

### Kiran Bedi writes to PM, rejects Puducherry CDM's allegations

**PUDUCHERRY, JAN 5 /-** Puducherry Lt Governor Kiran Bedi has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, rejecting chief minister V Narayanasamy and his cabinet colleagues' allegation that her office was a "bottleneck" in implementing welfare schemes.

Bedi shared a copy of the letter with reporters through WhatsApp. The Lt Governor said she wrote the letter after reading reports in local media that Narayanasamy has complained to Modi at a recent meeting about "bottlenecks" his government had to face because of her office. She returned from New Delhi on Thursday. Bedi told the Prime Minister that it was important to bring to her notice that the chief minister and some of his cabinet colleagues have been persistently propagating the allegation...that the Lt Governor's Office has been a bottleneck in implementing welfare schemes. These pronouncements are far from truth and is a false propaganda.

Making her case, Bedi said the proposal for ex-post facto scheme was cleared after due diligence by her office in July and October with the observation to exclude "above poverty line families". Bedi also referred to the fact that "not a single day was lost in clearing the proposal for payment of old-age pension to 1,44,847 beneficiaries" when the files were received by her office in November and December last year.

### Sena slams Goa CM for statement on sharing Mahadayiwater

**PANAJI, JAN 5 /-** The Shiv Sena has hit out at Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar for his remarks on sharing river Mahadayi water with neighbouring states, including Karnataka. Sena's spokesperson Rakhi Prabhudesai-Naik said on Thursday: "The chief minister's agreement to give river Mahadayi water to Karnataka was a shocking move for the coastal state, which trusted Parrikar's leadership...To make India 'Congress-mukt' (Congress free), BJP and Parrikar are all set to make Goa Mahadayi-mukt (Mahadayi free Goa) by stooping down to the lowest level of compromise over the (sharing of) river (water)." Prabhudesai-Naik said in a veiled reference to the upcoming Karnataka Assembly polls.

Parrikar had recently said that sharing the water of the Mahadayi river with other states was "inevitable". "One has to understand that 52 kms of the river runs through Goa, 35 kms through Karnataka and 16 kms through Maharashtra. As such, sharing of water of the Mahadayi river is inevitable as it is passing through all the three states," the chief minister had stated. She said the Sena had expected Parrikar to "fight like a real son of the soil" against all the attempts to share even a drop of water from the Mahadayi river.

## Karnataka CM warns of action against those instigating 'communal sentiments'

**BENGALURU, JAN 5 /-** Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah today warned of stringent action against those instigating "communal sentiments" in the state, as the coastal region remained on the edge over a spate of killings of Hindu activists.

The Opposition BJP was demanding a ban on the Popular Front of India (PFI) and its political wing Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), holding them responsible for killings of Hindu activists in the coastal Dakshina Kannada district. "Not only PFI, we will take action against all communal organisations," Siddaramaiah told newsmen at

Mudigere, near here. "Let them be from any religion - whether it is PFI or Bajrang Dal or Muthalik's organisation (Pramod Muthalik is chief of right wing Sri Rama Sene) or any organisation that instigates communal sentiments and creates communal violence, we will take stringent action against them," he said.

In the latest incident, 28-year-old Deepak Rao, who was associated with the Bajrang Dal and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, was hacked to death by a four-member gang on Wednesday, following which simmering tension prevailed in the district. Hundreds of activists of the VHP and the Bajrang Dal were

today taken into police custody at Mangaluru after they staged a road rucko here protesting Rao's killing. A bandh was observed in Suratkal and Katpallia areas in the coastal district on Thursday.

Asserting that life is precious, the Karnataka chief minister assured strict action against those behind the killing. "We have sympathy towards his family, they need to be consoled and they have to be given compensation. The government will do whatever it has to," he said.

Accusing the BJP of playing "communal politics" for terming the death as that of a Hindu, Siddaramaiah questioned: "...have they taken Hindutva on lease? Aren't we Hindus?" The BJP has claimed that with Rao's killing, the number of Hindu activists who have fallen to the "murderous agenda of jihadi forces" has risen to 22, and targeted the Congress government for being "soft" towards "jihadi forces". Trashing the BJP's charge, the Karnataka government accusing it of trying to polarise the situation ahead of Assembly polls early this year. State home minister Ramalinga Reddy has said 19 people associated with the BJP, RSS or Bajrang Dal have been killed in the state over a period of time, but in at least eight cases, the reasons were personal.



A police officer helping an elderly woman to cross the busy road in front of Secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday.

### Kerala CM praises Kim Jong-un's 'tough' resistance against US

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JAN 5 /-** Veteran CPM leader and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has lavished praise on North Korean leader Kim Jong-un for putting up a "tough" resistance against "imperialist" America better than the Communist-ruled China.

Addressing a CPM district committee meet at Kozhikode on Wednesday, he said North Korea was showcasing a better example in defending "imperialist" forces. The CPM politbureau member also said there was a general criticism that China's fight against imperialist forces was not living up to the expectations of the people. "North Korea has been adopting a tough anti-US stand. North Korea has successfully withstood the pressure exerted by the US," Vijayan said. The chief minister's statement came days after a flex board of the North Korean leader, brought out as part of a programme of CPM in Idukki district, was removed by the party after it triggered a controversy.

The local leaders of the Left party later clarified that Kim's photo was included by "mistake". Kim, in his New Year's Day address, has said North Korea's nuclear weapons can reach anywhere in the US and threatened that he has a nuclear button on his desk. Hitting back, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday warned that his "nuclear button" is "much bigger and more powerful" than the one controlled by Kim as the White House said it was keeping all its options on the table to curb Pyongyang's atomic programme.

### March to 'Kurishumala' turns violent, leads to lathicharge

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JAN 5 /-** A march by the faithful to the Kurishumala (Mount of the Cross) in nearby Bonacaud today turned violent leading to lathicharge, the police said.

Priests and the faithful under the Nesyantinkara Latin Catholic Diocese took on a procession to install a new holy cross in the place of one which got damaged a few months ago. Authorities had on Thursday itself informed the Church that they would not be allowed to enter the forest land in violation of the Forest Conservation Act. Trouble started as the protesters broke the police barricade and started pelting stones at police, the police said. The agitators ran better-sheltered when police used lathis to disperse them. A few policemen and 11 protesters were injured in the melee, the police said. The injured protesters have been admitted to the medical college hospital here. The district authorities held talks with the priests present to find a solution to the issue. The local people consider 'Kurishumala' to be a pilgrimage centre and are faithful with it on the first Friday of every new year.

## Delhi HC turns down O P Chautala's plea to extend parole, has to surrender on Jan 8

**NEW DELHI, JAN 5 /-** The Delhi High Court today dismissed a plea of INLD chief O P Chautala, serving a ten-year jail term in teachers' recruitment scam case, to extend his parole to look after his ailing wife. The 82-year-old former Haryana chief minister will have to surrender on January 8, when his parole is due to expire. Justice Mukta Gupta refused to extend the relief granted to Chautala on December 22, 2017, saying there were other family members to look after his wife, admitted in a hospital here, and he should reserve it for a better time. "At this stage, the court does not see any ground to extend

the parole. The application is dismissed," the court said, adding that Chautala has been able to oversee improvement in the health of his wife and he cannot get parole for indefinite period for this purpose. Senior advocate Sudhir Nandrajog and advocate Amit Sahni, appearing for Chautala, sought extension of parole by four weeks on the grounds that his wife was now admitted in Medanta Medicity Hospital in Gurgaon and he wanted to look after her.

Sensing the mood of the court which was not inclined to grant the relief, the counsel urged it to extend the parole by a week but the prayer was declined. The court had on

December 22 last year granted a two-week parole to Chautala and restrained him from involving in any other activity. It had also stopped him from moving out of Sirsa where his wife was earlier admitted in a hospital. In the petition, the leader had said that his wife Sneh Lata was critically ill and was hospitalised at Sirsa in Haryana and that he wanted to spend time with his wife "in her last days". Delhi Police standing counsel Rahul Mehra had opposed his parole plea, saying the court had earlier cancelled Chautala's parole and furlough on the grounds that he was attending political rallies.

## Andhra CM threatens dharna, fast to promote toilet construction

**AMARAVATI, JAN 5 /-** Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu has set a March 31 deadline for construction of toilets in every home in the state and threatened to sit on a dharna and hunger strike if the target was not achieved.

"I will sit on a silent dharna. I will also observe a day-long fast. At least then you (people) will show some pity (on me) and build toilets," Naidu said, terming sanitary latrine a fundamental birthright. He set March 31 as the deadline for all households in the state to have individual sanitary latrines (ISL) so as to make Andhra Pradesh completely open defecation-free (ODF). "My aim is to have a Swachh Andhra Pradesh, a healthy Andhra Pradesh. I have taken up this task as a social movement," the Chief Minister said, addressing a 'Janambhoomi' meeting at Ichapuram, bordering Odisha, late on Thursday evening. Janambhoomi is a mass contact programme of the TDP-led government.

If you don't build a toilet...if you don't have self-esteem I will come to your village. I will visit your house. I will spend day and night till you all build toilets and only then return to Amaravati (the state capital)," the chief minister said, driving home the need for every household to have a lavatory. "The state's prestige is being lost and your health is getting affected (due to lack of ISL). Let us all think of a Swachh Andhra Pradesh," Naidu said. He exhorted people to undertake "aatmagourava deeksha" (resolve for self-respect) to achieve this. Naidu said every caste and religion should propagate the need for toilets. "If the need for toilets is propagated in temples, churches and mosques, people's belief will increase. It will contribute to the success of the programme."

Of the 13 districts in the state, six had already achieved 100 per cent toilet construction, he said.

## Uttarakhand madrasas yet to install PM's pictures, cites 'religious considerations'

**DEHRADUN, JAN 5 /-** Madrasas in Uttarakhand are yet to comply with a state government order asking educational institutions to install a picture of Prime Minister Narendra Modi inside their premises, citing religious considerations.

The order, issued to all government-run educational institutions after the Home and Law Department last year, asked them to install a

picture of the Prime Minister inside their premises and to take a pledge to implement Modi's vision of building a new India by 2022. "Madrasas in the state have not installed pictures of the PM because of religious considerations as Islam prohibits installation of pictures of living beings in mosques and madrasas," deputy registrar of Uttarakhand Madarsa Board Akhlag Ahmad told news

agency PTI. However, he said the refusal to install the picture of the prime minister should not be interpreted as their opposition to an individual. "They aren't opposed to any individual in particular. It is purely due to religious beliefs. Islam does not permit us to install pictures of living beings or individuals, including religious leaders inside mosques or madrasas," Ahmad said. He said

## J&K govt move to expedite POS devices installation

**JAMMU, JAN 5 /-** The Jammu and Kashmir government has asked Linkwell Telesystems Pvt Ltd to complete 100 per cent installation of point of sales (POS) devices in 20 districts by January 30 to help 6,000 fair price shops become fully functional in those areas of the state.

The state government is looking at completing the process of electronic public distribution system (e-PDS) in the state by March 2018. State minister for food, civil supplies and consumer affairs Choudhary Zulfiqar Ali asked the authorities of Linkwell Telesystems to complete 100 per cent installation of POS devices in 20 districts of the state by January 30, 2018 so that 6,000 fair price shops can be made fully functional in those places, according to an official spokesperson said. All said the process of installation of POS devices in border districts of Leh and Kargil shall also be taken up soon.

The government is "putting in strenuous efforts to complete the process of electronic public distribution system (e-PDS) in the state by March 2018", the minister said while chairing a meeting of officers of Jammu Division convened to review the progress on streamlining of the ration distribution in the next week.

## Public Wi-Fi hotspots set up at 204 rural BSNL Exchanges

**JAMMU, JAN 5 /-** In a major push to digitisation in the rural areas of Jammu and Kashmir, public Wi-Fi hotspots were set up at 204 rural BSNL exchanges in 21 districts.

"To give impetus to telecom services in rural and remote areas with development of Wi-Fi infrastructure, the Department of Telecommunications through USOF has set up public Wi-Fi hotspots in 204 rural BSNL telephone exchanges of various districts," an official spokesman said. This initiative of the department implemented through Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) is aimed at to equip these rural telephone exchanges with the internet facility which has become an integral part of an innovative and technologically-driven society.

## Himachal govt to set up women helpline

**SHIMLA, JAN 5 /-** Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur today announced he will set up round-the-clock women helpline to check crime against them. Thakur said special crime cells would be set up. The chief minister's office would conduct day-to-day monitoring of the women-related cases and ensured action would be taken within 48 hours, he said. "There would be zero tolerance for crime against women," the newly elected minister stated. He said stringent measures would also be taken to curb drug menace and corruption in the state, besides cyber crimes. Thakur also sought cooperation from the state

### REPAIRING WORKS

Tender under Notice No. 1/KGPWCAR-EARTHQUAKE-20, Date: 04.01.2018 is invited by the AMCC, South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur Workshop for and on behalf of the President of India for following work. Name of the Work: Repairing of wheel set earthing equipments of LHB coaches as per RFP. Spec. No. EADS 101. Rev-C. AM-1, COP-3. Quantity: 200 Numbers. Place of Work: Carriage Shop of Kharagpur Workshop, South Eastern Railway, Post: Kharagpur, Dist.: Paschim Medinipur, Pin-751001. Tender Value: Rs. 26,60,000/- Earnest Money: Rs. 53,200/- Contract Period: 12 months from the date of issue of L.O.A. Cost of Tender: Rs. 3,000/- Closing Date & Time of Tender: 15.02.2018 at 15:00 hrs. Detail Tender Document is available in the e-Tender Portal (www.etenderportal.gov.in) South Eastern Railway We serve with a smile

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