

AYODHYA VERDICT

To review or not: Muslim Personal Law Board will discuss on Nov 17

SEEMA CHISHTI
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 10

THE ALL India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB), a body of influential Muslim clerics and scholars, will meet on November 17 to plan the way forward after the Supreme Court's Ayodhya judgment. The meeting will discuss the defeat in the case, and whether a review petition should be filed in the Supreme Court.

On Saturday, AIMPLB advocate Zafaryab Jilani stopped short of saying they would go for a review, despite several members of the Board making it clear that they were "not satisfied" with the Supreme Court's verdict.

Sources said AIMPLB members are puzzled how the five-judge Bench reached its conclusion despite accepting that idols were stealthily placed in the Babri Masjid in 1949, and that the demolition of the mosque on December 6, 1992 was an "egregious" breach of the rule of law.

A source said there was concern that Muslims had been denied their due on the land where the masjid stood simply because "they had not obstructed Hindus from worshipping at the Chabutra and Sita Rasoi".

While the court has awarded a 5-acre plot for a mosque somewhere in Ayodhya, sources in the AIMPLB said that more than the

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BULBUL KILLS 8 IN WEST BENGAL

A family in their wrecked home in Bakkhali on Sunday. Cyclone Bulbul made landfall at Sagar Island in South 24-Parganas district. Partha Paul REPORT, PAGE 6

Chhattisgarh govt sets up panel to probe WhatsApp snoop cloud

DIPANKAR GHOSE
RAIPUR, NOVEMBER 10

THE CHHATTISGARH government has decided to set up a three-member committee to look into suspicions that NSO, the Israeli company that owns the spyware Pegasus, held a meeting with the state's police "two to three years ago" to sell the product. The committee will also look into allegations that residents of the state have been subject to snooping, officials said.

An order signed by Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel states that complaints have been "received that two to three years ago, the Israeli company NSO had made a presentation regarding their software to the Chhattisgarh Police".

"These kinds of allegations are very serious since they are connected to the freedom of people. It is essential to investigate these complaints," it states.

According to the order, the Principal Secretary (Home) will head the probe committee,

which will include the Raipur IG and Secretary, Department of Public Relations — it will be assisted by the state DGP. "The committee will do a detailed investigation of the entire events, and will present an evidence based report within a month," the order states.

On October 31, *The Indian Express* first reported Facebook-owned WhatsApp had filed a federal suit in San Francisco alleging that journalists and human rights activists had been the

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DAY OF FAST DEVELOPMENTS

In Maharashtra, BJP says can't form govt; Gov calls Shiv Sena

Sena has time till today evening, Uddhav could be candidate for CM

VISHWAS WAGHMODE
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 10

SOON AFTER receiving a formal expression from the BJP of its unwillingness to form the government in Maharashtra, Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari on Sunday evening invited the Shiv Sena, and gave it time until Monday evening to inform him if it could form the government.

On a day of rapid developments, Shiv Sena leaders said party chief Uddhav Thackeray and NCP chief Sharad Pawar spoke after the Sena received the Governor's invitation.

"The two leaders spoke after the Governor's invite. The party is likely to stake claim for government formation tomorrow," a senior leader told *The Indian Express*.

The leader, who declined to be named, said the Governor had given the Sena time until 7.30 pm on Monday to respond.

Sources said that Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut was likely to leave for Delhi to meet with Congress leaders.

Sources in the Sena said that party chief Uddhav Thackeray was likely to be nominated chief minister. On Sunday, there were posters outside his home Matoshree saying: "It is the need of Maharashtra that Shiv Sena Chief Uddhav Thackeray should become Chief Minister."

The invitation to the Sena, the second largest party in the Assembly, came after BJP leaders led by caretaker Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis met the Governor at 5.30 pm and turned down his invitation citing the lack of numbers.

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Senior BJP leaders outside Raj Bhavan after meeting with the Governor on Sunday evening. Ganesh Shirsekar

NCP puts conditions: Snap BJP-NDA ties, fix a common agenda

SANDEEP ASHAR
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 10

WITHIN MINUTES of the BJP informing Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari Sunday that it cannot form the government in Maharashtra, the NCP laid down a set of conditions for backing a Shiv Sena-led ruling formation: Cut ties with BJP, quit NDA, evolve a common programme.

Having maintained so far that its mandate is to sit in Opposition, this is the first time when Sharad Pawar's party has indicated its willingness to offer "conditional" support to the Sena.

"If the Governor extends an invitation to the Sena and the party desires support of the NCP and the Congress, it should first snap all ties with the BJP, making an announcement to that effect. The Sena will have to walk out of the NDA. Their minister (Arvind Sawant) in the Narendra Modi government will have to resign," said NCP's national spokesperson and Mumbai party president

EXPLAINED

New equation, more questions

THE BJP'S move leaves the three parties left in the fray with key questions. Will Shiv Sena sever its decades-old ties with NDA? Can NCP convince Congress to come onboard? Will Congress shed its inhibitions to align with the ideology that Sena represents? The answers will define the new political equation in Maharashtra.

Nawab Malik. "If they are agreeable to these conditions and send us an official

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NSA Ajit Doval at an inter-faith meeting at his residence in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI REPORT, PAGE 5

The Day After Verdict: 27 years from Babri, healing and hurting

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA & KAMAAL SAIYED
KOLKATA, SURAT, NOV 10

FROM A grocery shop owner to a packaging unit labourer, a government employee to an NGO worker. From Kolkata to Surat, Bhopal to Mumbai.

For the families of those who lost their lives in the violence that followed the Babri Masjid demolition on December 6, 1992 — a turning point in the Ayodhya dispute — the Supreme Court verdict on Saturday has meant a surge of mixed emotions.

There is despair over unfulfilled promises and lingering memories, and yet, there is also relief that some sort of closure

INSIDE

IN DENYING MUSLIM PARTIES' CLAIM, SC QUOTED 2015 ORDER BY JUSTICE NAZEER

JUDGES GET MORE SECURITY

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has been reached.

"I just pray that peace prevails and no one loses his brother, son, or father again," said Mehmood Alam, 34, who was at his grocery shop in Kolkata when he heard that the court had ordered the disputed land to

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India-China business forum called off, no visas for Chinese team

NIRUPAMA SUBRAMANIAN
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 10

AN INDIA-CHINA business forum that was to take place in Delhi later this week has been called off as the Indian government has not yet issued visas to the Chinese delegation.

The forum, which takes place every year in an Indian city, was scheduled to be held at a five-star hotel in the Capital on November 13 and 14. In invitations that have been sent out, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has been listed as the chief guest and chief economic adviser K Subramanian, and members of NITI Aayog, among the speakers.

International Business Linkage Forum (IBLF), the India-based organisers of the forum along with FICCI, put out a terse message on their website announcing that the meet would not take place as scheduled. "Due to unforeseen circumstances, we have been advised to postpone the Forum for the time being. We apologise for the inconvenience caused. We hope to announce the new event date soon," the message read.

The 70-strong Chinese delegation, sources said, had applied for visas weeks ago, but had not received them yet. The organisers, who appear to have had government backing for previous editions of the forum, tried to

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THE EDITORIAL PAGE

A BREATH, NOT CLOSURE

BY SUHAS PALSHIKAR
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Getting threats, say revenue officers in AP and Telangana

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, NOVEMBER 10

LESS THAN a week after a Mandal Revenue Officer (MRO) in Telangana was burnt alive by a claimant to a disputed piece of land, over a dozen revenue officers in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh have claimed to have received threats from parties in other disputes.

On November 4, Abdullapurmet MRO P Vijaya Reddy, 37, was set on fire by K Suresh, an autorickshaw driver, who claimed to own land which was disputed. Suresh too, succumbed on November 7.

The Telangana Tahsildars Association wrote to the Additional DGP (Law and Order) on Friday, seeking security for MROs, especially women MROs, in the state.

"Citing Abdullapurmet MRO's incident, people having land disputes are resorting to threats and blackmail. Some farmers have threatened MROs that they would write suicide

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

BY UNNY



THE GOVERNANCE PAGE



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INSIDE



P S KRISHNAN, MAN WHO FOUGHT CASTE PREJUDICE, DEAD P 5

Tackling paedophilia: psychologists open doors for those seeking help

TABASSUM BARNAGARWALA
MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 10

OVER THE last four years, at least 300 people with suspected paedophilic tendencies have reached out for counselling support on an online portal, and another 30 have contacted counsellors through a network of psychologists and psychiatrists based in Mumbai and Pune. Two psychol-

ogists in Mumbai, and four in Pune are slowly trying to expand training amongst experts on treatment of this disorder.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) terms paedophilia as a mental disorder, with patients suffering from persistent sexual interest in children.

In Pune, KEM Hospital Research Centre runs a clinic to assess and counsel such individuals. Thirty individuals have so far reached out to the clinic. The

fear of social stigma frequently scares people away from discussions on the problem, and prevents help from reaching them.

"The disorder cannot be cured, but the behaviour of a person can be controlled. We teach patients coping mechanisms, and give them anti-depressants to alleviate stress," Dr Vasudeo Paralikar, head of the psychiatry unit in KEM, Pune, said. Dr Paralikar counsels such

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He put fear of God in recalcitrant politicians, was respected by all... Good bye, Mr Seshan



S Y QURAISHI

SPECIAL TO THE EXPRESS

THE PASSING on of Mr T N Seshan marks the end of a glorious era of resurgence of democracy about three decades ago. The very mention of his name was enough to put the fear of God in the hearts of recalcitrant

politicians in the first half of the nineties, and respect in the heart of every Indian ever since. I have no hesitation in saying that all of his successor CEOs basked in his glory, though we always carried the burden of being compared with him all the time.

I worked under him as observer several times. He once sent me to Danapur in Bihar, which was Lalu Prasad Yadav's constituency. On another occasion, I was deputed to Myslapore where Jayalithaa lived (and where Mr Seshan too, had his house). He was having a running battle with both of them, which made my tough job doubly difficult.



T N SESHAN
1932-2019

I recall the Bihar election in 1996, when I was posted as an observer. Mr Seshan concluded his briefing with these reassuring words: "Don't worry. Nothing will happen — except a bomb on your face and a bullet through your stomach!" Sure enough, I saw two bomb explosions a few yards away. Fortunately I returned with my stomach unscathed!

The awe and fear he evoked in us bordered on terror. Nobody

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