

2 Congress RS MPs move SC challenging Venkaiah Naidu's rejection of removal motion against Chief Justice

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Two Rajya Sabha (RS) Congress party Members of Parliament (MPs) today moved the Supreme Court challenging the Rajya Sabha chair Venkaiah Naidu's decision to reject the removal motion against Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra. They challenged the decision, they said, because the removal motion was signed by more than 50 MPs, which is what is constitutionally required, and yet Naidu rejected it. The petitioner MPs - Pratap Singh Bajwa from Punjab and Ameer Harshadray Jainik from Gujarat - in their joint petition said that once a removal motion is signed by the requisite number of MPs the RS chairman has no option but to constitute an inquiry committee to investigate the charges against the CJI. The petitioners also doubted the consultation process undertaken by the RS chairman saying the notice of the motion was given on April 20 and it was rejected on April 23, during

which period Naidu was mostly outside Delhi on vice-presidential engagements. Then petitioners sought a direction from the SC to the RS chairman to immediately constitute an inquiry committee under the Judges Inquiry Act to probe the charges against CJI mentioned in the removal motion. Kapil Sibal and Prashant Bhushan mentioned the petition by Congress MPs challenging rejection of removal motion against the CJI before a bench headed by Justice J Chelameswar, who had led the 'rebel' press conference against the CJI on January 12. While Justice Chelameswar initially showed reluctance, Sibal and Bhushan insisted that since the CJI as master of roster is disqualified from hearing a petition on removal of CJI, it has to be heard and decided by a bench headed by Justice Chelameswar. Sibal said he is not asking for any interim order but seeking listing of the petition before an appropriate bench. The bench of Justice J Chelameswar and S K Kaul said it will pass orders on listing on Tuesday morning.

On April 20, as many as 64 MPs belonging to seven political parties signed the notice for removal proceedings against the CJI. They include MPs from the Congress, the NCP, CPM, the CPI, the SP, the BSP and the Muslim League. They mentioned five grounds for his removal: 1. "Conspiracy to pay illegal gratification" in the Prasad Education Trust case and the denial of permission to proceed against a retired high court judge in the same matter. 2. The CJI allegedly listed the petition against the Prasad Education Trust before himself, even when he was heading the Constitution bench, which is against the convention. 3. "Antedating" (backdating) of an order for listing of a petition related to the investigation against the Prasad Education Trust in the Supreme Court. 4. Misra allegedly acquired a piece of land by giving a "false affidavit" while he was an advocate. The plot was surrendered in 2012 when he was elevated to the Supreme Court, even though orders cancelling the allotment were given in

1985. 5. Abuse of exercise of power by the Chief Justice in choosing to send sensitive matters to particular benches by misusing his authority as Master of the Roster with the likely intent to influence the outcome. On April 23, Naidu rejected the Congress-led opposition parties' notice to remove the CJI saying it lacked substantial merit. "Having considered the material contained in the notice of motion and reflected upon the inputs received in my interaction with legal luminaries and constitutional experts, I am of the firm opinion that the notice of the motion does not deserve to be admitted. Accordingly I refuse to admit notice of motion," said Naidu. "I have applied my mind to all five charges made out in impeachment motion and examined all annexed documents. All facts as stated in motion don't make out a case which can lead any reasonable mind to conclude that CJI on these facts can be ever held guilty of misbehavior," said Naidu further.

Murder during birthday party at Delhi Bar in fight over song, DJ arrested

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A young man celebrating a birthday at a bar in Delhi was murdered after an argument with the DJ over a song request on Sunday night. A full-blown bar fight erupted at Raftaar in Punjabi Bagh in west Delhi following an argument. Ishmit, in his mid-20s, was celebrating with 10 of his friends on the third floor of the building. The argument started when one of his friends, Vijaydeep, went to the floor above and asked

the DJ, Deepak Bisht, to change the song. Bisht reportedly refused, which led to shouting and blew up. As Ishmit's friends fought with the DJ and other bar staff, chairs were flung and beer bottles were smashed and used as weapons, witnesses told the police. Vijaydeep, a gym instructor was stabbed inside the bar during a birthday party. The DJ allegedly took out a knife and stabbed Vijaydeep, who died on the spot. By the time the police arrived, most of the bartenders and other staff had run away, say

sources. A young girl who was also partying in the pub suffered severe head injuries; she has been admitted in a hospital nearby. The police have filed a First Investigation Report against the DJ, who has been arrested. The police have also seized the CCTV footage and the knife used to stab Vijaydeep. The statements of those who were at the birthday party are being recorded and a few employees of the bar have been detained for questioning, say police sources.

Science & Technology News

Man caught smuggling 100 iPhone X models at Delhi Airport

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At the Delhi Airport, a man was arrested by the customs for allegedly trying to smuggle 100 iPhone X models into the country. The 53-year-old accused was intercepted by the customs after his arrival from Dubai on Friday. Apple iPhone X is one of the most expensive flagship smartphones in the country right now.

The base model of iPhone X with 64GB storage retails at Rs 95,390 while the higher version with 256GB storage retails for Rs 1,08,930. "Hundred iPhone X handsets worth a total of Rs 85.61 lakh were seized from his baggage after a thorough search," said Amandeep Singh, Additional Commissioner of customs at the airport. Research firm Strategy Analytics reported that Apple sold 16 million units of iPhone X during the first quarter of 2018. It was also the most successful smartphone model in terms of sales during the quarter ending March 2018. Last week, Apple announced record results during fiscal 2018 second quarter ending March 31, 2018. It posted a quarterly revenue of \$61.6 billion, a jump of 16 percent from the same period last year. The record quarter was mainly driven by \$38 billion in revenue from sales of 52 million iPhone during the quarter. Apple said international sales accounted for 65 percent of the revenue. "Customers chose iPhone X more than any other iPhone each week in the March quarter, just as they did following its launch in the December quarter. We also grew revenue in all of our geographic segments, with over 20 percent growth in Greater China and Japan," CEO Tim Cook said during the earnings call. Apple also announced \$100 billion in additional stock

buybacks as a way of reassuring that iPhone sales are not off the cliff yet. The results last week topped most estimates by Wall Street analysts, who had a cast over Apple's continued success in the smartphone market. However, in India, Apple still continues to struggle due to the already high price of iPhone and the recent hike due to an increase in import duty on CBUs (completely built units) to 20 percent. Apple, however, remains confident of success in India in the next few years as it expands its manufacturing efforts in the country. There is no word on whether this man brought 100 units of iPhone X with an intention to sell them in the grey market. One thing is clear, the overall price for these devices would have been way cheaper than the operating price of iPhone X in India.

Pakistan minister Ahsan Iqbal shot at, attacker nabbed; sad, says Malala

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Pakistan's Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal was injured on Sunday in an assassination attempt when an unidentified man opened fire at him in Punjab province after he addressed a political rally, police said. Following the incident, prominent Pakistani educational activist and the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai condemned the attack. Iqbal, 59, was hit by a bullet on his right shoulder in the attack in his native Narowal's Kanjur Tehsil after he addressed a rally, the police said. Terming the incident as "sad", Malala, who is pursuing a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the Oxford University was quoted by Geo TV as saying, "I wish that every Pakistani [person] remains safe and that no

one's life is in danger. I hope for a Pakistan where everyone lives peacefully." The Nobel laureate further said that she was thankful to God that the murder attempt on Iqbal did not end up being fatal and prayed for his quick recovery. The incident took place when the US-educated Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader was leaving the rally. Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi condemned the attack and called for an immediate report on the incident from top police officials of Punjab province. State Minister for Interior Tallal Chaudry meanwhile, said the suspected shooter was identified as Abid Hussain and has been arrested. The suspect, who is a resident of Narowal, is about 20 years old and being interrogated, according to media reports.

Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif described the incident as an "assassination attempt". Iqbal's son said that his father was out of danger. The attacker fired with a 30-bore pistol from a distance of around 18 metres. The attacker was about to fire a second shot when he was apprehended, police said. However, the reason behind the attack was not immediately known. Sharif said: "Just spoke to him and he is in high spirits. "Those who indulged in this heinous act will be brought to justice. PML-N will not be browbeaten into submission. I am personally overseeing the investigation". Punjab government spokesman Malik Ahmad Khan confirmed the attack and arrest of the attackers. He said the minister is stable but being shifted to Lahore. "Police are investigating the attack and we will know how

he (attacker) was able to reach so close to the minister," he said. He said that the attacker was initially identified as Abid Hussain and his age was said to be between 20-22 years. He is said to be a resident of Narowal. The Punjab government said that the suspect "is being interrogated by the police". Rana Manan, a lawmaker of Punjab assembly, said that Iqbal was about to sit in his vehicle when the attacker fired at him. The attack on the interior minister highlights the issue of security of high-profile politicians ahead of the elections scheduled to be held after June. Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa also condemned the incident and sent his best wishes for Iqbal's early recovery. Asif Ali Zardari, Bilawal Bhutto and other Pakistan Peoples Party leaders also condemned the attack.

SpaceX's powerful rocket tech could put lives at risk: NASA advisors

Washington, May 7

An approach used by SpaceX to make its Falcon 9 rocket more powerful could put the lives of astronauts at risk, NASA's safety experts have warned. To make the Falcon 9 rocket even more powerful, SpaceX came up with the idea of keeping the propellant at super-cold temperatures to shrink its size, allowing them to pack more of it into the tanks. But the approach comes with a major risk, The Washington Post reported on Saturday citing the experts.

The new approach requires the propellant to be loaded just before takeoff, while astronauts are aboard, but an accident during this manoeuvre, known as "load-and-go," could set off an explosion. As NASA and SpaceX prepare to launch humans into orbit as early as this year, one watchdog group labelled load-and-go a "potential safety risk," the Post reported. In a letter, a NASA advisory group warned that the method was "contrary to booster safety criteria that has been in place for

over 50 years." SpaceX suffered a setback in September 2016 when a Falcon 9 rocket blew up while it was being fuelled ahead of an engine test. As a result of the explosion, a multi-million dollar satellite was lost. Although no one was hurt in the incident, it raised safety concerns in the minds of the people at NASA. The report quoted NASA's William Gerstenmaier as saying that the agency had not decided whether it would allow SpaceX to load crews before loading the fuel.

Blackbuck poaching: Salman Khan bail plea hearing adjourned until July 17

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Salman Khan's bail plea hearing in the 1998 blackbuck poaching case was on Monday adjourned to July 17 by a Jodhpur trial court. The Bollywood actor arrived in Rajasthan's Jodhpur on Sunday afternoon to appear before the court. Khan had on April 5 been convicted in the 19-year-old case and sentenced to five years in jail for killing

two blackbucks in Jodhpur during the shooting of the 1998 movie *Hum Saath Saath Hain*. Subsequently, Salman was granted bail after spending two nights in the Jodhpur Central jail. Salman's *Hum Saath Saath Hain* co-stars Tabu, Sonali Bendre, Saif Ali Khan and Neelam and Jodhpur resident Dushyant Singh, another accused in the case, were all acquitted due to lack of evidence. The blackbuck case is not

the only instance of legal trouble Khan is facing. Also in April, a Mumbai court cancelled the bailable warrant against Khan in connection with the 2002 hit and run case. The court had issued the bailable warrant as Khan had not completed the procedure of providing surety on the past two dates. Further, a Ludhiana court on May 1 rejected a petition against Salman and Shilpa Shetty that sought action against them under the SC/

ST Act for allegedly using derogatory words against the Valmiki community. In the same case, the Supreme Court on April 23 put on hold proceedings pending against Khan before several courts across the country in cases registered under the SC/ST Act. Salman is set to be back on the small screen as the host of *Dus Ka Dum* and is shooting for the big screen venture *Race 3*, among other projects.

Lunar rock points to hidden water reserves on Moon

Scientists have found a mineral in a lunar meteorite that points to the presence of abundant hidden reserves of water ice under the surface of the Moon, which could be potentially useful for future human exploration. A team from the Tohoku University in Japan found the mineral, called moganite, in a lunar meteorite discovered in a desert in northwest Africa. Moganite, a crystal of silicon dioxide, is known to form on Earth in specific circumstances in sedimentary settings from

alkaline fluids. It has never before been detected in samples of lunar rock. Researchers believe the mineral formed on the surface of the Moon in the area called Procellarum Terrane, as water originally present in lunar dirt evaporated due to exposure to strong sunlight. "For the first time, we can prove that there is water ice in the lunar material," said Masahiro Kayama from Tohoku University, who led the study. "In a moganite, there is less water, because moganite forms

from the evaporation of water. That's the case on the surface of the Moon. But in the subsurface, much water remains as ice, because it's protected from the sunlight," Kayama told 'Space.com'. Scientists already knew that there is water on the moon. For example, NASA's Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite detected a shadowed crater near the Moon's south pole. India's probe Chandrayaan-1 recorded evidence of water in the thin atmosphere above the Moon's surface.