

# DISASTERS UPDATE

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## TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

### National

#### IMD to set up Doppler radars in State for better forecasts

Staff Reporter, **The Hindu**, Tuesday, Jun 28, 2011

*55 radars to be installed within a year, says Ajit Tyagi*

*The radars have the capacity to predict more accurate weather patterns*

*'Twenty of the DWRs are ready to be deployed'*



**Better monitoring: Director-General of Meteorology, IMD, Ajit Tyagi (second from right) and other dignitaries at the release of a book at the users' meet on weather services in Bangalore on Monday.**

Bangalore: Even as the spectre of climate change looms large auguring an increased incidence of extreme weather conditions, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has set about putting in place a more efficient weather monitoring system in Karnataka.

A state-of-the-art Doppler Weather Radar (DWR) system will soon give the State the capacity to predict more accurately thunderstorms, cyclones, cloudbursts and other fast-developing weather systems, Director-General of Meteorology, IMD, Ajit Tyagi has said.

The DWR will be introduced in two phases in Karnataka, Mr. Tyagi told presspersons on the sidelines of a users' meet on 'Weather Services to Karnataka delivered by India Meteorological Department'.

The DWRs are more sophisticated than the conventional radars that Karnataka uses at present, said Mr. Tyagi. The radars will detect the intensity and speed of weather systems, including turbulence or wind speed, and can therefore predict thundershowers, cyclones and other extreme weather conditions quickly and accurately, he said. A total of 55 DWR will be installed in the State within the span of a year, he said and added that of these, 20 are "ready" to be deployed. The radars have been developed in collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organisation. IMD is also working with the ISRO on instrumentation for forthcoming satellites, Mr. Tyagi added.

Speaking on the need for efficient weather warning systems for farmers, Mr. Tyagi said that an SMS service launched by the IMD now has 20 lakh subscribers from the farming community from across the country.

Naveen Kumar, Managing Director of the Karnataka Power Company; K.S. Prabhakara, Secretary, State Revenue Department (Disaster Management) and N.C. Muniyappa, Principal Secretary, Karnataka Tourism Department, spoke at the meet organised by the IMD.

### **Cases of water-borne diseases on rise in city**

**Jaya Shroff Bhalla, Hindustan Times**

**New Delhi, June 28, 2011**

Complaints of diarrhoea, jaundice, gastroenteritis and typhoid cases have started trickling into city hospitals, thanks to intermittent spells of rains coupled with extremely hot and humid days. OPDs in the medicine departments across hospitals are also

choc-a-bloc with diarrhoea and typhoid cases. "Most patients have symptoms of diarrhoea besides complaints of vomiting and sore throat," said Dr Sushum Sharma, senior consultant and head, preventive health programme at Max Healthcare.

"Cultures show no pus cells, which means these are all viral infections caused by drinking impure water. People should not self-medicate and take antibiotics. Re-hydration is the only cure," Sharma added.

Doctors at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (Aiims), which receives maximum patients in the city, has also seen huge number of patients complaining of upset stomachs.

"We've got gastroenteritis, hepatitis A and few cases of typhoid, which are not unusual at this time of the year, as people, especially the children are not careful about the water they drink," said a doctor from the department of medicine at Aiims.

"People should avoid eating cut-fruits, juices and shakes."

The situation at Lok Nayak, the biggest Delhi government hospital, is no different. "Gastroenteritis and diarrhoea patient load is huge, but expected, as contaminated water leads to development of exotoxins in the body that cause almost instantaneous food poisoning, leading to diarrhoea," said Dr Richa Diwan, professor in the department of medicine at Lok Nayak.

While gastroenteritis - also known as stomach flu - is an inflammation of the stomach and small intestine and presents itself as acute diarrhoea, typhoid caused by bacteria. It is characterised by slowly progressing fever that goes as high as 104°F accompanied by diarrhoea.

Civic bodies, say doctors, have an important role to play. "The civic bodies should regularly chlorinate water and contamination should be checked in different localities," said a doctor.

Till they do, it is for people to stay away from contaminated food and drinking water as much as possible.

### **Dengue rides on humidity to hit city**

TNN | Jun 27, 2011, 11.43pm IST

NEW DELHI: Mosquitoes seem to have stolen a march on the rains this year. Even before the monsoon set in on Sunday, the city had recorded five cases of dengue and 21 of [malaria](#). Doctors and municipal officials said the intermittent rains and high humidity through the latter half of June had created ripe conditions for mosquito breeding.

Meanwhile, the MCD's [dengue breeding checkers](#) (DBC's) — who are supposed to check for breeding, and fumigate and spray larvicides in sensitive areas — have threatened to go on strike from July 1 to protest against the delay in disbursement of their salaries. "The MCD has not paid salaries to us for over three months. The issue of regularising (jobs) is also long-pending," said Ashok Choudhary, general secretary of the DBC Association.

According to the Municipal Corporation of [Delhi](#) (MCD), last year only one case of dengue was reported till June-end. "The latest case of dengue has been reported from Moti Bagh area. A 21-year-old man admitted at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital was diagnosed positive for the disease. His condition is stable," said Dr VK Monga, chairman of the MCD health committee.

Dr Monga said, compared to previous years there was certainly an increase in the number of cases and mosquito-breeding sites this time. "Close to 10,000 houses visited by DBC's were found positive for breeding in our recent surveys, apart from many offices and police stations. In all 13,753 legal notices have been issued for mosquitogenic (breeding-

friendly) conditions, of which 4,479 notices were issued in the last two weeks," said Monga.

Dengue claimed eight lives and left 6,529 people ill last year. This year, for the first time, the civic body has decided to accept dengue cases found positive using the NS-1 antigen test — used by most private hospitals and nursing homes — and the numbers are certainly going to increase significantly on this account, said another MCD official. He said, earlier, as per Central rules, only cases diagnosed positive for dengue through 'IgM capture Elisa test' were taken into account.

Dr Bir Singh, professor in the community medicine department of AIIMS, said that extreme care should be taken to check water stagnation in the locality or even inside houses. "During rains, many people stop using coolers but rainwater gets filled up in them. People should ensure that this water is removed. Coolers are the most common ground for mosquito breeding, apart from other sources like flower vases," said Singh.

Regarding the DBCs' demands, Monga said the proposal to regularise their services, at least partly, was discussed but it did not materialise because the new recruitments would have caused an additional burden of about Rs 60 crore. "We are still trying to sort out the matter and to ensure that the work does not suffer at all," he said.

## **“Stop building pseudo bridges on Yamuna”**

Staff Reporter, **The Hindu**, Tuesday, Jun 28, 2011

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*NGO Yamuna Jiye Abhiyan writes to Delhi L-G*

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NEW DELHI: Alarmed by the upcoming proposals, non-government organisation Yamuna Jiye Abhiyan has shot off a letter to the Lieutenant-Governor Tejendra Khanna to stop more “pseudo bridges” from coming up on the river and disturbing its flow.

According to the YJA, there is a proposal to construct a pseudo bridge by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation across the Yamuna as part of its Phase III alignment joining Sarai Kale Khan with Mayur Vihar Phase I on its proposed Mukundpur-Yamuna Vihar line.

The YJA claims that none of these bridges are built across the entire active flood plain of the river in the city, but are actually cross bunds-cum-road on the river with the bridge portion being only over 500-600 m of the lean season river flow.

“This is often resorted to in the name of cost saving, without taking into account the huge environmental costs (and additional dangers of flooding). It is unfortunate that such bridges hardly ever go through the scrutiny of the Environmental Impact Assessment mechanism of the MOEF,” said YJA convenor Manoj Misra. Appealing to the L-G, who

is also the chairman of the Yamuna River Development Authority (YRDA), the YJA adds:

“It is the reason why bridges in the past were always aligned across the narrowest stretch of a river. The best such example is the British time built road-cum-rail bridge that straddles the narrowest portion of the river Yamuna in the city. Since then 10 more pseudo bridges have come up on the river over its 22 km stretch from Wazirabad barrage till Okhla barrage.”

The NGO claims there are pseudo bridges at Wazirabad, ISBT, Shastri Park (DMRC) Gita Colony, ITO, Yamuna Bank (DMRC), New Railway Bridge, Hazrat Nizamuddin, DND and Okhla.

“The Signature Bridge is presently under construction and at least two more are planned as part of the Zone O (River Yamuna) zonal plan by the Public Works Department, one upstream of New Railway Bridge as part of the East-West corridor and the other as an extension of the elevated Barapullah road till Mayur Vihar Phase I. These all put together would mean 14 bridges on the 22 km stretch of the river in the city. This comes to on an average one bridge after every 1.57 km of the river,” the YJA has alleged.

The NGO has also suggested finding a design that will allow the Barapullah road extension to Mayur Vihar I and the newly-proposed DMRC bridge to be constructed in synchronisation. “Both the elevated Barapullah road extension to Mayur Vihar I and the newly-proposed DMRC bridge as part of its phase III are proposed in the same stretch of the river, why can't we plan them together as a road-cum-rail bridge and thus save substantially on costs,” Mr. Misra has suggested.

## **High Court asks State to notify fire safety measures for high-rises**

Staff Reporter, **The Hindu**, Tuesday, Jun 28, 2011

Bangalore: The Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the State Government to notify within two weeks the fire safety measures to prevent fire accidents in high-rises based on the action plan submitted by the Fire and Emergency Services and the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

A Division Bench comprising Chief Justice J.S. Khehar and Justice H.G. Ramesh issued the direction after the BBMP and the Fire Services Department submitted the proposed action plan. The Bench passed the order while disposing of a public interest litigation petition filed by Beyond Carlton, a group involving families of the nine who died in the Carlton Towers fire accident here on February 23, 2009.

The notification will have to be issued under Section 13 of the Karnataka Fire Safety Act 1964, which empowers the Government to issue directions to authorities in relation to preventive measures. The Government has been authorised to modify or change the measures suggested in the action plan.

## **Recommendations**

The following are the safety measures recommended: all buildings 15 metres and above to be considered high-rises in terms of the National Building Code of India 2005 and the BBMP shall not grant building plans/licences without obtaining no objection certificate from Fire and Emergency Services Department.

In case of the existing but unoccupied buildings and those under construction, the BBMP shall not grant occupancy certificate unless sufficient fire protection system is installed before the building is made operational and certified by the Fire Officer.

Electricity and water utilities (BESCOM and BWSSB) shall not provide services to any high-rise without a certificate by BBMP on fire safety measures.

### **Inspection**

The owner/association of high-rises shall get the premises inspected by the Fire and Emergency Services Department to ascertain the working condition of the fire safety measures. The fire safety certificate should be produced to the BBMP for renewal every two years. An affidavit along with the inspection report shall be submitted to the BBMP and Fire and Emergency Services Department every year before March 31.

The officer nominated by the BBMP Commissioner, along with the representative of the tenants/residents, shall carry out checking once in two years relating to deviations and alterations in buildings.

A detailed compliance report has to be filed after inspection. The officer can also carry out surprise checks to ascertain fire safety measures relating to encroachment of corridors, fire escape routes and emergency exits.

### **Disconnection**

In case of failure to comply with the prescribed fire safety measures, a prior notice, not more than three months, should be issued to occupier/developer/owner or a builder. In case of any lapse reported by the inspecting officer, BESCOM and BWSSB can disconnect supply and seal the building within two days of intimation by officer concerned.

High-rises violating rules or are unauthorised construction shall not be entitled to benefits under the Akrama-Sakrama scheme.

## **16 killed in road accident**

Staff Correspondent, **The Hindu**, Tuesday, Jun 28, 2011

*Eight injured in collision between bus, MUV near Tumkur*



**The wreckage: Eyewitnesses said the accident occurred when the driver of the Tempo Trax attempted to overtake an autorickshaw.**

Tumkur: Sixteen persons died and eight were injured when a Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) bus collided with a Tempo Trax near Heggare in Tumkur district on Monday.

The accident occurred on National Highway 206, in front of Gangadharaiah Memorial Hall, around 12.30 p.m.

While 15 people died on the spot, one died on the way to hospital. The 16 were among the 18 persons travelling in the Tempo Trax to Tumkur.

Nine of the victims have been identified: Jayalakshamma (35) from Subhashnagar in Gubbi taluk, Shivanna (45) from Sugganahalli in Magadi taluk, driver of the Tempo Trax Sudhir (36) from Heggare in Tumkur taluk, Hanumantharaju (24) from Barethota in Gubbi, Lakshamma (30) from Somalapura in Gubbi, Somashekar (23) from Kadehalli in Turuvekere, Vijaykumar (25) from Bellavi in Tumkur, Kumara (31) from Subhashnagar in Gubbi, and Swami Ananda (32) from Sampige in Turuvekere taluk.

Two passengers in the MUV and six in the bus, including driver Lingaraju were injured. The injured were rushed to Tumkur District Hospital.

According to District Surgeon Pratap Surya at the hospital, some of the injured suffered multiple fractures. Four, including the bus driver, were referred to the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences in Bangalore, of whom one died on the way.

Eyewitnesses and the Tumkur police told The Hindu that the accident occurred when the driver of the Tempo Trax attempted to overtake an autorickshaw and collided with the bus, which was on its way to Shimoga. The MUV overturned and was badly damaged.

## Compensation

Deputy Commissioner C. Somashekar announced compensation of Rs. 50,000 from the KSRTC to the family of each victim, who were mostly from poor families. A sum of Rs. 15,000 was given to the families on the spot.

Mr. Shivanna said he would request further compensation from the Chief Minister.

## Six persons killed in accidents

Special Correspondent, **The Hindu**, Tuesday, Jun 28, 2011

**TAMBARAM:** Six persons were killed in different accidents since Sunday night in areas around Tambaram.

Police said that three young men died when a speeding car hit them around 9.30 p.m. on Sunday on GST Road in Maraimalai Nagar. S. Harshad and S. Ishaan, both 25 years old and K.Usman (24) belonged to Haryana. They were crew members of a container lorry and had reached Maraimalai Nagar to load cars from Ford factory.

After parking their vehicle, they were walking towards Singaperumal Koil, looking for a restaurant, when they were hit by a car.

Other vehicles on GST Road overtook the vehicle, intercepted it and overpowered the driver, identified as J.Bharathidasan.

Meanwhile other motorists called 108 and an ambulance rushed to the spot. While Harshad died on the way to the Chengalpattu Government Medical College Hospital, Usman and Ishaan succumbed to injuries a little later. The driver was arrested by Maraimalai Nagar police.

On Monday morning, two men died when a couple of motorcycles collided at Manimangalam near Tambaram. Anandan (51) was riding a motorcycle with a friend Singaram riding pillion. Anandan had gone to his relatives and friends' homes in and around Manimangalam to distribute invitation cards for his daughter's wedding.

While travelling on Sriperumbudur – Karasangal Road, Anandan's motorcycle collided with another motorcycle driven by Kirubanandam (35). Anandan died on the spot, while Kirubanandam died at Tambaram Taluk Government General Hospital. Around 1 p.m. on Monday, an unidentified woman, around 60 years old, died on the spot when she was hit by a speeding mini cargo van in West Tambaram on GST Road.

The mini cargo van was carrying vegetables and proceeding towards Perungalathur when the accident took place.

# International

## **Somalia: Increase in refugees fleeing to Kenya**

**By Will Ross** East Africa correspondent, **BBC News**, 28 June 2011 Last updated at 01:50 GMT

War and drought in Somalia are leading an unprecedented number of people to flee across the border into Kenya, an aid agency says.

Save the Children is reporting that every day, about 1,300 people - at least 800 of them children - are arriving at the Dadaab refugee camp.

The monthly number of new arrivals has more than doubled in a year, it says.

Aid workers at the camp say the children are exhausted, malnourished and severely dehydrated.

Save the Children says some families are walking for more than a month to reach the camp.

The conflict in Somalia forces many to head for the Kenyan border but a severe drought and the unaffordable cost of food has made the situation worse.

Although made up of three settlements, Dadaab is often referred to as the largest refugee camp in the world.

It is home to well over 350,000 people.

The humanitarian agency Medecins Sans Frontieres says many of the new arrivals are in desperate need of healthcare.

It says almost half of the children arriving there have never had a vaccination.

With the Somali conflict continuing and several more months of drought expected, conditions in the already overcrowded refugee camp are likely to get even worse.

Efforts to decongest the camp and relocate the refugees have so far made little difference.

## **Los Alamos nuclear lab: New Mexico fire reaches border**

**BBC News**, 28 June 2011

A New Mexico wildfire has breached the boundary of Los Alamos National Laboratory, one of the top nuclear weapons research facilities in the US.

On Monday, officials said that they had detected "no off-site releases of contamination" and said the facilities face "no immediate threat".



**The wildfire reached the lab's southwestern border on Monday evening**

The lab was closed on Monday and was to remain so on Tuesday. The surrounding town has been ordered evacuated.

The lab, opened during World War II, led the development of the atomic bomb.

By Monday evening, the Las Conchas fire had burned through 49,000 acres of forests, canyons, and mesas to the south and west of the lab in northern New Mexico.

The fire had reached the lab's southwestern boundary and leapt a state road onto the land, burning roughly an acre, state fire officials said.

"No facilities face immediate threat, and all nuclear and hazardous materials are accounted for and protected," officials [said in a statement](#).

The lab employs about 11,800 people, and about 12,000 people live in the town of Los Alamos.

***Compiled by  
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