NO DISCIPLINARY ACTION ASSURED

Punjab govt employees call off pen-down strike

The development came after representatives of the Punjab Sanjha Mulzam Manch held talks with Chief Secretary Sinha

Hans News Service
Chandigarh

PUNJAB Ministerial employees on Wednesday called off their pen-down strike after an assurance by the chief secretary that show-cause notices for disciplinary action against them will be withdrawn.

The development came after representatives of the Punjab Sanjha Mulzam Manch on Wednesday held talks with Chief Secretary K A P Sinha here.

During the meeting, Sinha assured them that the show-cause notices will be withdrawn, the employees' representatives said.

The employees on Tuesday had announced an extension of their pen-down till September 11, while the state government decided to implement 'no work, no pay'.

Protesting employees were demanding withdrawal of show-cause notices for disciplinary action over "unauthorised" absence on August 27 when they went on a statewide strike.

Employees on August 27 were on leave. They were not "unauthorised" absent, the leader said.

It is a small victory for employees, the leader added.

A pen-down strike on Tuesday adversely affected the administrative work in government offices in the state.

The deadlock began August 27 when over three lakh government employees went on a statewide strike by availing mass casual leave, pressing the state government to accept their various demands, including release of their pending 18 per cent Dearness Allowance.

A meeting between the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and the representatives of employees' bodies could not take place on August 27 as Mann made it clear that talks could only be held after they call off their strike.

On September 4, the Punjab government announced a DA hike for around 85,000 government employees recruited after July 17, 2020, from 42 per cent to 60 per cent.

The decision covers employees recruited under the post-2020 regime whose pay is based on the central government's 7th Pay Commission pattern.

However, it will not benefit employees recruited before July 17, 2020.

Employees remained adamant on their demand for clearance of DA arrears as per directions of the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Folk singer Rajwada dies in road accident

Hans News Service
Mathura

FOLK singer Rinku Rajwada, known for performing the traditional Rasiya folk genre and devotional songs, was killed in a road accident in Mathura district, police said on Wednesday. Rajwada, 31, was travelling on his motorcycle from Barauli to Farah through the Kanjouli Ghat North Bypass in the Baldev area on Tuesday when an unidentified vehicle hit his bike, Superintendent of Police (Rural) Suresh Chandra Rawat said. The singer, a resident of Midhakur village in Agra district, suffered serious injuries in the accident and died due to excessive blood loss, the officer said.

Police were examining CCTV footage from the area to identify the vehicle and its driver, Rawat said.

The body was handed over to the family after post-mortem examination late Tuesday evening, he said.

The officer said Rajwada was not wearing a helmet at the time of the accident and suffered a severe head injury.

Rajwada performed Rasiya songs as well as devotional music programmes.

He used to perform at bhajan sandhya and other religious events at different places as part of a troupe led by Karan Sharma of Hathras, according to those familiar with his work.

He was well known among fellow artistes, they said.

Businessman beaten to death in Kanpur

Kumar was brutally killed with a brick by four youths after he objected to one of them urinating on a road in an upscale locality

Hans News Service
Kanpur

A 47-year-old businessman was allegedly beaten to death with a brick by four youths after he objected to one of them urinating on a road in an upscale locality here, with CCTV footage revealing the shocking sequence of events, police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place around midnight near Om Crossing in Kakadeo when Amit Kumar, a resident of Naveen Nagar, was returning home after closing his shop, Police Commissioner Raghubir Lal told PTI.

According to the CCTV footage now in police possession, four youths were drinking on the roadside when one of them allegedly began urinating on the road.

Kumar objected, following which an argument broke out and the youth allegedly abused him.

Three others accompanying him then joined the assault and surrounded Kumar, repeatedly hitting him on the head with a brick, leaving him critically injured, Lal said.

When some bystanders attempted to intervene, the attackers allegedly threatened them and told them to leave or face a similar fate, he said.

"The CCTV footage has revealed the shocking sequence of events. We have launched a massive search for the accused and are making efforts to arrest them at the earliest," Lal said.

Two of the alleged attackers have been identified as Jitendra Srivastava and Kushal Srivastava, while efforts are underway to identify the other two with the help of CCTV footage, the police commissioner said.

Local residents alerted police through the emergency helpline 112 and informed Kumar's family following the assault.

Kumar was initially taken to a nearby private hospital and later shifted to Anurag Hospital, where he remained under treatment for two days. His condition subsequently deteriorated and he died on Monday night.

Kumar's family reached the post-mortem house and demanded the immediate arrest of all the accused. His body was handed over to the family after the post-mortem examination.

Ambedkar statue desecrated in Pb

Hans News Service
Ludhiana

UNIDENTIFIED persons allegedly desecrated a statue of Dr B R Ambedkar at Jalandhar Bypass Chowk here, prompting various Valmiki organisations to call for a Ludhiana bandh on Wednesday, police said.

The incident sparked anger among members of the Valmiki community.

Heavy police deployment was made at several places in Ludhiana following the bandh call.

Members of various Valmiki organisations staged a dharna near the statue and blocked a stretch of the National Highway 44 at Jalandhar Bypass on Wednesday.

The blockade severely affected traffic movement towards Delhi and Jalandhar, with long queues of trucks, buses, cars and other vehicles forming on both sides of the highway.

Commuters were left stranded and faced inconvenience due to the blockade.

A truck driver said he was on his way to deliver goods to a factory but got stuck in the traffic, while a bus passenger travelling to Amritsar said he was waiting for the blockade to be lifted.

Police said efforts were underway to identify and arrest those responsible and appealed to people to maintain peace.

Monsoon activity weakens in Raj

Hans News Service
Jaipur

MONSOON activity has weakened across Rajasthan, with the Meteorological Department forecasting largely dry weather in the state over the next week.

Weak monsoon conditions are likely to prevail over most parts of the Jaipur, Bharatpur, Ajmer, Kota and Udaipur divisions in eastern Rajasthan for the next four days, the department said. Most parts of the Jodhpur and Bikaner divisions in western Rajasthan are also expected to witness weak monsoon conditions for the next five days.

A fresh low-pressure area is likely to form over north coastal Andhra Pradesh and adjoining south Odisha coast near the Bay of Bengal on September 11, the department said.

Under its influence, a fresh spell of light to moderate rainfall may begin in some parts of eastern Rajasthan from September 12, it said.

Leopard spotted in Kota had escaped from zoo

Hans News Service
Kota

THE leopard, which ventured into Chattar Villas (CV) Garden in the Nayapura area of Kota city on Tuesday, had escaped from an enclosure inside Kota Zoo, an official said on Wednesday. The leopard was rescued safely after a three-hour operation and was put under observation in Abheda Biological Park in the city, he added. The two-and-a-half-year-old female leopard -- rescued earlier from the forest and was kept in an enclosure in the zoo -- was spotted in its enclosure till Monday-Tuesday night. However, it escaped in the early morning hours on Tuesday and wandered into the CV Garden, chief conservator of forest, Mukundara Hills Tiger Reserve T Mohan Raj said. Following the escape, Raj ordered an inquiry committee headed by the DFO to submit a report within seven days, the CCF said.

Notably, panic gripped morning walkers and fitness enthusiasts in Kota on Tuesday

morning after a full-grown leopard was spotted in the crowded public garden.

The park, frequented daily by local residents for yoga, exercise, and morning walks, was thrown into chaos as visitors spotted the big cat roaming through the green space.

As visitors raised shouts, the animal climbed a nearby 40-foot-high tree. Large crowds gathered outside the garden boundary as news of the wild intruder spread rapidly throughout the city, hr said. A joint emergency team comprising forest department personnel and local police cordoned off the area and successfully rescued the animal by tranquillising it atop the tree, he said.

SP MLAs protest against BJP over local issues

Hans News Service
Raebareli

SAMAJWADI Party MLAs staged a protest outside the Raebareli collectorate against the ruling BJP on Wednesday, alleging that local issues were being ignored by the district panchayat, ahead of a District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (Disha) meeting attended by Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

Gandhi, who is also the Congress MP from Raebareli, arrived at the collec-

torate around 11 am along with Amethi MP Kishori Lal Sharma for the meeting. District Magistrate Sarneet Kaur Broca welcomed them.

The two SP legislators Rahul Lodhi and Shyam Sundar Bhati arrived at the collectorate carrying placards and posters listing issues they wanted to highlight at the meeting. Their posters mentioned school closures, alleged encroachment by land mafias, false cases, problems faced by farmers, unemployment and poor basic amenities. Speaking to reporters before the meeting, Lodhi alleged that development work was not being carried out in the district and accused the BJP-led government of damaging children's future.

"Most of the schools have been closed in my constituency, Harachandpur. Land is being encroached upon in the district, but there is no one to speak up. Every person and every section of society is troubled," he alleged.

Anganwadi centres key to building developed India: Yogi Adityanath

Hans News Service
Varanasi

Adityanath said the government's focus on nutrition and strengthening anganwadi centres reflected Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of laying a strong foundation for India's development

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday said anganwadi centres and basic education schools will serve as the foundation for building a healthy, educated and self-reliant India.

He was speaking at the launch of the ninth Poshan Maah programme here.

The Rashtriya Poshan Maah (National Nutrition Month) is observed every September as a dedicated platform to mobilise communities and reinforce key nutrition, health and caregiving behaviour among pregnant women, lactating mothers, children, adolescents, and their families.

Adityanath said the government's focus on nutrition and strengthening anganwadi centres reflected Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of laying a strong foundation for India's development.

He said the transformation in the functioning of anganwadi centres in Uttar Pradesh was visible during his visits to districts, where he regularly inspects Bal Vatika facilities and observes activities there.

"The change we see today is the result of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision. He took steps in 2014 to strengthen the foundation of the country, building on the work he had implemented on the ground in Gujarat since 2001," Adityanath said. "The same vision that began in Gujarat in 2001 is today being implemented across the country, and Uttar Pradesh is also moving forward in this direction," he said.

Drawing a parallel with the concept of Ram Rajya, the chief minister said it envisioned a society free from poverty and deprivation, where people were healthy and capable of contributing to the creation of a strong nation.

He questioned why such a vision had not translated into effective ground-level

action before 2014, particularly for poor families, malnourished children and pregnant women whose health was directly linked to India's future.

Adityanath said the launch of the ninth nutrition month, coinciding with the completion of 10 years of the Matru Vandana Yojana, was an opportunity to further strengthen efforts aimed at improving nutrition and maternal and child welfare. Referring to the condition of anganwadi centres before 2017, he said many were in dilapidated and unhygienic conditions, lacked drinking water and toilets, and did not provide hot meals or nutrition supplements on time.

"Before 2017, many anganwadi centres were in a pathetic condition. Children would carry their own mats to sit on; there was no proper drinking water, no toilet and no hot meal," he said.

Rajasthan civic polls; turnout crosses 50pc

Hans News Service
Jaipur

GLITCHES in Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) disrupted polling at several places in Rajasthan on Wednesday as voters lined up to elect councillors in the first phase of urban local body elections, with 50.38 per cent turnout recorded till 1 pm, officials said.

Polling was disrupted at a booth each in Ward 39 of Sujangarh Municipal Council and Ward 52 in Bikaner due to malfunctioning EVMs, according to officials.

In Alwar city, voters expressed anger after an EVM stopped working at a polling booth, while long queues of voters were witnessed in Sawai Madhopur and Jodhpur following technical glitches in EVMs, they said.

Complaints of alleged fake voting also emerged from Wards 16 and 18 in Baran district, Ward 1 in Dudu in Jaipur district, Ward 22 in Bhilwara, Ward 34 in Jalore and Ward 29 in Bharatpur.

The highest turnout till 1 pm was recorded in Sikari municipality in Deeg district, where 81.28 per cent of voters had exercised their franchise. The lowest turnout of 36.67 per cent was recorded in Bhilwara Municipal Corporation. Polling began at 7 am and will continue until 6 pm, the officials said. More than 20,000 candidates are in the fray for 5,393 councillor posts in the first phase, covering 162 urban local bodies -- four municipal corporations, 27 municipal councils and 131 municipalities.

A total of 57,52,278 voters are eligible to exercise their franchise across 7,683 polling stations in the 162 civic bodies. In Jaipur district, voting is being held at 565 polling stations across 18 urban local bodies.