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NEARBY



Arun Jaitley admitted to AIIMS, stable

NEW DELHI
Senior BJP leader Arun Jaitley was admitted to the AIIMS here on Friday. He is under the care of the Cardiothoracic and Neurosciences Centre of the hospital. According to a hospital release, Mr. Jaitley is hemodynamically stable. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other BJP leaders, including Amit Shah and Harsh Vardhan, visited Mr. Jaitley at the hospital.

NEWS • PAGE 12

AKKA IAS ACADEMY
Chandra Layout, Bengaluru, +91 7353983929
PSYCHOLOGY
BENARAS WORKSHOP
Batch 1 - from 16th August, 8 AM to 10:30 AM
Batch 2 - from 4th September, 5 PM to 7:30 PM
Dr. SHIVAKUMAR

BJP plans grand I-Day celebrations in J&K

50,000 flags to be distributed to party workers, motorcycle rallies also planned

DAMINI NATH
JAMMU

Ramping up its Independence Day celebration plans after the Centre revoked Jammu & Kashmir's special status on Monday, the Bharatiya Janata Party's State unit intends to distribute 50,000 Indian flags to its workers to hoist on August 15.

"People should know that it's a *jashn* [celebration]," BJP J&K unit president Ravinder Raina told party workers, who had gathered at the office here on Friday as he distributed flags to them.

As Mr. Raina and the BJP made preparations for motorcycle rallies and programmes on August 15, large parts of Jammu and Kashmir remained under curfew-like conditions for the fifth day.

For the BJP, however, it was time to celebrate. "This time, Independence Day is *jashn-e-azadi* for the people of Jammu and Kashmir.



Festival of flags: BJP president Ravinder Raina distributing flags at the party office in Jammu on Friday. • DAMINI NATH

This is the first time that we are out of the shackles of slavery," said Mr. Raina.

With the government revoking provisions under Article 370 of the Constitution, Jammu & Kashmir's constitution and flag have been scrapped. "We will hoist the tricolour in every panchayat and ward," he said.

Flags were being flown in from Delhi to Jammu, Srinagar and Leh.

While interacting with a group of sarpanchs and handing over flags to them

at the party office, Mr. Raina led those who had gathered through chants of *Jahaan hue balidaan Mookerjee, voh Kashmir hamara hai* (Where Syama Prasad Mookerjee laid down his life, that Kashmir is ours). Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder S.P. Mookerjee, who had opposed Article 370, had died a detainee of the Sheikh Abdullah government in Kashmir in 1953.

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SHOCK IN VALLEY • PAGE 13

Friday prayers are peaceful

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Most Friday congregations in Srinagar passed off peacefully, barring a major procession at Soura against the Centre's decision to divest Jammu and Kashmir of its special status.

An official said stone-throwing started at Soura, Nowshera, Rambagh, Barzalla and Rainawari after the prayers.

At the end of the procession from Soura to Ali Jan Road, 4,000 people clashed with security men for hours. Several mosques in Pulwama passed resolutions against the dilution of Article 370.

The Army had warned mosques in Gulgam against political sermons. A policeman, Nasir Ahmed, was beaten up by a mob in Hawal.

Amid lockdown, locals queue up for a phone call

Srinagar residents wait for hours at a government office to talk to kin outside State on a mobile phone

VIJAITA SINGH
SRINAGAR

There were tears of both anger and relief at a government office in the heart of Srinagar, where people had come to make a solitary phone call to their loved ones living outside the State.

As the Kashmir Valley remained under a lockdown for the fifth day, the administration made some arrangements for residents to make calls. Three personal mobile phones of officials working at the Tankipora office were turned into helplines. Residents swarmed the office, with some waiting for more than six hours for their turn. The administration had shared the three numbers on local cable channels.

A plastic chair and a table had been placed on the lawn at the administrative complex where people queued up to register the numbers



Cherished hellos: People waiting to make a call to their loved ones in Srinagar on Friday. • VIJAITA SINGH

they wanted to call. Paper slips were handed out as tokens. "There are more than 200 people who have registered since 9 a.m. and only 23 have been able to speak as of now, it's already 12 p.m. You can calculate how long we have to wait here now,"

said Feroze Ansari, a local shopkeeper.

C.L. Vishen had had a death in the family and needed to speak to relatives in New Delhi.

"I have come here so that I can ask when are the rituals planned," said Prof. Vishen,

TV channels turn town criers

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
SRINAGAR

With communication lines shut for five days now, people in Kashmir are using local TV channels to announce deaths and other news.

The 24X7 Chinar Gold music cable channel had a scroll running on top: "Nazeer Ahmad Akhoun of Srinagar's Pather Masjid is no more. All relatives watching this are intimated about it."

A close relative of the de-

ceased told *The Hindu* that just eight people attended the burial, only after pleading for permission before the security forces on the evening of August 6.

The local channels have become the main communication source to announce cancellations of weddings.

"Attention: we regret that all invitations of my son Jibrán Javed Buch's wedding at Hazratbal area stand cancelled," one scroll read.

ney," said Ms. Eijaz, who had been waiting for over three hours. Sadiq Bhatt, an official at the DC's office manning one of the lines, said the numbers had been shared on social media on Thursday night and that calls hadn't stopped coming since then.

Court frames charges against Sengar, co-accused

MLA will also be tried under POCSO Act

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Friday framed charges against expelled BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar for allegedly raping a minor girl in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao in June 2017. He will also be tried under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Charges were also framed against another accused, Shashi Singh, for allegedly kidnapping the girl, who is currently undergoing treatment at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences here.

Sections 120-B (criminal conspiracy), 363 (kidnapping), 366 (kidnapping or inducing a woman to compel for marriage) and 376 (rape) of the Indian Penal Code have also been invoked.

Accident case

The rape survivor was seriously injured along with her lawyer, and her two aunts were killed, when an "overspeeding" truck collided with their car in Rae Bareilly last month.

The Central Bureau of Investigation will also probe the case, which was



Kuldeep Singh Sengar

initially registered by the local police.

Mr. Sengar and the co-accused have denied their involvement in the rape case. During the court proceedings, the CBI had on Thursday submitted that the victim's father was framed in an Arms Act case in conspiracy with three U.P. police officers and five others.

The alleged incident took place on April 3 last year when the victim's father was taken to a police station following an altercation and an FIR was registered against him for allegedly possessing a country-made firearm and four live cartridges. He was arrested and sent to judicial custody, during which he died, on April 9, 2018.

Supreme Court upholds law empowering homebuyers

They can start bankruptcy proceedings against errant builders, rules three-member Bench

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday upheld a central law which empowered harassed homebuyers to initiate bankruptcy proceedings against errant real estate builders.

The judgment gains significance as many real estate builders have been under fire for incomplete projects leaving homebuyers in dire straits.

A three-judge Bench led by Justice Rohinton Nari-

man confirmed the constitutional validity of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Second Amendment) Act of August 2018, which gave homebuyers the status of "financial creditors" with power to vote in the Committee of Creditors.

On par with banks

The Act had brought the homebuyers on par with the creditor banks of the property builder. Prior to the law, the homebuyers were often left in the lurch. With

their dreams of owning a home shattered, they were made to wait blindly for a solution to come up, either in the form of a completed apartment or a refund.

Before the Amendment Act of 2018 came into existence, the assets of the bankrupt builder were divided among his employees, creditor banks and other operational creditors. Homebuyers had hardly figured, though their hard-earned savings may have provided a major chunk of the housing

project.

The Amendment Act allowed homebuyers, as financial creditors, to trigger bankruptcy proceedings under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code of 2016 and have their "rightful place" on the Committee of Creditors (CoC). The CoC, by voting, makes important decisions on the future of the bankrupt builder. These calls include what to do with his assets and who should finish the pending housing projects.

The builders had challenged the Amendment Act. They said making homebuyers financial creditors was like "forcibly inserting a square peg in a round hole."

The builders argued that homebuyers were already armed with the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act (RERA), another piece of legislation which protected the interests of the individual investor in real estate projects.

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Man arrested from Mumbai for threat mails to Kejriwal

The 28-year-old zeroed in on Delhi Chief Minister to draw attention, say police

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

A 28-year-old man from Mumbai has been arrested for allegedly sending death threat emails to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the police said on Friday.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Cell, Special Cell) Anyesh Roy said that the accused has been identified as Abhishek Tiwari, who works as a delivery man with a furniture distributor. Hailing from Unnao in Uttar Pradesh, Tiwari is a resident of

Mumbai's Nala Sopara.

The police said that they had received a complaint last month from Mr. Kejriwal's office stating that two emails were received at the CM's official email address on July 25 and July 30 respectively with "Kill...kill...kill" written in the subject line. Based on the complaint, a case under relevant sections was registered and investigation taken up.

"With deep analysis of technical inputs, his location was traced to Nala Sopara, Mumbai, a densely populat-



Arvind Kejriwal

ed, low-lying area.

The team in Mumbai searched through hundreds

of chawls till the accused was finally nabbed," Mr. Roy said.

Attention-seeker

During interrogation, Tiwari allegedly told the police that he is a school dropout and was not satisfied with his job and his life. "He wanted to do something big to draw the attention of people. He came up with the idea of sending threat emails to political leaders in July," the officer said. The first email sent by the accused, the police said, was to a local municipal of-

fice-bearer of a political party in Mumbai but disappointed with the "lukewarm response", he decided to send threat emails to political heavyweights.

"First, he sent the emails to the CM and then he sent another one about an impending bomb blast at the headquarters of a national political party," Mr. Roy said.

The police claimed to have recovered the mobile phone which was used to send the threat mails; it has been sent for cyber forensic analysis.

National honours

The 66th National Film Awards were announced on Friday with Bollywood stars winning across many categories. A curated list of the winners:



Ayushman Khurana & Vicky Kaushal jointly won Best Actor Award for *Anhadhun* and *Uri: The Surgical Strike*

Best Director: Aditya Dhar, *Uri: The Surgical Strike*



Best feature film: *Hellaro*, (Gujarati)



Best Male Playback Singer: Arijit Singh, for "Binte Dil Misriya mein..." in *Padmaavat* (Hindi)

Keerthy Suresh bagged Best Actress for Telugu movie *Mahanati*

Best Film on Environment Conservation: *Paani*, (Marathi)

Best Film on Social Issues: *Padman*, (Hindi)

Best Screenplay (original): Rahul Ravindran for *Chi La Sow* (Telugu)

Best Music Direction: Sanjay Leela Bhansali for *Padmaavat*

Best Female Playback Singer: Bindhu Malini for "Maayavi Manave..." in *Nathicharami* (Kannada)

Best Film on Environment Conservation: *Paani*, (Marathi)

Best Film on Social Issues: *Padman*, (Hindi)

Best Screenplay (original): Rahul Ravindran for *Chi La Sow* (Telugu)

Best Music Direction: Sanjay Leela Bhansali for *Padmaavat*

REPORT ON PAGES

Many States reel under monsoon fury, 70 dead

28 killed in Kerala, seven die in Karnataka's Kodagu

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The depression that has caused torrential rainfall mainly in Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, claiming at least 70 lives and forcing the evacuation of tens of thousands of people, is expected to abate from Saturday, the chief of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Friday.

"Except for Rajasthan, there will be a marked reduction in rain from tomorrow [Saturday]. While these are extremely heavy rains, they are nowhere close to record rainfall that these States have witnessed in the past," M. Mohapatra, Director-General, IMD, told *The Hindu*.

Extremely heavy rain battered the western coastal States and many parts of the Western Ghats on Thursday night, killing 28 persons in central and northern districts of Kerala and prompting the evacuation of nearly 65,000 people.

Rescue under way

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday that at Kavalappara, near Nilambur in Malappuram district, rescue workers were struggling to trace at least 40 people



Assessing loss: Farmers surveying the damage to their crops at a village in Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu. • M. SATHYAMOORTHY

feared trapped in a massive landslide. "Three bodies have been recovered," he said after a review meeting.

The bodies of nine people were recovered from Meppadi, Wayanad district, the site of a second landslide. "It is not yet clear how many people were affected... Rescue operations using excavators are in progress. Eleven deaths have been reported in Wayanad district so far," Mr. Vijayan said.

As of Friday, 64,103 people had been shifted to 738 camps in the flood-hit districts. Thirteen dams – seven maintained by the Kerala State Electricity Board and six by the Water Resources Department – were opened. Twelve teams of the NDRF were deployed and Army units rushed to Idukki

and Malappuram, he said. The IMD has issued red alerts in seven districts – Ernakulam, Idukki, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Wayanad and Kannur – for Saturday.

In Karnataka, mudslides and flash floods in Kodagu district resulted in seven deaths in 24 hours, and eight people were reported missing. There was one rain-related death in Mysuru district. Rain intensified in the southern districts on Friday but abated in the north Karnataka districts.

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SEVEN KILLED, 35,000 RESCUED

IN KODAGU • PAGE 8

AT LEAST 40 FEARED TRAPPED

IN MALAPPURAM • PAGE 8

NAVY RESCUES 12 STRANDED

NEAR POLAVARAM DAM • PAGE 8

DMK bags Vellore by a slender margin

T. RAMAKRISHNAN
T. MADHAVAN
CHENNAI/VELLORE

In an absorbing contest that saw a dramatic change of fortunes even as counting of votes was on, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) on Friday bagged the Vellore Lok Sabha constituency, polling for which was deferred in April, taking its tally in the Lok Sabha to 24.

The party's nominee, D.M. Kathir Anand, who is the son of former Minister and DMK treasurer Durai Murugan, defeated his nearest rival and AIADMK candidate A.C. Shanmugam by a slender margin of 8,141 votes.

Of a total of 10,26,055 votes polled, the DMK candidate secured 4,85,340 votes (47.3%) and the AIADMK nominee 4,77,199 votes (46.51%). The voter turnout was 71.51%.

The polling in the Vellore constituency was held on Monday (August 5) after the Election Commission of India rescinded it in April following seizure of cash from associates of the DMK candidate.