

Delhi govt to direct private, state-run hospitals to complete fire audit by June 8: Bharadwaj



■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: In the aftermath of a fire at a neonatal hospital that killed seven newborns, the Delhi government will issue directions to all private and state-run hospitals to complete a fire audit by June 8 and submit a compliance report, Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said on Monday.

Bharadwaj had called for a meeting to discuss the fire incident at the neonatal hospital in

east Delhi's Vivek Vihar area. "On April 24, we had issued directions to all hospitals for fire preparedness. On May 8, we had asked them to conduct a fire audit. We will ask all private and Delhi government-run hospitals to complete a fire audit by June 8 and submit a compliance report to the Health department," he told reporters.

The minister also said two nurses and some locals rescued the babies without worrying about their lives.

"We will recommend their names for bravery awards," he added.

The Revenue department will be asked to expedite the process of compensation to the families of the babies killed and injured in the fire, Bharadwaj said.

The meeting at the Delhi Secretariat, where Health department officials were present, also discussed the ongoing heatwave conditions.

The private neonatal hospital in Vivek Vihar where the seven newborns died and five were injured in the blaze was operating despite the expiry of its license. It also did not have qualified doctors and no clearance from the Fire department, police said on Sunday.

The police have arrested Dr Naveen Khichi, the hospital's owner; and Dr Aaksh – who was on duty at the time of the fire late on Saturday.

INDIA bloc parties intend to implement Talibani rule in country, alleges Adityanath



■ STATE TIMES NEWS
MAU (UP): Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday alleged the INDIA bloc parties have indicated that they intend to implement Talibani rule in the country and confine women to their homes.

At a poll rally in the Ghosi Assembly constituency in favour of BJP ally and Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party candidate Arvind Rajbhar, he alleged that the Congress and Samajwadi Party have a negative mindset.

"They stand against Lord Ram and the nation, denying Dalits and backward communities their rights. Now, they have set their sights on reservations for OBC castes," Adityanath said.

"There is talk of taking away reservations meant for

the OBCs and allocating them to Muslims. But we will not allow this to happen. These rights belong to the OBC caste and we will not permit them to be usurped," he said.

Bhimrao Ambedkar had asserted that religion cannot be the basis of reservation, he said adding the opposition parties have once again have

the objective of dividing the country along the lines of religion but people have discerned their intentions.

"We must be wary of the INDI alliance, as they proclaim that if they come to power, they will impose inheritance tax. This tax is akin to Aurangzeb's 'Jizya' tax'. Moreover, they declare that if they assume power, they will

enforce personal laws, indicating their desire to implement Talibani and Sharia law in the country," the Uttar Pradesh chief minister said.

"However, they fail to recognise that this nation operates under the Constitution of Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. We will not tolerate the revival of the deplorable practice of triple talaq in our country," he said, adding that the INDIA bloc parties intend to confine women to their homes.

He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nation's stature and the dignity of every Indian have risen globally over the past decade. Consequently, the slogan of 'Fir ek bar Modi Sarkar' and 'Abki bar 400 paar' reverberates throughout the country, Adityanath said.

The nation now has better security and major development projects are underway. The rights of the poor are being upheld and free ration is being provided to 80 crore people in the country, the Uttar Pradesh chief minister said.

"Additionally, 60 crore people are benefiting from health insurance coverage of Rs 5 lakh under Ayushman Bharat. As many as, 12 crore farmers benefit from the Kisan Samman Nidhi, and toilets have been constructed in 12 crore households. All this has been achieved due to Prime Minister Modi's visionary leadership," he said.

From June 4, every person above the age of 70 years will be provided an insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh per year, Adityanath added.

Money laundering: Kejriwal seeks from SC extension of interim bail by week for medical tests

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has sought extension of his interim bail by seven days from the Supreme Court to undergo a host of medical tests, including a PET-CT scan in view of his "sudden and unexplained weight loss, coupled with high ketone levels", which are indicative of kidney, serious cardiac ailments and even cancer.

Kejriwal, in his plea filed on May 26, said he will surrender back to jail on June 9, instead of June 2, the scheduled date for his return to prison.

"The appellant prays for an extension of his interim bail by a week, during which the Appellant can get the prescribed tests done and obtain results of the same. The Appellant will get all these tests done in the working week from June 3 (Monday) to June 7 (Friday) and then surrender on the weekend, i.e. June 9," the fresh plea, according to the lawyers, said.

The top court had on May 10 granted 21-day interim bail to the chief minister, who was arrested in a money laundering case linked to the excise policy 'scam', to enable him to campaign for the Lok Sabha polls.

It had directed that Kejriwal shall surrender on June 2, a day after the last phase of the seven-phase poll gets over.

The fresh plea, which is likely to be taken up in the coming



days by a vacation bench, said during the incarceration from March 21 to May 10, the chief minister suffered a lot of health-related complications which are also "partly attributable to the negligent and callous behaviour of the jail authorities".

Kejriwal lost around six to seven kg of weight in the jail and has not been able to regain even after his release and renewing his earlier lifestyle to the extent possible, it said.

"In the meantime, recent test reports confirm that the Appellant has also developed an unusually high blood glucose level as well as high ketone levels in urine, which indicate that in addition to increased blood sugar level, the appellant may have also developed kidney related complications and kidney damage," it said.

Referring to his recent health check up at his residence by a senior physician of a private hospital, the plea said the doctor took note of Kejriwal's health complications and increased risk indicators and

prescribed a host of full body tests, which are necessary to be carried out before he surrenders.

"It is important to note that unexplained weight loss which a person is not able to regain along with the other symptoms ..., can have a host of causes, including some potentially life threatening ones.

"It is on account of this that a senior physician from Max Hospital upon a detailed clinical examination of the appellant at his home on May 25, 2024 has directed a host of tests including but not limited to tests such as whole body PET-CT to rule out any malignancies and Holter Monitor Test, where the appellant will be required to wear a Holter monitor for a few days while going about his daily activities to identify any irregularities in his heart functioning," the plea said.

The PET-CT scan shows detailed pictures of organs and tissues.

These tests are to be done in a particular sequence and would require about five-seven days, it said, adding "sudden and unexplained weight loss, coupled with high ketone levels could be indicative of kidney damage, serious cardiac ailments and even cancer".

Early detection of these ailments is essential for preventing further progress of the disease and associated life risk

and Kejriwal needed to undergo these tests, otherwise his life is at "high risk", it said.

While setting him free for campaigning in the remaining phases of the Lok Sabha elections after 50 days of custody in the case, the court on May 10 had barred him from visiting his office or the Delhi secretariat, and signing official files unless absolutely necessary for obtaining the lieutenant governor's approval.

While imposing a strong of bail conditions on Kejriwal, the apex court had directed him to furnish bail bonds of Rs 50,000 with one surety of the like amount to the satisfaction of the jail superintendent.

A bench of justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta had rejected the argument of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) counsel that enlarging Kejriwal on interim bail to

campaign in the elections will be without a precedent.

Later on May 17, the top court reserved its verdict on the main plea of Kejriwal seeking to declare his arrest as illegal.

The Delhi High Court, on March 21, had refused to grant him protection from arrest on his petition challenging summonses issued to him. The ED arrested Kejriwal shortly after that.

The ED, on October 30, had sent first summons to Kejriwal in the money laundering case for appearance on November 2. Several summons were also issued subsequently.

The matter relates to the alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government's now-scrapped excise policy for 2021-22.

PMLA court extends ED remand of Jharkhand minister for three more days



■ STATE TIMES NEWS
RANCHI: A special PMLA court in Ranchi on Monday extended Jharkhand minister Alamgir Alam's remand with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for three more days in connection with an alleged money laundering case, his legal representatives said.

Alam had been taken into custody by the ED on May

15 following two days of interrogation at the agency's office. Initially remanded for six days by the PMLA (Prevention of Money Laundering Act) court starting May 17, his remand was subsequently extended for five days on May 22.

Alam's lawyer, Kishlay Prasad, said that the ED prayed for a three-day extension of remand for further

inquiry, which was granted by the court.

"The ED indicated the necessity for additional inquiries and the requirement for details regarding immovable properties," Prasad elaborated.

Alam, who serves as the state parliamentary affairs minister and represents the Pakur seat in the Jharkhand Assembly, is under investigation for alleged irregularities and bribery in the state rural development department.

The ED's focus on Alam intensified following the arrests of his personal secretary, Sanjeev Kumar Lal (52), and Lal's domestic help, Jahangir Alam (42). During a raid on May 6 at a flat associated with them, the central agency uncovered over Rs 32 crore in cash.

Game zone fire: Gujarat HC raps Rajkot civic body, says it doesn't have faith in state machinery



■ STATE TIMES NEWS
AHMEDABAD: The Gujarat High Court on Monday came down heavily on the Rajkot civic body over the game zone fire which left 27 persons dead, and said it does not have faith in the state machinery which gets into action only after innocent lives are lost.

The court pulled up the Rajkot Municipal Corporation and asked whether it had turned a blind eye to such a big structure coming up in its vicinity, after the RMC's lawyer submitted that the TRP game zone had not asked for requisite permissions.

A special bench of Justices Biren Vaishnav and Devan Desai was hearing a suo motu PIL on the game zone fire incident.

The court also observed that all the Rajkot municipal commissioners, from the time the TRP game zone was set up in 2021 till the time of this incident (on May 25) "should be held accountable for the tragedy that occurred," and directed them to furnish separate affidavits.

The fire at the TRP game zone in the Nana-Mava locality of Rajkot on Saturday evening killed 27 persons, including children.

The game zone was operated without the fire NOC (no objection certificate), as per officials.

The HC on Sunday took suo motu cognisance of

the fire tragedy, terming it a prima facie "man-made disaster".

On Monday, a counsel pointed out that the unfortunate incident required immediate preventive and corrective measures, and the state government will have to come forward to hold a person accountable, and this calls for drastic steps.

The court then said, "Who will take such drastic steps? Honestly speaking, we do not have faith in the state machinery now. Four years after orders of this court, directing them, after their assurance, this is the sixth incident that has happened. They only want

lives to be lost and then trigger the machinery," the court observed.

To the RMC counsel's submission that the game zone had not applied to the authorities for requisite permissions, the court asked whether the civic body was blind to such a big structure having come up under its jurisdiction.

"You were blind to that, that this big structure existed, you were not aware of it? What is the corporation's explanation that the whole zone existed for the last two-and-a-half years? What fire safety did they apply for? When ticketing was done, were you aware of entertainment tax? So we take

it that you are completely turning a blind eye to the whole issue?" the court said.

The HC also wanted to know when the corporation first recognised the existence of the game zone.

"Till then you were completely ignorant of such a structure in the vicinity? Were you not aware of the orders of this court for fire safety (passed) in a PIL? What were you doing then? There are media reports that your municipal commissioner went there at the time of inauguration. We can't take judicial notice of that fact? For 18 months, what did the corporation do? Sat over it?" the bench asked.

The court also observed that all the municipal commissioners, right from the time the TRP game zone was set up in 2021 till the time of this incident "should be held accountable for the tragedy that occurred," and directed them to furnish separate affidavits.

"We refrain at this stage

from passing any orders, though we would certainly desire to, to suggest that the officers in question be suspended for dereliction of duty and non-compliance of the direction of this court. We do not do so with the hope to give them a chance," the bench further said.

It directed the incumbent RMC commissioner and officers who held the municipal commissioner's post from July 2021 till the date of the incident to file affidavits before the court, explaining various issues regarding certificates on the structural stability of such constructions, etc.

The HC also directed chief fire officers of the Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Surat and Rajkot municipal corporations to file affidavits on the fire safety measures (in areas of their jurisdiction), such as installation of fire hydrants, checking of fire safety equipment, whether licences (to operate) were obtained from the respective collectorates or mamlatdars.

Cyclone Remal: One person killed in Kolkata, says NDRF



■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: One person died in Kolkata due to a wall collapse incident that took place during cyclonic storm 'Remal' that made landfall last night in the coastal area between West Bengal and neighbouring Bangladesh, a senior NDRF officer said Monday.

Fourteen teams of the federal contingency force are undertaking restoration and rescue work by clearing uprooted trees, electric poles and helping people come out of marooned areas hit by heavy rainfall, he said.

These teams have removed about 54 uprooted trees, two electric poles and

cleared about 18 kms of roads in affected areas of Hasnabad, Sandeshkhali, Gosana, Sagar, Shyampur and Haringhata, he said. According to the latest report received through the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), one person has been killed in a wall collapse incident in Kolkata. The NDRF teams are on job to clear roads and aid West Bengal agencies in restoring normalcy in the aftermath of cyclone Remal that made a landfall in the mid-night and is expected to convert into a deep depression by this evening, he said.

Visuals shared by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) this morn-

ing showed its rescuers using electric saws to cut uprooted trees even as some others were seen working on electricity and communication poles that were thrashed to the ground due to strong winds and rains.

Apart from the 14 teams in West Bengal, one NDRF unit is deployed in Tripura, which may see heavy rains due to Remal, the officer said.

The NDRF teams are deployed in various districts of West Bengal like Kolkata, North and South 24 Parganas, Purba and Paschim Medinipur, Murshidabad, Nadia, Howrah and Hooghly.

The cyclone ravaged adjacent coasts of the state and Bangladesh between Sagar Island and Kheupura, near the southwest of Mongla in the neighbouring country, after its landfall process began at 8.30 pm on Sunday, causing extensive damage to infrastructure and property.

Waterlogging has been reported in several areas, compounding the misery of the affected residents.

approached the cyber police with a complaint.

Based on the complaint, the police on Sunday registered the case under Indian Penal Code sections 419 (cheating by personation), 420 (cheating) and 34 (common intention) and provisions of the Information Technology Act, the official said.

Navi Mumbai man loses Rs 1.07 crore in share trading fraud; cops launch probe

accounts, Navi Mumbai cyber police's senior inspector Gajanan Kadam said.

The man deposited Rs 1,07,09,000 in various bank accounts, but when he sought returns and refund of the money invested by him in shares, the fraudsters failed to respond, the official said.

After realising that he has been cheated, the man

approached the cyber police with a complaint.

Based on the complaint, the police on Sunday registered the case under Indian Penal Code sections 419 (cheating by personation), 420 (cheating) and 34 (common intention) and provisions of the Information Technology Act, the official said.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Describing them as "unsung heroes", BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Monday announced that the groundsman and curators of all the 10 regular IPL venues will be given Rs 25 lakh each as a token of appreciation for providing "brilliant pitches" during the league.

The IPL concluded in

Chennai on Sunday with Kolkata Knight Riders lifting their third overall trophy with an eight-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad. "The unsung heroes of our successful T20 season are the incredible ground staff who worked tirelessly to provide brilliant pitches, even in difficult weather conditions," Shah posted on X.

"As a token of our appreciation, the groundsman and curators at the 10 regular IPL venues will receive INR 25 lakhs each, and the same at the 3 additional venues will get INR 10 lakhs each. Thank you for your dedication and hard work!" he said. The 10 regular venues for the IPL are Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Lucknow, Ahmedabad and Jaipur.

The additional venues this year were Guwahati, Visakhapatnam and Dharamsala.

While Guwahati was the second home venue for Rajasthan Royals, Visakhapatnam hosted Delhi Capitals' first leg of home matches. Dharamsala

served as the second base for Kings XI Punjab. This year's IPL has been talked about for high-scoring matches with the peak team total record shattered twice. The 250-run mark was crossed as many as eight times this season.

Shah also congratulated KKR for their title triumph. "Congratulations to the @KKRiders for clinching the 2024 #TATAIPL! The team showed great consistency throughout the tournament and kudos to @ShreyasIyer15 for leading the side brilliantly.

"Once again, thank you to the fans for coming out in big numbers and for making this yet another successful season!" he said.