



**Leader of Oppn in MP Assembly Umang Singh takes part in a protest against the state govt during the Budget session of the Assembly, in Bhopal**



**West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose with SSB personnel during his visit to the India-Nepal border, at Pantitanki area near Siliguri**



**Tibetan community people hold a protest march on the occasion of the Tibetan National Uprising Day, in Dehradun, Uttarakhand**



**School students pay tribute to Maharashtra's first chief minister Yashwantrao Chavan on his birth anniversary, in Karad**

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**AAP workers during a protest against the BJP government in Delhi over its promise to provide free cooking gas cylinders to women on the occasion of Holi**

### 9-year-old boy sexually assaulted in Nagpur, case registered

**NAGPUR:** Police have launched a manhunt after a nine-year-old boy was allegedly sexually assaulted by a 35-year-old man in Nagpur, an official said on Wednesday. The incident took place on Monday afternoon when the child was playing with his friends outside his house, said the official from Kotwali police station. The accused lured the boy with chocolates, took him to his home and sexually assaulted the minor, the official said, citing the FIR. He also allegedly threatened to kill him if he spoke about it. The boy returned home in tears and narrated the crime to his parents, who approached the police. A case has been registered and efforts are being made to nab the accused, the official added.

### 2 killed, 5 injured as bus collides with parked truck in Rajasthan

**JAIPUR:** Two people were killed and five others were injured when a private bus collided with a parked truck in the Bichiwada police station area of Dungarpur district in Rajasthan on Wednesday morning. Police said the accident occurred when a private bus traveling from Rajkot to Bahraich collided with a truck near Sherwada village. The deceased were identified as Bharat (20) and Girish Kumar (23). The injured have been admitted to Dungarpur District Hospital for treatment. Police said that after the post-mortem, the bodies were handed over to the family members. A case has been registered against the bus driver, and an investigation is underway.

### Delhi Police busts cyber fraud syndicate, three held for phishing scam

**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi Police has dismantled an organized cyber fraud syndicate operating across India and arrested three key members of the gang for creating fake banking websites and phishing links to deceive unsuspecting victims, an official said on Wednesday. The accused used advanced digital techniques to steal sensitive banking information, leading to widespread financial fraud, he said. "The gang targeted people by impersonating representatives of a renowned bank, offering lucrative credit card deals. Victims were sent phishing links that directed them to counterfeit banking websites designed to collect their personal and financial information," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer North) Nidhin Valsan said.

### Nagpur jeweller accuses maize trader of duping him of Rs 2.34 crore

**NAGPUR:** A jeweller from Nagpur has accused a businessman of cheating him of Rs 2.34 crore by taking gold ornaments from him but not paying for them, an official said on Wednesday. In his complaint, the jeweller said the accused, a maize trader, initially bought valuables from him and made payments promptly, gaining his trust. However, over the past year, the accused took jewellery worth Rs 2.34 crore from the complainant but failed to make payments. He gave the complainant a few cheques but all were dishonoured for lack of funds, the jeweller told the police. The jeweller subsequently demanded the money in cash, but the accused allegedly refused, prompting the complainant to approach the cops, said the official from Pratap Nagar police station.

### Five Naxalites held in Chhattisgarh

**BIJAPUR:** Police on Wednesday arrested five Naxalites, one of them carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh on his head, in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh, officials said. Narayan Bhandari, Dharma Kaka, Neela Kaka, Kista Dhruva and Rambabu Punem were apprehended by the security personnel near a forest in Marudbaka village under the Usur police station limits during an anti-Naxal operation, an official said. The local police, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and its elite Commando Battalion of Resolute Action (CoBRA) units were involved in the operation launched in the area on Monday, he said.

### PDP MLA raises issue of ban on J&K outfits in Assembly

**JAMMU:** People's Democratic Party (PDP) member Wahid Para on Wednesday raised in the assembly the issue of ban on two Jammu and Kashmir-based groups, seeking its revocation. The Centre on Tuesday banned two Jammu and Kashmir-based groups -- Awami Action Committee and Jammu and Kashmir Ittihadul Muslimeen -- for five years under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. As the House assembled for the day, Para raised the issue. Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather instructed him to sit down as the Question Hour had begun.

# We back three-language policy, oppose Hindi imposition: Kerala Min

**PTI, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** As the bitter battle between the Tamil Nadu government and the Centre over the three-language policy continues, Kerala Higher Education Minister R Bindu said on Wednesday that the state has always encouraged the policy but firmly opposes the imposition of Hindi.

Bindu stated that Kerala wants students to learn multiple languages and has even established a Centre of Excellence for Language Networking. "We want students to learn foreign languages as well, which is why we have set up the Centre of Excellence for Language Networking," she told reporters here.

However, the minister reiterated that the state opposes the imposition of Hindi.

### 3-LANGUAGE POLICY A 'FAILURE MODEL', ASSERTS TN MINISTER P THIAGA RAJAN

**PTI, MADURAI:** Tamil Nadu Minister for Information Technology Palanivel Thiaga Rajan on Wednesday called the Centre's three-language policy a "failure" model and questioned why such a flawed model should replace the state's "successful" model of 2-language policy. Speaking to reporters here, Thiaga Rajan asked if anyone with knowledge and wisdom would accept a failure model. Though the first National Education Policy came up way back in 1968, the 3-language policy could not be properly implemented anywhere and Tamil Nadu, which adopted the 2-language policy could generate the best learning outcomes. Further, he said that the question of 3-languages would not arise if the second language of English had been taught properly in northern states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The Centre had no authority or right to impose any language and they could not even implement teaching of 2 languages successfully. However, Tamil Nadu has been successful in implementing the 2-language formula.

"At the same time, we embrace tolerance towards all languages. Imbibing and assimilating different languages has been a part of Kerala's cul-

ture from the very beginning," Bindu said.

She further noted that Kerala's long coastline has historically attracted various groups of

### NSUI SLAMS DHARMENDRA PRADHAN FOR CRITICISING TN GOVT'S NEP STAND

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The National Students' Union of India (NSUI) staged a protest outside Delhi's Shastr Bhawan on Wednesday, condemning Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's remarks, in which he accused the Tamil Nadu government of creating a "fear psychosis" about the three-language formula proposed in NEP 2020. On Tuesday, Pradhan had criticised the Tamil Nadu government over its stand on the new National Education Policy (NEP), accusing it of creating a "fear psychosis" about the three-language formula while doing little to promote Tamil in the state. The protest was led by NSUI Delhi president Ashish Lamba, who accused the BJP government of disrespecting regional identities and linguistic diversity, according to an official statement from NSUI. According to the statement, heavy police deployment and barricades were set up to prevent the NSUI activists from marching further. The activists continued their protest, criticising what they termed the BJP's interference in education.

foreigners to the state, leading to linguistic diversity.

"From then on, we have embraced different foreign languages. Now, our

policy is to encourage students to study multiple languages, with Malayalam, of course, being given prominence," the minister added.

## Search ops to get boost with deployment of robo

**PTI, NAGARKURNOOL (TELANGANA):** The search for seven persons trapped inside the partially collapsed SLBC tunnel here will get a boost following the deployment of a robo, officials said on Wednesday.

### TELANGANA TUNNEL COLLAPSE

A Hyderabad-based company has taken an 'autonomous hydraulic powered robo' to the accident site and it would carry out activities like removal of debris and digging, an official statement said.

The robo can go to "dangerous places" (inside the tunnel) where humans cannot reach and it can also work with 15 times more capacity than humans, it quoted officials as saying.

The robo is being de-

ployed to overcome the hurdles being faced in the search operation and to conduct it with more speed, it said.

The challenging conditions inside the tunnel include debris, mounds of soil and low levels of oxygen.

Slush would be removed by using a 40 HP pump with the aid of 'autonomous hydraulic powered robo'. The robo can remove 5,000 cubic metres of soil per hour, it said.

The release also said personnel belonging to 12 Central and state government organisations are carrying out the search operation round the clock.

The ex-gratia of Rs 25 lakh announced by the Telangana government was also handed over to the family, it said.

## Privatisation of Railways compromising safety; leading to accidents, deaths: Oppn

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** Opposition members in Rajya Sabha on Wednesday said privatisation of various operations of the Railways by the government has compromised safety, leading to accidents and death of many passengers.

During a discussion on the working of Ministry of Railways, N R Elango (DMK) alleged that 2 million jobs in the Railways have been cut through contractualisation and outsourcing of the workforce.

After the BJP government came to power, in 2015 a Niti Aayog committee proposed a two-decade vision to privatise major segments of India's extensive railway network. Since then the BJP government has implement-



**Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh arrives to conduct proceedings in the House during the Budget session of Parliament, in New Delhi**

ed various privatisation measures through multiple approaches, he said.

Elango further said, "In the past three or four years we have lost valuable lives of 400 passengers due to train accidents, compared to zero deaths between

## COME RAINE OR SHINE



**Amidst continuous rainfall in Kochi, Kerala, people were seen taking boat rides, navigating through the city's scenic backwaters**

## Accused remanded to judicial custody till March 26

**PTI, PUNE:** A court here in Maharashtra on Wednesday remanded the accused in the Swargate bus rape case to police custody till March 26.

The accused, Dattatray Gade, had allegedly raped a 26-year-old woman inside a stationary state transport (MSRTC) bus at the Swargate terminus in the early hours of February 25, police said.

### SWARGATE BUS RAPE CASE

Gade was produced in court after completing his 12-day police custody in the afternoon.

"We sought his judicial custody, reserving the rights of police custody of two days. The court sent Gade to judicial custody till March 26," a crime branch officer said.

According to the police, the victim was waiting for a bus at the Swargate bus stand to go to her native place in Satara district in the early morning of February 25 when Gade approached her posing as a bus conductor, and offered to take her to a waiting bus.

As per the complaint, the victim went with Gade inside a bus, only to find it empty with no lights. The accused followed her inside the bus, closed both doors and allegedly raped her.

Gade, who faces half a dozen criminal cases, was tracked down in an agriculture field near his native Gunat village under Shirur taluk of Pune district with the help of drones and sniffer dogs.

## Unsafe to convict on suspicious dying statement sans corroborative evidence: SC

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court has said it was not safe to convict on the basis of a suspicious dying declaration in the absence of corroborative evidence and acquitted a man of his wife's murder.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ah-sanuddin Amanullah said a dying declaration was an important piece of evidence and a conviction could be made by relying solely on it as it held immense importance in criminal law.

"However, such reliance should be placed after as-

certaining the quality of the dying declaration and considering the entire facts of a given case," the bench said.

The apex court, therefore, acquitted a man convicted for allegedly murdering his wife by setting her ablaze in September 2008.

The bench said the trial court convicted him on the basis of his wife's dying declaration.

"In other words, if a dying declaration is surrounded by doubt or there are inconsistent dying declarations by the deceased, then courts must look for cor-

roborative evidence to find out which dying declaration is to be believed," the bench said in its March 4 verdict.

Courts, the bench said, were required to act cautiously in such matters.

"In cases where the dying declaration is suspicious, it is not safe to convict an accused in the absence of corroborative evidence," it said.

It came on record that the victim gave two statements that were "totally different" from her subsequent testimonies, including the one made before the judicial magistrate that became her

official dying declaration.

Investigation, the bench said, also ruled out the angle of dowry harassment.

The order observed the relations between the families of the accused and the woman had soured and a couple of years the woman's death, the man's brother had filed an assault case against his father-in-law and brother-in-law.

While allowing his appeal, the bench set aside a Madras High Court's February 2012 order that had upheld his conviction and life sentence for the alleged

offence of murder.

According to the prosecution, the woman succumbed to burn injuries in a hospital three weeks after being set on fire by the husband. The couple lived in Tuticorin with its minor son.

The apex court observed the woman told the police in the hospital the fire was due to an accident in the kitchen.

However, three days later, the police recorded another statement of the victim in which she claimed her husband set her on fire by pouring kerosene.

## Train hits man, infant son; both die in Kerala

**PTI, PALAKKAD (KERALA):** A 24-year-old man and his infant son were killed when a train hit them near Lakkidi on Wednesday evening, police said.

The man, his wife, and their son had come to the woman's parental home and were returning when the incident occurred at around 4.30 pm, police added.

The man was walking along the tracks with his six-month-old son in his arms, heading toward the Lakkidi railway gate from his wife's home, when the train struck them, killing them on the spot.