



NORTH

HC denies maternity leave to govt staff in case of third child

Nainital: The Uttarakhand High Court has passed an order denying maternity leave to women in government jobs for their third child. In an order dated September 17, Chief Justice Ramesh Rangnathan and Justice Alok Kumar Verma of the high court quashed an earlier order by a single bench. The

double bench overruled the order accepting the contention of the state government. The single bench order was delivered on a PIL filed by Haldwani-based nurse Urmila Masih challenging a government rule denying maternity leave to women employees of the state for their third child. **PTI**



Mongolia President Khaltmaagiin Battulga being received by Minister of State Kiren Rijiju on his arrival in New Delhi on Thursday. **PTI**

EAST

Man sentenced to death for raping, killing 6-yr-old girl

Cuttack: A 26-year-old man was sentenced to death by a special court here on Thursday for raping and killing a six-year-old girl in Cuttack district in 2018. Additional District and special POC SO court Judge Vandana Kar sentenced Mohammad Mustaq to capital punishment after convicting him under section 302

(murder) and other sections of the IPC and section 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, Special Public Prosecutor A K Nayaksaid. The girl was found in a critical condition with deep injuries in the evening of April 21, 2018. Mustaq was arrested a day after the girl was found. **PTI**

WEST

Bail plea of man who ‘tried to join IS’ in Syria dismissed

Mumbai: A special court on Thursday rejected the bail application of Areeb Majeed, who is facing trial for allegedly travelling to Iraq and Syria to join the Islamic State (IS). Majeed, who has been behind bars since November 2014, sought bail for the third time, on grounds including the recent amendment to the UAPA Act. Majeed had claimed that

prior to the amendment, the NIA did not have the jurisdiction to investigate an offence which took place allegedly in Iraq and Syria. Majeed also claimed that his return was ‘facilitated’ by the NIA and that he had not sneaked into the country, as claimed by the agency. Meanwhile, a witness was declared hostile during recording of evidence. **ENS**

SOUTH

Karnataka woman given triple talaq over WhatsApp

Bengaluru: A Muslim woman from Shivamogga has approached the police accusing her husband of giving her triple talaq from Dubai over WhatsApp. The couple had been married for about 20 years, and the husband had left for Sharjah-Dubai in January, police said. The man is said to have repeatedly

picked up a quarrel with her, and gave her talaq in August, they said. A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019, and under section 498A (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty) of the IPC. **PTI**



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh waves before flying a sortie on the LCA Tejas at HAL, Bengaluru, on Thursday. **ANI**

‘Thrilling, special’: Rajnath first Defence Minister to fly Tejas

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

RAJNATH SINGH became the first Defence Minister to fly in the indigenously built Tejas fighter aircraft on Thursday. The 30-minute sortie in the multi-role Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), from HAL airport in Bengaluru, was piloted by Air Vice-Marshals Narmadeshwar Tiwari.

“Thrilling and special” is how Singh described his experience of flying the fourth-generation aircraft. He congratulated Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Aeronautical

Development Agency (ADA) for building the aircraft.

Many countries have shown an interest in Tejas, the minister said, adding that he was proud that India had achieved a level where fighter jets and other defence equipment can be exported.

Air Vice-Marshals Tiwari said that Singh, who had been briefed about Tejas by senior officers of the Air Force, controlled the aircraft for some time during the flight and was “very happy with the quality and smoothness of the aircraft”.

Later in the day, Singh addressed DRDO members at the Centre for Airborne Systems and reiterated that flying the indige-

nously-developed Tejas was a proud and memorable moment for him. Encouraging the efforts of scientists and technicians in the development of indigenous defence systems, Singh mentioned the successes of the AS-TRA missile, the LCA Tejas and the successful utilisation of NE-TRA in Balakot, stating that these had restored the confidence of the country in DRDO.

Domestic content in defence manufacturing industry will reach 75 per cent by 2030, he added. At another event in Bengaluru, Singh emphasised the importance of R&D, innovation and creation of cutting-edge technologies to become self-reliant in defence production.

Inaugurating the seventh edition of Engineers Conclave 2019 based on themes of ‘Defence Technology & Innovation’ and ‘Transformation of Rural India Using Digital Technologies’, Singh said the Indian defence industry had not reached its full potential in the past and this led to overwhelming dependence on imported arms.

“It is well said that when nations go to war, the one with the best technology is most likely to win,” said Singh, adding that developing critical and cutting-edge technologies indigenously will make the country self-sufficient, thus saving foreign exchange which could be utilised for other development activities.

SHIVAKUMAR BAIL PLEA

By paying tax, tainted property can’t become untainted: ED

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate told a Delhi court that it was irrelevant that Karnataka Congress leader D K Shivakumar has disclosed his income to the I-T department, and just the fact that he paid taxes does not “make tainted property untainted”.

The ED was opposing Shivakumar’s bail application in connection with a money-laundering case. The arguments remained inconclusive and will recommence on Saturday.

Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for the ED, said, “The declaration of property made by him is irrelevant. The question is how he acquired it. Even if he pays tax on it, it still remains tainted. By just paying tax, tainted property cannot be turned into untainted,” he said.

“He says he is an agriculturist. Rs 1.38 crore from agricultural income is projected by him in the last 20 years. Entire property is Rs 800 crore. Saying Rs 1.38 crore was invested and became Rs 800 crore is unbelievable... when you sow paddy, you don’t get gold.”

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

AIR MARSHAL Rakesh Kumar Singh Bhadauria will become the next Chief of Air Staff, it was announced on Thursday.

Air Marshal Bhadauria, who became Vice Chief of Air Staff in May this year, will take charge on September 30 when incumbent Air Chief Marshal B S Dhanoa retires.

The government has decided to go with the senior-most officer in succession, as has been the general convention, unlike in selecting General Bipin Rawat as the Army chief in 2017 and Admiral Karambir Singh as Navy chief earlier this year, both of whom had superseded their seniors.

Air Marshal Bhadauria and Air Chief Marshal Dhanoa were to retire together on September 30. But with his elevation, Air Marshal Bhadauria will now retire on September 30, 2021. Chiefs of the three services retire either after serving as chief for three years, or on attaining the age of 62, whichever is earlier.

This is not the first instance when both the chief and the vice-chief were to retire on the same day and the vice-chief



Air Marshal Bhadauria was a chief test pilot for Tejas and is one of the first IAF pilots to fly the Rafale jet.

took over. The handover takes place at forenoon, thus facilitating the vice-chief to take over just before he is due to retire.

It last took place in 1991, when Air Marshal N C Suri took over from Air Chief Marshal S K Mehra even as both were to retire the same day.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, the institution he went on to head later, Air Marshal Bhadauria was commissioned in the fighter stream of the Air Force in June 1980 and had won the Sword of Honour as he stood at the top in the overall order of merit.

With more than 4,250 hours of flying experience on 26 types of fighter and trans-

port aircraft, Air Marshal Bhadauria was a chief test pilot for Tejas, and has also led the flight test centre for the Light Combat Aircraft as its project director. He was one of the first pilots of the Indian Air Force (IAF) to fly the Rafale jets, 36 of which have been bought by India and the first will be delivered soon.

After flying a sortie in the Dassault-made Rafale in July, Air Marshal Bhadauria had said that the fighter jet will be “a game-changer” for the IAF from its planning perspective, and for “offensive missions and planning the kind of war we want to conduct in the coming years”.

As Deputy Chief of Air Staff, he was also head of the contract negotiating committee for Rafale jets.

Air Marshal Bhadauria has been Commandant of NDA, Deputy Chief of Air Staff at the Air headquarters, and Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Southern Air Command, and later the Training Command before being made the Vice Chief of Air Staff.

He has been awarded the Param Vishist Seva Medal, the Ati Vishist Seva Medal, and the Vayu Sena Medal.

Oral evidence of idol at ‘garbh grih’ prior to 1949, says SC

ANANTHAKRISHNANG
NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 19

THE SUPREME Court on Thursday said that oral evidence had come on record that there was an idol at the “garbh grih” (sanctum sanctorum) believed to be the birthplace of Ram below the central dome of the Babri Masjid even prior to 1949 and that Hindus had prayed to it.

According to the Muslim side, idols were placed inside the central dome for the first time on the night of December 22-23, 1949, by trespassers.

Justice Ashok Bhushan, who is part of the five-judge Constitution bench hearing appeals against the September 30, 2010 judgment of Allahabad High Court, referred to the statement of one Hausila Prasad Tripathi, who said he had seen “one niche-placed idol” and “one photograph” in the sanctum sanctorum when he first visited Ayodhya in 1935 when he was 12-13 years old.

Tripathi said he had gone to Ayodhya first in December 1935 with his uncle Mata Prasad Tripathi and had since been a regular visitor. He stated that pilgrims, after praying at the Chabutra, used to pray to the garbh griha from the “wall with bars” — after the 1855 communal riots, the British had installed railings at the disputed site to demarcate the area into two zones for Hindus and Muslims to pray separately.

Justice Bhushan’s rejoinder came as Senior Advocate Rajeev Dhavan insisted that there was no evidence of Hindus praying to the central dome and it was the Ram Chabutra in the outer courtyard, which they believed was where Ram was born, where the idols were kept and worshipped. “So it may not be correct when you say there is no evidence. How we appreciate it is different?” asked Justice Bhushan.

The bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi is hearing arguments against the Allahabad High Court verdict dividing the disputed 2.77 acres into three equal portions.

Justice Bhushan also referred to statements of other witnesses who visited the place and spoke about pilgrims praying to the sanctum sanctorum inside the



dome through the iron grill and offering flowers, etc. He cited the testimony of Ram Surat Tiwari, who said he visited the place in 1942 with his brother Ram Keval Tiwari “who was in service of the Raja Saheb Ayodhya”.

Dhavan countered this saying it was “not plausible evidence”. The senior counsel tried to blow holes in Tripathi’s testimony and said he was stating what his uncle explained to him. Turning to Justice Bhushan, Dhavan remarked, “I note some aggression in your Lordship’s stand.” Senior Advocate C S Vaidyanathan, appearing for Ramlalla, said “it is unfortunate” that such comments were being made.

Justice D Y Chandrachud too intervened, after which Dhavan tendered an apology to the bench and Vaidyanathan.

He then took the court through a cross-examination of witnesses and said their testimonies were an afterthought and could not be considered evidence. The Ramjanmabhoomi question had already become an issue when these witnesses recorded their statements, he added.

On Wednesday, the bench had pointed to the “close proximity” of the ‘Ram Chabutra’ — located in the courtyard of the disputed site — to the railings and wondered whether Hindus, by praying at the railings, were actually praying to something beyond, to their deity whom they believed existed in the central dome of the mosque.

On Thursday, Dhavan said “before 1989, there was no claim by Hindu parties that their prayer in the outer courtyard was to the alleged deity in the central dome”. He submitted that “there was the danger that in cases like this, conjecture or suspicion may take the place of legal proof”.

The Board’s counsel said that Ramjanmabhoomi was a post-1980 phenomenon.

GOVT ACTS TOUGH

Accused in mob violence won’t get govt jobs in Bihar

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, SEPTEMBER 19

WITH BIHAR reporting 39 cases of mob violence in which 14 people were killed, the state government has decided to act tough to send a message across.

It has been decided that an accused in a mob violence case might lose his job if he is a state government employee; and if he is not a government employee, he gets automatically disqualified for any job in the government, said a senior police official. State police have been gathering video footage from the media and local residents to identify more accused.

So far, 345 people have been named in 39 mob violence cases in Patna, Sasaram, Jehanabad, Gaya and other districts. Police have arrested 278 people in connection with these cases.

Most of these incidents were triggered by child-lifting rumours. Last month, four Gaya residents were beaten up badly on the suspicion that they are child-lifters. An old man and a mentally-challenged woman were killed by a mob in Patna in August on similar suspicion.

Add DGP, CID, Vinay Kumar said, “In mob lynching cases, we often book unidentified people. We are now focusing more on

So far, 345 people have been named in 39 mob violence cases in Patna, Sasaram, Jehanabad, Gaya and other districts

identifying faces in the crowd with help of video footage gathered through media and local people. The objective is to ensure that people do not take law in their hands.”

He said the accused could now lose government jobs and contracts. “In recent cases, over 2,000 unknown people are booked. Despite several warnings, people continued to take law in their hands because of unfounded rumours,” said Kumar. Addl DGP (headquarters) Jitendra Kumar said the state police had been closely monitoring these cases. “Chargesheets would be filed in most cases soon and we would also ensure speedy trial,” said Kumar.

“Since almost 90 per cent mob violence cases in the past decade led to zero convictions, there is an urgency to gather more scientific evidence and name more accused. We need more convictions so that it works as a deterrent for lumpen elements.”

VILLAGERS SAY ONLY FEW ELDERS RAISED CASTE ISSUE

After barring his entry, Karnataka village to felicitate MP

RALPH ALEX ARAKAL
TUMKUR, SEPTEMBER 19

DAYS AFTER Gollarahatti village, a settlement of the Golla community in Tumakuru’s Pemmanahalli, hit the headlines for denying entry to Chitradurga MP A Narayanaswamy as he is from an “inferior caste”, residents decided to felicitate him and welcomed him to the village on Friday.

Recalling the incident, villagers clarified that only a couple of elders questioned the MP’s entry citing his caste. “The elders came up to the MP and said his entry to the village would be against their beliefs. Others came and stopped them and welcomed the MP, but he was hurt and went back,” former Panchayat presi-

dent Dasappa said.

He said the villagers have now realised that the MP is trying to bring in development. “The teams from Biocon and Narayana Hrudayalaya, which came with the MP, assessed the village with regard to their Corporate Social Responsibility schemes. The villagers were not used to politicians visiting as they have been neglected for a long time,” he added.

Gollarahatti comprises around 150 huts and farmlands where residents farm ragi, paddy and groundnuts. Severe drought has hit the harvests since 2016, villagers said.

“Lack of basic amenities and drought conditions have added to our frustrations,” said Ashok D R, a villager.

Meanwhile, Kannada actor



Chitradurga MP A Narayanaswamy was turned away from Gollarahatti village on September 16. **Express**

Chetan and a group of social workers visited the village on Thursday as part of a Parivartana Rally organised to spread awareness among the residents.

After interacting with residents, Chetan told *The Indian Express* it is the collective responsibility of the government, educated citizens and social workers

Congress turns to party veterans for Maha battle

POLL MODE Ashok Chavan, Prithviraj Chavan, Balasaheb Thorat among likely candidates

Aurangzeb Naqshbandi
■ aurangzeb.naqshbandi@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Two former chief ministers Ashok Chavan and Prithviraj Chavan and state party chief Balasaheb Thorat are among senior Congress leaders whose names have been cleared as candidates by the party's poll panel for the upcoming assembly elections in Maharashtra.

A Congress functionary familiar with the development said the screening committee tasked with shortlisting the candidates has so far cleared 104 names.

Out of the 288 seats in the state, the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) are contesting 125 each leaving 40 for smaller parties, including the Samajwadi Party, Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana of Raju Shetti and the Communist Party of India (CPI). Congress leaders have also ruled out any tie-up with the Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi, saying its chief Prakash Ambedkar has made an "unacceptable and unreasonable" demand seeking the termination of the party's long-standing alliance with the NCP.

The ruling alliance of the BJP and the Shiv Sena are yet to firm up their seat-sharing arrangement. Apart from two former chief ministers and Thorat, the names of Congress legislative



■ (From left) Ashok Chavan, Prithviraj Chavan and Balasaheb Thorat.

HARYANA CONG SEEKS KHADI VOW

CHANDIGARH: The Haryana unit of Congress has begun the process of ticket distribution by inviting applications, and aspirants are being asked to make a declaration that they wear Khadi clothes and keep away from intoxicating substances. The applications are

being sought on a specified format with a fee of ₹5,000 and ₹2,000 for General and Scheduled Caste applicants, respectively.

Besides, the aspirants have to declare they do not believe in any kind of discrimination, be it on the basis of religion or caste. **PTI**

party leader KC Padavi and leader of opposition Vijay Namdevrao Wadettiwar have also been approved. However, many senior leaders including Sushil Kumar Shinde, Milind Deora, Sanjay Nirupam and Nana Patole may not be considered for the assembly elections. Both the Congress and the NCP have been hit by desertions with senior leaders from both the parties defecting to the ruling BJP and the Shiv Sena in the run-up to the elections.

Last week, NCP's Lok Sabha member from Satara Udayanraje Bhosale, a descendant of Maratha warrior king Shivaji, and senior Congress leader and former state minister Harshvardhan Patil joined the BJP.

Another Congress leader said the party's first list of candidates would be out soon after the election commission announces the poll dates for Maharashtra.

The Congress and the NCP contested the 2014 assembly polls separately after sharing power

for 15 consecutive years. The alliance came apart after a disagreement over seat sharing.

The Congress won 42 of the 288 assembly seats while the NCP won 41. The BJP won 122 and the Shiv Sena, which also fought separately, 63 seats. In the just-concluded Lok Sabha elections, the Congress managed to win just one Lok Sabha seat with the NCP winning four. The BJP won 23 seats and the Shiv Sena 18.

Mumbai-based political analyst Abhay Deshpande said, "There is a problem of plenty for Congress. Its house is not in order and candidates have lost the fighting spirit. Not many to top leaders keen on contesting."

The Congress also assigned different regions of the state to leaders for better election management. Mukul Wasnik will look after Vidarbha, Avinash Pande Mumbai region, Rajni Patil Western and Konkarn regions, RC Khuntia northern region and Rajeev Satav Marathwada.

HT PHOTOS



■ Nirav Modi

Nirav Modi to be in judicial custody till Oct 17: UK court

LONDON: Diamantaire Nirav Modi, wanted in India in connection with the \$2 billion Punjab National Bank fraud case, was on Thursday remanded in judicial custody for another 28 days until October 17 by the Westminster Magistrates Court.

The 48-year-old businessman appeared by video link from Wandsworth prison in southwest London, where he is currently lodged. Under UK law, the jail remand needs to be renewed every 28 days.

Magistrate David Robinson said the extradition trial would likely be held over five days, from May 11 to 16 next year, after consultation with lawyers from both sides. The Indian government has informed the court through the Crown Prosecution Service that if extradited, Modi will be lodged in Barrack 12 of the Arthur Road jail in Mumbai.

More remand and case management hearings are likely to be held before the extradition trial begins in May next year. Nirav Modi has been denied bail three times in the magistrates' court. His appeal against the rejections was also rejected by the high court in June, when Judge Ingrid Simler ruled that he posed a "flight risk" and could possibly interfere in witnesses and evidence.

Meanwhile, the ED on Thursday, obtained permission to sell Modi's watches, cars, paintings and other articles, that were seized by the agency during a raid earlier this year.

ED had approached the special PMLA court seeking permission to sell paintings and other valuables recovered from Modi's house Samudra Mahal, eight cars seized by ED and paintings seized by Income Tax department.

While the court allowed ED to sell properties seized from Modi's Worli house, along with the eight cars, it denied ED permission to sell the paintings recovered by I-T department. **HTC**

No proof that Hindus prayed under central dome, SC told

HT Correspondent
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Arguments in the Supreme Court on Day 27 of the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case veered around to whether Hindus had prayed under the central dome of the demolished structure, believed to be the birthplace of Ram, before 1949.

Senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for the Sunni Waqf Board, said there was no such evidence and that the prayers were restricted to the Ram Chabutara in the outer courtyard of the complex.

Dhavan was addressing a bench of five judges led by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi while arguing an appeal against the 2010 Allahabad High Court verdict that divided the disputed 2.77 acres into three equal portions.

Dhavan's statement evoked a sharp reaction from one of the judges on the bench. Justice Ashok Bhushan intervened while Dhavan was reading out the statement of a witness, asking

him not to read in portions. The judge asked the senior counsel to read the whole statement, which established the presence of an idol at the spot before 1949 and also that Hindus had prayed to the central dome from the railings put up at the site by the British at the disputed site after the 1855 communal riots.

The statement was from a witness named Hausila Prasad Tripathi. It is the contention of the Muslim parties that idols were placed in the central dome on the intervening night of December 22-23, 1949. These idols were earlier placed in the Chabutara.

Referring to Tripathi's statement, Justice Bhushan said: "So it may not be correct when you say there is no evidence. How we appreciate it is different." He also pointed to other statements in which witnesses have claimed to have visited the place in 1942 and prayed inside the dome.

Dhavan insisted the statements were not "plausible evidence." His response to Justice Bhushan's intervention led to

tense moments in the court. The senior advocate said he noted "some aggression in your Lordship's stand." Senior advocate CS Vaidyanathan, who appears for Ram Lalla (the personification of the God), objected to Dhavan's remarks and called his comments "unfortunate." Justice DY Chandrachud, another member of the bench intervened too, following which Dhavan tendered an apology to the bench. He then read out the cross-examination accounts of these witnesses and said their testimonies could not be considered as evidence.

A large section of Hindus believes the 16th century mosque in Uttar Pradesh was built over a temple dedicated to Hindu god Ram, whose birthplace is also considered to be at the site. A mob of thousands demolished the mosque in December 1992.

Meanwhile, the court closed a contempt case against an 88-year-old man from Chennai who had sent a letter to Dhavan cursing him for arguing the case of Muslim parties in the case.

SC summons UP home secy in Muslim girl case

HT Correspondent
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Irked over the Uttar Pradesh government's failure to respond to its notice on a plea by a 16-year-old Muslim girl seeking validation of her marriage under Mohammadan law, and release

from a women's home where she is currently lodged, the Supreme Court summoned the state's home secretary, asking him to be present on September 23 before it.

A bench led by Justice NV Ramana retorted when the UP government counsel asked for 15 days to file a written response and said: "You are taking it so lightly. The girl is kept inside in Nari Home. Let your secretary home be present in person on Monday."

The girl approached the top court on September 10 against the Allahabad high court's decision to send her to a women's shelter home, terming her marriage as void. Under the Special Marriage Act, 1954 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 the legal marriageable age for a girl is 18

while for a boy it's 21 years. But in its 2018 verdict in the Shafin Jahan case, the top court recognized the Mohammadan law and held that a marriage under the same is valid if both—the boy and girl -- profess Islam and had attained the age of puberty.

In this the girl has asked the top court to test her case on the touchstone of the Shafin Jahan verdict. Filed by advocate Dushyant Parashar the petition said his client's marriage was valid because both the girl (16) and her husband (24) had attained puberty, there was an offer and acceptance, giving and taking of meher and a nikahnama was drawn with the consent of both.

The matter reached the high court after the girl's father lodged a kidnapping case against the husband. In a statement recorded by the magistrate the girl stated she had married of her own volition without any pressure and that she wanted to live with her husband. She refused to go back to her parents after which she was sent to a women's home.

court diary



■ Deepak Talwar.

COURT REJECTS BAIL PLEA OF DEEPAK TALWAR

NEW DELHI: The Delhi high court Thursday dismissed the bail plea of Deepak Talwar, arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case, saying the "magnitude of conspiracy angle" in it is huge and enormous amount of money is yet to be trailed. Justice Rajnish Bhatnagar denied relief to Talwar on the ED's contention that he could flee from justice based on his past conduct and record of investigation, besides the fact that his son Aditya—a co-accused in the case—is a citizen of Antigua and Barbuda. Talwar was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate after his deportation from Dubai in January.

NATH NEPHEW TO BE IN CUSTODY TILL OCTOBER 1

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Thursday sent Ratul Puri, nephew of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, to judicial custody till October 1 in a money laundering case related to the alleged Augusta Westland chopper scam. Special judge Arvind Kumar sent Puri to jail after he was produced before the court by the Enforcement Directorate after 14-day custodial interrogation. The agency said that the probe was at a crucial stage and Puri should not be released as he may influence the ongoing probe. The court also allowed Puri to take his medicines to jail subject to the opinion of the jail doctor.

ED OPPOSES SHIVAKUMAR BAIL PLEA

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday opposed the bail application of Congress leader DK Shivakumar and stated that he cannot turn his "tainted property" into untainted one just by paying taxes. Appearing for the ED, additional solicitor general KM Nataraj told special judge Ajay Kumar Kuhar that if granted bail, Shivakumar may influence people privy to his "offence". "The declaration of property made by him is irrelevant. The question is how he acquired it. Even if he pays tax on it, it still remains tainted property. By just paying tax tainted property cannot be turned into untainted," he said, adding that the claims made by the accused were "unbelievable".



Defence minister breaks barrier with flight in single-engine fighter

HT Correspondent
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday flew in the indigenously made Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), Tejas, becoming the first defence minister to fly the single-engine fighter.

"I feel thrilled. The flight was smooth and comfortable," the minister said after the 30-minute long sortie. Singh, who was wearing the anti-gravity suit of the Indian Air Force, said the sortie gave him "first-hand" understanding of the capabilities of the Tejas.

"It was one of the most memorable events of my life," he told media persons.

The Tejas is an indigenously built light-weight, multi-role supersonic aircraft developed in both fighter and trainer versions. Recently, a Naval version—fighters that are capable of landing on the deck of an aircraft carrier—made an arrestor-wire landing at a land-based facility in Goa.

As a rule, senior ministers, in



■ Rajnath Singh.

PTI

particular, the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister, avoid flying single-engine aircraft for safety reasons. In the past, the Presidents and Defence Ministers that have flown fighters with the IAF have stuck to twin-engine fighters.

On why he chose the Tejas, an aircraft that was given its Final Operational Clearance (FOC) recently, Singh said, "This is an indigenous plane. Also, I wanted to check the conditions under which the fighter pilots fly. This is why I flew in this aircraft."

The defence minister also congratulated the Defence Research Organisation (DRDO) and the Aviation Development Agency. "We have reached a level where

we can export fighter planes across the world...Countries in South East Asia have shown interest in purchasing Tejas aircraft," he said.

Talking about his experience offlying with the defence minister, Air Vice Marshal, NTiwari said, "The Defence Minister controlled the aircraft in the air for about two minutes and he liked it. We went all the way up to 2 to 2.5g (gravitational force unit). But I was showing him more avionics and sophisticated systems that we have onboard like laser designation pod, using which you can pick up targets even from 20-25 km away."

Air Vice Marshal Tiwari is the LCA Project Director at the National Flight Test Centre, ADA (Aeronautical Development Agency). "We went close to Mach 1, the speed of sound, but he couldn't make it out. I had to tell him that this is the speed now," Air Vice Marshal Tiwari said.

The IAF had placed an order with the HAL—the Bengaluru-based Defence Public Sector Unit—for 40 Tejas aircraft.

Odisha man gets death for rape, murder of minor

BHUBANESWAR: A 26-year-old man was awarded death sentence on Thursday for the rape and murder of a six-year-old girl in Odisha's Cuttack last year.

A Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) court handed out capital punishment to Sheikh Mushtaq after convicting him under various sections of the IPC and the Pocso Act a day ago.

In April last year, Mushtaq, a neighbour of the girl in Nischintakoli block of Cuttack, had lured her with the promise of chocolates. He had then taken her to a primary school where he tried to rape her. When the girl cried out in pain, Mushtaq had choked her and banged her face against the wall, injuring her critically.

The girl had slipped into a coma and died in a government medical college five days later.

The death sentence is fourth such ruling in the last two months in Odisha under the Pocso Amendment Act. **HTC**

SC criticises UP govt on forest land claims

HT Correspondent
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Uttar Pradesh government came under criticism from the Supreme Court on Thursday for allowing private claims on forest lands which, it said, was done in contravention of its July 1994 order that disallowed diversion of forest land for industrial purpose.

A bench led by Justice Arun Mishra made some strong remarks against the state when it asked for a blanket order to quash all settlement claims allowed by Forest Settlement Officers from 1994 onwards, allowing industries to operate in the Renukoot-Mirzapur reserved forest area.

Appearing for the state, solicitor general Tushar Mehta said over 1,000 industries and individuals had laid claim to the reserved forest land.

"You keep sleeping. The State has been sleeping for 26 years and now you want us to pass ex-parte order (without hearing others) to remove everyone,"

said justice Mishra, warning the state that such a direction would have "serious repercussions."

The bench said it would hear the allottees before accepting UP government's plea. The state was also pulled up for not having any disciplinary control over its officials. "Are these officials (Forest Settlement Officers) still passing orders and granting claims to the forest land," the bench enquired from the law officer.

The court then asked Mehta to submit a list of all industries and units that had been granted land illegally in forest.

In its application filed in the forest rights case, the UP government wants all orders passed after July 18, 1994 by Forest Settlement Officers and additional district judges to be declared null and void. The list of allottees also includes NTPC and Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL).

The state said all orders in favour of these two units by the Forest Settlement Officers and additional district judges should also be set aside.

Pathalgadi case: SC notice to J'khand

HT Correspondent
■ letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has issued notice on a petition challenging a Jharkhand high court judgment, refusing to quash a sedition case registered against four tribal activists for allegedly inciting violence by writing Facebook posts supporting the so-called Pathalgadi movement of the Munda tribal community.

The four petitioners have also been booked under section 66A of the Information and Technology Act, a provision the top court had

struck down in 2015. While upholding the registration of the case against them, the HC had allowed criminal proceedings to continue even under the IT law.

Pathalgadi, having its origin in a resistance movement by tribals during British rule, is a practice of raising huge stone plaques at village outskirts with warnings to outsiders not to enter and declaring the village council, the only sovereign authority.

A bench led by Justice LN Rao sought response from the Jharkhand government to the petition filed by J Vikash Kora, Dharm Kishor Kullu, Emil Walter Kan-

dulna and Ghanshyam Biruly. They allegedly incited Munda tribal members in Khunti village to attack police on June 26, 2017.

As per the police case, four policemen posted as security guards of sitting BJP MP from Khunti, Kariya Munda, were abducted by the villagers. This was in retaliation to a police attack on the village while a gram sabha was in progress in Ghagra.

The charges say the four misled and influenced the "innocent tribals" as members of an organization called 'Adivasi Mahasabha' and 'A.C. Bharat Sarkar Kutumbh Parivar'.

Think **bold fashion**
Think **next-gen gadgets**
Think **rejuvenating trips**
Think **uninterrupted chilling**
Think **HT Weekend!**

Hindustan Times presents HT Weekend, a leisurely & spirited read that offers perfect company to your relaxed and laidback Sundays.

Health & Wellness

Entertainment

Newsmakers

Fashion & Style

Food

Modi leaves for 'howdy, US' trip today

India Meets Criteria For US Trade Concessions: MEA On Eve Of PM Visit

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi will embark on a week-long visit to the US on Friday. While the first leg of his visit, to Houston, will see him meeting CEOs of energy majors and addressing an Indian community event — 'Howdy, Modi' — where US President Donald Trump will also be present, the PM will travel to New York on Monday to participate in the 74th session of the UN General Assembly.

Modi's UNGA address on September 27, his first since 2014, and a meeting with Trump on September 24 are expected to be among the highlights of his trip. He will also address meetings on climate change and terrorism at the UNGA and host an event on Mahatma Gandhi.

While it's not yet clear if the much talked about Indo-US trade deal will be finalised during the visit, foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale told journalists on Thursday that India met the criteria for trade concessions under the US Generalised System of Preferences (GSP).

Gokhale was replying to a query on a bipartisan group of 44 US lawmakers urging the Trump administration to reinstate India's designation as a beneficiary developing nation under the GSP programme as part of the poten-



PM Modi and President Trump in Osaka, Japan, in this June 28 photo

Trump hints at announcement at PM rally

US President Donald Trump has said that he may make an announcement at the mega 'Howdy, Modi' event in Houston on Sunday when he would join PM Narendra Modi in addressing the 50,000-strong Indian diaspora. The White House on Monday announced that Trump would join Modi at the Houston rally on September 22 as a "special gesture" by the US President to underscore the special bond between the two countries. "Could be, I have a very good relationship with PM Modi," Trump told reporters on Wednesday while responding to a question if there would be any announcement when he goes to Houston for the rally. Trump did not elaborate. **TNN**

tial trade deal. Gokhale said it was up to the US government to take a decision on the issue and that the trade deal had to be "mutually balanced".

The US had terminated India's designation as a beneficiary developing nation under the GSP on June 5.

"It has always been India's position that GSP is a

unilateral decision given by countries to other countries based on certain criteria. We are a developing country, we meet those criteria. I do not recall us ever stating we are not interested in GSP. To my recollection, the US unilaterally withdrew that concession from us," Gokhale said. On the likely Indian agenda

at the UNGA, the government is unlikely to bring up Article 370-related developments on its own because, as the foreign secretary said, it was an internal issue. He also said terrorism was not going to be the only focus area for India at the UNGA.

"Article 370 is an internal issue. Terrorism is one among many issues. The focus will be on India's role on the global stage, the PM will present his vision in this regard," Gokhale said. Modi is also expected to have bilaterals with 15-20 world leaders apart from Trump.

Modi will have his first engagement in Houston on September 21 in the form of a meeting with CEOs of 16 energy majors including ExxonMobil, BP and Emerson Electric Company. The next day, he will address the 'Howdy, Modi' event which will be attended by more than 50,000 people, including Trump and a bipartisan group of US Congressmen. In New York, Modi will hold a round-table with CEOs of 45 MNCs.

On September 23, the PM will participate in climate change, universal healthcare summits and leaders dialogue on terror responses. He will host a special event, 'Leadership Matters: Relevance of Gandhi in the Contemporary World', on September 24 where he will be joined by leaders of, among others, Singapore and South Korea.

India may not escalate Pak airspace row

New Delhi: India on Thursday hit out at Pakistan for denying use of its airspace to PM Narendra Modi's flight for his upcoming visit to the US, saying that wasn't the way normal states behave. The government, however, seemed undecided about whether or not it planned to approach ICAO, which is responsible for international air navigation, against Pakistan's decision.

"It's an unfortunate situation where a country denies overflight to head of state of another country. But it's true when there's a normal country. Hope Pakistan will realise its folly," said foreign secretary Vijay Gokhale. He added though that India as of now did not intend to approach any international body over Pakistan's decision. "But if they're in violation of norms of International civil aviation organisation that's a possibility we can certainly consider," he said.

Pakistan foreign minister S M Qureshi had earlier said that permission for overflight had been denied "in the light of the current situation in Kashmir, India's attitude and atrocities there".

PM has right to speak his mind: Sena leader

► Continued from P 1

The Prime Minister urged the "loudmouths" to also have faith in the Indian Constitution.

When the PM was in Mumbai during the Ganpati festival earlier this month, Uddhav had first raised the mandir issue in the PM's presence at a rally at BKC, saying that just as the Modi government had nullified Article 370 granting special status to J&K, it should take steps to build the Ram temple. Uddhav had then said, "We have been speaking in favour of the Ram temple in Ayodhya from Day 1. The hearing in the SC has reached its final stages, and a verdict will be out soon. However, the Centre should take appropriate steps and introduce a special act for the temple, just as the government has taken the bold decision to defang Article 370."

On Monday, Uddhav again said he was confident the government would take steps to build the temple soon.

Sena spokesperson Anil Parab said, "He (PM Modi) has the right to speak his mind. I cannot comment on his statement."

Ayodhya case: Lawyer in SC accuses judge of 'aggression'

Dhananjay Mahapatra
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: A day after "harshly" advising Justice D Y Chandrachud not to indulge in conjecture while appreciating evidence on record in the Ayodhya land dispute case, senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan, appearing for Muslim parties, said Justice Ashok Bhushan's "aggressive" tone in questioning "frightened him a little".

Arguing before a bench of CJI Ranjan Gogoi and Justices S A Bobde, Chandrachud, Bhushan and S Abdul Nazeer on Thursday, Dhavan said there was absolutely no evidence to back the claim of Hindu parties that idols were worshipped inside Babri Masjid prior to 1949. He said the idols were always worshipped at Ram Chaubtra in the mosque's outer courtyard and these were surreptitiously placed under the central dome on the intervening night of December 22-23, 1949, to desecrate the mosque.

Justice Bhushan pointed to a witness's deposition before the Allahabad high court that as a 12-year-old, he had visited the disputed structure in 1935 and had seen idols being worshipped inside the structure. Dhavan said, "What is the credence of this witness who is unable to identify any of the 12 photographs of the disputed structure?"

Justice Bhushan said, "It is not a question of believing his evidence. His evidence was considered by the HC. I am just pointing out that there is evi-

SC closes contempt proceedings after 88-year-old apologises to Dhavan

The Supreme Court on Thursday closed contempt proceedings against 88-year-old retired government servant N Shanmugam after he tendered an unconditional apology for writing a letter to senior advocate Rajeev Dhavan and cursing him with physical disabilities for appearing against deity Ram Lalla. Dhavan's counsel Kapil Sibal and Ejaz Maqbool accepted the octogenarian's apology but said such things should not happen when a counsel appears for any party. The bench headed by CJI Ranjan Gogoi disapproved writing of such malicious letters while closing the contempt proceedings. **TNN**

dence on record that in 1935, idols were there inside the mosque." When Dhavan stoutly countered the witness's evidence, Justice Bhushan asked, "Can we not look into the estate when it is relied upon by the HC, even if it was not pointed out by Hindu parties?"

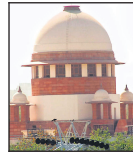
Expressing his annoyance at the judge's insistence to look into the evidence, Dhavan asked, "Is there some aggression in the judge's tone in putting the question? I am a little frightened." This immediately drew a protest from senior advocate C S Vaidyanathan, who said, "It is unfortunate that a senior advocate of Dhavan's stature is making allegations that the judge is aggressive when a question is put to him."

Referring to Dhavan's repeated and proud flaunting of his ancestral connections to the North West Frontier Province (Pakistan) during the arguments, CJI Gogoi said, "People from NWFP are not frightened easily." Justice Chandrachud, to whose aid Justice

Bhushan had stepped in when the former was being lectured by Dhavan on Wednesday for "venturing into conjectures", returned the "favour" on Thursday.

Disapproving Dhavan's overreaction, Justice Chandrachud said, "We ask searching questions to elicit appropriate answers to clear doubts in our mind. There is no question of a judge showing aggression during a hearing. It is just a question."

Dhavan was quick to apologise to Justice Bhushan, as he had done on Wednesday to Justice Chandrachud for being "a little harsh", attributing it to his possible tiredness. To Justice Bhushan, he said, "My apologies. I was a little taken aback by the insistence on the question. I have appeared before you (Justice) in the HC long time ago and then too you had asked searching questions." Dhavan went on to punch holes in the witness's statement about idols being inside the mosque since 1935 and termed it unbelievable.



HEARING ON

Mosques pick-up points for anti-Modi rally? India & Pak expats clash online

Chidanand Rajghatta
@timesgroup.com

Washington: Angry and overwrought exchanges and charges of genocide, terrorism, human rights violation, sexual abuse and worse are erupting between Pakistani and Indian partisans in the US in the run-up to the 'Howdy, Modi' event in Houston on Sunday where pro-India activists say hundreds of protesters are being bussed in by organisers from mosques and Islamic centres in the region.

Supporters of the Modi rally where US President Donald Trump will also be in attendance are tagging Houston Police, the FBI, US Secret Service, and immigration authorities to highlight the fact that places of worship are being used for political activism, leading to furious exchanges on the salience of religion in exposing purported civil liberties and human rights abuse.

The issue first surfaced on social media when an activist posted a list of 13 pick-up locations for protesters being



Thousands of British Pakistanis descended on London and indulged in violent acts, including smashing windows of the Indian high commission on September 4. Indians in US are alerting local authorities of earlier attacks in the run up to the 'Howdy, Modi' event

bussed in for demonstrations against the 'Howdy, Modi' rally with the remark, "SURPRISE SUPRISE the bus pickups for those protesting against Modi & Trump are the mosques of #Houston. See how this works yet? Mosques

are not simple places of worship. They are places of co-ordination & control"

"Much like churches, village galls, town halls, schools and many other buildings that serve a local community. Your point?" asked one protest supporter who saw nothing wrong in the pick-up from mosques.

"Her point is why only mosques? Why not other local community buildings like churches, villages halls, town halls school etc.?" came one response. And from another: "Imagine the horror had these pickups were from temples, then it would have labelled 'Hindu terror' India partisans also pointed to violence that accompanied such protests by Pakistanis in London and Pretoria while alerting local authorities.

Undeterred by the solid endorsement by the Trump administration for the rally and for India's narrative on Kashmir amid stray concerns about the human rights situation in the Valley, Pakistan and its supporters have cranked up

their efforts to embarrass Modi with a fervid campaign that involves constant references to genocide, Hitler, Nazism, nuclear war etc.

The high-pitched campaign has had little effect so far on Modi's programme or the global attention he is getting.

The rest of the world is treating the shrill rhetoric, much of it from the playbook of Pakistan's PM Imran Khan, with the diplomatic equivalent of an eye-roll.

Among Modi's engagements in New York includes a 'leaders' dialogue on strategic responses to terrorist and violent extremist narratives', jointly hosted by King of Jordan, New Zealand PM, French President and UN Secretary General.

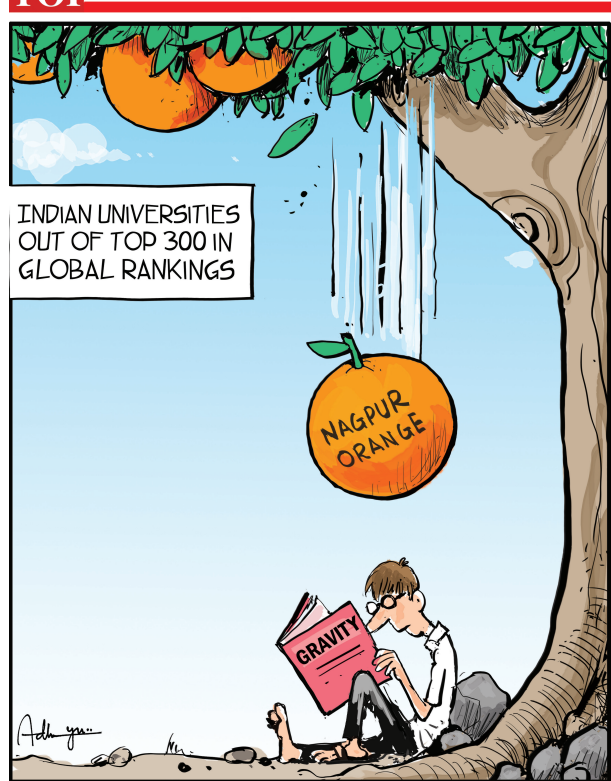
Modi is also slated to attend an event to commemorate 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at UN.

Showing no sign of relenting, the Pakistan campaign will arrive in New York this weekend even as Modi and Trump head there from Houston.

Full report on www.toi.in

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL

SANDEEP ADHWARYU



ED searches premises of TMC's RS MP

New Delhi: On a day Trinamool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee met home minister Amit Shah, the Enforcement Directorate searched the premises of TMC's Raja Sabha MP K D Singh in a money laundering investigation against his company, Alchemist Infra Realty Ltd.

The ED searches were carried out at the company's premises in Delhi and Chandigarh. In January, the agency had attached assets worth over Rs 239 crore of the Alchemist group on alleged money laundering charges.

Banerjee had met PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday before calling on Shah.

Meanwhile, the CBI on Thursday issued fresh summons to former Kolkata police chief Rajeev Kumar to join investigation on Friday. **TNN**

RIISING INDIA

TIMES interact
Connecting People. Connecting Needs.

CONSUMER CONNECT INITIATIVE

Urvashi Mishra
@timesgroup.com

Inculcating skill development and knowledge in youth is a sure-shot way towards economic growth and social development of a country. Luckily for India, it has an

existing 65 per cent of the young population that falls into the working age group. India recognises the need for skill development and has always been particular about focussing on prolific policies for the young. If the youth of India rises, India will rise concomitantly.

As India is striving to become a knowledge economy, the need of the hour is to create a multitude of new jobs and empower a

In order to bolster India's economy, the need of the hour is to focus on skill development

Skilling India's youth



large number of Indian youths to take up industry-relevant skill training that will assist them in securing an equitable livelihood. "Increased collaboration between the government and industry will create synergies for the pro-

motion of skill development activities and enhanced innovative environment in the industry," said Sanjay Aggarwal,

Vice President, PHDCCI, at a recent summit on skill development at PHD House in New Delhi. Rising India is a public revolution that enables common citizens to take charge for change. Enabling the youth by upgrading

As India is striving to become a knowledge economy, it is imperative to create a multitude of new jobs and empower a large number of youngsters

development. Skill development has taken precedence over other sectors because it offers hope to supply critical human resource - nationally and internationally. The aim is to attract young and talented administrators

to consider self-employment or entrepreneurship for a catalytic effect on the economy. Given the digitalisation of the world, this is achievable only if the academic world and the technological world are brought closer through collaborated govern-

ment efforts. Rising India is an endeavour to empower every single citizen of India. So, we must keep in pace with the dynamic environment by creating adept manpower that has the ability to work in the existing sectors of the economy.

DEALERS / DISTRIBUTORS REQUIRED

1-TIME IN INDIA WEARABLE QUILTS

"VOW QUILTS WITH SLEEVES"

Md: MIS MADHURAJ TRANSLITES PVT. LTD.
+91-95607-49075 Email: rajenj1950@gmail.com

Utkarsh Small Finance Bank
Aapki Ummeed Ka Khaata

SAVINGS ACCOUNT **FIXED DEPOSITS**

7% P.A. **9% P.A.**

Earn Higher Interest on your Entire Savings Bank Balance. Attractive Interest on Fixed Deposits. 0.50% p.a. Additional for Senior Citizens

Kindly contact your nearest branch for latest information.

www.utkarsh.bank | Toll Free : 1800-123-9878 | [f](#) [t](#) [in](#)

Doon Defence Career Point
A Name Of Quality Education
Join for successful written exam

NDA, AFCAT CDSE (IMA/JOTA)

- ✓ INDIAN AIRFORCE (Group X&Y)
- ✓ INDIAN NAVY (SSR, AA, MR)
- ✓ INDIAN ARMY (GD/CLERK)
- ✓ COAST GUARD

MERCHANT NAVY DECK CADET COURSE (12" PASSED PCM)

100% Company Sponsorship
Intake available 30 Seats

84% SELECTION RATE IN DEFENCE JOB

visit us at:
www.doondefencecareer.com

Uttarakhand The Land of Brave Warriors

D.L. Road, SBI (1st & 2nd Floor), DEHRADUN
9412047446, 7500967683, 9997024015

their skills to international standards through significant industry involvement and cooperation between state and centre is the objective of the government's initiative for skill

SILK TREE

Never before range of skin care products

PRODUCT RANGE

- Face Wash & Scrubs • Body & Face Creams
- Body Lotions & Bleaches • Facial Kits • Hair Removal Creams

Contact for Super Stockists & Distributorships
+ 91 9761345000, 7055001190

E: customercare@silktree.in | [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) /silktreeindia @/silktree.in