



International News

Dutch to return colonial treasures to Indonesia, Sri Lanka

The commission was set up after a request by Indonesia for the return of some art pieces

The Netherlands said Thursday it will hand back hundreds of colonial-era artifacts to Indonesia and Sri Lanka, including a haul of treasure and a gem-encrusted bronze cannon. The decision to return some 478 objects followed recommendations by a government-appointed commission last year looking into illegal Dutch colonial acquisitions now being displayed in museums in the Netherlands.



"These recommendations are a milestone in dealing with collections from a colonial context," said Gunay Uslu, Dutch deputy minister for culture, education and science.

The commission was set up after a request by Indonesia for the return of some art pieces and natural history collections by its former colonial ruler the Netherlands.

Some of the items to be handed back include the so-called "Lombok treasure" of hundreds of golden and silver objects, looted by the Dutch colonial army after capturing the Cakranegara palace on Indonesia's Lombok island in 1894.

It also included a bronze cannon decorated with silver, gold and precious gems including rubies. The 18th-century "Lewke's cannon" is believed to have been a gift by a Sri Lankan aristocrat called Lewke Disava to the king of Kandy around 1745-46. It is believed to have fallen into Dutch hands in 1765 when Dutch troops led by the governor of Ceylon Lubbert Jan van Eck attacked and conquered Kandy. After being displayed around the Netherlands, the cannon was eventually added to the Rijksmuseum's collection in Amsterdam. Rijksmuseum director Taco Dibbits said the "restitution as a positive step in cooperation with Sri Lanka."

The commission will hand down decisions about other artifacts in the future, public broadcaster NOS said. This included art from Nigeria as well as the Dubois collection which included the horse-riding reins of Prince Diponegoro, a Javanese royal who opposed Dutch colonial rule in the 19th century. The Netherlands has been wrestling with the legacy of its colonial past in recent years.

Dutch King Willem-Alexander on Saturday issued a historic royal apology for the Netherlands' involvement in colonial-era slavery.

The Hindu, 7 July 2023

National News

Monsoon rally: Deficit dips to 5%, from 30%, in 12 days

NEW DELHI: After a delayed and weak start in an El Nino year, the monsoon has registered a sharp recovery with the countrywide rainfall deficit coming down to 5% by Thursday from a steep 30% barely 12 days ago. Importantly, the wet spell over the past dozen days since June 24 has covered most regions of the country, including the central and southern parts where the monsoon deficit was worryingly high. And, contrary to fears that the monsoon may go into a break around the first week of July, the wet spell is likely to continue over the next couple of weeks or so, as per India Meteorological Department officials.





The monsoon still has a lot to make up for though. As on Thursday, 16 out of the 36 meteorological subdivisions in the country had received deficient rainfall, that is, 20% or more below normal, since the start of the monsoon season on June 1.

These include Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra (except the coastal belt), Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar and the plains of Bengal. However, the deficits have fallen in all these subdivisions over the past two weeks, and many are likely to get more rain in the coming days. "From current indications, rainfall in July is likely to be in the higher end of the normal range (94% to 106%). We expect active monsoon conditions to continue for the next two weeks," said IMD chief Mrutyunjay Mohapatra. Mohapatra said the main rainfall activity was currently over central India, which was likely to shift to the Indo-Gangetic plains around July 8.

"From current indications, rainfall in July is likely to be in the higher end of the normal range (94% to 106%). We expect active monsoon conditions to continue for the next two weeks," said IMD chief Mrutyunjay Mohapatra. Mohapatra said the main rainfall activity was currently over central India, which was likely to shift to the Indo-Gangetic plains around July 8. "Around July 12, the monsoon trough is expected to move southward again, bringing another spell of wet weather to central India. Thereafter, a low-pressure system may form around July 16. If that happens, central India may get another spell of rainfall," he added.

The Times of India, 07 July 2023

Sport News

Grand Chess Tour: Anand has moderate day; Gukesh shines with twin wins Tournament features top players like Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi in the Grand Chess Tour.

Chess Grandmaster and former World champion Viswanathan Anand interacts with chess enthusiasts during International Chess Tournament, in Mumbai.

Indian maestro Viswanathan Anand had a moderate run on day two of the SuperUnited Rapid and Blitz chess tournament, part of the Grand Chess Tour, winning, drawing and losing a game each. Anand began the day well, beating Ivan Saric in round four before settling for a draw



against Fabiano Caruana and ended with a loss to world No.1 Magnus Carlsen on 6th July.

Anand's compatriot - GM D Gukesh, bounced back from a below par start to win two matches and drew one to climb to the joint second spot. Gukesh had a fine run, beating Constantin Lupulescu and Saric after drawing with Richard Rapport in the day's first game. A surging Ian Nepomniachtchi and Caruana were able to catch Anand during the second day. All three now have eight points and share the top spot followed by Gukesh and Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Poland), who are on seven points each. Nepomniachtchi won all three games to tie for the lead going into the last day of the rapid. day started off with a shock for Carlsen, as he lost back-to-back games to Caruana and Firouzja. However, the former five-time World Chess Champion bounced back in the final round, with a nice technical win against Anand in a rook endgame. A blitz segment will follow the rapid event in the tournament which features top players including Carlsen, Anand and Nepomniachtchi among others.

The time control for the rapid portion is 25+10, with 2 points awarded for a win, 1 point for a draw, and 0 for a loss. The blitz portion will have a time control of 5+2, using the typical 1, 1/2, 0 scoring system. The Grand Chess Tour is a circuit of international events, featuring the world's best players.

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