

National and International News

# PM assures emotional CJI of govt support in increasing judge strength

**PTI New Delhi, April 24:** An emotional CJI TS Thakur lamented on Sunday "inaction" by the executive to increase the number of judges from the present 21,000 to 40,000 to handle the "avalanche" of litigations even as Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured him of his government's resolve in finding a solution jointly with the judiciary. "...And therefore, it is not only in the name of a litigant or people languishing in jails but also in the name of development of the country, its progress that I beseech you to rise to the occasion and realise that it is not enough to

criticise. You cannot shift the entire burden on the judiciary," the Chief Justice of India said in a choking voice. Addressing the inaugural session of Joint Conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices of High Courts, Justice Thakur said that since 1987, when the Law Commission had recommended increase in the number of judges from then 10 judges per 10 lakh people to 50, "nothing has moved". "Then comes inaction by the government as the increase (in the strength of judges) does not take place," he said. Justice Thakur said following the

Law Commission's recommendation, the Supreme Court in 2002 had also supported increasing the strength of the judiciary. A Parliamentary Department Related Standing Committee on Law then headed by Pranab Mukherjee had also recommended taking the judge to people ratio to 50 from 10. As of today, the judge to people ratio stands at 15 judges to 10 lakh people which is way less than as compared to the US, Australia, the UK and Canada. "In 1987, the requirement was 40,000 judges. From 1987 till now, we have added 25 crore in terms of

population. We have grown into one of the fastest growing economies of the world, we are inviting foreign direct investment into the country, we want people to come and make in India. "Those whom we are inviting are also concerned about the ability of the judicial system in the country to deal with cases and disputes that arise out of such investments. Efficacy of the judicial system is so vitally connected with the development," Thakur said, referring to Modi government's "Make in India" and "Ease of doing business" campaigns.

# Violence in AMU campus, 1 ex-student killed in clash

**PTI Aligarh (UP), April 24:** Violence erupted at the AMU campus around midnight last night following a clash between two regional student groups in which a former student was killed, prompting authorities to step up security and deploy Rapid Action Force. Trouble started when a resident of Mumtaz hotel was assaulted and his room set afire, DIG Aligarh

Range Govind Agarwal, who led the police operations, told PTI today. The victim rushed to the proctor's office to file his complaint. As soon as news of the incident spread students belonging to the two rival factions gathered and a clash broke out. Police said that Mehtaab was shot dead late last night near the Proctor's office where the warring

groups exchanged fire with each other. The rampaging students set afire a jeep and over half-a-dozen bikes. The mob also indulged in arson and set afire the proctor's office building. The violence was so widespread that it took the police nearly two hours to defuse the situation at different spots of the campus. An official of AMU said that trouble

between rival groups belonging to Azamgarh and Sambhal regions has been simmering since quite some time now. Rapid Action Force has been deployed at all sensitive spots especially in view of the entrance test for the engineering college is scheduled today and more than 13,000 candidates are expected to appear from the Aligarh campus centre alone.

# PM Modi sanctions ex- gratia for landslide victims in Tawang

**ANI New Delhi, April 24:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday announced an ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh each for next of kin of the persons deceased in landslide in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, from Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF). The Prime Minister has also

sanctioned Rs. 50,000 each to those gravely injured in the landslide in the state. At least 18 persons were killed after a landslide buried their camp near a private hotel construction site at Phamla in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district on Friday. Meanwhile, Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju took stock of the

situation and met the families of the victims. Rijiju said that he will try to ensure the Centre releases extra funds for the state as the damages due to the natural calamity have been extensive. Arunachal Pradesh governor JP Rajkhowa announced an ex gratia of Rs 1 lakh for the nearest of kin of

each of the 16 killed in the landslide. Tawang has been experiencing incessant heavy rain since last fortnight triggering several landslides on Bhalukpong - Chardwar - Tawang main road axis leading to Tawang town. A massive landslide struck a civil labour camp at village Phamla, causing death of 16 village labourers.

# Second accused arrested in Muktsar kidnapping and rape case

**ANI Muktsar, April 24:** The Muktsar court on Sunday arrested the second accused in connection with the abduction and rape of a Dalit girl, which took place on March 25. The second accused-Sandeep Sipa is the driver of the main accused Gurinder, alias, Jojo. The police have also seized his car. Gurinder was arrested yesterday in connection with the case. Following a complaint, the Malaut Police had on March 30 booked the accused, and was on look out for him, who was allegedly absconding. Gurinder, 27, a resident of Kandu Khera village, reportedly abducted the victim, a resident of the same village, from outside a computer centre in Malaut, where she was an employee. He took her to Tapa Khera village and allegedly raped her. The incident of abduction has been captured on CCTV camera installed at the computer centre.

**TNN Ranchi, April 24:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit in Jharkhand will be marked by protests and bandh by the members of the Adivasi Moolvasi Janadhikar Manch (AMJM) who will be backed by several tribal outfits who want to draw the PM's attention to a 'flawed' local resident policy. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) has also called for Kolhan bandh tomorrow. The PM is scheduled to arrive at Ranchi airport on Sunday afternoon and take a chopper to Jamshedpur from where he will address 33 lakh panchayat representatives on April 24 national panchayat raj diwas. The AMJM activists in Jharkhand are celebrating it as 'black day'. AMJM's credentials and organizational strength might be negligible, but the bandh call coinciding with the PM visit carries major political significance. "The PM is not aware of the local resident policy the state government has notified. The PM bases his policies on sabka sath sabka vikas, but the state government has ignored the interests of the tribals in its local

**Bandh, protests to mark resident policy,"** said Ansan Lakra, the general secretary of AMJM. The struggle is to get maximum benefits to the tribals for which, AMJM coordinator Ajam Ahmad said, the activists are ready to face the police who would try to foil the bandh. "We want the cutoff date to be 1982. In undivided Bihar this policy was proposed," Ahmad said. He claimed it would serve the adivasis better. The officials of state police special branch, tasked to follow the activities of outfit members, have gathered a report of the proposed activities of the outfit. Premshahi Munda, senior leader of Adivasi Jan Parishad (AJP), a state

**PM visit** based tribal social organization, said AJP also supports the bandh. "The government should convene special session of the assembly to discuss the local resident policy," he said. With elaborate arrangements cops will be deployed in Ranchi and Jamshedpur besides other parts of the state to check the protests. "Elaborate security arrangement will be in place at all the sensitive places," police spokesperson S N Pradhan said. Ranchi SDO Aditya Kumar Anand said prohibitory orders would be imposed in the Sadar division of the state capital on Sunday to keep the protesters in check.

# Ecuador death toll rises to 654, over 100 rescued

**Quito, April 24:** The death toll from last week's devastating magnitude-7.8 earthquake in Ecuador has risen to 654 with another 58 people missing. The website of the secretariat for risk management yesterday said that 113 people had been rescued alive following the quake that flattened coastal towns and more than 25,000 people remained in shelters. The death toll from Ecuador's quake has surpassed that of Peru's 2007 temblor, making it the deadliest quake in South America since one in Colombia in 1999 killed more than 1,000 people. Hundreds of aftershocks have rattled Ecuador since the Saturday night quake. Several strong tremors and more than 700 aftershocks have continued to shake the country since the major quake, sparking momentary panic but little additional damage. Tremors are expected to continue for several weeks. With close to 7,000 buildings destroyed, more than 25,000 people were living in shelters. Some 14,000 security personnel were keeping order in quake-hit areas, with only sporadic looting reported.

Survivors in the quake zone were receiving food, water and medicine from the government and scores of foreign aid workers, although Correa has acknowledged that bad roads delayed aid reaching some communities. Correa's leftist government, facing mammoth rebuilding at a time of greatly reduced oil revenues for the OPEC country, has said it would temporarily increase some taxes, offer assets for sale and possibly issue bonds abroad to fund reconstruction. Congress will begin debate on the tax proposal on Tuesday. Correa has estimated damage at \$2 billion to \$3 billion. Lower oil revenue has already left the country of 16 million people facing near-zero growth and lower investment. The country's private banking association said on Saturday its member banks would defer payments on credit cards, loans and mortgages for clients in the quake zone for three months, to help reconstruction efforts. President Rafael Correa has said the quake caused USD 3 billion in damage and warned that the reconstruction effort will take years.

Short Story

# The Magic Of Mushkil Gusha

Once in the royal city of Isfahan, there was an old woodcutter who lived alone with his young daughter. Every day, the woodcutter went out to the desert to gather camel-thorn bushes, then sold them in the marketplace as firewood. In this way, he earned barely enough for the two of them. One morning, the woodcutter's daughter said, Father, we always have enough to eat. But just once, it would be nice to have something special. Do you think you could buy us some date cakes? I think I could do that, my dear, said the woodcutter. I'll just gather some extra wood today. So the woodcutter walked farther that day to gather more thorn bushes. But he took longer than he meant to. By the time he got back with the wood, darkness had fallen. It was too late to go to the marketplace. What's more, when he reached his house, he found that his daughter had already bolted the front door and gone to bed. Knock as he would, there was no answer. So he had to sleep outside on the doorstep. Next morning, the woodcutter awoke while it was still dark. He told himself, I might as well go out right now and get another big load of wood. Then I can sell twice as much and buy even more date cakes. So he left his load and went back to the desert to gather more bushes. But again he took longer than he meant to, and when he got back, it was dark and the door was bolted. So again he had to sleep on the doorstep. He awoke once more before dawn. There's no sense wasting a day, he said. I'll go back out for one more big load. How many date cakes we'll have then! But yet again he took too long, and yet again the door was bolted when he got back. The woodcutter sank to the doorstep and wept. What's wrong, old man? He looked up to see a dervish in a long green robe and a tall green cap. Holy sir, for three days I have gone out to gather thorn bushes, and for three days I have come home too late to get into my house. And in all that time, I've had nothing to eat. What night is this, old man? The woodcutter said, Why, Friday eve, of course. That's right. It's the eve of our holy day. And that's the time of Mushkil Gusha. Mushkil Gusha? said the woodcutter. That's right, old man — the 'Remover of Difficulties.' The holy man took some roasted chickpeas and raisins from his pouch and handed them to the woodcutter. Here, share this with me. Thank you, sir! You may not know it, the dervish went on, but Mushkil Gusha is already helping you. If you want your good fortune to continue, here's what you must do: Every Friday eve, find someone in need. Then share what you have, and tell a tale of Mushkil Gusha. That way, you both will be helped. And with that, the holy man vanished. As the woodcutter stared at the empty spot, the door to his house swung open. Father, where have you been? Oh, please come inside! I was so worried! A few days passed, while the woodcutter and his daughter enjoyed the many date cakes he bought after selling his wood. Then one morning, when the woodcutter had gone to the desert and his daughter had finished her housework, she decided to go walking in a public park. She was strolling down a broad path when a carriage stopped beside her. What a pretty little girl! said a royal

young lady. I am the daughter of the king. Would you like to be my handmaiden? Yes, Your Highness, the girl said, blushing. So the woodcutter's daughter became a handmaiden of the princess. With the gifts the princess gave her, she and her father became quite rich. He bought a nice house, and he didn't have to gather thorn bushes anymore. But somehow he forgot what the dervish told him. A month went by. One day, the princess went on a picnic to one of her father's private gardens, and she brought along the woodcutter's daughter. There was a small lake there, so they decided to go for a swim. The princess took off her necklace and hung it on a branch overlooking the water. But when she came out, she forgot all about it. A few days later at the palace, the princess looked for the necklace but couldn't find it. She turned angrily to the woodcutter's daughter. You stole my necklace! You must have taken it when we went for our swim! No, Your Highness, I wouldn't do that! You're a thief and a liar too! I'll show you what happens to people of your kind! Get out of my sight! The woodcutter's daughter ran home in tears. But an hour later, soldiers came to the door. They arrested the woodcutter and carried him off to a public square in front of the prison. Then they locked his feet in the stocks and left him there. The woodcutter had to suffer the taunts and jeers of the passersby. Some people were kinder, though, and even threw him scraps of food. Now, that evening was Friday eve. As the sun set, the woodcutter cast his thoughts over all that had happened to him in the past weeks. All at once, he cried out. Oh, what a foolish, ungrateful wretch I am! Didn't the dervish say to share what I have each Friday eve and tell of Mushkil Gusha? Yet I haven't done it once! Just then, a packet of chickpeas and raisins landed by the woodcutter. When he looked up, he didn't see who had thrown it. But he did see a beggar boy coming by. Young friend! called the woodcutter. Please share this with me while I tell you a story. The boy sat down and gratefully took what was offered. As he ate, the woodcutter related everything that had happened, from when his daughter asked for date cakes, to when he was put in the stocks. Thank you, sir, said the boy. I needed the food, and the story was good too. I hope it has a happy ending. The beggar boy went on his way. But he'd only gone a block when a rich merchant stopped him. My one and only son! Ever since you were stolen at birth, I've looked for that birthmark on your left cheek. Now at last I've found you! But they leave our story here. The next day, the princess had another picnic in her father's private garden, and again she went down to the lake for a swim. She was about to step into the water when she saw the reflection of her necklace. She looked up into the tree — and there was the necklace itself, right where she had left it. That woodcutter's daughter didn't take it at all! By the end of the day, the woodcutter was free from the stocks, and his daughter was back in the palace. And every Friday eve after that, the woodcutter always remembered to find someone in need, share what he had, and tell his tale of Mushkil Gusha.

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