

## INLD threat to stop Punjab buses in Haryana dangerous: SAD

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 29 /- /- Shriromani Akali Dal today took strong notice of the "threat" issued by the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD), an opposition party in Haryana, to stop Punjab buses in Haryana on July 10.

INLD has threatened that its youth workers would stop the Punjab Roadways buses in Haryana on July 10 demanding construction of the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) canal. SAD, the former ruling party in Punjab, termed INLD's act as unfortunate, illegal, unconstitutional and highly dangerous. In a statement released here, the SAD secretary and spokesperson Daljit Singh Cheema said it was surprising that a responsible political party was giving call for such a program which could directly result in bloody clashes between the people of Punjab and Haryana. Cheema, the former state education minister, said the decision of INLD is a reminder of 1982 Asia Games during which people from Punjab, particularly Sikhs, who were going to witness these games were dragged out of their vehicles and humiliated on large scale.

He said political parties from Haryana should desist from indulging in such inciting activities and should not forget their responsibilities while trying to take points in political battle on SYL issue. He said neither such "bogus threats" can scare Punjabis nor can they come from entering Haryana.

The SAD has urged Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar to issue serious notice of the threat issued by INLD and ensure safety of Punjabis besides smooth flow of traffic between Punjab to Delhi via Haryana and vice versa. (PTT)

## Act against illegal firecracker factories: Adityanath to officials

LCKNOW, APRIL 29 /- /- Taking note of an incident in Ghaziabad where five persons died in a fire yesterday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath today directed the state officials to identify illegal firecracker factories and act against those operating them.

Adityanath termed as "tragic" the incident which occurred in Ghaziabad district yesterday in which five persons were broked out to death in a fire that broke out at a cracker godown. He directed all the district magistrates and superintendents of police to identify all illegal firecracker factories in the state and take stern action against those operating them.

No factory should operate without a licence and it should be ascertained that those having the licence are operating as per norms, he told officials.

"It should be ensured that, firecracker factories do not operate in populated areas," the CM said. Five persons died in a fire that broke out at a cracker godown yesterday afternoon in Farrukh Nagar village in Sahibabad in Ghaziabad district. (PTT)

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 /- /- Grappling with a crushing defeat in the civic polls, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today admitted that his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) made "mistakes" and that there was a need to "introspect" and "course correct". Till now the AAP leadership had been blaming Electric Voting Machines (EVMs) for the party's rout in polls. Kejriwal said that based on his interactions with "volunteers and voters", it was obvious that the party made mistakes and there was a need to go back to the "drawing board". "Need is action and not excuses," he said, amid growing clamour in the party to desist from raking up the issue of EVMs being "tampered with" to favour the BJP, an allegation rubbished by the Election Commission.

# 22 persons held for violence on Allahabad varsity campus; Yogi seeks report

ALLAHABAD, APRIL 29 /- /- Twenty-two persons have been arrested so far in connection with the violence and arson on the Allahabad University (AU) campus yesterday, a senior police official said today.

"We have arrested 22 persons so far, including the four who had been caught yesterday. A case has been registered against 46 named and around 2,000 others persons, who have not been named, under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code for violence, arson and violation of prohibitory orders," Deputy Superintendent of Police Vijay Shanker Tiwari said. Tiwari, who is in-charge of the Colonelji Circle under which the sprawling AU campus falls, said a search was on for the accused not yet arrested. Four persons were arrested yesterday when they chanted slogans at the University guest house, in violation of the

prohibitory orders clamped on the area earlier this week. The agitators were demanding an investigation into alleged financial irregularities at the varsity. A meeting of the varsity's Executive Council was underway at the guest house. Prohibitory orders under section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code were imposed a few days back when attempts of the University authorities and police to evict illegal occupants from hostels met with angry protests.

The Allahabad High Court has repeatedly directed the varsity administration to evict those who have been staying in the hostels illegally. The news of the arrests had triggered violent protests during which youths torched a bus and hurled stones, damaging window panes and vehicles, until they were quelled by the police which was aided by Rapid Action Force and

Provincial Armed Constabulary. Meanwhile, chief minister Yogi Adityanath today sought a detailed report over violence on Allahabad University campus after the arrest of four students for allegedly disrupting a meeting and violating prohibitory orders. He tasked the state chief secretary and the director general of police with preparing the report and directed that all problems of the students should be speedily redressed. A group of students, led by office bearers of the students' union, had yesterday surrounded the university's guest house in the noon, where the executive council meeting was underway and shouted slogans demanding action against alleged financial irregularities in the institute. Prohibitory orders had been clamped in the area a few days ago in view of the unrest caused by a drive to evict illegal occupants from university hostels following an order

of the Allahabad High Court. Upon receiving information that a large number of students had gathered at the guest house without permission, a police party rushed to the spot.

Most of the agitators ran away but four of them were arrested. The police had said earlier. The students resented the arrests and despite efforts to explain that the same were made on account of violation of prohibitory orders, some of them turned violent and allegedly hurled stones at the police personnel, damaging a number of window panes and smashing windows parked nearby and smashing window panes. They allegedly torched a bus parked near a hostel and set fire to a pile of old tyres on one of the roads, bringing traffic to a standstill. The agitators were chased away with the help of the Rapid Action Force and the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PTT)



People enjoying unseasonal rain, in Belagavi on Saturday.

# Stalemate continues over AIADMK merger talks

CHENNAI, APRIL 29 /- /- The stalemate continued over merger talks of the two factions of ruling AIADMK with the group led by Chief Minister K Palaniswami stating that the time was "ripe" for parties' even as the rebel camp remains firm on its demands. AIADMK (Amma) led by Palaniswami accused the O Panneerselvam faction of "refusing" to come for talks. On the other hand, the AIADMK Puratchi Thalaivi Amma faction maintained that discussions "will happen" only after its demands, including a CBI probe into former chief minister J Jayalalitha's death, were met. Apparently peeved at the "delay" in commencement of talks, state finance Minister D Jayakumar told reporters that the time was "ripe for talks." But they (Panneerselvam camp) are refusing

to come to the table," he said, adding that the discussions will be "transparent". Striking to which stand for commencement of merger talks, Panneerselvam aide and Rajya Sabha member V Mathiravan reiterated the Puratchi Thalaivi Amma faction's demand for the state government recommending a CBI probe into Jayalalitha's death, besides removal of party chief V K Sasikala and members of her family from the party. "Only if these demands are met, the talks will happen. We are clear on that," he said. The two groups have been expressing their willingness to sit across the table and discuss the proposed merger since they set up their respective seven-member committees for the purpose last week. However, the talks have not commenced so far.

The Palaniswami camp had revolted against the party leadership on April 18 and resolved to keep Sasikala and her family, including her nephew and deputy T T V Dhinakaran, away from the AIADMK. Dhinakaran, AIADMK (Amma) Deputy General Secretary, was later arrested for allegedly attempting to bribe an unidentified Election Commission officer to secure the 'Two Leaves' symbol of the undivided party (prior to the R Nagar assembly byelection). The April 12 byelection was subsequently countermanded over use of money to lure voters. Hopes of an early start of talks had received a boost on Wednesday when the banners of Sasikala at the AIADMK office here were pulled down, a move welcomed by the Panneerselvam group. (PTT)

# BJP practising political vendetta of worst order: Cong

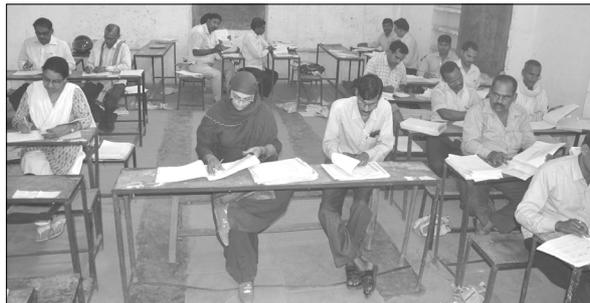
NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 /- /- The Congress today attacked the BJP over the "leak" of Dharma Commission report, accusing it of practising political vendetta of the "worst order". Senior Congress spokesperson Ghulam Nabi Azad wondered why the BJP government was stooping "so low to harass" Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law Robert Vadra who has his Haryana land deals.

He claimed the Congress never indulged in vendetta against the BJP or its supporters when in power. "Whatever Commission it may be, those commissions and inquiries are the political vendetta of the worst order," he said.

The issue of Vadra's controversial land deals with DLF has come in renewed focus after alleged leak of the report of Dharma Commission. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has also come out with a statement saying her finances have nothing to do with that of her husband and any insinuations made about her land deals were "false, baseless and defamatory". She also alleged "a deliberate, politically motivated and malicious campaign to besmirch and destroy her reputation".

Reacting for the first time on the issue, Robert Vadra said in a Facebook post "Truth shall prevail". Azad said the Congress had been in government for over a decade but never victimised any of its opponents. He said they had proof "about a number of leaders and their" kin but never harassed them. The Congress "also knew of businessmen supporters

and those funding the BJP but never raided them." This is political vendetta of the worst order. This is the limit. I cannot believe that such a mighty government can stoop so low. It is just to harass its opponents," the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha said, Responding to Azad, BJP leader Subramanian Swamy tweeted, "Ghulam Nabi Azad says he knew of the wrong doings of the BJP leaders but did not harass with cases. I challenge him to make public a single case!" (PTT)



Teachers checking Uttar Pradesh secondary School Certificate examination answer copy at a center in Mirzapur, Uttar Pradesh on Saturday.

# Kejriwal concedes mistakes after Delhi loss

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 /- /- Grappling with a crushing defeat in the civic polls, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today admitted that his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) made "mistakes" and that there was a need to "introspect" and "course correct". Till now the AAP leadership had been blaming Electric Voting Machines (EVMs) for the party's rout in polls. Kejriwal said that based on his interactions with "volunteers and voters", it was obvious that the party made mistakes and there was a need to go back to the "drawing board". "Need is action and not excuses," he said, amid growing clamour in the party to desist from raking up the issue of EVMs being "tampered with" to favour the BJP, an allegation rubbished by the Election Commission.

Since then, it has focused on expanding its base beyond the national capital, but its foray in Punjab and Goa failed, and the party has also lost its grip over the national capital in the recent past. In Punjab, the party did emerge as the primary opposition but the performance did not live up to the hype. In Delhi, the party first lost the Rajouri Garden assembly bypoll and within days, received a drubbing in the civic elections, where the BJP retained control of all the three corporations. "It's time to get back to work. And even if we slip from time to time, the key is to find the reserves to hold and pull ourselves up. People deserve nothing less. The only thing constant is change," he added. Meanwhile, Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari today

said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has a record of wildly coming mistakes and then seeking an apology. His remarks came after Kejriwal admitted that his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) made "mistakes" and that there was a need to "introspect" and "course correct". "If you look back, whether it was fighting the Lok Sabha elections or forming a government in Delhi for 49 days, he has been knowingly committing mistakes and pulling the stunt of apologising," Tiwari said. The AAP has suffered a string of defeats since last two months. It performed far below expectations in Punjab, drew a blank in Goa, forfeited its deposit in the Rajouri Garden bypoll.

## Burglary at AIIMS docs' residence, Rs 5 lakh jewellery missing

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 /- /- In a case of broad daylight burglary, jewellery worth Rs five lakh was allegedly stolen from the residence of a doctor couple on the AIIMS premises here. The incident took place yesterday when the complainant, a senior resident doctor in the department of Orthopaedics at AIIMS, New Centre, and his wife left for work around 9 o'clock in the morning. "I had an interview, so I returned around 11.30 AM and found the lock missing though it was latched on outside," said Dr Avtar Singh Balawat. Balawat immediately raised an alarm and the security guard immediately rushed to the spot. They were clueless. The house was not ransacked, said Balawat in his complaint. "When I checked, I found everything okay. I opened the almirah and it was all normal. But when I checked the locker where the jewellery was kept, it was missing," he said. He then called up his wife who rushed to their residence and confirmed that the jewellery had been stolen. They then lodged an FIR with the police, in which they estimated the cost of the jewellery at Rs five lakh. Meanwhile, the AIIMS Resident Doctors Association has flagged concern over the need of CCTV surveillance in the premier institute's residential areas. "Even after multiple complaints of thefts no action has been taken and installation of CCTV cameras is pending. Despite being a premier medical institute several places in the hospital including wards, hostel, ICU, entry and exit gates are not under CCTV surveillance," AIIMS RDA president Dr Vijay Gurjar said. (PTT)

## Separatists playing politics over dead bodies, alleges Madhav

JAMMU, APRIL 29 /- /- BJP leader Ram Madhav today attacked separatist leaders in Kashmir accusing them of playing politics of sentiment over dead bodies and said that the Centre had made it clear that it would not hold talks with them. "Separatists have only one motto - one dead body a day so that they can play sentimental politics over the dead bodies. They use the people of the Valley as guinea pigs in their reprehensible politics of violence and separatism," the BJP General Secretary alleged in a post on Facebook. He said the security forces and the government on the other hand try their best to ensure that the ill intentions of separatists do not succeed.

It is a difficult job being executed with commendable sincerity by the government and the security forces, he said. Madhav, who is considered to be the BJP's pointman for Kashmir, said the Centre had told the Supreme Court yesterday that there is no plan to hold any talks with separatists and those not loyal to India. He said the Supreme Court too had taken a strong stand while hearing a petition which demanded that the use of pellet guns be barred by emphasising that stone pelting and street violence had to be stopped. "The stand of the SC judges including Chief Justice of India (CJI) is commendable and I am sure patriotic people in the country including those in the Valley welcome this position of Court," the senior BJP leader said in his post.

He said that the forces have very few pellet guns and use them in rare situations only and they are deemed less lethal than the normal guns. The BJP leader said that the Government of India's stand is to tackle militants and their sponsors with utmost toughness and stone-pelters with deftness so that violence is firmly put down but care is taken to prevent loss of life. (PTT)

## Punjab college students continue protest over suicide

AMRITSAR, APRIL 29 /- /- Students today continued with their protest at Khalsa College here, demanding the arrest of the college principal, registrar and head of agriculture department over a student's suicide. The agitating students, who have been protesting since Wednesday, are demanding arrest of Principal Mehal Singh, Registrar Devender Singh and HOD, Agriculture Randeep Kaur Bal who were booked under IPC section 306 (abetment to suicide). Harpreet Singh, a student of the college, allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling fan in his hostel room on Wednesday. He was reportedly upset after being detained due to shortage of lectures. The students today blocked all the entry gates leading to the college which invited sharp reaction from teachers who staged a massive parallel protest against the protesters for cordoning off the campus.

The protesting teachers and pacified them. "Some out with their protest at Khalsa College here, demanding the arrest of the college principal, registrar and head of agriculture department over a student's suicide. The agitating students, who have been protesting since Wednesday, are demanding arrest of Principal Mehal Singh, Registrar Devender Singh and HOD, Agriculture Randeep Kaur Bal who were booked under IPC section 306 (abetment to suicide). Harpreet Singh, a student of the college, allegedly hanged himself from the ceiling fan in his hostel room on Wednesday. He was reportedly upset after being detained due to shortage of lectures. The students today blocked all the entry gates leading to the college which invited sharp reaction from teachers who staged a massive parallel protest against the protesters for cordoning off the campus.

## Gehlot demands revision of compensation to martyrs' kin

Jaipur, April 29 /- /- Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot today demanded that the compensation packages given to martyrs' families in the state be revised.

The students also blocked the entry of the teachers and staff members from the rear side of the college. However, the situation was controlled after KGC President Satyajit Singh Majithia and honorary secretary Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina reached out to them.

## Are policewomen deployed at public places? DCW to Delhi Police

NEW DELHI, APRIL 29 /- /- The DCW has issued notice to the Delhi Police Commissioner seeking to know if women police personnel in plainclothes are being deployed at public places to curb cases of molestation, stalking and rape in the national capital. The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) sought the details referring to a Supreme Court order which calls for district additional commissioners of police and DCPs to depute women officers in plainclothes at bus stops, railway stations, parks and educational institutions, among others. Further, it was directed that in case any incident/take place, these officers should intervene and take legal action, the Commission said in the notice. (PTT)