HC directs DDA to handover flat to a family, 39 years after booking

NEW DELHI, JULY 1/--/A family's tireless wait of 39 years for a DDA flat seems to be ending soon, with the Delhi High Court directing the landowning agency to hand over its possession to the allottee while pulling it up for its "non-caring attitude".

The court held cancellation of the allotment of the residential flat to the family as illegal and contrary to law and said the case revealed a "sordid state of affairs" as the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has failed to maintain records.

A Delhi resident had applied for the flat in the DDA's residential scheme in 1979 and was declared successful for the allotment. The man, J C Madan, died in 1984 and his wife and son were pursuing the matter with the authorities.

"The application by the husband of plaintiff no. 1 (wife Kaushalya) and father of plaintiff no.2 dates back to 1979. The family has waited for more than 39 years for allotment of a MIG flat. The record speaks volumes of the complete non-caring attitude of an authority like the DDA. "The demand cum allotment letter has been generated in multiple originals and not a single one of them was sent and delivered to the plaintiffs. Thus, the cancellation is illegal and contrary to law," Justice Prathiba M Singh said. The court granted a decree in favour of Madan's wife for a flat in Dwarka's Sector 13 on payment of Rs 10.16 lakh by them to the DDA by July 31.

It directed the agency to handover the possession of the flat to the family within four weeks of receiving the payment and said in case this flat was not available, they should be given another one.

The court also said that a copy of its order be sent to the Lieutenant Governor and Vice Chairman of DDA for issuing appropriate orders and directions with regard to maintenance of records by the agency DDA and for considering setting up an online feature on its portal to enable proper and complete tracking of current status of files and correspondence.

The DDA had claimed in the court that the family had informed it late about the death of the original allottee and also sent the demand-cum-allotment letter to their address. But it was cancelled due to non-payment of the amount. It had also alleged that the family had not informed it about change of their address. The family, however, had said that they had informed the agency about their new residential address on time.

The court said the original record of the DDA was absolutely sketchy and it only contained few pages and there was no other document in it. "The files of the DDA go to show that it does not preserve (for whatever reason) the correspondence in a proper manner. There is no method by which a citizen can ascertain as to whether his/her letters have reached the DDA and if so how long he/she should wait for a reply. For an ordinary litigant, approaching court is the last resort.

"This entire litigation after the allotment in 2002 could have been completely avoided if there was proper maintenance of correspondence by the DDA. The DDA would have known that there was a change of address through the letter sent by the plaintiffs. Even in 2006, the DDA came out with the policy for considering the individual cases but it still did not consider the plaintiffs case," the court said. (PTI)

Rape victim's father wants death penalty for accused

INDORE (MP), JULY 1/--/The father of an eight-year-old girl, who was allegedly gang-raped in Mandsaur district, today demanded capital punishment for the accused, saying he does not want compensation from the government.

The victim, whose father is a flower vendor in Mandsaur about 200 km from here, was raped on June 26 after having been abducted from outside her school by two men. She had suffered grievous injuries to her neck, face, head and private parts and was admitted to the Maharaja Yeshwantrao (MY) hospital here on June 27.

The girl's father told reporters at the hospital that his family wants death sentence for the accused. "Our family doesn't want compensation from the government. We want the legal process in this case to be completed at the earliest and convicts be awarded death sentence as soon as possible," the distraught man said.

Asked about the state government's decision to extend a financial assistance worth Rs 10 lakh to his family, he said, "Money is not an issue. We only want justice."

He also said he was satisfied with the treatment being provided to his daughter by doctors at MY Hospital. "Doctors from outside are also coming to treat my daughter. She would get the right treatment here. Her condition is expected to improve further in the next couple of days," he said.

The hospital's superintendent had yesterday said the victim's wounds were healing and she was likely to be discharged from the hospital in about two weeks.

The team of doctors from the hospital were being advised by two private paediatricians to ensure the best possible treatment for the minor, as directed by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, he had said.

Meanwhile, Mandsaur District Collector O P Shrivastava told PTI that Rs five lakh from the chief minister's discretionary fund was transferred to the bank account of the victim's father on Saturday to provide immediate financial assistance to the family. Another installment of Rs five lakh will be deposited tomorrow, he said.

After discharge from the hospital, the girl would be provided counselling by a senior psychiatrist so that she can recover from the trauma and lead a normal life.

Earlier, the two accused -- Irfan alias Bhaiyu (20) and Asif (24) -- were arrested in connection with the case and booked under relevant sections of the IPC and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. (PTI)

Muslim teacher translates 'Ramayana' into Urdu

KANPUR (UP), JULY 1/--/ To spread the message of communal harmony and brotherhood, a Muslim teacher and author has translated the Ramayana into Urdu. Mahi Talat Siddiqui, a teacher who hails from the city, said it took her two years to complete the work. She hoped more people from the Muslim community would now become aware of the goodness of Ramayana.

Talat had received a copy of the epic from Badri Narayan Tiwari, a resident of Kanpur, who advised her to translate it into Urdu language so that it becomes more accessible to members of the Muslim community. "Just like the holy texts of all religions, Ramayana also gives us a message of peace and brotherhood," Siddiqui told PTI adding she experienced happiness and peace after writing the text in Urdu. I have focussed on the aspect that the translation shouldn't change the original meaning of the text, she said.

JK BJP reconstitutes disciplinary committee

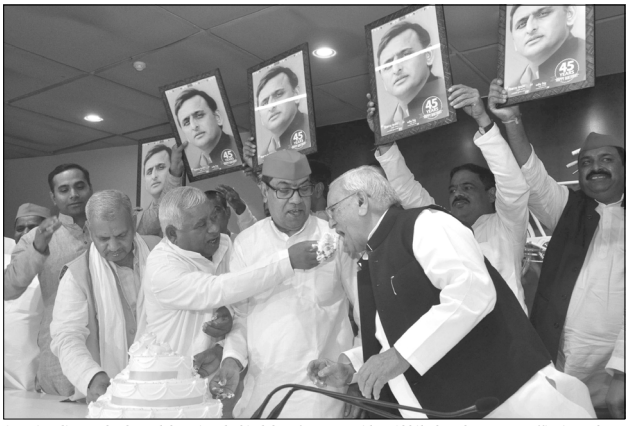
JAMMU, JULY 1/--/The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the BJP today reconstituted its disciplinary committee and nominated senior leader Sunil Sethi as its chairman, a party spokesman said today.

Senior leaders S Varinderjit Singh and Narsingh Das Rajwal were nominated as the members of committee, the spokesman said. He said the team was formed by BJP state chief Ravinder Raina in consultation with state general secretary (organisation) Ashok Kaul and other party leaders.

Terming the constitution of the team as a routine affair , Raina said it was a necessary step so that high standards of ethics and principles are maintained and every party activist carries on his job with the mission Nation First . He said with BJP growing as a party, there was an ever-increasing need to keep a strict vigil on the party related activities of its cadre. The party president expressed hope that the new team would work with full zeal to strengthen the organizational fabric of party. (PTI)

PM condoles Uttarakhand deaths

NEW DELHI, JULY 1/--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi today conveyed his condolences to the families of those killed in a bus accident Uttarakhand's Pauri district. At least 47 people were killed and 11 injured when an overloaded private bus fell into a 200-metre deep gorge near Gween village in the district. The bus was on its way to Ramnagar, according to the state police.



Samajwadi Party leaders celeberating the birthday of party president Akhilesh Yadav at party office in Lucknow on Sunday.

U'khand: 47 killed as bus falls into gorge

DEHRADUN, JULY 1/--/ At least 47 people were today killed and 11 others injured when a bus fell into a deep gorge in Uttarakhand's Pauri district, police said.

The incident occurred near Gween village, close to Dhumakot in the district, when the private bus, carrying 58 passengers, on it way to Ramnagar, fell into a 200-metre deep gorge, Pauri Superintendent of Police Jagat Ram Joshi told PTI. At least 45 people were killed on the spot and 13 others injured. Later, two more succumbed to their injuries at the PHC Dhumakot, where the injured were immediately rushed after rescue teams reached the spot, he said. Two critically injured, out of the remaining 11, were referred to Ramnagar, whereas nine are still under treatment at the Dhumakot PHC, the SP said. Though the exact cause of the accident is not known, but the bus was overloaded, he said. Rescue operations were carried out by police and the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) personnel, he said, adding that all the bodies have been recovered and the injured rescued from the mangled remains of the bus. Governor K K Paul and Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident The chief minister ordered a magisterial probe into the incident, besides announcing a compensation of Rs 2 lakh to the next of kin of those killed and Rs 50,000 for the injured, the CMO said.

Ghatkopar plane crash: UY Aviation claims it had necessary requirements, approvals

MUMBAI, JULY 1/--/Two days after the husband of the co-pilot of the small plane which crashed in suburban Ghatkopar questioned the air-worthiness of the ill-fated plane belonging to the UY Aviation, the company today said that all "necessary" requirements and "approvals" were in place.

In a statement issued today, the Mumbai-based private chartered aircraft firm also said that "it is extending its full co-operation to all the regulatory and law enforcement agencies involved in the aftermath of the tragic crash."

Five people, four crew members including two pilots and a pedestrian, lost their lives when the 12-seater plane on a test flight crashed into an under-construction building on Thursday.

Prabhat Kathuria, the husband of Marya Zuberi, the co-pilot who along with four others was killed in the incident had alleged that the test flight was performed despite adverse weather conditions.

Stating that it wanted to put things in proper perspective, the company clarified that, "before undertaking the test flight, it was ensured that all necessary requirements and approvals were in place."

The aircraft took off from Juhu Aerodrome at approx 12:20 hours IST on June, 28 with two pilots employed by UY Aviation and two technical personnel of MRO Indamer Aviation Private Limited and flew for approximately 40 minutes as per the air test profile, it said adding the contact with Mumbai ATC was reportedly lost at around approx 13:00 hours IST and the wreckage was later found near Ghatkopar.

The aircraft was purchased by the Pune-based Silver Jubilee Aviation Pvt. Ltd from the UP Government and was sent directly to Indamer Aviation for rebuilding before UY Aviation bought the plane, which was lying with Indamer which was tasked to completely rebuild it, the company said.

"It is pertinent to note that this aircraft was not yet operating on the non-schedule operators permit (NSOP) of UY Aviation as it was still to be released to service," the statement clarified.

UY Aviation is extending its full co-operation to all the regulatory and law enforcement agencies involved in the aftermath of the tragic crash and it is "committed to extending all possible help and assistance to the bereaved families of the victims during this time of grief and loss." (PTI)

Let nuns perform sacrament of confession in Church: Kerala outfit

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JULY 1/--/Citing the alleged sexual abuse of a married woman by five priests of a church, women members of a Kerala-based outfit today sought reform of the centuries-old method of sacrament of confession, saying nuns be allowed to perform the penance for women.

Representatives of the Kerala Church Act Action Council, an outfit comprising members from various church denominations who stand for reforms in the Church, said there was a possibility of intimate confessions by women being "misused" in the present form. Last month, a man from Pathanamthitta district accused five priests of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church in Kerala of using his wife's secret confession to blackmail and sexually abuse her.

Vice-chairperson of the Kerala Church Act Action Council, Indulekha Joseph said this incident could not be viewed as an isolated episode and similar incidents might have been taking place across denominations for decades. Joseph termed the practice of only priests performing sacrament of confession an example of gender bias in the Church. "Why are nuns not being allowed to perform the same?

They are also strictly adhering to the church rules and following the prescribed norms. Hence, they should be allowed to perform the penance for women and minors instead of priests," she said.

She claimed that nowhere in the Bible has it been said that only priests should perform the sacrament of confession. "Otherwise, an ancient method like 'Pizhamoolal', in which believers seek forgiveness by recounting their sins in their minds in the presence of a priest, should be reinstated. There is no need for vocal confession," Joseph said.

This, she added, would prevent the misuse of a confession. "The women members of our outfit will stage a dharna in front of the Secretariat here on July 7 demanding government intervention to end the exploitation of women in the name of the religious practice," she told PTI. Joseph, also a lawyer, said the group had raised the same demand last year after a Catholic priest allegedly raped a minor girl in Kannur district's Kottiyoor village. Though a representation was given to the church authorities, no action was taken, she said. The alleged sexual abuse by Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church priests came to light after an audio clip containing the victim's husband's purported conversation with a church official alleging sexual abuse of his wife by the priests was widely circulated on the social media. Last week, a Crime Branch probe was ordered into the case by state police chief Loknath Behara. (PTI)

Italian accuses 'tour guide' of raping her

MUMBAI, JULY 1/--/**A 37-year-old Italian national has accused a man, who claimed to be a tour guide, of raping her in a cab in Mumbai's Juhu area on June 14, senior police said today.**

Police said that the victim, in her complaint filed on Friday, has stated that on the day of the incident, she had boarded a bus as part of a sightseeing tour of Mumbai. "She met the accused during the bus tour on June 14. He introduced himself as a tour guide and the victim hired his services," said an official.

After the bus tour ended at around 7pm in Juhu that day, the accused offered to show the victim the bungalow of film superstar Amitabh Bachchan which is also in the vicinity, police said. "He then promised to drop her to the Colaba hotel where she was staying. A cab was booked by the accused and the complainant has told us that he stopped the vehicle nearby to purchase liquor," the official said. "She has said that the accused forced her to consume alcohol and also touched her inappropriately. He then raped her in the car," the official informed.

Police said that the victim approached the Italian Embassy which asked her to register a case with the local police.

Based on her complaint, a 'Zero FIR' was lodged at Colaba police station which was then transferred to Juhu police station where the incident allegedly occurred. "A rape case has been filed and police teams are on the lookout for the accused. Further investigations are underway," said a Juhu police official. The victim had come to India in December last year and she arrived in Mumbai on June 11. (PTI)

Rijiju to lead Indian delegation for disaster meet in Mongolia

NEW DELHI, JULY 1/--/An Indian delegation led by Union minister Kiren Rijiju will participate in the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR 2018) to be held in Mongolia from July 3.

The four-day meet in Ulaanbaatar is expected to host over 3,000 delegates and participants from Asian and Pacific countries, governmental and inter-governmental organisations, the United Nations and other stakeholders, an official statement said today.

Rijiju, the Union Minister of State for Home, will present the country statement on July 4 and chair a technical session on disaster risk reduction, it said. P K Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, will co-chair a session on 'strengthening disaster resilient infrastructure and urban resilience on July 5. Kamal Kishore, member, National Disaster Management Authority, will be a speaker at the same event and R K Jain, member, NDMA, will present a case study on heat wave during a technical session.

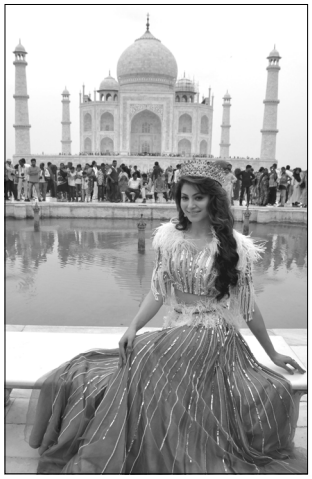
India will also organise a side event during the AMCDRR on cultural heritage and disaster risk management, the statement said. Participants from private sector/the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) will attend an event being jointly organised by the Mongolian Chambers of Commerce and the FICCI. Some Indian companies are also expected to present their firms' activities on disaster risk management, it said. (PTI)

BJP MLA accuses Banda SP of 'patronising' sand mafia

BANDA (UP), JULY 1/--/A BJP MLA from Tindwari assembly constituency here has accused Banda district superintendent of police of patronising local sand mafia and posing threat to his life through them.

MLA Brijesh Kumar Prajapati made the allegations against the woman police officer Shalini in a Facebook post yesterday. "SP Shalini is involved in illegal sand mining in the district. She was involved in unsuccessful bid to kill me in road accidents twice by inciting sand mafias," said the MLA in his Facebook post.

The MLA also tagged a Feb 2 letter written by him against the SP to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. "SP Shalini is conspiring to kill me for a long time. She can get me shot or killed in a road accident. Unsuccessful attempts were made twice to kill me in accident. Anything can happen to me and the SP and the sand mafia, patronised by her will be responsible for this," the MLA wrote in his FB post. He alleged that the SP used to take Rs 10 lakh per months from every mines and also take Rs 5 lakh for appointment of SHOs.



Bollywood Actress Urvashi Routala at Taj Mahal in Agra on Sunday.