

# Critical not to disturb fraternity of separation of powers: Prez

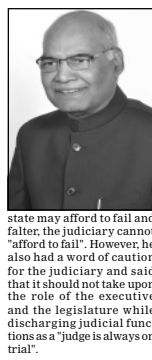
**NEW DELHI, NOV 26 /- /** President Ram Nath Kovind said today that it was critical not to disturb the fraternity of powers and maintain a "delicate balance" while exploring the relationship between the judiciary, the executive and the legislature as they are all equal. The three organs of the state should be conscious of their liberty and strive to protect their autonomy, he said. However, they should be careful about not disturbing the fraternity of separation of powers "by even unknowingly intruding into the domain of one of the two other branches", the president said. "It is critical to keep this intricate and delicate balance in mind when exploring the relationship between the three

branches of the state - that is, the judiciary, the legislature and the executive. They are all equal," Kovind said while inaugurating the function organised by the Supreme Court here to celebrate the Constitution Day. He said the Constitution is "not static but is a living document" and the sobriety and discretion in communication between these three branches of the state is extremely advisable. "This will promote and enhance fraternity between the three equal branches of the state, all of which have a certain responsibility to the Constitution. It will also reassure the ordinary citizen that the Constitution is safe - and in mature hands," the president said. He also emphasised that high courts across the country need to take up

the task of quickly providing certified translated copies of judgements to the litigants in local and regional languages. "Even the hearings in court, if possible, have to be in a language that is understandable to the ordinary litigant. The process of case disposal too has to be made faster," he said. The president also said that it was upon the higher judiciary to mentor and encourage the lower judiciary and in this process, the cooperation of state governments was very much necessary. He said it was for the state governments to ensure that the judges of the district and subordinate courts were not denied their due perquisites and facilities and high courts should urge the subordinate courts to be more efficient and conclude cases

faster. "I am glad to note, some high courts are taking steps in these directions. As of June 30, 2017, there were about 75,000 old cases, pending for five years or more, in sessions and district courts under the High Court of Jharkhand. The High Court has set a target of March 31, 2018, to dispose off almost half these cases," he said. He also referred to the initiative of the Chhattisgarh High Court in setting a deadline of April 30, 2018, for the subordinate courts to dispose off cases pending for up to 10 years and September 30 next year deadline for disposing cases pending for between five and 10 years. "The High Court of Chhattisgarh has also started to make provision for availability of Hindi

versions of judgements and orders. I commend these initiatives. I am sure other high courts are also moving ahead with a similar sense of public service," Kovind said. He said that Constitution is not just an abstract ideal and it has to be made meaningful to the lives of ordinary people in every street, every village and every mohalla of the country. Delivering a lecture on "constitutional values" at the function, former Chief Justice of India R C Lahoti referred to the historical events related to framing of the Constitution. He said that the Constitution is the "religion of all the religions". Referring to the judiciary, the ex-CJ said that while other organs of the



# Backlog of cases can't be roaring tiger before judiciary: CJ

**NEW DELHI, NOV 26 /- /** Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra today said pending cases are "roaring tigers" before the judiciary and held that the backlog problem will be tackled if the bar and the bench worked together. The CJ asked the bar body and the lawyers to assure him that they would not seek unnecessary adjournments in cases, stressing it was a way to resolve the backlog problem. "Let us promise each other that we shall collectively march ahead to reduce pendency. Pendency cannot be a roaring tiger before us. We will be able to tackle it if we work together," the CJ said while speaking at a function here organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association to celebrate Constitution Day. The people, he said, must pledge to defend the dream and vision of the Constitution. "We cannot permit... anyone and I mean anyone who harbours the notion of denigrating the dignity of the institution at his whims and fancy," he said. Speaking on the issue of pending cases, he said rotational benches of the high courts across the country were functioning on Saturdays and were taking up criminal appeals which were around 10 years old. "I must tell you in last one and a half months, all the high courts combined have disposed of around 1100 appeals and the credit goes to the judges and the members of the bar. In the last two months, we have brought down pendency by more than 3,200 cases," he said. He said that advocates on record (AoRs) of the apex court should get the privilege to mention a matter for urgent hearing and stressed that the lawyers should come prepared even if they seek early hearing. "I have told my colleagues (judges) to come prepared to defend the matter for early hearing. If the case can be disposed of, we will sit and dispose it of," he said. Addressing the gathering, Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the government had made 106 appointment in the higher judiciary this year. "In the subordinate judiciary, there are about 5,000 vacancies. The Centre has no role in it. Appointments are done by the high courts or public service commissions. We have written to the CJ," he said. Prasad also said fresh talents should join the subordinate judiciary. "It is time to induce new blood, new talent in the subordinate judiciary," he said, adding, "We need to collectively work together".

Attorney General K K Venugopal lamented the delay in justice delivery and said certain cases may take eight years to pass the trial court and the same in high courts and the apex court. "A total of 24 years. Only rich persons can file a case," he said, adding that the delay in justice delivery is the number of judges. "We have only 18 judges for a million people. This is the root cause of delay in justice. The total number of judges needs to be increased," he said. Since the government was party to 70 per cent cases, its early disposal would also benefit the government, he said. (PTI)

# Doctors remove 5 kg iron objects from MP man's stomach

**SATNA, NOV 26 /- /** In a rare surgery, doctors in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district recently removed 5 kg iron objects - a chain, as many as 263 coins and shaving blades - from the stomach of a man who they said is not in a good frame of mind.

The 32-year-old Mohammed Maqsood, who hails from Sohawal in Satna district, was taken to the state-run Sanjay Gandhi Medical College and Hospital in adjoining Rewa on November 18 after he complained of pains in stomach. Dr Priyanka Sharma, attached to the Sanjay Gandhi Medical College and Hospital (SGMCH), told informed that they identified the cause behind Maqsood's stomachache after conducting tests and through an X-ray. He said a team of six doctors surgically removed 10-12 shaving blades, four big needles, a chain, 263 coins, besides pieces of glasses - collectively weighing 5 kg, from the stomach of Maqsood on Friday. (PTI)

# Decades of neglect taking toll on rail infrastructure: Lohani

**NEW DELHI, NOV 26 /- /** The accumulated deficit in upkeep of infrastructure due to "decades of neglect" is taking a toll on the Indian Railways, chairman of the Railway Board Ashwani Lohani has said, referring to an accident in north-eastern state of Assam on Friday. In a Facebook post on Saturday night, Lohani, who had rushed to the accident site at Manikpur in Chitragoud district, said an action plan needs to be put in place to address the problem. "The accident at Manikpur is a cause for concern. Huge accumulated deficit in upkeep of infrastructure arising out of decades of neglect is taking its toll. Consolidation has to take priority over growth and an action plan has to emerge very shortly," he wrote. He said the country was looking up to the railways to set its house in order but the fact remains that it would take its time and may also extract its price, "a price that would have to be paid either way". Four train accidents in less than 12 hours in the northern state of Uttar Pradesh and the eastern Odisha state killed seven people and injured at least 11 on November 23-24. The accident near Manikpur occurred at 4.18 am on Friday when 13 coaches of the Vasco Da Gama-Patna Express, on its way from Goa to Patna, derailed, killing three people, including a six-year-old boy and his father, and injuring nine. Four more were killed and two injured in three other train accidents. (PTI)

# Speed up developmental works in Poonch: J-K chief sec to officials

**JAMMU, NOV 26 /- /** To speed up developmental works in border areas of Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, Chief Secretary B B Vyas has directed officials to remove hurdles by taking appropriate action in a week's time. The officer gave the directions at a high-level meeting here to review the overall development scenario and implementation of various ongoing projects yesterday, an official spokesman said. The meeting discussed issues, including land acquisition, compensation, and forest clearance, hindering development projects, he said. The chief secretary directed officers to speed up ongoing projects and directed them to monitor these to ensure their completion on time, the spokesman said.

District Development Commissioner Tariq Ahmad Zargar apprised Vyas about the physical and financial status of ongoing development works, and the programmes taken up by various agencies and departments in Poonch. Zargar also informed the chief secretary about the shortage of equipment and staff, especially radiologists, in the district health centres. He requested for similar infrastructure in sub-district hospitals and health centres. Commissioner Secretary Health and Medical Education, Pawan Kotwal said that the department was taking steps to fill vacancies of doctors, the spokesman said.

Reviewing the progress of newly created infrastructure for the health sector, Kotwal directed the chief medical officer, Poonch, to immediately take over the new buildings constructed under the National Rural Health Mission and submit a report on the requirement of medical equipment and furniture. During the meeting, Zargar also raised the issue of restoration of a 132 KV transmission line. The spokesman said that the chief secretary visited the sites of various ongoing projects, including the secretariat building, indoor sports stadium, anganwadi Integrated Child Development Services Centre in the town. (PTI)



Famed Sabair mala hill shrine witnessed a heavy rush of pilgrims from different parts of the country on Saturday.

# Private member resolution to ask for quota in pvt sector: Raja

**NEW DELHI, NOV 26 /- /** A Private Member's resolution on jobs reservations for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes as well as other backward classes in the private sector is listed for discussion in the winter session of Parliament. The resolution, tabled in the last Parliament session by CPI Raja Sabha member D Raja, could not come up for discussion then. "I strongly feel that if the private sector is getting so much of help from the government, it should also help. They are getting a concession from the government on water, electricity and land. But they do not follow any recruitment policy (on reservation)," Raja said. Raja said the government should bring in legislation on his resolution as job opportunities in the public sector and the government had either stagnated or reduced during the past few decades while private sector jobs were on the rise. In the resolution, Raja said SCs/STs/OBCs had been provided with reservation in jobs in the government on the basis of constitutional and statutory provisions to "fulfil the vision of the framers of the Constitution for addressing the problems of discrimination, inequality and deprivation caused by castes".



Kerala DGP Loknath Behra flagging off a cyclothon organized by the Kerala Cycling Association as part of a campaign titled 'fuel conservation through public participation' at LNCPE Velodrome, Kariyattom near Thiruvananthapuram on Sunday.

He argued that government jobs were now shrinking because of privatisation and most of the jobs in any case were contractual, for which reservation was not applicable. "Reservation is being taken away through the back door," he said. "In a market-driven economy where the corporate sector is the dominant engine of economic growth, most employment opportunities are now available in the private sector where reservation is not applicable," he added. The Left leader further argued that the "constitutional provision of positive discrimination" is being negated by "neo-liberal policies", centred on market forces and the withdrawal of public sector enterprises.

Raja quoted former President K Narayanan to press for the resolution. Narayanan, in a Republic Day eve speech, had said, "Indeed, in the present economic system and of the future, it is necessary for the private sector to adopt social policies that are progressive and more egalitarian for these deprived classes to be uplifted from their state of deprivation and inequality and given the rights of citizens and civilised human beings". Raja will urge the government for the reservation of jobs for SCs/STs and OBCs in the private sector on the pattern of quotas in the government. (PTI)

# Varun ready for an all-important switch

Congress may be all set to virtually stage a coup in the family of Indira Gandhi's estranged daughter-in-law and BJP minister Maneka Gandhi by wooing her restive son Varun Gandhi to cross over to the left. Priyanka and Rahul Gandhi are said to be already in touch with him and feel that his switching sides might help in bringing round a number of former Congressmen to come back to the party. Varun has been unhappy with the BJP leadership for not giving him due importance in Uttar Pradesh, where he even nursed the ambition of being projected as a prospective chief ministerial candidate. The Gandhi scion is learnt to be upset with the BJP leadership for ignoring Indira Gandhi's centenary, calling her a mother to this nation. This could be cited as the pretext for the cross over.

**HARDIK AIDE NOW A STAR CAMPAIGNER**  
It's barely a month after Gujarat OBC leader Alpesh Thakor joined the Congress, but he has already made it to the star league of the late Congress. According to sources, the close associate of Patidar leader Hardik Patel has

managed to get assurances from the Congress party for 5 to 7 seats for his supporters in the Assembly election. Thakor himself is expected to fight from South Gujarat and his name figures among 40 star campaigners of Congress in the Gujarat campaign, along with Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Manmohan Singh, Raj Babbar and Navaj Singh Sisodia. Sam Pitroda, who played an important role in drafting the Congress manifesto for Gujarat, is also on the list of star campaigners.

# POLITICAL DELICACIES

**UNSTOPPABLE LALU FRUSTRATES NITISH**  
BJP's Lulu hunt seems to be going awry as Lulu Prasad Yadav's claim to be the strong man of Bihar has remained intact despite the fact that the Lulu family has been at the receiving end of action by the Central government agencies. Lulu has been constantly shutting between Ranchi and Patna to attend to these issues, but central government and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar have not succeeded in engineering a split in

the RJD, which on the contrary seems to be growing stronger by the day. The spate of corruption charges and raids have not dented Lulu's popularity and his strong anti-BJP stance has won him admiration from his supporters and the party cadre. It is Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who is facing an awkward situation as despite his best efforts to be in the good books of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he could not get any favour from the Centre for the benefit of the state.

# UTTARAKHAND BJP INFIGHTING OUT IN THE OPEN

The infighting between Chief Minister Tripathi Singh Rawat and Ajay Bhat in the Uttarakhand BJP is coming out openly. Ajay Bhat is behaving like a leader of Opposition, writing letters to the chief minister taking up various issues and attacking the state government policies. The latest controversy is about the closure of the health insurance policy in the state and entrusting it to Bajaj Allianz. Ajay is believed to enjoy the confidence of party president Amit Shah for his organisational capabilities, which make him popular among state party leaders as well. (IPA)

# Mercury dips in Kashmir Valley, Jammu region

**SRINAGAR, NOV 26 /- /** Sub-zero temperatures were recorded at most places in Kashmir even as the weatherman predicted light rain or snowfall at isolated places in the state over the next two days. The night temperature across the Kashmir Valley, except in Kokernag, settled below the freezing point last night, an official of the Meteorological department here said. Cold conditions were reported in an area of 100 sq km with Banihal registering a low of 3.7 degrees Celsius today.

The official said the mercury in Jammu fell to 7.7 degrees Celsius on Friday, the lowest so far in November. Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded the minimum temperature of minus 0.2 degree while the famous ski

# SC dismisses plea seeking relief for traffic policemen

**NEW DELHI, NOV 26 (PTI)** The Supreme Court has dismissed a plea seeking to ensure rotational basis of work location for traffic policemen in order to effectively tackle their health issues due to rising pollution. The bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud dismissed the PIL filed by Sanjay Kulshrestha, a doctor, who also sought to ensure periodic medical check-up and treatment for pollution-related diseases encountered by the traffic policemen. The plea said that traffic policemen should be deputed on rotational basis in congested areas and non-polluted areas. "What kind of prayer is this? Do you want the Supreme Court to monitor the duty roster of traffic police? Heard. Dismissed," the bench said.

The petition had sought direction to the Centre seeking relief to traffic policemen for better management of their severe health problems due to heavy vehicular pollution on Indian roads. "Before coming to the court, petitioner tried to know through RTI about extra facilities or allowances that state governments are providing to traffic policemen for this occupational hazards and it confirmed that there are no such provisions by most of the state governments," the plea said. The plea claimed that air pollution has become a big occupational hazard for traffic policemen in India and said that within five to six years, these policemen develop pollution-induced diseases. "This vehicular pollution mainly affects their respiratory system, however, there is no part or system in the body which is immune to it," the plea said. The petitioner, who is also a consultant paediatric surgeon, claimed that continuous exposure of traffic policemen to vehicular exhaust could even induce adverse reproductive outcome. "There is a significant increase in neonatal deaths and abortions in the wives of traffic policemen and decrease in live births has been observed," the plea submitted. (PTI)