

Mithun Chakraborty to get Dadasaheb Phalke Award

NEW DELHI/KOLKATA, Sept. 30 (PTI)

VETERAN actor Mithun Chakraborty, star of films such as "Mrigayaa", "Disco Dancer", and "Prem Pratigya", was on Monday named recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, the Government's highest recognition in the field of cinema.

The announcement was made by Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnav on X.

This comes months after

Chakraborty, a member of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was awarded Padma Bhushan, the third-highest civilian honour, by the Government of India.

Congratulating Chakraborty, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the actor is a "cultural icon" admired across generations.

"Delighted that Shri Mithun Chakraborty Ji has been conferred the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award, recognising his unparalleled contributions to Indian cinema. He is a cul-



tural icon, admired across generations for his versatile performances. Congratulations and best wishes to him," PM said in a post on X.

Vaishnav said Chakraborty's remarkable cinematic journey "inspires generations". "Honoured to announce that the Dadasaheb Phalke Selection Jury has decided to award legendary actor, Sh. Mithun Chakraborty Ji for his iconic contribution to Indian Cinema," the Minister said in the post.

Chakraborty, 74, said when he got the news, his life kept replaying in his mind, including the initial struggle for food and shelter. "I am short of words. It is an occasion which reminded me of the past. I went to Mumbai from Kolkata. In Mumbai, I did not have food and would sometimes sleep in the garden... This kept replaying. After all this, you get this huge honour. I have no words. I can only say I dedicate this award to my family and to fans all over the world.

(Contd on page 3)

AFSPA extended in Manipur for six more months

IMPHAL, Sept 30 (PTI)

THE Government on Monday extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) by another six months in Manipur excluding 19 police station areas falling under the Imphal valley and a region that shares its boundary with Assam. In a notification, the State Government's Home Department said the extension will come into effect from October 1. "The State Government is of the opinion

after analysing the prevailing law and order situation in the State that it is not expedient to have a detailed assessment on the ground as security agencies are pre-occupied with maintenance of law and order," the notification said.

The issue of declaration of Disturbed Area status is very sensitive and may likely attract public criticism and resistance if proper care is not taken, it said.

"The Governor of Manipur hereby accords approval to

declare the entire State of Manipur excluding the areas falling under the jurisdiction of 19 police stations... as Disturbed Area for a period of six months with effect from 1st October" the notification signed by Commissioner (Home) N Ashok Kumar read.

The police station areas where the Disturbed Areas have not been imposed include Imphal, Lamphel, City, Singjamei, Seknai, Lamsang, Patsoi, Wangoi, Porompat, Heingang, Lamlai, Iribung,

Leimakhong, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Nambol, Moirang, Kakching and Jiribam.

The areas that have been kept out of the purview of AFSPA are dominated by the majority Meitei community.

The Disturbed area tag was first withdrawn from the Imphal Municipality areas in 2004 and was removed from 15 police stations in six districts in April 2022. The disturbed area was removed from other four police stations in April 2023.

Army signs eighth procurement contract through iDEX platform

NEW DELHI, Sept 30 (PTI)

IN LINE with the commitment towards the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative, the Army on Monday signed the eighth procurement contract through the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) platform.

The aim of iDEX is to create an ecosystem to foster innovations and encourage technological development in defence and aerospace by engaging research and development institutes, academia, and industries and providing them funding and other support to carry out R&D which has good potential for future adoption by Indian defence and aerospace organisation.

Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on April 12, 2018, during the Defence Expo India, iDEX under

the Defence Innovation Organisation has emerged as a front-runner in establishing the right kind of contact with startups and innovators and has gained substantial traction in the defence startup community, the defence ministry said in a statement.

The contract for procurement of 'Generation of Quantum Secure Key (Quantum Key Distribution)' with QuNu Labs was signed in the presence of Lt Gen NC Raja Subramani, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, at the South Block here. "QuNu Labs had proposed a 200 km single hop Quantum Key Distribution in Open Challenge 2.0 under iDEX. It will replace the algorithm-based encryption systems thus enabling greater security as also optimising manpower commitment," the statement said.

Israel launches small raids against Hezbollah across Lebanese border

BEIRUT, Sept 30 (AP)

ISRAEL launched small ground raids against Hezbollah as it prepares for a larger ground operation in Lebanon, officials said Monday.

A US official said Israel has informed the US about the raids that are underway and that Israel has not provided timing on plans for a larger operation. The US has not told Israel to halt all of its operations in Lebanon and wouldn't do so as Washington supports Israel's right to defend itself, according to the official.

A Western official, a diplomat

in Cairo whose country is directly involved in de-escalation efforts, said an Israeli ground operation in Lebanon is "imminent". The diplomat said Israel has shared its plans with the United States and other Western allies and that the operation will "be limited". Both officials spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the situation.

It was not clear if Israel had made a final decision on a broader operation. The Israeli military did not comment.

Hezbollah's acting leader Naim Kassem vows to continue fighting

Hezbollah vowed on Monday it was ready to keep fighting even after much of its top command, including longtime leader Hassan Nasrallah, was recently wiped out. Despite the heavy blow Hezbollah has suffered in recent weeks, acting leader Naim Kassem said in a televised statement that if Israel decides to launch a ground offensive, the group's fighters are ready. He said the commanders killed have already been replaced. "Israel was not able to affect our (mil-

itary) capabilities," Kassem said in a televised statement, the first time any senior Hezbollah figure has been seen since Nasrallah was killed. "There are deputy commanders and there are replacements in case a commander is wounded in any post." He added that Hezbollah, which fought Israel to a stalemate in their monthlong war in 2006, anticipated "the battle could be long".

A founding member of the militant group who had been Nasrallah's longtime deputy, Kassem will remain in his acting position until the group's leadership elects a replacement.

India logs 8% more rain than normal, highest since 2020

NEW DELHI, Sept 30 (PTI)

THE 2024 Southwest monsoon season officially ended on Monday, with India recording 934.8 mm rainfall, 108 per cent of the long-period average and the highest since 2020, according to India Meteorological Department data.

Central India received 19 per cent more rainfall than the long-period average for the

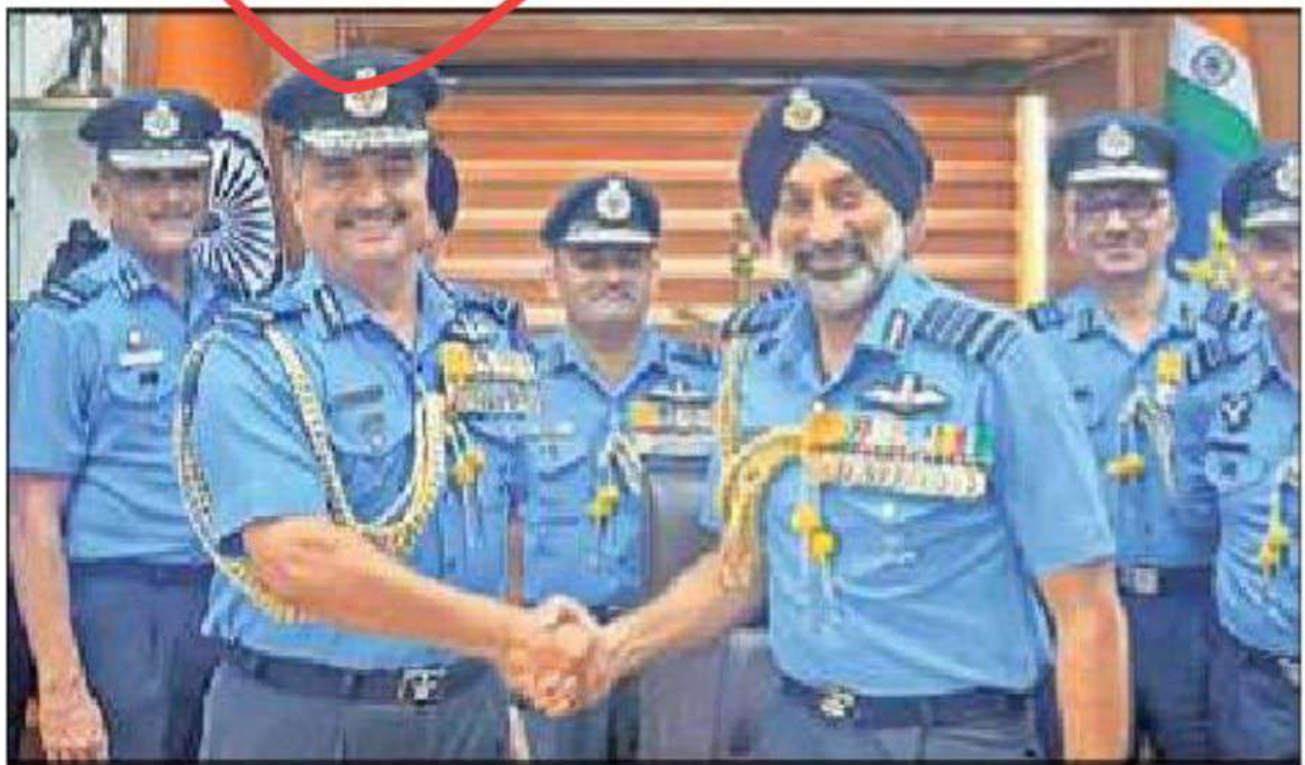
region, the southern peninsula recorded 14 per cent more than normal, and Northwest India saw 7 per cent more than usual. East and Northeast India registered 14 per cent less rainfall than normal, the data showed.

The country experienced a rainfall deficit of 11 per cent in June, followed by an excess of 9 per cent in July, 15.7 per cent in August, and 10.6 per cent in

September. In the 2023 monsoon season, India had recorded 820 mm rainfall, which was 94.4 per cent of the long-period average of 868.6 mm.

The country logged 925 mm of rainfall, 106 per cent of the long-period average, in 2022; 870 mm in 2021; and 958 mm in 2020. The IMD had predicted above-normal rainfall (106 per cent of the long-period average) for this year.

Air Chief Marshal A P Singh takes charge as **new Chief of Air Staff**



New Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh (R), with outgoing CAS Air Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari during handing over of the command at Air headquarters, in New Delhi, on Monday. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, Sept 30 (PTI)

AIR CHIEF Marshal Amar Preet Singh, an accomplished fighter pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience, on Monday assumed charge as new chief of the Indian Air Force, succeeding incumbent Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari.

Air Chief Marshal Singh was

serving as Vice Chief of the Air Force in his previous assignment. Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari retired from service after helping the force for three years.

Born on October 27, 1964, Air Chief Marshal Singh was commissioned into the fighter pilot stream of the Indian Air Force in December 1984.

(Contd on page 3)