

IN BRIEF



NIA questions chief of Hurriyat Conference

NEW DELHI
The NIA on Monday questioned Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umer Farooq in connection with a case of "funding terror groups and separatist organisations" in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. PTI

Vice Admiral Verma moves tribunal

NEW DELHI
Vice Admiral Bimal Verma, who currently heads the Andaman and Nicobar-based tri-service command, on Monday moved the Armed Forces Tribunal over the appointment of Vice Admiral Karambir Singh as the next Chief of Naval Staff.

Assam man assaulted for selling 'beef'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The police in north-eastern Assam's Biswanath district picked up five people after a mob assaulted a 68-year-old man for allegedly selling beef at his restaurant.

The incident happened on Sunday afternoon but came to light on Monday after a video of the assault was uploaded on social media. The man, identified as Shaikat Ali, sustained injuries and was taken to a local hospital for treatment.

"We picked up five people, including two market committee leaders, in a bid to disperse the mob. They were allowed to go after signing a good behaviour bond under Section 107 of Code of Criminal Procedure," a district administration official said. He added that some locals had been warning Mr. Ali not to sell what they believed was beef. Things came to a head when a group went to inspect his eatery on Sunday.

Mohammed Sahabuddin, the brother of Mr. Ali, later filed an FIR at the local police station.

Army gets Dhanush artillery guns

It is the indigenously upgraded version of Bofors gun procured in 1980s

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) on Monday handed over the first batch of six Dhanush artillery guns to the Army. Dhanush is the indigenously upgraded version of the Swedish Bofors gun procured in the 1980s.

"Indigenisation to the extent of about 81%, has already been achieved. By the end of 2019, the indigenisation level of the gun will go up to 91%," the Defence Ministry said in a statement. Six guns were handed over at a ceremony at Gun Carriage Factory, Jabalpur.

"The first Dhanush regiment with 18 guns is expected to be ready by the end of next year," an Army source said. The GCF received the Bulk Production Clearance



The indigenously developed Dhanush artillery guns.

(BPC) to manufacture 114 guns from the Army on February 18, 2019.

Dhanush is a 155 mm, 45-calibre towed artillery gun with a range of 36 km and has demonstrated a range of 38 km with specialised ammunition. It is an upgrade of the existing 155m, 39 calibre Bofors FH 77 gun. It is compatible with all North Atlan-

tic Treaty Organisation (NA-TO) 155 mm ammunition system.

Conducting of trials

The first phase of trials were conducted between July and September 2016 at Pokhran and Babina ranges and the second phase was held between October and December 2016 at the Siachen base

camp with three guns. The last round of user exploitation trials were completed with six guns in June last year.

The gun is fitted with inertial navigation system with global positioning system (GPS) based gun recording and auto-laying, an enhanced tactical computer for onboard ballistic computations, an automated gun sighting system equipped with camera, thermal imaging and laser range finder

All 114 guns are expected to be delivered within four years. The OFB has already undertaken capacity augmentation to manufacture over 400 barrels and 250 ordnances for large calibre weapon systems.

Top 5 About 3,127 institutions applied for different categories of the NIRF this year. A list of the top 5 across categories

Categories/Rank	1	2	3	4	5
Overall	IIT-M	IISc., Bengaluru	IIT-D	IIT-B	IIT Kharagpur
University	IISc., Bengaluru	JNU	BHU	Univ. of Hyderabad	Univ. of Calcutta
Engineering	IIT-M	IIT-D	IIT-B	IIT-Kgp	IIT-K
Medical	AIIMS, Delhi	PGIMER, Chandigarh	CMC Vellore	SGPIMS, Lucknow	Amrita Vidyaapeeth
Management	IIM-B	IIM-A	IIM-C	IIM-L	IIM-Indore
Colleges	Miranda House, Delhi	Hindu College, Delhi	Presidency College, Chennai	St. Stephen's, Delhi	LSR, Delhi

Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

IIT-Madras tops Centre's higher education rankings

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

The Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-Madras) has topped the Centre's ranking of higher education institutions, followed by the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, and IIT-Delhi. Seven IITs appear in the top 10 list of the National Institution Ranking Framework (NIRF) for 2019, while Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi and Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, take the remaining places.

Announcing the rankings

on Monday, President Ram Nath Kovind said "Recent expansion in higher education has widened access and improved equity. Even so, quality remains a concern"

The rankings, published annually since 2016, are based on multiple parameters, including teaching, learning and resources; research and professional practice; graduation outcomes; outreach and inclusivity; and the perception of the public, academics and employers. Overall, 3,127 institutions applied for diffe-

rent categories of the NIRF this year.

With regard to engineering, apart from the IITs, Anna University, Chennai, and NIT, Tiruchi, also make it to the top 10. Management rankings are topped by IIM-Bangalore, while XLRI, Jamshedpur, is the only institute apart from IIMs in the top 10. Delhi's Miranda House tops the list of colleges, followed by Hindu College, Delhi, and Presidency College, Chennai. VIT, Vellore, tops the list of private or self-financed institutions.

SC: why should govt. officers head temples?

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Justice S.A. Bobde on Monday wondered aloud why government officials should be in charge of managing temples in a secular country.

The oral observations came in the backdrop of allegations raised that devotees were subject to harassment at the hands of staffers at the Jagannath temple in Puri.

"I do not know why government officials should manage temples," Justice Bobde asked.

Questioning the efficiency of government officials manning posts in temple administration bodies, Justice Bobde pointed to the idol theft case in Tamil Nadu. "These idols, apart from the religious sentiments, are priceless," Justice Bobde observed orally.

The comments have come even as a separate petition filed by BJP MP Subramanian Swamy seeking temples to be made independent of government control is pending in the Supreme Court.

Call for entries for The Hindu Prize 2019

The annual *The Hindu* literature prizes reflect the

newspaper's commitment to promoting good writing, fiction as well as non-fiction, in English as well as other Indian languages, and encouraging writers of promise in all fields and languages.

The *Hindu* Prize for Fiction was instituted in 2010 to recognise and encourage Indian fiction written in English.

Originally limited to fiction in English, the competition has since been extended to include translations of literary fiction from the regional languages into English. The prize is awarded to a novel or short story collection that exemplifies the best work of fiction in each year.

The *Hindu* Prize for Nonfiction, introduced in 2018, is awarded to the best work of non-fiction in English or regional languages (in translation).

The winners in both categories, fiction and non-fiction, will receive ₹5 lakh each in cash, a trophy and a citation. In the case of a translated work being the winner, the prize money will be divided equally between the translator and the author.

There will be separate jury panels for the two categories of awards. Jury members will be drawn from a pool of prominent writers, academics, book critics, and experts in different fields.

A shortlist of the best five books in each category will be announced in October 2019, and the winners will be announced at *The Hindu* Lit for Life in Chennai in January 2020.

HOW TO ENTER The Hindu Prize: Fiction

● Publishers may submit novels or short-stories collections by a single

author, written in English and published between July 2018 and June 2019.

● Translations of works from the regional languages into English published between July 2018 and June 2019 will also be eligible for the competition. The original work should have been published not earlier than August 1947.

● Only works of literary merit will be considered.

● Publishers may enter a maximum of five books from across their imprints.

● Publishers are asked to send a list of all their published titles to *The Hindu*. This will enable the judges to nominate additional books if they wish.



● Publishers are required to send eight (hardcover) copies of each title they submit. Paperbacks and electronic copies are not acceptable.

● Entries must be in prose.

● Self-published or electronically published books are not eligible.

● Children's books, Young Adult fiction or non-fiction, graphic and pictorial publications are not eligible.

● Publishers may not submit books written by members of the jury.

● Books that were submitted for *The Hindu* Prize 2018 will not be accepted.

The Hindu Prize: Non Fiction

● Publishers can submit their best works in the following categories:

● Biography/Memoirs/Autobiography, Travel Writing, History, Arts, Culture, Polity and Economy, Investigative Journalism/reportage,

Environment and Ecology and Academic works with a social science orientation.

● Publishers can enter five of their best titles from across their imprints. Publishers should also send a list of their published titles to enable the judges call in for additional books.

● The books/manuscripts should have been published between July 2018 and June 2019.

● Entries must be research-based and scholarly works with literary merit.

● Translations of works of non-fiction from regional languages published between July 2018 and June 2019 will also be eligible. The original work should have been published post Independence i.e. not earlier than August 1947.

● Publishers must send eight (8) copies of each book. Only hard copies will be accepted. Electronic copies will not be accepted.

Eligibility criteria for both categories

● The author must be an Indian citizen, or an NRI holding a valid Indian passport, or an Overseas Citizen of India, or a domiciled resident of India. It is the publisher's responsibility to verify the author's eligibility before submitting the book.

● Employees of *The Hindu* and their family members are not eligible.

All entries must reach *The Hindu* on or before May 31, 2019. All entries must be marked *The Hindu* Prize 2019 Fiction/ Non Fiction and should be sent to Shalini Arun, Sr. Associate Editor, *The Hindu*, Kasturi Buildings, 859-860, Anna Salai, Chennai 600002.

For more details, contact R. Krithika@0422 2212572 (extension 334) or email to krithika.r@thehindu.co.in

Slow, steady campaign peaks for Jagan

Meetings, mass contact lend fillip to YSRCP leader

NISTULA HEBBAR NEW DELHI

The heart of the high pitched campaign being waged by the YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh beats in a small building in the Banjara Hills locality of Hyderabad – the office of the Indian Political Action Committee (IPAC) which has been with the campaign for the better part of two years.

Maintaining momentum

From providing the logistical wherewithal for party leader Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy's mammoth 3,684 km Praja Sankalpa Yatra to Samara Shankaravam (booth-cadre meetings) to the Jagan Anna Pilippu (Jagan Anna (elder brother) is calling you) mini campaigns in the midst, the build up has been to give a specific direction to the party's message across Andhra Pradesh and to ensure that the momentum is maintained.



The "war room" of the YSRCP. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Janata Dal (U) vice president Prashant Kishor, the founder of IPAC is now a mentor with the organisation, after his entry into formal politics.

Scattered across the four floors of the building are not just publicity materials, but white boards that track the campaigns of Mr. Reddy, his sister Sharmila and their mother Y.S. Vijayamma, as well as every day trackers for both Assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies.

According to Asba Farooqui, who joined the team on this particular assignment after a stint as a management consultant in the corporate sector, the mini campaigns were necessary building blocks for the concerted strategy. "From booth level build up of party workers to at least two direct mass contact programmes between Mr. Reddy (referred by the team as JMR) and the public were held," he said.

In the Samara Shankara-

vam for example, a goal of 11 party workers per booth was fixed, which led to a huge total of over five lakh booth workers with each booth having one convenor at the top.

During the "Jagan Anna Pilippu" outreach, over 60,000 plus village level "neutral" influencers were identified and received personalised letters from Mr. Reddy. They were then invited for an interaction with him and provided an email address and phone number for suggestions for campaign and governance goals.

Several defections

As a measure of the efficacy of the campaign, the team cites the fact that there have been a total of 1,400 defections to the YSRCP from other parties, including two TDP men whose names had been announced as candidates for the Assembly poll, all in the last one month.

Political campaigns are tricky things, but the team is hoping their professional management of the party's affair is here to stay.

SC may consider plea against order on TikTok

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi on Monday indicated that the Supreme Court would look into a petition challenging an interim order of the Madras High Court to the Centre to prohibit download of TikTok, a mobile application.

In an urgent mention

made before a Bench presided over by the Chief Justice, senior advocate A.M. Singhvi said the order violated the right to free speech and expression and did not factor in the protection given to intermediaries under the Information Technology Act.

In April, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court even ordered the me-

dia houses to refrain from telecasting TikTok videos. A Division Bench of Justices N. Kirubakaran and S.S. Sundar asked the Centre whether a law similar to the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) of the U.S. could be brought in to shield children from cybercrimes.

Though the High Court did not object to TikTok be-

ing used in jest, it pointed out how the application could be used for crude humour against innocent parties, leading to violation of the fundamental right to privacy.

The High Court said inappropriate contents were being made available to children and this could expose them to sexual predators.

High Court orders release of Manipur television journalist in sedition case

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT GUWAHATI

The Manipur High Court has ordered the release of television anchor Kishorechandra Wangkhem who was charged with sedition under the National Security Act (NSA) for criticising Chief Minister N.Biren Singh on social media.

The release order came

more than four months after he was lodged in the Sajiwa Central Jail on the outskirts of Imphal on November 27 last year and days ahead of the election to the Inner Manipur Lok Sabha seat on April 18.

"The court has released my husband's after revoking NSA. We expect him to be released from jail soon," Mr

Wangkhem's wife Ranjita Elangbam said on Monday.

Mr Wangkhem had taken to Facebook to condemn the Chief Minister - with some incendiary words - for organising a function to mark Rani of Jhansi's battle against the British and linking it to Manipur's freedom movement. He had said the CM was the "Centre's puppet".