

Visit to Forest School

I visited Forest School at the request of the Headteacher on Friday. I was shown the buildings, met the Head Boy and Deputy Head Boy, and discussed a wide range of issues about the success of the school and its future prospects. I explained that I had campaigned in the last Parliament for fairer funding for schools, as places like Wokingham have done poorly out of the grant formula in recent years. The government was elected on a promise to reform the grant allocations. The Secretary of State announced new proposals for 2018-19. I am pressing her to go further, as the gap between what we receive and what the best paid schools receive is still very large.

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Nia Griffith MP, Labour's

Shadow Defence Secretary, commenting on the Prime Minister's failure to explain when she knew about the Trident test blunder, said:

"This report of a Trident missile veering off course during a test is clearly a very serious matter indeed, and we need to know exactly what happened."

"Furthermore,

it is completely unacceptable that today the Prime Minister chose to side-step questions on the test, and would not even tell us when she knew about the incident.

"I am demanding the Prime Minister come to Parliament tomorrow to give a full explanation to MPs."

Seventeen States and Six Central Ministries to showcase their tableaux in Republic Day Parade – 2017

This year Republic Day Parade on Rajpath will witness tableaux from 17 States and Six Ministries of the

China makes progress in fight against desertification

China will step up efforts to fight desertification to meet a global target of halting net land degradation by 2030, a senior official said Sunday.

The country plans to rehabilitate more than 11,300 square kilometers of severely desertified farmland in the next three years at a cost of at least 27.2 billion yuan (about 4 billion U.S. dollars), Zhang Yongli, deputy head of State Forestry Administration, said at a press conference.

Zhang said China will enhance vegetation protection on desert land and improve compensation mechanisms to reward localities working toward fighting desertification.

China will also strengthen international cooperation, especially with countries along the Belt and Road, to reverse desertification, Zhang said.

Expanding deserts are a global challenge. It is estimated that one-third of the earth is exposed to desertification, affecting millions of people.

China has spent decades curbing desertification through greening. It has effectively contained desertification, with desertified land area shrinking continuously during the past decade.

The area of its desertified land totaled 1.72 million square kilometers at the end of 2014, nearly one fifth of the country, down 9,900 square kilometers from 2009.