

Maharashtra minister rubbishes report of assault on his PA

MUMBAI, NOV 24 /- Maharashtra social justice minister Rajkumar Badole on Friday rubbished reports that his personal assistant was assaulted in his office by a proprietor of an unaided school in Osmanabad district over bribery charges.

Arun Nithure, proprietor of an unaided Ashram school in Osmanabad district had on September 12 alleged that a personal assistant of Badole had demanded Rs 10 lakh bribe from him to approve his proposal. There were reports in a section of media that there was a physical altercation between Badole's personal assistant and Nithure, when the latter had gone to the minister's third floor office in Mantralaya to inquire about the status of his case.

In his written response to a question by NCP's Hemant Takle, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Council Dhananjay Munde and others, Badole, however, said, "No personal assistant of the minister was assaulted." Reacting to the media report, leader of opposition in legislative assembly Radhakrishna Vikhe-Patil had earlier said: "If the beating up of the personal assistant of the minister for work not done even after payment of Rs 10 lakh is anything to go by, the day is not far when a similar fate could befall the minister."

AMUSU seeks SC's intervention ahead of VHP's Dharam Sabha

ALIGARH, NOV 24 /- The All India Muslim University Students' Union has sought the Supreme Court's intervention as the VHP is holding a Dharam Sabha for the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya on Sunday, despite the case being sub-judice.

The AMUSU at a press conference on Friday evening announced that they were writing to the Chief Justice of India, the Uttar Pradesh Governor and the chief minister regarding threat to law and order in the state in view of the Vishva Hindu Parishad's Dharam Sabha, a gathering of saints to be held in Ayodhya on Sunday. AMUSU secretary Huzefa Amir said: "Already an atmosphere of fear prevails in

different parts of the state since people are fearing that if the VHP proceeds with their temple construction programme, it would definitely disturb the peace in the state."

Amir said by challenging the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in this matter, the Centre and the state government would be held morally accountable in case there is any breakdown in the law and order situation.

The AMUSU has urged the CJI "not to allow the forces of disruption to play around with the Constitution of India on the pretext that the temple issue is a matter of faith and goes

beyond the jurisdiction of the country's existing legal system". A day before the Dharam Sabha called by the Vishva Hindu Parishad, Ayodhya was virtually turned into a fortress with multiple layers of security and deployment of drones to keep an eye on possible mischief-mongers.

A UP Police spokesperson said one additional DGP, one deputy inspector general (DIG), three senior superintendents of police (SSPs), 10 additional SPs, 21 deputy SPs, 160 inspectors, 700 constables, 42 companies of PAC, five companies of RAR, ATS commandos and drones were deployed here.



Tourists capturing their beautiful movements at Kovalam Beach, in Thiruvananthapuram

Man dies after bike skids on Signature Bridge

Two medical students died on same spot on Friday

NEW DELHI, NOV 24 /- A 24-year-old man was today killed and his cousin injured after their motorcycle skidded and hit a road divider on the Signature Bridge, a day after two medical students died in a crash there, police said. The deceased, Shankar, was riding the motorcycle and his cousin Deepak (17) was riding pillion, a senior police officer said, adding that the duo was on their way to the northeast district from Nangloi. The Timarpur police station was informed about the accident at 8.20 am, he said. They were rushed to a nearby hospital, where Shankar was declared brought dead and Deepak was treated for knee injuries, he added. The deceased was a resident of Ghaziabad and worked as a salesman, while Deepak lives in Shalimar Bagh, the officer said. Deepak told police that both of them were wearing helmets but due to the impact, Shankar's came off and his head hit the divider resulting in severe injuries, he added. With two accidents in two days and reports of people scaling its boundaries to take selfies, the Signature Bridge has been in the limelight for all the wrong reasons since its inauguration by chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on November 4. On Friday morning, two medical students on a bike were killed after ramming into a divider and falling 30 feet.

Chief minister Kejriwal has expressed concern and appealed to Delhiites especially the youth to exercise caution while taking selfies at the Signature Bridge and to not drive fast on it. The Signature Bridge over the Yamuna river is double the height of Qutub Minar and was completed after a delay of over 14 years.

Civilian injured in firing incident succumbs to injuries in Budgam

SRINAGAR, NOV 24 /-

A civilian, injured in a firing incident near a security forces camp in Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, succumbed to injuries today, officials said.

Ishtaq Ahmad Ganai was injured in the firing near the camp of Army's 50 Rashtriya Rifles unit at Chattergam area of Budgam in central Kashmir on Friday, a police official said. He said Ganai succumbed at the SMHS hospital here Saturday morning. Local residents had accused the Army of opening unprovoked fire that led to Ganai getting injured. However, Srinagar-based defence spokesperson Col Rajesh Kalia said the Army did not open fire and the civilian was injured in a "terrorist committed atrocity".

"In a case of terrorist committed atrocity, Ishtaq Ahmad Ganai of Magraypora was shot at by the terrorists, 500-600 metres away from Army camp at Chhatargam," Kalia said in a statement. He said when the Army troops heard the sound of the firing, the Quick Reaction Team immediately rushed towards the direction of the fire to find out what was happening. "When the party reached the spot, they saw Ishtaq in a pool of blood. He had bullet injuries, one in head and the other in leg and was immediately taken to Chhatargam hospital from where doctors shifted him to SMHS," Kalia said.

The defence spokesperson said the reports of "the individual lobbing a grenade on the Army camp and the Army retaliation are completely baseless".

Civilian killings must end in Kashmir: Tarigami

JAMMU, NOV 24 /- Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPM) leader M Y Tarigami Saturday demanded an immediate end to civilian killings in the Kashmir Valley.

"The unabated civilian killings in Kashmir must be a cause of concern for every right-thinking person in the state and the country," Tarigami said. Three civilians, including a 14-year-old girl, were killed in Kashmir in the last three days. Expressing heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, he said the killings were "highly condemnable".

"Killing of civilians can never be a solution to any problem. Whether a civilian is killed by the bullet from one side or the other side, it is a loss of precious human life," the Communist leader said.

Raje govt patronised liquor, land and sand mafia in Rajasthan: Gehlot

UDAIPUR, NOV 24 /- Senior Congress leader Ashu Gehlot today attacked Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje on the issue of corruption and claimed that the state government led by her patronised liquor, land and sand mafia.

The AICC general secretary, who is contesting December 7 elections from Jodhpur's Sardarpura seat, is conducting electioneering in Mewar region for the party. "No government in Rajasthan had ever patronised any mafia but the Vasundhara Raje government did that. Land, liquor and sand mafia flourished in her rule in connivance with officers and I blame that money has reached up to the top level," Gehlot told newsmen here. Raje bowed before the party president but never met people in five years. Instead of bowing before Shah, she should have taken care of the people of Rajasthan who gave such a huge mandate in 2013 election, he said.

Gehlot said in 2013 election, he was betrayed people, the former Rajasthan chief minister said.

Gehlot alleged that the BJP government in five years only worked to weaken schemes launched by former Congress government and stalled various important projects in the state. During the Congress government rule, there were 25 lakh people engaged in MGNREGA works, but now the number has reduced to just 2.5 lakh, he said. Gehlot alleged that the government spent crores of rupees on Resurgent Rajasthan and now the government should disclose that how much investment was made in the state in five years.

The Resurgent Rajasthan summit was held in 2015 to attract investment in the state. Gehlot said the Ram temple was just an election issue for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP uses the name of Lord Rama during elections only. They have no genuine intention and they have been exposed before public now, he said. Gehlot is scheduled to address public rally in Chittorgarh, Bagore in Bhilwara, Ramsar in Nasirabad (Ajmer).

At least 25 die as bus plunges into canal in Karnataka

BENGALURU, NOV 24 /-

A private bus carrying mostly schoolchildren, fell into a canal in Karnataka's Mandya district today, killing at least 25 people, police said.

The bus completely submerged after falling into VC canal at Kankanamaradi of Pandavapura taluka, the said, adding bodies of 23 victims was fished out. Most of the killed were children, police sources said, adding they were returning home after a half-day at school. Long waits from the grief-stricken inconsolable kin of the victims followed as the rescue team fished out bodies one after another. The district authorities roped in a crane to bring out the bus from the canal.

Police had a difficult time controlling the crowd as people living nearby thronged the accident site. Locals said they rescued three people even before the police reached the spot. "I just came to know that a bus has fallen in a canal and 25 people have died. That is the latest report," said deputy chief minister G Parameshwar, expressing grief over the tragedy. Cancelling all his official engagements, chief minister HD Kumaraswamy rushed to the spot where rescue operations were on full swing.

Central team deputed to access damage caused by Cyclone holds talks with TN CM

CHENNAI, NOV 24 /-

A Central team deputed to assess the damage caused by Cyclone Gaja in Tamil Nadu today held discussions with chief minister K Palaniswami here.

The seven-member team is headed by Daniel E Richard, a senior official in the Union home ministry in New Delhi. The team members met the chief minister at the Secretariat and held discussions with him, an official release said. Tamil Nadu ministers D Jayakumar, C Ve Shanmugam and RB Udayakumar and senior officials including chief minister G Jayaraman were present during the meeting. While five members of the team had arrived from Delhi on Friday, two others who are stationed here, have joined them. The officials belong to various central departments such as finance, power and agriculture. The team is expected to complete its assessment in three days starting with a visit to Tiruchirappalli. During his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Thursday, Palaniswami sought about Rs 15,000 crore as central assistance towards relief and rehabilitation activities in cyclone-hit districts of the state. He also asked Modi to depute a Central team to assess the damage. Cyclone 'Gaja' had crossed the Tamil Nadu coast early on November 16 between Nagapattinam and Vedaravani, about 300 km from Chennai. It left behind a trail of destruction in Nagapattinam district and also in several other districts. The cyclone has claimed 63 lives, with Nagapattinam, Tiruvavur, Thanjavur and Pudukottai being the worst affected districts.

State Notes

Militants kidnap, kill ex-SPO in Shopian

SRINAGAR, NOV 24 /- A former special police officer (SPO) was killed by suspected militants on Friday after they kidnaped him in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said. The bullet-riddled body of former SPO Basharat Ahmad Wazir was recovered, hours after he was kidnaped, a police official said. Besides the former SPO, two other persons were also kidnaped by unidentified gunmen. The police official said that the two other kidnaped persons - Zahid Ahmad Wazir and Reyaz Ahmad Wazir - were released by the suspected militants. Militants killed two persons - one shot dead and another terminated in ISIS-style execution - in South Kashmir last week on the charge of being informers of security forces.

Flesh trader racket busted, 3 held

THANE, NOV 24 /- Three persons, including two women, were arrested for allegedly running a prostitution racket at Mira Road in Thane district of Maharashtra, police said today. The arrests were made by the Thane district rural police following a raid at a massage parlour-cum-saloon at Mira Road on Thursday, in which five girls were also rescued. Assistant superintendent of police Atul Kulkarni said nine women hiding in secret rooms at the parlour were also rescued during the operation. "Police had got a tip-off that a saloon in the locality was running a prostitution racket. Swinging into action, police conducted a raid at the saloon and arrested its three operators, including two women," he said. "During the raid, five girls found in the parlour and nine women hiding in secret rooms there were rescued," police said.

Drug peddler held in J&K

JAMMU, NOV 24 /- The Jammu and Kashmir Police has arrested a drug peddler with intoxicant capsules in Samba district of the state today. A police party during patrolling on the highway intercepted a man and recovered 550 intoxicant capsules from his possession, they said. The accused was identified as Bashir Ahmad alias Imran of Uttar Pardesh, they said. A case was registered at Police Station Samba and investigations were taken up, they added.

Farmer's buffaloes worth Rs 4 lakh blooded in UP

MUZAFFARNAGAR NOV 24 /- Six armed men allegedly looted buffaloes of a farmer worth Rs 4 lakh after holding him and his wife hostage in Shamli district's Gangeru village, police said today. The incident took place Friday night. The farmer, Gaffar Ahmed, was sleeping near the bovines when the six men came in a vehicle. They held him and his wife hostage and took the buffaloes. The police have launched a hunt to nab the accused.

YSRC, TDP voters hold key to re-election of Telangana Cong chief

HYDERABAD, NOV 24 /- Voters who backed the YSR Congress and Telugu Desam party (TDP) in the 2014 elections are likely to be the deciding factor in Huzurnagar constituency, from where Telangana Congress chief Uttam Kumar Reddy is seeking re-election.

YSRC, which has chosen not to contest the December seven Telangana Assembly election, and TDP candidates polled more than 25,000 votes each in this segment in the previous poll. The TDP of Andhra Pradesh chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu is a partner in the Congress-led alliance along with CPI and TJS, named 'Praja Kutami' (People's Front), for the upcoming Telangana election giving a boost to Reddy's electoral prospects. But, at the same time, YSRC leaders said the supporters of their outfit would not support Reddy as the Congress has allied with TDP, its arch-rival in neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, and their votes would go to the TRS.

Reddy, a former pilot in Indian Air

Force, is betting on the "anti-incumbency factor" and the support of the alliance partners while his opponent Saidi Reddy (TRS), an NRI and IT professional, is counting on beneficiaries of various government schemes in the constituency. Uttam Kumar Reddy won the Huzurnagar seat by a margin of 23,924 votes over his nearest TRS rival Kasoju Sankaramma in the previous election in which YSRC contestant G Srikanth Reddy polled 29,657 votes, and Telugu Desam Party candidate Swamy Goud Vangala 25,353 votes.

"Our cadre and YSRC sympathisers would never vote for Congress as it tied up with TDP which is our arch-rival in Andhra Pradesh. So we would vote for the TRS candidate. And as such voters of this constituency lost faith in sitting MLA Uttam Kumar Reddy as many housing projects which were initiated when he was the housing minister (in undivided Andhra Pradesh) either did not take off or bills have not been paid for beneficiaries," Srikanth Reddy told news agency PTL.



Telangana Congress Working President A Revanth Reddy addressing media persons during Press Meet, organised by Telangana State Union of Working Journalists in Hyderabad on Saturday.

Punjab Police launch search operation after villager spots suspicious men

CHANDIGARH, NOV 24 /- The Punjab Police launched a massive search operation in Shadipur village of Pathankot district after a local claimed to have seen six suspicious men.

The search operation was carried out on Friday evening after a farmer claimed to have seen six suspicious persons who were carrying backpacks,

police said today. He immediately informed the police which conducted a search operation in sugarcane fields of the area to trace the suspects. We have carried out search operation on Friday evening and as a preventive measure, we will again launch search operation in some more villages on Saturday, Pathankot senior superintendent of police (SSP) Vivek Sheel Soni told news agency PTL. So far, nothing suspicious has been found, he said.

Meanwhile, in another incident, police also recovered a car near Muthi village of Pathankot after its occupants abandoned it. Police believed that the car, bearing Jammu and Kashmir registration number, belonged to some

bovine smugglers. All the police check posts were alerted in Pathankot district to stop the car on Friday night after getting an input about the bovine smugglers. However, four car occupants avoided two police check posts near Kollian village and Ujhi area. But later, they abandoned the vehicle near Muthi village when they found it was not possible to give a slip to the police check posts.

Police have also traced the owner of the car which is registered in the name of one Hassandin of Kathua area.

A raid was also conducted at his house but he was not found, police official said. Nothing suspicious has been found from the vehicle, police said. Meanwhile, extra

vigil is being maintained in the security agencies in the border district. Security agencies in Pathankot and adjoining districts have been on alert for four persons, including a woman, hired SUV from Jammu, had snatched the vehicle from its driver at gunpoint near Madhopura area here a couple of days back. However, police was yet to trace the vehicle.