

RAM JANMABHOOMI-BABRI MASJID DISPUTE

Mosque side set to file review plea against SC order, rejects 5-acre plot

Sunni Waqf Board opposes decision by AIMPLB, Jamiat; AIMPLB says will accept what the court finally decides

ABANTIKA GHOSH & MAULSHREE SETH
NEW DELHI, LUCKNOW,
NOVEMBER 17

THE All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and Jamiat ulama i Hind announced on Sunday that they would file review petitions on the Supreme

Court judgment in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, and would not accept the 5-acre plot awarded by a five-judge Bench in lieu of the disputed site.

After a meeting held in Lucknow, AIMPLB working committee member Kamal Farooqui said, "The board has decided that a review petition

should be filed against the Supreme Court verdict."

While Jamiat is a party in the dispute, the AIMPLB has played an organising role in the case. The AIMPLB working committee members said the petition would be filed within the 30-day deadline and reiterated that whatever "the final verdict" of

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Zafaryab Jilani (right) at the AIMPLB press meet Lucknow. PTI

Key sales numbers show rural demand may dip further

Warning signs across FMCG, tractors & 2-wheelers, gold, real rural wages

PVAIDYANATHAN IYER
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 17

THE GOVERNMENT Friday claimed that a significant divergence in levels of consumption and direction of change prompted it to withhold the findings of the survey on household consumption expenditure for July 2017-June 2018. But all major indicators of rural demand suggest the situation has only worsened since the beginning of financial year 2019-20, and the economy is yet to see the end of the current slowdown cycle.

The *Indian Express* spoke to business leaders across key industries to find that all indicators of rural demand — sales of FMCG, and of tractors and two-wheelers, in non-cities — show they are still riding the trough. Other indicators, such as a sharp fall in gold imports in the last four months (half of gold demand is rural-driven) also point to slackening demand.

The most critical factor behind rural stress is not just the fall in nominal wage rates of labour. With CPI rising for rural labour-

EXPLAINED Revival still some time away

FMCG, TRACTOR and motorcycle sales, as well as a decline in real wages, show that rural consumers are postponing the purchase of non-discretionary items. The possibility of a revival is at least three-six months away.

ers, real wages since March have also seen a decline. The real wage growth, adjusted for CPI-RL (Consumer Price Index-Rural Labourers), has seen the sharpest erosion in August. With CPI-RL at 6.23%, even if nominal wages increased 3.4% in August, real wages eroded by 2.83%.

While some economists say excess and late monsoon in a few

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Let Farooq attend, Oppn tells PM at all-party meet before House session

PRADEEP KAUSHAL
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 17

AS PRIME Minister Narendra Modi said the government was ready to discuss every issue, at the all-party meeting held a day before the Winter Session of Parliament begins Monday, the Opposition raised the question of continued detention of leaders in Kashmir. Congress Rajya Sabha leader Ghulam Nabi Azad demanded that senior National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, who is held under the Public Safety Act, "be allowed to attend Parliament".

Buoyant after the recent Assembly election results which didn't give the BJP the results it expected, the Opposition is gearing up to take on the government over the economic slowdown, unemployment and farm distress, apart from Kashmir.

Returning to power with an increased majority, the Modi government in the past two sessions pushed through the triple talaq Bill and the scrapping of special status to Jammu and Kashmir. Now, bolstered by the Supreme Court verdict in the Ayodhya case, it has lined up exhaustive legislative business



Modi, Shah, Azad at the all-party meeting, Sunday. Renuka Puri

such as the contentious citizenship (amendment) Bill.

The session is scheduled to conclude on December 13, and will hold a special joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on November 26 to commemorate 'Constitution Day'. Modi and BJP chief Amit Shah, apart from leaders of 27 parties, were present at Sunday's meeting, called by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi.

In his customary remarks, the PM said the government was willing to discuss every issue in

the House. "We look forward to a productive Parliament session, where people-centric and development-oriented issues would be discussed," he said, adding that constructive discussions in Parliament also kept the bureaucracy alert.

Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Ghulam Nabi Azad (Congress) and National Conference Lok Sabha MP Hasnain Masoodi raised the continuing detention of mainstream leaders in Jammu and Kashmir.

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Chirag seeks convenor, cites missing Sena, shrinking NDA

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 17

THE TREMORS of the Shiv Sena's parting of ways with the BJP in Maharashtra were felt at the NDA meeting in Delhi on Sunday, ahead of the Parliament session, with allies pitching for a mechanism to improve coordination and Prime Minister Narendra Modi describing the ruling alliance as "one big family".

The Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) demanded appointment of a convenor for better coordination, and said the government should take up unemployment in the coming session. With the government

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30 political detainees in Srinagar moved amid claims of manhandling

ADIL AKHZER
SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 17

NUMBERING OVER 30, all the mainstream political leaders kept under detention at the Sher-e-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar since August 5 were on Sunday afternoon moved to the MLA hostel within the city, amid allegations of manhandling by police.

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) claimed that the hostel wasn't equipped with heating facilities, the reason unofficially given for shifting the detainees. This led to protests, after which



The detainees being moved in Srinagar on Sunday. PTI

some leaders were allegedly roughed up. People's Conference

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INDIA MAPS: NEPAL PM SAYS KALAPANI ITS AREA, PAGE 13



BUSINESS AS USUAL

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Big Democracy strong thinking & strong graphics
CITIZENSHIP AMENDMENT BILL

In High Court bail denial to Chidambaram, 'copy, paste'; matter in SC today

PRITAM PAL SINGH
NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 17

PORTIONS OF the November 15 order of the Delhi High Court dismissing the bail plea of Congress leader P Chidambaram in the INX Media money laundering case, it has emerged, bear striking resemblance to both a previous High Court order as well as a Supreme Court decision on the bail plea of lawyer Rohit Tandon, arrested in several money laundering cases (he is currently out on bail).

Justice Suresh Kumar Kait's 41-page judgment denying bail



Similarities with HC, SC orders, ED affidavit

to the 74-year-old Congress leader also, in parts, resembles the counter-affidavit filed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) during the course of the proceedings.

This emerged after Justice Kait's order was uploaded late on Saturday evening. Senior

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Gotabaya wins, his camp reaches out: 'India closest friend'

EXPRESS IN COLOMBO
ARUN JANARDHANAN
NOVEMBER 17

BY THE time friends and family members started thronging his two-storey house, away from the heart of Colombo, the verdict was clear. Around noon Sunday, visitors were told that he was taking a nap after staying up the entire night to track the results. Finally, in the afternoon, Gotabaya Rajapaksa stepped out to reach the election commission.



Gotabaya Rajapaksa after the results, in Colombo. AP

By then, the former wartime defence secretary, and younger brother of ex-president Mahinda Rajapaksa, had been officially elected as the new President of Sri Lanka with about 52 per cent of votes. "All Sri Lankans are part

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HERO OR 'WAR CRIMINAL'?, PAGE 13

Exiled in UK, Pak MQM leader seeks asylum from Modi for himself, aides

ADITI KHANNA
LONDON, NOVEMBER 17

MUTTAHIDA QUAMI Movement (MQM) founder Altaf Hussain, living in exile in the UK, has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to grant him and his colleagues asylum or at least some financial assistance to take his case to the International Court of Justice.

Promising that he would not interfere in politics, Hussain took to social media last week to relay a new speech, in which he also welcomed the Supreme Court

verdict in the Ayodhya case. The 67-year-old is due to stand trial in the UK on an offence of encouraging terrorism through a speech relayed to his followers in Pakistan a few years ago.

"If India today, and Prime Minister Modi, allow me to come to India and provide me asylum with my colleagues, I am ready to come to India along with my colleagues, because my grandfather is buried there, my grandmother is buried there, my thousands of relatives are buried there. I want to go there, to their graves," said Hussain, in a speech

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