

Ex-inmate of Muzaffarpur shelter home gang-raped

Crime committed in moving car: police

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BETTIAH

A woman, who had been an inmate of the infamous Muzaffarpur shelter home, was allegedly raped by four men in a moving vehicle in Bettiah town of West Champaran district, the police said on Sunday.

The Muzaffarpur shelter home had hit the headlines in 2018 after a social audit report highlighted that over 30 girls were allegedly raped at the government-aided shelter home, run by an NGO.

Bettiah town police station SHO Shashi Bhushan Thakur said that the woman was admitted to a government medical college on Saturday evening and an examination was conducted by a team of doctors on Sunday, he said.

Medical report

It will be confirmed whether she was raped only after getting the medical examina-

tion report, he said.

The woman, in her police complaint lodged with the Bettiah town police station on Saturday, alleged that four men forcibly took her inside their vehicle while she was passing through the area where she lives on Friday evening, and raped her in a moving vehicle, police said. The men then dumped the woman in her locality after raping her.

All the four men had covered their faces with masks but she could remove the masks and identify them.

While all the four persons belonged to the same family, two of them were brothers, she said.

Over 30 girls were allegedly raped at the shelter home run by Brajesh Thakur, the chief of a State-funded NGO. The alleged sexual exploitation of the girls was first highlighted in an audit report submitted by TISS to the State's Social Welfare Department.

India asks Pak. to keep peace

More than 2,000 ceasefire breaches reported this year

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Intensifying the war of words, India on Sunday asked Pakistan to stick to the 2003 ceasefire agreement and maintain peace at the Line of Control. A government source said the Indian military response had been restrained so far despite more than 2,000 ceasefire violations by Pakistan.

Unprovoked firing

"This year, they have resorted to more than 2,050 unprovoked ceasefire violations in which 21 Indians have died. We have repeatedly called upon Pakistan to ask its forces to adhere to the 2003 ceasefire understanding and maintain peace and tranquillity along the LoC and the International Border," said a source, mentioning that India has not responded to unprovoked



India says that its response has been restrained so far despite over 2,000 violations by Pakistan this year. PT/FILE PHOTO

provocations and attempted terrorist infiltration.

The statement came after Pakistan summoned Indian Charge d'Affaires Gaurav Ahluwalia and conveyed Islamabad's condemnation of alleged ceasefire violations by Indian forces on September 14 in the Nikiyal and Jandrot sectors of the LoC.

Pakistan's charge

Pakistan said that Indian firing claimed the life of one ci-

vilian of Balakot village near the LoC, and urged India to allow the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan to look into such incidents.

The exchange between Pakistan and India came in the backdrop of a similar diplomatic spat between Islamabad and Kabul after alleged shooting from militants in Afghanistan killed a Pakistani border guard.

A war may lead to nuclear conflict: Imran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has said there was no question of talking to New Delhi after it revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, as he warned about the possibility of a conventional war with India which could go beyond the subcontinent.

"So that's why we have approached the United Nations, we are approaching every international forum, that they must act right now," he said.

"I am a pacifist," he told *Al Jazeera*, adding that Pakistan would never start a war. "When two nuclear-armed countries fight, if they fight a conventional war, there is every possibility that it is going to end up into nuclear war. The unthinkable," he said.

Man falls while removing hoarding in Chennai

Incident follows death of woman techie

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

A 30-year-old worker, Rajesh, suffered injuries when one of the hoardings he was removing outside an apartment complex under the Pallikaranai police station limits collapsed on Saturday evening.

Following the death of Subasri, 22, on the Pallavaram-Thoraipakkam Radial Road on Thursday, the Chennai Corporation started removing illegal hoardings. Rajesh and a few others were removing a 50-foot billboard on a road, which is about 100 metres from the place where Subasri lost her life. Rajesh lost his balance and fell.

He sustained injuries on the leg and hands. "He is undergoing treatment at a private hospital and is said to be out of danger. No one



The 50-foot billboard that collapsed on Saturday.

has given a complaint so far," said a police officer from the Pallikaranai station.

The police are yet to arrest AIADMK functionary Jayagopal, who put up banners for his son's wedding. One of the banners fell on Subasri. The police said they were yet to ascertain his whereabouts.

'SC order on Cauvery should be adhered to'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

The judgment of the Supreme Court in the Cauvery river water dispute should be adhered to by all stakeholders, Tamil Nadu Governor Banwarilal Purohit said here on Sunday. He also said that linking up the Godavari with the Cauvery for transferring the surplus water would be of immense benefit to the State.

Speaking at an event 'Cauvery Calling' organised by Isha Foundation, Mr. Purohit said: "It comes as a big relief that the long-standing Cauvery river dispute before the Tribunal and the Supreme Court has come to an end. It is necessary, as law abiding citizens, for all stakeholders to adhere to the directions of the apex court of the land in letter and spirit."

Delhi-Dhaka ties best ever now: Bangladesh Minister

Prime Minister Hasina's visit to focus on economic ties

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Bangladesh and India are currently enjoying "best ever" relations, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh A.K. Abdul Momen said during an interaction with the media in Dhaka. The observations form the backdrop to the October 3-6 visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina that will include a summit-level meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The Bangladesh average economic growth was only 3.2% from 1976 to 1990, which is 6.8% in last 10 years... this is amazing," said Dr. Momen, emphasising that the main success of the Sheikh Hasina government is the high rate of economic growth.

The senior Minister said Ms. Hasina and Mr. Modi



A.K. Abdul Momen

would discuss a number of bilateral issues on October 5 but did not reveal specifics. Both leaders are expected to meet on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York later this month.

Bangladesh has recently been in the spotlight after the final list of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam was published last

month, which excluded more than 1.9 million individuals. India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar had assured Bangladesh that the future of the NRC-excluded Bengali-speaking people in Assam is an internal issue of India.

Subsequently, however, Home Minister Amit Shah had said the people excluded from the NRC will not find space in India. Bangladesh has steadfastly refused to be drawn into the debate, with Dhaka pointing out that India has declared the NRC an internal issue of India.

It appears that Dhaka will highlight its economic success to draw investment from India during the Premier Hasina's visit, when she is also expected to participate in the India Economic Forum.

CPI(M) says Sitharaman to blame for slowdown

Party urges people to 'rise in protest'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The CPI(M) on Sunday criticised Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, saying decisions taken by her Ministry had resulted in the economic slowdown.

In a statement, the party said that instead of announcing a big increase in public investment to build the much-needed infrastructure, generate employment and thereby boost domestic demand, the Finance Minister once again announced measures that in the first place had caused this economic slowdown bordering on recession.

Low purchasing power

"The emphasis on targeting private investment in the realty sector and the effort to boost exports cannot succeed. Global trade volumes were shrinking and houses were not being purchased because of sheer lack of pur-

The Minister once again announced measures that in the first place had caused this slowdown

COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA
(MARXIST)

chasing power among the people.

The ₹70,000 crore worth of packages announced yesterday [on Saturday] instead should have been put to use in increasing public investment and paying the arrears of the MNREGA [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme], which would have boosted the purchasing power in rural India," the statement said.

It called upon the people to rise in protest against the policies that "only favour the maximisation of profits at the expense of growing misery for the people."

Gangwar insulted north Indians: Opposition

He said job aspirants lacked quality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
LUCKNOW

Union Labour Minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar has said there is no dearth of employment opportunities in the country, but recruiters visiting north India complain of lack of "quality people" to fill vacancies.

Opposition leaders accused him of insulting the people of the region.

The comments came amid criticism of the Centre over the unemployment rate rising to a 45-year high of 6.1% in 2017-18.

"Recruiters who visit north India complain of facing dearth of quality people for the posts they need to fill," he told presspersons in Bareilly, his Lok Sabha constituency, on Saturday.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said: "Mr. Minister, it has been more than five years for your govern-



Santosh Kumar Gangwar

ment. There is no job creation. Whatever jobs were there, they have been snatched due to the economic slowdown brought by the government. You want to escape by insulting north Indians."

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati said in a tweet that such comments were laughable and added that an apology should be tendered to the nation.

Inept handling of economy, says Swamy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

BJP MP Subramanian Swamy, who has often criticised the government's economic policies, believes only people with a solid grounding in macroeconomics can pull the economy out of its current tailspin.

Dr. Swamy has come out with a book in which he takes a critical look at various aspects of the Indian economy.

Today, the economy suffers from clueless economic stewardship, cloaked in spin, and media management, while the economy is debilitated by serious multiple structural flaws that make this current slowdown unlike any other we have experienced in India since 1947, he writes in "Reset: Regaining India's Economic Legacy."

He also opines that the slowing of inflation is not an achievement in the absence of robust demand signals and weak purchasing power among the masses. It is a form of deflation, he writes.

In the book, he is also critical of the UPA governments (2004-2014), saying it had some of the most senior Ministers committing gigantic corruption.

Comparing Narendra Modi with his predecessor Manmohan Singh, Dr. Swamy says, "He is the exact opposite of Dr. Singh. He is not the person of letters, and one who has an unstudied familiarity with microeconomics but not macroeconomics."

Denying visa to journalists now 'routine': Shahidul Alam

I am being targeted for comments on Kashmir, he says

SUHASINI HAIDAR
NEW DELHI

Denying visas to journalists has become "routine" in the subcontinent, particularly India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, says Bangladeshi photographer Shahidul Alam, who was denied a visa to travel to Delhi for an event last week at the British Council.

Mr. Alam, who was arrested in 2018 for giving interviews that were critical of the Bangladesh government's treatment of student protesters, says he appears to have run into trouble in India over his comments about human rights in Jammu and Kashmir.

Hostility towards media

"It is commonly known that anyone asking for a journalistic visa would be given a hard time by Pakistan, India or Bangladesh. It is imperative that nations that call themselves democracies stop being so hostile to the media. It is up to all of us to hold our governments accountable, and a free and unfettered media is the best chance we have of establishing some form of accountability," he told *The Hindu*.

Mr. Alam was due to attend an art festival programme called 'Serendipity' organised at the British Council in Delhi, and eventually made his appearance via Skype.

While he said he had "no way of telling whether there were political reasons" for the visa denial, he pointed to other colleagues who had



Shahidul Alam

applied for and received multiple-entry visas, in far less time. Mr. Alam had been granted a visa to India when he won a journalistic award in Mumbai earlier this year, but showed correspondence to establish that even that had been a short-entry visa issued hours before his flight, with much difficulty.

Different yardstick

"I have no way of telling whether there were political reasons [for the visa denial], but others from my office have applied for and received one-year multiple-entry visas in less time. I provided all the information needed and had fulfilled all the necessary requirements."

He said he had noticed that since he had made comments about "human rights abuses in Kashmir", he had received comments on social media that accused him of being "anti-Indian".

According to his documents, Mr. Alam had applied on August 27 for the visa at the Indian High Commission

in Dhaka, which was due to be processed in normal course.

On September 5, when he went to collect his passport, however, he was told his visa was denied.

When asked, the Ministry of External Affairs said it was not possible to give reasons for each visa that is not granted. "No country does that," said an official aware of the case of Mr. Alam, adding that the "application was under process as per established procedures".

Organisers of the 'Serendipity festival' said the event Mr. Alam had been invited to attend had artists from several other countries including Sri Lanka and Nepal.

"Of all the people we invited, only Mr. Shahidul Alam's visa was denied," said an organiser who did not want to be identified, and said they hoped he could attend another event later this year.

The British High Commission declined to comment, and said the British Council was a "venue partner".

"When he was incarcerated, people around the world, and so many from India, had protested his imprisonment... it is ironic that he was denied the opportunity to come and speak here in person," the organiser said.

Mr. Alam was nominated Time Magazine's person of the year last year, after spending more than 100 days in jail for having "live-streamed" a protest by student activists demanding road safety reforms.

Book traces Thackerays' origin to Bihar

It also details differences in the style of rival cousins Raj and Uddhav

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

A new book on the Thackeray cousins, Raj and Uddhav, reveals that much in contradiction to the anti-north Indian political rhetoric deployed by both the Shiv Sena and the Maharashtra Navanirman Sena (MNS), the patriarch of the family and father of Shiv Sena founder, Balasaheb Thackeray, 'Prabodhankar' Keshav Sitaram Thackeray, traced the family's origins to Bihar.

Ironic twist

The book, *The Cousins Thackeray: Uddhav, Raj and the Shadow of their Senas* (Penguin Random House), by journalist Dhaval Kulkarni makes this point fairly early on, quoting 'Prabodhankar' Thackeray's own book, *Gramnyancha Sadyanta Itihas Arhat Nokarshahiche Bande* ('A History of Village Disputes or Rebellion of the Bureaucracy').

The book unequivocally



In focus: The book is one of the first to look at the third generation of the Thackerays. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT/FILE PHOTO

states that the Chandrasenya Kayastha Prabhu (CKP) community, to which the Thackerays belong, moved out of ancient Magadha (in present-day Bihar) after Mahapadma Nanda, in the third or fourth century BC, deployed usury with regard to his subjects. The community migrated out of Magadha and "earned its living as warriors and scribes". The anti-migrant political rhetoric of the Shiv Sena and the MNS therefore has a piquant and ironic twist.

This is not the only inter-

esting thing in the book, which is one of the first to look at the third generation of Thackerays in public life. According to it, the seeds of competition between the cousins were sown in December 1993, when Raj Thackeray had organised a *morchha* (rally) of unemployed youth in front of the Maharashtra Assembly in its winter home in Nagpur. "It was evident that the Nagpur *morchha* would be huge. A night before the *morchha*, Raj got a call from Matoshree (the Thackeray homes-

Rivalry on court

The book also details the differences in the style and approach of the two cousins, especially through an example of a badminton match played by both in 1997, where Uddhav, while playing with his cousin and his associates, fell down and was laughed at. "He [Uddhav] did not say anything then, but stopped coming to play from the next day onwards."

He, however, enrolled for classes at Bandra's MIG club and soon attained a commendable mastery over the game," the book quotes a friend of Raj Thackeray as saying.

Team to visit U.S. ahead of Modi's UNGA address

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

A delegation of politicians and foreign policy experts will visit the U.S. on September 17, ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit there to address the United Nations General Assembly on September 27.

The delegation includes Congress leaders Manish Tewari and Jaiveer Shergill, BJP's Rajiv Pratap Rudy and Shiv Sena's Priyanka Chaturvedi.

Mr. Shergill said the delegation will participate in discussions on Indo-U.S. relations and other international issues.



APPEAL
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