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Waterlogging under a railway bridge following heavy rain, in Ponneri of Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu

Four killed as e-bus rams into vehicles on busy Rajkot street

**RAJKOT:** An electric bus operated for Rajkot Municipal Corporation rammed into several vehicles as it was passing a traffic signal here on Wednesday morning, resulting in the death of four persons and injuries to four others, police said. Closed-circuit television (CCTV) footage showed the bus failed to stop at the signal near Indira Circle on the city's 150-foot ring road around 10 a.m. It ploughed through at least two four-wheelers and six two-wheelers before halting at a distance from the impact site. "Four people - two men and two women - lost their lives after being run over by the bus, which knocked down several two-wheelers, while four persons were injured," said Gandhigram police station inspector Sejal Meghani. Among the injured is a seven-year-old boy, the youngest victim of the incident.

IED found outside house in Manipur's Imphal East

**IMPHAL:** An IED was found outside a house in Manipur's Imphal East district in the early hours of Wednesday, police said. The Improvised Explosive Device (IED) was found outside the main gate of Md Ilyas Khan's house in Khergao Makha Leikai in Porompat police station area around 4 am, they said. It is believed that the IED was kept there to threaten Khand and his family, they added. Police said an investigation is underway to find those behind the incident. A bomb disposal unit neutralised the IED around 7 am, they said.

Man arrested for murdering father in Assam's Hojai

**NAGAON (ASSAM):** A person was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly killing his father in an inebriated state in Hojai district of Assam, police said. According to a senior official, police got a report about the incident during the early hours and rushed to the spot in Beltola Milanpur area of Lanka in the district. "We got a call from the daughter-in-law of the deceased. The man last night came back heavily drunk and started a fight with his father," he said. He then beat up his father and allegedly burnt him alive, the official said. The deceased has been identified as Sarjon Sampia and the post-mortem examination has been completed, he said. "We have arrested the accused from the spot. We will now produce him before a court," the official added. Further investigation is underway.

Two labourers killed after tree falls on them in Tripura

**AGARTALA:** Two labourers died and two others were injured when a tree fell on them in Tripura's Dhalai district on Wednesday, police said. According to police, 22-year-old Robert Malsom died on the spot, while Jue Malsom (18) succumbed to her injuries later at Kuali Hospital. "A group of labourers was engaged in constructing an embankment on the slopes of two hilly sides under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme when the incident occurred," a police officer said. "Suddenly, a full-grown tree fell on them at Nailahabari, resulting in one death on the spot and injuries to three others. Later, one more succumbed to her injuries. Two injured workers have been admitted to a nearby health facility," he added.

Drug peddler's house demolished in Jammu; suspects detained in Samba

**JAMMU:** Authorities razed a double-storey house of an alleged drug peddler here on Wednesday and detained several suspects in Samba, officials said. The newly constructed house of a wanted drug peddler, Lahu Gujjar, was razed by police in Bijru Chack village of the Bishnah area in the outskirts of Jammu, officials said. They said Gujjar built the house with proceeds from the drug sale and had been issued a notice some time back, but he failed to appear before the police. Gujjar is wanted by police in several cases and is absconding, they said. In another action, a contingent led by a Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) conducted raids in Balole Khad, Gujjar Basti and adjoining areas in the Bari Brahmana area of Samba and detained several people for questioning.

Five alleged drug peddlers arrested in outer North Delhi

**NEW DELHI:** Apr 16 (PTI) Delhi Police arrested five alleged drug peddlers and seized 620 grams of heroin with a street value of over Rs 1.25 crore in three separate operations, an official said on Wednesday. The accused have been identified as Sahibul (36), Jatin (19), Arun (20), Ravinder (40) and Farooq (35), he said, adding they were arrested under various cases registered at Bhalaswa Dairy and Narela Police Station under sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. In the first operation, Sahibul was arrested with 300 grams of heroin, a senior police official said, adding that he has three previous cases against him. His three brothers are currently in judicial custody for a 2019 murder case linked to illicit drug trade rivalry, he said. In the second operation, Jatin, Arun and Ravinder were arrested while travelling in a white car and police seized 320 grams of heroin from them.

# Congress protests against ED chargesheet in National Herald case

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The Congress on Wednesday held protests outside Enforcement Directorate offices across the country over the agency's charge-sheet against Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case and alleged that the action against its leaders showed panic and moral bankruptcy of the "despotic" government which wanted to divert attention from public issues and economic crisis. The BJP stepped up its attack on the Congress, saying the opposition party has the right to protest but no one has the "licence to loot", and asserted that probe agencies will be unfazed by the Congress' "threats".

The law will take its course under the Modi government, BJP leader and former law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said at a press conference at party headquarters and dismissed the Congress' charge of vendetta. The opposition party claimed that the "frivolous" case against its leadership is nothing but BJP's fear of a "rising, revived" Congress and alleged that the ruling party was trying to "whitewash its sins" with such actions. "This effort is being made to divert attention from public issues, foreign policy and economic crisis. The masterminds of this politics of revenge are two people who have a criminal mindset, but we will not re-



Congress workers protesting outside ED offices in different parts of the country

main silent," AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh said addressing a press conference along with Abhishek Singhvi. Holding black flags and placards, Congress leaders and workers raised slogans against the government and the ED as they protested on streets and outside the agency's offices across the states. In Delhi, a protest started at the AICC headquarters but the members were soon whisked away by the police. The Congress put out explainers on social media, countering the allegations related to the financial loan given to Associated Journals Limited (AJL), the company running National Herald, and termed as false the charges that Young Indian has taken over Rs 5,000 crore worth

of properties of Associated Journals. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that the "despotic government is hell-bent on targeting the Congress to whitewash its sins". "BJP's economic mismanagement is spiralling out of control. Desperation is gathering steam. No vision, No solution, only diversion!," Kharge said in a post tagging Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He alleged that the BJP is deliberately, out of vengeance, misusing the agencies and filing false cases, saying, "We will fight against this false case. If we were not afraid of the British, then what are BJP-RSS?". BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said the Congress has the right to hold 'dharanas' but that right does not

extend to misappropriating public properties given by the government to the National Herald. He outlined the main charge against the Gandhis that as 76 per cent shareholder of the Young India company, they "misappropriated" thousands of crores of real estate owned by AJL. BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi also said that there was no question of vendetta politics as the probe into the case began on the Delhi High Court's directive in 2013 when the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was in power. He alleged that the way the Congress leadership has played with the "legacy of freedom fighters" in the National Herald case raises "ethical questions". "They

transferred our freedom fighters' property (AJL) to their own child," he charged. The Congress said that "politics of vengeance, harassment and intimidation" has been going on for the last two days, adding that its leadership, particularly CPP Chairperson Sonia Gandhi and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi have been deliberately targeted. Singhvi said the case is nothing but vendetta in legal disguise. "Selective justice is nothing but political thuggery," he said, asking where are the proceeds of the crime. "This is the eighth wonder of the world, it is mocking justice, it represents the politics of vendetta," he said hitting out at the government. Ramesh said, "You have been in power for 11 years, you have no

evidence, no proof, nothing - otherwise you would not have been forced to wait for the 365th day." "This shows not only the government's panic but also their mental and moral bankruptcy. Modi ji, this is the Congress party. The blood of Rahul ji and Sonia Gandhi's own people is mixed in the soil of this country, show these false threats to someone else," he said. "We cannot be silenced. We will continue to raise public issues," he said. AICC general secretary K C Venugopal shared pictures of protests by Congress leaders across the country on X and said, "Whenever Modi fears, he puts forth the ED." Congress leader Pawan Khara, in a video post on X, said it was the British who used to fear the publication National Herald in the past while it is the RSS now. "The British were irritated before 1947 with the National Herald, Gandhi family and Congress party, and now the Sanghis are getting irritated in the year 2025. The Gandhi family and the Congress party were the voice of the oppressed then and still are today," he said. Singhvi claimed that the government is building a false narrative that the Gandhi family had made money and had usurped properties of AJL, whereas Young India is only a non-profit company and its shareholders have not benefitted even a single penny.

## Meitei outfit claims Prez rule falls short of tackling emergency in Manipur

**PTI, IMPHAL:** Meitei organisation COCOMI claimed that the President's rule in Manipur was not properly addressing the "emergency situation" in the state, and asked the legislators to either act as "responsible leaders" or resign to pave the way for fresh elections. Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) convenor Khuraijam Athouba, while addressing a press conference, asserted that the President's rule did not bring any major change in the situation in the state. "We don't favour the President's rule. When it was imposed, people assumed that

**MANIPUR: LOW-INTENSITY BLAST TRIGGERS PANIC IN CHURACHANDPUR**  
**PTI, IMPHAL/ CHURACHANDPUR:** A low-intensity explosion triggered panic in Manipur's Churachandpur in the early hours of Wednesday, officials said. The blast happened at Elim Veng near the Jamsuan-Sahei roads junction, they said. No one was injured in the explosion, they added. Locals claimed that some persons came to the area around 1 am on a two-wheeler, hurled the bomb and left. Police said an investigation was underway to identify those behind the blast.

the Centre would swiftly end the conflict. But there have been a series of incidents where the Kuki bodies and armed groups of the community have openly defied the authorities," he alleged. Khuraijam said people had

thought that with the imposition of the President's rule, all hostile areas would be sanitised and peace would be restored within two-three months, and with the improvement of the situation the admin would be handed over to the state.

## Disturbing collapse of law and order in Assam, alleges Gaurav Gogoi

**PTI, GUWAHATI:** Senior Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi on Wednesday alleged that Assam is witnessing a "disturbing collapse" of law and order, and has become a police state where "intimidation and miscarriage of justice have become the norm". Gogoi, the deputy leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha, made the comment after visiting party spokesperson Reetam Singh, who is at present in Morigaon district jail after being arrested multiple times in various cases registered across the state. "Over the past few days, Congress spokesperson @

SinghReetam has been relentlessly targeted and implicated in one case after another. I visited Morigaon District Jail yesterday to meet him and extend my solidarity," Gogoi said in a post on X. As it was the first day of Bohag, the Assamese new year month, the MP handed him some 'pitha' and other traditional sweets. "Assam is witnessing a disturbing collapse of law and order - a police state where intimidation and miscarriage of justice have become the norm. Ordinary people are speaking up. I stand with the people of Assam," said Gogoi, the MP of Jorhat.

## Delhi HC comes down heavily on school for treating students with indignity

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The Delhi High Court on Wednesday pulled up Delhi Public School Dwarka for treating students with "indignity" over a fee dispute by confining them in a library and not allowing them to attend classes or interact with peers. Justice Sachin Datta said the school, which was treating students like "chattel", deserved to be shut down. The court stressed on placing some safeguards to ensure that the students were not "tortured" by the school, which was running the institution merely as a "money making machine".



Parents stage a protest outside the Delhi Directorate of Education (DoE) over fee hike by private schools, in New Delhi

In dramatic scenes, several students in their school uniforms, with books and bags, were pres-

ent during the court proceedings along with their parents. "I am concerned with

you treating the students in a shabby and inhumane way which is brought out in the inspection report. Assuming the fee is not paid, you are entitled to take action but surely not in this manner. What is this going on? Inability to pay fees does not give the school the licence to treat students with such indignity," the judge said. The high court examined an inspection report of an eight-member committee led by the district magistrate (southwest), flagging several discriminatory practices against students amid the fee hike row.

## Student leader smears cow dung on principal's office in retaliation to classroom experiment

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** A 'research experiment' conducted at Delhi University's Lakshmi Bai College involving the application of a traditional cow dung-based slurry on classroom walls has led to protests from the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU). The experiment, carried out by Principal Pratyush Vatsala and a faculty team, involved applying a mixture containing cow dung

to the walls of classrooms. Vatsala stated that the initiative was part of a research project titled "Study of Heat Stress Control by Using Traditional Indian Knowledge." The project aimed to explore indigenous, eco-friendly methods of reducing heat in temporary classroom structures that become particularly hot during summer months. According to the principal, the project was

launched in response to students' concerns about high indoor temperatures. "The classrooms where we held the experiment are located in porta cabins, not permanent structures... Several students had approached us regarding the heat. So, we decided to try indigenous methods to make these classrooms cooler," Vatsala said. Dr. Shwetank, an assistant professor of environ-

mental studies overseeing the experiment, clarified that the applied material was not cow dung alone. "The slurry used comprised 40% clay soil, 10% gypsum, 10% red soil, 10% husk and straw, and 30% cow dung," he explained. "It is being misunderstood that only cow dung was used. Students were also involved in the process, and classes are continuing in the same rooms, with

students even painting on the treated walls." A video showing Principal Vatsala applying the slurry was circulated in the college's faculty WhatsApp group and later spread widely on social media, drawing criticism from some students. On Tuesday, DUSU president Ronak Khatri staged a protest by smearing cow dung on the walls of the principal's office. Khatri lat-

er posted about the action on social media platform X, stating that the protest was meant to mirror the treatment of classroom walls. "No consent was taken from students for such an initiative," Khatri said. "Instead of providing air conditioners, cow dung has been applied on classroom walls. I visited the room, and there was a strong smell of cow dung. No classes were being held there at the time."