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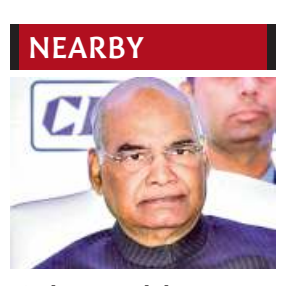
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12 Finance Ministry officials 'forcibly retired'
 NEW DELHI

In a sweeping action aimed at removing corrupt officials from service, President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday forcibly ordered the retirement of 12 senior officials of the Ministry of Finance. Some officials were also allegedly simply forced to retire on the grounds that they were chronically ineffectual at their jobs.

NEWS PAGE 13

2.85 lakh apply to DU as Friday deadline nears

NEW DELHI
 With just four days left to register for admissions to Delhi University's undergraduate programmes, 2.85 lakh aspirants had applied till Monday. Continuing last year's trend, BA (Hons.) English is emerging as the most sought-after undergraduate course. Till Sunday, the university had received 92,346 applications for the course. BA (Hons.) Political Science received 83,504 applications.

CITY PAGE 3

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Three get life sentence for rape, murder of 8-year-old in Kathua

Three others were sentenced to 5 years in jail for destroying evidence

PEERZADA ASHIQ
 SRINAGAR/JAMMU

Six of the seven men accused in the 2018 rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua were convicted on Monday by a special court in Pathankot.

The court sentenced the mastermind Sanji Ram, a retired government official and priest of the temple where the crime took place, special police officer Deepak Khajuria and Ram's nephew Parvesh Kumar to life imprisonment. Special Police Officer (SPO) Surender Verma, head constable Tilak Raj, and sub-inspector Anand Dutta were awarded five years in prison for destroying evidence.

The court acquitted the seventh accused Vishal Jangotra, son of Sanji Ram, giving him the "benefit of doubt", said Mubeen Farooqi, who represented the victim's family in court.

Till end of life
 District and sessions judge Tejwinder Singh, who concluded the hearing on June 3 in a record time of 14 months, read out the verdict and declared the six accused guilty under different Sections of the law.

The court convicted Sanji Ram, Deepak Khajuria and Parvesh Kumar under Sections 120B (criminal conspiracy), 302 (murder), 376/D (gang rape), 363 (kidnapping), 328 (poisoning), 201 (destroying evidence) and 343 (wrongful confinement). They were also fined ₹1 lakh each.

Mr. Singh said a life term for the three convicts meant they would be in jail till the end of their life.

Surender Verma, Tilak Raj and Anand Dutta were found guilty under Section 201 (destroying evidence) and will face "an imprisonment of five years and a fine of ₹50,000".

The seventh accused was acquitted. The defence lawyers had produced material evidence that he was in

A closure of sorts

17 months after the ghastly crime, a special court in Pathankot gave its verdict

Life term and fine of ₹1 lakh
Sanji Ram. The mastermind, he was the caretaker of the temple where the crime took place; he is a retired government official and local priest

Deepak Khajuria: Special police officer convicted for criminal conspiracy, murder, kidnapping, gangrape, destruction of evidence and drugging the victim

Parvesh Kumar: A civilian, he was directly involved in the crime, according to the prosecution



The accused being taken away in a police vehicle in Pathankot on Monday. ■ AFP

Five years in jail and fine of ₹50,000 each:

- Sub-inspector Anand Dutta, head constable Tilak Raj and police officer Surender Verma were convicted for destruction of evidence

Set free:
 Vishal Jangotra, son of Sanji Ram, has been acquitted

Charges: The court framed charges under the Ranbir Penal Code, including Sections 120B (criminal conspiracy), 302 (murder) and 376D (gang-rape) and Section 328 (causing hurt by poisoning)

racy), 302 (murder), 376/D (gang rape), 363 (kidnapping), 328 (poisoning), 201 (destroying evidence) and 343 (wrongful confinement). They were also fined ₹1 lakh each.

Meerut at the time of the crime to appear for his examination. The State Crime Branch had only produced witnesses and "not enough evidence" in his case, the court said.

Pending trial
 The crime branch of the police had filed the chargesheet against eight persons, including a juvenile. The trial against the juvenile is yet to begin as his petition on determining his age is yet to be heard by the Jammu and Kashmir High Court.

The prosecution team, comprising lawyers J.K. Chopra, S.S. Basra, Harminder Singh and Bhupinder Singh,

said it had demanded the capital punishment for the main accused and might appeal against the sole acquittal.

"The court has underlined that life imprisonment meant till life in this case. However, we will appeal in the higher court for an enhancement of the punishment against all the seven accused," Special Prosecutor Santosh Singh said.

Describing the sole acquittal as "a positive development", defence lawyers said they would also appeal for relaxation of punishment for the others.

Mr. Kanojia has been charged under the repealed provision of the Information Technology Act, and the Indian Penal Code. The police have said there is evidence against him under Sections 500 and 505 of the IPC and Section 67 of the IT Act.

Mr. Kanojia had allegedly shared a video on Twitter and Facebook, in which a woman was seen speaking to reporters of various media organisations outside the Chief Minister's Office, claiming that she had sent a marriage proposal to Mr. Adityanath.

SC to hear plea by wife of scribe held for tweet on Yogi

Petition seeks to know whereabouts of Prashant Kanojia

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
 NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to urgently hear a petition by Jagisha Arora, whose journalist husband Prashant Kanojia was arrested by the Uttar Pradesh police for allegedly uploading defamatory comments on social media against Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

A Vacation Bench, led by Justice Indira Banerjee, decided to list the matter for hearing on Tuesday.

The *habeas corpus* petition filed by Ms. Arora is to know the whereabouts of her husband. The petition, mentioned by advocate Nitya Ramakrishnan, said the arrest was "illegal and unconstitutional".

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PROTEST IN DELHI PAGE 13



Taking to the streets: Journalists, along with Jagisha Arora, wife of Prashant Kanojia, right, staging a protest in New Delhi on Monday. ■ SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Gorakhpur man arrested for Twitter post on CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh police on Monday arrested a person in Gorakhpur district for allegedly making an "objectionable post" on Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. This is the fourth such arrest in the State in the last three days.

Peer Mohammad was accused of "maliciously making an image" of Mr. Adityanath through an "objectionable post" on Twitter. The police said that they acted on a complaint received through Twitter, and on the instructions of the Senior Superintendent Of Police,

Gorakhpur, made the arrest. The police have also recovered the mobile phone used to make the post. Mr. Mohammad was booked under Sections 503 and 505 of the IPC and Sections 65 and 66 of the IT Act, they said.

The accused allegedly shared a fake marriage card linking Mr. Adityanath to a woman who told the media last week that the Chief Minister chatted with her through video for over a year; she now wanted him to make the relationship public.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Girish Karnad passes away at 81

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 BENGALURU

Girish Karnad, writer, playwright, actor and public intellectual, passed away in his sleep at his residence here on Monday morning. He was 81, and is survived by wife Saraswati Ganapathi and two children.

The Jnanpith and Padma awardee was hailed due to degenerative respiratory issues for some time and was on oxygen support. His cremation was held without religious rituals, public viewing or state honours, as per his last wishes, at Kalpalli cemetery in the afternoon.

While the State government declared a day's holiday and three-day State mourning, a cross section of writers, actors and political leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Ramnath Kovind, condoled Mr. Karnad's death. In a tweet, historian Ramachandra Guha said, "In his life, he embodied the richness and depth of Indian civilization more nobly and less self-consciously than anyone else I knew."

Renaissance of theatre
 Born in May 1938, Mr. Karnad was one of the most prominent playwrights of the 1960s and 1970s, a period regarded as epitomising the renaissance of Indian theatre.

He worked with mythology and history and gave them a contemporary resonance in plays such as *Tughlaq* and *Hayavadana*. He wrote his first play *Ma Nishada* in 1960 and followed it with his breakout play *Yayati* in 1961 when he was a Rhodes scholar in England.

Mr. Karnad also translated most of his plays into English. His last play was



Rakshasa Tangadi, published last year, set in the last years of the Vijayanagara empire.

He was also an acclaimed filmmaker and actor, his acting debut being in the classic *Samskara*, directed by Patabhira Reddy and based on a novel by U.R. Ananthamurthy. He made a name not only in parallel cinema but also for his roles in mainstream films in multiple languages. His films include *Mantana*, *Kadhala*, *Minsara Kanavu*, *Hey Ram*, *China Gate* and *Tiger Zinda Hai*, among others. He directed films like *Utsav*, *Tabbaliyu Neenade Magane* and *Kaadu*.

Mr. Karnad was also an institution-builder and headed the Film and Television Institute in Pune, the Nehru Centre in London and the Sangeet Natak Akademi. He played a significant role in developing the theatre space Ranga Shankara in Bengaluru.

A highly regarded public intellectual, Mr. Karnad often became the target of the Hindutva right. His name was on the hit-list of the right-wing outfit that allegedly killed editor-activist Gauri Lankesh, and he was provided security by the police.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
 ACTOR WITH A CONSCIENCE
 PAGE 9

At 48°C, Palam records highest-ever June temperature

STAFF REPORTER
 NEW DELHI

It was a scorching day in the Capital with the mercury rising to a new June high of 48°C at the Palam weather station under the influence of a severe heatwave.

The record for the city is 48.4°C at Palam on May 26, 1998, said Devendra Pradhan, Additional Director General of India Meteorological Department.

The previous June high recorded at Palam was 47.8°C on June 9, 2014.

The Safdarjung weather station, which provides the city's official figure, recorded a maximum of 45.6°C, six degrees above normal for the season. The minimum was 27.2°C, one degree above normal. The record high at Safdarjung, according to IMD data, was recorded at 46.7°C on

June 17, 1945, while in the past decade, the highest temperature was recorded on June 10, 2014, at 45.5°C.

Weather stations at Lodhi Road, Ridge, Ayanagar, Fariabad, and Najafgarh recorded maximum temperatures of 46°C, 47.9°C, 47°C, 46°C and 46.3°C respectively.

While Delhi touched a new June high, the rest of the northern region was no bet-

ter. Churu in Rajasthan registered a high of 50.3°C, followed by Banda in Uttar Pradesh (49.2°C), Allahabad (48.9°C), Sri Ganganagar in Rajasthan (48.5°C) and Naraula in Haryana (48.3°C).

A weather official at the regional Met office in Delhi said the extreme heatwave was caused due to dry westerly winds blowing across the city and that there was no effect

of a western disturbance that usually provides relief in June. The Met office said that relief in the form of dust storm/thunderstorm accompanied by gusty winds (speed 40-50 kmph) could be expected late at night on June 11 or on June 12 and 13. A heatwave is declared in the city when the maximum temperature is above 40°C and 4.5°C-6.4°C above normal.

Private weather forecaster Skymet said Cyclone Vayu is likely to bring relief to the city by June 12. "We would see pre-monsoon activities such as dust storm, thunderstorm or light rains by June 12, bringing in relief. These rain activities would stay for at least 2-3 days, resulting in drop in temperatures. It would be a gradual relief only," said its weather bulletin.

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 RANK 9th
 NEHA SAINI (Topper of CRIMINAL LAW - I & II)

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- RANK 8: NISHAL SINGH, RANK 18: BHARAT SONI, RANK 24: NISHAL SINGH, RANK 56: SHASHI GUPTA, RANK 58: SHASHI GUPTA, RANK 59: SHASHI GUPTA, RANK 9: SHASHI GUPTA, RANK 14: NISHA JAIN, RANK 75: PAVI SHARMA, RANK 151: HARSHAD VAREKARI, RANK 286: KANAKA SINGH, RANK 447: NISHA SHARMA, RANK 891: NISHA SHARMA

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