

## Cabinet to examine if NIA can probe human trafficking

**NEW DELHI, FEB 27** /- The Union Cabinet is likely to take up the draft anti-human trafficking bill tomorrow and decide whether the anti-terror body National Investigation Agency (NIA) can be empowered to probe such cases, official sources said. After the Cabinet approves the Draft Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, the government hopes to bring it before Parliament in the second part of the Budget Session starting March 5, they said. The draft Bill proposes that NIA probe cases of human trafficking. According to a senior official of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, the NIA would re-

ceive financial aid under Nirbhaya Fund for safety of women in order to set up a cell for investigating human trafficking.

The proposed legislation divides various offences into "trafficking" and "aggravated trafficking". The former category of crimes would carry a jail term of seven to 10 years and the latter would carry a punishment of at least 10 years in jail, which can be extended to life imprisonment.

Aggravated offences would include forced labour, bonded labour, forced surrogacy, use of narcotics to induce forced labour, trafficking in the garb of marriage and those that lead to a preg-

nancy or grave illness such as HIV/AIDS. The draft bill also moots life imprisonment for repeat offenders and three years in jail for abetting, promoting and assisting trafficking.

The proposed law recommends a national anti-trafficking relief and rehabilitation committee which would be headed by Secretary of Women and Child Development ministry. It also suggests setting up of a rehabilitation fund and prescribes a process to be followed for repatriation of trafficked persons.

These proposals were approved by a group of ministers in a meeting last month. The group comprised ministries of exter-

nal affairs, law and justice, housing and urban affairs and, women and child development. The Ministry of Women and Child Development had first released a draft of the proposed legislation in May 2016 for stakeholders' comments. After widespread criticism that the Bill lacked teeth, the Centre made several changes to it.

Later, for more than a year the Bill was delayed because of back and forth communication between the ministries of women and child development and home affairs over the issue of setting up of a national bureau on trafficking. Last year, the WCD ministry related that the role of national bureau could be performed by the NIA. Government officials say that in order to empower the NIA to probe trafficking cases, the National Investigation Act, 2008, will have to be amended.

The NIA was set up by the UPA government in 2009 to probe terrorist activities in the aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which killed 166 people. According to the National Investigation Act, the anti-terror body is empowered to probe offences under eight specified laws, including the Atomic Energy Act 1962, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act 1967, and the Anti-Hijacking Act 1982.(PTI)

## TISS students across all campuses to go on strike tomorrow

**NEW DELHI, FEB 20** /- The TISS Students Union has announced a strike across all campuses of the institute from tomorrow against the administration demanding tuition, dining hall and hostel fees from scholarship students. The association has claimed that students studying at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) under scholarship are exempted from paying such fees. TISS has campuses in Mumbai, Tuljapur, Hyderabad and Guwahati. "All talks and mediation with the administration over past many months have failed. The students union of TISS calls for a University Strike across TISS campuses on February 21. We call for boycotting all classes, field work and submissions," TISS Students Union President Archana Soreng said. The Centre's Post Matric Scholarship (GOM-PM) issue stands unresolved since the institute has notified its withdrawal from all forms of financial aid to students, she claimed.

"Now students, both current and newcomers, will have to pay their full fees even as they wait for their state scholarship amounts to come," Soreng said. The association has also demanded a notification from the institute about ways in which financial assistance was being provided. The upcoming batch of 2018-2020 will be provided.

Explaining the issue, she said that the institute was not mentioning anything in the prospectus, was now demanding tuition, dining hall (DH) and hostel fee from scholarship students of the 2016-18 batch. "The administration has also said that the 2017-2019 batch will have to pay the full fee for DH and hostel as the notification was out in May 2017 before they took admission and they were very well aware about the notification. But the argument cannot be bought as the notification was released in May 2017 in between the admission process, not before the admission process was initiated," she said.

Earlier, students and alumni of the premier social science school today staged a demonstration near the Human Resource Development Ministry against the withdrawal of scholarships for SC and ST scholars. The students of all the campuses of the institute have been protesting since February 21 against the administration demanding tuition, dining hall and hostel fees for scholarship students. They have been protesting against the withdrawal of financial aid given to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) scholars. Over 30 students along with their counterparts in Delhi colleges and universities today demanded not to burden the students through fee hike and fund cuts. One of the alumnus, who requested anonymity said the fees per semester had surged over 100 per cent in just two years and the students were forced to become indebted to the banks through loans.(PTI)

## AIMPLB plans silent march against triple talaq legislation

**JAIPIUR, FEB 27** /- Termining the triple talaq legislation as "defective", the All India Muslim Personal Law Board today demanded the Centre withdraw it in the interest of Muslim women. The board also announced a silent march of women across the country will be taken out here tomorrow in support of its demands. "It is a totally defective bill and not only against the Constitution but also against Islamic principles. A large number of Muslim women are worried and lot of protests are on across the country against the bill. AIMPLB secretary Umrain Mahfooz, said at a press conference here. He said that the board had written to the prime

minister expressing concerns over the bill but there was no response. There are several provisions in the bill which, if it becomes an Act, will create and enhance problems for Muslim women, he claimed. Board member Yasmin Farooqui said a large number of Muslim women will take out a silent march tomorrow against the bill. The bill is anti-women, anti children. It is going to break families. The bill has been drafted in such a way that it will damage families and increase problems for women," she said. She said the silent march will be carried out from Chardarwaja to Muslim Musafirkhana.(PTI)

Hours before the Cabinet meeting today, Prakash wrote to Kejriwal saying he would attend to discuss important budget matters and asked him to ensure "no physical attack and verbal assault" on officers. The Delhi cabinet decided that the budget session of the Assembly would be held from March 16-28. "A meeting of the Council of Ministers has been scheduled (today) to discuss important matters of finalisation of dates for the Budget Session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly," Prakash said. "Since finalising the

## Only peace can stop shelling: Farooq

**JAMMU, FEB 27** /- Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah today said that exchange of firing and shelling between armies of India and Pakistan will continue unless the two nations start thinking of peace. He was reacting to a question about continuation of ceasefire violations and heavy shelling by Pakistan troops along the border targeting civilians and schools in Rajouri and Poonch districts. If they (both the nations) don't think of peace, the firing will not stop, neither from our side nor from their side, the National Conference chief told reporters on the sidelines of a function here.(PTI)

## CS Row: CM's adviser goes on medical leave, Prakash attends Cabinet meeting

**NEW DELHI, FEB 27** /- Delhi Chief Secretary Anshu Prakash today attended a Cabinet meeting, his first since the alleged assault on him by AAP MLAs, after asking Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to ensure that officers concerned, will be attending the meeting," he said. Prakash said he hoped that proper documentation would be maintained and dignity of officers would be protected during the meeting.

In another development, a Delhi court ruled to grant bail to AAP legislator Prakash Jarwal who was arrested in connection with the alleged assault on Prakash. Prakash's residence on February 19, proceeded on a week's medical leave. "The chief minister's adviser has gone on week long medical leave. He has not been attending office since the alleged assault on the chief secretary," sources informed. Delhi Police told a court last week that Jain had disclosed during interrogation that he saw MLAs Prakash Jarwal and Amanatullah Khan surrounding the chief minister's residence on the night. However, Jain had previously said he had not seen anything as he had gone to the washroom at the time of the incident.

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dates of the Budget Session and passing of the budget are important for the functioning of government, along with officers concerned, will be attending the meeting," he said. Prakash said he hoped that proper documentation would be maintained and dignity of officers would be protected during the meeting.

In another development, a Delhi court ruled to grant bail to AAP legislator Prakash Jarwal who was arrested in connection with the alleged assault on Prakash. Officers in the national capital, including those belonging to the IAS, DANICS and DASS cadre, are communicating with ministers only in writing since February 19. A joint forum of Delhi government employees passed a resolution, saying officers arrested with the budget have attended the Cabinet meeting in the interest of the people. However, it has decided to continue only written communication between ministers and maintain five minutes of silence at 1.30 pm, during lunch time every day till the end of the month. Manish Sisodia tender a written apology. "Delhi government employees will continue to work through formal written means of communication and continue their protest in the form of a five-minute silence at 1.30 pm during lunch time every day. Government officers till a specific written and public apology is tendered by the chief minister and the deputy chief minister," Pankaj Kumar, a member of the forum, said in a press meet. "Steps are being taken to ensure the personal safety and dignity of officers while they discharge their official duties," he said.(PTI)

Trump explained his bombshell announcement by citing Comey's handling of the investigation by America's leading law enforcement agency into Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server. The move came days after Comey testified on Capitol Hill about the FBI's investigation into Russia's election meddling into the US electoral college. "You are hereby terminated and removed

from the office, effective immediately," Trump said in a letter to Comey.

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## Incentive Scheme for Electricity Consumers

**PORT BLAIR, FEB 27** /- It is to inform all the consumers of Port Blair and South Andaman that due to increase in gap between power generation and power demand, The Electricity Department proposes to bring about awareness campaign relating to power saving/Energy conservation activities through print/electronic media. Accordingly, an incentive scheme is being launched from 1st March, 2018 onwards for period of 3 months, with prize money as an award to the consumers contributing toward the saving of more than 30% of the power and above (subject to complying of the conditions mentioned in the scheme). The scheme aimed to bring down the power consumption and thereby help in reducing load

during peak hours, consequently benefiting the needy students preparing for their examination. Further, this scheme shall encourage the practice of conservation of energy among the consumers by usage of energy efficient equipments like LED lights, star rated air conditioner, refrigerator, fan etc. All the consumers are requested to avoid using energy guzzler such as Air conditioners, Microwave oven etc during peak hours (5 PM to 11 PM) and to switch over to energy efficient lights and star rated appliances to reduce their energy bill. The prize money will be distributed in three (03) categories viz. domestic, commercial and industrial consumers, as follows:

Sl.No.	CATEGORY	PRIZE	INCENTIVE
01 (a)	Domestic (Green Energy & Energy Conservation)	First	Rs.75,000/-
		Second	Rs.50,000/-
		Third	Rs.30,000/-
(b)	Domestic (Energy Conservation)	First	Rs.50,000/-
		Second	Rs.30,000/-
		Third	Rs.15,000/-
02	Commercial	First	Rs.75,000/-
		Second	Rs.50,000/-
		Third	Rs.30,000/-
03	Industrial	First	Rs.75,000/-
		Second	Rs.50,000/-
		Third	Rs.30,000/-

The details of the scheme, criteria for selection of consumers for the prize money can be seen/obtained from the departmental website www.vidyut.andaman.gov.in and can also be obtained from concerned Site Office.

## LGC recruitment Type Tests on 3 & 4 Mar

**PORT BLAIR, FEB 27** /- The Port Blair Municipal Council conducted a written examination for 33 posts of Lower Grade Clerk on 21/01/2018. The Type-Test on computer will be held at the National Informatics Centre (NIC), Andaman State Unit, GPOA Complex, Ranchi Bashi, Port Blair on 03rd & 04th March, 2018 i.e. Saturday & Sunday. The admission Certificate/Hall Tickets for the Type-Test can be downloaded from the website www.andn.ic.nic.in. The Type-Test will be of qualifying in nature and its marks will not have any effect on the merit but those who fail to clear the Type-Test will be out of the recruitment process. The Candidates will get their result of the Type-Test at the end of the Test itself. The candidates who qualify the Type-Test will be required to produce original documents for verification on 05th March, 2018 from 09:30 AM onwards at the premises of Municipal Council Head Quarter, Mohanpura, Port Blair as per schedule given below:

Category of Candidates	Time
General	09:30 AM onwards
Othe Backward Class	11:30 AM onwards
Schedule Tribe/ Meritorious Sports Persons /Physically Handicapped	03:00 PM onwards

After verification of the original documents, if it is found that the s/he is not eligible as per the notified Recruitment Rules and the Scheme of the recruitment exam, then his/her candidature will be rejected irrespective of his/her performance in the examination and the Typing Test. The Offer of appointment will be issued to candidates equal to number of vacancies under each category. Remaining candidates in the category wise Final Merit List will be in the Panel for a period of one year.

## ITKGP team taps microwave radiation to create clean energy from Sunn Hemp

**KOLKATA, FEB 27** /- Researchers at the IIT Kharagpur have tapped microwave radiation to create clean energy for large-scale use from nitrogen-rich non-food Sunn Hemp plants. The IIT Kharagpur Bioenergy Lab team was led by Prof. Saikat Chakraborty, faculty at the Department of Chemical Engineering and P K Sinha Center for Bioenergy and researcher Souvik Kumar Paul, an IITKharagpur student said. High energy non-edible plant sources such as Sunn Hemp have the potential of making available biofuel on a large scale, as a replacement of fossil fuel. The team successfully converted the non-edible lignocellulosic fibres (plant dry matter) of Sunn Hemp into biofuel precursors, an alternative to land-based crops for biofuels, the statement

said. The entire conversion, which otherwise takes 8-10 hours, took 46 minutes to be completed by using the microwave reactors in the lab, the statement said. Sunn Hemp is widely grown in the sub-tropical regions of Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Pakistan, Russia, Sri Lanka, the US and Uganda. In India it is widely grown in Bihar, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The large scale availability of Sunn Hemp in India along with its fast rate of growth, high cellulose (75.6 per cent) and high energy content are the key elements of listing it as a top choice for biofuel. The team successfully converted the non-edible lignocellulosic fibres (plant dry matter) of Sunn Hemp into biofuel precursors, an alternative to land-based crops for biofuels, the statement published by Elsevier.(PTI)

## Irani releases English, Hindi and online versions of India 2018

**NEW DELHI, FEB 26** /- Information and Broadcasting Minister Smriti Irani today released 'India 2018', an annual government publication on its policies and development programmes, in print and online versions, and voiced hope that it will be brought out in all Indian languages from the next year to benefit the public at large. She called the book a comprehensive manual of all landmark government schemes and said the online version will help re-

searchers and students who often look for information on internet. It will be a referral book not only for those who study administration but also for researchers and student community, she said on the occasion of its release.

The ministry's publication division, which has brought the book, said in a statement that India 2018-Bharat 2018 in its Hindi version-is an exhaustive publication dealing with all aspects of the country's development from rural to urban, industry to infrastructure, science and technology to human resources development, art and culture, polity, economy, health, defence, education and mass communication. With its latest edition, the book has entered into its 62nd year of publication. The e-book can be accessed on a variety of devices such as tablets, computers and smartphones. The series has remained irregular in this region. Consumers are supplied cooking gas in three to four months forcing people to use firewood. The other demand of villagers here is permission for collection of minor forest products for construction of huts etc," they added.

## Rampur, Karmatang villagers threaten road blockade

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hatma Gandhi Govt. College under APWD and the stretch from Mahatma Gandhi Govt. College to Karmatang-IX are in a deplorable state and not fit for even two-wheeler riders. Villagers particularly the school, college students and senior citizens have been facing the brunt of official apathy for the past several months. Despite repeated

pleas, no concrete action has been taken for repair and maintenance of the crucial road network," claimed some Karmatang villagers. "Poor BSNL services is also taking a toll on residents here. During emergencies like for medical reasons, villagers fail to contact the hospital authorities for assistance. For the past 15 years, the BSNL tower installed here is hanging on



A woman walks in front of a securityman on Maulana Azad road, as search of vehicles for possible transportation of arms and ammunition intensified on a tip off, in Srirangar.

## Book by FBI chief fired by Trump to hit stores in April

**NEW DELHI, FEB 27** /- James Comey, who was abruptly removed as FBI chief by US President Donald Trump last year, will share unheard stories from his career in a book this April.

In "A Higher Loyalty: Truth, Lies, and Leadership", Comey will "explore what good, ethical leadership looks like and how it drives sound decisions", according to Pan Macmillan, which has acquired the publishing rights in the UK and the Commonwealth excluding Canada. "Using examples from some of the highest-stakes situations in the past two decades of

the American government, Comey will share yet-unheard anecdotes from his long and distinguished career," it said. Jeremy Trevathan, Publisher at Pan Macmillan UK, said about the acquisition. "This is an extraordinary look at what leadership under pressure, in the highest of public offices, means from the point of view of someone who has experienced the best and the worst aspects of both."

"Each chapter reads like a scene from the West Wing, except this is for real. It's not a hypothetical; it's a book that takes you inside key mo-

ments of recent history in such detail." "A Higher Loyalty" will be published in the UK on April 17, the same day Flatiron will publish the book in the US. Comey served as director of the FBI from 2013 to 2017, appointed to the post by President Barack Obama.

He previously served as US Attorney for New York, and the United States Deputy Attorney General in the administration of President George W. Bush.

From prosecuting the mafia and Martha Stewart to helping change Bush administration policies on torture

and electronic surveillance to overseeing the Hillary Clinton e-mail investigation as well as ties between the Trump campaign and Russia, Comey has been involved in some of the most consequential cases and policies of recent history.

Trump fired him on May 10, 2017, abruptly removing the top sleuth overseeing a criminal probe into whether the Trump campaign colluded with the Russian government to influence the 2016 presidential election that was won by the real estate mogul.

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from the office, effective immediately," Trump said in a letter to Comey.

Trump explained his bombshell announcement by citing Comey's handling of the investigation by America's leading law enforcement agency into Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server. The move came days after Comey testified on Capitol Hill about the FBI's investigation into Russia's election meddling into the US electoral college. "You are hereby terminated and removed