

NHRC directs defence ministry, IAF to take action on plea to compensate Abhinandan



Agency
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National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Thursday directed Ministry of Defence and the chief of Indian Air Force (IAF) to take appropriate action in relation to a complaint that sought compensation to Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman. The NHRC has given the authorities eight weeks time for the same. In an order, the NHRC said that, "These complaints should be transmitted to the

concerned authority for such action as deemed appropriate. The authority concerned is directed to take appropriate action within eight weeks associating the complainant/victim and to inform them of the action taken in the matter." The NHRC direction came in response to a complaint filed by Thane-based lawyer Aditya Mishra. He had asked the NHRC to "recommend the Central government to compensate Abhinandan Varthaman suitably." Mishra, in his complaint had

said that, "Various petitions are filed in our country for the compliance of due process of law and to ensure that human rights of anyone are not violated. But hardly any petition has been filed for appropriate compensation to our defence forces who lay down their life in protection of our country." "Our country has witnessed a gallantry act by our Air Force officer Wing Commander Shri Abhinandan Varthaman, who was detained by Pakistan army on 27.02.2019," the complaint said. The complaint also said,

"There were numerous reports in media in which it was shown that our officer Abhinandan was tortured and beaten when he was kept in captivity by Pakistan forces. He suffered all this for our country." After the Balakot airstrike in Pakistan by the IAF, the neighbouring country had tried to enter the Indian airspace. During the aerial combat which ensued in the aftermath, IAF fighter jet pilot Abhinandan Varthaman's plane was shot down and he crash landed in Pakistan. Abhinandan was spotted by the Pakistani forces when he was attacked by a mob of local villagers. The pak rangers rescued him. He subsequently made it back to India after a series of diplomatic dialogues. Since, Mishra's complaint was filed during the time when Varthaman was in Pakistan, he had also sought "special protection to his family members". However, with Varthaman's release after a few days, his demands did not survive. NHRC took cognisance of the complaint on May 1 and subsequently passed an order on May 7.

Man who slapped Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal

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Suresh, the man who slapped Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow on May 4, expressed regret over his act. "I don't know why I slapped him (Arvind Kejriwal). I regret it," Suresh said while talking to ANI on Thursday. Suresh also claimed that he is not affiliated to any political party. "I am not affiliated to any political party. Nobody asked me to do this. Police did not misbehave with me. They only said what I did was wrong," he added. On May 4, AAP chief Kejriwal was slapped by a man (later identified as Suresh) in Moti

Nagar in West Delhi while campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections. The CM had stepped on to an open jeep and was shaking hands with supporters and waving at the gathering when Suresh wearing a reddish maroon shirt climbed on to the vehicle and landed a slap on his face. AAP supporters immediately pulled him down and thrashed him. This was not the first time that the Aam Aadmi Party convener was assaulted. Kejriwal was also slapped in 2015 while campaigning for Delhi assembly elections and again in the same year when an autorickshaw driver slapped him during a roadshow in Delhi.

Campaigning for 6th phase of LS polls ends this evening

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Campaigning for the sixth phase of Lok Sabha elections will end this evening. 59 constituencies, spread over 7 states, will go to polls in this phase on Sunday. Voting in this phase will take place for 10 seats in Uttar Pradesh, 14 in Haryana, 8 seats each in West Bengal, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, 7 in Delhi and 4 in Jharkhand. Star campaigners of various political parties are holding rallies and road shows in

different parts of the country to woo the voters. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address rallies at Rohtak in Haryana, Mandi in Himachal Pradesh and Hoshiarpur in Punjab today. BJP President Amit Shah will campaign at Barwala in Hissar district, and Charkhi Dabri in Haryana. Congress President Rahul Gandhi will hold rallies in Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh, while Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will campaign in Uttar Pradesh.

Know Your Armed Forces

By- IGAR (South)

In its continuous efforts to guide the youth of the nation to a better path, Mantri Pukhri Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR(South) organised an awareness programme on 'Know Your Armed Forces' at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Yaralpath on 09 May. The event was organised by Koirengei Company Operating Base (COB) of the Battalion to give young students an insight into the Indian Army and the Assam Rifles. The event witnessed attendance of over 300 students and teachers from eight colleges and fifteen schools all over Manipur. As part of the event, a series of activities were carried out. The event commenced with a motivational lecture on 'Live a Life Less Ordinary: Indian Army and Assam Rifles' wherein the attendees were informed about the glorious history and traditions of the Indian Army and the Assam Rifles. The students were also made aware on various types of entries to join the



Indian Armed Forces as a career option including eligibility for direct SSB interviews after obtaining NCC 'C' Certificates. An informative video was also screened for the students showcasing valour of the Indian Armed Forces and various ways to join the Forces. The lecture was

followed by an interactive session clarifying all the queries raised by the students regarding procedure to join the Indian Army and the Assam Rifles. Information on the upcoming recruitment rallies along with career counseling was also provided to the attendees during the programme.

As part of the event new generation weapons and equipment used by the Indian Armed Forces were also displayed. The youth were fascinated seeing the display and showed tremendous inquisitiveness regarding the technical knowhow and functionality of the weapons and equipment. The exhilaration and exuberance of the youth was visible during the interaction wherein various queries regarding weapons and equipment were answered. The event concluded with tea and refreshments for all the attendees. The event offered a platform for the youth to know more closely about the Indian Armed Forces. All the attendees expressed profound gratitude to the Battalion for undertaking such an initiative and appreciated the continuous efforts and commitments of Assam Rifles in reaching out to the youth.

News from the world of medicine

Liquid Biopsy – A game changer for Oncologists



By- Dr Sameer Kaul,

The advent of next-generation sequencing has quickened the pace of discovery in oncology by making available an entire class of biomarkers that are the result of mutation analysis and are biologically tumor-specific. These genetic mutations drive virtually all forms of cancer. The development of non-invasive methods to detect and monitor tumour has been a major challenge in oncology. Cancer diagnosis at its early stages is now made easy and non-invasive. Researchers have found that unique cancer mutations can show up in microscopic fragments of DNA in a patient's blood. What are tumor cells? Tumors shed both intact cells (resulting in circulating tumor cells) as well as cellular components, such as nucleic acids (resulting in cell-free DNA or RNA).

Monitoring of a disease is fundamental for successful treatment of that disease. Cancer is a genetic disease, and the progression of cancer is characterized by high heterogeneity. T-cells are therapeutic resistant that is the tumors acquire new mutations that render them resistant to the therapies that target specific genetic mutations. A liquid biopsy is a liquid biomarker that can be isolated from body fluids, such as blood, saliva, urine, ascites, or pleural effusion. Like a tissue biopsy, it is a

changes in tumor response and the recovery of additional biopsy material assumes we can effectively identify the most important sample of the disease for analysis. The traditional methods for tumor assessment fail to capture the heterogeneity of the disease, especially during progression. The Liquid biopsy can solve these problems. It is a supplementary biopsy mechanism that samples different parts of the disease from traditional



representative of the tissue from which it has spread. The non-invasive nature of liquid biopsies, which require only 5 mL of blood, means they are much easier to tolerate and the procedure is quicker than a surgical biopsy. The blood sample is then 'spun down' to get 2 mL of plasma which can be analysed for tumour DNA. Tolerability and convenience are a major boost for patients. The biggest benefit lies in the potential of liquid biopsies to detect disease progression or treatment resistance long before it would trigger clinical symptoms or appear on imaging scans.

Liquid biopsies have become more clinically useful in recent years due to the ability to pair tests on circulating tumor cells with genomic tests. **Liquid Biopsy – Advantages over traditional methods** The molecular properties of this heterogeneous disease differ within a tumor. Primary tumor biopsy may not reflect current disease condition and may cause changes in the tumor cells. Traditional biopsy is invasive and the tissues are limited, which puts a question mark on the feasibility based on patient condition or the T-cell. Liquid biopsy addresses all these limitations! Mutation analysis has traditionally been performed only on tissue biopsy material. However, many tumors are difficult to biopsy, are accessible only using fine needle aspirates, or are located either in unknown sites or in sites that are challenging and risky to access. Radiographic approaches are often insensitive to

surgical biopsy, has none of the associated side effects or risks being just a blood draw, can be repeated as needed for effective monitoring, and samples the part of the tumor that is associated with metastatic events. Unlike traditional biopsies, liquid biopsies remove the need for invasive surgeries and procedures by instead allowing medical professionals to test for signs of cancer from a simple blood-draw. Hence liquid biopsies are easier to perform, giving hope to many that they will lead to earlier diagnoses of cancers in patients. Certain fragments of DNA shed by tumours into the bloodstream can potentially be used to non-invasively screen for early-stage cancers, monitor responses to treatment and help explain why some cancers are resistant to therapies. Liquid biopsies have been made possible by advances in sequencing the human genome since scientists and researchers can now detect genetic mutations of cancers. Tumor cells release Cell-free circulating tumour DNA (ctDNA) and circulating tumour cells (CTCs) in the plasma of the cancer patients. Therefore, assays using these molecules can be used for early tumor detection, monitoring or detection of resistance mutations. ctDNA liquid biopsy allows us to understand specifically what kind of molecular changes are happening in the tumour in real time, which is a very big step beyond where CTCs are today in clinical terms.

*****The writer is a Senior Oncologist, Indraprastha Apollo Hospital, New Delhi