its new state-of-the-art Advanced Technology Center (ATC) in Nanakramguda, Gachibowli, Hyderabad, marking the expansion of its engineering excellence capabilities in India. Virtusa has invested approximately Rs. 75.30 crores in setting up the new center.

The ATC, whose inauguration ceremony was graced by Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K. Rosaiah is built on over 6 acres of land, and when fully built out would provide a 6000 seat capacity.

Speaking at the inauguration, Kris Canekeratne, Virtusa's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, said, "India is a key part of our global operations and we are proud of this milestone in our decade long association with Hyderabad in addition to our presence in Chennai. Our new Advanced Technology Center reflects our commitment to Virtusans in India who are part of our One Global Team focused on accelerating business outcomes and consumer experiences of our Fortune 1000 client base."

The Hyderabad campus will provide diverse technology solutions and service global clients across many industries, including, banking, financial services, insurance, telecommunications, technology and healthcare.

Satyam Computer fraud now estimated at USD 1.75 billion

Financial irregularities perpetrated by the original promoters of Satyam Computer Services led by B. Ramalinga Raju resulted in an Rs.78.55 billion (USD 1.75 billion) impacts on the company's accounts, the stock exchanges were informed Wednesday.

Presenting the consolidated financial results of the company, now renamed Mahindra Satyam, the new management said an impact of Rs.67.95 billion (USD 1.5 billion) was on account of what it said was based on specific financial irregularities identified during forensic investigations.

"The fictitious revenue was recorded by creation of false invoices by circumventing the normal revenue recognition cycle," said the filing signed by Chairman Vineet Nayyar on behalf of the new board of the company.

The irregularities covered various heads including revenue, interest income, exchange fluctuations, salary costs, other expenses, bank borrowings and interest, as also tax payments, as per the report presented to the stock exchanges

.Once the poster boy of Indian information technology industry, Raju had stunned the corporate world in January last year when he admitted to financial irregularities worth Rs.70 billion (USD 1.5 billion) over the past several years in the largest corporate fraud in the country's history.

Funds for Tribal hostels will be released: Andhra Pradesh CM

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K Rosaiah today agreed to release funds for the improvement of tribal welfare hostels and other schemes taken up by the department. He said all Tribal Welfare institutions in the state would be renovated. Emphasis would be given to tribal welfare schools and hostels. He asked the finance department to give priority to the requirements of the Tribal Welfare Department.

The Chief Minister today reviewed the functioning and various other issues pertaining to the Tribal Welfare Department with minister and officials. Dr Rosaiah also agreed to fill up the vacancies in the ITDAs and the Tribal Welfare Department on a priority basis.

The Chief Minister was informed that a workshop was held in ITDA and Bhadrachalam recently to identify the gaps and interventions required for improving literacy in tribal areas. A comprehensive plan was being prepared.

Meanwhile, support was sought for Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) scheme at State Level Planning and Monitoring Unit (SPMU) on tribal education in the office of the Commissioner, Tribal Welfare. There are 1313 tribal welfare institutions with a total strength of 2, 98,600 students. During 2010-11, the strength was fixed for all Tribal Welfare institutions as per existing infrastructure available. Admission to Tribal Welfare hostels during 2010-11 were being done as per a GO. In Andhra Pradesh, Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions (APTWREIs) admissions are completed as per Right to Education Act.

The arrears of Post Metric scholarships have been released to the districts. During the year 2010-11, Rs 1540 lakhs provided for pre metric scholarships. Under the Tribal Welfare-NREGS convergence, 4.67 lakh acres of land was distributed to 1.65 lakh families as individual pattas under the RoFR Act, 2006. A comprehensive and systematic planning was being taken up to start land development, minor irrigation development, horticulture and plantation development. The Plan would be implemented in 2010-11 and 2011-12.

The Chief Minister was informed that 25 per cent of the royalty amounts collected from mining leases in tribal areas were to be spent for the welfare of tribals. The Chief Minister asked the finance department to allocate funds under the scheme to the Tribal Welfare Department.

Tribal Welfare Minister P Balaraju, Adviser to CM, P K Agarwal, Special Chief Secretary, Tribal Welfare, A K Tigdi, Commissioner, Tribal Welfare, Shanthi Kumari, Principal Secretary, Finance, L V Subramaniam and other officials attended the meeting, a press release from CMO here said.

Piped cooking gas for GHMC consumers

Petroleum, Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), Chairman, and Mr. L. Man Singh today assured Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister K Rosaiah that piped cooking gas will be supplied to the people of GHMC area in two months time.

The Chief Minister thanked Mr. Man Singh and his officials for all the support extended to Andhra Pradesh in honoring the requests.

PNGRB has been extending full support to Andhra Pradesh to develop an Integrated Gas Grid. The PNGRB has accepted the state's proposal for treating a district as a unit for gas distribution in the city.

The Chief Minister expressed happiness that PNGRB had recently notified four districts--Ranga Reddy, Medak, Nalgonda and Khammam for bidding to develop city gas distribution network. Already, the distribution for Hyderabad, Vijayawada, Kakinada and Rajahmundry has been awarded and work was in progress. The APGIC would submit bid documents for four districts, which were recently notified.

Dr Rosaiah said the Andhra Pradesh Gas Infrastructure Corporation (APGIC) has requested PNGRB to take up a trunk line between Kakinda and Kolkata so that the distribution network can be laid in the districts of Visakhapatnam, Vijayanagaram and Srikakulam as the Kakinada-Kolkata trunk line had not been taken up so far.

He said the APGIC will be approaching PNGRB for city gas distribution network for the remaining districts in the state, starting from West Godavari, Krishna, Warangal, Karimnagar, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram and East Godavari.

The Gas Distribution in the districts south of Krishna River was also being planned by the state. Soon, Expression of Interest will be filed with the PNGRB.

141 ft Gandhi greeting card to display at America on Oct 2

A 141 ft long mega greeting card of Mahatma Gandhi prepared jointly by Sri Venkateswara Children's High and Spring Dale Public School will be displayed in United States of America on October 2, the 141st Gandhi Jayanthi Day.

The greeting card was conceptualized and designed by the Secretaries of the schools Vasu and S Komandur. It was released by Chittoor MP Dr N Siva Prasad and former MLA M Venkataramana at a function here today.

Later, talking to UNI, Mr. Vasu, who is also an advocate, said the objective was to spread message by the Principles of Gandhism. It took three months to prepare the card. Even though, he had not visited US, Mahatma Gandhi's statues had been installed in main cities in the US

He said he had received invitations from various schools in America and said he would leave for America on September 28 and release the mega greeting card first at California on October 2. He would then display it in other main cities in America, he added.

Over 7.5 lakh surgeries performed under Arogyasri

As many as 7, 51,165 surgeries had been performed in Andhra Pradesh under the government's health scheme "Arogyasri" under which free medical treatment is provided to people Below Poverty Line at corporate and government hospitals.

Disclosing this at a review meeting here today, Minister for Implementation of the Scheme P Satyanarayana said the total amount spent on "Arogyasri" during the last five years was more than Rs 2171 crores.

He said Krishna district stood second in utilizing the scheme performing 53,224 surgeries.

Spl Task Force for containing viral fevers: Minister

Special Task Force teams would be formed to contain the spread of viral fevers, dengue and malaria, Minister for Arogyasri Pitani Satyanarayana said here today.

Addressing a review meeting with several top officials, the Minister said imported medicated mosquito nets would be distributed and large scale sanitation and awareness drive launched.

“Task Force comprising Revenue and Health officials will be formed for every 250 to

500 population," he said.

"The team will conduct house-to-house health inspections, 15,000 medicated imported mosquito nets would be distributed in the slums and sanitation on war-footing will be carried out in the city.

These are the decisions which were taken in the review meeting as part of the strategy to check the rapid spread of dengue," the Minister informed.

Ruling out the possibility of including treatment for dengue in Arogyasri affording cashless treatment, he said it was not possible due to some technical problems.

Making it clear there was no dearth of funds in taking steps to contain the spread of dengue, the Minister said adequate funds were ready to be released. He said Rs 3.11 crore had been provided to the GGH here and in Machilipatnam under Aarogyasree Scheme.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

6 per cent agriculture growth in AP: Minister

Andhra Pradesh Major and Medium Irrigation Minister Ponnala Lakshmaiah said the state government has achieved 6 per cent growth in agriculture and is working on long term strategies to increase the food production in the state.

Addressing a two-day national seminar on Engineering Agriculture for Evergreen Revolution organized by Indian Society of Agriculture Engineers in association with Acharya N G Ranga Agriculture University at Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University Auditorium here yesterday, the Minister said the state had achieved 6 per cent growth in agriculture and it was really good for 65 per cent people who depend on it.

The government also provided subsidies on seeds and pesticides besides on irrigation equipment resulting development in agriculture, he said.

Comprehensive law to protect lakes and nallas

Andhra Pradesh government will bring in comprehensive law to protect lakes and nallas from encroachments Chief Minister K Rosaiah said today.

He responded positively to the proposal to bring in the new law to protect these water bodies in the city and surrounding areas. This law was also needed to protect the lives and property of the people.

The officials concerned informed the Chief Minister that all tanks in and the surrounding areas in the city were full and further rains would inundate the nearby localities also putting many unauthorized dwellings also in danger.

The Chief Minister said an empowered committee should look into this problem in detail and come out with a comprehensive law to protect the lakes and nallahs.

The Chief Minister gave clear directions to all the officials of the GHMC, MA and UD, Health, Water Board, traffic police and the Collectors of Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy districts to initiate necessary steps on a war footing to prevent inundation of low lying areas and colonies, traffic bottlenecks and spread of epidemics.

The Chief Minister reviewed the situation following unprecedented rains in the city and surrounding areas with ministers, City Mayor and top officials of various departments.

Merchant power status to Hindujas will harm state: Lok Satta

Lok Satta Party President Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan today said the Andhra Pradesh government's move to extend merchant power status to the Hinduja Power Project at Visakhapatnam would be detrimental to the state's interests.

In a statement here, he pointed out that the state government, which had allocated land at highly subsidized rate and facilitated coal linkage, was entitled to buy the entire power generated at the Hinduja plant at the price charged by NTPC's Simhadri power plant, as agreed upon earlier. If the state government concedes merchant power status to the Hinduja project, it will have to reconcile itself to allocation of a fraction of the power it produces.

The 1000 mw plant produces on an average, 20 million units of power a day. If the state government has to buy the entire Hinduja power at even one rupee more per unit than that charged by NTPC's Simhadri plant, the extra burden works out to Rs.2 crore a day or more than Rs.700 crore a year, he claimed.

Geo-strategic Issues

India has no threat from China: Pallam Raju

Minister of State for Defence M M Pallam Raju on Monday dispelled notions of insecurity along the areas bordering China, and asserted India has no threat from China.

"Every country works towards saving its own interest...from that point of view, even China will do whatever it has to, while we take our adequate safeguards in protecting our interests," said Pallam Raju, while interacting with the media persons after commissioning the new set up of Bharat Dynamics Limited, a unit functioning under the Ministry of Defence here today.

Pallam Raju also mentioned that India is acquiring and upgrading warships and weapons of the Indian Navy as a part of the defence policy.

"In terms of deterrence capabilities we are building up. We do all that we can to protect our nation's interest and in terms of strengthening the border infrastructure and strengthening the capabilities on the border. So we don't have to worry on that front," he added.

Diplomatic ties between India and China have become increasingly fraught over an unsettled border, the disputed Kashmir region and the competing global aspirations of the world's most populous nations.

Detailed Report

Karnataka

Political Issues

PDK to protest against Kannada organizations

Periyar Dravida Kazhagam (PDK) has announced that it would lead several Tamil organizations in Tamil Nadu in a protest against Kannada linguistic organizations which have announced that they would foist a flag in Hogenakkal area to claim that it belongs to Karnataka.

According to Dharmapuri district unit of PDK Secretary K Vedyappan and Tamil National Communist Party (TNCP) West Zone Secretary G Marimuthu, the claim being made by Kannada organizations would erode the good relations and sense of brotherhood between the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

They alleged that several Kannada organizations had been creating misunderstanding

claiming that Hogenakkal belonged to Karnataka.

They claimed that as no action was being initiated against the Kannada organizations to thwart them from putting up the flags in the Hogenakkal area on September 30, the PDK and TNCP had decided to stage the protest and 'chase away' the agitators of the Kannada organizations.

Hogenakkal Protection Committee, led by former MLA M Najappan, had appealed to Karnataka Government to prevent the Kannada organizations from entering Hogenakkal and creating misunderstanding between the two states.

Zilla and Taluk Panchayaths Polls would be held as per schedule.

Karnataka Rural Development Minister Jagadish Shettar today said the elections to Zilla Panchayaths and Taluk Panchayaths would be held as prescheduled and there was no proposal to postpone them.

Talking to newsmen here he said as soon as the State Election Commission declares the date for the election, the government would get ready to conduct the polls.

He said the government would promulgate an ordinance in a week's time to allocate reservation of seats in the elections. The Supreme Court in its recent ruling had ordered that the quota should not exceed 50 per cent of the total seats.

Earlier, this reservation was more than 50 per cent. Hence there was a need to bring in an amendment to the law. As there was no session at present, there was a need to promulgate the ordinance, he said.

Reacting to opposition parties charge that allocation of portfolios in the cabinet reshuffle was done providing prominence to the upper communities, he said there was no meaning in such criticism. The allocation of portfolio was done as per the decision of the core committee.

Economic Issue

Social/Humanitarian Issue

Historic judgment, says Yeddyurappa

Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yeddyurappa today termed the Allahabad High Court verdict on Ram Janma Bhoomi - Babri Masjid as "historic judgment".

In a statement here, he said "this is an historic judgment and I hope everyone will welcome it with open mind." He said that the majority decision has confirmed that the place where the idol of Lord Srirama is situated is the actual birth place of Srirama.

Mr. Yeddyurappa said the verdict has done justice to the followers of all faiths. It is hoped that everyone will extend cooperation in building the Srirama Temple respecting the sentiments of majority of Indians.

"In this situation, I fervently appeal to all the citizens of Karnataka to cooperate with us in maintaining peace, order and harmony.

"I also request my media friends not to publish, broadcast or telecast any provocative Reports or live debates and cooperate with the government in maintaining law and order in the state," he added.

Nearly 7000 rounded up in Karnataka as precautionary measure

Police rounded up 7000 potential trouble makers in the last two days as part of security arrangements for the impending Allahabad High Court judgment on Ayodhya title suit today.

Police and district authorities rounded up 4000 potential trouble makers yesterday and another 3000 preventive arrests were made today, official sources said.

Ban orders under Sec 144 CrPC has been clamped in across the 30 districts of Karnataka and the BJP government which has banned public gatherings, celebrations and bursting of crackers for the next two days.

The State government which had promised to ensure that normal life prevailed in the state, provided a thick blanket of security cover deploying 80,000 policemen in the state, out of which 18,000 were placed in Bangalore city alone

The state remained on high alert but normal life was not affected. Schools and colleges would remain closed for the next two days. However, government offices functioned normally.

Road traffic in the city remained subdued since this morning.

Omidyar supports Janaagraha with USD 3M grant

Omidyar Network, a philanthropic investment firm, on Friday announced a grant of up to USD3M to Janaagraha, a Bangalore-based nonprofit that works to improve the quality of life in India's cities and towns.

The investment firm's grant will be used to extend Janaagraha's successful model of citizen engagement and urban governance to other urban areas in India.

At the recent Clinton Global Initiative, Omidyar Network committed an additional USD 30M over the next three years, and Janaagraha's is the first grant against that commitment. The grant is also Omidyar Network's first government transparency grant in India and its largest government transparency grant outside the United States.

"Janaagraha is one of the premier government transparency organizations in India," said Jayant Sinha, managing director, Omidyar Network India Advisors. "Omidyar Network is proud to partner with Janaagraha and offer our technology and human capital expertise to help Janaagraha scale their model and online platforms across the world's largest democracy."

The grant will also support a national online civic-engagement platform, iJanaagraha, and a bribe-reporting website, "I paid a bribe."

Two multi-skill development centres to come up in Karnataka: Minister

Karnataka government today said two multi-skill development centres would be set up in the state at a cost of Rs 64 crore.

To be set up at Bangalore and Gulbarga, the cost of the two centres would be shared equally between the state and the Union governments, Karnataka Labour Minister B N Bachegowda told reporters here.

He said the centres, which were expected to start functioning from the next academic year, would admit 3,400 candidates for eight courses, including electronics, automobile, mechatronics, environment engineering and construction, ranging between one and four years.

Germany's GTZ Corporation would provide technical and other logistics assistance.

The candidates would be employed in various industry enterprises globally, especially in Germany and India.

Meanwhile, the Minister also said the government had revised the daily wages for 24 unorganized sectors, including municipalities and city corporations.

Following the implementation of new wages, the workers engaged as 'Safai Karmacharis' would get Rs 5,044 per month in A class cities, Rs 4,264 in B class and Rs 3,484 in C class cities in the states. The wage for these workers was revised in 2005, the Minister said.

Karnataka on high alert; bans protests, demonstrations

Karnataka has been put on high alert banning protests, demonstrations and victory processions across the state from Thursday ahead of the verdict by the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court on the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute.

"We have already deployed around 50,000 police personnel across the state, including 20,000 men in Bangalore to maintain law and order and prevent any untoward incident arising out of the Ayodhya verdict," Home Minister R. Ashoka told reporters after chairing a high-level meeting with the top police brass to review the security arrangements.

The state government has also declared holiday for all schools and colleges Thursday and Friday.

"Prohibitory orders under section 144 of the CrPC (banning assembly of five or more people) have been clamped from Thursday 6 a.m. to Saturday 6 p.m. and sale of liquor banned Thursday and Friday in Bangalore," City Police Commissioner Shankar Bidari said.

Ashoka also reviewed the security arrangements and assessed the situation in other parts of the state by holding video-conferencing with deputy commissioners and Superintendents of police of the 30 districts.

"As part of preventive measures, the police have arrested several anti-social elements and suspects prone to create trouble or cause disharmony," Ashok said.

The state government has roped in additional personnel from the Karnataka State Reserve

Police, City Armed Reserve, and home guards to strengthen security arrangements across the state, especially in the sensitive districts and cities of Bangalore, Mysore, Mangalore, Hubli, Belgaum and Gulbarga.

Director General of Police (DGP) Ajai Kumar Singh has asked media and television news channels to report the verdict and its details with restraint and avoid flashing or airing any inflammatory speech or provocative statement.

Around 100 closed-circuit television cameras (CCTVs) and cameras in sensitive areas and vital installations in major cities and towns, especially Bangalore, Mysore, Mangalore, Hubli and Gulbarga have also been installed.

Madani's judicial custody extended till Oct 12

A city court today extended till October 12 the judicial custody of Abdul Nasser Madani, one of the accused in the 2008 Bangalore serial blast case.

The leader of Kerala-based People's Democratic Party and 12 others, who are lodged in the central jail at Parappana Agrahara on the outskirts of the city, were produced before the First Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Venkatesh Hulagi through video conferencing.

The 14 accused, including Madani and main accused T Nazir were produced before the Magistrate and they raised their hands one by one as the names were called. Later the magistrate extended their judicial remand by another 14 days.

While four of the 32 accused were killed in an encounter by the Central Crime Branch of the city police on the Kashmir borders a few years ago and four others are still absconding, the remaining are in jails in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh respectively.

Madani's counsel P S Usman complained that the jail authorities had installed remote cameras in the jail room and the bathroom, which amounted to human rights violations. He also sought the copies of the charge sheets, which the police had not provided despite several requests.

The Magistrate said he would enquire about the remote cameras and directed Investigating Officer Omkaraiah to furnish a copy of the charge sheet to Madani.

TCS seeks 100 acres in Bangalore to set up campus

India's top IT bellwether Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has approached the Karnataka government for 100 acres of land near Bangalore international airport to set up a huge campus in this tech hub, a senior official said Tuesday

"TCS has approached the state government to allot 100 acres of land to set up its largest campus in the proposed IT Park at Devanahalli near the airport. We have agreed to consider the application," state Principal Secretary, Commerce and Industry V.P. Baligar told reporters here.

A team of senior officials of the Tata group headed by Tata Steel vice-chairman B. Muthuraman met Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa to discuss the status of investment proposals group companies made during the global investors' meet here early June.

"Land acquisition for setting up Tata Metaliks' Rs.15, 000-crore steel plant with three million tones per annum capacity at Haveri in central Karnataka is progressing without a hitch," Baligar said.

The state government has also agreed to allot five acres of land to Tata Consulting Engineers (TCE) for its project and similar land for setting up its "Ginger" brand budget hotels at Belgaum and Hubli in north Karnataka.

"Tata Housing has also sought land for its various projects. We have assured the company to allot land in industrial areas across the state," Baligar noted.

Tata Power is one of the bidders for a power project at Bidadi, about 40 km from the city.

Tata Elxsi, a product design and IT services firm, is planning to expand its Bangalore campus, while Tata Realty has bid for the proposed monorail and high-speed rail link projects in the city.

"We have already submitted our investment proposals to the state government and met the chief minister to review their status as we have lined up several projects across the state," Muthuraman noted.

On refinancing USD 5.4 billion debt raised to partly fund the acquisition of the British

steel major Corus, the vice-chairman said the company (Tata Steel) was negotiating with banks and a decision would be taken later this week," Muthuraman added.

Tata Steel bought Corus for USD 12.9 billion in 2007.

Kannada would be of no interest if religious places demolished

Daxina Kannada, known for many religious centres attracting a large number of pilgrims, may lose a number of religious structures if the Supreme Court's order to demolish every temple, church, mosque and other religious structures included in the unauthorized religious construction list, is implemented.

According to revenue department sources here as per this 833 religious structures have been marked for demolition. Bantwal alone has 382 unauthorized constructions and Moodubidri 23.

Of the 833 religious structures, temples form the majority at 640 with the rest being 151 mosques, 32 churches, and 10 Jain temples.

The revenue department's statistics reveal that 350 acres of land in the district was occupied by illegal structures, including 294 acre of land by temples and prayer halls.

Several religious organizations which were conducting meetings about the Deputy Commissioner's circular have also submitted a memorandum to him. Expressing his concern regarding the issue, Ramesh Nayak, the coordinator of "Hindu Jana Jagrithi Vedike", said a number of temples were over five or six centuries old and they are not sure where to relocate these structures.

Meet to focus on infrastructure for heli-ambulance

The fourth national seminar on 'helicopter emergency medical services and development of heliports/helipads' in this tech hub Tuesday will focus on building infrastructure for helicopter ambulances.

"The day-long conference will also deliberate on how crucial is heli-ambulance service to save patients during the golden hour, especially in grid-locked metros and cities of India," Rotary Wing Society of India (RWSI) southern region president Wing Commander Unnikrishna Pillai told IANS here Monday.

Aero medical specialists in choppers provide advanced life support to serious patients in-flight or at the accident spot. The copters are turned into mini-intensive care units (ICUs) for trauma care to individuals and mass casualties.

According to state-run Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd, there is an urgent need for about 100 heli-ambulances across the country to provide emergency medical services and another 80 for disaster management.

Organized by the state-run RWSI, the seminar will educate stakeholders on promoting such an efficient service and on building capacity to popularize it.

The Indian hospital industry is keen on introducing the heli-ambulance services soon, as many precious lives can be saved and avert national loss of human resource.

"But at Rs.200,000 per trip, heli-ambulance service is cost prohibitive if hired privately and becomes affordable if hospitals and service operators join hands to provide such a life-saving mode," Pillai said. The heli-ambulance service is, however, not covered by insurance yet.

About 120 delegates from across the country, representing healthcare, insurance, copter service firms and related sectors are participating in the conference.

India has a fleet of 260 private copters, including 40 used for oil and gas exploration. In contrast, the US has a whopping 11,860 choppers, Canada 1,675 (rotorcraft) and Japan 940.

In times of natural calamities and medical emergencies, the government deploys military choppers to evacuate the affected people.

"The choppers are mobilized from helicopter bases located nearer to the place of disaster," according to OSS Air Management, a copter service firm.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

Scientist calls for new innovations to double food production

Well-known scientist and Indian National Academy of Engineering (INAE) distinguished professor Dr K V Raghavan today underlined the need for special attention to new innovations in food production in order to double it by 2017.

Delivering the special lecture on R and D for Indian specialty products 'Innovation holds key to future growth' on the eve of the 68th foundation of the CSIR at central food technological research institute (CFTRI), he said there was a big challenge before the country to increase food production.

It had not increased since the last decade. This situation was most alarming and needed new technologies in food production.

He said the total turn over from agriculture production was Rs 8, 30,000 crore with an annual growth of 10 per cent. India stands fifth in terms of production in the world. The food production contributes six per cent to the GDP of the country. However, investment in food processing and research and development was very less at Rs 1,303 crore which was 0.15 per cent of total R and D investment in other areas. The food processing level was just two per cent compared to China where it was 80 per cent and 30 per cent in a small country like Thailand. India's share in trade was just one percent. This was due to inadequate supply chain, he added.

Now the government has plans to increase food processing to 20 per cent and value addition to 20 to 35 per cent. The new opportunities in food processing were establishment of mega food parks and integrated food clusters in the country, he pointed out.

Drinking water project with World Bank help

Karnataka Rural Development Minister Jagadish Shettar today announced that 500 village panchayat areas in 11 districts in the state would be provided safe drinking water from World Bank drinking water project.

Inaugurating the first pilot project in Kusagal village of Hubli taluk, he said the project was being executed in collaboration with the people and Gram Panchayats.

The people have to contribute 10 percent of the total cost and the Gram Panchayats five per cent.

The Minister said on this occasion, the Government was seriously thinking of establishing a separate department of Engineering for implementation of drinking water projects in the state.

Duchess of Cornwall arrives in Bangalore for rejuvenation

Camilla Parker, the Duchess of Cornwall, arrived in the city today for a four-day stay at an up market health spa for rejuvenation.

The visit of Prince Charles's wife marks gaining popularity of the tech hub as a top notch destination for global medical tourism.

The Duchess and some members of her family and friends will stay at 'Soukya' the spa and a holistic health centre located at Whitefield, closer to the IT hub which houses top companies like Microsoft, Intel, Cisco and SAP. The spa has made its name with top leader's world over visiting it in recent times.

She flew into the city quietly early this morning and headed straight for the health centre, sources said.

The 63-year-old will later join her husband at Delhi for the inauguration ceremony of Commonwealth Games on October 3.

Soukya, a 30-acre integrated holistic healing centre, incorporates the ancient medicine systems of Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Naturopathy, yoga, meditation, ayurveda and other traditional forms of therapy.

High security arrangements had been put in place with the help of Scotland Yard last week.

A Scotland Yard team has been stationed in the sprawling holistic centre for Camilla's security.

The noted wellness centre has recently tied up with the London-based Royal College of Integrated Medicine to train western doctors and therapists in ayurveda and traditional forms of Indian medicine. The private spa also hosted the Duchess of York Sarah Ferguson in 1997.

Geo-strategic Issues

Renewed focus on coastal security: Raju

There had been a renewed focus on coastal security after the 26/11 terror attack on Mumbai with Coast Guard and Indian Navy strengthening their monitoring and surveillance systems, Minister of State for Defense Pallam Raju said today.

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines after inaugurating the Golden Jubilee Raising Day celebrations of the 106 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) of the Parachute Regiment here, he said the government had been working towards strengthening the Coastal Guard, while the Navy had been provided additional funds for the purpose.' We have increased marine police stations, automatic vessel identification surveillance system has been implemented and the number of light houses has been increased. This has increased the range of surveillance of coastal areas," he said.

He said the Centre was looking into gaps in the coastal security systems and would fill it up immediately. Indigenous as well as imported technology was being used for the

surveillance.

Numbers of Coast Guard vessels were being increased and the Centre was also encouraging the states to have patrol boats, he added.

GE Aviation emerges lowest bidder for LCA

US aircraft engine maker GE Aviation today edged past its competitor Euro jet by quoting the lowest bid for supply of improvised GE F-414 engines for the home made "Tejas" Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mark-II.

The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), a DRDO, had designed and developed the indigenous trainer-cum-combat jet.

Its serial production is done by PSU aircraft making giant, Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

The multi-million dollar contract to supply nearly 100 engines had been bitterly fought between the two aviation majors and earlier Euro jet, offering its EJ200 engines, was tipped as having the edge.

But ultimately the US-based company, incidentally ahead of President Barack Obama's visit to India in December, prevailed by quoting the lowest bid and is all set to win the contract.

This would, however, be subject to further price negotiations, top DRDO sources here told UNI.

ADA has lined up eight limited series production (LSP) pieces of LCA.

So far, four of them have flown successfully.

The fifth LSP would fly shortly and this will be the service delivery model, while the sixth will be an experimental aircraft.

General Electric's subsidiary GE Aviation was declared the lowest bidder for supplying engines to power India's second generation Tejas fighters, the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mark-2, a senior official said Thursday.

"GE Aviation emerged as the lowest bidder for supplying about 100 engines (GE-414) to fit into the LCA Mk-2," Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) Chief Controller (R and D) Prahlada told IANS here.

Europe's Euro jet, a sister concern of Euro fighter that manufactures jet engines for its Typhoon fighter, was the other bidder short-listed for the multi-billion rupee tender after the global tender that was floated in 2009 by the Indian defense ministry.

"Price negotiations and contract finalization will be worked in the next two months,"

Prahlada said. "GE Aviation will deliver 20 GE-414 engines from 2014 and the rest will be manufactured in India under transfer of technology to our defense establishments."

According to a statement by the state-run DRDO, the price negotiating committees for the alternate engine declared GE Aviation the lowest bidder after commercial quotes of both the bidders were compared following evaluation and acceptance of their technical offer.

"We have decided to go for a new engine for the LCA Mk-2 after the Indian Air Force (IAF) sought a better engine with higher rate of performance in terms of speed, thrust and vector than GE-404 engines being used in LCA Mark-1," Prahlada pointed out.

The IAF has placed an order with the defense behemoth Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) to supply 40 Tejas fighters.

"The GE-414 engines will be developed by the Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE) in Bangalore in collaboration with other DRDO agencies such as Aeronautical Development Agency and HAL," Prahlada said.

The Kaveri engine, which is in the advance stage of development at GTRE, will be fitted in the first generation LCA Mk-1.

Detailed Report

Kerala

Political Issues

Notification issued for Kerala Civic Polls

The stage has been set for the local body elections in Kerala with the State Election Commission issuing the notification today.

The nomination papers can be filed from today and the last day for accepting nomination papers will be October 4.

Scrutiny of nomination papers will be done on October 5 and the last day for withdrawing nomination papers is October 7.

Candidates for district panchayat wards and city Corporation wards would have to remit Rs 200 each as deposit.

Candidates in municipalities and block panchayats would have to deposit Rs 150 each and for those contesting the grama panchayat wards, the deposit amount is Rs 100.

The elections to the Local Bodies in the State would be held in two phases--on October 23 and 25.

Arabic teachers to launch state-wide stir

The Kerala Arabic Teacher's Federation (KATF) will take out a state-wide 'jatha' in protest against the 'anti-language' policy adopted by the CPI (M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) Government in the state.

Talking to newsmen here today KATF General Secretary K Moinkutty said the recent government order canceling the Arabi, Urdu and Sanskrit examinations was a testimony to this policy.

He accused the LDF of adopting similar anti-language policy whenever it assumed office in the state.

Indian Union Muslim League State General Secretary P K Kunhalikutty would flag off the march at Cherkala in Kasargod district on October 5.

The 'jatha', after traversing through all the 14 districts, would culminate with a Secretariat march at Thiruvanthapuram on October 11, he said.

Leader of the Opposition in Kerala Assembly Oommen Chandy would inaugurate the function, he added.

IUML in Kerala hesitant to comment on Ayodhya verdict

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) in Kerala was apparently hesitant to comment on Ayodhya title suit verdict delivered by the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad

High Court today.

When contacted by UNI over phone IUML state President Panakkad Mohammedali Shihab Thangal, his aides said the leader was not available for comments as he was busy with work relating to the ensuing civic polls in the state.

Party General Secretary P K Kunhalikutty was also not available for comments as his mobile phone remained switched off

Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh has also welcomed the decision of the Allahabad High Court for observing that Ram Janam Bhoomi belonged to Lord Ram. " Now, it is the time for the Muslim community to come forward and pave way for construction of a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya," the former BJP leader said, while reacting on the HC verdict.

Talking to media persons, the leader, who was the Chief Minister of UP when the disputed structure was demolished on December 6,1992, said it was unfortunate the court had wished trifurcation of the disputed area and to give one portion to the Muslims for worship.

Mr. Singh, who had championed for the construction of Ram temple in the recent times after changing his stand couple of time in the past, had also visited Ayodhya for 'darshan' of Ram Lalla earlier this month after the court fixed date for the judgment.

He had also demanded that the Central government should also bring an Act for the construction of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya.

Sunni Central Waqf Board, whose suit have been dismissed by majority decision of the special bench of the Allahabad High Court here, is expected to move to the Supreme Court within next a few days.

" The legal cell of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) will decide the format of the appeal to be made before the Apex Court against the Allahabad High Court verdict," said Central Sunni Waqf Board counsel Jafarayeb Jilani here.

He said it was a positive decision of the court, admitting that mosque existed at the disputed site.

Mr. Jilani said there should not be any disappointment among the people on the verdict

and it should be accepted as given

" We had earlier said that whosoever petition is rejected will go to the Supreme Court and hence the matter would be settle in the Apex Court," he said

Balakrishna Pillai predicts UDF win in local body polls

Kerala Congress (B) Chairman R Balakrishna Pillai today claimed the results of the local body elections would go in favour of the Congress-led UDF in the State.

Attending a Meet-the-Press Programme, organized by the Press Club here, he said the results of the local body elections would be a setback for the CPI (M)-led LDF due to its alleged anti-people policies and corruption in funds utilization.

Stating the UDF would highlight the corruption of LDF in the local body elections, he said many factors, including caste, religion and money power, would influence the Panchayat-level elections.

Alleging the State had diverted development funds, allotted to the local bodies by the Centre, he said the development process was inactive in the State.

BSP to contest alone in Kerala

Kerala BSP leader Neela Lohida Dasan Nadar today said his party would contest alone in the forthcoming local body elections in the state.

Addressing a press conference here, he said his party would not support the major parties, CPI (M), Congress or BJP in these elections.

Announcing the list of candidates, he said the party would extend its support to parties like PDP and others, based on local adjustments.

Economic Issue

Kerala ignites thought process aims global market

Kerala has initiated steps to invent 'need-based' products by igniting 'thought process' to overcome the shortage of skilled manpower in the state and to fulfill global demands.

Though the code of conduct for the local body elections in the state exists, the State Election Commission has given prior sanction to go ahead with the government plans in this regard considering its importance.

A series of 'competitions' to invent such products had already been started by the Department of Industries and Commerce and the first among this series is Contest for a Coconut Felling Device, which has attracted global media in a big way.

Another public contest to design and produce is 'Cool Jacket', which can protect laborers from sun burn and problems caused by high temperature, is expected to bring more global attention, especially in the gulf countries.

Lakhs of Keralites as well as people of other states in the country employed in the Gulf countries are the major victims of sun burn. A few north Indian states also face the threat of sunburn.

In Kerala also this has become a serious problem as the atmospheric temperature rose to 50 degree Celsius in the hot summer in recent years.

Experts say that materials like dry ice and special fabric can be used to produce the Cool Jacket. But the Government does not put forward any suggestion on this. Design, technology and manufacturing process are to be selected accordingly. The source of energy, if needed, can either be solar or rechargeable battery or any special substance which could ensure refrigeration.

"Our initiative is to develop and promote entrepreneurial skill, igniting the thought process of developing need-based products and its marketing and to bring out an array of global products," Additional Chief Secretary T Balakrishnan said.

Kerala Lottery Case: Singhvi withdraws

All India Congress Committee spokesmen Abhishek Singhvi today announced his decision to withdraw from the lottery case in Kerala after his appearance in the court on behalf of promoters of lotteries from outside the state created a storm in the Congress there.

"There was never any intention to have any conflict of interest. However, to avoid any communication gap or controversy, I have decided not to appear in the Kerala lottery case," the eminent lawyer said in Kochi.

Addressing reporters, Singhvi said: "I have decided to withdraw from this case and hence

will not appear in this case again."

"I saw this case as a lawyer sees it, but now I have realized that there is a huge resentment over my taking up the case and hence have withdrawn from this case," said Singhvi.

Singhvi appeared for Megha Distributors - an agent for lotteries of Sikkim and Bhutan - in the court Wednesday and Thursday.

The Congress in Kerala has been vigorously campaigning against the "illegal" Sikkim and Bhutan lotteries whose tickets are sold in the state, alleging that the CPI-M-led state government was helping Megha Distributors.

Lotteries from outside the state have been allegedly making Rs.14, 000 crore annually.

The opposition alleges that the lotteries from other states are sold without any checks on the number of tickets sold, the draws announced and the sales tax they are required to pay.

The Kerala High Court today directed the state government to receive advance tax on lotteries of other States.

A Division Bench comprising Justices Thottathil B Radhakrishnan and P Bhavadas also directed Megha Distributors not to transfer any lottery tickets to the State of Kerala before the fourth of next month.

The interim direction was issued on a writ petition filed by the Megha Distributors challenging the judgment of the Single Judge.

The Single Judge had ordered there should only be one lot for the lottery conducted by one State in a week.

Congress Spokesperson and Senior Advocate of Supreme Court Abhishek Singhvi appeared for the Bhutan Government in this appeal.

He submitted before the court that Megha Distributors was the authorized promoter of the Bhutan Government lotteries in Kerala.

Another writ petition filed by Megha Distributors challenging the ordinance on Tax on Kerala Lotteries Act was adjourned to November three.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

Pak, Chinese writers to participate in literary festival

Three Pakistani writers and a Chinese writer would be among the literary figures who will participate in the Kovalam Literary festival to be held here on October 2 and 3. Mohammed Hanif, the author of international best seller "Case of Exploding Mangoes", debut novelists Ali Sethi (The Wish Maker) and H Naqvi (Home Boy) are the Pakistani writers who will be participating in the two-day festival.

Chinese writer Lijia Zhang, the author of the best seller "Socialism is great" will hold a reading session from her book at the festival.

Deborah Baker-Ghosh will also conduct a reading session from her forthcoming book "The Convert: A Parable of Islam and America".

Basharat Peer, graphic novelist Sarnath Banerjee and Manu Joseph would be among the Indian writers who will participate in the event.

Prohibitory orders clamped, three held in Kerala

Three people were arrested from Ochira in Kollam District yesterday for sending provocative SMS even as prohibitory orders had been clamped in all the 14 districts of Kerala for two days as part of tight security arrangements to maintain peace for verdict on the Ayodhya title suits today.

The prohibitory orders were clamped under Kerala Police Act till tomorrow, police said.

State Home Minister Kodyeri Balakrishnan had yesterday made it clear that strict action would be taken against persons if they were found involved in pasting provocative posters and sending provocative SMS.

Security was beefed up at public places like railway stations, Airports, shopping malls and bus stops and in all places of worship. Police kept strong vigil.

As a precautionary measure, public rallies and demonstrations were also banned.

A year after Thekkady boat tragedy, no probe, no case

Exactly a year ago, 45 people died when a Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC) boat sank at the Wild Life Reserve here around 3.30 p.m. But the judicial inquiry into the accident is yet to begin and the Crime Branch of the state police has not found the cause of the tragedy.

The boat carried 87 passengers against its capacity of 76. The toll would have been more if the locals had not acted promptly.

The state government then announced a judicial probe but it is yet to begin, while the Crime Branch has reached a dead end after arresting six people.

The arrested include surveyor K.K. Sanjeev, official of the boat manufacturing firm N.A. Giri, boat driver Victor Samuel, his assistant, a forest guard and chief boat inspector M. Mathews.

All the six are currently on bail and Samuel lost his job despite working as a driver for more than a decade with the KTDC.

"I work at a home stay and I earn very little. I have to make both ends meet and take care of my aged mother. Life is indeed tough," said Samuel.

Boating here resumed 106 days after the tragedy, but tourists who prefer to go for boating face lots of problems for stringent check up.

Security tightened in Kerala ahead of Ayodhya verdict

Security has been tightened in Kerala ahead of the pronouncement of the verdict on the Ayodhya title suit tomorrow.

Talking to reporters here today after a meeting of top police officials, state Home Minister Kodayeri Balakrishnan said all measures had been taken to face any situation.

The district Police Superintendents had been asked to take necessary precautionary measures after evaluating the situation in the different regions, he said.

Security had been beefed up at public places like railway stations, airports, shopping malls and bus stops, he added.

In places of worship, the police had been asked to be more vigilant. Mr. Balakrishnan said prohibitory orders under the Kerala Police Act would be clamped in all the districts if required.

As a precautionary measure, public rallies and demonstrations will be banned, he added.

"Strict action will be taken against persons if they are found involved in pasting provocative posters and sending provocative SMS," he said. The coastal patrolling and night patrolling would be intensified.

Mr. Balakrishnan said the state government had demanded three companies of Rapid Action Force (RAF) from the Centre.

Bomb Squad, Striking Force and Anti-Sabotage Team would be deployed in different parts of the state.

The state had already demanded six companies of the RAF from the Centre, he added.

Kerala CM's plea to Vayalar for return of Malayalees in Saudi Arabia

Kerala Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan today urged the Overseas Indian Affairs Ministry to take necessary steps to make use of the Saudi Arabian government's six-month amnesty for hundreds of illegal foreigners overstaying their visas

In a fax message to Union Overseas Indian Affairs Minister Vayalar Ravi, he said the Centre should make necessary arrangements for Malayalees residing in Saudi Arabia illegally to return to their homeland.

He also informed the Centre that the state government had already taken measures to provide facilities to the Malayalees who were arriving from Saudi at Mumbai and Delhi, a release said here.

The Saudi government had announced a six-month amnesty for hundreds of illegal foreigners overstaying their visas and they would be allowed to leave the Kingdom without punishment.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

Kerala to host 'cool jacket' designing contest

The Kerala government will soon organize a contest to design and produce a 'cool jacket' that can protect a person from sun burn and heat stroke.

T. Balakrishnan, head of the state industries department, said the initiative was part of the government's efforts for foster innovation and entrepreneurship.

The department had earlier hosted a contest that saw eight people developing a coconut plucking equipment.

"Lakhs of Keralites as well as people from other states of India are employed in the Middle East who is victims of heat stroke. It would be a great relief for such workers and other people living in hot climate zones if a suitable jacket is designed to maintain their body temperature below the ambient temperature, just like the woollen jacket that protects us from cold," said an official of the department.

Experts say materials like dry ice or a special fabric can be used to produce the cool jacket. The source of energy, if needed, can either be solar or rechargeable battery, or any special substance which could ensure refrigeration.

At the first stage of the "cool jacket" contest, proposals for design, production idea and concept will be invited.

An expert committee will then select 10 proposals after interviewing the persons who come up with ideas. They would be given Rs.one lakh each to produce the jacket.

At the second stage, these 10 innovators have to demonstrate their product before the committee.

All other interested persons, either participants in the first round or not, are also eligible to demonstrate their products made without any assistance from the government.

Based on the overall performance of these products, the committee will select three best innovators who will be provided with Rs.10 lakh each for the commercial production of the product.

The entire process of this contest shall be completed within six months.

Cancel tender to Korean firm: Oommen Chandy

Opposition leader in Kerala Assembly Oommen Chandy today asked Chief Minister V S Achuthanandan to cancel the tender given to a Korean company for implementing the Centrally-sponsored programme to curtail transmission loss and energy theft.

In a letter to Mr. Achuthanandan, he said the state had lost about Rs 52 crore in awarding the tender to the Korean company. He also demanded action against those who were responsible for this.

Stating that the project was completely Centre-sponsored, Mr. Chandy said the Korean company was awarded the tender for the software for curtailing transmission loss and arresting energy theft even after Omnigate Systems Ltd had bid the lowest.

"It was clear the Korean company had been awarded the tender after surpassing all rules and regulations," a press release quoted him.

He said Wipro Chairman Azim Premji had complained to the Chief Minister regarding the issue.

MAM ready to clean public places: Mata Amritanandamayi Devi

Spiritual leader Mata Amritanandamayi Devi today said the Mata Amritanandamayi Math (MAM) is ready to take up the responsibility of cleaning public places and constructing bathrooms and toilets in every town in the country if it gets support and cooperation of state governments.

"It is said that India is growing and developing. However, in matters of environmental cleanliness and hygiene, we are lagging behind by centuries. News, appeared in various foreign media about the lack of cleanliness at the Commonwealth Games venues, has damaged the country's image," she felt.

Pointing out that western countries maintain high standards of cleanliness on roads, at public places and in public bathrooms and toilets, she said had become a habit for the people here to urinate at roadsides and to spit on public roads and pavements.

"The standard of cleanliness on roads and public toilets in India is appalling. Though there are waste bins, people are not in the habit of disposing of the litter and food waste in the bins. They discard them at the roadside or even in the middle of the road," she said.

"Environmental cleanliness and hygiene are a part of development and cultural refinement. For this to happen, we need to plan widespread awareness campaigns. We

should erect more signboards on environmental cleanliness at public places, bus stands and roadsides," she pointed out.

Amma also sought sincere support and cooperation of the television and the print media for the success of the mission.

Geo-strategic Issues

Motorcycle rally flagged off for coastal security

A motorcycle rally comprising 21 motorcycles was flagged off by Rear Admiral S Y Srikanth, Chief of Staff Southern Naval Command at Coastguard District Headquarters, here today.

The rally aims to spread the message of coastal security awareness amongst the coastal population.

Rear Admiral Srikanth, while interacting with the rallyists, emphasized the importance of the task which they were about to embark and said the coastal community was the bulwark against any external threats from the sea.

The 42-member team consisting of members from Indian Coast Guard, Navy, Kerala Police and Fisheries Department has been divided into two teams.

One team rode northwards along the coast and the other team proceeded south, thus covering 590 km of Kerala coast.

During their stopovers at coastal hamlets and fish landing centers along the coast, the team would interact with the population on coastal security measures, distribute pamphlets and clarify doubts on various regimens in place to reinforce coastal defense.

Detailed Report

Tamil Nadu

Political Issues

PDK to protest against Kannada organizations

Periyar Dravida Kazhagam (PDK) has announced that it would lead several Tamil organizations in Tamil Nadu in a protest against Kannada linguistic organizations which have announced that they would foist a flag in Hogenakkal area to claim that it belongs to Karnataka.

According to Dharmapuri district unit of PDK Secretary K Vedyappan and Tamil National Communist Party (TNCP) West Zone Secretary G Marimuthu, the claim being made by Kannada organizations would erode the good relations and sense of brotherhood between the people of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

They alleged that several Kannada organizations had been creating misunderstanding claiming that Hogenakkal belonged to Karnataka.

They claimed that as no action was being initiated against the Kannada organizations to thwart them from putting up the flags in the Hogenakkal area on September 30, the PDK and TNCP had decided to stage the protest and 'chase away' the agitators of the Kannada organizations.

Hogenakkal Protection Committee, led by former MLA M Najappan, had appealed to Karnataka Government to prevent the Kannada organizations from entering Hogenakkal and creating misunderstanding between the two states.

12 Nigerians held for staying without passport, visa

Twelve Nigerian nationals were arrested for staying without having valid passport and visa here, police today said.

Police told UNI that on a complaint from one Neethirajan, a local resident, regarding dispute with a Nigerian national, who threatened him of dire consequences on September 26, police last night arrested Romeo Davis Onderi (25). During interrogation, it was revealed that he did not have valid documents to stay here.

On further enquiry, police arrested 11 other Nigerians who were staying with him without valid passport and visa.

The arrested were Chibuzor Benjamin (28), Partrik Ekene (36), Ikechukwu Darlington (32), Sunday (28), Onyekamunday(36), Obinna innocend (26), Emeka (30), Imeka (28), Uchuma (28), Eckanah (32) and Ikechvkvwu (28).

The house owner, Ravindran (50), was also arrested for renting the house to the foreigners without verifying their documents.

Police urged the public to not to rent buildings to foreign nationals without checking their valid documents. They warned that legal action would be taken against the owners, who did not obey the government order, police added.

TN Govt 'betraying' Sri Lankan Tamils: Vaiko

Marumalarchi DMK General Secretary Vaiko today alleged that DMK Government in Tamil Nadu has done yet another 'betrayal' to the Sri Lankan Tamils by not giving its consent to the Union Government to lift the ban on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Addressing a press conference here, Mr. Vaiko pointed out that the Tamil Nadu Government led by Chief Minister M Karunanidhi, who himself claimed as a saviour of Tamils, had written to the Union Government that if the ban on the LTTE was lifted, there might be severe law and order problem on the Indian soil.

To a question, Mr. Vaiko said except few people like M K Narayanan, no other neutral man or media person or people like P Nedumaran could Visit Sri Lanka, because if they were allowed, offence committed against innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka might be exposed.

He alleged that Sri Lankan Government was destroying Hindu temples and cultural monuments of Tamils in the island nation and erecting new Buddhist temples on the same places.

He said MDMK and other like-minded parties would continue their efforts to declare Mahinda Rajapakshe as a war criminal and they would achieve this at the international level.

Group clash in Congress

Three Congress workers owing allegiance to the supporters of Union Shipping Minister G K Vasan were injured when a group of Congressmen, belonging to the Union Home Minister P Chidambaram's group and led by Karur District Congress President Bankubramnain allegedly attacked them during meeting to discuss arrangements for the proposed visit to Tiruchirapalli by Congress President Sonia Gandhi on October nine, in the presence of Tamil Nadu Congress Committee President K V Thangkabaluru here yesterday.

According to party sources, the supporters of G K Vasam were aggrieved as the picture of their leader was not found in the party banners and posters.

Trouble began when Mr. Veeralamalai, an alleged supporter of G K Vasam hailed his leader shouting "Long Live, Vasam" while TNCC President K V Thangkabalau was addressing the meeting.

Provoked, the workers belonging to other faction led by District President Subramaniam shouted "Long Live, Sonia Gandhi".

This triggered a scuffle between the two factions and the workers attacked each other in the melee, three workers including Mr. Veeramalai sustained head injuries.

Visibly upset over the unexpected developments, Mr. Thangkabalau attempted to restore normalcy, asking the workers to keep quiet but to no avail. Later, an ambulance was summoned and all the three were rushed to hospital.

Meanwhile, the supporters of Vasam, led by Mr. Sivasamy resorted to a road blockade, demanding action against those who attacked Mr. Veeramalai.

On information, police rushed to the spot and persuaded the agitators to call off the blockade.

AIADMK to lead Opposition stir on people's issue

The Opposition in Tamil Nadu, led by AIADMK, will launch a joint agitation with its allies to highlight issues concerning the welfare of the people.

Discussions in this regard were held by AIADMK supremo J Jayalalithaa along with CPI (M) leaders at her Poes Garden residence in the city today.

An AIADMK release here said CPI (M) state unit Secretary G Ramakrishnan, party's Central Committee members N Varadharajan and T K Rengarajan (MP), met Ms Jayalalithaa and held talks on launching a joint struggle led by the AIADMK to highlight the problems being faced by the people.

Economic Issue

Growing Sino-Indian ties will bring peace: Stalin

Stating that the economic co-operation and relations between India and China

were becoming stronger, Tamil Nadu Deputy Chief Minister M K Stalin today exuded confidence that closer economic ties between the two Asian giants would bring peace and prosperity to the region.

Addressing a function organized by Lakshmi Machine Works (LMW) and launching its product, Ring Frame LR60 AX, produced in China by LMW, Mr. Stalin, who is touring China and South Korea said China and India have become the fastest growing economies with great potential for future.

China and India are two of the ancient civilizations of the world. Great Chinese scholars like Fahien and Hiuen Hsang visited India. Indian monk Bodhi Dharma visited China in ancient times", he said.

Though both China and India, missed the first wave of industrialization, they have become the fastest growing economies with great potential for future, he said.

Lauding LMW as a leading textile machinery manufacturer in India, holding 60 per cent of Indian textile machinery market, Mr. Stalin said LMW was doing extremely well in India and "its products are known for quality. The company offers strong after sale service to the buyers".

He said he was extremely happy that LMW has now become a multi-national company and has floated a company at Vogiyang Economic Development Zone, Giyangsu Province in China.

"China is a huge market for textile machinery and LMW China is therefore ideally located to offer quality products at competitive prices", he said and hoped that LMW would soon play a dominant role in Chinese textile machinery market as it is currently doing in India.

Japanese delegation to sign MoU with Tamil Nadu this year

A Japanese delegation is expected to visit here sometime late October or early November and sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu government for partnering in some infrastructure projects.

"An official delegation from Japan will be visiting Chennai October or November and sign a MoU with the Tamil Nadu government to partner in development of infrastructure projects like ports, Chennai Metro Rail, building of Chennai-Bangalore industrial

corridor," Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Director General Shinya Fujii said.

Referring to the economic and business ties between Japan and Tamil Nadu, he said: "The number of Japanese companies in Tamil Nadu is steadily increasing. From 70 companies in 2008 the number went up to 169 in 2008-09 and now it stands at 304."

Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a seminar, Indo- Japan Business Cooperation in Automotive Sector, organized by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and JETRO, he said a couple of months back a state government delegation had gone to Japan to woo investments to the state.

The Tamil Nadu government had earlier announced the setting up of an industrial park for Japanese small and medium sized companies near here.

Earlier at the conference, Hirokazu Yamaoka, director, Overseas Business Support Division, JETRO, said: "The Free Trade Agreement between India and ASEAN would increase trade between two Japan and India."

On the hardening of Yen, Toyota Kirloskar Motor's Deputy Managing Director Shekar Viswanathan said: "It will be an issue for Japanese projects in India. But it is time to increase localization of components."

About the Indian car market, he said the demand for cars is expected to touch 3.5 million units by 2015 and the growth will be primarily driven by small cars and financing options.

Social/Humanitarian Issue

DMK MP's daughter among 4 students to test positive for swine flu

Four medical college girl students, including the daughter of a DMK Member of Parliament (MP), tested positive for influenza A (H1N1) virus.

Official sources here today said T Renuka Devi (18), studying at Madurai Medical College was among few students who reported flu-like symptoms two days ago.

Medical tests confirmed that Renuka and three other girl students were suffering from

swine flu. Renuka was admitted to an isolation facility at a private hospital in the city for treatment. She is the daughter of Mr. S Thangavel, DMK Rajya Sabha MP. The other students were being given treatment in an isolation facility at their hostel.

This is for the first time that swine flu was reported in South Tamil Nadu after the outbreak of the influenza in the State.

Tamil Nadu steps up security ahead of Ayodhya verdict

Security in Tamil Nadu has been tightened ahead of the Allahabad High Court verdict on the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid land dispute in Ayodhya, police said. Special Forces have been deployed in sensitive cities like Coimbatore, Tirupur, Madurai, Vellore, Kanyakumari, Tiruchirapalli, Dindugal and Hosur.

Around 70,000 security personnel have been deployed to maintain peace in the state. Meanwhile, lorry owners in the state have decided not ply their vehicles Thursday as a matter of precaution.

750 members of Jeeva Labour Union arrested: Neyveli strike

About 750 members of the Jeeva Labour Union, attached to the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) courted arrest today, as the indefinite strike by contract workers of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) entered the tenth day today. After the failure of seven rounds of talks, the contract workers intensified their agitation by resorting to picketing programmes and today police arrested 750 workers, when they attempted to stage a picketing agitation in front of Thermal Power Station-I.

On September 27, police arrested 1,000 contract workers, when they staged a picketing agitation in front of Mine-II, intensifying their stir, pressing a ten-point charter of demands, including wage settlement, medical facilities and union recognition.

In all, 13,000 contract workers were on strike since September 19. The AITUC's Jeeva Labour Union, which had a membership of 8,000 workers and seven other unions, including LPF, PTS, CITU and INTUC which had a collective membership of 7,000 workers were organizing agitations separately.

Meanwhile, the Jeeva Labour Union today chalked out plans to hold picketing agitations at 100 places in this district. The Union has convened a meeting for tomorrow to finalize the dates and venues of the agitation.

Though 13,000 contract workers were on strike for the past ten days, Power generation and mining remained unaffected as the regular employees expressed solidarity with the management.

80 Teachers arrested

Police today arrested 80 teachers, including 32 women teachers belonging to the Confederation of Tamil Nadu Self-Financing Minority schools for violating police permission and continuing their agitation.

It may be recalled that a section of teachers of the Confederation observed a fast here yesterday to draw the government's attention to their long pending demand of government's aid to minorities schools, withdraw section 14 (A) of the Tamil Nadu Private Schools Regulation Act immediately and to extend the government aid to all the minorities schools which were started in the state after 1991.

The police gave permission to continue their agitation up to 1700 hrs of yesterday. But the agitators did not call off their stir even this morning.

Despite the police warning, the agitations caused nuisance to passers by following this they arrested the teachers. They were remanded to judicial custody, police said.

IUML to honour TN CM with 'Man of Harmony Award'

Tamil Nadu unit of Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) has decided to honour Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK President M Karunanidhi with 'Man of Harmony Award' (Nallinakka Nayagar Virudhu) this year.

Talking to newsmen here last night, IUML National President and Union Minister of State for Railways E Ahamed and former Lok Sabha Member and IUML State President professor K M Khader Mohideen, after attending IUML State Advisory meeting, said a resolution to this effect was adopted at the meeting.

They said the award would be presented to Mr. Karunanidhi at the IUML state conference to be held at Chennai on December 11.

They said the meeting hailed the Center's eight point package towards bringing peace in Jammu and Kashmir and hoped that all sections of the people would cooperate for implementing it.

It was decided to maintain peace whatever be the verdict of the Allahabad High Court on the Ayodhya issue as there would be room for going for appeal against the verdict, they said.

The IUML leaders said the meeting welcomed Tamil Nadu Government's decision to amend Marriage Registration Act and appealed to the government to give proper importance to Urdu language in its uniform education process.

They claimed the membership drive in Kerala evinced good response and 16 lakh members were enrolled there. It was proposed to enroll at least ten lakh members in Tamil Nadu, they added.

They said the IUML would field its ten candidates in the ensuing Assembly elections in Bihar.

Global Hospitals launches hypertension clinic

Commemorating the World Heart Day, Global Hospitals and Health City has launched a unique Comprehensive Hypertension Clinic at its campus in suburban

Perumbakkam.

At a function got up at the hospital last evening, glass maker Saint Gobain Managing Director B Santhanam inaugurated the clinic in the presence of Global Hospitals and Health City COO, Commander S C Iyer.

The Hospital, in association with the Indian Medical Association College of General Practitioners, also conducted a symposium on "Preventive Measures for Workplace Wellness," a hospital release said today.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Iyer said high blood pressure was a chronic medical condition and one of the risk factors for stroke, myocardial infarction, heart failure and arterial aneurysm.

It was also a leading cause for chronic kidney failure and moderate elevation of arterial blood pressure led to shortened life expectancy.

He said this key factor that had not been given due importance as the existing hypertension clinics in the State focused only on heart and kidneys.

1,000 NLC contract workers held

At least 1,000 of the 8,000 contract workers of Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC) belonging to the AITUC-affiliated Jeeva Contract Laborers Union were arrested today after they held a demonstration inside the Mine II even as the stir in support of various demands, including regularization of services, entered the ninth day today.

The workers were demanding among other things regularization of services, equal pay for equal work, medical benefits and recognition of various unions.

Talking to UNI here, AITUC District Secretary M Sekar claimed the 2009-10 salary bill for NLC's 4,080 Executive Engineers came to Rs 289 crore (basic and DA), the 11,000 permanent workers got Rs 419 crore (basic and DA).

In contrast, the wage bill for the contract workers numbering about 13,000 (for eight unions, including Jeeva, put together) came to only Rs 50 crore.

Flight suffers bird hit, pilot ensures safe landing

About 138 passengers and six crew members had a narrow escape after the pilot ensured safe landing when the flight suffered a bird hit at the Chennai Airport today. Airport sources said the IC-550 Indian Airlines flight from Andaman suffered a bird hit while landing on the runway at 1120 hrs.

Following the bird hit, an electric bulb from an overhead panel fell inside the aircraft. No one was injured.

However, the shrewd pilot managed to land the aircraft safely causing no harm to the passengers and the crew.

No major damage was caused to the aircraft. Airport Authorities of India officials have

ordered a probe into it.

Committee constituted for celebrating Teresa's birth centenary

Puducherry administration has constituted a committee for celebrating birth centenary of Mother Teresa under the chairmanship of Chief Minister V Vaithilingam.

According to an official release here today, the 22 member committee comprises Home Minister E Valsaraj, PWD Minister M O H F Shajahan, Revenue Minister Malladi Krishna Rao, Welfare Minister M Kandasamy and Public Health Minister A Namassivayam, Special Secretary Art and Culture, Arch Bishop of Puducherry and Cuddalore dioces Rev Dr A Anandarayar, Vicar General A Arulanandam, Sister Mangala, Missionaries of Charity and other members.

Director of Art and Culture Department is the member secretary.

The committee would plan out various activities and organize events for the celebration.

Food, Environment and Energy Issue

Sterlite plant closure may lead to inflow of sulphuric acid from overseas

The closure of Sterlite Industries' Tuticorin smelter plant is likely to result in increased inflow of sulphuric acid from South Korea and neighboring Andhra Pradesh into Tamil Nadu and Kerala, say industry officials.

The Madras High Court Tuesday ordered immediate closure of the plant for violating various environmental laws and causing pollution.

Sterlite Industries is India's largest non-ferrous metals and mining company and part of London-based Vedanta Resources, promoted by Anil Agarwal.

Industry circles expect the company to appeal against the order, but they also visualize various scenarios and their impact on sulphuric acid and copper prices.

An industry official of a chemicals company said in a scenario of Sterlite operating the plant at a lower capacity or plant closure, the prices of copper in the international market will increase due to the sucking out of Sterlite's capacity.

As a result, there will be an increase in production of by-products like sulphuric acid and the possibility of increased inflows from outside the country and within are high.

"As copper is the main product, overseas companies may increase their output. This would increase the supply of by products like sulphuric acid," the official said.

According to him, the sulphuric acid markets in Tamil Nadu and Kerala will witness increased inflow from overseas as well as from Andhra Pradesh.

"Many units in Tamil Nadu- sulphuric acid as well as fertilizer units- stopped production when Sterlite started production at Tuticorin," he said.

The Tamil Nadu and Kerala market for sulphuric acid is estimated to be in the region of around 1,500 tonne per day (tpd), excluding the demand from fertilizer units.

Industry officials say the current sulphuric acid price ranges around Rs.3, 500 per tonne.

Last fiscal, Sterlite Industries produced 1,036,000 tones of sulphuric acid. According to the company, the average net realisation last year was Rs.828 a tonne as against Rs.5, 091 per tonne during 2008-09.

The industry officials say the fertilizer units that sourced sulphuric acid from Sterlite may have to start producing on their own if the smelter plant is shut down for a long time.

Sterlite Industries will appeal against the Madras High Court order closing down its copper smelter plant in Tuticorin.

2,000 hens crushed to death as poultry farm collapses

About 2,000 hens were crushed to death when a private poultry farm, housing thousands of chickens, collapsed due to heavy rain at Dharapuram in Tiruppur district of Tamil Nadu early today.

Police sources in Tiruppur district, when contacted by UNI over phone, said the entire poultry farm, housed in a 3,000 sqft area came crashing down under the impact of heavy rain, which was accompanied by thunder and lightning.

In the impact, about 2,000 chickens, including country and broiler varieties, got trapped under the debris and were crushed to death.

Geo-strategic Issues

Sources

<http://www.newkerala.com/>

<http://news.rediff.com/>

<http://expressbuzz.com/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/tamil/>

<http://www.deccanherald.com/>

<http://www.manoramaonline.com/>

<http://www.manoramaonline.com/>