EXPRESS NETWORK

No footage of Babri demolition: TV guidelines

New Delhi: News channels must neither show any footage of the demolition of Babri Masjid nor broadcast any visuals of celebrations or protests on the issue of the disputed site in Ayodhya, according to guidelines issued on Wednesday by the News Broadcasting Standards Authority, a self-regulatory organisation for television news.

The NBSA issued nine specific guidelines on the "Ayodhya matter", keeping in mind the "sensitive nature" of the issue, and asked all editors part of the organisation, in an advisory, to ensure these are followed by all news channels, besides the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards.

The NBSA advisory stated, "The reporting of the Ayodhya issue... is one in which extra care and caution needs to be exercised to ensure that the telecast of any news relating to it should not be sensational, inflammatory or provocative." **ENS**

No leave for **UP field** officials till November 30

Lucknow: The UP government on Wednesday issued an order saying officials on "field duty" will not be granted leave till November 30. The instructions come on the last day of the Supreme Court hearing in the Ayodhya land dispute case. The official order, however, attributed the decision to the festive season. Officials considered to be on field duty include police officers posted at the district and lower levels, as well as district magistrates.

the order, Chief Additional Secretary Mukul Singhal said the government decided that in view of the coming festival season, no official should be granted leave, unless in the most unavoidable circumstances, till November 30. The order also directed officials to remain present at their respective headquarters.

Now, Bench will write its ruling



THE BENCH: Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, Justice S A Bobde, Justice D Y Chandrachud, Justice Ashok Bhushan, Justice S A Nazeer

As the five-judge Constitution Bench concludes the 40-day hearings on appeals, **Ananthakrishnan G** summarises the key arguments and SC's observations

■ Material unearthed by ASI points to presence of a "massive structure with features distinctive of a temple" beneath the ground on which the Babri Masjid stood. A significant discovery is a "pranala" — a discharge outlet attached to the temples — on the northern wall of the structure.

■ ASI report establishes that Babri Masjid was not built on vacant or agricultural land, but on land on which a "massive structure", dating back to at least 2nd Century BC, stood.

■ History books establish there was a temple. It is the unshakeable faith of believers that this is the birthplace of Ram. That itself is the greatest evidence.

■ Both Hindus and Muslims consider Ayodhya as the birthplace of Ram and there is no difference of opinion regarding this.

■ The birthplace of Ram too is a juristic person and there are judgments which show that something which is not in idol form can also be a juristic person. God is all-pervading, so the manifestation of the divinity is also worshipped. The whole of Ayodhya is divine for Hindus and therefore everything connected to it is a juristic person.

Nirmohi Akhara

■ We were in possession of in-

ner courtyard and Ram

Janmasthan for hundreds of

years. Outer courtyard having

'Sita Rasoi', 'Chabutra', 'Bhandar

Grah' was in our possession,

never part of dispute in any case.

Our suit was filed within the

period of limitation. We are

seeking rights to management

and possession of the area.

■ Allahabad HC held the disputed site is deity. If that is so, awarding joint possession is bad

in law. ■ Accounts of foreign travellers and historians establish beyond doubt the location of Ram Janmabhoomi, and that the sanctum sanctorum in Hindu temple there was demolished to make way for the Babri Masjid.

> ■ Inscriptions on a stone slab "recovered" from the rubble of the demolished Babri Masjid pointed to existence of a 12th Century Vishnu temple.

■ Divinity of Ram Janmabhoomi was not lost, though the Babri Masjid was built over the temple which pre-dated it, hence nobody can claim title over the site by adverse possession.

■ Lime-surkhi mixture as building material was used in India much before the arrival of Muslims, and its presence on a 50-metre long wall, discovered beneath the disputed structure, does not indicate that the wall was an Islamic structure.

■ A district court in Faizabad had concluded in 1886 that a mosque was built on land considered holy by the Hindus in Ayodhya, and it was for the Muslim side to show that this finding was wrong.

■ Has a question like the present

one (on the birth of Ram) been

raised about the birth of a

prophet or whether Jesus was

born in Bethlehem, in any court

■ The presence of the Chabutra

in close proximity with the iron

railings put up by the British

post-1855, to separate the Babri

anywhere in the world?

RAMLALLA VIRAJMAN — UP SUNNI CENTRAL WAQF BOARD —

AAAAA

AYODHYA

HEARING

"invented in 1989" for the pur-

pose of the suit filed by Ramlalla

■ Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas has

no locus standi in the matter, nor

can it be party to any suit. Suit by

Ramlalla Virajman was only a

"socio-political vehicle" for Nyas,

which was created in December

■ Disputed premises has always

been a mosque, since the day it

■ No evidence of demolition of

a temple, gazetteers relied on by

the temple side to prove their

case not authentic proof of his-

■ High Court did not consider re-

port of four historians which re-

jected claims that the site was

■The demolished (Babri Masjid)

building belonged to us... the

right to reconstruct it also be-

longs to us. Nobody else has the

■ Archaeological Survey of

India's report not just an opinion,

but expert opinion and will have

■ Oral evidence on record that

there was an idol at the "garbha-

griha" (sanctum sanctorum) be-

low the central dome of the

Masjid even prior to 1949, and

that Hindus had prayed to it.

to be given due weightage.

the birthplace of Ram.

Virajman that year.

was constructed.

1985.

■ Examining historic rulership and legitimacy of actions of emperors like Babur and Aurangazeb will open a pandora's box.

■ Archaeological Survey of India report at best an "opinion" and "cannot be accepted as evidence" to decide the case.

■ Lime-surkhi was brought to India during the Islamic period and its traces on the wall show it was part of an Idgah.

■ Alleged placing of idols of Hindu deities in the central dome of the Babri Masjid on the intervening night of December 22-23, 1949, was a planned, surreptitious attack and an illegal usurpation.

■ Some photographs of 1950 show "Allah" was inscribed on the inside walls of the masiid in Arabic calligraphy.

■ There were idols of Hindu deities in the Ram Chabutra, but Hindus did not have title over the place, only the right to pray.

■ Babri Masjid was used for prayers by Muslims even after the 1934 communal riots which damaged a part of it.

■ Babri Masjid had an Imam who led the prayers and a Muezzin who recited the Azaan.

■ Concept of Ram birthplace treated as a juristic person was

SUPREME COURT'S OBSERVATIONS

Masjid from outer courtyard,

■ It is very difficult for the Uttar

Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board

to question the belief of the

Hindu community in Ram's

birthplace, given that even a

Muslim witness had attested

to the significance of Ayodhya

assumes significance.

for them.

Dhavan tears 'birthplace' map **ANANTHAKRISHNANG** NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

UNPRECEDENTED SCENES were

Drama in SC:

witnessed in the Supreme Court Wednesday, in the final hours of the Ayodhya hearings, when senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for the UP Sunni Central Waqf Board, tore a map provided by a Hindu party.

This happened following an argument between Dhavan and senior advocate Vikas Singh who was representing the All India Hindu Mahasabha. Singh wanted the court to take on record a book Ayodhya Revisited, authored by retired IPS officer Kunal Kishore. Dhavan objected, saying the book was not part of the records before the Allahabad HC and it was not open to the other side to produce fresh evidence. Following an argument, Singh agreed not to submit the book. But he asked the bench to look at a map which, he said, showed Ram's birthplace. He said this map was also part of the records before the HC.

This infuriated Dhavan who asked CJI Ranjan Gogoi if he could throw it away. The CJI said he could tear it if he so wished. Dhavan promptly tore the map into pieces, at which Singh said "yeah, shred it further". When there were more interruptions, the CJI said it would be impossible to continue and the bench would rise if the parties didn't behave.

During the post-lunch session, Dhavan told the bench: "There is a controversy that I tore papers in the court on my own... I think I asked if I can throw it away, and CJI told me I can tear it if I want. So I tore it".

The CJI had a smile when he replied: "Yes, you are right... you can say the CII told Mr Dhavan that if it's tearable, you can."

RAM JANMABHOOMI-BABRI MASJID DISPUTE

WHEN IT BEGAN



In Ayodhya, Wednesday. PTI

build a canopy outside the Babri Masjid 1949: Idols of Ramlalla placed under central dome 1959: Nirmohi Akhara

possession of the site

files suit seeking

1885: Faizabad district

Mahant Raghubir Das to

court rejects plea of

1981: UP Sunni Central Waqf Board files suit for

possession of the site

1986: Local court orders the government to open the site for Hindu worshippers

1989: Allahabad High Court orders maintenance of status quo at the site

DEC 6, 1992: Babri Masjid demolished

1993: 'Acquisition of Certain Area at Ayodhya Act' passed for acquiring land of the disputed area by the Centre

2002: High Court begins hearing on determining who owns the disputed site

2003: SC says no religious activity of any nature be allowed at the acquired land

2010: In a 2:1 majority, the High Court rules three-way division of the disputed area between Sunni Wagf Board. Nirmohi Akhara and Ramlalla

2011: SC stays High Court's verdict

2017: Supreme Court constitutes three-judge bench to hear pleas challenging the verdict of the Allahabad High Court SEP 27, 2018: SC declines to refer the case to a five-judge **Constitution bench**

DEC 24, 2018: SC decides to take up petitions for hearing on January 4, 2019

THIS YEAR



Outside SC.

five-judge Constitution Bench, headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi and comprising **Justices S A Bobde, N V** Ramana, UU Lalit and DY Chandrachud

JAN 8, 2019: SC sets up a

JAN 10: Justice U U Lalit recuses

IAN 25: SC reconstitutes 5-member Constitution Bench comprising CJI Ranjan Gogoi and Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S A Nazeer

JAN 29: Centre moves SC seeking permission to return the 67-acre acquired land around the disputed site to original owners

MAR 8: SC refers the dispute for mediation by a panel headed by former apex court judge FM I Kallifulla

APR 9: Nirmohi Akhara opposes Centre's plea to return acquired land around Ayodhya site to owners MAY 9: The three-member mediation committee

submits interim report to the SC

JUL 18: SC allows mediation process to continue, seeks outcome report by Aug 1

AUG 1: Report of mediation submitted in sealed cover to SC AUG 6: SC commences day-to-day hearing on the land

OCT 4: SC says it will wrap up hearing on October 17 OCT 16: SC concludes hearing; reserves order

Source: PTI

J&K govt revokes PSA against Shopian minor

Family had challenged detention under PSA in J&K HC

ADIL AKHZER SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 16

THE JAMMU and Kashmir government has informed the High Court that it has revoked the Public Safety Act (PSA) slapped against a minor from South Kashmir's Shopian district.

The boy's family had challenged his detention under the PSA in the I&K High Court. With this, the J&K government has revoked the PSA in all the four cases where the families had approached the High Court and said those detained were minors.

In its dossier on the boy, the Shopian Police had mentioned his age as "20 years". However, the judicial inquiry ordered by the J&K HC in September, concluded that he was 14 years old.

After submitting a habeas corpus petition, the boy's family members had submitted a school certificate stating that he was a minor.

On September 25, Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey had asked the Registrar Judicial, HC, to conduct an inquiry and "take such evidence as may be necessary to determine the age of applicant detenue". The court had said the inquiry should be completed within 10 days.

The report submitted by the Registrar Judicial said: "To sum up all the statements, especially of principal, Maktaba Islamia High School, paternal uncle and brother of the petitioner detenu, as well as the documents brought by the principal, Maktaba Islamia High School, Shopian, the age of petitioner detenu, as on 10.08.2019, comes to about 14 years, 04 months and 25 days."

The police had said that the boy "has close liaison and friendship with active militants". "You used to assist both these militants in letter and spirit... You not only indulge in stone-pelting but instigate others to follow suit. As such, you continuously, without rhyme or reason, turn youths to stone pelting," it had said while giving its grounds for detention. It had listed four cases against him — three registered in 2019, and one in 2018.

Denying that the boy was involved in stone-pelting, his family said he worked as a baker and was the only earning member. His sister said since they couldn't afford to travel to meet the boy, who

is lodged in a jail outside the Valley. Shopian SP Sandeep Chaudhary could not be con-

HC: Give legal aid if necessary

ADIL AKHZER

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 16

THE J&K High Court on Wednesday directed that legal aid should be provided, "wherever necessary", to those detained under the PSA.

A division bench of Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Rashid Ali Dar gave the direction while hearing a PIL filed by senior advocate Syed Tasaduque Hussain. Hussain said many detained under the PSA are from poor families and don't have the resources to engage a lawyer. He also said that many families could not travel to meet their relatives detained outside the state. He said the government should provide legal assistance in such cases.

Granting his plea, Chief Justice Gita Mittal issued directions that legal aid be provided to those detained "wherever necessary".

Hussain has also challenged the constitutional validity of the I&K PSA, and asked the court to scrap it. The case has been listed for November 6.



An Army jawan during the encounter, in Anantnag. ANI

Three LeT militants killed in Anantnag

ADIL AKHZER

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 16

THREE MILITANTS affiliated to the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) were killed during an operation by joint forces in South Kashmir's Anantnag district Wednesday.

and-search operation was launched at Pazalpora, Bijbehara in Anantnag. Around 5 am, militants fired at the security forces, triggering an encounter. Kashmir Police said on

Twitter that three militants were killed in the encounter. The slain militants were identified as Nasir Chadru, Aqib Hajam and Zahid Hussain.

"Affiliated with proscribed

terror outfit LeT. Involved in ter-

ror crimes as per police records. Arms and ammunition recovered. Case registered," police tweeted on Wednesday

evening.

J&K Police stated in a release on Wednesday that DGP Dilbag Singh visited Anantnag to commend the police personnel and Police officers said a cordonsecurity forces for the successful operation in Bijbehara.

> The operation was the first in South Kashmir after mobile phone services returned to the Valley. On October 8, two militants

of the LeT were killed in the first encounter between militants and security forces in south Kashmir since the Centre's decision to scrap J&K's special status on August 5.

women held during protest **BASHAARAT MASOOD**

SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 16

A DAY after they were arrested for trying to stage a silent sit-in in Srinagar to protest against the Centre's decision to revoke special status to Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K administration on Wednesday released 13 prominent women from the Valley, including the sister and daughter of Lok Sabha MP and former chief minister Farooq Abdullah.

After more than 30 hours in Srinagar's Central Jail, the activists were released after they signed a mandatory bond assuring that they would "not commit breach of peace".

"Yesterday they asked us to sign a bond to apologise (for the protest). We refused," said Muslim Jan, retired editor of Kashmir University students' newspaper who was among those arrested.

With Srinagar Central Jail running short of space, they were locked up in a room in the jail's new administrative block.

The arrested people included National Conference president Faroog Abdullah's sister Suraya and daughter Safiya Abdullah. Among the others arrested are Delhi-based activist and head of Centre for Dialogue and Reconciliation Sushoba Bharve, academic Hawa Bashir, who is

New Delhi



Faroog Abdullah's sister and daughter were among the 13 women who were arrested. Express file

wife of former Chief Justice of **I&K High Court Bashir Ahmad** Khan, and activist Qurat-ul-Ain.

Day after, J&K releases 13

The police did not register an FIR; they were arrested under Section 107 of CrPC for defying prohibitory orders under CrPC Section 144.

"We wanted to send out a message with this protest — that people of J&K are not happy with the abrogation of special status to the state — and we have been successful in sending that out," one of the women said.

In a statement issued at the time of their arrest, they had said that they are individuals from different fields and "disapprove of the unilateral decision taken by the government to revoke Article 370, 35A and downgrade and split the state of Jammu and Kashmir.... We feel betrayed, humiliated and violated as people..." Hawa Bashir's son, actor

Express earlier in the day in Mumbai that even though he was proud of his mother and his aunts, who were arrested, he was worried since they are old and frail. "At the same time, I know thousands of people are in a worse condition, or in a condition that we don't even know about. Their family members don't know where they have been taken. Compared to them, my mother comes from a privileged background.... So I can't say my mother is suffering (but) my mother is asthmatic, suffers from arthritis and both her knees were replaced. My elder aunt has cardiac ailment." He also said, "My mother had

Aamir Bashir, told *The Indian*

called me while she was being taken to the jail. When I expressed my concerns, she laughed it off."

WITH ENS, MUMBAI

epaper indianex ess.com

(hindustantimes.com) ndustanti THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2019 New Delhi/METRO ■Vol. XCV No. 248 ■ Price ₹5.00/with Hindustan ₹9.00 (₹7.50 in Faridabad)/with Mint ₹9.50 ■24 Pages +10 pages of HT City. Area specific pages extra

US PASSES BILLS BACKING HK PROTESTS, htworld p17 BJP USING GOVT

END OF ARGUMENTS

AYODHYA CJI says 'enough is enough' ■ Hearing concludes amid high drama ■ Order reserved

Bhadra Sinha

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court wrapped up a marathon, some times acrimonious 40-day hearing on the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masiid title suit on Wednesday by reserving its verdict, preparing the way for a judicial settlement of the decades-old dispute centred on 2.77 acres of land $in \, the \, ancient \, city \, of \, Ayodhya.$

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India (C.II) Ranjan Gogoj completed hearing the suit at 4pm, an hour earlier than the deadline set earlier in the day by Gogoi, who declined to accept an intervention application in the last leg of the case. A verdict will be delivered before the CJI retires on November 17.

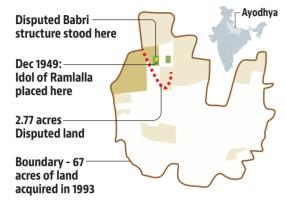
"By 5pm, this matter is going to be over. Enough is enough," said Gogoi, who heads the bench also comprising justices SA Bobde. DY Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and SA Nazeer.

Ahead of the verdict, the Uttar Pradesh state government strengthened security across the state and cancelled until November 30 the leave of all field officers. including the police and administration, posted in all 75 districts. additional chief secretary Mukul Singhal said in an order on Wednesday. A senior state government officer said the measures were taken in view of the Supreme Court's likely verdict on the Ayodhya land dispute as well as coming festivals.

The final day of hearing didn't lack for drama. Advocate Rajeev Dhavan, representing the Muslim parties, tore up a map showing the purported birthplace of Lord Ram, handed to him by a lawverfor the Hindu Mahasabha.

CLOSER TO JUDGMENT DAY

As hearing concludes, the Supreme Court may deliver its verdict in the Ayodhya case in November



0.313 acre The area on which the actual disputed

The total expanse of the disputed site, including the outer courtyard. The Allahabad high court ordered its trifurcation in 2010

DRAMATIC FINAL DAY

The advocate representing Muslim parties, Rajeev Dhavan, takes strong objection to Hindu Mahasabha introducing a map, purportedly showing the birthplace of Lord Ram, before the top court. The lawyer then tears the document in court after taking Chief Justice Gogoi's permission

THE CASE SO FAR

1992: Babri Masjid structure is demolished on December 6

1994: In the historic Ismail Faruqui case, SC says that a mosque is not integral to practising Islam 2010: Allahabad HC rules the

division of disputed area among

Sunni Waqf Board, Nirmohi Akhara **2011:** Top court stays HC verdict

2019

March - Supreme Court refers the matter for mediation to a panel headed by ex-SC judge FMI Kalifulla Aug - Mediation proceedings fail and five-judge Constitution bench begins hearing the dispute

Oct - SC reserves judgment in title dispute, closes arguments

Second longest oral hearings before Supreme Court bench

ensure communal harmony on ground LUCKNOW: The UP government has reinforced security across

State police told to

the state, cancelled the leave of all police and administrative officers on the field until November 30 and issued directions to district police chiefs to ensure communal harmony, officials said. Additional chief secretary Mukul Singhal said an order was issued on Wednesday against granting leave to field officers except in unavoidable circumstances. He cited the festival season for the cancellation of leave. An official, on condition of anonymity, said security has been strengthened also in view of the top court's expected verdict on the Ayodhya dispute.

1949, 1986, 1990, 1992... 2019 the newest landmark

Prashant Jha

has become

NEW DELHI: An Indian who is today 70 was not even born when a controversy first broke out in 1949 about the installation of the idol of Ram at the site. An Indian who is 33 was not even born when Rajiy Gandhi decided to open the locks of the site in 1986. And an Indian in his 20s would have little recollection of the frenzy that marked the demolition of the Babri Masiid in 1992, Yet, 1949, 1986, 1990, and 1992 are as relevant today in shaping what India

Capital air now 'very poor', may worsen further



Soumya Pillai and Vatsala Shrangi

NEW DELHI: Delhi's air slipped into the "very poor" category on Wednesday for the first time since July although the meteorological department said smoke from stubble burning in the northern states of Punjab and Harvana was not yet blowing into the city and NASA scientists reported fewer cases of farm fires in the region from September 25, when harvesting began in these states.

Experts blamed the dip in the capital's air quality mainly on local factors such as construction and road dust, and garbage burn**EXPERTS BLAMED** THE DIP IN AIR QUALITY MAINLY ON LOCAL **FACTORS SUCH AS**

CONSTRUCTION AND

ROAD DUST, AND

GARBAGE BURNING ing that need to be reined in

urgently. System for Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR)—the ministry of earth sciences' weather and air quality monitoring system —showed that only 5% of the PM 2.5 levels recorded in Delhi came from stubble burning emissions

on Wednesday, PM (particulate

matter) 2.5 is the most critical pol lutant in Delhi's air. It can pene trate deep inside the lungs and **CONTINUED ON P8**

PC arrested by ED in INX Media case

Neeraj Chauhan

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday arrested former Union minister F Chidambaram for suspected money laundering in the INX Media case after questioning him in Tihar jail, where he is in judicial custody on corruption charges brought by the CBI in the same case. The ED's officer told Chidambaram he was being held under the Prevention of Money



P Chidambaram

Laundering Act because ₹3 crore had been paid to his son Karti's companies by INX Media co-founder. Peter Mukeriea, at

his behest, said an official. »P11

Some parties open to compromise solution: Land for temple to save mosques elsewhere

HT Correspondent

NEW DELHI: Some parties from both the Hindu and Muslim sides, including one of the principallitigants, Sunni Central Waqf Board, on Wednesday told the Supreme Court through a mediation panel that they could agree to a settlement in which a temple would be built on the disputed site in lieu of certain safeguards for mosques across the country.

THE PARTIES HAVE PUT

FORTH 4 CONDITIONS, ONE OF WHICH IS THAT THE GOVT RENOVATE OTHER EXISTING MOSOUES IN AYODHYA

ter said on condition of anonymity that the proposal, submitted to the top court by the mediators retired SC judge justice FM

ram Panchu and spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar — effectively offers a possible road map for the court as it prepares to deliver a verdict in the decadeslong dispute.

According to the settlement proposed by the parties, the Sunni Central Waqf Board would be willing to give up its claim on the disputed 2.77-acre land if four conditions were met. First, the status quo of all religious sites in India be maintained as per how they existed at

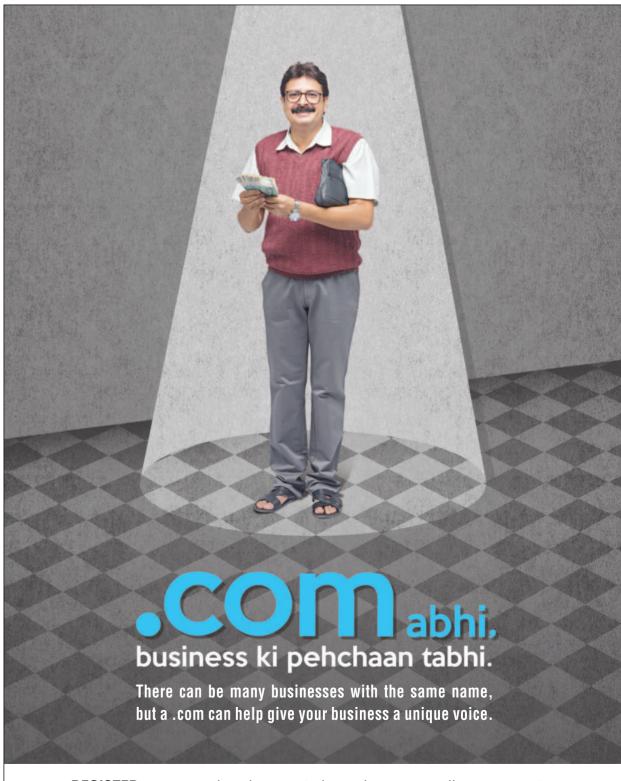
ond, other existing mosques in Ayodhya be renovated by the government. Third, the Waqf board be allowed to build a mosque at a suitable place other than the disputed site. And fourth, prayers be allowed at several mosques across the country where access is restricted due to norms set by the Archaeological Survey of India.

the time of Independence. Sec-

The people said that the settlement has been signed from the CONTINUED ON P7



Offer also available on other select models. To know more: © 1800 210 1000 | www.pureitwater.com



REGISTER your .com domain name today and use your online presence to:

REDIRECT YOUR DOMAIN NAME to your social media page, market place or directory listing of your business.

BUILD YOUR WEBSITE and get greater control, ownership and flexibility for your brand.

CREATE PROFESSIONAL EMAIL ADDRESS and give your business a polished appeal while communicating with your customers.

Visit dotcomabhi.com and get started!



Muslim parties ready to drop claim to Ayodhya land: Mediation panel

Nyas, Jamiat **Not Party To** Settlement

Dhananjay.Mahapatra

New Delhi: The court-appointed mediation panel on Wednesday informed the Supreme Court about achieving a groundbreaking settlement to the vexed dispute over the 2.77acre Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri

FULL COVERAGE: P 14

Masjid land in Ayodhya under which the Muslim parties have agreed to give up their claim on the land for the construction of the Ram temple.

Parties which signed the settlement were the Sunni waqf board, the Nirvani Akhara, a representative of Nir-

Hindu outfits offer land for harmony

Nirvani Akhara and Pudu-cherry's Aurobindo Ashram have written letters to the SC-appointed mediation panel offering large plots owned by them in Ayodhya for setting up a national institute for social harmony. Sources close to Akhara said Mahant Dharam Dass has offered a plot of 1 lakh squarefeet for the institute, while Aurobindo Ashram has offered a three-acre plot adjacent to the 2.77-acre disputed land.

mohi Ani (parent body of all eight Nirmohi Akharas), the Hindu Mahasabha and the Ram Janmasthan Punarudhar Samiti, sources told TOI.

The settlement, while seeking to facilitate a Ram temple, also seeks strict implementation of the 1991 law that lays

Implementation in letter and spirit of Places of Worship (Special Provision) Act, 1991. This act does not apply to Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masiid dispute

Muslims to give up claim. Government to take up repair and restoration of all mosques in Avodhva, UP Sunni waqf board to construct a mosque at an alternative site

to be opened up for worship to Muslims after a court-appointed committee hears the parties

ASI management

Select a few mosques under

Janmabhoomi Nyas and Ram

Lalla deity through next fri-

end (suit filed by the deity in-

cludes Nyas as one of the pla-

intiffs), and a faction of Jami-

at Ulema — did not participa

Air Quality and Weather Fo-

recasting and Research (SA-

FAR) said Delhi's air quality

was likely to remain un-

changed or deteriorate mar-

ginally over the next two da-

ys. It attributed the dip in air

quality to slow winds that we-

re preventing pollutants from

dispersing. It said the contri-

bution from stubble-burning

in neighbouring states was

te in the negotiations.

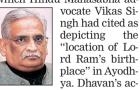
SC RESERVES VERDICT, JUDGMENT BY NOV 17, P 14 SUNNI WAQF BOARD DENIES WITHDRAWING APPEAL, P 14

down status quo for all places of worship that existed on August 15, 1947, repair of all other mosques in Ayodhya and, importantly, construction of a mosque at an alternative site by the waqf board.

However, two main stake holders — VHP-backed Ram ▶Difficult to oppose, P 14

Dhavan tears up map of Ram's 'birthplace'

eserving his best theatrics for the final day of the hearing, Muslim party counsel Rajeev Dhavan tore up a map which Hindu Mahasabha ad-



tion came after Singh told the CJI he wasn't relying on the map as evidence following which the CJI told Dhavan, who was doubting its veracity, "Since the Hindu party isn't relying on it and if you find it irrelevant, you can tear it off."

Dhavan took him literally. P14 **PSBs** to bring

tate-run banks are set to) implement doorstep bandoorstep banking was prescservice for all customers. of all PSBs seeking private

labourer shot dead in Valley **Show us administrative orders** Panic-Stricken for placing curbs, SC tells J&K Truckers Flee

imposing restric-

tions in the state after the

withdrawal of its special sta-

tus. Solicitor general Tushar

Mehta assured that the ad-

ministrative orders would

be placed before the court

but said they could not be

shown to the petitioners as it

The bench also asked the

ormer CM Farooq Abdul-

lah's younger sister, Su-

raya Abdullah Matoo, and

his daughter Safiya Abdul-

lah Khan were released on

Wednesday evening from

the Srinagar central jail after signing a bond with the

executive magistrate that

they would not attempt to

disrupt the peace in future,

official sources said. P18

involves national security.

Punjab apple trader, migrant

Shopian: An apple trader from Punjab and a brick kiln worker from Chhattisgarh were shot dead in separate attacks by terrorists in J&K on Wednesday, taking the number of civilian killings to three in as many days and sending a frisson of alarm that resulted in a procession of outstation trucks fleeing the Valley without picking up their fruit consignments.

The latest victims in the resurgence of terror attacks since Monday were Punjabbased Charanjeet Singh, who was killed during a business trip to Trenz in Shopian district, and Sethi Kumar Sagar, a resident of Besoli in Chhattisgarh employed in a brick kiln in Pulwama. Sanjeev Singh, who was accompanying Charanjeet, was critically injured in the attack.

▶Life is important, P 18

he SC directed the J&K state why it has not filed a readministration on Wedply on a plea by the wife of an NRI businessman challengnesday to place before it all

ing his detention, saying

that it is a serious matter re-

►Indian envoy updates US panel on K-roadmap, P 18

lating to "personal liberty". Mehta said the affidavit is ready and will soon be filed. The apex court posted the matter for further hearing on October 24. **P18**

Faroog's sister. **Soura unrest** mastermind held daughter freed

&K police on Wednesday arrested Hyat Ahmad Bh at, believed to be the brain behind the unrest in Soura on the outskirts of Srinagar soon after the state's special status was withdrawn in August. Police said Bhat was "instrumental" in mobilising miscreants in and around Jenab Sahib Soura on Srinagar-Leh highway. P18

SC to hear plea on PMC Bank

The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a petition seeking directions to protect the interests of 15 lakh customers whose money is blocked in the beleaguered PMC Bank and posted the hearing on October 18. P13

Pak to remain on FATF grey list

inancial Action Task Force, the terror financing watchdog, has decided that Pakistan will remain on its grey list for the next four months and told it to check terror financing. P18

Can't let online Jane Doe play judge: HC

ases where persons don't identify themselves but put out sexual harassment allegations online may need the court's intervention since the anonymous accuser becomes a judge and decides the guilt of the other person while the accused doesn't even get a chance to defend himself, the Delhi HC has ruled, reports Abhinav Garg. "...In such cases, suits have been entertained and ex parte orders issued to sites for taking down impugned content and disclose particulars of the uploader," it said. P12

City suffers season's lst 'very poor' air day

Times News Network

New Delhi: Delhiites suffered the first "very poor" air day of the season on Wednesday, with the city's average air quality index touching 304, a clear deterioration from the AQI of 270 (in "poor" zone) recorded on Tuesday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board readings. Most of the 37 air quality

monitoring stations in Delhi recorded AQI in the "very poor" category even as satellite pictures showed the region under a haze of pollution. The Centre-run System of

low at this time. However, the Delhi government said the foul air was largely because of crop burning taking place in Punjab and Haryana.

▶Quality may worsen, P 4

services to your doorstep

king for millions of consumers, including the facility to deposit and withdraw cash, making life easier for senior citizens and disabled, reports Sidhartha. While ribed by the RBI a few years ago, PSBs have come together to appoint a common service provider to handle the UCO Bank has floated a 'Request for Proposal' on behalf players to run the facility. P23

8-day rule for whisky, vodka puts city resto-bars in a fix

Amin Ali & Atul Mathur | TNN

New Delhi: Resto-bars in the capital are crying foul over a new excise department order that says the contents of vodka and whisky bottles in the premium price range can only be sold within eight days of being opened and any unsold portion has to be disposed of.

The order, which came in-

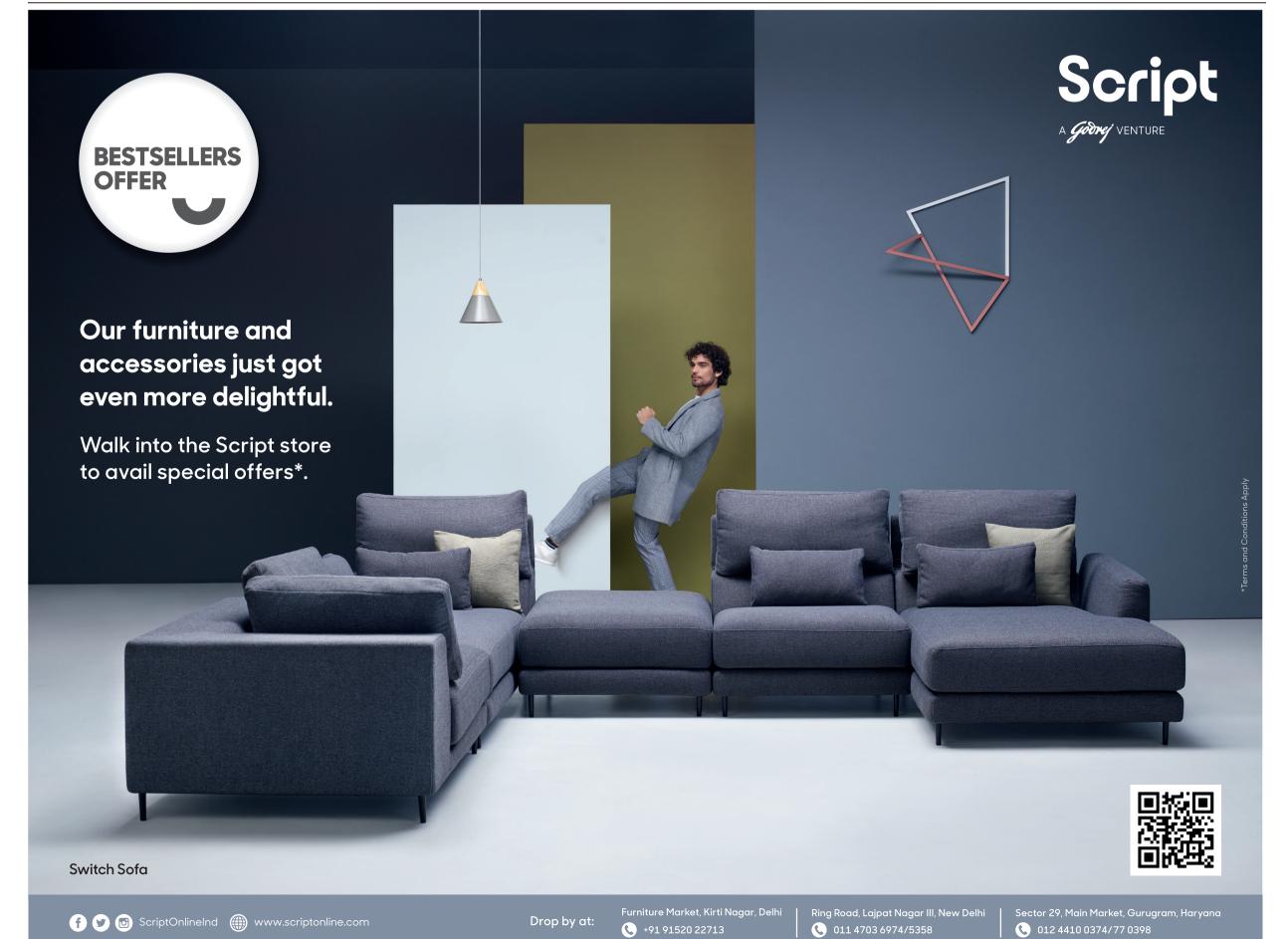
to effect from October 1 with the aim of checking mixing of liquor and preventing serving of diluted or spurious alcohol, has made restaurants rethink their stock orders. The "time limit rule' applies to sparkling wines, champagne as well as imported vodka and whisky priced in the range of Rs 1,501 to Rs 4.500 (750 ml).

A restaurateur said eve-

ry bottle they open now will be with a prayer that it sells within the time limit to avoid losses. The restaurateur said he had to flush away most of the contents of two bottles each of three popular whisky brands this month.

Hotels with 4 star or higher ratings have been exempted from the rule.

► Top brands off menu? P 7



Countdown To Verdict In Ayodhya Case Begins

SC Reserves Order After 40-Day Marathon Arguments | In latest theatrics, Dhavan

@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday reserved verdict on cross-appeals by Hindu and Muslim parties litigating for last 70 years claiming ownership over 2.77 acre disputed Ram Janmabhumi-Babri Masjid land, and who have refused to accept the Allahabad high court's 2010 judgement dividing the land equally among Ram Lalla, Nirmohi Akhara and UP Sunni Wakf Board.

A bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices Sharad Arvind Bobde, Dhananjay Yeshwant Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and S Abdul Nazeer will have time till November 17 to deliver the verdict based on the 40-day long arguments by both sides which commenced on August 6 and spanned two months and 11 days. CJI Gogoi is scheduled to retire on November 17.

After reserving the judge ment, all five judges decided to take up chamber matters and not regular hearings.

After promising each party that "no party's arguments would be curtailed" on August 6, the bench lived up to the promise and patiently heard submissions of counsel. The Hindu parties were K Parasaran, CS Vaidyanathan, PN Mishra, Ranjit Kumar, Sushil Jain, P S Narasimha, Vikas Singh and Joydeep Gupta, PV Yogeswaran and the Muslim side Rajeev Dhavan, Zafaryab Jilani, Ejaz Maqbool, Akriti Chaubey and Mohammed Ni-

The Supreme Court asked the parties to file by Saturday written submissions on how it could mould relief granted by the high court, which on September 30, 2010 divided the disputed land into three equal parts and allotted the part under central dome to Ram Lalla (the deity); Chabutara, Sita Rasoi and Bhandara part of the mosque to Nirmohi Akhara and the rest, including the land on which the two domes stood, to Sunni Wakf Board.

The common thread of arguments by Hindu parties was the community's faith

Yusra.Husain@timesgroup.com

sed on Wednesday reports

which claimed it had agreed

to withdraw its appeal in the

TOI, Sunni waqf board chair-

person Zufar Farooqi said

there was "no truth" in the re-

ports, which started doing the

rounds on Wednesday morn-

ing even as the Supreme

Court continued to hear clos-

handed over an affidavit to

the mediation panel in this

regard, Farooqi said since the

apex court has directed all

parties to maintain confiden-

tiality with regard to their

communication with the

mediation panel, he would

provide an "update" only af-

ter the SC allowed the parties

to make public their interac-

garding withdrawal of ap-

peals by the board. However,

there is a confidentiality or-

der of the SC regarding

mediation. (We) will update

you once it is lifted," Farooqi

told TOI. The UP Sunni Cen-

tral Waqf Board is a key liti-

"No truth in reports re-

tions with the mediators.

On reports that he had

ing statements in the case.

Speaking exclusively to

Ayodhya case.

A 70-YEAR-OLD LITIGATION IN COURTS

1885 | Mahant Raghubir Das files plea in Faizabad district court seeking permission to build a canopy outside the disputed structure. Court rejects the plea

1949 | Idols of Ram Lalla placed under central dome outside the disputed structure

1950 | Gopal Simla Visharad files suit in Faizabad district court for rights to worship the idols of Ram Lalla

Paramahansa Ramachandra Das files suit for continuation of worship and keeping the idols

1959 | Nirmohi Akhara files suit seeking possession of the site

1981 | UP Sunni Central Wagf Board files suit for **possession** of the site

Feb 1, 1986 | Local court orders the government to open the site for Hindu worshippers

Aug 14, 1989 | Allahabad HC orders maintenance of status quo in respect of the disputed structure

Dec 6, 1992 | Babri Masjid

and belief since time imme-

morial that the place under

the central dome of the

mosque, demolished by Kar

Sevaks on December 6, 1992,

was Lord Ram's birth place

and that Hindus worshipped

it since time immemorial,

continuing to do so despite

Babur demolishing the Ram

temple and constructing a

lied heavily on Archaeologi-

cal Survey of India's excava-

tion report which opined that

a huge structure resembling

the temples of northern In-

dia was buried beneath the

disputed structure. They also

relied on events since 1934,

when a rioting mob had dam-

Litigants barred

from TV debates

and order in the district

Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi

administration on Wednesday

inviting litigants in the case for

administration had banned TV

debates on the case at public

places in the temple town. The

district administration has

issued an application form,

which TV channels will have

programmes in Ayodhya.

application form states

confirmed to TOI that

in Ayodhya case". TNN

The third point of the

be called". Murli Dhar Singh,

deputy information officer,

to sign before hosting debate

fitigants of the dispute will not

"litigants" referred to "litigants

gant in the title suit since the

Muslim litigants in the case

have been claiming owner-

ship of the disputed land in

waqf board withdrawing its

appeal went viral on social

media on Wednesday.

Reports of the Sunni

Ayodhya under the board.

barred news channels from

debates. On Tuesday, the

verdict, the Ayodhya

ahead of Babri

n another step to ensure law

The Hindu parties also re-

mosque over it.

Didn't drop appeal:

Sunni Waqf Board



Apr 3. 1993 | 'Acquisition of Certain Area at Ayodhya Act' passed for acquiring land by Centre

in the disputed area Various writ petitions, including one by Ismail Faruqui, filed in Allahabad HC

challenging various

aspects of the Act SC exercising its jurisdiction under **Article 139A transferred** the writ petitions. which were pending in

mosque, to argue that Mus-

lims had abandoned it and no

prayer was offered there

that what stood at the disput-

ed site till 1992 was a mosque,

which was built by Mughal

emperor Babur in 1528. They

relied on British documents

to claim that Babur had fixed

grants for upkeep of the

mosque, which were contin-

ued by Nawabs of Awadh and

by British government itself.

reptitiously placed idols un-

der the central dome in the in-

tervening night of December

22-23, 1949, to desecrate the

mosque and thereafter pre-

vented Muslims from offer-

he sources said since the

agreed to give up their

 $claim \, on \, the \, disputed \, land \, and \,$

agreed to allow the construc-

tion of Ram temple, the Nyas

would find it difficult not to ac-

cept this settlement as this is

the best they could get from

the Supreme Court if it de-

had ordered the UP govern-

ment to provide adequate secu-

rity to Sunni waqf board chair-

man Zufar Ahmed Farooqi on

being informed by one of the

SC-appointed mediators, Sri-

ram Panchu, that Farooqi has

received a threat to his life. The

Implementation in letter

and spirit of Places of Worship

(Special Provision) Act, 1991,

which prohibits conversion of

any place of worship and to

provide for maintenance of the

religious character of any

place of worship as it existed

on August 15, 1947, and for mat-

ters connected therewith or in-

cidental thereto. This act does

not apply to the Ramjanmab-

■ Muslims to give up claim on

the disputed 2.77-acre land in

Ayodhya. The government to

hoomi-Babri Masjid dispute.

points of settlement are:

Just two days back, the SC

cides to rule in their favour.

'Even Jamiat would

find it hard to oppose'

They argued Hindus sur-

Muslim parties argued

the high court

Oct 24, 1994 | SC says in historic Ismail Faruqui case that mosque was not integral to Islam

Apr, 2002 | HC begins hearing on determining who owns the disputed site

Sep 30, 2010 | In a 2:1 majority, HC rules three-way division of disputed area between Sunni Waqf Board, the Nirmohi Akhara and Ram Lalla

May 9, 2011 | SC stays HC verdict on Ayodhya land dispute

Mar 21, 2017 | CJI JS Khehar suggests outof-court settlement among rival parties

Aug 7 | SC constitutes three-judge bench to hear pleas challenging 1994 verdict of the Allahabad HC

with a pinch of salt.

which was last offered on De

cember 16, 1949. They trashed

ASI's excavation report say-

ing it was mere opinion with

little expertise and argued

the court should consider it

Nirmohi Akhara ap-

peared to break ranks with

Hindu parties to claim man-

agement rights over the dis-

puted land. It claimed to be

undisputed sole shebait of

Ram Lalla since yore. It said

only the "shebait" could rep-

resent the deity and not the

"next friend" to lodge right

over management of the dis-

puted land. Nirvani Akhara

joined issue with Nirmohi Akhara and claimed shebait

take up repair and restoration

in Ayodhya. UP Sunni waqf

■ Select a few mosques under

the Archaeological Survey of

India management to be

opened up for worship to Mus-

lims after a court-appointed

committee hears the parties

and chooses the mosques to be

Some of those who partici-

opened for worship purposes.

pated in the negotiation proc-

ess, which was restarted on

September 18 by the SC-ap-

pointed panel of Justice FMI

Kalifulla, ace mediator and se-

nior advocate Panchu and spir-

itual leader Sri Sri Ravishan-

kar, told TOI that even the Ja-

miat faction would find it diffi-

even if the SC decides in fa-

vour of the Muslim parties, it

will be the Sunni waqf board

which would be entitled to the

disputed land. Under Section

51 of the Waqf Act, the waqf

board being the sole statutory

body can consent to acquisi-

tion of the land under its con-

trol. "So, the waqf board, even

if the Muslim parties emerge

victorious, would be able to

give up claim on the disputed

land," they said.

Their argument was that

cult to oppose the settlement.

an alternative site.

Feb 8, 2018 | SC starts hearing the civil appeals

Sep 27 | SC declines to refer the case to a five-judge Constitution bench. Case to be heard by a newly constituted three-judge bench on October 29

Jan 8, 2019 | SC sets up a five-judge Constitution Bench to hear the case headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi. SC reconstitutes bench after Justice UU Lalit recuses

Jan 29 | Centre moves SC seeking permission to return the 67-acre acquired land around the disputed site to original owners

Feb 26 | SC favours mediation, fixes Mar 5 for order on whether to refer matter to court-appointed mediator

Mar 8 | SC refers the dispute for mediation by a panel headed by former apex court judge F M I Kallifulla

Aug 1 | Report of mediation submitted in sealed cover

Aug 6 | SC commences dayto-day hearing on the land dispute

Oct 16 | SC concludes hearing; reserves order

counsel M C Dhingra had created a flutter by saying it was the real owner of the mosque and that it was ready to give the disputed land to the Hindus for building a Ram temple. But, the Sunni Wakf Board termed the offer hollow saying Shias claim of ownership over the mosque was dismissed by courts

tive and religious issue saw tempers run high off and on during the 40-day-long arguments, but the five-judge bench managed to keep the proceedings under control by holding on to their patience and not interrupting repeated reiteration of arguments

rights over the idol.

more than 70 years ago. Arguments on the emo-

Wednesday issued orders, announcing that no administration and police officials on 'field duty' in districts will be granted any leave till November 30 in wake of festive season'. The order said leaves of officials posted in field won't be sanctioned except under

VHP stalls 'Trishul

As the SC reserved its verdict in Ayodhya title suit on Wednesday, Vishwa Hindu Parishad decided to stall its 'Trishul Deeksha' programme, keeping in mind that it might send a wrong message about the Hindu community. In 'Trishul Deeksha', cadres are trained in using tridents. Pankaj Shah | TNN

Temple construction from Dec 6: Sakshi

s the hearing in the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masiid land dispute case concluded in the Supreme Court on Wednesday, Unnao BJP MP Sakshi Maharai said that Ram temple construction would begin in Ayodhya from December 6 to coincide with the date of Babri demolition. TNN

No leave for UP cops,

officials till Nov 30 The UP government on

Deeksha' programme

shreds 'Ram birthplace' map

@timesgroup.com

picting the "exact location of Lord Ram's birthplace" at the disputed site in Ayodhya.

Appearing for Hindu Mahasabha, senior advocate Vikas Singh was showing a map claiming to locate where Lord Ram is believed to have been born at the disputed site in Ayodhya. But, he ran into stiff resistance from Dhavan who doubted its veracity and the five-judge bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi appeared to sustain his objection.

Singh clarified he is not relying on the map as evidence, but Dhavan continued to raise his voice. The CJI told Dhavan: "Since the Hindu party is not relying on the map, and if you (Dhavan) find it irrelevant, then you can tear it off." As if acting on the cue, the 73-yearold senior advocate dramatically tore the map to pieces to the surprise advocates who were present in good number in the CJI's courtroom.

Theatrics and brow-beating of the opponent's counsel, and even judges, is not new to Dhavan. If in Sahara case judgement of May 6, 2014, the SC adversely commented on his boisterous arguments intended to discomfit judges, the fivejudge bench of CJI Gogoi and



(Front row from left) Advocates Ejaz Magbool, K Parasaran and Rajeev Dhavan, who represented the two sides in the Ayodhya case, outside the SC after completion of arguments on Wednesday

Justices S A Bobde, D Y Chandrachud, Ashok Bhushan and Abdul Nazeer had a first hand experience during the 40-day arguments in the case.

On the very first day of commencement of arguments on August 6, the CJI promised that each party will get adequate time to make their submissions. Dhavan replied, "I hope so." An irked CJI asked, "Do you doubt?" Dhavan said, "Yes, some."CJI had asked him not to forget that he was an officer of the court who should keep the dignity of court in mind.

Few days into the hearing, Justice Bhushan asked certain questions when Dhavan was arguing. Disliking the questioning, Dhavan stumped the judges by asking, "Do I feel aggression in the tone?" The judges and counsel for Hindu parties made known their displeasure with Dhavan for accusing the judge of being aggressive when he had put a question to him.

At another time, Dhavan disliked the questions being put to him on the claim of Muslim parties for ownership over the disputed site. He hinted bias. The bench had actually been putting questions to the Hindu parties right through the hearing. It did so the very next day; ie on Tuesday when, after directing a number of posers at K Parasaran, the CJI turned to Dhavan and asked, "Are we putting enough questions to them?"

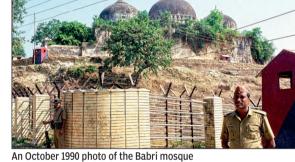
But Dhavan had clearly reserved his best theatrics for the final day when he tore up the map in the morning session. In the afternoon session, he told the court that he spoke to a reporter who disputed his claim that the CJI had given him the go-ahead to tear the map, "The CJI said 'you find it irrelevant, then you can tear it off' and that is precisely what I said. I tore it with permission

It's conclusive proof of exact birthplace: Creator of map

Mumbai: The man who prepared a pictorial map showing the Ram Janmasthan, ex-IPS officer Kishore Kunal, isn't surprised that lawyer Rajeev Dhavan, representing Muslim petitioners in the Ayodhya title suit, angrily tore off the page depicting its contours before the five-judge Constitution bench. "As a lawyer Dhavan knows if the map is handed over to the court, he'd lose the case," Kishore told **TOI**.

Kishore, who as officer on special duty in the home ministry in 1989-1990 facilitated and coordinated negotiations on Ayodhya between the Hindu and Muslim sides under the premierships of VP Singh and Chandra Shekhar, stated his confidence stemmed from the fact that the map, published in his 2016 book 'Ayodhya Revisited', is "conclusive proof" about the exact spot at which Ram was born. All along, he said, the argument of those opposing the temple has been that the Hindu claim about Ram's birthplace was based on "belief or imagination that Ram was born there' and that the Allahabad high court in its 2010 verdict too had stressed on this "belief".

Five pieces of evidence were used by him to prepare the map, "which fits to scale", with the help of architects, Kishore said. The first was a police complaint filed in 1858 by Babri Masjid's muezzin, Syyed Mohammed Khatib, when a team of 25 Sikhs from Punjab tried to capture the masjid. The complaint, Kishore said, noted that "in the middle of the mosque is the nishaan (marker) of janmasthan, which Hindus wor-



shipped for centuries".

The second piece was the Latin account of an Austrian Jesuit priest, Joseph Tieffenthaler, who visited the Awadh region circa 1760. According to Kishore, Tieffenthaler described the "koti and kasauti pillars", two of 12 retained from the original structure "to support the mosque's interior arcades", and wrote that on the left of these two pillars "at the entrance" stood a square called the "Bedi (cradle)" by the Hindus because "this was where Vishnu took incarnation as Ram". The priest provided exact specifications of the "square box", Kishore said: its borders made of lime, it was "18 ft 9 inches in length, 15ft in width and 5ft in height". The ex-official has in his

book also quoted Tieffenthaler's work to profess the theory that the Ram temple was destroyed neither by Babur nor by his general Mir Baqi in 1528 but by Aurangzeb in 1660. Kishore said the Austrian priest had stated that "though Aurangzeb had demolished the place to deprive Hindus of their faith, they still came there, did parikrama (circumambulation) and prostrated on the floor". The fourth source used to delineate contours of the map was Faizabad assist-

ant commissioner P Carnegy's description in the 1870s which said "the janmasthan is near Sita rasoi", and the fifth was Francis Buchanan's 1813-14 survey of the area Kishore, at the same time,

disputed the claim of historian D N Jha that he and three other historians who had visited Ayodhya and prepared a report were independent historians. He said the four historians — Jha, R S Sharma, Suraj Bhan and Athar Ali — were nominees of the All-India Babri Masjid Action Committee when he, as officer on special duty, had asked both sides to the dispute to give a list of 10 experts who could produce documents and speak during negotiations. The SC in September this year refused to give credence to the historians' report and called it "mere opinion". Kishore termed their report as "one-sided" and added it had "found fault only with Hindu documents and not commented on the AIBMAC's claims".

"There are a lot of documents on the Janmabhoomi which haven't been explored. Those that I referred to are part of the India Office records in the British Library, London, the Baroda Oriental Research Institute and the Benaras library," he said.

Kartarpur MoU set to be finalised | Mortality from severe malnutrition at just 1.2%: Study on Oct 19; Pak drags feet on bridge

Bharti.Jain@timesgroup.com

Dera Baba Nanak, Gur**daspur:** Barely three weeks before Kartarpur corridor connecting this part of Punjab and Kartarpur Sahib in Narowal, Pakistan is opened to pilgrims, the missing Pakistani side of the connecting bridge—that stands completed as an all-weather road on Indian side—arrests one's attention. In fact, devotees wishing to visit the gurudwara where Guru Nanak Dev spent the last 18 years of his life, must make do with an alternative, supposedly a makeshift slip road on one side of the bridge, as Pakistan remains non-committal on the time-frame for completing its

For now, the pilgrims will take the Indian road to the zeroline, before boarding vehicles arranged by Pakistan to cover the rest of the distance to the passenger terminal complex on its side. Land Ports Authority of India chairman Govind Mohan on Wednesday claimed the Indian side of Kartarpur corridor was 80% complete and would be handed over to LPAI on October 31.

The Indian side of 4.2-km Kartarpur corridor is set to be inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on November 8 ahead of 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Devji. The first group of pilgrims (Jatha) will visit Kartarpur Sahib thereistering online for the darshan from October 20.

'The online system of registration is expected to commence on October 20, after the memorandum of understanding is signed between the sides," said Mohan. The memorandum of understanding on Kartarpur corridor is expected to be finalised on October 19.

Mohan said negotiations are underway with Islamabad on the \$20 service fee it insists on charging pilgrims for 'darshan' at Kartarpur Sahib. Government sources said even if Pakistan remains adamant on levying the fee, it will end up being the one seen in poor light.

Rema.Nagarajan @timesgroup.com

ortality from severe acute malnutrition ▲(SAM) might be just 1.2%, much lower than the 10-20% estimated by the World Health Organisation based on older studies largely done in Africa, a study of two tribal districts in Jharkhand and Odisha has found. The findings strengthen the case for prioritising prevention through known health, nutrition, and multisectoral interventions in the first 1,000 days of life and raise doubts on a strategy based on combatting

The study done in two poor, rural tribal districts of Jharkhand and Odisha with high levels of child undernu-

SAM through ready to use

therapeutic food (RUTF).

trition included over 2,600 6month old children and $tracked\,them\,for\,18\,months.$ The study authors sug-

gested that one of the reasons for low mortality among the SAM-affected children could be because the children studied were six months old while the heaviest toll on children was in the first six months of life, before treatment with RUTF became relevant. In the trial area, 64% of all infant deaths occurred in the first month of life and 86% in the first six months.

This is in keeping with the overall trend in India, where neonatal deaths constitute 58% of under-5 child deaths and neonatal deaths are mostly caused by pre-maturity or low birth weight, noted the study. Pre-maturity and low birth weight reflect chronic

undernutrition over generations inflicted by poverty. One of the authors, Dr

HPS Sachdev, told TOI that there were multiple attempts to portray SAM as an acute emergency situation and to show that afflicted children will either die or never recover unless "magic therapeutic food" (RUTF or peanut butter

MUCH LOWER THAN BELIEVED

composed food) is provided. We have busted this myth through two published studies, including the current one, that clearly show that without any proeven gramme for communitybased management of acute malnutrition, mortality in SAM is very low (1.2%-2.7%) over six months to one-year

period, and that spontaneous recovery occurs in a substantial proportion," said Dr Sachdev, adding that current Indian evidence indicated that "the scare-mongering and hysteria" around SAM was unwarranted. "I may be having an extreme paranoid view, but the repeated advocacy for RUTF convinces me of attempts at commercialisation of development misery rather than saving of starving kids," said Dr Sachdev.

Dr Sachdev pointed out that after 32 weeks of starting RUTF, the recovery rates in the current study without any community-based management were broadly comparable to the rates seen in an earlier trial, which found augmented homemade food as good as RUTF. He explained that there was also

the cost argument against a scaled-up use of RUTF as ball park figures suggest the budget needed for it would be equivalent to the entire POSHAN (the government's nutrition scheme) budget. Dr Sachdev said while

helping severely undernourished children was an imperative, regional home-based food, nutrition counselling, care for illnesses and preventive actions including safe water and sanitation should be a greater priority than focusing on product-based solutions. Prevention Can Work—a recent intervention combining crèches, participatory meetings with women's groups and home visits reduced wasting, underweight, and stunting among children under 3 in Jharkhand and Odisha.