

IN BRIEF



AIADMK, DMK release election manifestos

CHENNAI
The ruling AIADMK and the Opposition DMK released their manifestos for the Lok Sabha election on Tuesday, making several populist promises. The DMK released its manifesto for the byelection to 18 Assembly constituencies also. Promises such as declaring the Cauvery delta region a protected agricultural zone and education and farm loan waiver are common to the manifestos of both parties.

CBI to probe cases related to Pollachi sexual abuse

CHENNAI
The Tamil Nadu government on Tuesday informed the Madras High Court that it had already passed orders transferring two main cases booked in connection with Pollachi sexual abuse issue to the Central Bureau of Investigation and that a decision has been taken to transfer other related cases too to the central agency.

SC asks miners' kin if they want bodies recovered

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court has sought to know from the relatives of miners, who were trapped in an illegal mine in Meghalaya three months ago, if they wanted the "decomposed" bodies recovered. Only two bodies have been recovered from the mine so far. The court is hearing a plea seeking urgent steps for rescuing the miners body trapped in the rat-hole mine in Ksan in East Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya. **PTI**

Single document for CBSE mark sheet, certificate

NEW DELHI
The Central Board of Secondary Education will issue a single document combining the certificate and mark sheet for Class 10 board exams from this year onwards, officials said on Tuesday. A decision in this regard was taken by the board's examination committee and was approved by the governing body recently. Class 12 students will, however, continue to get separate documents. **PTI**

GoMs on lynchings, harassment on hold

Any decision on two important issues will now be taken by the next government after the election

**VIJAYA SINGH
JAGRITI CHANDRA
NEW DELHI**

With the announcement of general elections on March 10, at least two important Groups of Ministers (GoMs) constituted by the Centre last year to suggest measures on anti-lynching and prevention of sexual harassment of women at workplace have been put in the cold storage.

Till the next government is sworn in during May-June, the government cannot bring in changes in law on the two subjects.

A top source in the Ministry of Women and Child Development said the government's attempt to address sexual harassment at workplace in the aftermath of the MeToo movement by revisiting the law and suggesting ways to improve the response mechanism of organisations is now "on hold."

"The GoM is on hold because we are now on election track. It is now up to the next government (to take a decision)," the source said.

In cold storage

Two separate GoMs constituted by the Centre in 2018 have been put in abeyance

Date of constitution	Focus area	Number of GoM meetings held
October 24, 2018	Address sexual harassment of women at the workplace	1 Suggestions yet to be finalised
July 23, 2018	To decide measures to prevent lynchings	2 Suggestions yet to be finalised

Both the GoMs were headed by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh



The government had set up a four-member GoM in October last year and gave it three months to give its recommendations.

The GoM is headed by Home Minister Rajnath Singh and includes Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari, Maneka Gandhi and Nirmala Sitharaman. It, however, met only once and tasked another sub-panel to submit a report.

While the Ministry of Women and Child Development submitted its inputs in January, the sub-committee couldn't compile a report to

place it before the GoM.

The sub-committee includes officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Law & Justice.

On July 23 last year, after several incidents of lynching were reported across the country, the government announced that a GoM headed by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh will submit its recommendations on ways to prevent the crime to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A senior government official said the GoM met on two

occasions but was yet to finalise its report. A high-level committee headed by Union Home Secretary Rajiv Gauba submitted its report to the GoM in September, but it was yet to finalise the recommendations.

Among the measures suggested by the panel was tightening of law by inserting clauses in the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure through parliamentary approval.

The members of the GoM are External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari, Law

Pinaki Chandra Ghose appointed first Lokpal

President also appoints eight members

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
AHMEDABAD**

Former Supreme Court judge Pinaki Chandra Ghose became the first Lokpal of the country with his appointment to the post along with eight members on Tuesday.

The President has appointed Justice Ghose as Lokpal or anti-corruption watchdog ombudsman. Besides him, other judicial members are Justices Dilip B Bhosale, P.K. Mohanty, Abhilasha Kumari and A.K. Tripathi.

The non-judicial members are Dinesh Kumar Jain, Archana Ramasundaram, Mahender Singh, and Indrajeet Prasad Gautam.

Former SSB chief

Ms. Ramasundaram is former Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) chief, while Mr. Jain is former Maharashtra Chief Secretary. Mr. Gautam is



Justice P.C. Ghose

former IAS officer of Gujarat cadre and was Municipal Commissioner of Ahmedabad and Principal Secretary (Urban Development) in Gujarat.

Justice Ghose's appointment has come nearly five years after the Lokpal Act was notified on January 16, 2014. The law was passed in 2013 following a country-wide anti-corruption movement.

The members of the Lokpal will include eight members – former High Court judges and civil servants.

Experts discuss details of Kartarpur

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

Indian and Pakistani experts travelled to the border crossing in Punjab for the proposed Kartarpur Corridor on Tuesday, and discussed the coordinates for the "Zero Point" where Sikh pilgrims will cross over, officials in Delhi and Islamabad said. The two sides will meet next on April 2, to take forward plans to complete the corridor in time for the 550th birth anniversary celebrations of Guru Nanak.

"Both sides jointly surveyed the coordinates of the Zero Point and discussed the technical details. The two sides agreed on some technical aspects and expressed the hope to finalise the other modalities at the earliest," a press release issued by the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs said. The MEA did not issue a statement.

Apex court upholds right to self-defence

Says it extends to protecting others too

**KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI**

The right to self-defence extends not only to one's own body but to protecting the person and property of another, the Supreme Court has said.

A Bench of Justices A.M. Sapre and R. Subhash Reddy underlined the right to private defence, enumerated in Sections 96 to 106 of the IPC, while acquitting a Tamil Nadu forest ranger who shot dead a sandalwood "smuggler" in the Dharmapuri forest area of the State in 1988.

The trial had sentenced Sukumaran, the forest ranger, to a life in prison for murder. The Madras High Court reduced the term to five years.

In appeal, the apex court concluded that Mr. Sukumaran had shot the smuggler under threat to his own life and that of his driver,

Chinnakolandai.

The forest ranger and his driver were in a jeep in the early hours, doing rounds in the forest, when they saw a truck. They gave chase.

According to the ranger, smuggler Basha and his companions first pelted stones at their jeep, following which they pulled out a gun on the ranger. Mr. Sukumaran was quick to draw and shot Basha in self-defence.

The Supreme Court said Mr. Sukumaran was only trying to protect his life and that of his driver.

"The prosecution was not able to prove the manner in which the incident occurred as alleged by them in their charge sheet. In this view of the matter, the appellant (Sukumaran) is entitled to be acquitted from the charges for want of any evidence against him," Justice Sapre wrote.



Helping hand: Navy officials unloading relief material from INS Sujata at Port Beira in Mozambique. ***SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

India reaches out to Mozambique

Navy joins in rescuing the cyclone-hit

**DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI**

The Indian Navy had launched a Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operation in coordination with local officials to evacuate about 5,000 people stranded at Buzi near Port Beira in Mozambique, a Navy officer said on Tuesday.

The African nation has been devastated by tropical cyclone Idai.

Act as anchor

"Large fishing boats provided by Mozambique acted as anchor midway across the channel. Rigid-Hulled Inflatable Boat (RHIB) and Gemini boats on our ships will transport personnel from shore to the fishing boats to be transported to the Beira side," a defence official said, giving details of the operation.

The smaller RHIB and Gemini boats were employed as the Navy ships and local fishing boats could not enter the channel due to depth restrictions. Helicopter operations were also planned to assist the rescue efforts.

"Ships of First Training Squadron of Indian Navy, Sujata, Sarathi and Shardul, operating in Southern Indian Ocean were diverted to Port Beira in Mozambique based on the request of the Government of Mozambique," the Navy officer said.

Navy ships provided food, clothes, medicine and potable water to the affected people. The ships also have three medical practitioners and five nurses to provide immediate medical help. The helicopter on INS Shardul is operating from the local airport for rescue and search and rescue, the Navy officer said.

SC bats for victims of hit-and-run cases

'Make compensation system secure'

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court has highlighted the need for "secured and foolproof" method of distribution of motor accident compensation to victims and their families.

A Bench of Justices S.A. Bobde, Deepak Gupta and Vineet Saran recently asked the Union of India, represented by Additional Solicitor General Pinky Anand, the apex court's amicus curiae, advocate Gaurav Agarwal, and other stakeholders "to submit a scheme for a

faithful distribution of the amount, which may be paid over to the victims of hit-and-run motor accident cases." The court recently adjourned the PIL petition filed by S. Rajasekharan to April 2, 2019 for the purpose.

The court's order came on the basis of submissions made by Mr. Agarwal that a "large sum to the tune of ₹90 crore is lying with the General Insurance Council (GIC) for disbursement to the victims of hit-and-run cases."

'Major Aadhaar data leak plugged'

**GAUTAM S. MENGLE
MUMBAI**

The Indian cyber security machinery, in collaboration with a self-proclaimed anonymous French security researcher who has been vocal about data security through his Twitter account, claimed to have plugged a major data leak over the course of the last nine days.

The researcher, who goes by the display name Elliot Alderson on Twitter, had on March 10 tweeted that two

"Indian governmental websites" were leaking "300,000 and 5,000 documents IDs including Aadhaar cards."

"Contact me by DM for the details and to give me the opportunity to disclose the issue responsibly. As personal information are at risk, you have 1 week. Regards. Your worst nightmare," he tweeted.

Highly placed sources said the matter was discussed at the highest levels

of the Indian government, after which contact was established with Alderson to begin a top secret operation to identify and plug the leaks.

On Monday, Alderson once again tweeted saying, "Thanks to all the people involved, the issue has been fixed and the personal documents of 305,000 has been secured." Alderson has been critical of Aadhaar, saying it is a security risk to store all the personal details of Indians in a common server.