

B'Ed 'shops' told to give affidavits: Javadekar

CHANDIGARH, JUNE 2/-

The Centre has begun clamping down on 'shops' being run in the name of B Ed colleges by asking them for affidavits listing information on course structure and the like. Union minister Prakash Javadekar said here today.

About 7,000 colleges across the country have sent the affidavits and many more are in the pipeline, the human resource development (HRD) minister said.

The Centre has sought affidavits from B Ed colleges with complete information about their course structures and criteria for admissions. Javadekar said while noting that many colleges were being run as 'shops' in the name of providing B Ed course to students.

Javadekar, who was addressing the concluding day of a workshop on Innovative and Best Practices in School Education, organized by the HRD ministry and Punjab's Department of School Education, said states had been given the authority to decide whether or not to detain students failing in 5th and 8th standard exams.

He highlighted the need to impart education in native languages besides English, accountability of teachers, students as well as parents in shaping the future of the students.

The inculcation of the humanitarian values, gender sensitivity and dignity of labour is also a significant aim of the education besides subject knowledge and skill development," he said. Herculean efforts were needed, he said, to carry out a revamp of the education system and ensure that every child is imparted quality education.

The minister also batted for improvement in the infrastructure of the government schools. He cited Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas as good examples of quality education "which are worth emulating". (PTI)

JK gears up to fight 'bedroom jihadis' in virtual battleground

SRINAGAR, JUNE 2/-

After years of fighting armed militants with bullets and bricks, security agencies in Jammu and Kashmir are now facing a new enemy bedroom jihadis who manipulate social media from the comfort of their homes to spread rumours and influence youths.

It's a new battleground and a new battle, say senior officers. Far removed from conventional weaponry and the conventional fighting zones of the warren of narrow streets and forests, these new age jihadis use computers and smartphones to wage war from just about anywhere in Kashmir or outside, safe inside their homes or out on the streets, from a nearby café even just a convenient roadside.

An immediate worry for security agencies is the Amanath Yatra that starts June 29. Armed with access to platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter, they fear that the new band of jihadis could instigate communal riots in the Valley ahead of the 40-day pilgrimage to the high altitude shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva.

"It is a virtual battleground where a bloody war is fought, but with words. However, this has an

impact on the young minds," said a senior police officer.

Many officers felt that false rumours could be floated in Jammu in the coming days, leaving authorities with little time to react.

"Anyone, while sitting on his bed or sofa, can plant this news in one of the thousand chat groups and the entire state can plunge into communal divide," said a police officer. The social chat groups are active not just in Jammu and Kashmir. They are seeing participation from youngsters in the national capital, rest of the country and abroad as well. Officers cite the recent example of a constable from the Kashmiri Pandit community to explain how difficult it is to tackle the unseen enemy. The constable went missing and his body was found in north Kashmir's Kupwara, about 90 km from here, after a thorough search.

But even before the investigations began, people in the Pandit community posted stories that he had been kidnapped by militants and had died a martyr's death.

The impact of social media on the case was so profound that it began to be probed as a militancy-related case. However, a Special Inves-

tigating Team (SIT), constituted by Director General of Police SP Vaid, later found that the constable had been murdered by a fellow policeman whom he had allegedly sodomised and threatened to make it public.

Another instance of trouble being engineered was a fake picture of a pond around the shrine of Goddess Raganya Devi, also known as Kheer Bhawani, being shared on WhatsApp groups ahead of the annual Kheer Bhawani melā being celebrated today.

According to the post, the water of the pond had turned black, which according to folklore indicates inauspicious times for Kashmir. The government stepped in and released official photographs in an attempt to quell the rumours. They also tried to find those responsible.

"But it is like finding a needle in a haystack. Millions of people are on social networking sites and it is too difficult to locate that one person," a police officer said.

In the Valley, social media access had been controlled to a large extent after authorities clamped down on 22 websites.

While many users in the Valley found a way out through virtual pri-

rate networks (VPN), they found it difficult to share pictures or videos because of the clamp down on 3G and 4G networks.

A police officer recalled that many hartal calls attributed to separatist leaders last year actually came from students or employees who did not want to attend work.

"The hartal calls used to spread like a jungle fire even leaving separatists wondering at times whether they actually had given them," he said. Most youngsters picked up for questioning were let go with a warning. Given the government's push for Digital India in other parts of the country and the rapid strides in technology, the state government has received severe flak for its ban on the world wide web.

Security agency officers feel it is necessary to keep 'bedroom jihadis' at bay so that they can concentrate on nabbing or eliminating terrorists with real guns. The government has warned administrators of these chatting groups or social networking sites against hosting any incriminating material on their platform.

However, officers felt that a few more curbs and punitive action would help in reining in such 'bedroom jihadis'. (PTI)



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti offered milk to the holy spring during the annual, 'Mela Kheer Bhawani' festival of Kashmiri pundits, being celebrated with religious fervour and gaiety in Kashmir valley on Friday.

Ahmedabad cops to use mobile app to penalise traffic violators

AHMEDABAD, JUNE 2/-

In a bid to bring transparency in the collection of fine from traffic offenders, the city police have decided to do away with the system of collecting on-the-spot cash penalty and instead use a mobile app to issue e-challans.

The project will be implemented on a pilot basis for a month starting tomorrow.

"Under this pilot project, the city traffic police will not collect cash penalty from the offenders on the spot for the next one month," an order issued yesterday by the city traffic police said. According to the police officials, if the new system becomes a success, then it would be implemented on a permanent basis. "Instead of the manual procedure, wherein traffic police usually issue a memo to an offender and collect the penalty on the spot, policemen will now be required to use 'ATP' app," said the order.

The police are required to take photos of the traffic offenders and upload them on the app. The ATP (Ahmedabad Traffic Po-

lice) mobile application is directly connected with the police control room, which would then generate an e-challan to that offender. Additional commissioner of police (AdCP), Traffic, Sudhir Kumar Desai said, "Our aim is to promote non-contact enforcement for better transparency. Instead of issuing memos on the spot and take cash penalty, policemen will now take a photo of the vehicle's registration number and send it to our server using ATP app."

"We will then generate an e-challan and deliver it to the address of that offender who can either pay the fine online or contact a nearest police station to pay it. This drive would continue for one month, starting tomorrow," he added. To stop lower rank policemen from penalising the offenders using memo or challan books issued earlier, all such policemen, including police constables, head constables and Assistant Sub Inspectors, have been directed to deposit their memo books at their respective police stations today.

KCR announces women welfare schemes on Telangana formation day

HYDERABAD, JUNE 2/-

Marking the third anniversary of formation of Telangana state, Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu today announced schemes for well being of pregnant women and single women.

Addressing a ceremonial parade to mark the Telangana formation day at the Parade Grounds in Secunderabad, the TRS chief also announced distribution of 84 lakh Sheep with an investment of Rs 5,000 crores.

"We are going to implement two schemes - distribution of Rs 15,000 worth KCR kits aimed at the well being of mother and child, (which) will come into force from tomorrow and disbursement of pension of Rs 1,000 per month for single women, who have no support, will be launched on June 4," Rao said.

Under the KCR kits' scheme, pregnant women will be given financial assistance of Rs 12,000 in three phases, he said, adding that a sum of Rs 1,000 will be given additionally in case of delivery of a baby girl.

"The idea is to encourage more and more deliveries in government hospitals, reduce the infant mortality rate and female foeticide," Rao said.

Rao said his government will ensure that the welfare of Dalits and Kurumas communities will be

given 75 per cent subsidy to set up sheep units.

"I am happy to announce that we are buying and distributing 84 lakh sheep with an investment of Rs 5,000 crores to Yadavs and Kurumas families.

"This scheme will result in accumulation of wealth worth Rs 20,000 crore for these families. By taking up sheep breeding on a large scale, not only Telangana state will become self-sufficient in its need for meat, but will be in a position to export to other states and countries," the chief minister said.

Rao said his government is spending Rs 40,000 crore on as many as 35 welfare schemes.

The CM cited a CAG report quoting that Telangana state stood first in revenue growth in the country by recording 17.82 per cent rate in the financial year 2016-17.

"I declare it proudly that it is due to proper policy planning, financial prudence and discipline of the government policies that the growth rate was achieved," he said.

On power sector, Rao said the government is setting up new power plants to make the state surplus in power generation in future.

"We are making serious efforts to provide 24-hour round-the-clock uninterrupted quality power supply to farmers from this summer itself," the CM said.

On Mission Bhagiratha programme,

which is aimed at providing drinking water to every household in the state, Rao said by end of this December, river water will reach all villages.

He said the government has formulated several schemes to strengthen the rural economy.

"A comprehensive plan is formed to develop the agricultural economy while offering financial support to the agro-based activities and thereby putting the villages on the progressive path," the chief minister said.

He said for the first time in the country Rs 17,000 crore crop loans of 35-30 lakh farmers are waived in the state.

"Under Mission Kakatiya programme, which is aimed at revival of irrigation in the state, 15,000 farmers were rejuvenated in the last two years while work is on to revive 5,000 more tanks this year.

"Despite attempts by certain vested interests, the government is bent upon completing all the irrigation projects, by allocating Rs 25,000 crore per year in budgets.

We are going to give Rs 8,000 per acre for two crops from the next year towards the input expenditure," he added.

Rao ruled out scarcity of seed and fertiliser, saying the government is giving huge subsidies for paddy houses and Green House cultivation. (PTI)



Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu presenting Telangana State Level Awards-2017 on the occasion of Telangana State Formation Day at Parade Grounds in Secunderabad on Friday.

Erosion of vote bank, growing clout of Bheem Army major worries for BSP

PRADIEP KAPOOR

LUCKNOW: BSP supremo and former chief minister Mayawati is making a serious bid to reinvent herself and her party after the humiliating performance in the assembly polls.

Much significance is being attached to Mayawati's participation in the lunch hosted by Mrs Sonia Gandhi to forge opposition unity for Presidential election. By attending the high profile meeting with other opposition leaders, she was demonstrating her keenness to end her isolation. Significantly enough she has also had a meeting with her so far arch rival Akhilesh Yadav.

There are indications that with the mediation of BJD president and former Bihar chief Minister Lalu Yadav, Mayawati and Akhilesh are ready to cooperate to take on the BJP, which has emerged as the main force in the state by grabbing 925 seats in the assembly. Going by the arithmetic, if Congress, SP and BSP votes had

been combined then BJP would have got only 90 seats, but then politics is not governed by simple arithmetic. Lalu has promised Mayawati that his party would send her to Rajya Sabha as her party has only 19 seats in the UP assembly. If Lalu has his way, Akhilesh and Mayawati are expected to address joint rallies in the near future as part of a grand design to take on the BJP although it is too early to reach any conclusion.

Siddiqui has released several audio tapes seeking to damage Mayawati's credibility on the issue of funds collection. She had already been facing a serious charge of selling party tickets to higher bidders for both the assembly and Lok Sabha polls. As part of a damage control exercise, Mayawati has brought back a large number of middle rung Muslim leaders, who she had sacked earlier. Some of them had contested the assembly polls on Samajwadi Party tickets. The re-induction of sacked leaders and workers shows Mayawati's desperation to save her vote bank and revive the party to take on BJP

in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Her visit to Saharanpur to meet the families of Dalits who were victims of the recent caste violence is very significant from this perspective. It is for the first time in many years that she decided to visit a trouble spot of caste-communal violence and this is seen as a move to reassure voters that she is very much with them. In her address there, she blamed the BJP government for the violence and assured the Dalits that she would fight for them.

Observers feel Mayawati is scared of the rising popularity of Bheem Army chief Chandrababoo Naidu and the growing influence of his team over Dalits, which was clearly demonstrated through the impressive dharna in Delhi recently. She realizes that she is on a slippery ground as her vote share is on the decline and in view of the massive mobilization of Dalits by Bheem Army which could be a potential threat to her party in the near future. (IPA)

Kerala CM pay tribute to IAF pilot killed in Sukhoi jet crash

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUNE 2/-

A pall of gloom descended on the body of Flight Lt Sa Sandeep, one of the two IAF pilots who was killed after their Sukhoi-30 fighter jet crashed in Assam on May 23, was brought to his home here today. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan paid tributes to the late officer and spent some time with the bereaved parents.

The parents had gone to Kerala's Tezpur airbase as soon as they had heard about the incident and returned yesterday. The last rites of the 25-year-old IAF pilot are expected to be held at the family's ancestral home in Kochikode tomorrow. Senior Air Staff officer Headquarters, Southern Air Command, Air Marshal Rajiv Sachdeva also paid tributes to the pilot and consoled the parents. Devasom minister Kadakkampally Surendran was among those who visited the pilot's home here and paid their respects.

The wreckage of the Sukhoi-30 MKI jet was found on May 26 in a dense forest area in Arunachal Pradesh after a three-day search operation. The plane had taken off from Tezpur airbase at around 10:30 am on May 23 and had gone off the radar around 11:10 am. It was on a routine training mission as part of a two-aircraft formation. The wreckage of the jet was spotted from air on May 28, and search teams could reach the crash site only on May 28 due to inclement weather after which the black box was recovered.

Kerala to keep away from water drawing trees

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUNE 2/-

The CPIMD LDF government has decided not to cut softwood trees at a stretch. Government was committed as per an agreement to supply softwood to cut softwood trees at a stretch. Government was committed as per an agreement to supply softwood to cut softwood trees at a stretch.

However, he said it was not possible for the government to cut softwood trees at a stretch. Government was committed as per an agreement to supply softwood to cut softwood trees at a stretch. Government was committed as per an agreement to supply softwood to cut softwood trees at a stretch.

Farmers' stir turns violent in MP town Six bikes set ablaze

DHAR, JUNE 2/-

A protest by farmers in Sardarpur town in the district turned violent this morning as six motorcycles were set on fire and two shops were damaged after an argument broke out between the agitating farmers and shopkeepers over keeping the shops shut, police said.

The incident took place when the farmers reached the market area in Sardarpur town, around 40 kms from here, to close the shops as part of their ongoing agitation, which was launched in parts of the state yesterday.

A group of farmers reached around 8 am to force shut the shops in Sardarpur local market. However, an argument broke out between the agitating farmers and the shopkeepers," Dhar Superintendent of Police Virendra Singh said.

Following the argument, six motorcycles belonging to the farmers were burnt, while two shops were damaged," he added.

Singh said that police force has been deployed there and the situation is under control.

South Eastern Railway

Metro Railway, Kolkata
KOLKATA'S PRIDE
Replacement of 2.3 MVA, 11KV/604V transformer
By Chief Electrical Engineer/Project, Metro Railway, 337, J.L. Nehru Road, Metro East Bhawan (Old Road), Kolkata-700017 for and on behalf of the President of India before 15.00 hrs. on the date mentioned against No. & Description of work: (1) 114-Ele-G-AGP-16-17-20R: Miscellaneous Maintenance Contract under SSEE (P) South, Kharagpur. (2) 114-Ele-G-KGP-17-18-01: Electrical works for Upgradation/development of RPF training centre. Tender Value: ₹ 43,13,530/- for Sl. No. 1 & ₹ 15,47,111/- for Sl. No. 2. EMD: ₹ 98,280/- for Sl. No. 1 & ₹ 30,810/- for Sl. No. 2. Date of Opening: 05.07.2017 at 15.00 hrs. of 05.07.2017. Interested persons should visit the website: www.reps.gov.in for full details, description, specifications, the tender and submit their bids online. (pg-245)