



## India to contribute 1.5 Million tonnes of grains to SAARC Food Bank

NEW DELHI: India will contribute 1.53 million tonnes of food grains, the highest by a donor to be given for the SAARC Food Bank proposed by Bangladesh. The Bank aims at food and nutrition security of more than 150 crore people of the region. A meeting of Bangladesh's government chaired by Chief Adviser Dr Fakhruddin Ahmed took the decision this month. The food bank will start with a reserve of over 2 lakh 41, thousand tonnes of food grains.



**Hollywood Actress Ashley Judd at a Press conference in Jaipur.**

## Mizoram Bans Poultry from Myanmar.

AIZWAL: Mizoram has banned the entry of all Myanmarese livestock into India following reports of outbreak of bird-flu in Myanmar. About 70 per cent of the livestock meant for the state comes from Myanmar. The police and veterinary officials are keeping a strict vigil at Zokhawthar border, a trade point on Mizoram's side, to prevent trade of animals and birds from the India's neighbouring country.

## High Court pulls up Maharashtra for stopping Rabies Vaccine.

MUMBAI: The High Court in Mumbai took the Maharashtra government to task this month for not explaining as to why the Haffkine Institute was told to stop production of anti-rabies vaccine. The court, on a PIL on the issue of stray dogs, filed by an NGO had earlier, sought clarification from the authorities. The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai said they had never asked Haffkine to stop production. The court ordered the state government to inform the steps taken by it for making the vaccine available at cheap rates. The MCGM said a single dose that cost of Rs 30 earlier, is now available only for Rs 275.

## Tsunami Insurance Scheme announced

NEWDELHI: Finance Minister Mr. P. Chidambaram this week formally launched the Centre sponsored Health Insurance Scheme for tsunami affected families in four southern states and the Union Territory of Puducherry. Under the Tsunami Jan Bima Yojana Scheme, the Centre will pay the yearly premium of 800 rupees per family to provide an insurance cover upto 30,000 rupees to meet medical expenses. The policy will also cover death or permanent disability up to 25,000 rupees to the head of the family. The scheme, that costs the Centre 36 crore rupees per annum, will benefit over 4 lakh 58 thousand families. Mr. Chidambaram has urged the

Tamil Nadu government to utilise 5,000 crore rupees provided by the Centre for the rehabilitation of tsunami affected families.

## Millions of tiny tots given Anti-Polio Drops

NEW DELHI: Millions of tiny tots were administered polio vaccine across the country today as part of a nationwide drive to eradicate polio. The drive was organised in the entire state of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Gujarat, Punjab and selected districts of Assam ( Cachar, Hailakandi, Karimganj, Dibrugarh and Tinsukhia), Jammu and Kashmir (Jammu, Kathua, Rajouri and Udhampur),

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## Prof. Wangari Mutta Mattai wins Nehru Award.

NEW DELHI: Kenyan Nobel Laureate Prof Wangari Muta Maathai has been conferred with the prestigious Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for her outstanding contribution to environment conservation. President Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam presented the award for the year 2005 to Prof. Maathai at Rashtrapati Bhavan this month. She is the first African woman to receive the award



**Prof. Wangari with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh**

and to join the select group of Nehru Awardees including Martin Luther King, Junior, Mother Teresa, Indira Gandhi

and Dr. Nelson Mandela. Prof. Maathai is a leader in the movement for environment protection in Africa and the world. After Receiving the Award, Prof Maathai said that she was inspired by great men like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru throughout her life to work towards human rights and development of people. Showering laurels on her, Dr. Kalam said, India values Prof. Maathai's involvement and her contribution to strengthen the relationship between Kenya and India.

## Centre sanctions 58.65 Lakh for Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana in Sagar District

The Ministry of Rural Development has sanctioned Grants-in-aid amounting to Rs.58.65 lakh as restoration of second instalment to Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh. It has been given as central assistance for implementation of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana during the current financial year of 2006-07. The grant is towards plan expenditure and will be utilized for approved items of works subject to the conditions laid down in the SGRY Guidelines. The expenditure on implementation of the program with regard to cash component is to be shared on 75 : 25 percent basis between the Central and the State respectively. The

Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to provide additional wage employment to rural areas for food security, creation of durable community assets and socio-economic infrastructure in the rural areas.

## Renowned Educationist Ram Prakash Gupta Dead.

NEW DELHI: Renowned educationist and member of the first elected Metropolitan Council for Delhi Ram Prakash Gupta died in New Delhi, last week of cardiac arrest. He was 81. He was the president of Bhartiya Blind

School, Delhi and was closely associated with many social and religious NGOs. Gupta, a Jan Sangh member, was the President of All India Federation of Teacher's Organisation and was the General secretary of Delhi School Teachers Association.



## Poverty a blot on Civilisation, Bhairon Singh Shekawat.

NEWDELHI: The Vice President of India, Shri Bhairon Singh Shekawat said poverty is a blot on any civilized society. He said the Supreme Court has expanded the content and contour of the expression of life in our Constitution and ruled that the right to life implies the right to live with human dignity. This he said encompasses within its ambit, the bare necessities of life including health and sanitation, clothing and shelter, protection and preservation of environment free from pollution of air and water. He said, the State has the obligation to provide a decent standard of living to the indigent and downtrodden segments of our society. Shri Shekawat released the book "Poverty and



**Bollywood actresses Shilpa Shetty and Kangana Ranaut at the music release of Anurag Basu in Mumbai.**

Hunger: Causes and Consequences" by Dr. Ratan Das, an eminent Gandhian and Sarvodaya leader. Speaking on the occasion Shekawat said success of poverty alleviation is intimately interlinked with quality of public governance.

## Nation wide Polio Drive

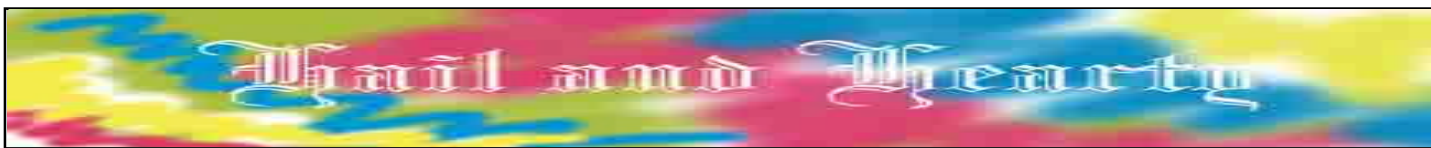
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Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand and West Bengal. Around 30,000 workers and employees of the Health Department were pressed into service from 0900 hrs to 1600 hrs in the Capital to ensure maximum reach of the polio immunisation drive among children below five years. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Bhuvan Chandra Khanduri visited the Doon Hospital to administer polio drops to children. Governor Sudarshan Agarwal initiated the Polio Eradication Campaign in parts of Uttarakhand by administering polio drops to children below five years age at the Raj Bhavan. The Governor said in year 2006, 676 cases of polio were detected in the country. This year, alone 15 cases have been detected so far— seven in Bihar, four in Uttar Pradesh, two in Andhra Pradesh and one each in Haryana and Maharashtra. In Varanasi, film personality Farooq Sheikh, as UNICEF goodwill ambassador, took part in the anti- Polio drive aimed at eradicating the crippling polio virus. Children upto the age of five years were administered anti-polio drops in Madhya Pradesh's Betul, Gwalior, and Bhind.

## Medha Patkar detained for protests against privatisation of Water.

Social Activist Medha Patkar and her supporters were detained, while they were trying to meet officials of the Planning Commission in the capital. About 50 Narmada Bachao Andolan activists carrying earthen pitchers on their heads wanted to submit a memorandum on the occa-

sion of the World Water Day. No privatisation of water resources, moratorium on construction of dams, scrapping the project of interlinking of rivers are some of the demands listed in the memorandum. Ms. Patkar and her supporters were later released by the police.



**A FULL LIT VIEW OF THE PRESIDENT HOUSE**

**National Commission for Women Calls for ending atrocities against mentally ill Women.**

NEW DELHI: The Chairperson of the National Commission for Women Ms. Girija Vyas has called for efforts to end the violation of human rights of mentally ill women. Speaking at a two day seminar in the capital she said the existing laws should be strictly enforced and lacunaes in the statutes be amended to ensure mentally ill women get legal protection. Ms. Vyas said more rehabilitation centres, after-care and half-way homes should be set up in the country to ensure that no mentally ill woman is left uncared for, not even in the remote areas. Speaking at the seminar, the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Mrs. Meira Kumar said her ministry has established 10 half-way homes in the country and is encouraging NGOs to work in this area.

She said there are 11 lakh people in the country with mental illness of whom 3.5 lakh are women and 2.5 lakh women are in the rural areas. The Seminar was inaugurated by President Kalam.

**Scribes honoured**

Delhi-based NGO HIV and Human Development and Resource Network awarded journalists for their coverage of human trafficking and HIV related issues. Addressing the function Chief Editor of Marathi daily Loksatta Mr. Kumar Ketkar said, People living with HIV/AIDS are treated as if they have a limited life and. we forget that all of us have limited lives. In his address, V S Chandrasekar, Executive Editor of the Press Trust of India, said the news agency gave deserved coverage for social issues.

**Relief Package for 2002 Gujarat riot victims**

The Centre has announced a comprehensive relief and rehabilitation package for all the victims of the 2002 Gujarat riots. The package was approved by the Union Cabinet at its meeting in the second week of this month. The Union Cabinet has decided to provide ex gratia assistance for a total of Rs 3.5 lakh to the next of kin of deceased in addition to the amount already paid by the State government. In case of injury, ex gratia of Rs 1.25 lakh minus the amount already paid has been approved. Similarly, damage to residential and commercial property would be compensated with ex gratia ten times the amount given by the State Government minus the amount already paid. This package is similar to that provided to the 1984 anti-Sikh riot victims. The approval has been, further, enlarged to include those who have died, suffered injuries etc., but who have not received any assistance from the State government. The anticipated expenditure would be a sum of Rs 106 crore.

The awardees were given a citation and Rs 25,000 in cash. The ceremony also saw the unveiling of a statement of commitment to highlight social issues by the media.