



People form a human chain on the occasion of 150th Gandhi Jayanti, organised by Patnam State Committee to press various demands, at Tank Bund in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

Extremely unfortunate that 5,000 construction workers in Mumbai not registered: SC

NEW DELHI, OCT 2 /-/- The Supreme Court Monday said it was "extremely unfortunate" that around 5,000 construction workers in Mumbai were not registered under an Act meant for their welfare and directed the Maharashtra government to take action against builders and contractors in this regard.

A bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur asked the state government to identify the contractors and builders who have employed these 5,000 construction workers without them being registered and directed the slum rehabilitation authority to ensure compliance of the provisions of the Act. The Apex Court observed that due to non-registration, these construction workers would not get benefit of the provisions of the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996.

The bench, which also comprised justices S Abdul Nazeer and Deepak Gupta, perused a note placed before it by the state government as per which at least 53,270 construction workers were working at sites in Mumbai.

The state, while making it clear that 48,488 such construction workers were registered under the 1996 Act, told the bench that this figure did not include workers in the schemes approved by the slum rehabilitation authority. "The admitted position, therefore, is that there are about 5,000 construction workers who are working, but they have not been registered by the employer/contractor," the bench said.

"This is an extremely unfortunate situation because due to the non-registration of these construction workers, they will not get the benefit of the provisions of the Act and on the contrary, cess will (hopefully) be collected from

the contractors/builders but utilized for a purpose other than the benefit of the construction workers," it said. The bench further said, "Under these circumstances, we direct the state of Maharashtra to identify the contractors/builders who have employed these roughly 5,000 construction workers without they being registered and take punitive action against the builders/contractors." The counsel appearing for the state told the bench that generally, the construction workers were either illiterate, semi-educated or migrant workers. "Obviously, under these circumstances, it is unlikely that they will know their rights under the Act. Therefore, the responsibility of the registration must squarely lie with the employer/contractor/builder/State of Maharashtra," the bench noted in its order.

The bench asked the state to file a status report in the matter and

posted it for further hearing on October 10. The issue of utilisation of cess collected under the 1996 Act in Maharashtra had cropped up when the bench was hearing a matter related to framing of solid waste management policy by the states.

The Apex Court had on August 31 castigated some states and union territories for their "pathetic" attitude in not framing a solid waste management policy as per the 2016 Rules on the issue and had stayed construction activities till they brought it out. It had later vacated its order staying construction activities in these states and union territory. The issue of waste management had cropped up when the top court was dealing with a tragic incident of 2015 in which 14 children lost their lives due to the death of a seven-year-old boy due to dengue in Delhi. The victim was allegedly denied treatment by five private hospitals here and his distraught parents had subsequently committed suicide. (PTI)

Need to check 'urban naxals' support to Maoists in Chhattisgarh: Minister

RAIPUR, OCT 2 /-/- There is a need to check the support of urban sympathisers to Maoists so that the left-wing extremism can be eliminated by Chhattisgarh, senior Cabinet minister Brijmohan Agrawal said Tuesday.

The minister of water resources, agriculture and biotechnology, animal husbandry and fisheries said Naxalism has ended from 75 per cent area of the state and 25 per cent region was currently under its "little" influence. "There are some Naxal activities in 25 per cent of the areas that share borders with neighbouring states (Odisha and Andhra Pradesh). We will finish Naxalism soon from there too," he asserted. Agrawal, who had been the home minister of the Naxal-hit state, said there was a support system for Maoists from urban areas of the country.

"So there is a need to check them so that Naxalism can be ended from the rural areas," he told PTI. The minister said left-wing Naxalism was not just affecting Chhattisgarh. "It is an issue with some other states also. There has to be a joint policy, joint command and joint efforts to end Naxalism," he said. Chhattisgarh chief

minister Raman Singh had recently said his government was making efforts through development projects to "soon neutralise" the ideological and financial support the Naxalites received from sympathisers in places from Raipur to Delhi. Like the Naxals are getting weaker, they (sympathisers) will also become weak.

This fight to check Naxalites and their supporters) is of Chhattisgarh and other states. We are getting successful (in checking Naxal activities) and this support system will soon be neutralised," Singh said.

Agrawal said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will form the government for the fourth consecutive term in the state. Polls to the 90-member Chhattisgarh Assembly are due later this year. He said the BJP's main agenda after winning the elections will be of development.

"We have done development and we will do development," the agriculture minister said, citing the presence of Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Law University, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) and best airport, rail and road infrastructure in the state. (PTI)



Bombay HC directs two men accused in criminal case to clean a beach

MUMBAI, OCT 2 /-/- The Bombay High Court has quashed a case of criminal intimidation against two persons and directed them to do community service for a month by helping in the cleaning of a beach in Mumbai. A division bench of Justices Ranjit More and Bharti Dangre was Monday hearing an application filed by city residents Angad Singh Sethi (22) and Kumar Singh Sethi (25), seeking to quash the FIR lodged against them by the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) police on September 10, 2017. According to the

police, the duo had last year threatened a man who runs a hotel, with a replica gun and demanding that he opens his establishment and serve them. The man later complained to the police and lodged a case there. The accused persons' counsel Ashok Mundargi told the high court that they have amicably settled the case with the complainant.

"We are willing to pay monetary compensation too," Mundargi said. To this, the court said, "If we ask them to just pay monetary compensation, then their parents will pay the money and it will not serve any purpose. We want the accused to pay individually." Mundargi then said the duo would do community service. The bench then directed the two accused to volunteer for the suburban Versova beach cleaning project, which is led by advocate Afroz Shah, every weekend for one month. "In addition to this, the applicants shall also pay a sum of Rs 20,000 each to Tata Memorial Hospital," the court directed and quashed the case against the duo. (PTI)

'Mastermind' of BMC fake job scam held

THANE, OCT 2 /-/- Thane crime branch has arrested the alleged mastermind of the BMC fake job recruitment scam in which 36 persons were duped of Rs 54 lakh by a gang, taking the total number of persons in custody to five, police said Tuesday.

The alleged mastermind of the fraud is 22-year-old Datta Prasad alias Tushar Dhuri, said a senior officer of the crime branch.

Police had earlier arrested Rahul Kelkar, Prakash Gaikwad, Aniket Rane and a woman.

The crime branch officer said Dhuri posed as a senior officer of the Mumbai civic body, BMC (Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation) to lure glibly youths.

He used to roam in cars with BMC stickers, he said. The alleged crime took place between October 2017 and May 2018.

The officer said the youths were given fake joining letters by the accused persons in lieu of cash.

He said the victims were allegedly paid "salary" of Rs 10,000 by the accused to make them believe that they had landed the job.

Police have registered a case under various sections of the IPC, including fraud and cheating.

Anti-quota group SAPAKS to contest Assembly polls in MP

BHOPAL, OCT 2 /-/- SAPAKS, an anti-reservation organisation in Madhya Pradesh, announced Tuesday that it is entering electoral politics and would contest all 230 Assembly seats in the year-end elections in the state. Former IAS officer and patron of SAPAKS, Hiralal Trivedi, has been made president of the new party, he said.

"On Tuesday, we have formally announced formation of a political party - SAPAKS Party. It will contest all 230 seats in the state. We will soon announce our candidates," Trivedi told reporters. The party's organisation

general secretary Suresh Tiwari said that former IPS officer Vijay Wate, former IAS officer Veena Ghanekar, former state health department director K L Sahu and Betul-based industrialist Rajiv Khandelwal have been appointed as vice presidents.

"Our main plank in assembly elections would be opposition to recent amendments in the SC/ST Act which are against the Supreme Court's verdict. We are also against reservation in promotion of government employees. We are also demanding reservation to the economically weaker section instead of caste-based reservation," Tiwari said. The party would also contest Lok Sabha elections next year, he said. A section of government employees in Madhya Pradesh formed 'Samanya', Pichda, Alpsankhyak Kalyan Samaj Sanstha (SAPAKS) two years ago to agitate against reservation in promotions. The outfit recently staged protests in the state against Parliament's amendment to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. After the Apex Court inserted certain safeguards regarding immediate arrest under the Act, the amendment restored the original provisions. (PTI)

Four drug peddlers arrested in HP

DHARAMSHALA, OCT 2 /-/- Four suspected drug peddlers were arrested in separate incidents and 1 kg of poppy husk, 24 grams of charas and 401 intoxicant capsules were seized from their possession, police said Tuesday. During checking at Gagwal village, the police arrested Dattip Kumar (34) and Munish Kumar (29) with 1 kg of poppy husk and 206 parvon spas plus capsules, said SP (Kangra) Santosh Patil.

The police seized 120 spasmoproxyvon capsules and 75 alprazolam pills and arrested Rakesh Bhardwaj (35) at Chelian village during patrolling, the SP said. Another man was arrested with 24 grams of charas, he said, adding that the accused person was identified as Ashok Kumar (48). Separate cases were registered against all the four accused persons, he added. (PTI)

UP STF busts inter-state gang; apprehends 3, seizes 250 kg ganja

LUCKNOW, OCT 2 /-/- The Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force has busted an inter-state gang by arresting its three members and seizing nearly 250 kg of ganja from their possession. A spokesperson of the STF Tuesday said the gang was active in Odisha, Assam, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

The arrests were made by sleuths of the STF and the Narcotics Control Bureau on Monday following a tip-off that a truck carrying narcotics from Odisha is heading

towards Palwal in Haryana via Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, he added.

Those arrested were identified as Kalinga Patna Gauri of Odisha, Rais Ahmed and Satbir Singh, both from Amroha district of Uttar Pradesh.

Nearly 250 kg of ganja was seized from them," the spokesperson said. On interrogation of the trio, it emerged that the gang is headed by one Sabir Khan, a resident of Palwal, he said. Efforts are on to arrest him, the spokesperson added. (PTI)



Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Governor ESL Narashimhan paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of his 150th birth anniversary in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

Haryana govt to develop zoological park in Rewari's Massani barrage area

CHANDIGARH, OCT 2 /-/- The Haryana government is planning to develop a nature and zoological park in the Massani barrage area in Rewari district to attract tourists, especially from the National Capital Region (NCR). "It is expected that after the development of the Massani barrage as a nature and zoological park about 20 lakh tourists would visit the site annually," a spokesman of Forests and Wildlife Department said here Monday. Besides the development of

the nature and zoological park, various facilities have been planned which include demonstration of agro-forestry models for arid and semi-arid regions, development of farm tourism facilities and development of lake and water bodies for birds, he said. The Massani barrage is located about 60 km from Dhaula Kuan in Delhi and 40 km from Gurgaon on the Gurgaon-Jaipur National Highway, he said. The Massani Barrage was constructed by the Haryana

Irrigation Department on Sahibi River during late 1970s. "It is located on the golden triangle map of India connecting Delhi-Agra-Jaipur-Massani-Delhi," he said. The spokesman said it was decided to organise a state level wildlife week celebration at Massani Barrage on October 5. The wildlife week is celebrated in the first week of October every year to sensitise the society about the importance of wildlife and steps needed to preserve it, he said. (PTI)

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