

Excavation for rail tunnel completed

The Kashmir rail link project took a significant leap with the completion of excavation work for the 11-km long railway tunnel connecting Banihal town with Qazigund in south Kashmir, underneath the rugged Pir Panjal Mountains, is the longest tunnel in India.

Sea levels not rising: Swedish scientist

Contrary to prevailing scientific opinion, a Climate Change conference organized by the University of Mumbai and the Liberty Institute, New Delhi, and INSTUCEN India study centre has claimed that the sea levels were not rising and carbon dioxide did not pose a special threat to the climate. Sea levels in the Indian Ocean were not rising and cities like Mumbai, islands like Maldives or Tuvalu would not be affected at all. Professor Nils-Axel Morner, a retired professor from Stockholm University, who enlightened a large group of appreciative students and professors on the perils of the estimates of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The one-day conference, "Shifting science and changing policy," was hosted by the Centre for Extra Mural Studies at Mumbai University.

Satellite in good health

The Megha-Tropiques satellite, put in orbit by the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C18) on October 12, is in good health and its four scientific instruments have been energized. The satellite is a joint contribution from India and France to the global scientific community engaged in research on climate and weather systems that affect the daily life of humanity the world over and particularly in the tropical region, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said. Three co-passenger satellites, the SRMSat from the SRM University, near Chennai, the Jugnu from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and the Vesselsat-1 from Luxembourg were put in orbit by the PSLV-C18. The user-institutions have confirmed establishing contact with their satellites.

Report on wage boards sent to PMO

As the Supreme Court has once again said that the Union Cabinet is free to take up the Justice G.R. Majithia Wage Boards for journalists and non-journalists of newspapers and news agencies notwithstanding a petition challenging the recommendations, the Labour Ministry has sent a detailed report to the Cabinet Secretariat and the Prime Minister's Office with the court's observations and the wage boards' recommendations. Informed sources replied in the negative when asked whether any deletions or additions had been made to the Boards' final reports. "Probably, they may take it up in the next Cabinet meeting and prior to that the Cabinet Secretariat and the PMO might scrutinize the recommendations and the Supreme Court's observation in detail," said a senior official.

Shimla symposium on making chemistry creative

Himachal Pradesh University and the University Grants Commission are jointly organizing a two-day national symposium on "Chemistry innovations for human well-being" from October 21. The year 2011 has been proclaimed the International Year of Chemistry by the United Nations. Notably, the IYC 2011 coincides with the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry awarded to Marie Curie. The keynote address will be delivered by Dr. D. K. Tuli, an alumnus of the University's chemistry department and at present Research and Development General Manager for the Indian Oil Corporation in Faridabad.

Shram awards for four

Four employees of Hindustan Zinc received the Prime Minister's Shram Award for the year 2009 in the workmen category for their exemplary performance record and high order of devotion to duty. The Prime Minister's Shram Bhushan Award carries a ' *Sanad*' and a cash award of Rs. 1 lakh and the Prime Minister's Shram Veer Award carries a cash award of Rs. 60,000. The recipients are fitter Bhura Lal Nagda, assistant foremen Jagdish Chandra Jat, Dal Chand Lohar and Mahendra Kumar Soni, who is also an assistant foreman in ore dressing. The awards were given away by Union Minister of Labour and Employment Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan.

Rural, urban health missions may be merged in 13th Plan

The Centre proposes to merge the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) and the yet-to-be-launched National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) during the 13th Five-Year-Plan period. The two ambitious projects will, however, remain separate entities in the coming 12th Plan period. In its proposals to the Planning Commission, the Health and Family Welfare Ministry has said the NUHM will be taken up as a thrust area of the 12th Plan and launched as a separate mission with focus on slums and the urban poor. It will cover all cities and towns with a population of more than 50,000 — broadly 779 cities and towns including the mega cities of Mumbai, New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Ahmadabad. The NRHM was launched in 2005 and is proposed to be extended by five years.

Nod for ordinance to phase out analogue cable TV by 2014

Analogue cable television will become obsolete in India in three years' time with the government deciding to promulgate an ordinance to make the digitalization of cable services mandatory by 2014. The Union Cabinet approved the Information and Broadcasting Ministry's proposal to promulgate the Digitalization of Analogue Cable Systems Ordinance. The shift would mean that all customers must have a set top box whether they want to receive free-to-air or pay channels. They will be able to watch high quality channels of their choice on an a la carte basis, and are likely to have access to internet and telephone through the same digital cable. Broadcasters may be able to generate more revenue directly from subscribers, and thus reduce their dependence on TRPs and advertisers.

Celebrating World Post Day

Workers of the Department of Post & Telegraph celebrated World Post Day at the General Post Office in Kolkata on October 14. The department observed a National Postal Week from October 9 to 14. The GPO building with a rotunda was designed by Walter B. Grenville in 1864.

Russian honors for Delhi airport

The Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) received the "Golden Chariot" Russian Transport Public award earlier this month at the World Routes Forum in Berlin. Speaking about the award, DIAL CEO I. Prabhakara Rao said: "The Golden Chariot is recognition for Delhi's Terminal-3, our team and for the spirit that continues to make Delhi International Airport India's first Hub Airport." Delhi Airport shared the honor with Novosibirsk International Airport Tolmachevo (Russian Federation). The project has been supported by the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, the Government of the Russian Federation, the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation and transport associations, guilds and trade unions.

Vice-President beckons Turkish investors

With bilateral trade set to surpass the \$5-billion mark two years ahead of schedule, Vice-President Hamid Ansari has urged Turkish businesspersons to explore the opportunity in infrastructure development being planned by India. Turkey prided itself on having some top companies in infrastructure. And India earmarked \$1trillion for infrastructure development over five years from 2012, offering an opportunity for investment, Mr. Ansari said, addressing the Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkey (TUSKON).

Wozniak in line for iPhone

Steve Wozniak expressed his fondness for fellow Apple co-founder Steve Jobs early in a way many gadget lovers can relate to — by camping out overnight for the latest iPhone. Television station NBC11 is reporting that Mr. Wozniak was first in line when he showed up at the Apple store in Los Gatos. The iPhone 4S went on sale worldwide, the company's first new release since the death of Jobs last week, and a jovial atmosphere pervaded most Apple stores from Australia to Tokyo to Europe as thousands waited in line for the gadgets. The latest iPhone hits stores after already breaking a record on first-day pre-orders. Mr. Wozniak, now 61, founded Apple with Jobs in 1976. Last week Mr. Wozniak said he was “dumbfounded” by the news of his friend's death.

China backs Nalanda project

China has reiterated its backing to the initiative to rebuild the Nalanda university, even as the Governing Board of the proposed university held a board meeting and discussed the university's future with the Chinese leadership. The Governing Board, led by Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, was invited to hold a board meeting in China by Premier Wen Jiabao following last year's meeting of the East Asia Summit, which had earlier declared its support to the project. China has already announced it would donate \$1 million to the project.

Uniform KYC Regulation norms by month-end

Market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is planning to come out by this month-end norms for setting up a uniform Know Your Customer (KYC) Regulation Authority. That will ease the burden alike on the intermediaries as well as the common man, seeking to make investments. SEBI Chairman U. K. Sinha said that the regulator was encouraging the setting up of KYC Registration Agencies. Indications were that licenses would be given for setting up these agencies which would receive KYC applications and give out a number that would go to a common date base and could be used by the consumer whenever he is required to fulfill KYC requirement.

India to host World Steel Conference next year

In an indication of India's emerging importance on the world steel map and massive growth it is poised for in this sector, India has been awarded the right to hold the World Steel Conference in October next. The governing body of the World Steel Association, representing 170 producers and accounting for 85 per cent of world steel production, has decided to give the rights to hold the World Steel Conference in India from October 8 to 12 next year.

For pesky calls, Vodafone fines telemarketing firms

Mobile operator Vodafone has penalised telemarketing companies for making unsolicited calls to its subscribers, and deposited Rs.50,000 with the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) collected as fine. This is the first such instance since the new regulations on telemarketing calls came into force last month. On September 27, the TRAI enforced 'The Telecom Commercial Communications Customer Preference Regulations.' Violators could be penalized up to Rs.2.5 lakh, while habitual offenders would be blacklisted.

Panel to look into relocating NTPC's Jharkhand unit

The Union Government has constituted a three-member panel headed by Planning Commission member, B. K. Chaturvedi to look into proposed relocation of NTPC's 1,980-MW North Karanpura plant in Jharkhand. The development comes after a Group of Ministers (GoM) on Coal, headed by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, at its meeting last month, decided to refer the North Karanpura power project issue to the B.K. Chaturvedi Committee. The three-member panel, which includes Coal Secretary Alok Perti and Power Secretary P. Uma Shankar, will submit its report within a month from the day of its formation.

Father of C programming language passes away

Dennis Ritchie, a computer czar who wrote the popular C programming language and helped develop the UNIX operating system, has died. Ritchie, 70, was found dead at his home in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey. Ritchie, who lived alone, was in frail health in recent years after treatment for prostate cancer and heart disease. Ritchie is best known for his contributions to computer programming and software.

Escorts unveils new tractors in Tamil Nadu

Escorts, a leading tractor manufacturer, unveiled its 'Jai Kisan Series' of tractors in Tamil Nadu. Presently available across all Escorts network in Tamil Nadu, the new series will come in five new categories — ValueMaxx, LoadMaxx, AgMaxx, InfraMaxx and SuperMaxx — in the 25 HP to 60 HP range and at price range from Rs. 3.1 lakh onwards.

Dhoni, Raina star in India's big win

An elusive Indian dream became a reality at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium. Since the tie in a World Cup match at Bangalore in February, M.S. Dhoni's men have found in England, an impregnable rival. The ghosts of the immediate past were finally laid to rest at least for now as India defeated England by 126 runs in the opening One-Day International to go 1-0 up in the five-match series. Chasing India's 300 for seven in 50 overs, England mustered 174 in 36.1 overs.

IPL V from April 4

The chairman of the Governing Council of the Indian Premier League Rajiv Shukla, told the media that the issue of Pakistani players' participation in the IPL had not yet been finalized. The dates of the DLF IPL 2012 were confirmed and the event will begin in Chennai from April 4 with an inaugural ceremony a day before the first match, and end on May 27.