

# India rejects reports about denial of airspace to Pak to send aid to Sri Lanka

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (PTI)

INDIA on Monday expeditiously heeded to Pakistan's request to use Indian airspace to send humanitarian assistance to cyclone-hit Sri Lanka, people familiar with the matter said.

They also described as "fake" reports in the Pakistani media that India has not granted overflight facility to Pakistan to send aid to Sri Lanka.

The official request for overflight was submitted by Pakistan at around 1300 hours (Indian time) on Monday seeking permission to fly over Indian airspace, the people said.

Given the fact that the request pertained to humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka, India expeditiously cleared the request and

intimated the same to Pakistan at 1730 hours (Indian time) on Monday through official channels, they said. It was processed at the shortest notice period of four hours, they added.

This gesture from India despite Pakistan having banned its airspace for Indian airlines was considered purely on humanitarian grounds, the people said.

"Pakistani media, as usual, is indulging in propaganda and peddling fake news. These allegations are baseless and misleading. All requests for overflight or transit are processed strictly in accordance with established procedures and international norms," said one of the people. India's decisions on airspace permissions are governed by standard operations.

# Colder winter in central India, N-W, peninsular regions: IMD

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (PTI)

NORMAL to below-normal temperatures are expected in central India and the adjoining north-west and peninsular regions during the three-month winter season, IMD said on Monday. The western Himalayan region, the foothills of the Himalayas, the north-eastern States, and parts of eastern and western India may experience above-normal maximum temperatures, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said. The IMD is expecting four to five "extra" days of cold wave conditions in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, and some parts of Maharashtra.

Mohapatra said these areas normally experience four to six days of cold wave conditions during the December to February period. "During the

upcoming winter season (December 2025 to February 2026), normal to below-normal minimum temperatures are likely over most parts of central India and adjoining peninsular and north-west India. Above-normal minimum temperatures are likely over the remaining parts of the country," he said.

During the season, maximum temperatures are expected to be normal to below normal across most parts of the country, he added. The season's first spell of cold to severe cold wave conditions started early and was observed only in isolated pockets over west, central and adjoining east India, mainly north-east Rajasthan, south Haryana, north Madhya Pradesh, south Uttar Pradesh and north Chhattisgarh, between November 8 and 18, and over north interior Maharashtra on November 15 and 20.

Another cold wave spell is expected in parts of north-west and central India from December 3 to 5, the IMD chief said. "We are expecting weak La Niña conditions to continue during the December to February period," he added.

La Niña refers to the large-scale cooling of ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, coupled with changes in tropical atmospheric circulation such as winds, pressure and rainfall. It is generally associated with intense and prolonged rains in the monsoon season in India and colder-than-usual winters, particularly in northern regions. Most parts of the country, except for parts of south-east peninsular India, the north-eastern states and areas in the extreme north-west, recorded normal to below-normal temperatures in November.

# Pak under \$30 billion Chinese debt burden as CPEC crawls

NEW DELHI, Dec 1 (IANS)

CHINA-PAKISTAN Economic Corridor (CPEC) has significantly increased Pakistan's external obligations to China as its loan constitutes approximately \$30 billion of the country's external debt. High loan interest rates and foreign currency financing create serious debt pressure, making successful project implementation more vulnerable to economic and political risks, according to an article in a Kyrgyzstan newspaper.

Of the 90 planned projects in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) only 38 have been completed and the Gwadar Port as well as the airport operate on a limited scale, highlighting the gap between ambitious

plans and actual implementation. The project also faces security and social perception challenges. In Balochistan, local initiatives call for a more balanced approach, ensuring that residents' interests are considered alongside major investment goals, it further says.

Of the nine Special Economic Zones (SEZs), active development is observed in only three, while the others remain in planning or discussion stages. This underscores institutional challenges and the need for more coordinated actions.

The article also highlights that the project exerts pressure on the environment: increasing resource consumption and emissions require strengthened monitoring and the adoption of sus-

tainable solutions; otherwise, risks to ecosystems could be significant. CPEC is developing against the backdrop of changes in international relations. New partnerships create opportunities for investment diversification but also reveal the vulnerability of a model overly dependent on a single key partner.

CPEC 2.0 demonstrates that even large, ambitious initiatives require flexibility, careful management, and consideration of real economic, institutional, and social conditions. The project remains strategically important, but its implementation faces serious challenges, making plan adaptation inevitable and highlighting the need for a strategic approach and balanced risk allocation, the article observes.