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P7

“THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW”

“MCI WAS PLAGUED BY CORRUPTION”

HARSH VARDHAN

UNION HEALTH MINISTER

## Ayodhya mediation: 4 proposals saw some light till talks failed

**SEEMACHISHTI**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 4

ATTEMPTS TO find a settlement in the Ayodhya dispute by the Supreme Court-appointed mediation committee continued till the last minute of the deadline, with intense talks towards the end of July holding out a tantalising hope that a “breakthrough” could be achieved. After a firm proposal submitted by those asking for the mosque did not elicit any response from those asking for the temple, the committee tried to get a consensus on what it called “the four elements” (see box) for arriving at a deal. But, with some of the contesting parties not agreeing to these propos-

als, the committee had to report to the Supreme Court that the proceedings had “failed”.

Based on detailed conversations with the sides involved in the mediation, *The Indian Express* has learnt that the side asking for a mosque submitted a proposal in a sealed envelope, during the committee's second meeting in Faizabad, for a mosque and a temple adjacent to each other within the disputed area. It also gave a detailed layout for the same. But the proposal was a non-starter as it elicited no response from the side asking for the temple.

Thereafter, the mediation committee tried to break the log-jam by formulating four essential elements for a possible deal,

### THE ALMOST FOUR

■ Freeze status of all places of worship as per 1991 Act, or as on August 15, 1947

■ Ask ASI to streamline process of declaring mosques as ‘monuments’

■ In lieu of Babri Masjid, give alternative land and funds for a mosque elsewhere

■ Repair, refurbish, restore “about 20 mosques” in Ayodhya

which were underpinned on the premise that the mosque would be completely relocated outside

### KASHMIR CLAMPDOWN

## Srinagar hears midnight knock: Omar, Mufti under arrest, Internet snapped

Bar on public movement; schools shut



Forces out on Srinagar streets on Sunday night. AP

Govt looks at land laws to dilute Art 35A

**PVAIDYANATHAN IYER**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 4

WHILE THE Centre has held the Kashmir card close to its chest despite a flurry of action over the last few days, top state government officials have been exploring options to modify Article 35A, which confers special rights to the permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

The options include creating categories of land and allowing outsiders to purchase land in certain cases, and placing restrictions on the quantum of land based on the usage. To curtail misuse, they said, Article 35A can borrow from land laws in hilly states such as Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

A government source said, “There are issues about selling

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Before jail over CSR, govt should have seen this data

Total spend by firms has gone up in the last 5 yrs from 70% to over 90%

**SANDEEP SINGH**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 4

THE AMENDMENT to the Companies Act, introducing harsh penalties including jail term for non-compliance on CSR (corporate social responsibility), comes at a time when firms have been successively improving their record on the front. Data sourced from Prime Database (a leading provider of data on capital market), shows that in the last five years, the total CSR spend of companies has progressively jumped

from 70% to over 90% now.

According to the data available for 224 companies for the year 2018-19, against a required CSR spend of Rs 4,366.8 crore, the firms spent an aggregate of Rs 3,994 crore or 91.5% of the requirement. The percentage stood at 79% in FY'16, 83.8% in FY'17 and 83.2% in FY'18.

Data further shows that both the number of companies eligible for mandatory CSR spending and their total spend have shown a significant rise. While the amount stood at Rs 6,446

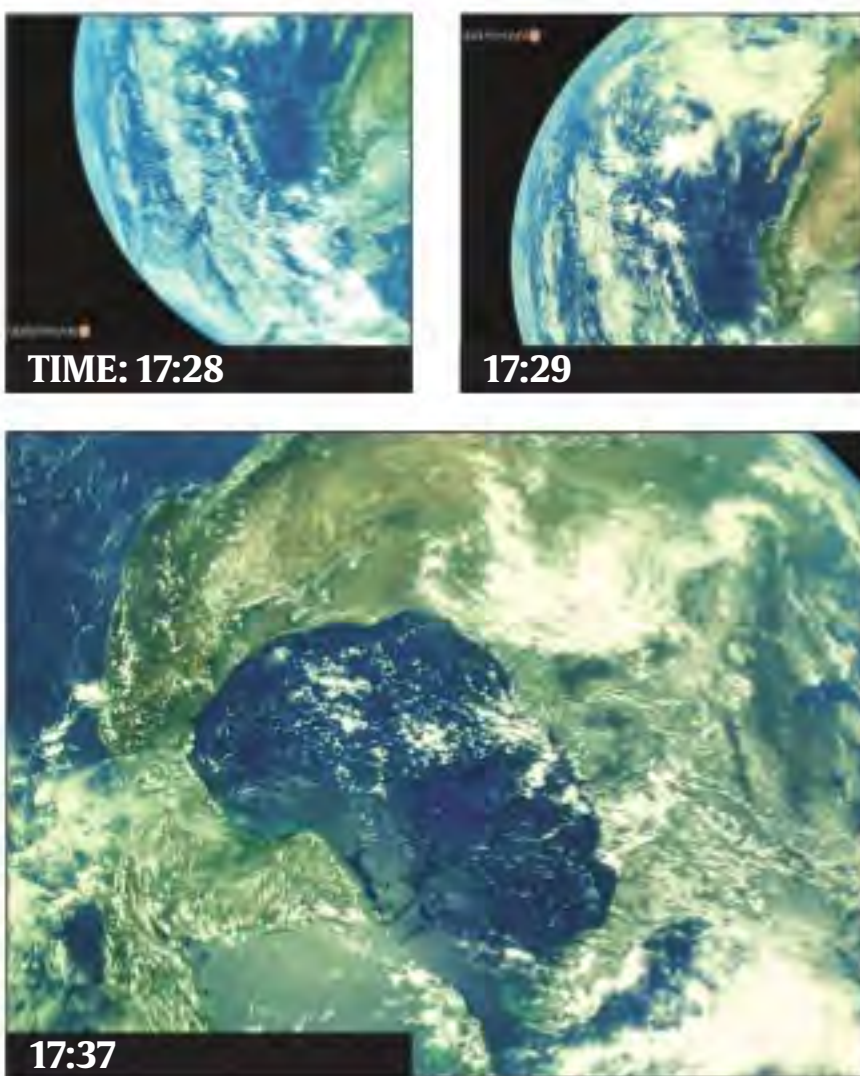
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EXPLAINED

### Surprise move

WHILE some call the mandatory CSR spend clause itself regressive, there is no impact assessment either on whether the sums spend under it are actually effective. Penal provisions on top of it, despite improvement as shown by this data come as a surprise.

### VIEW FROM THE TOP



### WHAT'S NEXT

**AUGUST 6:** Spacecraft to raise itself into a higher orbit

**AUGUST 14:** Break from Earth orbit, head to Moon

**AUGUST 20:** Slated to enter an orbit around the moon

**SEPTEMBER 3:** Vikram lander, inside which Pragyaan rover is housed, will separate from the spacecraft and descend into a lower orbit around the moon

**SEPTEMBER 7:** Lander and rover to attempt a touchdown on the lunar surface

	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	2015-16	2014-15
No. of companies considered for the analysis*	224	1077	992	911	849
Required CSR spends	4,366.82	10,364.78	9,668.51	9,088.06	8,201.51
Shortfall in spends	372.56	1,740.91	1,565.06	1,883.41	2,444.63
CSR spends as a percent of required CSR	91.47	83.20	83.81	79.28	70.19

\* Firms listed on NSE and obligated to spend on CSR and for which CSR details were available in Annual Reports  
CSR spend figures in ₹ crore; Source: Prime Database

## CWC to meet Aug 10, Deora puts up Pilot, Scindia names

**MANOJ CG**  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 4

AS THE Congress announced Sunday that it would hold a meeting of its Working Committee on August 10 to appoint a new president in place of Rahul Gandhi, the party's leadership crisis took another turn with names of someone from outside the Gandhi family being suggested for the top post.

Former Union minister Milind Deora said on Sunday that he was of the view that “young leaders like Sachin Pilot and Jyotiraditya Scindia can lead and invigorate the party”. “My view is that the party must put its best foot forward. It is very clear now that a member of the Gandhi family will not become party president. They have made

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

## Assam dists panic, notices at night for NRC hearings 300 km away

**ABHISHEK SAHA**  
SONTOLI (KAMRUP), AUGUST 4

ON SUNDAY, Abu Sama and Abu Bakkar boarded a packed bus with their young children and wives, hoping to make it to a hearing of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Jorhat, over 300 km away, scheduled for Monday. The daily wage labourers were among the hundreds of people in at least two districts of Lower Assam, Kamrup (Rural) and Barpeta, to have received “sudden” notices to appear for NRC hearings in far-off towns within the next few days, starting Monday.

The notices started arriving Saturday night. With the short deadline adding to the panic, and the government tight-lipped, villagers across the two districts hired vehicles to make the long travel, many of them for the first time in their lives.

The bus Sama and Bakkar



At Sontoli, one of the trucks hired for hearings. Abhishek Saha

boarded was hired for Rs 30,000 by those served notices in their village. Other families were seen clambering onto Tata Sumos and pick-up trucks, headed apart from Jorhat, for towns like Dibrugarh, Sivasagar and Golaghat.

Referring to Sontoli, a local police officer said, “It seems al-

most every house has received a notice in this area.” A few of his colleagues too had got notices, he added, and had applied for leave.

In adjoining Goroimari, where many received notices too, there was panic selling to arrange money for travel.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8**

## Ponzi scam: IMA founder may have kept bribe records

**JOHNSON T A**  
BENGALURU, AUGUST 4

INVESTIGATIONS BY a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Karnataka police into a nearly Rs 1,400 crore scam, where over 40,000 investors in a firm called I Monetary Advisory Ltd have been cheated through a ponzi scheme dubbed as sharia compliant, have revealed that the firm's founder, Mohammed Mansoor Khan, maintained records on his computer of bribes he paid officials.

The names of several top police officers who served in the eastern jurisdiction of Bengaluru city, where the IMAGroup is located, are present in the records maintained by the alleged scamster, multiple police sources familiar with details of records

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

**THE GOVERNANCE PAGE**  

How a biometric-based train system is reducing chaos on railway platforms

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HOW A BIOMETRIC SYSTEM IS REDUCING CHAOS ON RAILWAY PLATFORMS

PAGE 12

## Indian men mark arrival in badminton's speediest, strongest, toughest event

**PAGE 1 ANCHOR**

**SHIVANI NAIK**  
MUMBAI, AUGUST 4

SIX YEARS ago, coaches Pullela Gopichand in Hyderabad and Uday Pawar in Mumbai told their respective wards Saatwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty that their future lay in ditching singles ambitions and embracing dou-

bles. On Sunday, they became the first-ever Indians to win a Super 500 championship, beating reigning world champions Chinese Li Jun Hui and Liu Yu Chen 21-19, 18-21, 21-18 at the Thailand Open.

This is India's first top title in what is badminton's speediest, strongest and toughest event to crack — the men's doubles, dominated by the powerful and blitzzy Indonesians, Chinese, Koreans and Danes.

“I watched with tingling excitement as two young Indians



Shetty (left), Rankireddy after their win at Thailand Open in Bangkok. Courtesy BAI

showed a lot of wisdom and brains as well as control over the shuttle,” gushed India's foremost doubles player, 86-year-old Nandu Natekar, watching from Pune. “There are always four very fast players on court in doubles at the topmost level. To see two of them being Indian was a fabulous treat,” he added.

India has always seen the solo artists winning big — besides two All-England singles champions in Gopichand and Prakash

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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