

MoD approves IAF squadron for Udhampur base, four NCC units in J&K & Ladakh

NEW DELHI, Jan 8 (IANS)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday approved an air squadron for Udhampur base in Jammu and Kashmir and four National Cadet Corps (NCC) units for J&K and Ladakh.

“One Air Squadron at Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir has been approved,” the Ministry of Defence said in a statement. The Ministry said that Indian Air Force (IAF) has also successfully managed to

land a transport warhorse C-130 J Super Hercules in Kargil.

“In a first, an IAF C-130 J aircraft recently carried out a night landing at the Kargil airstrip. Employing terrain masking enroute, the exercise also detailed a training mission of the Garuds,” the Ministry said.

The Ministry said that NCC units for J&K and Ladakh include one mixed (boys and girls) Army Battalion each at Udhampur, Kupwara and Kargil (Ladakh) in Jammu and Kashmir.

HAL's modified Sukhoi to be on display at 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show'

NEW DELHI, Jan 8 (IANS)

HINDUSTAN Aeronautics Limited (HAL) on Monday said that it will participate in the 10th edition of 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show 2024' and also showcase the indigenously modified Sukhoi during the event.

The 'Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show 2024' will take place from January 9 to 13.



"We have identified over 100 critical items for indigenisation and will display some of them during the event," HAL in a press statement said.

CMD HAL C B Ananthakrishnan said that one of the major attractions at HAL stall will be Su-30 MKI aircraft which has been modified indigenously for integration of air-to-ground BrahMos missile manufactured in India.

India hands over items of Lankan Coast Guard Ship post its overhaul



Indian and Sri Lankan Navy officials during handing over the items of Sri Lanka Coast Guard Ship Suraksha post its overhaul in India. (PTI)

COLOMBO, Jan 8 (PTI)

IN AN indication of camaraderie and friendship, India on Monday handed over to Sri Lanka its coast guard ship 'Suraksha' after its overhaul in India. Sri Lanka's first Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV), the SLCGS Suraksha earlier belonged to the Indian Coast Guard and was officially handed over to the Sri Lankan Navy in October 2017. Indian Navy ship Kabra docked in Colombo on Monday and handed over the items to the Sri Lankan side.

"@indiannavy ship #Kabra in Colombo! The ship handed over items of Sri Lanka Coast Guard Ship #Suraksha post its overhaul in India. The Commanding Officer later called on COMWEST @srilanka_navy," said a post on X by the Office of the High Commission of India here.

"The Commander also met the Commander in Charge of the Naval Command of Sri Lanka Navy," the post on X said, adding, "The Commanding Officer @srilanka_navy of this ship also met the Western Regional Command."

Earlier in June 2021, India gifted Sri Lanka 650 machinery parts worth LKR 120 million to augment the maintenance capacity of SLCGS Suraksha.

Barely 10 days before that, a high-level meeting between the Indian Coast Guard and Sri Lanka Coast Guard, India had assured full cooperation in the field of maritime security and capacity building, the media here had then reported.

"This is in line with India's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR) and the 'Neighbourhood First' policy," it had said.

Maldives President arrives in China; to sign pacts to boost bilateral ties

BEIJING, Jan 8 (PTI)

MALDIVIAN President Mohamed Muizzu arrived in China on Monday on a five-day State visit during which he is due to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping and sign several agreements to bolster the bilateral ties.

Muizzu, who is regarded as "pro-China," is accompanied by his wife Sajidha Mohamed and a high-level delegation.

The President and the First Lady were greeted by senior Chinese officials upon their



arrival in the country.

They visited the Xiamen Free Trade Zone in China's Fujian province after their arrival. Representatives from the Xiamen Free Trade Zone presented an introductory video. Following the presentation, the President and the First Lady took a tour and inquired about

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu and First Lady Sajidha Mohamed being welcomed upon their arrival in People's Republic of China on Monday. (PTI)

significant areas in the zone.

Muizzu's maiden visit to China, however, has been marred by a huge diplomatic row triggered by the derogatory remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi by some Maldivian Ministers after he posted a video of him on a pristine beach during his visit to Lakshadweep. The Maldivian envoy to India was on Monday summoned to the External Affairs Ministry and conveyed strong concern over remarks. Muizzu is due to hold talks with Chinese President.

Exports may take \$30bn hit over Red Sea threats

India may see around \$30 billion shaved off its total exports in the current fiscal year, as threats to cargo vessels in the Red Sea lead to a surge in container shipping rates and prompt exporters to hold back on shipments.

The initial assessment, conducted by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries, a New Delhi-based thinktank, would mean a 6.7% drop in Indian exports, based on last fiscal year's \$451 billion total.

"The crisis in the Red Sea would indeed impact India's trade and may lead to further contraction," said Sachin Chaturvedi, director general of the thinktank. The govern-



ment hasn't released any official estimates on the impact of the Red Sea crisis on Indian exports.

The number of ships passing through the Suez Canal is down about 44% compared to the average for the first half of December, according to Clarkson Research Services, a unit of the world's largest ship broker. Vessels with a combined tonnage of about 2.5 million gross tons passed through in the week to Janua-

Initial assessment by Research and Information System for Developing Countries will mean a 6.7% drop in exports

ry 3, compared with about 4 million tons at the start of last month, they said.

Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi militants have targeted vessels transiting through the Red Sea with missiles in recent weeks. The Houthis say they are going after any vessels that have a connection with Israel. For India, the Red Sea is a major route for shipping to Europe, the US east coast, the Middle East and African countries. BLOOMBERG

In China, Muizzu calls Beijing a valued ally

Beijing: Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, who arrived in China on his first state visit, Monday praised Beijing as a "valued ally and integral collaborator" of the Indian Ocean island nation and hailed the cooperation between the two countries. Muizzu's maiden visit to China has been marred by a diplomatic row with India, triggered by the derogatory remarks against PM Narendra Modi by some Maldivian ministers.

Muizzu, who is regarded as

"pro-China", met provincial officials in Fujian on the first day of his five-day visit.

While China is yet to release his official itinerary, the foreign ministry in Beijing said earlier that he is due to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping and sign several agreements. In his meeting with senior officials of the China Communications Construction



Company Limited which has done projects in the Maldives, Muizzu "underscored the significance of China as a valued

ally and an integral collaborator in the developmental journey of the Maldives", a press release issued by his office in Male said. He expressed aspirations to enhance bilateral relations to new heights and enhance collaborative efforts in various areas of mutual interest, the readout said.

Later he met Zhou Zuyi, secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China, Fujian Provincial Party unit.

Muizzu is due to hold talks with Chinese President Xi and sign several agreements to bolster the bilateral ties, accord-

ing to the Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin. "The relations between China and the Maldives now stand at a new historical starting point. We believe that through this visit, the two heads of state will provide strategic guidance for the bilateral relations to reach a new height," Wang told the media on January 5.

The Maldivian President's Office said that the Maldives and China will sign key agreements to enhance trade, professional development, and socioeconomic cooperation. ൩

Action on energy demand can save global economy \$2 tn a year: WEF

NEW DELHI, Jan 8 (PTI)

A SET of business actions aimed at reducing the intensity of energy demand can unlock annual savings of at least USD 2 trillion a year for the global economy if measures are taken by the end of this decade, a new WEF study showed on Monday.

These targeted practical actions can also boost growth and cut greenhouse gas emissions. Releasing the report ahead of its Annual Meeting in Davos from January 15-19, the World Economic Forum (WEF) said the right policy frameworks would unlock growth and productivity, save companies cash, deliver competitive advantage and reduce



WEF's Annual Meeting is in Davos from January 15-19

emissions.

The report was launched in collaboration with PwC and is supported by over 120 global CEOs who are members of the WEF's International Business Council (IBC), a group representing 3 per cent of global

energy use. In one of the most widely supported initiatives at UN climate change conference COP28, Governments pledged to triple the world's renewable energy capacity by 2030 and double the rate of energy efficiency improvement over the same period.

Countries need to cut their energy intensity at least twice as fast between 2023 and 2030 as they did in previous years, which calls for substantial changes from the private sector. Underlining the practical actions that businesses can take to act on energy demand, the WEF said these would be driven by energy-intensity reductions in buildings, industry and transport.

Gzb to become Gajnagar or Harnandi Nagar?

Ghaziabad: Circulating for some time as a demand by Hindu outfits, the civic body has put renaming of Ghaziabad on the board meeting agenda for the first time on Tuesday. On the table are two options — 'Gajnagar' and 'Harnandi Nagar', reports **Abhijay Jha**.

The proposal to rename the NCR district was tabled by a BJP councillor on Monday and inducted into the agenda, with the mood believed to be turning in its favour.

Mayor Sunita Dayal said once the board clears the pro-

FOUNDED IN 1740

- Calls to rename Ghaziabad given by Hindu outfits for long. Demand grew louder after **Allahabad's name change**
- Named after **Ghazi-ud-din**, Mughal emperor Mohd Shah's vazir, who **founded city in 1740**
- Proposed names either inspired by **Mahabharata** or the claimed ancient name of **river Hindon, Harnandi**

posal, it will be sent to the state government and then the Centre for final approval.

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