

Houses torched, shots fired in Manipur's Ukhrul, internet services suspended



IMPHAL, Feb 10 (PTI)

IN A fresh bout of violence over the alleged assault of a Tangkhul Naga community member in Manipur's Ukhrul, several abandoned houses were set on fire and shots fired on Tuesday morning, prompting the State Government to suspend internet services in the district for 5 days. The fresh firing and arson in Litan Sareikhong area comes a day after two Tangkhul Naga organisations restricted the movement of Kukis in Ukhrul and Kamjong districts.

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Govt-Oppn logjam ends

LS takes up discussion on Budget



Lok Sabha proceedings underway during the Budget Session, in New Delhi on Tuesday. (Sansad TV/ANI)

NEW DELHI, Feb 10 (PTI)

SIGNALLING the end of the gridlock between treasury and Opposition benches, the Lok Sabha on Tuesday

afternoon took up a discussion on the Union Budget, which had been held up for days over the Opposition's demand that Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi be allowed to speak on

a variety of issues.

When the House assembled at 2 pm after two adjournments, Krishna Prasad Tenneti, who was in the Chair, asked Congress member Shashi Tharoor to initiate the debate and the Thiruvananthapuram MP started speaking on the issue.

The thaw came soon after Opposition parties submitted a notice to bring a resolution to remove Om Birla as Speaker of the Lok Sabha. Since February 2, the Lok Sabha has witnessed unruly scenes and repeated disruptions that led to the suspension of seven Congress members and one CPI(M) member for the rest of the Budget session. Apprehending unpleasant scenes, Birla requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to attend the House last week when he was to respond to the Motion of Thanks to President's address.

Japan to pick Prime Minister on February 18 after election

TOKYO, Feb 10 (IANS)

JAPAN will convene a special parliamentary session on February 18 to choose the Prime Minister following Sunday's House of Representatives election, local media reported on Tuesday.

According to Jiji Press, the Japanese Constitution stipulates that an extraordinary Diet session must be convened within 30 days after a House of Representatives election to designate a Prime Minister. On the opening day of the session, the incumbent Cabinet will collectively resign. The newly-elected House of Representatives and the current House of Councillors will then vote separately to designate a new Prime Minister, who will subsequently form a new Cabinet.

In the prime ministerial designation election, a candidate who secures a majority in the first round of voting in each chamber wins outright. If no candidate obtains a majority, the top two vote-getters advance to a runoff, with the winner decided by a simple majority. If the two chambers designate different candidates and fail to agree after consultations, the Constitution stipulates that the decision of the powerful House of Representatives shall prevail.

Given that the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) currently holds more than two-thirds of the seats in the Lower House, Japanese media believe that LDP President and Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is all but assured of victory in the designation election, Xinhua news agency reported. Following Sunday's Lower House election, Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) gained a significant boost in seats and secured a two-thirds majority alone in the House of Representatives.

India designated 'Country of the Year' at Germany's BIOFACH 2026

NEW DELHI, Feb 10 (IANS)

INDIA has been designated as the 'Country of the Year' at 'BIOFACH 2026', the world's leading trade fair for organic products, scheduled to be held from February 10-13 at Nuremberg in Germany, according to an official statement issued on Tuesday.

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is organising India's participation at 'BIOFACH 2026' with a prominent and high-impact presence.

India's participation marks a significant scale-up compared to previous editions, reflecting the expanding footprint of Indian organic exports, increased global demand for organic products, and growing participation from exporters, associations, and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), the statement said.

The India Country Pavilion, set up by APEDA, will span an area of 1,074 square metres and will feature 67 co-exhibitors, including exporters of organic products, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), cooperatives, organic laboratories, state Government organisations, and commodity boards.

The pavilion will showcase a wide range of organic products such as rice, oilseeds, herbs, spices, pulses, cashew, ginger, turmeric, large cardamom, cinnamon, mango puree, and essential oils, among others, the statement explained.

Exhibitors from more than 20 states and



union territories are participating in the India Pavilion, reflecting the country's vast agricultural and regional diversity. These include Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Delhi, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Uttarakhand.

The participation highlights region-specific organic produce and value-added food products, demonstrating India's year-on-year expansion in international organic trade engagement.

In addition to product displays, visitors to the India Pavilion will be offered curated food tastings showcasing the flavours and aromas of Indian organic products. Live sampling of aromatic biryani prepared using premium organic basmati rice and spices will be organised. Further, five GI-tagged rice varieties, namely Indrayani rice, Navara rice, Gobindbhog rice, Red rice, and Chak Hao (Black rice), will be served to visitors to highlight India's heritage rice varieties.

MoD may clear deal this week to buy 114 Rafale fighter jets from France

NEW DELHI, Feb 10 (IANS)

THE Defence Ministry is likely to approve a Rs 3.25 lakh crore deal this week to buy 114 Rafale fighter jets from France for the Indian Air Force, according to reliable sources.

The clearance is scheduled to take place ahead of French President Emmanuel Macron's forthcoming official visit to Delhi.

After the Defence Ministry's approval, the deal will eventually need clearance from the Cabinet Committee on Security chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. According to the proposal, India will purchase 18 off-the-shelf Rafales from French



defence giant Dassault Aviation, while the remaining 96 fighter jets will be 'made in India'. Some of these jets will be twin-seater aircraft to be used for training. The deal will involve the transfer of state-of-art fighter jet technology and a strategic partnership to give a fillip to the 'Make in India' programme.

The Indian Air Force already has 36 Rafales in its fleet, comprising two squadrons, with the

last delivery of the 'C' variant taking place in December 2024. Another 26 Rafale jets of the 'M' version, have also been ordered for the Indian Navy in a deal worth Rs 63,000 crore. The naval variants will be operated from the aircraft carriers INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya.

That deal includes facilitation of fleet maintenance, logistics support, and personnel training under a MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul) agreement.

The Rafale jets were successfully used in Operation Sindoor to hit precision targets in Pakistan, as part of India's military response to the Pahalgam terror attack in May last year.

Pakistani forces enter Balochistan with tanks

QUETTA, Feb 10 (IANS)

PAKISTANI security forces entered Balochistan's Nushki with tanks and armoured vehicles, intensifying security measures, days after the deadly clashes with Baloch rebels, local media reported.

As operations continued, Pakistani authorities imposed a curfew across the town, directing shops to remain closed and instructing residents to stay indoors.

Citing local sources, The Balochistan Post reported that Pakistani security forces demolished the ancestral home of Bashir Zeb Baloch, identified as the leader of the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), in Nushki amid an ongoing curfew and security operation.

The demolition took place in the Ahmed Wal area, where Pakistani forces destroyed Bashir

Zeb Baloch's house using explosives amid broader security operations across different parts of Nushki.

The developments followed the BLA's launch of the second phase of 'Operation Herof' on January 31, during which it claimed to have taken control of Nushki, along with other areas. The group stated that it retained control of the town for six days before declaring the end of the operation.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday, sharing a video of a Pakistani tank entering the area on his social media platform X, leading Baloch human rights defender, Mir Yar Baloch, accused Pakistani occupying forces of launching attacks using tanks, drones, air strikes, and heavy artillery against the Baloch civilians and destroying villages across the Ahmedwal region in Nushki.