

## Processing of returns picked up, IT dept issuing refunds faster

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Some elements of the new project may be implemented under the current system as well.

Once the new mechanism is in place, taxpayers will get a pre-filled form in their income tax account which will have their name, PAN and other details, a tax officer said.

In addition, the columns related to salary, interest income and tax deducted at source captured in the 26AS forms will also be there. Taxpayers can add to the form by adding other income that may have accrued but not reported to the tax department earlier, said an officer.

Goyal also said there will be a system for quicker rectification of mistakes.

"This is a laudable initiative and will go a long way to ease tax compliance, collection of taxes and enhanced experience for taxpayers. India will become more competitive and aligned with global best practices. However, the real success of this will be measured when the technologies and tools become easy to use for a common man or woman and technology changes are accompanied by changes in the mindset and culture of the tax authorities at the operational levels," said Neev Ahuja, partner at consulting firm Deloitte India. In recent years, processing of returns has picked up and the tax department is also issuing refunds faster.

## Home min to mull online FIRs for railways

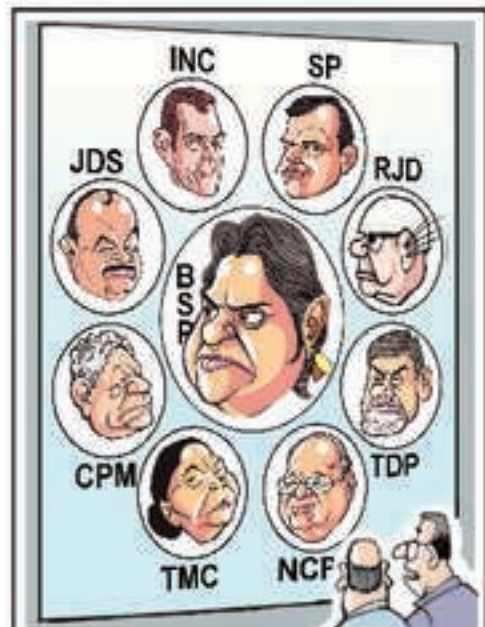
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Sharing his concern over passengers' ordeal to file an FIR in case of a crime or theft on trains, Union home minister Rajnath Singh pitched creation of a framework for people to file it online during their journey. Junior railway minister Manoj Sinha also favoured giving more power to Railway Protection Force (RPF) highlighting how it's "toothless".

Speaking at an event on railway security, Singh said the home ministry will see whether online filing of FIRs can be integrated into the CCTNS system, which allows citizens to lodge FIRs electronically. "If somebody is travelling by train and something happens, he needs to visit the Government Railway Police station to get an FIR registered. It will then go to the state, to district and eventually to the police station concerned. There is no guarantee that he would get the desired justice," he said.

Singh suggested to railway ministry to discuss and decide on online FIR. "We will provide all possible support from the home ministry," he said. Both Sinha and RPF director general Arun Kumar pushed for handing over registration, inquiry and detection of passenger-related crimes on board trains to the RPF. The minister said a draft bill for amendment in the Railways Act to empower RPF to register, inquire and prosecute cases of luggage theft and crime against women has been approved to be sent to the Cabinet for approval.

JUST LIKE THAT AJIT NINAN



Grand Alliance option 2—Netas dial M for 'Maya-gathbandhan'

# Expansionist China's inroads into Indo-Pacific alarms US

### 'Beijing Looking For Strategic Bases In Pak, Cambodia And Vanuatu'

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New Delhi: After establishing its first overseas naval base at Djibouti in the Horn of Africa in August 2017, which now also hosts marines, infantry combat vehicles and helicopters, China is now looking at Pakistan, Cambodia, Vanuatu and other countries for additional military bases to enhance its strategic footprint and emerge as the pre-eminent power in the crucial Indo-Pacific region.

Sounding this warning in its latest report on "China's global expansion by military and non-military means", the Pentagon says Beijing also "completed" over \$20 billion



LONG-TERM VISION

of military sales and transfers as a component of its foreign policy just between 2012 and 2016 to become the world's fifth largest arms supplier.

This included \$8 billion in arms to Indo-Pacific countries, primarily Pakistan, Ban-

gladesh and Myanmar. China's second-largest arms sales were to the Middle East and North Africa.

Pakistan, on its part, is getting eight Yuan-class diesel-electric submarines, two Type-054A multi-role frigates

and other weapons. The Djibouti base, where China is now constructing a 450-metre pier capable of berthing at four warships by mid-2019, and "probable follow-on bases at other locations" signal "a turning point" in the expansion of operations of the People's Liberation Army in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and beyond, warns the Pentagon report.

"These bases, and other improvements to the PLA's ability to project power during the next decade, will increase China's ability to deter the use of conventional military force, sustain operations abroad, and hold strategic economic corridors at risk," it says.

## Apex court junks plea of states to take control of DGP selection

Dhananjay.Mahapatra @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: In a jolt to states like West Bengal, Punjab, Kerala, Bihar and Haryana, the Supreme Court on Wednesday rejected their attempt to wrest control over selection of the state police chief and ordered that directors general of police must continue to be selected from among senior officers empanelled by the Union Public Service Commission.

To step around the apex court's 2006 judgment in the Prakash Singh case — it mandated selection of DGP from a panel of IPS officers drawn up

The bench said given the spirit behind the directions issued in Prakash Singh case, it would serve public interest "if the same are implemented until such time that the matter is heard finally"

by the UPSC — some states had enacted laws allowing setting up of an internal committee headed by the chief secretary to empanel senior police officers, from whom the state could select one. A bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices L N Rao and S K Kaul said attempts to usurp the process of empanelling police officers ran counter to the Prakash Singh judgment, which wanted to en-

sure that "commitment, devotion and accountability of the police have to be only to rule of law". The bench said given the spirit behind the directions issued in Prakash Singh case, which were "wholesome", it would serve public interest "if the same are implemented until such time that the matter (challenge to state police Acts) is heard finally". Attempting to free police force from noxious

political-bureaucratic influences, an SC bench headed by then CJI Y K Sabharwal had said, "Supervision and control has to be such that it ensures that police serves people without any regard, whatsoever, to the status and position of any person while investigating a crime or taking preventive measures. Its approach has to be service oriented, its role has to be defined so that in appropriate cases, where on account of acts of omission and commission of police, the rule of law becomes a casualty, the guilty police officers are brought to book and appropriate action taken without any delay."

## Four nuns who stood up for rape survivor 'punished'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kottayam: Four nuns who had supported the survivor nun in the rape case against Jalandhar bishop Franco Mulackal have been asked by the Missionaries of Jesus congregation to leave the Kuravilangad convent in Kerala and rejoin their communities in other parts of the country. Sr Regina Kadamthottu, superior general of the Jalandhar-based congregation, in separate letters, said that the nuns — Sr Alphie Pallasseril, Sr Anupama Kelamangalathuvayil, Sr Josephine Villoonnickal and Sr Ancilla Urumbil — had defied her repeated instructions to rejoin the communities to which they belong canonically as per their appointment.

The nuns, who participated in the September 2018 protest demanding the arrest of Bishop Mulackal, are now staying with the survivor



This is like a disciplinary action against us, said one of the nuns. This is a ploy to torpedo the case and isolate the survivor, she said

nun. The superior general's letter to Sr Nina Rose, the fifth nun who participated in the protest, is also expected soon. The nuns have said that they would not obey the orders. "This is like a disciplinary action against us," Sr Anupama said. "We are preparing a reply to the superior general. This is a ploy to torpedo the case and isolate the survivor nun," she said.

## 'Employer kills three UP men in Saudi'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Varanasi: Three people, including two brothers, from UP's Azamgarh are said to have been murdered by their employer in Saudi Arabia recently, UP cops said.

Azamgarh SP Ravi Shankar Chhabhi said the process to bring back their bodies was underway. "The two brothers belonged to Raunapur while the third victim was from Ji-

yanpur. All three had gone to Saudi Arabia to earn a living," Chhabhi said. Brothers Shafiqat, 35, and Shamim, 32, and Faiyyaz, 40, were working as drivers in Riyadh. Around 12 days ago, Shafiqat had gone to meet his employer for final settlement following some dispute between the two. When he did not return, Shamim and Faiyyaz went to the employer asking for Shafiqat. They too never returned.

## Protesters stop 2 women from entering Sabarimala

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Thiruvananthapuram: Two women of menstruating age, who trekked the Sabarimala hill on Wednesday, were stopped midway by protesters opposing the entry of women into the Lord Ayyappa temple, police said.

Reshma Nishanth and Shanila, both residents of Kannur district, attempted to climb the holy hill early in the morning but were prevented from proceeding to the temple after the devotees spotted them with Irumudikettu (offerings to Lord Ayyappa). "They were stopped at Neelimala (en route Sabarimala). They were brought down after protests broke out. After taking them down to Pamba, they were moved to Erumeli around 7am," police said. Sources said the women had come along with a group of men. "We had informed the police before reaching here seeking protection," Nishanth told media. TV channels reported that both women, who are now under police custody, sat on indefinite fast demanding that they be allowed to enter the shrine. Reacting to the development, Devaswom Minister Kadakampally Surendran termed the act of stopping devotees (women) from visiting Sabarimala "barbaric".

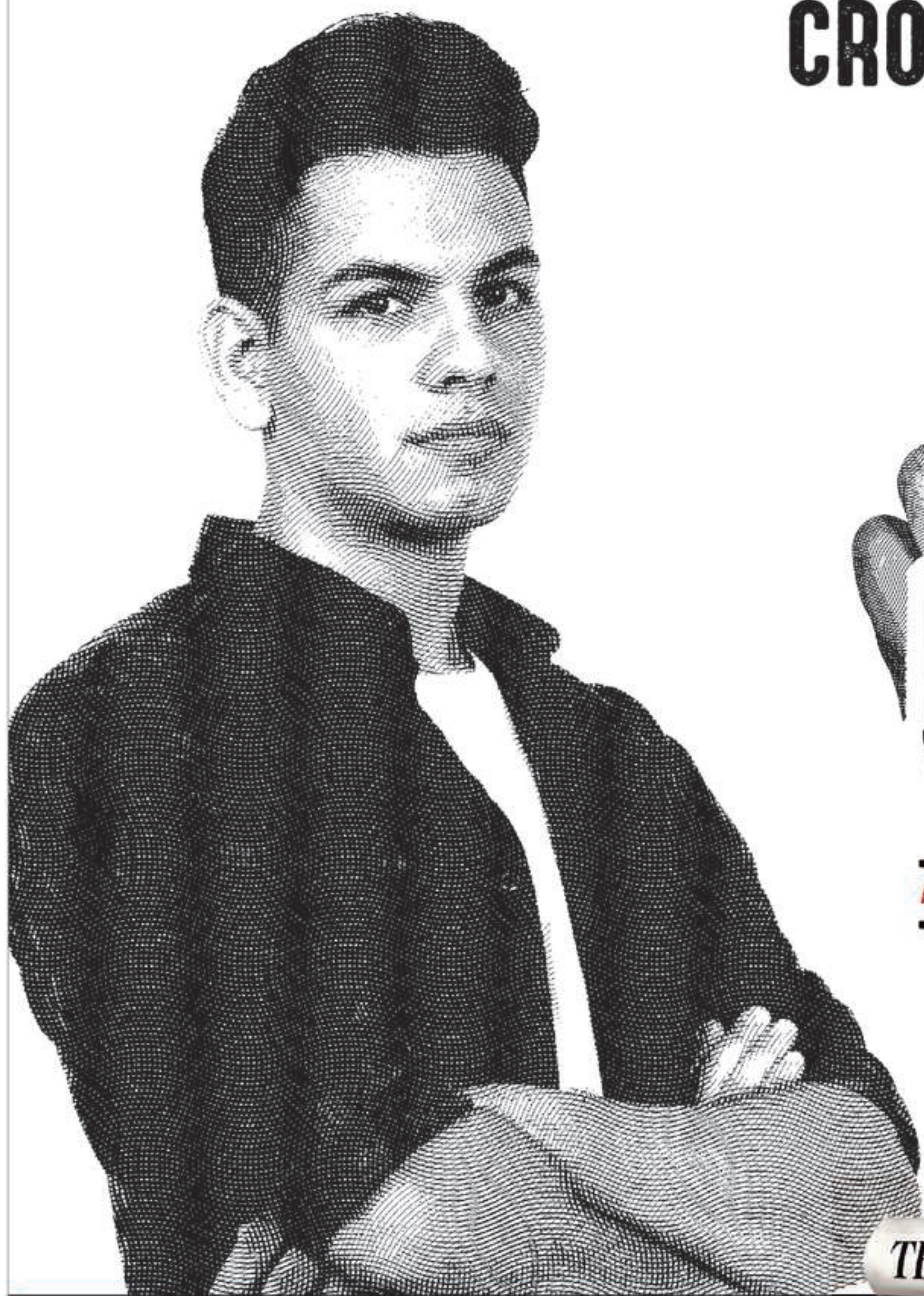
"All women who have followed the vritham can enter Sabarimala. The act of stopping devotees from visiting the shrine is barbaric. What's happening at Sabarimala is goondaism," he said. Since the shrine opened for the Mandalam-Makaravilakku festivities on November 17, it had witnessed massive protests by devotees and right-wing outfits against the state government's decision to implement the Supreme Court's order, allowing women of all ages to enter the temple.



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