

### CPM hits back at Rijiju over his remark against the Left

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28** /- / The CPM today hit back at Union Minister Kiren Rijiju over his reported 'Leftists celebrate when jawans die' remark. The Left party invoked Sardar Virendra Singh Patil to attack the Minister, alleging the RSS men celebrated Mahatma Gandhi's death. "Who celebrated after Gandhi was killed? RSS men expressed joy and distributed sweets after Gandhi's death" Patil to Golwalkar, 11-09-1948 (sic), CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury said on Twitter. Rijiju reportedly hit out at the Left parties over Delhi University student Gurmehar Kaur's claims that she received rape threats following her social media campaign against the RSS-affiliated ABVP. He reportedly said that creating controversy over the student is not right and it is about Leftists who allegedly celebrate when country's jawans (soldiers) die. In another tweet, the Marxist leader charged, "Ministers have to understand their constitutional oath to ensure rule of law; currently, they back those who threaten & bully a 20-year old, (sic)" The Parliamentarian also reiterated Sanjay Parivar allegedly uses "threat of violence" as its only weapon against ideas as it has no strength of conviction in its rhetoric. Yechury also accused the RSS of trying to impose its regressive ideas on what people "wear, eat, see, do, or the way you live" (PTT)

### Srinivas cremated in Hyderabad amidst outpouring of grief

**HYDERABAD, FEB 28** /- / Amidst heart-rending scenes, the mortal remains of Indian engineer Srinivas Kuchibhotla, who was shot dead in the US in a parent hate crime incident, were consigned to flames here today. Kuchibhotla's father Madhusudan, who had the funeral pyre at the crematorium in Jubilee Hills in the afternoon. The parents of the 32-year-old engineer expressed sorrow over the tragedy that has struck them. Union Minister Bandaru Dattatreya, several other leaders, family members and friends of Kuchibhotla were present on the occasion. As the funeral pyre was lit, some of those present at the crematorium raised slogans in memory of Kuchibhotla and against the US administration. The body of the engineer was taken to the crematorium from his house at Bachupally on the city's outskirts. It was a picture of sadness and grief at the house, where a pall of gloom had descended, as Kuchibhotla's wife Sunayana was seen weeping at the last minute rituals. His parents and other family members too looked crestfallen. Kuchibhotla had been working at the Garmin headquarters in Olathe in Kansas City. Another Indian and his colleague Alok Madasani was injured in the incident that took place on last Wednesday. A teacher of Kuchibhotla recalled him as a simple and good natured person who always had a positive outlook towards life. The engineer's body was brought to his parents' house shortly before midnight yesterday after being flown from the US to Rajiv Gandhi International Airport. Union Ministers from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, MLAs and other leaders belonging to different political parties visited his house after the shooting incident. Union Ministers M Venkaiah Naidu and Bandaru Dattatreya had earlier visited the family. The shooting incident had taken place at Austins Bar and Grill in Olathe in Kansas City, the US state of Missouri. Ian Grillot, an American, was injured when he tried to tackle the accused Adar Purinton (51), who was arrested Thursday morning, five hours after the incident. Purinton had reportedly fled "out of my country" before opening fire on Kuchibhotla and Madasani. (PTT)

# Panmeer camp petitions Prez for probe into Jaya's death

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28** /- / A delegation of AIADMK MPs owing allegiance to Chief Minister Panneerselvam today called on President Pranab Mukherjee and sought a probe into the circumstances surrounding the death of late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalithaa. The 12-MPs delegation, led by Rajya Sabha member V Maitreyan, submitted a memorandum in this regard to the President at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here. In

their memorandum, they sought steps for instituting a probe which can be a judicial inquiry or a CBI probe. It can be decided by the President, Maitreyan told reporters here after meeting Mukherjee. "Ever since Jayalithaa passed away in December, there has been doubts about it among party cadres and general public. We have requested the President to look into the issue and order a central government probe into her death to reveal the truth," he said. He questioned the need to admit the former chief minister in hospital on September 22nd just for "fever and dehydration," when her Poes Garden residence itself had a "mini hospital and ICU set-up". Maitreyan, who was among the first to support Panneerselvam after he revolted against the party leadership earlier this month, said in the 75-day long medical treatment given to Jayalithaa "there are many

suspensions and goof-ups." "I consider removal of such suspicions will be a tribute to Amma (Jayalithaa)," he said. Maitreyan, who is an Oncologist, said during Jayalithaa's long medicalisation at Apollo none was allowed to visit her. "After taking necessary precautions one or two members can be allowed. Neither Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley nor OPS was allowed to see Amma," he said. He also said they wanted to know who authorised the hospital's decision to go in for "cessation of treatment," to allow natural cessation of life after Jayalithaa suffered a cardiac arrest on December 5. Under normal circumstances a permission was obtained from blood relatives to stop medical treatment, he said. Maitreyan also mocked the State government for not being "qualified" to probe Jaya's death. "Chief Minister Edappadi is not talking about the issue and

is ignorant," Maitreyan alleged. He also promised to take up the issue in the upcoming session of Parliament. To a question on why the issue was not raised soon after Jaya's death, Maitreyan said, "If we had raised it on the day of funeral, TN would have faced a charge of violence." While being the care-taker Chief Minister, Panneerselvam had said a probe would be ordered into the circumstances leading to the death of Jayalithaa. (PTT)

### Army veterans vow to fight for Gurmehar, mother keeps mum

**CHANDIGARH, FEB 28** /- / Army veterans in Punjab have stepped forward to fight a legal battle on behalf of Gurmehar Kaur, the daughter of an army martyr, who started a social media campaign against the ABVP. The mother of the 20-year-old Delhi University student, whose defiant stand against the ABVP drew a volley of hate tweets, refused Facebook requests to be drawn into the controversy over it. When contacted, Rajvinder Kaur said, "No thanks... I do not want this controversy to go on." Punjab State Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association (Sewa) president Col (ret'd) Kuldeep Singh Grewal wanted to fight a legal battle on Gurmehar's behalf "till the matter reaches its logical conclusion". "Her opinion should be respected as she has the right to raise her voice," he said. "No one should remain unaffected when his daughter is threatened with rape. The people of the country should raise their voice to protect the daughter of a martyr," Col (ret'd) Tejinder Singh Bajwa, a member of the association, said. Gurmehar's father Capt Mandeep Singh was commissioned in the 49 Army Air Defence Regiment in 1991 and was serving with the 4 Rashtriya Rifles battalion when he died fighting militants on August 6, 1999. Brigadier (ret'd) Ashwini Kumar, former Commanding Officer of the 3 Rashtriya Rifles battalion, who was serving in the area when the attack on Capt Mandeep's company took place, said, "The Captain and his men fought against militants with great courage and they were given a befitting reply". Mandeep's brother Davidinder Singh, a professor at a college in Nakodar at Jalandhar - Gurmehar's hometown, said his daughter would have stood like a rock behind her. She is entitled to her opinion... she did not say anything anti-national," he said. Meanwhile, a number of ex-servicemen and representatives of various organisations condemned the rape threat to Gurmehar and appealed to the Delhi government to provide "proper security" to her. (PTT)

### Apollo hospital asked to pay Rs 4L for medical negligence

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28** /- / The apex consumer commission has asked the Apollo Hospital in Hyderabad and one of its doctors to pay Rs four lakh as compensation to a man who lost his wife due to alleged medical negligence. The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC), while dismissing an appeal filed by the hospital against the state commission's order, directed it to pay the amount to Telangana resident K S Sastry whose wife died during a complicated medical procedure. The commission also noted that the hospital authorities failed to take the consent of the patient and her family before a surgery, which was a high risk procedure, that deteriorated her health, resulting in her death. "... The OP (Hospital) and the doctor failed to take informed consent. As per medical records, the patient was not willing to undergo such high risk procedure." Similarly the progress sheet reveals 'patient and her husband not willing for surgery immediately'. Thus, in our view, in the instant case it was not an informed consent," the NCDRC bench said. "We are of the considered view that it was a case of medical negligence due to failure of duty of care. It was not a reasonable practice. Therefore, we do not find any error in the well reasoned order of the state commission," it added. According to the complaint filed by Sastry, his wife Padmavati was suffering from upper abdominal pain and consulted the doctor at the Apollo hospital in 2000. It was alleged that antibiotics were prescribed by the doctor without conducting any pre-operative tests. The complaint further alleged that the doctors advised for a high risk surgery and the patient was taken for Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) without her or her husband's consent. It further alleged that she suffered cardiac arrest during the procedure. It also said that in spite of repeated requests that she was already suffering from a lung disease and was under treatment with steroids, the doctor did not perform ERCP in a negligent manner without conducting necessary tests. The hospital and the doctor denied the allegations saying all the necessary precautions were taken with utmost care. They also contended that the complaint was covered under Central Government Health Service Scheme, therefore, he is not entitled for compensation. However, the state commission asked the hospital and the doctor to pay the amount to Sastry. (PTT)

### Javed Akhtar slams Rijiju, Sehwal for Gurmehar Kaur case

**MUMBAI, FEB 28** /- / Veteran lyricist Javed Akhtar today hit out at Union Minister Kiren Rijiju for his remark against Delhi University student Gurmehar Kaur, calling it "grossly biased". He also took a dig at cricketer Virender Sehwal and wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt, who trolled Kaur after her campaign "I am not afraid of ABVP" went viral. "If a hardly literate player or a wrestler troll a pacifist daughter of a martyr it's understandable but what's wrong with some educated folks," Akhtar tweeted. Kaur, 20, the daughter of an army martyr Captain Mandeep Singh and a student of Lady Sri Ram College, had started the campaign following the violence against the members of the RSS-backed outfit.



The Union Minister for Food Processing Industries, Harshraj Kaur Badal at a meeting with the Ambassadors and High Commissioners on World Food India - 2017, in New Delhi.

### Ramjas violence provoked by outsiders, blame put on us: ABVP

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28** /- / The RSS-backed Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) today claimed that the recent violence at DU's Ramjas college was provoked by "outsiders" and the blame was put on them by the "anti-nationals". The student outfit has called for a protest on March 2 against the theory of outsiders on campus and their alleged attempts to "pollute" the atmosphere. "There is lot of hue and cry about ABVP's involvement in the violence. We would like to put on record that the violence was provoked by outsiders and

the 'anti-nationals' have put the blame on us," Saket Bahuguna, ABVP's National Media Convener, said during a press conference. "The outsiders are not only polluting the academic and peaceful atmosphere of the university but are also provoking violence. We had not gone to attack anybody but only went to calm the situation that day and to ensure that there is no clash of ideologies in our classroom," he added. Ramjas college had last week witnessed large-scale violence between members of the AISA and the ABVP. The genesis of the clash was an invite to JNU students Umar Khalid and Shehla Rashid to address a seminar on "Culture of Protests" which was withdrawn by the college authorities following opposition by the ABVP. "This is for the first time that such widespread violence has been witnessed at Delhi University and it is not because of ABVP. Our organisation has been part of the students union for years, why such violence took place now is because of the involvement of outsiders," Bahuguna said. "We have called for a massive protest on March 2 to agitate against

### Mayawati seeks vote for 'bahubali' Mukhtar Ansari

**MAU (UP), FEB 28** /- / BSP chief Mayawati today sought votes for jailed gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, arguing that his victory would erase his 'bahubali (muscleman)' image. "I urge you to vote in large numbers, thereby ensuring comprehensive victory for Mukhtar Ansari... once Mukhtar wins the assembly polls his bahubali (muscleman) image will gradually diminish," she said. The BSP supremo sought support for Mukhtar in an election meeting in Mau in eastern UP, which goes to polls on March 4 in the sixth phase. Mukhtar, who faces 40 criminal cases, including those of murder and kidnapping, recently joined BSP after the merger of his Quami Ektadai (QED) with ruling SP. He has been a strong supporter of strong objections from Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. QED merged with the BSP to consolidate its Muslim vote bank in some constituencies

of eastern districts where the Ansari brothers have their strong influence. BSP has fielded him from Mau, the seat he holds in the outgoing Assembly. He was given custody parole by a trial court from February 16 to March 4 to let him campaign in the election. The Delhi High Court, however, set aside the lower court order. Mukhtar, who has been in Lucknow jail since 2005, is facing trial for his alleged role in the murder of BJP legislator Krishnaman Raj Singh in 2003. He was arrested in 2004. His wife Sena 271 took place the same year. Rai's widow had got the case transferred to Delhi from Uttar Pradesh on grounds that Mukhtar could influ-

### Civic polls: BJP pips rivals in vote share; bridges rural-urban gap

**MUMBAI, FEB 28** /- / BJP, which put up a spectacular show in the elections to municipal corporations, panchayat samitis and zilla parishads in Maharashtra, has left the Congress and NCP far behind in Mau in eastern UP, which goes to polls on March 4 in the sixth phase. Mukhtar, who faces 40 criminal cases, including those of murder and kidnapping, recently joined BSP after the merger of his Quami Ektadai (QED) with ruling SP. He has been a strong supporter of strong objections from Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav. QED merged with the BSP to consolidate its Muslim vote bank in some constituencies

(56,93,694) votes. Congress finished a distant third with 19.43 per cent (49,72,272) votes, followed by Shiv Sena with 18.52 per cent (47,39,976) votes. Of the 1,509 seats in the zilla parishads, BJP won 406, NCP 360, Congress 309, Shiv Sena 271 and MNS one. In the 283 panchayat samitis, where 2,990 seats were up for grabs, BJP emerged as the winner with 631 seats, NCP 674, Congress 591 and MNS one. In the case of the municipal corporations too, BJP topped with 35.36 per cent votes, leaving behind its rivals. Sena at 18.13 per cent, NCP at 14.88 per cent, Congress at 13.14 per cent and MNS at 3.96 per cent. In the 2,169 seats across 10 municipal corporations, BJP bagged 628, followed by the Sena with 268, NCP 131, Congress 121 and MNS 15 seats. (PTT)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying homage to former Prime Minister of India, Shri Morarji Desai, on the occasion of his birth anniversary, in New Delhi.

### US authorities engaged with us on safety of Indians: Govt

**NEW DELHI, FEB 28** /- / India today rejected media reports that a demarche was issued to the US over the killing of an Indian engineer, saying the pro-active response of the American government and senior authorities in Kansas "obviated the need for such an action." "It is important to note that the US authorities are engaged with us on the larger concern regarding safety of Indians in the US, a matter which continues to receive the government's top priority," external affairs ministry Spokesperson Gopal Baglay asserted. He said the US government and senior authorities in Kansas have pro-actively responded to the unfortunate death of Srinivas Kuchibhotla and also drew attention to the strong condemnation of the tragic shooting by the US Embassy here last week. Further, the US Charge d'Affaires in New Delhi stated that her country welcomes people from across the world and the US authorities will investigate thoroughly and prosecute the case, he noted. "This approach is reflected in the sentiments and assurances from senior most authorities of Kansas, who have reached out to the Indian Consulate General in Houston. These developments obviated the need for a demarche by the government on this matter," Baglay said. The Spokesperson was reacting to a query on the media report that the Embassy of India in Washington had issued a demarche to the US State Department. In Washington last week, Indian Embassy Spokesman Pratik Mathur in a statement had said, "Government of India has taken up the matter with the US authorities to express our deep concern and have asked for speedy investigation. US government while condemning the attack, have assured us that they are conducting thorough investigation into the matter." Baglay also mentioned that "We also must not forget the noble and courageous gesture of the young American Ian Grillot, who risked his life while countering the shooter." Srinivas (32), who was killed at GPS-maker Garmin headquarters in Olathe, was shot dead by an American in a crowded bar in Kansas City in an apparent hate crime incident. (PTT)