

NEWS WRAP**AGD**

THE WEST BENGAL STATE Government had planned the recruitment of 10,000 jungle-mahal youths, in West Midnapore / Purulia / Bankura districts, as special constables to be deployed in the Naxal- infested areas. Despite Maoist threats, advertisements were published in Bengali daily newspapers, inviting applications for the posts. The state police administration in the three districts, received thousands of application forms. The recruitment process has been kept in abeyance, after the Union Ministry of Home objected to the recruitment process, as jobs cannot be created for a particular region.

The Union Ministry of Home is providing six new helicopters and more CRPF troops for anti-Maoist operations. Six MI-17 or equivalent helicopters, hired on wet lease for anti-Naxal operations, would be fully armoured. The copters would assist deployment, reinforcements and evacuation of casualty of troops, in countering Maoist operations. The present strength of nine helicopters is being operated in Chattisgarh and Jharkhand by the BSF. Five more CRPF battalions, each battalion of 1000 personnel, are being deployed for anti-Naxal duties, raising the total to 76 CRPF battalions. 10 battalions of BSF and five of ITBP are also operational in the war against Maoists. For the purpose of strengthening of fortified police stations, Rs 1000 crore has been sanctioned, in the “Left Wing Extremism” states.

CELLPHONE TOWERS RADIATION

Standard government norms stipulate that cellphone towers should not be installed in a radius of five metres from a building and the radiation level should be limited to 4 to 7 watt per square metre. Before erecting such towers in Kolkata, any mobile service provider has to first obtain a ‘no-objection’ certificate from the local civic body, and the consent of the building where the tower is set up. R G Kar Government Hospital in Kolkata caters to about 1400 indoor patients. The School of Nursing in the hospital compound, provides residence to 240 nursing students. The 100-year-old hospital is severely exposed to radiation, emanated by cellphone towers, situated in and around the hospital. The continuous exposure to radiation can cause cancer, brain tumour and benign tumours.

UNTREATED SEWAGE

Chennai faces the problem of letting out sweage into waterways. The Storm Water Drains (SWD) maintained by Chennai Corporation are estimated to carry around 10 million litres of sewage a day. People have connected sewage into SWD at many places like T Nagar, Korukkupet and Thiruvanmiyur, resulting in mosquito breeding, damage to the environment, and adverse effects of the sewage on the ground water. Nearly 60% of the estimated 55 million litres of untreated sewage is being let into the Buckingham Canal, which makes it the

most polluted of the three major waterways in Chennai. About 30% of the untreated sewage falls into the Cooum river, and the rest gets into the Adyar river.

INDIAN DAIRY WORKERS IN ITALY

Since the last twenty years, Indian immigrants from Punjab have been settling in the province of Cremona in Italy, along the vast tract of the Po Valley. The Indians, a large number being Sikhs, first arrived in the area, when the generation of dairy workers took to retirement with no intake or substitutes in sight. The Indian immigrants settled in Italy's agricultural heartland to work primarily on farms, often as 'bergamini' dairy workers. Even though the dairy industry is hugely mechanized, human labour is still necessary. When the young Italian people of Po Valley were disinclined to work with cows, the Indian immigrants saved the economy. Cremona produces one million tons of milk per year, about a tenth of all milk produced in Italy. Possessing knowledge of cows and dairy farming, the Indian immigrants proved indispensable for dairy farming in dairy land. In August 2011, Gurdwara Sri Guru Kalgidhar Sahib, a Sikh temple designed to hold 600 comfortably, was inaugurated in Cremona. Many of the Indian immigrants have become Italian citizens, purchased homes and settled their families. About 40% of all Indian immigrants to Italy are women, but only a small percentage have jobs. □□□