



Tej Pratap Yadav
addicted to drugs, says
wife in divorce plea

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Plea to reschedule NRC
hearings for people
from far-flung areas

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14 killed, 145 injured
in blast triggered by
the Taliban in Kabul

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India to take on
West Indies in
the first ODI

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NEARBY



Arguments begin in
Unnao rape case

NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Wednesday started hearing arguments in the Unnao rape case in which Uttar Pradesh MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar is one of the accused. Counsel for the CBI submitted before District and Sessions Judge Dharmesh Sharma that the minor was assaulted by the expelled BJP MLA and co-accused Shashi Singh helped him in the commission of the crime as she had lured the victim to his residence on the pretext of getting her a job.

NORTH • PAGE 5

No trace of cab driver
who 'raped' JNU student

NEW DELHI

After four days of investigation, the police are yet to trace the cab or the driver who had allegedly raped a 21-year-old JNU student. A police officer said the statements given by the student are not matching with the electronic evidence accessed by them.

CITY • PAGE 3



RBI takes offbeat tack to help reverse growth slowdown

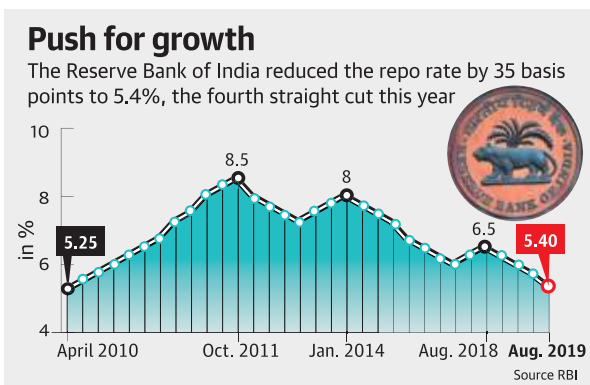
EMIs to fall after 'unconventional' 35 bps rate reduction

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday opted to break with convention by reducing the key policy rate, the repo rate, by 35 basis points (bps), to 5.4% as it focused monetary policy measures on helping revive demand to tackle a deepening economic slowdown.

While central banks typically cut or raise interest rates in increments of a quarter percentage point or in multiples, Governor Shaktikanta Das said too much should not be read into the departure from convention.

The extent of cut was determined by the situation, he said. This is the first time the RBI has moved rates by a figure that is not a multiple



of 25 bps. A percentage point comprises 100 bps.

"Given the evolving economic situation, the assessment of the MPC, based on demand conditions etc. 25 bps cut was inadequate, while a 50 bps rate cut was excessive, especially after taking into account the ac-

tions already undertaken," Mr. Das said in a post-policy press briefing. "That is why we have taken a balanced call."

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RBI'S GOLDLOCKS CUT

EDITORIAL

MORE REPORTS ► PAGE 15

Mayawati changes party U.P. chief, LS leader

Munquad Ali is new State BSP president

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
LUCKNOW/ NEW DELHI

Making key changes to its organisation, the Bahujan Samaj Party on Wednesday appointed former Rajya Sabha MP Munquad Ali as the president of its Uttar Pradesh unit, while also replacing its floor leader in the Lok Sabha Kunwar Danish Ali.

Shyam Singh Yadav, the first-time MP from Jaunpur, is the new leader of the party in the Lok Sabha, where it has 10 members. Ritesh Pandey, the MP from Ambedkar Nagar, was nominated the BSP's deputy leader in the Lower House.

While Mr. Yadav is an OBC — the BSP highlighted his "pichda varg" (backward credentials) in its press statement — Mr. Danish Ali, MP from Amroha in western U.P., is Muslim.

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MORE REPORTS ► PAGE 15

Pakistan shuts a part of its airspace

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

Pakistan has closed a corridor in its airspace, which will result in an additional 12 minutes of flying time for overseas flights, an Air India official said on Wednesday. The flights would have to be diverted to other routes due to the closure.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Many Jammu residents hail integration as best option

Phone and Internet connectivity continue to be disrupted

DAMINI NATH
JAMMU

Looking at a nearly deserted road that functions as Jammu's main outstation bus stand, Shubham Sharma said on Wednesday that though his business of ferrying passengers to Srinagar had taken a hit over the past three days, he was sure that "this [amending Article 370] was the best option, even for Kashmiris."

It had been three days since the government imposed restrictions under Section 144 of the CrPc, curtailing vehicular movement and shutting off mobile Internet services in Jammu, ahead of its announcement of revoking Jammu and Kashmir's special status and bifurcating the State into two Union Territories on Monday.

While many Jammu residents welcomed the Modi government's move, across the road from Mr. Sharma, Umar, a resident of Srinagar who also runs a tourism transport business, termed it a "betrayal."

Umar, who wished to be identified by his first name alone, said he drove from Srinagar overnight to avoid the stone-pelting by protesters, just in order to make a phone call to relatives abroad. Since Sunday night, all phone — mobile and fixed



Stranded on the street: Children sleeping on a pavement outside the Tourist Reception Centre in Srinagar as their parents make efforts to leave the Valley. ■ NISSAR AHMAD

'Unprecedented lockdown'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

J&K People's Movement president Shah Faesal on Wednesday said Kashmir was experiencing an unprecedented lockdown and the locals were yet to make sense of what had

line — services and Internet connectivity in Srinagar have been stopped on government orders.

"The government has put us at gunpoint. We had an agreement with India, not with Pakistan, when we joined. Now, they have broken the agreement. What re-

befallen them. "Everyone is mourning what we lost...its the loss of statehood that has hurt people deeply. This is being seen as the biggest betrayal by the Indian State in last 70 years," the former IAS officer tweeted. ► PAGE 12

lation do we have left with them? Now, anyone can come and claim Kashmir, be it Pakistan or China," said Umar, as he waited for information about when he could start driving back to Srinagar, if the roads were open.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

Liaison officers plan on-campus Id celebrations for J&K students

SAURABH TRIVEDI
NEW DELHI

To help calm the nerves of students from Kashmir currently studying in various colleges in Delhi-NCR and neighbouring States, the liaison officers appointed by the J&K government are planning several measures, including Id-ul-Azha celebrations, on campus.

Acting on the instructions of the Chief Secretary, J&K government, all liaison officers who have the responsibility of coordinating with J&K students at various universi-

ties/colleges in north India have started visiting the campuses under their respective jurisdiction since August 6.

Visit to colleges

"Liaison officers in Chandigarh, Delhi-NCR, Meerut, Jaipur and Aligarh have visited colleges/universities and met the students as well as the institute authorities. Around 50 students have approached them with a request to contact their families in the Valley," said Veedushi Kapoor, Deputy Director with Kashmir Bureau

of Information.

"The liaison officers are planning to celebrate Id with some of the students. All necessary arrangements are being made for the festival," said Ms. Kapoor.

The colleges have been asked to issue a formal advisory to all the students to avoid making any inflammatory remarks and not pay heed to any rumours, said Ms. Kapoor. The local administration, including the police, is also keenly involved in sensitising the students.

SEE ALSO ► PAGE 2

Full state honours for Sushma

Tributes pour in from diplomatic community, world capitals

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Tributes poured in from the diplomatic community and world capitals for former External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, who was cremated here on Wednesday with full state honours.

The series of condolences were led by the Ministry of External Affairs that she exited in May.

"Enjoying immense respect within the Ministry and outside, for her compassionate and amiable personality, she has left a lasting legacy for putting people at the core of Indian diplomacy," said the Ministry of External Affairs in a statement.

The United States, Japan, Bangladesh, and Bhutan were among the countries that condoled the passing away of Ms. Swaraj, who had



Irreparable loss: Sushma Swaraj's husband Swaraj Kaushal and daughter Bansuri, centre, at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ PTI

a distinguished public life spanning more than four decades. "Saddened to hear of the passing of my friend and former Indian External Af-

fairs Minister Sushma Swaraj. She was a strong partner who shared our view that a more democratic world is a more peaceful one," said Se-

cretary of State Mike Pompeo in a message.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 12

MORE REPORTS ► PAGES 3, 12

Why use Urdu, Persian terms in FIR, asks HC

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday directed the Delhi Police Commissioner to explain why Urdu or Persian terms are used in an FIR when the same are not used by the complainant.

A Bench of Chief Justice D.N. Patel and Justice C. Hari Shankar said: "Too much flowery language, the meaning of which is to be found out by a dictionary, should not be used. An FIR should be in the words of the complainant. The police is there for public at large and not just for persons with doctorate degree in Urdu or Persian. Simple language should be used, instead of high-sounding words."

DETAILS ON ► PAGE 4

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