

# **NEWS ALERT**

**OCTOBER 1-7, 2018**



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**COMPILED BY**  
**HEMANT KHARE**



**Indian Institute of Public Administration**  
**I.P. Estate, Ring Road, New Delhi-110002**

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**DECCAN HERALD**

**ECONOMIC TIMES**

**HINDU**

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## AGRICULTURE

HINDU, OCT 3, 2018

**Govt. gives in to some demands, but farmers adamant**



***Protesters seek implementation of the Swaminathan Commission report; Centre says formula for MSP is economically unviable***

As the thousands of protesting farmers affiliated to the Bhartiya Kisan Union (Tikait group) were prevented from entering Delhi in support of their demands, Minister of State for Agriculture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on Tuesday said the Centre would consider reducing GST on farm equipment to 5%. The farmers have demanded that farm equipment be exempt.

Among the protesters were sugarcane farmers from Bhora Kalan village in Muzaffarnagar who complained of rising debt, increasing cost of pesticides and other expenses and demanded that the recommendations of the M.S. Swaminathan Commission be accepted.

“Even when we are given insurance schemes, the companies make sure we don’t get our due. They have ground farmers into powder just like you grind spices,” said Chowdhry Dhan Singh from Bhora Kalan.

Among the protesters is Jasmeet Singh from Punjab, with a noose around his neck. “This is to represent that one farmer dies every three days with the kind of conditions we have today,” he said.

## No MSP hike

While the Centre is prepared to cede ground on some of the demands, it is refusing to budge with regard to higher minimum support prices (MSP) and wants further discussion on issues such as loan waivers, Mr. Shekhawat told *The Hindu*. The C2+FL formula is economically unviable, he said.

Union Ministers have been in touch with BKU leaders, Naresh and Rakesh Tikait, from Monday evening, Mr. Shekhawat said. Around mid-day, Home Minister Rajnath Singh along with Agriculture Minister Radhamohan Singh, Mr. Shekhawat and senior government officials met the BKU leadership and thrashed out an agreement on seven demands.

The Centre agreed to seek a legal review petition against the National Green Tribunal’s ban on diesel vehicles more than ten years old in the NCR, and bring on board the four affected State governments as well. “Tractors can’t be counted as vehicles,” said Mr. Shekhawat.

He added that he would chair a committee to resolve implementation problems on crop insurance and farmer credit schemes, and review the possibility of including crop damage by wild animals for insurance.

Farmer representatives would also be included in a NITI Aayog special committee that will focus on linking agriculture with MGNREGA, he said.

The Centre also agreed to ensure that crops were procured at MSP rates within 90 days.

**PIONEER, OCT 3, 2018**

## **Govt releases Agri census data for 2015-16**

More and more females are participating in the management and operation of agricultural lands, as per the agriculture census for 2015-16 released by the Ministry of Agriculture on Monday. The census, however, showed a 1.53 per cent decline in total operated area at 157.14 million hectare as compared to 2010-11 data.

The census found out that the percentage share of female operational holders has increased from 12.79 per cent in 2010-11 to 13.87 per cent in 2015-16. In terms of operated area, the share of women increased from 10.36 per cent to 11.57 per cent. The average size of operational holding declined to 1.08 hectares (ha) in 2015-16 compared to 1.15 ha in 2010-11, as per the provisional data.

The Agriculture Ministry said the first census was conducted with reference year 1970-71. The census is conducted every five years to collect data on structural aspects of operational holdings in the country. So far, nine censuses have been done and this is the 10th in series.

TRIBUNE, OCT 4, 2018

## **After farmers' protest, MSP for rabi crops hiked by up to 21%**

A day after farmers laid siege at its doorsteps, the Centre today announced a Rs 105 per quintal hike in the support price of key rabi crop wheat to take it up from Rs 1,735 a quintal in 2017-18 to Rs 1,840 a quintal for the 2018-19 season.

While the government claimed the new wheat MSP would give farmers “112.5 per cent extra return” over its cost of production, farmers rejected what they called was a “meagre” 6.1 per cent hike over last year’s support price.

Persisting on their demand for implementation of the “real” C2+50 formula, farmer leaders called it yet another “betrayal by an anti-farmer government as the cost of production was much higher than what was being claimed”.

However, terming the MSP announcement as a “big boost to farmers’ income by way of higher support price for all rabi crops, including barley, gram, pulses and oil seeds,” Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh said the initiative would provide farmers “additional income of Rs 62,635 crore and more than 50 per cent return over the cost of production”.

According to the government, the support price includes “all paid-out costs like those incurred on account of hired human labour, bullock labour/machine labour, rent paid for leased land, expenses incurred on

use of material inputs, depreciation on implements and farm buildings, interest on working capital, diesel/electricity for operation of pumpsets, etc, miscellaneous expenses and imputed value of family labour”.

While as per the government, the cost of production of wheat was Rs 866 per quintal and the MSP of Rs 1,840 quantified into a return of 112.5 per cent, farmer leader from Punjab Balbir Singh Rajewal said the cost of production of the key winter grain was “not less than Rs 2,800 a quintal, especially after the increase in fertiliser and diesel prices and additional costs of dealing with the paddy stubble, etc”.

According to the government, the cost of production of barley is Rs 860 per quintal and MSP of Rs 1,440 will provide a return of 67.4 per cent over the cost of production. But against last year’s figure, it is just an increase of 2.1 per cent, say farmers.

For gram, the cost of production is Rs 2,637 per quintal and MSP of Rs 4,620 means a return of 75.2 per cent and a 5 per cent increase over last year’s support price; for masur, the cost of production is Rs 2,532 per quintal and MSP of Rs 4,475 will quantify into a return of 76.7 per cent (5.3 per cent over last year's MSP); for rapeseed and mustard, the cost of production is Rs 2,212 per quintal and MSP of Rs 4,200 will give a return of 89.9 per cent (5 per cent more than that for last year); and for safflower, the cost of production is Rs 3,294 per quintal and MSP of Rs 4,945 will provided a return of 50.1 per cent to farmers. Percentage wise, it is the highest increase of 20.6 per cent over last year’s MSP for a rabi crop.

## **ARMED FORCES**

PIONEER, OCT 1, 2018

### **BSF, SSB get new chiefs**

Two of the country's three border guarding forces — the Border Security Force and the Sashastra Seema Bal — got new chiefs on Sunday.

While 1984-batch Uttar Pradesh cadre IPS officer Rajni Kant Misra took over as the new Director General (DG) of the BSF, his batchmate S S Deswal became the DG of the SSB.

Misra took charge from K K Sharma, who retired Sunday while Deswal succeeded Misra, who has been the SSB DG since October last year.

Deswal, who was serving as the Special DG of the BSF is from the Haryana cadre of the Indian Police Service.

While Misra will be in charge of the BSF till August next year, his scheduled retirement time, Deswal will superannuate in August, 2021.

The BSF is the country's largest border guarding force with over 2.5 lakh personnel in its ranks and is tasked to guard the Indian frontiers with Pakistan (over 3,000 km) and Bangladesh (4,096km).

The about 90,000 personnel strong SSB is tasked to guard the borders with Nepal (1,751 km) and Bhutan (699 km). The third frontier guarding force ITBP (guarding 3,488 km India-China border) will also have a new chief next month with the retirement of DG R K Pachnanda.

## CIVIL SERVICE

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 3, 2018

### **Babus to pay Rs 1,000 monthly for travelling to office in govt car in Haryana**

The Haryana government on Wednesday tweaked the guidelines about use of government vehicles and decided that the bureaucrats will have to pay Rs 1,000 per month for using the attached official vehicle between residence and office and for non-official journeys up to 1,000 km every month.

However, according to the order that the office of the chief secretary has issued, the ministers have been exempted from this latest hike.

The administrative secretaries, managing directors of boards and corporations, heads of departments, principal secretary to chief minister and officer on special duty to chief minister having government vehicle attached with them will come under the purview of these guidelines about the use of government staff car.

As per the January 2015 guidelines, which the government on Wednesday amended, ministers and the bureaucrats used to pay Rs 400 per month and 400 km was the total limit.

The Wednesday's changed guidelines are silent about the ministers even as in the January 2015 order it refers to the ministers also.

As per the order the hiked amount will be deducted from the salary of the officers at source unless the officer concerned submits in writing that he has not been provided with any such vehicle.

**PIONEER, OCT 1, 2018**

## **CBI pulled up for delays in obtaining sanction to prosecute 4 IAS officers**

The 2G Court pulled up CBI on Monday for delays in obtaining Sanction for Prosecution of four IAS officers in the Aircel-Maxis scam, who are co-accused with former Finance Minister P Chidambaram in the chargesheet. Special Judge OP Saini asked CBI, why they submitted Chargesheet without obtaining the Sanction and directed CBI to provide it by next hearing November 26. He also cautioned CBI that if failed to provide the Sanction, the Court may take appropriate action.

In the July 19, submitted chargesheet, the CBI has charged former Finance Secretaries Ashok Jha and Ashok Chawla in the illegal approval given to Malaysian firm Maxis to acquire the mobile phone operator Aircel. Both these officers are now retired and Ashok Chawla is now serving as NSE Chairman. Apart from these two officers, two serving IAS officers Kumar Sanjay Krishnan and Deepak Kumar Singh were also charged as accused by CBI.

“You (CBI) should not have filed the charge sheet. It is only increasing the pendency of the court. A lot of time of the court has been wasted due to this,” Special Judge O P Saini said.

“Granting of sanction is under active consideration of the government,” said senior prosecutor Sonia Mathur said. The Sanction for Prosecution has to be recommended by the Finance Ministry and approved by DoPT.

# CONSUMER

PIONEER, OCT 2, 2018

## **UP tops consumer redressal in country**

KGiving impetus to consumer education, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's Uttar Pradesh tops the list of consumer redressal in the country.

An analysis of the **National Consumer Helpline (NCH)** by the **Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi** reveals Uttar Pradesh stands first in the consumer complaints followed by Maharashtra and other States.

The study conducted by **Professor Suresh Misra, Professor & Coordinator, Centre for Consumer Studies, at IIPA New Delhi**, Uttar Pradesh received over 47000 consumer complaints during January to August 2018 and in this according to him more than 60 percent have been addressed and resolved to the benefits of the consumer.

He said, "We have done an analysis of the NCH from January 2018 to August 2018 and we have received more consumer complaints from UP and over 60 per cent have been resolved."

"NCH is the unique model in the world which addresses the consumer redressal with Government and private partnership. More than 500 top companies are part of this venture taken up by the Ministry of Consumer Affairs," he added.

National Consumer Helpline (NCH) is the grievance redressal mechanism set up by the Department of Consumer Affairs, to educate and handhold consumers in redressing their consumer related issues and make efforts to resolve his grievance.

NCH was started in March 2005, and has been handling consumer queries and grievances pan India for the last thirteen years.

Since May 2014, the Project is managed by the **Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.**

A consumer can seek advice , information or file a complaint using toll free number 1800 -11- 4000 and short code, 14404, or SMS on +918130009809 or file complaint directly on online portal [www.consumerhelpline.gov.in](http://www.consumerhelpline.gov.in) . One can use ‘Consumer App’ downloadable from online play stores. NCH advice depends on the stage exhausted by complainant and the resolution expected by him. NCH handles calls in English and Hindi only. There are 6 Zonal Consumer Helplines which feed into the NCH - one each in Patna, Bangalore, Jaipur Ahmedabad, Kolkata and Guwahati, which were set up in October 2017, established to cater to local languages and regional issues.

“NCH’s hallmark of redressing consumer grievances is by the ‘Alternate Dispute Redressal system (ADR) at the pre-litigation level. NCH provides an automated platform to escalate grievances to companies and organizations for redress and resolution.

Companies and organizations are invited to partner with NCH for ‘free, fair and fast grievance resolution of their consumers/customers. This is

a completely voluntary initiative. The alternate redressal mechanism for resolving consumer grievances is branded as ‘Convergence’ and has proven to be a successful model for resolving consumer grievances at the pre - litigation level” adds Suresh Misra.

According to Deepika Sur, the Project Manager of the NCH in the Convergence initiative, 460 companies have partnered with NCH, grievances received by these companies are on ‘real time’, and companies update the portal with the a suitable redressal at an average time frame of 30-60 days. For companies not under the convergence partnership, grievances are forwarded to them for redressal and updated on the portal by NCH. In addition, 21 Government Departments are mapped to the NCH portal to handle grievances for their respective departments.

Suresh Misra says consumer empowerment branded ‘Jagriti’ is an inherent part of the activities of the National Consumer Helpline.

“Programmes in Community Radios are aired giving information on consumer issues in different sectors. Nukkad Natak are enacted on various themes on which grievances are received. This is a powerful medium, and has a wide range of audience from all classes of society” he adds.

# ELECTION

STATESMAN, OCT 7, 2018

## **In process of allocating VVPATs, EVMs for 2019 Lok Sabha Elections says EC**

*The EC said it is consistently reviewing the status of production and supply of EVMs and VVPATs by the public sector units.*



The Election Commission (EC) on Sunday said it was in the process of ensuring allocation of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) for over 10 lakh polling stations.

It also assured of timely allocation of electronic voting machines (EVM) for the 2019 general elections.

The mandatory First Level Checks and training to District Officers are being ensured to meet the requirement of 100 per cent VVPATs across

approximately 10.6 lakh polling stations for the Lok Sabha Election in 2019, said the poll panel.

With around 22.3 lakh ballot Units, 16.3 lakh control units, and nearly 17.3 lakh VVPATs to be used for the forthcoming elections, the EC said it is consistently reviewing the status of production and supply of EVMs and VVPATs by the public sector units.

The EC on September 26 had said that it has enhanced the requirement of additional VVPATs from 125 per cent to 135 per cent considering the trend of failure rate of the machines in past elections, besides adopting improved hardware for them.

## ENERGY RESOURCES

PIONEER, OCT 3, 2018

### **Centre cuts fuel prices by Rs 2.50: List of states where petrol, diesel have become cheaper**

Facing mounting criticism from the opposition and with Assembly elections round the corner, the Centre Thursday slashed petrol and diesel prices by Rs 2.50 per litre. Here's a list of states where prices have been slashed.

Facing mounting criticism from the opposition and with Assembly elections round the corner, the Centre Thursday slashed petrol and diesel prices by Rs 2.50 per litre. Addressing a presser, Finance Minister [Arun Jaitley](#) stated that the decision will result in a revenue loss of Rs 10,500 crore in six months and urged states to effect a similar cut.

Soon after the announcement, several BJP-ruled states followed the suit and gave an overall relief of Rs 5 per litre.

Here's a list of states where fuel prices have been cut:

- \* Gujarat
- \* Maharashtra (only petrol)
- \* Uttar Pradesh
- \* Jharkhand

- \* Madhya Pradesh
- \* Chattisgarh
- \* Uttarakhand
- \* Assam
- \* Tripura
- \* Haryana
- \* Himachal Pradesh
- \* Jammu and Kashmir
- \* Arunchal Pradesh
- \* Goa

The Kerala government ruled out slashing the cess on petrol and diesel to match the Centre's announcement in fuel price cut. Reacting to Jaitley's suggestion, State Finance minister T M Thomas Isaac said it would adversely affect the state's revenue. Blaming the Centre for the frequent spurt in price of petroleum products, Isaac said it was the Centre that hiked the taxes on petroleum products. He also said the state had already reduced the tax on petroleum products earlier.

West Bengal CM [Mamata Banerjee](#) blamed the Centre for high fuel prices, and demanded that the Union government should roll back the Rs 10 cess it levied on petrol and diesel before asking the states to reduce taxes. She claimed that fuel prices were reduced in the international market and asked why these were increasing in the country.

“We (Bengal government) have already reduced fuel prices. You (Centre) have increased cess by Rs 10. Now you have reduced it by Rs 2.50 and you are asking others to do it. Others (states) are not your servants. You roll back the entire increase of Rs 10 and then talk”, Banerjee said at a programme. West Bengal had reduced the fuel price by Re 1 in August.

Delhi CM [Arvind Kejriwal](#) demanded a Rs 10 per litre cut in fuel prices. He said the Modi government raised excise duty on petrol from Rs 9.48 to Rs 19.48, leading to a steep rise in its price despite a sharp decline in international prices of crude oil. “Modi government raised excise duty on petrol by Rs 10 and today reduced only Rs 2.50. This is cheating. Centre should bring down petrol prices at least by Rs 10,” he said in a tweet.

**PIONEER, OCT 3, 2018**

## **Will generate 40% of power from non-fossil fuel by 2030: PM Modi**

India is targeting 40 per cent of electricity generation from non-fossil fuel-based resources by 2030 as it looks to tap vast solar and wind potential to replace reliance on polluting coal to meet its energy needs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday.

Modi said he saw the 121-country International Solar Alliance as the future OPEC for meeting energy needs of the world.

Oil cartel OPEC led by Saudi Arabia currently meets close to half of the world's oil needs.

Speaking at the first Assembly of the ISA here, he said the solar power will play the same role that oil wells have played over the past few decades in meeting global energy needs.

Humans have in the last 150-200 years relied on resources trapped below the earth's surface for meeting energy needs. But for a secure future, resources available above the ground like solar and wind energy need to be harnessed, he said.

Stating that the focus must be on renewable sources for meeting energy needs, he said India wants to bring all UN members on board of ISA.

Modi said 50 GW of renewable energy will be soon added to existing capacity and non-hydro renewable will contribute 20 per cent of total energy.

“This is the right time to invest in solar manufacturing,” he said adding he saw an investment potential of Rs 70,000 crore to Rs 80,000 crore in solar manufacturing.

The Prime Minister said 31 crore LED bulbs save 40,000 million units of electricity and Rs 16,000 crore in a year.

He said 28 lakh solar pumps can save 10 GW of electricity every year.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PIONEER, OCT 2, 2018

### **India, Uzbekistan sign 17 agreements**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uzbekistan President Shavkat Mirziyoyev held comprehensive talks on Monday to broaden the scope of bilateral partnership and step up cooperation in key areas such as defence and counter-terrorism.

The two sides signed 17 pacts in the sectors of defence, agriculture, science and technology and space, among others, which was termed “historic” by the Uzbek President.

The two leaders also discussed regional security, including the situation in Afghanistan, and asserted that dialogue was the only way to bring peace in the war-torn country.

“We have had very comprehensive discussions. We have taken a long-term view to deepen the strategic partnership between the two countries,” a statement quoted Modi as saying. On his part, Mirziyoyev said the strategic partnership with India is “one of the most important priorities” of Uzbekistan.

Defence has been an important aspect in the India-Uzbekistan ties. In this regard, the two sides agreed to work closely to expand and strengthen defence ties as well as defence industry cooperation, the joint statement said.

Both sides have agreed to hold joint military training exercises in counter-terrorism and cooperate in the field of military education and medicine, it said.

They agreed to strengthen cooperation between the law enforcement agencies and special services of the two countries, including under the framework of the Uzbekistan-India Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism.

Both sides have also called for early finalisation of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Uzbekistan will also set up a defence wing at its embassy here, the statement said.

Noting the importance of a safe and secure regional environment for development and prosperity, the two sides agreed to work closely in addressing threats and challenges to national as well as regional security.

Modi said a stable, democratic, inclusive and prosperous Afghanistan was beneficial for everyone. “The two countries have decided to have regular contact in this regard,” he said. PTI

**PIONEER, OCT 5, 2018**

### **Modi, Putin hold restricted meeting**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin held a restricted meeting here on Friday ahead of delegation-level talks of the annual bilateral summit.

Modi received Putin at the Hyderabad House here and the two leaders warmly shook hands and hugged each other obliging cameramen.

Putin arrived here on Thursday evening for the 19th India-Russia Bilateral Summit and held a private meeting with Modi at the latter's residence at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj received Putin at the airport here.

Around 20 agreements are expected to be signed between the two sides following the summit on Friday.

This includes India's purchase of the S-400 air defence missile system from Russia at a cost of more than Rs 40,000 crore.

The deal has been an issue of much speculation after US President Donald Trump's administration's law -- Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) -- came into effect in January.

CAATSA targets countries doing business with Russian, Iranian and North Korean defence companies.

Also expected to come up for discussion is Washington's fresh sanctions on Iran over the country's nuclear programme.

New Delhi is worried over the new sanctions, set to come into effect on November 4, as Iran is a major supplier of oil to India.

The sanctions have also put into jeopardy the Chabahar Port in Iran being jointly developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan.

Chabahar is a crucial link in the International North South Transport Corridor of which Russia is a key party.

Russia is one of only two countries with which India holds annual bilateral summits, the other being Japan.

The India-Russia bilateral relationship was elevated to Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership in 2010.

This is the third meeting between Modi and Putin this year after an informal meeting in the Russian resort city of Sochi in May and a bilateral on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in South Africa in July.



## INVESTMENT

STATESMAN, OCT 7, 2018

### **We are marching towards a New India, says PM Modi at investors summit**

*He said the Goods and Services Tax (GST) had been the biggest tax reform since independence that had made the entire country into a single market and widened the tax base.*



Speaking at an investors summit in Uttarakhand on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India is going through major social and economic changes and the resultant new India will prove to be a catalyst for global development.

“India is witnessing rapid economic and social changes. The country is going through a big transformation. We are marching towards a New

India. Every major institution in the world is predicting that in the coming decades, India is going to be the driving engine of world growth,” he added.

He said India’s economy had stabilized over the last few years, fiscal deficit had come down, inflation was under control, and the middle class was rising.

“The scale and speed at which reforms are happening are unprecedented. In the last two years, the central and state governments have ushered in more than 10,000 reforms. Thanks to this, India has made a significant jump of 42 points in the global ‘ease of doing business’ index,” PM Modi said.

“As part of these reforms, more than 1,400 laws have been repealed. Major tax reforms have been brought in.”

He said the Goods and Services Tax (GST) had been the biggest tax reform since independence that had made the entire country into a single market and widened the tax base.

He said infrastructure development was taking place at a record speed with more than 10,000 kilometres of national highways built in the last one year.

“It means over 27 km road built per day. This rate is double as compared to road development during previous governments,” he said.

## JUDICIARY

HINDU, OCT 1, 2018

### Indian judiciary strongest, most robust: CJI Dipak Misra



### CJI-designate Ranjan Gogoi, counters AG, SCBA chief on judges' pay

Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra on Monday called the Indian judiciary the “most robust in the world”.

The outgoing Chief Justice’s declaration, in his farewell speech a day before he retires, comes even as Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal, the country’s topmost law officer for the government, rued how the salaries of [Supreme Court](#) and High Court judges are “far below than what an average lawyer earns”.

“Our judiciary has been strongest judiciary in the world having capability to handle mind boggling number of cases,” Justice Misra, who will retire as the CJI on Tuesday, said while speaking at the farewell function organised at the premises of the [Supreme Court](#).

The outgoing CJI said, “Justice must have human face”.

“History can be sometimes kind, and unkind. I don’t judge people by their history but by their activities, perspective,” the CJI said.

“In my whole career as a judge, I never dissociated myself from the lady of equity,” Justice Misra said.

“I am indebted to Bar at every level and go from here with satisfaction,” he added.

He spoke after Chief Justice of India-Designate, Justice Ranjan Gogoi, praised him saying that his greatest contribution has been to civil liberties and cited his recent verdicts in this regard.

Justice Gogoi, who will be sworn-in as the Chief Justice of India on Wednesday, said Justice Misra was a remarkable judge.

### **A-G raises salary issue**

Mr. Venugopal said it is “not easy to get good judges”. “Salary should be doubled or tripled if we want good judges,” the Attorney-General said.

Why should well-earning lawyers give their legal practice to join the Bench? Mr. Venugopal asked.

“In Singapore, one million Singapore dollars are paid to judges of the Supreme Court... We do not want something extravagant, but they should have some relationship to what an average lawyer earns,” Mr. Venugopal said.

He expressed what may go through the mind of a lawyer who is invited to be a judge. “Some of them may think that all the lawyers are sending their children abroad, so why should we also not be able to do it. And if we are unable to do it, why should we give up our practice?” Mr. Venugopal said.

The Attorney-General vociferously argued for increasing the retirement age of Supreme Court and high court judges, asking whether judges who decide complex legal issues would find their “brains clogged” at the age of 62 and 65.

Supreme Court Bar Association president and senior advocate Vikas Singh agreed with Mr. Venugopal.

He suggested that “we should provide for full salary for the life time of the judge, so that when he is nearing retirement, he does not have to worry”. This would perhaps ward off the “retirement blues”.

But the next Chief Justice of India, Justice Ranjan Gogoi, differed about the “inadequacies or aberrations” and their effect on future and present judges, as highlighted by the Attorney-General and the SCBA president.

“In spite of the odds, we have committed judges. We are committed to the cause and we shall continue to be committed regardless of the inadequacies of remuneration and in spite of the possibilities of abuse of

our names. We will not be alarmed with that. It comes with the system,” Justice Gogoi replied stoically.

Justice Gogoi praised Chief Justice Misra’s illustrious career, exemplary erudition and remarkable fortitude.

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## **Leaders will have to pay for damage by cadre: SC**

HINDU, OCT 1, 2018

### ***Calls for setting up Rapid Response Teams to curb mobs***

Leaders of outfits who instigate a mob to an act of vandalism, which results in death or loss of public and private property, will personally face criminal action and are liable to compensate the victims of the violence, the [Supreme Court](#) ruled on Monday.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra and Justices A.M. Khanwilkar and D.Y. Chandrachud pinned the criminal liability squarely on leaders of outfits who “initiate, promote and instigate” mobs to destroy public and private property in the name of demonstrations, especially against cultural programmes, films and expressions of artistic freedom.”

The taxpayer is not responsible to cough up money to pay for the destruction caused by mobs, the Bench held.

Each and every person, who was part of the violence, would be booked under Sections 153A (promoting enmity), 295A (deliberate and

malicious acts to outrage religious feelings), 298 (intent to wound religious feelings) and, lastly, 495 (mischief) of the Indian Penal Code. The offences would come alive if the call for violence was made through a spokesperson or through social media of a group or by any individual.

The Supreme Court ordered persons caught red-handed by the police to be arrested on the spot.

If any leader fails to appear in the police station concerned, he shall be proceeded against as a suspect and be even declared an “absconding offender”.

State governments should set up Rapid Response Teams, preferably district-wise, to respond to mob violence, install websites which report instances of mob violence and destruction of public and private properties, special helplines, employ non-lethal crowd-control devices, like water cannons to deter the mob.

**HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 3, 2018**

## **On Day 1, Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi raises bar for urgent hearing in Supreme Court**



“I am a strict man, I am what I am, I cannot change.” With that statement, India’s 46th Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi announced the new rules of engagement in the court over which he presides.

To be sure, the remark by the new Chief Justice of India (CJI) came at a function organised to felicitate him by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) after court hours on Wednesday.

By then, the import of the message had already been felt by lawyers.

The moment he sat in court, a few hours after taking the oath administered to him by President Ram Nath Kovind, CJI Gogoi

refused to hear lawyers who were waiting in queue to mention cases for urgent hearing, a standard practice in Court no 1.

Raising the bar for hearing urgent cases that break the queue, the CJI told advocates: “We are in the process of coming up with new parameters and streamline the practise of mentioning cases. Till then only matters where someone is getting evicted or hanged or killed would be heard (urgently).”

Specifically, on Wednesday, CJI Gogoi declined to give an urgent hearing to cases pertaining to the illegal allotment of land in Haryana, an insolvency matter, and a matrimonial dispute.

He even refused to give an immediate hearing to advocate Prashant Bhushan who sought a stay on the deportation orders of seven Rohingya Muslims . “If they are deported, we can always get them back if it’s (deportation) wrong. Do not worry,” justice Gogoi said, adding that there was no urgency in the matter. Bhushan’s assertion that the seven would be sent to Myanmar on Wednesday night failed to move the bench.

The practice of letting lawyers mention urgent cases before the Chief Justice’s bench is designed to provide an opportunity to people to fast-track the first hearing of critical cases.

Still, long-time court observers say that over a period of time, many not-so-urgent cases have also been flagged before the bench, taking away the court’s precious time.

Former CJI Dipak Misra also attempted to streamline the practice earlier this year. In January, he directed that only junior lawyers would be allowed to mention cases before his bench. He was addressing a complaint from younger lawyers that they didn't get a chance to flag their cases because senior lawyers appeared to get priority.

Justice Misra later asked lawyers to first mention matters for urgent hearing before the registrar and approach the Chief Justice's court only if they were aggrieved by the registrar's order.

In the evening function, justice Gogoi clarified his morning remark on urgent cases. "Let me tell you, me and my colleagues are trying to prepare a system which will function better. We are trying to reduce the time between filing and listing of cases. We are trying to introduce a system where cases don't get dropped and if we succeed, perhaps a large section of mentioning will go away altogether, It's not the Chief Justice who will drop mentioning but mentioning will die out automatically," he said.

Justice Gogoi offered the clarification after SCBA president Vikas Singh urged him to be more lenient towards the Bar, especially junior lawyers.

"I am a strict man, I am what I am, I cannot change," the CJI replied, although he followed this up with his explanation.

## MIGRATION

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 4, 2018

### **Supreme Court refuses to stop deportation of 7 Rohingya refugees**

The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to stop the deportation of seven Rohingya Muslims set to be deported from Manipur to Myanmar a few hours later.

This will be the first such official deportation from India to Myanmar.

Lawyer Prashant Bhushan, who had sought the top court's intervention, said it is the duty of this court to protect stateless citizens, which Rohingya refugees are.

The bench shot back, telling Prashant Bhushan that he need not remind the judges of their responsibilities.

In its affidavit, the Home Ministry had underlined that the seven were willing to go back to Myanmar. They were illegal migrants and had served their sentence under the Foreigners Act.

Tushar Mehta, the centre's senior law officer, told the court that the Myanmar government had acknowledged that the seven were its nationals and given them a certificate of identity to facilitate their return.

Assam has about 32 Rohingya refugees in detention camps in Assam, about 15 of them including seven minors are in Tezpur. They are mostly

believed to be from the Rakhine State in Myanmar and were apprehended in 2014 by the railway police.

Thousands of Rohingya Muslims have been fleeing the Rakhine State on Myanmar's western coast for years, often caught between the military and Rohingya insurgents who have fought a bloody war for years. The refugees mostly landed in Bangladesh, but some did cross over into India also. The Indian security establishment believes there may be upwards of 40,000 refugees in India.

The UN refugee agency, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, had sought access to the detained Rohingya refugees in Assam but have not been permitted.

Ahead of the deportation, a UN human rights expert had expressed alarm at the government's deportation plan saying returning the seven Rohingya refugees to Myanmar could violate international law.

“Given the ethnic identity of the men, this is a flagrant denial of their right to protection and could amount to refoulement,” said the UN Special Rapporteur on racism, Tendayi Achiume.

“The Indian Government has an international legal obligation to fully acknowledge the institutionalised discrimination, persecution, hate and gross human rights violations these people have faced in their country of origin and provide them the necessary protection.

## MONETARY POLICY

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 5, 2018

### **RBI leaves repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent, reverse repo rate at 6.25 per cent**

The Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy stance has changed to 'calibrated tightening' from neutral. The RBI stated that headline inflation is estimated to accelerate to 4.5% by March 2019 quarter with upside risks.



The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its fourth bi-monthly meet today left the repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent while the reverse repo rate remains at 6.25 per cent. The monetary policy stance has changed from neutral to 'calibrated tightening'. The RBI stated that headline inflation is estimated to accelerate to 4.5% by March 2019 quarter with upside risks.

The central bank also stated in its policy document that FY19 GDP growth target remains unchanged at 7.4 per cent. CPI inflation is seen at 4 per cent in July-September and 3.9-4.5 per cent in October-March.

Following the RBI announcement, the rupee breaches 74-mark against US dollar for the first time. The rupee has been performing poorly for the past few months and the rise in repo rate is seen as an attempt by the RBI to curb further price fall. The rupee closed at 73.77 against the US dollar on Thursday.

## POLITICS & GOVERNMENT – INDIA- J&K

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 4, 2018

### **J&K governor Satya Pal Malik: India’s mistakes alienated state, my job is to make space for talks**

Satya Pal Malik said he has to create an environment in which the Centre can initiate talks with political parties in Kashmir and with the Hurriyat if they come to the table “without the condition of involving Pakistan”.



As J&K braces for local body elections starting October 8 amid militant threats and boycott calls by the PDP and National Conference, Governor [Satya Pal Malik](#) said Wednesday that “India has made mistakes, and its mistakes have, in the process, alienated itself” from the

people of the Valley. He said his priority is to “create an environment of trust” in which the Centre can initiate talks with mainstream parties and even the Hurriyat if they come to the table “without the condition of involving Pakistan”.

Speaking to The Indian Express (full interview tomorrow), Malik, who took charge of J&K two months after the state was placed under Governor’s rule following the collapse of the PDP-BJP government, said, “Kashmir is not an occupied territory”.

“Yeh koi, ek tarah se, occupation nahin hai. Isko ab aap occupation term do, woh ek alag baat hai. Lekin nahin, woh baat baithti nahin hai. Ye kaho ki humse mishandling hui hai. India se galti hui, India ne apni galtiyan se apne aap ko alien banaya. Occupation force ke taur pe India ko pesh kiya ja sakta hai, jo cheezein hui hain. Lekin Kashmir is not an occupied territory, apni marzi se hamare saath aaye hue hain,”

he said. (“This is not an occupation. It is another matter if someone chooses to use the occupation term. But no, that is not correct. You can say we have mishandled. India has made mistakes, and its mistakes have, in the process, alienated itself. Because of what has happened, India is being presented as an occupation force. But Kashmir is not an occupied territory, it came to us of its own free will.”)

“While Narendra Modi is Prime Minister, Jammu and Kashmir will see no political machinations. Elections will be absolutely fair.” He said the perception that security forces will be given a free hand during Governor’s rule is incorrect, “In my discussions with all three GOCs, no

one has asked for a free hand.” He said he is in favour of “wiping out” militancy, not militants.

“Mai unko maarne ke paksh mein nahin hoon. Militants ko nahin maarna hai, humko militancy ko maarna hai. Logon ki nighah mein militancy ko useless banana hai, ki iski koi zaroorat nahin hai (I am not in favour of killing them. We have to kill militancy, not militants. It has to be made useless in the eyes of the people.) You kill one militant, and five more will join. But I’m not for that.”

“I want to tell them respectfully that the dreams they have been shown in the last 15-20 years are unrealistic. From Sheikh (Abdullah) Sahab’s time until now — Azaadi or Pakistan — I want to say to them that they are not even one-fourth of the LTTE. The LTTE had such a committed cadre that 12-year-old girls would fight barefoot in the jungles. They got money and weapons from 14 nations. When they could not take over a country, it is not possible here,” Malik said.

## **POLITICS & GOVERNMENT – INDIA- MADHYA PRADESH**

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 4, 2018

### **Mayawati slams Congress, rules out state election tie-up**

Launching a scathing attack on the Congress, BSP chief Mayawati Wednesday said that her party will contest the upcoming polls in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh on its own and not in alliance with the Congress.



Launching a scathing attack on the Congress, BSP chief Mayawati Wednesday said that her party will contest the upcoming polls in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh on its own and not in alliance with the Congress.

Mayawati said that some leaders in the party were out to “destroy” the BSP, though Congress president Rahul Gandhi and UPA

chairperson [Sonia Gandhi](#) favoured an alliance. Calling the Congress “arrogant” with a “casteist and communal mindset”, she said that people had not forgiven the Congress for their “corrupt government”.

Her remarks left the Congress, which is trying to stitch together an alliance across the country against the BJP, scrambling for damage control and cautious in its response. The Congress pointed out that Mayawati had also expressed her regard for Rahul and Sonia Gandhi and said that “creases will be ironed out”. A section of the Congress, however, believes the BSP chief is setting the stage for some hard bargaining.

Her decision to contest polls alone came hours after Congress leader Digvijaya Singh said that Mayawati had wilted under pressure from the Centre and a fortnight after she announced an alliance with Ajit Jogi’s party in Chhattisgarh. The BSP also released a list of 22 candidates for the MP polls even as the Congress claimed that talks are still on.

Mayawati called Singh a BJP agent and said the Congress was trying to crush her party under the misconception that they can defeat the BJP on their own. “The reality is that people are unwilling to forgive Congress for their corrupt government,” Mayawati said. She also said that the Congress offered BSP just 9-10 seats in Rajasthan, 15-20 in Madhya Pradesh and 5-6 seats in Chhattisgarh despite the fact that BSP is the only party that can transfer its votes to other parties.

“In Rajasthan and MP too, we will either ally with regional parties or fight alone, not with Congress. Congress is trying to defeat their partners instead of BJP,” she said adding that Congress leaders like Singh did not

want a Congress-BSP alliance as they are afraid of agencies like the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

“Digvijaya Singh, who is also a BJP agent, is giving statements that I am under a lot of pressure from Centre so I don’t want this alliance. This is totally false and baseless. I feel that Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi’s intentions for Congress-BSP alliance are honest. Though some Congress leaders are sabotaging this,” she said.

Singh, in an interview to ABP News, said there was “tremendous pressure on Mayawati from the central government...pressure from Amit Shah and (Prime Minister) Modi. They are misusing the Enforcement Directorate and CBI a lot to pressurise politicians.” Speaking to The Indian Express later in the day, Singh said, “I have no ED or Income Tax or CBI case against me. So I am not afraid. But at the same time, I am in favour of a Congress-BSP alliance and I hold Mayawati in great respect.”

Congress communication department head Randeep Surjewala referring to Mayawati’s statements about Rahul and Sonia argued that “if there is harmony among Sonia, Rahul and Mayawati...no fourth person can create obstacles.” Mayawati, he said, “has expressed mutual respect and confidence vis-a-vis Congress President Rahul Gandhi as also our leader and guide Sonia Gandhi. I think that is the most important issue rather than reading multiple meanings in the statement of Mayawati.”

“Once the two leaders have an amicable, respectable, fruitful relationship with each other...all other creases can be ironed out. I don’t

think alliances are discussed or announced in press conferences. I think her statement says a lot and that is what you should read,” he said. According to Surjewala, the state units of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Telangana will take a call on the question of alliances, depending on the local situation and requirements, after discussions with the AICC.

He said the Congress has only one goal, which is to defeat the BJP in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. He said the Congress will welcome those who can work with it in that endeavour. “And those who cannot walk with us, they can tread their own path...which doesn’t mean that the resolve to oust the BJP and save the Congress and the country’s ideology is weakened.”

As for Mayawati’s comments against Singh, he said the Congress does not agree with “any adverse comment” made against any of its leaders adding that “...many things, both bitter and sweet, are said impulsively and at the heat of the moment.”

# POLICE

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 4, 2018

## **From 32,000 to 4.6 million followers in 3 years: How Mumbai Police climbed the social media chart**

Mumbai Police Joint Commissioner (law and order) Deven Bharti said more than the popularity of the handle, it is the value added to the Mumbaikar's relationship with the cops that matter the most.



While humour, sarcasm and irony can be the last thing people may associate with the police department, the Mumbai Police has arrested that stereotype, emerging as a witty, smart one-liner spouting force on Twitter ever since it made its debut three years ago. At the same time, they have managed to get their messages

on cyberstalking, piracy, traffic safety and drugs across to a new generation.

But behind the scenes is a team of 25-30 police constables, graphic designers and the Mumbai police commissioner and Joint Commissioner of police (law and order) themselves. “Regular weekly meetings are held in the office of the Commissioner of Mumbai Police, where the team brainstorms on the next theme or the next campaign that engages people,” said Sunchika Pandey, a former crime reporter who handles the city police’s Twitter account as well as that of the commissioner.

Giving a humorous slant to serious messages while not hurting sentiments is a major factor in the popularity of the Mumbai Police Twitter handle, Pandey said. She said the ideas for tweets came from observations of factors that shape or affect a person’s day to day life. “Members of our team are always alert to any kind of conversation that is gaining traction on social media and what is capturing people’s attention. It is then converted to some content to create awareness,” she said.

Pandey said the team handling the social media account worked in close coordination with the Mumbai Police. “It is the young constables on the ground who tips off the team on issues that people should be made aware of. Then there is a different group of about 15-18 constables that work in three different shifts monitoring responses to the tweets. Two senior officers head each

shift,” she said. However, the final approval for any content is given by the police commissioner.



From an initial 31,400 followers in 2015 on Twitter to 4.6 million presently, the journey has been successful because the city police have been effective and easily approachable to the people, feels Pandey. “This adaptability by the police has really worked wonders and that’s why Mumbai Police twitter handle has always been in news despite nearly three years of launch,” Pandey said.

Mumbai Police Joint Commissioner (law and order) Deven Bharti, however, said more than the popularity of the handle, it is the value added to the Mumbaikar’s relationship with the cops that matter the most. “We try all we can to provide them better service and accessibility and keep them alert and advise them about precautions to be taken during various situations,” he said.

The social media strategist of the Mumbai Police further said the success of their endeavor could be gauged from the fact that their twitter handle has now become the go to platform for alerts on weather, bandhs and train schedules. “Alerts prerogative of other departments like PWD or Railways are now being put on the Mumbai Police handle. This shows the trust we have gained of the people,” she said.

While the police department has got sensitive to the requirements and pressing needs of the people, the engagement has also led citizens to understand the conditions in which the policemen work and the sincerity they put. “I don’t think any government department or institution has such a close day-to-day interaction with the people,” she added.

However, everything has not been hunky dory for the social media team and some of its tweets have coughed up criticism from netizens, even though the issues may be directly not related to them. For example, in June they came up with a tweet showing a clip of Tom Cruise from a scene in Mission Impossible: Fallout, asking users to not try out stunts. However, the department got trolled for the city’s pothole-filled roads.

## POLLUTION

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 4, 2018

### **Punjab: Govt considering barring farmers engaged in stubble burning from contesting panchayat polls, says minister**

The Punjab government has appointed a large number of nodal officers and issued instructions for imposing penalties and taking legal action against erring farmers, the minister said.



The Punjab government is considering a proposal to make farmers ineligible for contesting panchayat election if found guilty of stubble burning, a senior minister said Thursday. The government

is taking stringent steps to stop burning of stubble and paddy residue, Rural Development and Panchayat Minister Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa said here.

Stubble burning is a major cause of air pollution in north India, particularly the national capital, during the winter.

The Punjab government has appointed a large number of nodal officers and issued instructions for imposing penalties and taking legal action against erring farmers, he said.

“At the same time, the government is also considering a proposal to amend the Panchayati Raj Act...to make farmers ineligible for contesting panchayat election if found guilty of stubble burning,” he said.

Bajwa said that the practice of stubble burning is not only polluting environment but the soil is also losing its fertility day by day.

The Punjab government has launched a vigorous campaign to aware farmers about the ill-effects of stubble burning and some legal actions are also being taken to stop this, he said.

The government is also providing huge subsidies on agricultural implements to tackle stubble burning, he said.

## PUBLIC SECTORS

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 3, 2018

### **Cabinet approves Rs 469-cr package for revival of closed NEPA mill in Madhya Pradesh**



The government has approved a Rs 469.41 crore package for the revival of closed NEPA mill in Madhya Pradesh, Union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said Wednesday.

NEPA Ltd is a public sector newsprint company, incorporated in 1947.

“The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs 469.41 crore package for the revival and mill development plan (RMDP) of NEPA Ltd, a public sector newsprint company located in Neapanagar, Madhya Pradesh. The plant was closed in 1981,” IT and law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told

reports after the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The move will ensure development of the tribal area, he said.

The decision for the package was taken by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA).

“The package includes infusion of Rs 277 crore as equity for completion of RMDP which shall enhance production capacity to 1,00,000 MT per annum from 83,000 MT per annum, diversify output, improve quality of products and also help resume production,” an official statement said.

Loan of Rs 101.58 crore for the payment of salary, wages etc to mitigate hardship being faced by employees.

It also includes a sum of Rs 90.83 crore for the voluntary retirement scheme of 400 employees.

The strategic disinvestment of NEPA Ltd on completion of the RMDP at an appropriate time has also been approved, the statement said adding “The completion of RMDP will help NEPA Ltd to command a better presence in the markets besides supporting employment in the tribal belt of Madhya Pradesh.” PTI NAM ABI MR

## RAILWAYS

HINDU, OCT 3, 2018

### **Cabinet eases plans to refurbish railway stations**

#### *Focus on ensuring cost neutrality*

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the redevelopment of [railway](#) stations by the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation (IRSDC) as a nodal agency through simplified procedures and longer lease tenure of up to 99 years.

Being the nodal agency, IRSDC will prepare the overall strategic and business plans for individual stations or a group of stations, ensuring cost neutrality of this programme.

“Redevelopment of major stations across the country is planned by leveraging commercial development of land and air space in and around the station,” an official statement said.

#### **Better amenities**

Passengers will now get amenities at par with international railway terminals and the creation of a large number of local jobs is expected as a positive external outcome, it added.

## SANITATION

HINDU, OCT 2, 2018

### **Toilet-for-all: WHO calls for more investment**

*‘Countries need to make policy shifts and invest more’*

The world will not reach the goal of universal sanitation coverage – where every person in the world has access to toilets – by 2030 unless countries make comprehensive policy shifts and invest more funds, the World Health Organization (WHO) warned on Tuesday as it launched the first global guidelines on sanitation and health.

In a release, the Organisation said that by adopting WHO’s new guidelines, countries can significantly reduce the diarrhoeal deaths due to unsafe water, sanitation and hygiene. For every US \$1 invested in sanitation, WHO estimates a nearly six-fold return as measured by lower health costs, increased productivity and fewer premature deaths.

Worldwide, 2.3 billion people lack basic sanitation (with almost half forced to defecate in the open). They are among the 4.5 billion without access to safely managed sanitation services – in other words a toilet connected to a sewer or pit or septic tank that treats human waste.

“Without proper access, millions of people the world over are deprived of the dignity, safety and convenience of a decent toilet,” said Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, deputy director-general for Programmes, WHO.

“Sanitation is a fundamental foundation of human health and development and underpins the core mission of WHO and ministries of health worldwide. WHO’s Sanitation and Health Guidelines are essential to securing health and wellbeing for everyone, everywhere,” she added.

## Cause and effect

WHO developed the new guidelines on sanitation and health because current sanitation programmes are not achieving anticipated health gains and there is a lack of authoritative health-based guidance on sanitation.

“Billions of people live without access to even the most basic sanitation services,” said Dr. Maria Neira, director, Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinants of Health, WHO.

“Poor sanitation is a major factor in transmission of neglected tropical diseases,” she added.

TRIBUNE, OCT 3, 2018

## **20,500 manual scavengers in country: Survey**

Over 20,500 persons have been identified as being involved in manual scavenging in India, with Uttar Pradesh accounting for nearly 6,000 of them, according to a survey by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment across 18 states.

An earlier survey conducted over a period of three years (2014-17), based on figures provided by states, had estimated there were 13,770 manual scavengers.

Some states like Gujarat, Kerala and Maharashtra had even denied the existence of persons engaged in manual scavenging in their territories, though the latest ongoing survey has revealed that manual scavenging was prevalent even in these states. The recent survey, which started in February and is ongoing, will cover 170 districts across the 18 states.

TRIBUNE, OCT 2, 2018

## **UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres lauds India's sanitation campaign**

United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his strong leadership with regard to sanitation and assured all help to India from the UN system in the matter.

Addressing the concluding session of the Mahatma Gandhi International Sanitation Convention which marked the launch of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Guterres said elimination of open defecation is central to sanitation.

The convention is part of the Union government's 'Swachhata hi Seva hai' programme that kicked off on September 15.

Guterres lauded India's role towards sanitation in direction of achieving Sustainable Development Goal set out to be achieved by 2030.

Modi and Guterres signed the Delhi Declaration which embodies pledge of world community towards sanitation.

The result of the survey on sanitation (2018) was announced at the convention. Haryana was awarded the first prize as it emerged the overall first state.

Addressing the convention, Modi lauded the Mahatma for his commitment to cleanliness. He said the Swachh Bharat Mission launched four years ago had become a people's movement.

## SOCIAL PROBLEMS

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 4, 2018

### **Shelter homes abuse: Muzaffarpur incident would never have happened if the existing mechanism was adequate, says SC**

A bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur was dealing with the matter in which 34 girls were allegedly raped and sexually abused in a shelter home run by an NGO at Muzaffarpur in Bihar.

The Supreme Court Thursday said the existing mechanism was “not adequate” to curb incidents of sexual abuse of children and girls at shelter homes and asked the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) to apprise it on the formulation of a child protection policy.

A bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur asked the joint secretary of MWCD to appear before it on October 8 to assist the court in understanding what exactly was proposed to deal with issues like counselling and rehabilitation of such victims, conditions prevailing at child care institutions and formulation of child protection policy.

“The existing mechanism is not adequate. If it was adequate then what had happened in Muzaffarpur would not have happened,” said the bench, also comprising Justices S Abdul Nazeer and Deepak Gupta.

The bench was dealing with the matter in which 34 girls were allegedly raped and sexually abused in a shelter home run by an NGO at

Muzaffarpur in Bihar. “These 34 girls need counselling. There are many more other girls like this. Somebody has to do something,” the bench said.

During the hearing, the bench observed that it had earlier asked about the formulation of a child protection policy but nothing has been done.

The counsel appearing for the MWCD said that a national consultation was taking place with all the states for formulation of a child protection policy, as suggested by the apex court, on preventing offences against children.

The Centre said that a “series of actions” which should be taken in such cases have been circulated among the states and the ministry would hold a meeting soon on the issue.

The counsel said that in the last meeting, three states have given information about the action being taken by them in such cases.

“There are two things. One is that some states admitting such things have happened and if such things have happened, some corrective steps have to be taken. The second is where some states may not admit it. Some states may say that please do not register FIRs of rape so that our record looks good,” the bench observed.

The bench also told the MWCD that they cannot say since the social audit of child care institutions by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was going on so let the situation remain the same.

The bench asked the MWCD's counsel to call the joint secretary of the ministry so that modalities to deal with the issue could be understood. "We will understand what is proposed to be done," the bench told the counsel.

When the counsel said that the ministry would soon call a meeting to come out with an action plan to deal with the issue, the court said, "calling a meeting will not help if the focus is on something else. Making a policy is one aspect and rehabilitation and protection of these children and girls is another aspect."

Advocate Aparna Bhat, assisting the court as an amicus curiae in the matter, said that large number of boys and girls have been abused in shelter homes and child care institutions and their rehabilitation was an important issue. Bhat also said that the data on social audit and research reports on the issue have to be analysed. The ministry's counsel told the court that social audit by NCPCR was going on and report with regard to 10 states have already come.

The amicus referred to a similar incident in Andhra Pradesh where 26 children living in a shelter home were abused there. She said the court could direct the states to file action taken report on incidents of sexual abuse of children in shelter home and child care institutions. "We cannot let these children suffer like this," she said, adding that states should come out with some policy to deal with the issue.

The bench asked the ministry's counsel to ask the joint secretary to come out with status report on incidents of sexual abuse of children as pointed out by the amicus.

Earlier, the apex court had expressed concerned over sexual and physical abuse of children at shelter homes across India and has asked the Centre to frame a child protection policy in this regard.

It had observed that according to social audit conducted by the MWCD from 2015 to March last year, 1,575 children were abused and were now living in the shelter homes.

The apex court, which has taken cognisance of the Bihar incident following a letter by a Patna-based man, had earlier termed as “horrific” the case of alleged sexual abuse of girls in an NGO-run shelter home at Muzaffarpur.

Over 30 girls were allegedly raped at the shelter home in Muzaffarpur run by Brajesh Thakur, the chief of the state-funded NGO.

The alleged sexual exploitation of the girls was first highlighted in an audit report submitted by Tata Institute of Social Sciences to the state’s social welfare department in April.

An FIR was lodged against 11 people, including Thakur, on May 31. The probe has now been taken over by the CBI.

## WILD LIFE

TRIBUNE, OCT 3, 2018

### **Deaths of lions in Gujarat's Gir sanctuary 'very serious', look into it: SC tells Centre**



The Supreme Court asked the Centre on Wednesday to look into the mysterious deaths of 23 lions in Gujarat's Gir sanctuary in the past three weeks, amid fears that the wild cats could have died due to virus infection.

"Today, we are faced with a peculiar problem. Lions are dying. There seems to be some kind of virus. We do not know. It is coming in newspapers. You find it out," a Bench headed by Justice Madan B Lokur

told Additional Solicitor General ANS Nadkarni, who was appearing for the Centre.

The Bench, comprising justices S Abdul Nazeer and Deepak Gupta, was informed that 23 lions have died in the only abode of Asiatic lions in the world in the past three weeks.

“If there is any kind of virus infection, all lions will be wiped out from the area,” advocate Ritwick Dutta told the Bench, which was hearing a matter related to the re-introduction of cheetahs in India from Namibia in Africa.

The counsel said the manner in which the lions have died, there was a fear of the epidemic spreading to other animals.

The Gujarat Government on Monday said some of the lions died due to a virus infection. It said it was yet to identify the type of virus that led to the deaths.

An application was filed in the top court by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), seeking a direction that the court’s 2013 decision rendered in a wildlife case does not prevent authorities from taking steps in conformity with the law to re-introduce cheetahs from Africa to suitable sites in India.

During the hearing, the Bench asked the ASG about the deaths of lions in Gir sanctuary and said, “What are you doing on the issue of lions? It is very serious”.

The ASG told the court that a matter related to lions in Gujarat was already pending in the apex court.

“I will find out (about the deaths of lions),” he told the Bench.

During the hearing, NTCA’s counsel said they have complied with the requirements of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), an organisation working in the field of nature conservation, for re-location of cheetahs from Africa to India.

The Bench, however, told the counsel whether they have taken the consent of the IUCN in this regard.

“You want to re-introduce cheetahs from Namibia. There is a process. IUCN is involved in the process. You are saying that you have complied with the process laid down by IUCN. Has IUCN said that you have complied with it and they have no objection?.” the Bench asked.

NTCA’s counsel said that he would take instructions in this regard whether IUCN has given consent for re-location of cheetahs from Namibia to India.

The Bench has posted the matter for hearing on October 29. — PTI

# WOMEN

HINDU, OCT 1, 2018

## **Supreme Court: a crusade for women's rights**

Supreme Court's challenge to patriarchy has been on-going across Benches, CJIs

The past two years have seen the **Supreme Court** progressively question patriarchy in religion to ensure emancipation for women, and set the course for the future. But majority decisions in the court continue to take cover behind legal technicalities when it comes to politically-charged cases like the Ayodhya dispute and the arrest of five activists in the Bhima-Koregaon violence case.

The court has not shied away from confronting age-old personal law practices, usages and customs which were considered taboo.

## **Gender bias**

Chief Justice Dipak Misra belled the proverbial cat when he wrote in his main opinion that "historically, women have been treated unequally". No philosophy has so far convinced the large population of this country to open up and accept women as equal partners journey of spirituality, the Chief Justice wrote in the Sabarimala case.

In Sabarimala, the court held that the ban on women, based on their menstrual status, considering them as “polluted” and a distraction for worshippers vowed to celibacy, is a “form of untouchability”. In no uncertain terms, the court told the world that India still practices untouchability 63 years after the social evil was abolished under the Untouchability (Offences) Act in 1955.

The fact that the court, despite the changes in Chief Justices, has remained steadfast in its objective to realise the equal status of women in religion was witnessed in October 2016 when a Bench led by then Chief Justice of India T.S. Thakur drew a parallel between the restriction on women worshipping in Sabarimala temple and Mumbai’s famed Haji Ali Dargah. Chief Justice Thakur had observed that ‘exclusion’ is practised by both Hindus and Muslims and the “problem needs to be addressed”.

## One too many

The frantic activity at the SC has drawn to a close. Major verdicts:

**Criminalisation of politics:** SC said Parliament should pass a law mandating parties to sack leaders charged with heinous crimes, and refuse them tickets

**Adultery:** It is not a crime, the SC said, and struck it off the Indian Penal Code

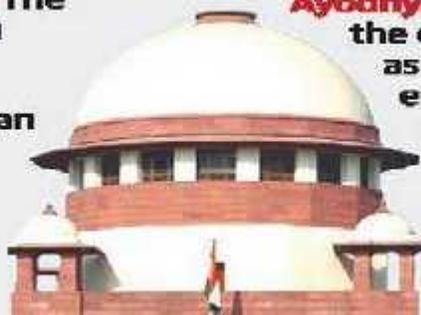
**Arrest of activists:** The arrests were not an attempt to silence dissent. SC also rejected a plea for an SIT probe

**Aadhaar:** The SC declared Aadhaar to be “a document of

empowerment”, while upholding its passage as a money bill. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud dissented, contending that “Aadhaar is unconstitutional”

**Sabarimala:** The SC lifted the bar on women from entering the Sabarimala shrine in Kerala

**Ayodhya:** SC declined to refer the question if a “mosque as a place of prayer is an essential part of Islam” in the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid appeals case to a seven-judge Bench. Justice S. Abdul Nazeer dissented



Hardly a week later, the Dargah Trust conceded before the court that it has resolved to allow women to enter the sanctum sanctorum of the dargah “at par with men”.

“Is that not what Your Lordships wanted? Is this not progressive?” senior advocate Gopal Subramaniam, for the Trust, asked the Thakur Bench.

The Khehar Court on August 22, 2017 declared the triple talaq unconstitutional and anti-Quran. Justice Kurian Joseph, on the Constitution Bench, held that “Islam cannot be anti-Quran... Triple talaq is against the basic tenets of the Holy Quran, and consequently, it violates Shariat”.

Over the past year, the Misra Court has intervened with the Parsi elders to allow Goolrokh Gupta, a Parsi woman, who married outside her faith, to pray at the Tower of Silence for her departed father. It has also referred to a Constitution Bench the question whether the practice of female circumcision or khafz, prevalent in the Dawoodi Bohra sect, amounts to “female genital mutilation” and is a violation of women’s right to life and dignity.

However, in the court’s decisions in three cases — Aadhaar, Ayodhya and activists’ arrests — the dissenting opinions of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and S. Abdul Nazeer resonate while the opinions of the majority on the Bench led by Chief Justice Misra feel prosaic.

## Fighting shy on politics

In the case regarding the arrested activists, the majority opinion shared between Chief Justice Misra and Justice Khanwilkar retains the probe with the Maharashtra Police. The two judges do not address Justice Chandrachud's conclusion that investigation should go to a SIT as there is "prejudice" on the side of the police.

In the Ayodhya case, Justice Nazeer points out the question in the 1994 Ismail Faruqui verdict, whether 'offering prayers in a mosque is an essential part of Islam or not', greatly influenced the Allahabad High Court's judgment to divide the Ayodhya land in September 2010.

The majority opinion of Chief Justice Misra and Justice Bhushan rests comfortably on the conclusion that the observation was confined to the facts of the Faruqui case.

In the majority opinion in the Aadhaar case, the lead opinion by Justice A.K. Sikri holds the right to provide dignity to the poor outweighs the right to privacy. The lead opinion strives for balance even as Justice Chandrachud, in his minority opinion, argues that it is not necessary to sacrifice privacy for dignity.

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**For Limited Circulation**

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