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People take part in a procession on 'Rangbhari Ekadashi', ahead of the Holi festival, in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Man arrested for obscene act in public after woman alerts Nagpur cops

NAGPUR: A 30-year-old man was arrested for allegedly masturbating in a public place in Nagpur, a police official said on Monday. A video of the act went viral on social media during the day. The official identified the accused as Shant Kumar, who hails from Karnataka and is a manager at a hotel here. "He was pleasuring himself while speaking on the phone and looking at a woman sitting on a bench along a jogging track close to Central Jail on Wardha Road. He fled when confronted by the woman, who later filed a complaint. He was arrested some time later after the car in which he fled was tracked down by Dhantoli police," the official said. A case has been registered at Bajaj Nagar police station against Kumar, he added.

Medic found hanging in hostel room of J'khand hospital

BOKARO (JHARKHAND): A 28-year-old medic was found hanging in her hostel in Jharkhand's Bokaro district, police said on Monday. A preliminary investigation revealed that the medical student died allegedly by suicide as she was not satisfied with her chosen field, a senior officer said. The deceased was identified as Arya Kumari Jha. Bokaro City DSP Alok Ranjan said, "A suicide note has been recovered from Arya's hostel room in which she expressed dissatisfaction with her medical trade." Arya, a first-year Diplomate of National Board (DNB) student, had recently joined the gynaecology programme at Bokaro General Hospital. The Diplomate of National Board (DNB) is a postgraduate degree awarded by the National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. "She had enrolled in the DNB course just a few days ago but had not been satisfied with her decision," the DSP said.

Two criminals arrested with pistol, heroin in J-K's Samba

JAMMU: Two suspected criminals were arrested and a country-made pistol and 8.13 grams of heroin seized from them in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district on Monday, police said. Pritam Singh alias Sethi and Narayan Sharma alias Shunna were arrested from a house in the Ramgarh area, a police spokesperson said. The criminals were planning to commit some heinous offence when a police party, acting on a tip, raided the house of Anoop Singh alias Makhan and arrested them, he said. Multiple criminal cases are registered against both in various districts of Jammu province, including Samba, the spokesperson said. Seven pistol rounds, a sharp weapon and an SUV were also seized during the operation, he added.

IMD predicts cloudy weather, light rain in Rajasthan during Holi

JAIPUR: A weak western disturbance is likely to cause cloudy weather and light rain in some parts of Rajasthan around Holi, a spokesperson of India Meteorological Department said. He said from March 13 to 15, there is a possibility of partly cloudy weather, and light rain or drizzle at some places in the north-west and northern parts. Holi falls on March 13 and Dhulandi on March 14. On March 14, there may be light rain with thunder in the afternoon in some parts of Bikaner, Jaipur and Bharatpur divisions, the Met office said. In the next 48 hours, the minimum and maximum temperatures are likely to increase by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius, it added. On March 10-11, maximum temperature in Barmer and surrounding areas is likely to be 40-41 degree Celsius, which is 5-6 degrees above normal. There is possibility of a heat wave at some places, it added.

Three feared drowned as boat capsizes in Ajmer, searches on

JAIPUR: Three youths are feared drowned after a boat capsized in the Banas River in Rajasthan's Ajmer on Monday, police said. Sanwar SHO Banwari Lal Meena said the incident happened in in Napakheda village. Five youths were on board the boat when it capsized in the river this afternoon. Two youths - Sanwara and Kirodi - swam out while Sandeep, Rajveer and Kalu got swept away in the river. A team of the Disaster Management, Relief and Civil Defence Department, SDRF from Ajmer are searching for the missing youths, he said.

Unfired cartridge found in Cong leader's house, Chandrapur cops begin probe

CHANDRAPUR: A probe has begun after an unfired cartridge was found in the house of a local Congress leader in Chandrapur, a police official said on Monday. "The cartridge was found in a porch on the first floor of Congress leader Raju Reddy's house in Ghugus on Sunday night, following which police was alerted about a firing incident at the place, he said. "However, a team checked the spot and concluded it was an unfired cartridge. The team found no signs of any firing. A case has been registered under Arms Act and further probe is underway," Superintendent of Police Sudarshan Mummaka said.

Chhattisgarh liquor scam: ED raids home of ex-CM's son

PTI, RAIPUR: The Enforcement Directorate on Monday raided the premises of former Chhattisgarh chief minister and senior Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel as part of a money laundering investigation against his son in the alleged liquor scam case and seized about Rs 30 lakh apart from some documents, official sources said.

The agency searched 14 locations in Durg district, including the Bhilai premises of Bhupesh Baghel's son Chaitanya Baghel, his alleged close associate Laxmi Narayan Bansal alias Pappu Bansal and others under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The raids began around 7 am and the ED search party was accompanied by a security team of the CRPF, the sources said.

Chaitanya Baghel shares the Bhilai accommodation with his father and hence the premises are being covered. He (Chaitanya Baghel) is suspected to be the "recipient" of the proceeds of crime of the liquor scam,



Gathering during raids by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on premises linked to Chaitanya Baghel, son of former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister and Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel, in connection with an alleged liquor scam, in Bhilai

they said.

About Rs 30 lakh in cash was seized before the eight-hour-long search ended in the evening, the sources said, adding the ED also brought a cash counting machine the former chief minister's residence.

The senior Baghel later told reporters that the ED officials "took with them about Rs 33 lakh in cash but no gold or jewellery was seized".

The former chief minister said he asked the ED officials about the ECIR (Enforcement Case Information Report, the ED's equivalent of a police FIR) number of the case but they said "there was no ECIR number."

"Then what is the investigation about? This makes it clear that asking questions in the legislative assembly is criminal now. Kawasi Lakhma (Congress MLA)

asked questions and he was arrested (by the ED earlier)...," Bhupesh Baghel said.

A total of 14 premises in the Durg district were raided, official sources said.

The Congress said the raids against the Baghels were a "conspiracy" to "manage headlines" on a day when Parliament's Budget session reconvened and the government faced questions from the opposition on multiple issues.

Search underway for 7 trapped in Telangana SLBC tunnel

PTI, NAGARKURNOOL: Search operations continued on Monday at the partially collapsed SLBC tunnel here with teams from NDRF, state-run miner Singareni Collieries, rat miners and others working at specific spots indicated by cadaver dogs and radar survey to locate the seven persons who remain trapped since February 22.

The mortal remains of Gurpreet Singh, which were recovered on Sunday, have been sent to his native place in Punjab in a hearse van.

Rescue personnel guided by the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) surveys conducted by the scientists of National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) in Hyderabad are focusing efforts at suspected locations. The search was further aided by Human Remains Detection Dogs (HRDD) of Kerala police, a senior official told PTI.

The dogs have been deployed twice inside the tunnel so far and might be sent in again on March 11, he said.

A robot along with all other surveillance material, including camera, modules and tools, shall be operational by March 11 and another one should be in place by March 14, he added.

All three excavators functioning inside the tunnel have cleared most of the metal debris and are about 100 metres away from the tail end of the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM), he said.

Strike action grounds thousands of flights in Germany

AFP, BERLIN: Strike action grounded thousands of flights in Germany on Monday, including all connections to and from Berlin, as the service sector union called on workers to walk out for better pay.

Some 3,400 flights were affected by the industrial action, impacting around 500,000 passengers, the German airport association ADV said.

At Frankfurt, the country's busiest airport, operator Fraport said no passengers would be able to board and that disruptions would "almost certainly" affect transit travel, according to German daily Bild.

Airports in Bremen, Cologne, Dortmund, Duesseldorf, Hamburg, Hanover, Leipzig, Munich and Stuttgart were also affected.

The Verdi union said Fri-



Airport employees organized in the Komba union walk through the airport in Frankfurt, Germany, when all major airports in Germany went on a warning strike

day it was calling on public sector workers and some 23,000 employees of ground handling service providers to walk out to send a message to management.

"We regret the inconvenience that this strike will cause for passengers," said the union's deputy chair Christine Behle.

COLORFUL TRADITION



Dancers representing the characters of Chola and Pepino perform at the closing ceremonies of Carnival in La Paz, Bolivia

16 kills, dozens missing due to heavy rain in Argentina

PTI, BUENOS AIRES: Heavy rains that flooded a city on Argentina's east coast in recent days have killed at least 16 people, officials.

Rescue teams were searching for dozens of others reported missing, including two girls and two adults. Authorities said they were swept away by floodwaters unleashed by rains that began pelting the city of Baha Blanca on Friday.

Crews have evacuated more than 1,450 people from the city located south of the capital of Buenos Aires. Those evacuated include patients from a local hospital.

Some 12 inches of rain have fallen in Baha Blanca in recent days, when the historical monthly average is about 5 inches.

Ahead of US talks, Zelensky says Ukraine wants peace

AFP, KYIV: President Volodymyr Zelensky said Monday ahead of talks with US officials in Saudi Arabia that Ukraine wants peace and Russia is the "only reason" that the war has dragged on.

Zelensky is due to arrive in Saudi Arabia later Monday, a day ahead of crucial talks between Ukrainian and US officials on ending the war with Russia.

"Ukraine has been seeking peace since the very first second of the war, and we have always said that the only reason that the war is continuing is because of Russia," Zelensky wrote on social media.

The highly-anticipated negotiations on Tuesday on resolving the more than three-year conflict will see US and Ukrainian officials meet for the first time since Zelensky's disastrous White House visit last month.

US President Donald Trump since taking office has repeated a string of false claims about Zelensky and the war that echo key Kremlin talking points.

The Kremlin, which has praised Washington's stance on the conflict since Trump took office, said Monday that it was not holding out for specific or concrete outcomes from the Saudi talks.

Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the United States was likely waiting to hear from the Ukrainian side that they are ready for peace.

"This is, in fact, probably what everyone is waiting for," Peskov told reporters.

Kyiv has been urging a just and lasting end to the war for years, while appealing for security guarantees that would deter Russia from ever attacking Ukraine again.

DMK raising NEP, delimitation issues out of fear of losing elections in TN: Nishikant Dubey

PTI, NEW DELHI: BJP member Nishikant Dubey on Monday accused the DMK of trying to divide the country by inciting passions by opposing the National Education Policy and delimitation of parliamentary constituencies.

Amid a raging war of words between the Centre and the M K Stalin government, Dubey raised the issue during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha and said the DMK was opposing the New Education Policy and delimitation out of fear of losing assembly elections due next year.

"The DMK is only inciting passions. Tamil is an ancient language, but Sanskrit pre-dates Tamil. Go to any temple across the country be it in Tamil-speaking, Telugu-speaking or Kannada-speaking regions -- everywhere puja is performed in Sanskrit," Dubey said.

The BJP leader said in 1973, the Congress-led government increased seats in Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal in the delimitation of parliamentary seats but did not do so in Tamil Nadu.

"Despite that, the DMK is running the government

in partnership with the Congress. The DMK party wants to divide the country by inciting emotions. The DMK is losing the Tamil Nadu assembly elections," Dubey said.

"The DMK is opposing the NEP, it is opposing Tamil, Telugu, Maithili, Santhali and Kannada. They are trying to disturb the harmony in the country. They want to impose English throughout and win elections by inciting passions," the BJP leader said.

BJP leader Saumitra Khan from West Bengal said the issue of illegal migration has been affecting

West Bengal since 1951. Highlighting the issue during Zero Hour, he said the northeastern states have been facing the issue of illegal immigration as well.

Khan, the Lok Sabha member from Bishnupur, claimed that there were over 50 lakh Rohingya Muslim immigrants in West Bengal who were being registered as voters by the Trinamool Congress government.

The BJP member asked the Union Home Ministry to take cognisance of reports of Rohingya residing in border areas of West Bengal getting voter cards.