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Ladakh standoff: India, China agree to disengage from a key patrol point

Ending the stalemate in border talks that lasted nearly six months, India and China have agreed in principle to disengage at a key patrol point in eastern Ladakh.

The agreement on PP17A was reached during the 12th round of Corps Commander-level talks, The meeting, which was part of a series of measures to resolve the 15-month standoff in Ladakh, was held on the Indian side of the Chushul-Moldo border.

China has agreed to step back from PP17A, also known as the Gogra Post, but is “not inclined” to move back from PP15 or the Hot Springs area. “Modalities are being worked out. But on PP17A, there is an agreement to disengage. On PP15, China continues to insist that it is holding its own side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Parliament passes Inland Vessels Bill

The Parliament has passed the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021 with Rajya Sabha approving it today amid din. The Lok Sabha has already passed the bill. The legislation is to replace the Inland Vessels Act, 1917.

The bill seeks to introduce a uniform regulatory framework for inland vessel navigation across the country. It provides for a central database for recording the details of vessel, vessel registration and crew on an electronic portal. The bill defines mechanically propelled inland vessels to include ships, boats, sailing vessels, container vessels and ferries.

The bill was passed after a brief discussion amid uproar. Speaking on the bill, Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal highlighted its importance and features.

Lok Sabha passes General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021

The Lok Sabha passed the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2021 amid din. The bill seeks to amend the General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Act, 1972.

It provides a greater private sector participation in the public sector insurance companies. The bill removes the mandatory provision of 51 per cent shareholding of the Central Government in

General Insurance Corporation of India, National Insurance, New India Assurance, Oriental Insurance and United India Insurance companies.

Preventive detention only if detenu affects or likely to affect public order, Supreme Court rules

To invoke a public detention law against someone, it is not enough that his/her actions pose a threat to law and order but must affect the public order, the Supreme Court ruled on 2nd August, 2021, quashing the detention of a man — “a habitual fraudster” — under the Telangana Prevention of Dangerous Activities Act, 1986.

A bench of Justices R F Nariman and Hrishikesh Roy said that a liberal meaning cannot be given to the expression public order in the context of preventive detention statute.

Supreme Court notice to states, HCs on cases still registered under scrapped Sec 66A

The Supreme Court issued notices to all states, Union territories and registrars general of High Courts on a plea highlighting continued use of Section 66A of Information Technology Act even though it was held unconstitutional by the court in 2015. “This cannot continue,” a bench of Justices R F Nariman and B R Gavai ordered while hearing the plea by the NGO People’s Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL).

On March 24, 2015, in the case *Shreya Singhal v. Union of India*, the top court struck down “Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, 2000”. The court found the law “in its entirety being violative of Article 19(1)(a) and not saved under Article 19(2)”, and that “it is clear that Section 66A arbitrarily, excessively and disproportionately invades the right of free speech and upsets the balance between such right and the reasonable restrictions that may be imposed on such right”.

In its reply, the Centre told the court that police and law and order being state subjects, law enforcement agencies of the state concerned share equal responsibility to comply with the *Shreya Singhal* ruling. It submitted that “police and public order are State Subjects as per Constitution of India and prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes, and capacity building of police personnel are primary responsibility of States. The Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs)

take legal action as per provisions of law against the cyber crime offenders. Accordingly the LEAs share equal responsibility to comply with the said judgement.”

Supreme Court orders immediate inclusion of shooter Naresh Kumar for Tokyo Paralympic games

The Supreme Court directed the Paralympic Committee of India to include shooter Naresh Kumar Sharma in the list of those participating in the games scheduled to begin on August 24 in Tokyo.

Following an urgent hearing in the afternoon, a three-judge bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, B R Gavai and Krishna Murari asked PCI “to recommend the name of” Sharma “as additional participant/additional entry for Men’s 50 m Rifle Position SH1, at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics without any exception

The High Court “had denied the inclusion” of Sharma’s name “stating that the shooting team had already been placed in a (bio) bubble for the purpose of the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics”.

New frog species discovered in Western Ghats, named after former DU vice-chancellor

A team of Delhi University researchers has discovered a new frog species in the Western Ghats and named it after former DU Vice-Chancellor and plant geneticist Deepak Pental.

The new frog species, *Minervarya Pentali*, was discovered from the Western Ghats biodiversity hotspot, extending along the southwest coast of the Indian Peninsula, and the research team has stated that this new species is endemic to the southern Western Ghats.

Tokyo Olympics: Indian Women’s Hockey team scripts history by reaching Olympic semifinals for the first time

In the Tokyo Olympics, the Indian women’s hockey team today scripted history by qualifying for the Olympic Games semifinals for the first time ever. The Indian eves defeated three-time champions, Australia by a solitary goal.