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Bollywood actor Ananya Panday during the screening of her upcoming film 'Kesari Chapter 2', in Mumbai

TN CM Stalin challenges Amit Shah on NEET, delimitation

PTI, TIRUVALLUR (TAMIL NADU): Chief Minister M K Stalin on Friday slammed Union Home Minister Amit Shah for accusing the DMK regime of using issues such as NEET and delimitation as diversionary tactic and challenged him to give "clear answers" to prove his point.

He also said: "Do you believe you can win by intimidating a few here and by forming alliances? Bring all your allies, we are ready for a fight...Not Amit Shah — no other "Shah" can rule here. This is Tamil Nadu. As long as Muthuvel Karunanidhi Stalin is here, your plans will not succeed," the CM said.

Stalin, addressing a government event at Ponneri near here, detailed a string



of welfare schemes of the state government including the Rs 1,000 monthly assistance for women. He referred to the introduction of two Bills by him days ago in the state assembly to nominate persons with disabilities as members in all local bodies. He said the voices of more than 15,000 differently-abled persons

would soon echo in the civic bodies across Tamil Nadu.

In view of many such initiatives, the chief minister said, under the DMK regime, self-confidence has grown and the state has also got developed. "Some are unable to tolerate this. They could not find any fault with the government and hence, they are spread-

ing defamatory allegations," he said adding, be it law and order, governance or any other indices, the state is a top performer. However, some opposition parties, rather than functioning as responsible opposition, behaved like parties opposed to Tamil Nadu state itself.

"What is their idea? They intend mortgaging Tamil Nadu by associating with a crowd that betrays Tamil Nadu and the Tamil people and this is the only thought of those opportunists," the chief minister said apparently targeting the BJP and AIADMK, without naming them.

Be it opposition to the NEET, 3-language policy, the Waqf amendment and mobilising states over delimitation, it is the DMK that continued to be staunch at the national level and his party is the "all India face of championing states' rights."

Shah, during his recent Chennai visit, remarked that the DMK regime is engaged in discussions over issues including NEET merely to divert attention, and the union minister alleged that it was a distraction tactic. "I wish to make it clear that Tamil Nadu is fighting not for itself alone, but on behalf of all states across India. Is it wrong to demand the rights of the states? It was due to the union government's inaction that the DMK government had to approach the Supreme Court against the Governor, that resulted in a historic verdict.

Two women caught with liquor in dry Bihar

PTI, KATHIHAR: Two women were arrested in Bihar's Katihar district for allegedly smuggling liquor, officials said on Friday.

The women, who are not muslims, had hidden the liquor under the burqas they were wearing, said Shubash Kumar Singh, an inspector of the Prohibition Excise & Registration Department in the district.

They were intercepted near Maniya railway station on Thursday on the basis of intelligence inputs, he said.

When they were frisked, a large quantity of liquor bottles was recovered from their possession, he added.

In a separate operation, two persons were arrested after liquor was seized from their houses in Durgapur Laliyahi area of the district.

Man, two kids killed as truck hits motorcycle in MP's Chhatarpur

CHHATARPUR (MP): A man and his two children were killed and two other children were injured when a speeding truck hit their motorcycle near Bamitha in the district on Friday morning, police said. The accident took place between 7:30 and 8 am. A total of five persons were riding the motorbike at the time of the accident. Majljal Ahirwar (45) and his children Shivam (3) and Varsha (4) died on the spot, said Bamitha police station in-charge Ashutosh Shrottriya. The other two injured kids were admitted to the district hospital in critical condition, he said. The truck driver who was allegedly speeding was arrested and further probe was on, he added.

Two criminals detained under PSA in Jammu, Udhampur

JAMMU: Two suspected criminals, including a cattle smuggler, were detained under the stringent Public Safety Act in Jammu and Kashmir's Jammu and Udhampur districts on Friday, police said. Lakhit Ali alias Liaqat, a resident of Sira Manjla village in Ramnagar and a cattle smuggler, was detained under the Public Safety Act (PSA) on the orders of the Udhampur district magistrate, a police spokesperson said. The accused stands booked in a number of cases related to cattle smuggling and has become a threat to the peaceful atmosphere in the district, he said. Raman Kumar, a resident of Kathar village of Armia, was also detained under the PSA in Jammu district, the spokesperson said.

SC quashes dowry harassment complaint against husband's kin

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has quashed a dowry harassment complaint filed by a woman against her husband's relatives, saying they were unnecessarily roped in and allowing the case to proceed against them would amount to a "vexatious trial". Referring to the apex court rulings in such cases, a bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra said the practice of involving the relatives of the husband in dowry cases had been deprecated. Admittedly, the marriage between the couple, the court noted, was dissolved by a decree of divorce passed in May 2012 and the complaint was filed after three years of the divorce.

Fire breaks out in banquet hall in Delhi's Vikaspuri area

NEW DELHI: A fire broke out in a banquet hall in Delhi's Vikaspuri area on Friday afternoon, prompting authorities to rush 13 fire tenders, an official from the Delhi Fire Services said. No casualties have been reported yet, he said. A call was received at 4.11 pm on Friday in the tent of the banquet hall in H Block in Vikaspuri area, he said. "We rushed a total of 13 fire tenders to the spot and the firefighting operation is still ongoing," he added.

Woman 'kills' two children, dies by suicide in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: A woman allegedly killed her two sons using a knife meant for cutting tender coconuts and then died by suicide by jumping from their residential apartment, police said. The woman (35) died on the spot after jumping from the building on Thursday evening, while her elder son (11) was found dead in a pool of blood. Her younger son (9), who was critically injured, was rushed to a hospital but did not survive, they said. A police official said a seven-page suicide note written by the woman suggests she was emotionally disturbed and angry with her husband. He also noted that the woman and both children were dealing with health issues.

Mobile thief held; 16 stolen phones recovered from him

LATUR: Police have arrested a man accused of being involved in multiple mobile theft cases in Maharashtra's Latur district, and recovered from him 16 stolen phones worth over Rs 2.80 lakh, officials said on Friday. Incidents of mobile phone theft from houses and shops were reported recently in parts of the district. The police even formed a dedicated team to probe the case and trace the culprit, an official said. Through technical analysis, the team received inputs that the suspect was trying to sell the mobile phones that he had stolen. The team laid a trap in Babhalgaon Chowk area and detained him on April 16, he said.

Medical student arrested in class 11 paper leak case in Assam: CID

GUWAHATI: A student of a medical college was arrested by the Assam police's CID on Friday on the charge of leaking the state board's class 11 Mathematics question paper for money, an official said. The accused medical student also works as a part-time teacher and is the son of the owner of a private senior secondary school in Nagaon, he said.

Churches hold special services, deliver sermons to mark Good Friday

PTI, NEW DELHI: Christians across the country observed Good Friday with religious fervour while churches held special services and delivered sermons to mark and commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Good Friday was observed in several states including Christian-majority Mizoram, Kerala, Nagaland, Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

In Mizoram, all churches of different Christian denominations, including the Presbyterian Church and Baptist Church of Mizoram (BCM) held special services and delivered sermons related to the crucifixion of Christ.

Most local churches marked the occasion with traditional congregational singing or service locally known as "Zaikhawm or Lengkhawm", which is an

SECURITY PREPAREDNESS



Jammu & Kashmir Police and Special Operations Group personnel during a mock drill in Kathua district, Jammu and Kashmir

33 Naxalites surrender before security forces in Chhattisgarh

PTI, SUKMA: At least 33 Naxalites, 17 of them carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 49 lakh, surrendered before security forces in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Friday, police said.

While 22 cadres, including nine women, turned themselves in before senior officials of the police and Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF) earlier in the day, later 11 others, including two women, surrendered before police officials, they said.

The surrendered cadres cited disappointment with "hollow" and "inhuman" Maoist ideology and atrocities on local tribals, Sukma Superintendent of Police Kiran Chavan said.

The official said they were also impressed by the state government's 'Niyad Nellanar' (your good village) scheme, aimed at facilitating development



Central Reserve Police Forces (CRPF) on high alert after 33 Naxalites, 17 of them carrying a cumulative bounty of Rs 49 lakh, surrendered before security forces

works in remote villages, and the new surrender and rehabilitation policy.

As many as 22 surrendered Naxalites were active in the Maad (Chhattisgarh) and Nuapada (Odisha) divisions of Maoists, he said.

Chavan said the cadres included Muchaki Joga (33), deputy commander in PLGA (people's liberation guerrilla army) company

One killed in clash over land dispute in Manipur's Ukhrul

PTI, IMPHAL: One person was killed and five others injured in a clash between people of two villages over a land dispute in Manipur's Ukhrul district, officials said on Friday.

The incident happened on Thursday, following which the Additional District Magistrate Polly Makan imposed prohibitory orders in Shangching and Lungreiphung Tang villages.

An official based in the Ukhrul district said the reasons behind the clash were related to the ownership of land between residents of the two villages.

The deceased has been identified as 46-year-old Ramson RK. He suffered a bullet injury on his left chest, police said.

According to the orders, the villagers have been prohibited from leaving their residences or engag-

TWO MILITANTS ARRESTED, 11 FIREARMS SEIZED IN THOUBAL DISTRICT OF MANIPUR

PTI, IMPHAL: Security forces arrested two militants of a banned outfit and seized 11 firearms and 10 IEDs during search operations in different parts of the state, police said on Friday. The two militants of Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup (KYKL) were arrested from Wangjing Khabakhong area in Thoubal district on Thursday. Two hand grenades were seized from their possession, the police said.

Security forces seized 11 firearms and several Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) during search operations in Tengnoupal, Imphal East and Imphal West districts. Two country-made 9 mm pistols with magazines, 10 IEDs, and eight hand grenades were seized from Tengnoupal district on Thursday, they said. From Chingkei Ching area in Imphal East district, one 7.62 SLR rifle with one magazine, two 12-bore SBBL guns, one 7.65 mm pistol with magazine, three hand grenades without detonators, ammunition, bulletproof jackets and helmets along with other weapons were seized on Thursday. One AK rifle, one SLR along with a magazine, one 9mm carbine machine gun along a magazine, one modified single barrel gun, one pistol, two hand grenades without detonators were seized from Khongnaobi Canal road in Imphal West district, the police added.

70 illegal hospitals, clinics closed in UP

PTI, SAMBHAL (UP): Chief Medical Officer Tarun Kumar Pathak on Friday said the health department has initiated action against unqualified medical practitioners and 70 illegal hospitals and clinics here in the past week.

A special campaign was launched in Sambhal, Gunnaur and Chandausi to identify and shut down unregistered healthcare facilities, said Pathak.

As a result, approximately 70 illegal hospitals and clinics have been closed, he added.

Pathak said that FIRs have been filed against more than 50 individuals

ICG ship 'Vigraha' comes to rescue of two endangered Olive Ridley turtles in Odisha

PTI, NEW DELHI: The crew of India Coast Guard (ICG) ship Vigraha came to the rescue of two endangered Olive Ridley turtles after they were found entangled in nearly 600 kg of ghost nets at sea, officials said on Friday.

The Olive Ridley turtles turn up in millions for mass nesting along the Odisha coast every year between February and March.

A ghost net is a fishing net that has been lost or abandoned in the ocean.

"@IndiaCoastGuard Ship Vigraha saved two #Olive-Ridley turtles an #Endangered species under the #IndianWildlifeProtection Act-1972, entangled in



nearly 600 kg of ghost nets. Our Maritime guardians are committed towards safeguarding marine biodiversity. #WeProtect #OpOlivia #MarineEnvironment," the ICG wrote in a post on X.

The ICG also shared a photograph and a video clip

of the rescue process.

Every year since 1991, the ICG has been providing continuous assistance under 'Operation Oliva' to the central and state authorities and agencies to protect endangered species under the Wildlife Act, 1972.

In February this year, the ICG said it had launched the annual operation to ensure safe mid-sea sojourn of breeding Olive Ridley sea turtles and mass nesting of these delicate marine species in Odisha.

Under 'Operation Oliva', the ongoing season of mass nesting of endangered Olive Ridley turtles at the coast of Odisha has yielded productive results. The nesting data mainly at Rushikulya have come up with 6,126 nests having 5,51,238 eggs, while nesting at Devi River mouth to Astrang is sporadic in nature with 60 nests and 5,400 eggs, officials had earlier said.