

City Monitoring Report - 7th January, 2010

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Delhi City Monitoring

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Law and Order

Fog engulfs Delhi; flights hit

Delhi is covered in a thick blanket of fog this morning. With visibility reduced to a few meters in many areas, commuters are having a hard time making their way to their destinations.

The Met office had warned of thick fog in the capital from mid-week. A foggy morning brings in bad news for travellers as 34 flights have been hit with runway visibility dropping down to barely 50 meters.

The sectors affected are Delhi-Amritsar, Delhi-Leh, Delhi- Bangalore, Jaipur-Mumbai, Delhi-Lucknow, Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Ahmedabad, and Guwahati-Imphal. International flights have also been severely affected. Seven incoming international flights from Singapore, Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, London, Istanbul, Tehran and Beijing along with eight outgoing international flights have been delayed.

Not just flights but trains have also been hit due to fog in the Capital. Six trains have been cancelled and 46 others have been delayed. Some of the trains running late are Lucknow Shatabdi, Bhopal Shatabdi, Shaan-e-Punjab Express, Shiv Ganga Express, Punjab Mail and Toofan Express.

Extortionist seeking Rs 50 lakh held

With the arrest of one Arif Khan, alias Haplu, (23), a native of Farukabad in UP presently putting up in Jamia Nagar, the south district police has claimed to have solved an extortion case wherein Rs 50 lakh were demanded from a Lajpat Nagar-based garment exporter.

A complaint in this regard was lodged by one Habibul Hassan, a resident of Daya Nand Colony in Lajpat Nagar, who deals in garment export and owns a factory in Manihari Street, Farukhabad, by the name Ethnic Craft Art.

On December 22, Hassan received an extortion call demanding Rs 50 lakh. The caller threatened to kill him if his demand was not fulfilled. In order to create panic, the accused threw pieces of chicken in front of Hassan's house in Farukhabad and threatened that next time he would cut an arm of one of his relatives and send it to his house if he did not get the money.

Health

3 more swine flu deaths in Delhi

The city death toll of Influenza A (H1N1) has reached 76, with reports of three more persons succumbing to the virus being confirmed today by the city health department. The Capital yesterday received 13 new cases of the contagious flu, pushing the cumulative tally to 9,508 and of these one is a child.

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Anand Vihar line opens for public today

Over 60,000 residents of east Delhi are expected to switch to Delhi Metro's new Yamuna Bank-Anand Vihar stretch for their daily commute from Thursday when the line will be thrown open to the public.

The stretch was flagged off by Union urban development minister Jaipal Reddy and chief minister Shiela Dikshit on Wednesday. This is the first Metro line to open this year. But from now on, a new Metro line will open every other month till September. Delhi Metro Rail

Corporation (DMRC) managing director E Sreedharan said the Inderlok-Mundka stretch will open next month.

From 6 am on Thursday, alternate trains from Dwarka will head for Anand Vihar and Noida City Centre respectively. The Metro station at Yamuna Bank will serve as an important interchange between the two lines, which are an extension of the existing Line 3. The 6.25 km-long Anand Vihar-Yamuna Bank stretch runs fully elevated along Vikas Marg which has a traffic volume of over 1.5 lakh vehicles daily. It is expected to take a considerable load off traffic on the main road as it passes through densely-populated residential and commercial areas.

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Threat call to blow up CST sends policemen in a tizzy

Security at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST) was beefed up since Wednesday morning following a threat call received by the Mumbai police's main control. The caller threatened to blow up six important places in Mumbai, including CST.

The police main control received a telephone call around 6.35am on Wednesday. The caller, speaking in Hindi, said that they had reached Mumbai on Wednesday morning and plan to blow up five important places in the city, including CST. The caller said that they would blow up CST around 12.20pm on Wednesday. Then the caller hung up.

The ATS, Mumbai is investigating the case. Preliminary investigations revealed that the threat call was made from the mobile phone of Iftikar Sayyed, a resident of Jacob Circle in Agripada. However, Iftikar's mobile was stolen by someone a couple of days ago. Iftikar had registered a case of theft at the Azad Maidan police station.

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Airtel advisory for mobile users

Airtel has issued advisory cautioning mobile users of a new fraud in which callers trick customers into parting with personal information or money. Typically, the customer receives a missed call from a number starting with +92.

Upon returning the missed call (with the indicated country code) the unsuspecting customer reaches a fraudster pretending to be representative of Airtel or another mobile operator and informs the customer of having won an operator-sponsored lottery.

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Fake documents used to cheat banks

The Chandra Layout police have arrested two persons allegedly involved in cheating various banks of Rs. 5.53 crore taken as loans with fake property documents as collateral.

Shankar (46) of Nagasandra and Srinath V. (33) of Venkatagiriappa Layout took loans from the Syndicate Bank, the State Bank of Patiala, the Union Bank, the State Bank of Hyderabad and Sir M. Visvesvaraya Cooperative Bank. Shankar convinced Jayalakshamma of Rajajinagar to part with her property documents promising her a loan to construct a building on Commercial Street. He had similarly obtained documents related to properties in Mico Layout, Yeshwantapur, Doddabidarakallu and Nagasandra and then used Srinath's press to duplicate the documents, which he then palmed off to the banks to get loans. Shankar made similar forgery cases against him in Chandra Layout, Ulsoor Gate and Shankara Math police stations while the CBI had filed a charge-sheet against him for cheating a bank.

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Five more districts listed as naxal-affected

Five more districts — Adilabad, Karimnagar, Warangal, Kurnool and Chittoor – have been added to the list of those affected by extremist activity for the purpose of seeking Central funds for development of roads.

A similar request for Central funds to improve roads citing Left wing extremism was earlier made in respect of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam and East Godavari districts. However, in the case of Khammam, work has begun following sanction of funds by the Centre in response to an earlier plea.

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Swine flu toll rises to 158 in Pune

The swine flu toll in the city rose to 158 with four more deaths reported in last two days, the victims included two children and a 50 year old woman who succumbed to H1N1 virus in different hospitals in Pune.

Out of 27 patients undergoing treatment in ICUs, eight of them were stated to be in a critical condition.

There had been a marked spurt in the number of suspected cases being screened at various centres set up in the city with the onset of winter, officials added.

Pune recorded the country's first swine flu fatality on August 3 when a 14-year-old school girl died in a private hospital.

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Thieves strike at four shops

Thieves decamped with cash and items worth lakhs of rupees from four shops in Phase V. Suresh Kumar, a municipal councillor, said thieves had struck at his shop and that of his brother and taken away kiriyana items worth lakhs of rupees. Two more shops in the vicinity were also targeted. He said the crime came to his notice around 6 am when his son came to open the shop and found the locks broken.

The police was then informed in this regard. Suresh said around 2.30 am chowkidar of the area, Raju, was taken away by some persons in their car and let off around 6 am near Ranbaxy Laboratories in Phase I. Thieves had taken away Rs 75,000 from the third shop apart from boxes of dry fruit and cosmetic items. Locks of the shop of a samosa specialist were also found broken.

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Srinagar terror strike: Encounter continues for second day

Security forces are still locked in a fierce gunbattle with two terrorists in the heart of Srinagar, over 19 hours after it began.

The encounter has entered a critical phase; police are preparing for a final assault as two terrorists are still holed up in the hotel.

The encounter, which began on Wednesday afternoon, continued through the night. One policeman and a civilian have been killed and nine others are injured.

The two terrorists are holed up in the hotel adjacent to the historic Amira Kadal Bridge in the Lal Chowk area. Police have been able to identify them as a local, Usman, and a Pakistani. At least 600 people have been evacuated from the neighbouring buildings.

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Law & Order

Ulfa chief emails blueprint of terror

One note from the Ulfa ‘commander-in-chief’, and all hopes of starting a peace process with the banned outfit have come crashing down.

On Wednesday, the elusive Paresh Baruah emailed a long list of ‘‘new policy and directives’’ for the outfit to follow. These include intensification of attacks on vital installations and an order to target all paramilitary forces deployed in the state.

After lying low for a few weeks since the arrest of outfit’s ‘chairman’ Arabinda Rajkhowa, Baruah sent a fresh blueprint of terror, thus nullifying all the efforts of dialogue, both by the Centre and the state government.

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Suspected US drones kill 12 in Pakistan

Two suspected US drone missile strikes killed at least 12 people on Wednesday in an area of Pakistan's volatile northwest teeming with militants suspected in a recent suicide attack that killed seven CIA employees in Afghanistan, intelligence officials said.

The lawless North Waziristan tribal area hit on Wednesday is home to several militant groups that stage cross-border attacks against coalition troops, including the al-Qaida-linked Haqqani network.

Counting the latest strikes, suspected US drones have attacked North Waziristan four times since the CIA bombing a week ago, killing at least 20 people.

US thinktank warns of fresh terror attacks

Pakistan-based terror groups have a "strategic intent" to launch major new attacks on the Indian soil to trigger a conflict between the two countries, according to a US intelligence and security thinktank.

In its annual forecast released today, Stratfor predicted that 2010 might see the US intensifying its drone strikes in Pakistan as the bulk of the al-Qaida leadership is believed to be hiding there. As the nature of the war shifts to Pakistan, Stratfor said, there is a strong jihadist strategic intent to launch a major attack against India in order to trigger a conflict between India and Pakistan.

"Such an attack would re-direct Pakistani troops from battling the jihadists in the country's west, towards the Indian border," the think tank Stratfor said in its security forecast for South Asia in 2010.

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