

## ANANTNAG FIREFIGHT LEAVES 2 MILITANTS, SOLDIER DEAD

# Jaish militant whose van was used in Pulwama CRPF convoy attack killed in Valley gunbattle

Sajad Maqbool Bhat's killing is a big achievement, say J&K security officers

ADIL AKHZER  
SRINAGAR, JUNE 18

SECURITY FORCES in the Valley notched a big success Tuesday when Jaish-e-Mohammad militant Sajad Maqbool Bhat, who owned the Maruti Eco van that was used in the February 14 Pulwama attack which left 40 CRPF personnel dead, was killed along with another militant in an Anantnag village in South Kashmir.

life in the gunbattle which took place less than 24 hours after a Major and a militant were killed in a firefight in Anantnag district Monday.

Colonel Rajesh Kalia, Defence spokesman based in Srinagar, said: "Two terrorists eliminated today. One soldier martyred in the operation."

In an official release, J&K Police said a cordon and search operation (CASO) was launched by security forces at Marhama village in Bijbehara area of

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Era Sharma bids farewell in Meerut, Tuesday, to her husband Major Ketan Sharma, who succumbed to injuries sustained in a gunbattle in J&K's Anantnag. Praveen Khanna

## On WhatsApp, Major told family: 'Maybe my last photo'

SOMYA LAKHANI  
MEERUT, JUNE 18

"MAYBE THIS is my last photo," wrote Major Ketan Sharma around 7 am Monday while posting a photograph of himself on a family WhatsApp group. Hours later, he succumbed to injuries sustained in a gunbattle in South Kashmir's Anantnag.

On Tuesday, his hometown Meerut was enveloped in grief as his body was brought home.



Major Ketan Sharma of 19 Rashtriya Rifles

"Mera sher putt goliyon toh nahi darda si (My brave son wasn't afraid of bullets). Where has my son gone? Just tell me what time Ranu (his nickname) will be back, I request you to return him

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## SHAMBHU SINGH NOW IN CUSTODY

# Minister V K Singh calls ex-aide a fraud, had fulsome praise last year

Also told Delhi CP to act against cops who booked ex-aide for cheating

SHYAMLAL YADAV & MAHENDER SINGH  
MANRAL  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 18

LAST WEEK, Ghaziabad Police arrested Shambhu Prasad Singh, former political aide of Union Minister Gen (retired) V K Singh, for alleged fraud, cheating and forgery.

Four FIRs were filed against him, the first based on a complaint by the Minister's Private Secretary (PS) Surjeet Singh accusing Shambhu Prasad of "tampering the name and image of Hon'ble (Minister) by duping people... misusing his position... impersonating and cheating as staff of Hon'ble Minister" and "for taking illegal and unauthorised possession of files, documents... which are properties of the office of the Hon'ble Minister".

The complaint to Upendra Agarwal, SSP, Ghaziabad, on April 26, 2019, also said that after having worked for "six months"



VK Singh and Shambhu Prasad Singh (left). File

— Shambhu Prasad was appointed in June 2014 — complaints were received by the Minister that he was trying to "make illegal money." He was warned but after a "brief halt", he was back to "extorting money", the complaint said. And that he continued with his "nefarious activities" even after being removed.

Gen (ret'd) Singh's scathing indictment of his aide doesn't quite match with what the Minister has himself put on record earlier.

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## THE EDITORIAL PAGE

### GIVE HONG KONG MORE SPACE

BY THOMAS ABRAHAM  
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### BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



## Om Birla is NDA's Speaker nominee: Grassroots politician who rose through the BJP youth ranks

PRADEEP KAUSHAL & HAMZA KHAN  
NEW DELHI, JAIPUR, JUNE 18

TWO-TERM BJP MP from Rajasthan Om Birla was Tuesday named the NDA nominee for the Speaker's post in Lok Sabha. Birla, 57, represents the Kota-Bundi constituency and was earlier elected to the Rajasthan assembly twice before he contested the LS polls.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is learnt to have proposed Birla's name for the post. His election to the high office is cer-



Om Birla with 16th Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan in New Delhi, Tuesday. Tashi Tobgyal

tain given the commanding position of the ruling NDA in the House and the absence of any

other candidate. Birla has the backing of not only NDA partners, including the AIADMK, but

the YSR Congress Party and the Biju Janata Dal as well.

President Ram Nath Kovind has scheduled the election for the post on Wednesday.

It has been a long wait for Birla, who cut his teeth as a politician in the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, the BJP's youth wing. He first had to wait for a chance to get a party ticket in an assembly election at a time when senior leaders like Lalit Kishore Chaturvedi

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## IN PARLIAMENT

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## Anand Grover, NGO booked by CBI, they say attempt to silence them

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 18

ACTING ON a complaint from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the CBI has registered an FIR against the Lawyers Collective, a rights issue NGO run by senior lawyers Indira Jaising and Anand Grover, for alleged violation of the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) and criminal offences under sections of the Indian Penal Code and Prevention of Corruption Act.

The FIR, registered in Mumbai on June 13, also names Grover, unknown office bearers of Lawyers Collective and unknown private persons and public servants. Suspected offences listed include criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, false statement made in declaration and criminal misconduct.

In 2016, the MHA had cancelled the FCRA licence of

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## Govt rethink: Visas for sportspersons from all countries (also Pakistan)

MIHIR VASAVDA  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 18

CLEARING THE way for sportspersons from Pakistan to compete in international events held in India, the government assured the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Tuesday that visas will be granted to participants from all countries "without prejudice".

This allows the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) to go ahead with its bids to host mega events, including the 2032 Olympics. In February, India was on the verge of isolation after a three-member Pakistani team was refused visas for the shooting World Cup in Delhi.

In a letter to IOC chief Thomas Bach and IOA president Narinder Batra, Sports Secretary Radhey Shyam Julaniya said the government will "permit all qualified athletes belonging to any National Olympic Committee..." to take part in events held in India.

"Such participation of

## EXPLAINED

### Clears the way for global event bids

BY REFUSING visas to sportspersons from Pakistan in February, India faced the risk of not being allowed to host big-ticket events such as Olympics and Asian Games. The assurance ensures India stays within global norms against discrimination in sports, including for political reasons.

athletes shall be without prejudice to our principled positions and policies on other political matters, including issues such as international recognition or otherwise of country of origin of the

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## 6 years after picking up bow, daily wager's son hits world silver

PAGE 1  
ANCHOR

MIHIR VASAVDA  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 18

PRAVIN JADHAV has spent half his life in a shanty near a drain, in a household where two full meals are a luxury. There's no electricity and water is scarce. And the only reason he picked up a bow — about six years ago, against his family's wish — was to escape poverty.

Now, Jadhav is Olympics-bound. Well, almost.

On Sunday, the 22-year-old from Satara teamed up with veterans Tarundeep Rai and Atanu Dasto to win a World Championship silver medal in the Dutch city of



Pravin Jadhav is also the national champion

's-Hertogenbosch and book a quota for next year's Tokyo Olympics.

Jadhav, who till a few years ago hadn't stepped out of Sarde village, was part of a team that conquered rivals from Norway, Canada, Chinese Taipei and the Netherlands before losing to China in the gold-medal match.

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