

# Finland to shut entire border with Russia over migrant concerns

**Helsinki:** Finland will close its entire border with Russia to travellers for the next two weeks in a bid to halt the unusually large flow of asylum seekers to the Nordic nation, which the government and its allies say is an orchestrated move by Moscow.

Finland last week shut all but one of its border posts to travellers from Russia, keeping open only the northernmost crossing located in the Arctic. But this too would now close, the government said on Tuesday. Some 900 asylum seekers from nations including Kenya, Morocco, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen have entered Finland from Russia in November, an increase from less than one per day previously, according to the Finnish Border Guard.

The decision to shut all eight border crossings means only cargo trains can pass between the two countries, Finland's Border Guard said. Helsinki says Moscow is funnelling people to the border in retaliation for its decision to increase defence cooperation with the US, a charge the Kremlin denies. Finland infuriated Russia earlier this year when it joined Nato, ending decades of military non-alignment, due to the war in Ukraine.

"This is Russia's influen-



Some 900 asylum seekers have entered Finland from Russia in Nov, an increase from less than one per day previously, according to the Finnish Border Guard

ce operation and we do not accept it," PM Petteri Orpo told a press conference. On Monday he said his country had intelligence information on Russian authorities assisting the asylum seekers and that despite Finnish border closures, there were still more people heading towards Finland in Russia. On Monday, only three asylum seekers arrived in Finland through the remote Raja-Jooseppi station, the last open border post, and on Tuesday there were no entrants. The border station will remain open on Wednesday before closing until December 13, the government said.

Finland's ombudsman for non-discrimination last week said the remote location of Raja-Jooseppi prompted concerns that Helsinki was jeopardising the right to seek asylum. AP



Silkyara Tunnel trauma terminates on the 17th day

# RESCUE! – FINALLY



Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Dhama, Union Minister V K Singh meet the first worker out: 8 pm. Last -- the 41st -- worker out: 8.45 pm.

## Men over machines Human grit tears through 58 metres of rock and rubble in just a few hours

### A saga of patience and persistence

Trapped workers emerged all smiles showing clear signs that the 17-day trauma had not daunted their bodies and their spirits. Happily they chatted with Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama and Union Minister V K Singh, sharing details of how they coped with the toughest test of their lives.

By Alok Singh  
UTTARKASHI, Nov 28 (PTI)

RESCUE workers pulled out all 41 workers trapped in Uttarakhand's Silkyara tunnel in a multi-agency rescue operation that hovered between hope and despair for almost 17 days.

Union Minister V K Singh and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama welcomed the workers as National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) men brought them out through a steel chute that lined a 60-metre passage.

An ambulance with the first of the 41 workers left the mouth of the tunnel around 8 pm, about an hour after a

group of rat-hole mining experts dug through the last stretch of rubble.

There was hugging and cheers as the ordeal ended. Outside the tunnel some people chanted "Har Har Mahadev" and "Bharat Mata ki Jai".

Ambulances which had lined up at the tunnel ferried the workers to a community health centre where a special 41-bed ward had been set up. Before this, the workers were given a quick medical check-up as they emerged out of the steel pipe.

CM Dhama said no worker was in a critical situation. But the labourers will be kept under medical observation for

some time before being sent home, he said. He said the youngest of the worker was rescued first. A portion of the tunnel on the Char Dham route collapsed on November 12, blocking the exit of the workers who were inside.

Food, medicines and other essentials were sent to them through a six-inch pipe pushed through the rubble of the collapsed portion.

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday expressed happiness over rescue of the workers trapped in a tunnel in Uttarakhand, saying the nation salutes their resilience and remains grateful to them for building critical infrastructure even at great per-

sonal risk. Their travails over 17 days, as the rescue effort met with obstacles, have been a testament of human

ed with incredible grit and determination to perform one of the most difficult rescue missions in history,"

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi hail successful rescue operations as 'indeed emotional' and workers' courage and patience remarkable.

endurance, Murmu said. "I congratulate the teams and all experts who have ac-

Murmu said in a post on X. Rescuers pulled out all 41 workers trapped in

Uttarakhand's Silkyara tunnel in a multi-agency rescue operation that hovered between hope and despair for over almost 17 days.

"I feel relieved and happy to learn that all the workers trapped in a tunnel in Uttarakhand have been rescued. Their travails over 17 days, as the rescue effort met with obstacles, have been a testament of human endurance. The nation salutes their resilience and remains grateful to them for building critical infrastructure, even at great personal risk, far away from their homes," President Murmu said.

Prime Minister Narendra (Contd on page 5)

# Defence Ministry inks Rs 2,956 cr contract with BHEL

NEW DELHI, Nov 28 (PTI)

THE Defence Ministry on Tuesday sealed a Rs 2,956 crore deal with state-run Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd to procure 16 upgraded super rapid gun mount (SRGM) and accessories for Indian Navy.

The SRGM is a medium caliber anti-missile and anti-aircraft defence weapon system that

The deal is to procure 16 super rapid gun mount for Navy

provides a sustained rate of fire and high accuracy.

The Ministry said the upgraded SRGMs will be installed onboard Indian Navy's in-service and newly-built ships.

"The Ministry of Defence has signed a contract with M/s Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited

(BHEL), Haridwar on November 28 for procurement of 16 Upgraded Super Rapid Gun Mount (SRGM) along with associated equipment/accessories for Indian Navy under Buy (Indian) category at a total cost of Rs 2956.89 crore," it said in a statement.

It said the upgraded SRGM will be manufactured by BHEL at its Haridwar Plant.

"The weapon system is capable of multiple engagements in multi-threat scenarios and has a proven record of very good performance against missiles and highly maneuverable fast attack crafts," the Ministry said.

It said the upgraded SRGMs will be installed onboard Indian

Navy's in-service ships as well as newly-built platforms.

"The project will generate an employment of two and half lakh mandays over a period of five years and encourage active participation of various Indian industries including MSME, thus significantly contributing to the Government's efforts to achieve 'Atmanirbharta' in defence," it said.



# Fight more surgically, limit displacements: US to Israel

The US has warned Israel that it must fight more surgically and avoid further mass displacement of Palestinians in its war against Hamas to avoid a humanitarian crisis that overwhelms the world's ability to respond, according to senior Biden administration officials. The White House has told Israel that replicating the scale of its bombardment in northern Gaza as it makes an expected push into southern Gaza once the recent pause in fighting ends would produce a crisis beyond the capacity of any humanitarian support network, the officials said. The UN has said the fighting has already displaced most of Gaza's population of 2.2 million.

The statements are the Biden administration's strongest warning to Israeli officials to date about the next phase of their military operation. For weeks, the White House has be-

**The warning, revealed by US officials, is the Biden administration's strongest to Israel to date about its military operation in Gaza**

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en careful to say it does not dictate how Israel conducts its military operations, but President Biden and senior members of his staff have grown more vocal as the humanitarian crisis has unfolded. They also come as the administration officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said they were ramping up humanitarian aid.

Among other things, US officials have told the Israelis that any coming military operations should not hamper the flow of power and water or impede the work of hospitals and UN-supported shelters. Israel's government was receptive to the requests, one official said. NYT



# Rajnath unveils crest of **INS Imphal**

NEW DELHI, Nov 28 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday unveiled the crest of Indian Navy's stealth guided missile destroyer Imphal that is equipped with BrahMos surface-to-surface missiles and anti-submarine indigenous rocket launchers.

The ship was delivered to the Indian Navy on October 20 by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai. The crest unveiling ceremony in Delhi was graced by Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan and Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar.

INS Imphal is the third of the four Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyers.

The crest design depicts the Kangla Palace on the left and 'Kangla-Sa' on the right.

The unveiling of Imphal's crest, adorned with the Kangla Palace and Kangla-Sa is a befitting tribute to the sacrifice made by the people of Manipur towards India's independence, sovereignty



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of the Naval Staff Adm R Hari Kumar and others unveil the crest of Project 15B stealth guided missile destroyer Yard 12706 (Imphal) in New Delhi on Tuesday.

(PTI)

and security, the defence ministry said.

The Kangla Palace is an important historical and archaeological site of Manipur, and was the traditional seat of the past king-

dom. With a dragon's head and lion's body, the 'Kangla-Sa' is a mythical character from Manipur's history, and symbolises as the protector of its people. 'Kangla-Sa' is also the state emblem of

Manipur. A guided missile destroyer with a displacement of 7,400 tonnes and overall length of 164 m, Imphal is a potent and versatile platform.

# Fifth day of truce

## Israel, Hamas agreement seems only a matter of time before war resumes

TEL AVIV, Nov 28 (AP)

A **TRUCE** between Israel and Hamas entered its fifth day on Tuesday, with the militant group promising to release more civilian hostages to delay the expected resumption of the war and Israel under growing pressure to spare Palestinian civilians when the fighting resumes.

The sides agreed to extend their truce through Wednesday, with another two planned exchanges of militant-held hostages for Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. But Israel has repeatedly vowed to resume the war with "full force" to destroy Hamas once it's clear that no more hostages will be freed under the current agreement's terms.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is set to visit the region later this week for the third time since the start of the war, and is expected to press for an extension of the truce and the release of more hostages.

The State Department said he would also discuss efforts to "protect civilian life during Israel's operations in Gaza" and accelerate the delivery of aid

to the impoverished coastal strip. Israel's top ally has pledged unwavering support for its Gaza offensive, but Blinken has also said "far too many" Palestinians have been killed.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reiterated his call for a long-term cease-fire and the release of all hostages

*(Contd on page 5)*

# US Navy removes fuel from plane that overshot Hawaii runway

KANEOHE BAY (US), Nov 28 (AP)

THE US Navy said on Monday that it has removed nearly all of the fuel from a large plane that overshot a Hawaii runway and landed in an environmentally sensitive bay, but it doesn't have a timetable for when it will get the aircraft out of the water.

Rear Adm Kevin Lenox said there was an estimated 2,000 gallons (7,500 liters) of fuel on board the P-8A.

"The team extracted all the fuel that they could get out of those tanks. This process was completed successfully without any fuel being released into the bay," Lenox said at a news conference. Removing the fuel will reduce the risks for the rest



A Navy P-8A plane that overshot a runway at Marine Corps Base Hawaii and landed in shallow water offshore sits on a reef and sand in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, on Monday. (AP/PTI)

of the salvage operation.

There were no injuries to the nine people who were on board when the plane landed on November 20 in shallow water just offshore of Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay. The base is about 10 miles (16 kilometers) from Honolulu.

Cmdr Mark Anderson, who is leading the Navy's mobile diving and salvage unit working at the site, said the plane was sitting on a mixture of coral and sand. The left engine is resting on coral. The plane rises a little with the tide, so the full weight of the plane is not on the coral, he said.

Kaneohe Bay is home to coral reefs, an ancient Hawaiian fishpond and a breeding ground for hammerhead sharks.