

Goagovt relievesDIG amidgraft charges

PANAJI, DEC 7 /- The Goa government has relieved the state's Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), Vimal Kumar Gupta, following allegations of corruption against him.

Gupta was relieved from his post on December 5 and directed to report to the Union ministry of home affairs. Last week, a woman police sub-inspector and a constable were suspended after they allegedly offered bribe to Gupta to the inquiry into complaints against them. The constable was facing a departmental inquiry in a case related to indiscipline. Besides, a departmental inquiry was on against the sub-inspector after she along with another constable allegedly assaulted a man near Panaji in 2014 and took away his car. "The DIG was relieved by the state government and he will report to the Union ministry of home affairs, following allegations of bribery against him," Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar told newsmen here on Wednesday. "The departmental inquiries conducted by Gupta would be reviewed by a senior officer who will take charge of the matter," he said.

Parrikar said Gupta has been relieved but that does not mean he has been given a clean chit in the matter.

DamanandDiu officerbooked byCBI;more underscanner

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has booked an assistant VAT officer of union territory of Daman and Diu for alleged irregularities in her appointment to the post without fulfilling the minimum eligibility criteria, the agency's officials said today.

Apeza Damania was booked and the CBI has also included unidentified officials of Daman and Diu in the FIR which indicates that some more officers are under the scanner of the agency, they said. These officers have been accused of criminal conspiracy and violation of provisions of prevention of corruption act in the FIR, they said. The FIR of the agency alleged that in response to an advertisement seeking application for Assistant VAT officer for Daman and Diu, 15 persons including Damania had applied in 2014. It is alleged that Damania had appeared for final semester of LLB examination in 2015.

The agency alleged that although she had submitted her experience certificate she was ineligible for appointment as her minimum educational qualification was not complete at the time of her appointment. "...Damania despite not being eligible for the post of Assistant VAT officer was selected for the said post and offered employment by the unknown officers of the UT Administration of Daman and Diu by abuse of their official position as public servants in conspiracy with Apeza Damania and thereby caused undue pecuniary gain to Apeza Damania," the FIR alleged. (PTI)

Gujarat poll: CM Rupani may face stiff battle on BJP's 'safe' seat

RAJKOT, DEC 7 /- The battle for Rajkot-West seat, the traditional BJP fortress, could be a cliffhanger for its high-profile contestant and Gujarat chief minister Vijay Rupani who is facing a challenger in Congress Indrani Rajyaguru.

Earlier known as Rajkot-II, the seat is considered as 'safe' for the saffron party which has been representing it since 1985. The constituency goes to polls on December 9 in the first phase of the high-stakes Gujarat elections. Vala, incumbent and Governor of Karnataka, had won the seat seven times for the BJP from 1985 to 2012. In 1985, he had defeated Harshadha Chudasama, Vala vacated the seat for Narendra Modi in 2002 after the latter was then nominated as the chief minister. Later, when Modi moved to Maninagar constituency, Vala continued his undefeated run till

2012. Later, after he was shifted to Karnataka, Vijay Rupani won the by-poll from the seat in 2014. Though Rajkot-West is a stronghold of the RSS, the Congress has mounted a strong challenge by bringing in Rajyaguru, the sitting MLA from Rajkot-East, to rework the caste combination in the party's favour.

To retain his seat, Rupani has to surmount the angry Patidars as well as the trading community, which is smarting under the impact of demonetisation and rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Out of 3.15 lakh voters in the constituency, the number of Kadva and Leuva Patidars is the highest at 60,000, followed by Brahmins, Lohana and Jain communities. The Congress is trying to direct the simmering anger among Patidars over lack of reservation in education and government jobs

under the BJP rule against Rupani. The quota agitation and Hardik Patel joining hands with Congress may dent the BJP's base among the Patidars, who till now were considered as the bedrock of the BJP's support base in Gujarat. Congress nominee Rajyaguru, the richest candidate in Gujarat elections, believes that he has won the "initial battle" against Rupani by keeping him busy in the constituency since the poll schedule was announced.

"I wanted to keep the chief minister busy in Rajkot-West constituency and morally I have won the initial battle as the chief minister has to visit his constituency more than once in a week," Rajyaguru claimed. However, Rupani has been unfazed and is confident of his victory. He earlier cited the work done by him for the people of the state as well as

his constituency, especially bringing the Narmada river water to Rajkot. Rupani had said that he was not facing any challenge in Rajkot West as it is a traditional bastion of the BJP. "I will win the seat easily," the chief minister had told news agency PTI in an interview recently. BJP's Saurashtra and Kutch spokesperson Raju Dhruv said that Rupani has always been ready to solve the problems faced by the people of Rajkot or elsewhere in Gujarat.

"As the CM, he has done well and because of his tireless efforts, Rajkot could get the Narmada water in less than five years of the project announced by then chief minister Narendra Modi," Dhruv said. The 182-member Gujarat Assembly will go to the polls in two phases - on December 9 and 14 - and the counting of votes will be taken up on December 18.

State Notes

Earthquake hits Ladakh

SRINAGAR, DEC 7 /- A moderate intensity earthquake measuring 5.4 on the Richter Scale hit Jammu and Kashmir's Ladakh region in the early hours of today. MeT officials said here. The tremors were also felt across the Kashmir valley. The epicentre of the quake was near the India-China border in the Ladakh region, officials said. "The earthquake of 5.4 magnitude on the Richter Scale was recorded at 4:59 am today. The epicentre of the earthquake was at a depth of 35 km near the Jammu and Kashmir-Xingjian border in the state's Ladakh region," a meteorological (MeT) department official said. No damage to property or casualty was reported, the police said.

Four killed in road mishap

MOGA, DEC 7 /- Four passengers were killed and 21 others injured today when a bus hit a truck while overtaking it on the Moga-Kotkapura road here, the police said. The Jaipur-Jammu bus had 50 passengers on board it when the accident took place, they said. The four passengers died on the spot. The injured have been hospitalized. Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Kaser Singh said.

Scribe killed in road mishap

NASHIK, DEC 7 /- A 37-year-old journalist working with a Marathi daily in the city died in a collision between his car and a truck at Chitegaon diversion near here on Wednesday night. The accident occurred when Ganesh Dhuri, who was working in the editorial department of 'Lokmat', was returning in his car from Navapur village, according to his family members. Santosh Kasar, another occupant of the car, sustained injuries in the accident. Many journalists in the city attended Dhuri's last rites this morning. Dhuri is survived by his wife and a son.

Girl loses hand due to treatment by quack

BALRAMPUR, DEC 7 /- The police here has registered an FIR against an alleged quack and sealed his clinic after a girl's hand had to be amputated due to his treatment, the police said today. A case was registered on Wednesday against the quack, Vasudev, who is at large. His clinic in Gaur village has been sealed, superintendent of police (SP) Pramod Kumar said. The officer said that the case was registered on a complaint by the girl's father alleging that his daughter's hand had to be amputated after Vasudev's treatment. Chief medical officer Ghanshyam Singh said that during a probe, the charges were found to be true and the clinic was sealed.

Heroin worth Rs 5 cr seized from India-Pak border

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /- In one of the biggest contraband seizures along the India-Pak border, the BSF confiscated about 55 kg heroin worth Rs 5 crore from Punjab's Gurdaspur district, official sources said. The incident was reported around 6:30 pm when a Border Security Force (BSF) patrol team detected some suspicious movement along the border post 'Rosse'. The intruders were challenged and they fired back, the sources said. After a brief exchange of fire, the intruders hastily fled, they said. The troops involved in the operation reported that there were three intruders with some head-load and a plastic pipe. As the BSF party recalled, one of the intruders got injured but his accomplices took him back across the international border.

RPF nabs 2 courier boys with cash, gold aboard train

NAGPUR, DEC 7 /- The Railway Protection Force (RPF) nabbed two courier boys in two separate incidents on Thursday with Rs 10 lakh in suspicious cash and 26 packets of gold and silver at Nagpur railway station, officials said. Acting on a tip-off about suspected movement of hawala money aboard train no-12290 Nagpur-Mumbai Duronto express at 4:00 pm, an RPF team searched the train, said RPF officials. "The RPF searched the train and apprehended a passenger Mahendra Tarode (31) and found Rs 30 lakh unaccounted cash with him," said senior divisional security commissioner (RPF) Jyoti Kumar Satga.

Woman in joint family gets additional toilet at home after police intervention

HARDA, DEC 7 /- A woman's demand from her in-laws for an additional toilet at home for their joint family of 17 members was not paid any heed, until she decided to take up the matter with police. She is now happy that the police's intervention has resulted in the construction of a new toilet at their home in the city, an official said today. The woman filed a police complaint last month against her in-laws after constantly facing the problem of having to share one toilet with 16 other family members at their residence, Harda police station in-charge Pankaj Tyagi said.

"We received a complaint from the woman last month that she was being beaten up by her in-laws. After an inquiry, it was found that her demand for construction of another toilet at home was the reason behind the dispute," he said. Tyagi said the joint family has 17 members and one toilet was inadequate for them. There were regular disputes as the woman, who got married two years ago, was demanding the construction of another toilet but her in-laws turned a deaf ear to her constant pleas," he said. Following the woman's complaint, the police tried to sort out the issue by talking to her family members. "We spoke to her in-laws after which they agreed to get another toilet constructed at home. The police also extended financial help for it to the family. The newly constructed toilet was handed over to the family yesterday," Tyagi said.



Senior AIADMK leaders and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami and Deputy CM O Panneerselvam canvassing votes for December 21st By-elections at R R Ngar Assembly Constituency, in Chennai on Thursday.

Robbers kill police head constable

ALIRAJPUR, DEC 7 /- A 32-year-old police head constable was killed by unidentified robbers at a village here, an official said today. The policeman, Arvind Sen, was going on his motorcycle last night when he saw some men beating a truck driver, after pulling him out of his vehicle, and snatching his belongings in Dekkan, the village. Alirajpur's additional superintendent of police (ASP) Seema Alawa told news agency PTI. Sen stopped his two-wheeler and got down to confront the robbers but they attacked him, she said. In the meantime, the truck driver ran away and the robbers then smashed the policeman's head with stones, killing him on the spot, police said. Before targeting the truck driver, the robbers had also tried to stop a van in the area by breaking its glass. However, the van's driver managed to run away from there, the ASP said. Police teams have launched a search for the accused, she said, adding that a case has been registered against the unidentified men.

DMK presents TN Gov holding discussions with officials

CHENNAI, DEC 7 /- DMK working president K. Anbazhagan today claimed that a state governor does not have the authority to order districts and inspect work for people like him. "As regards the Governor, as per constitutional norms, it is said that he does not have either authority or right to inspect or order districts and tours to oversee work for the people", Stalin told newsmen. Answering a question, Stalin, who is also the Leader of Opposition, said: "Like a chief minister or ministers, he has already undertaken tours of districts and has done inspections." Stating that the governor was now going to Kanyakumari, he said a "suspicion, arose if governor has undertaken such tours deciding that the incumbent horse-trading regime is not a government at all."

"We are ready to laud the Governor, if he summons the assembly and asks the government to prove its majority," he said. On Wednesday, Purohit held discussions with top district officials in Tirunelveli weeks after a similar exercise in Coimbatore which drew flak from DMK and others who claimed it amounted to an attempt to curtail the state's rights. In Tirunelveli, Purohit undertook a cleanliness drive at the old bus stand and Palayamkottai localities, sweeping the area with a broomstick and removing garbage. Officials, including district collector Sandeep Nandhan and those from the city corporation, also took part in the drive.

Court seeks report from Tihar on Moin Qureshi's plea on threat

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /- A Delhi court today directed the Tihar Jail authorities here to submit by December 12 a status report on an application by controversial meat exporter Moin Akhtar Qureshi, claiming threats from alleged gangster Neerawa. Qureshi, lodged in the central jail in connection with a money laundering case, has alleged that he was being threats from Bawana, who is also lodged there. Special judge Arun Bhardwaj, who had earlier sought a report from the jail authorities in this regard, granted five days to the officials after they sought

some more time to file their report. On December 12, the court is also likely to pronounce its order on Qureshi's bail application. In his application moved on November 7, he had said: "I have been shifted from general ward to high-risk ward where dreaded criminals, including those accused of rape and terrorism, are lodged, where I received threat from Bawana through his associate who is also lodged in the same jail." He had also alleged that his family members had received threats too. Qureshi was recently chargesheeted by the ED in a money

laundering case, in which it was alleged that he had extorted Rs 7.5 crore from two businessmen, Pradeep Komer and Satish Sana, by using the names of former CBI directors and promising to help them in CBI cases against them. The ED had also alleged that Qureshi was involved in hawala transactions through Delhi-based hawala operators. The meat exporter is also being probed by the Income Tax department for alleged tax evasion. Bawana, on the other hand, has been chargesheeted in various cases, including offences punishable under the provisions of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act. (PTI)

Cyclone Ockhi death toll climbs to 36

Thiruvananthapuram, Dec 7 /- Three bodies were recovered this morning off the Kerala coast, taking the death toll due to Cyclone Ockhi to 36 even as rescue operations are going on in full swing to trace the 96 missing fishermen. Sources in the state control room monitoring the rescue operations, said with the recovery of three more bodies, the death toll in Kerala due to the cyclone has gone up to 36 and 96 fishermen are yet to be traced. While a body was recovered near Alappuzha

by the Marine enforcement wing, two bodies were found by Coast Guard ship Vaibhav off Alappuzha-Kochi coast this morning, defence sources said. An Air Force aircraft AN-32 flying between Kozhikode-Kochi coasts had sighted a fishing boat with about 15 fishermen this morning following which Navy has sent a Dornier aircraft and ship to the area which is close to Lakshadweep islands, the sources said. Meanwhile, shipping services from Kozhikode to Lakshadweep began today

with around 60 passengers boarding the high speed vessel from Bepore this morning. M V Minicoy, the passenger vessel, berthed at Bepore had suffered some damage in the cyclone following which MMD officials had not granted travel clearance. The high speed vessel arrived at Bepore from the islands to ferry the passengers on Wednesday, the sources said. Around 1,600 passengers were transported from Kochi to various islands of Lakshadweep when the

shipping services resumed on December 5, according to the sources. Shipping services from Kochi to the Union Territory was stopped on November 30 to December 2, causing immense hardships to passengers. From Mangaluru port, M V Amini Divi, will sail for Lakshadweep with 46 passengers on Friday, the sources added. Due to the cyclone, about 1,098 passengers had been stranded in the ports of Kochi, Kozhikode and Mangaluru since November 30. (PTI)

Cab sharing a 'good idea', feels Delhi CM



NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /- Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today termed cab sharing a "good idea" and invited suggestions on how to allow it, keeping in mind the safety of women. Kejriwal's support for cab sharing, which, at present, is being provided by app-based cab aggregators has come amid the Delhi government firming up the City Taxi Scheme 2017. "I agree that ride sharing is a good idea. This is being discussed within the govt. Our concern is women safety. Sharing a ride with strangers may not be safe for women," Kejriwal tweeted.

The chief minister also invited suggestions on how to allow ride sharing and simultaneously ensure women safety. However, the opinion on whether to allow cab sharing or ban it is divided in the absence of any enabling law supporting either. According to sources, Delhi transport minister Kailash Gahlot is against banning cab ride sharing and a final decision over it is expected to be taken today. "The file related to the proposed City Taxi Scheme is pending with the minister's office for his approval. Once the minister takes a decision, the draft will be sent to the Lt

Governor and thereafter, it will be made public for general suggestion", an official said on the condition of anonymity. Cab aggregators operate with contract carriage permits that allow point-to-point transportation with no stop-overs between the origin and the final destination of a ride. In contrast, the stage carriage permit, given for public service transport, allows pick and drop at different stops on a route. The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, does not allow shared rides by cabs that operate under contract carriage permits. It can be done only after amending the Act.