# Student killing: Kerala Police to seek legal opinion on invoking UAPA

**KOCHI, JULY 5 /--/** The police probing the 'brutal' killing of an SFI leader today decided to seek legal opinion on whether the case allegedly involving activists of an Islamic outfit attracts provisions under anti-terror law.

Kerala Police Commissioner Loknath Behera said: "There is no doubt about conspiracy" in the killing of second year degree student of Ernakulam Maharajas College, Abhimanyu, hailing from a backward Tamil tribal area in Idukki district. The killers, allegedly workers of Popular Front of India (PFI) and its student wing Campus Front and political offshoot Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), had come from outside to attack SFI workers in the college campus, he said. "Whether the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) will be attracted or not, we will take the legal opinion," Behera told newspersons here.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is reportedly probing the role of the PFI workers, involved in the hand chopping of a college professor few years ago, in the killing of Abhimanyu. "The NIA Act, 2008 has conferred jurisdiction on the Agency over scheduled offences like UA(P) Act only," an NIA official said when asked about the reports. Four persons have been arrested for being allegedly involved in the killing. Some others have been taken into custody. Abhimanyu's family members have alleged conspiracy in the incident. Meanwhile, launching a statewide crackdown on activities of the PFI and its allied outfits, the police have detained its several workers after carrying out raids as part of the investigation in the case. Police had on Wednesday carried out raids at the offices and residences of some leaders and workers of the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) in various parts of the state.

Police is also investigating the role of radical elements, participated in a march organised by SDPI towards the Kerala High Court last year, in the killing of Abhimanyu. Activists of the pro-Islamic outfit had organised the march to the high court last year to protest against a verdict in the Hadiya case, which relates to a PFI activist who married a Hindu woman who had converted to Islam. The ruling CPM had termed the attack on SFI members in the college in Kochi as "Taliban Model." The party has said it would carry out extensive campaign to "expose" the activities of radical Islamic outfit PFI and its allied organisations in Kerala.

Shocked by the "brutal killing" of SFI leader, the CPM had said the PFI and its allied outfits organise such "planned killings" to disturb peace in the state. The SFI leader was stabbed to death and two others were injured in the attack allegedly by members of the pro-Islamic outfit at the Maharajas College in Ernakulam on July 1 night. (PTI)

# Burari deaths put spotlight on occult practices

**NEW DELHI, JULY 5 /--/** The whodunit might be solved but the mystery of how and why 11 members of a family died in their home in north Delhi's Burari locality will endure, with its suggestion of occult practices spotlighting bizarre rituals ending in human sacrifices that exist in many parts of the country.

Blurring the lines between delusion, superstition and blind faith, it's a narrative that cuts across lines of class, religion and literacy, say experts. Many of these cases are related to child sacrifices. Last month, for instance, a man from Rajasthan admitted to slitting his daughter's throat to appease Allah during Ramzan. In January 2016, a Chhattisgarh father confessed to beheading his son for the "well-being of his family". The several instances of women being killed or tortured in the belief that they are witches, the hypnotic influence of men passing themselves off as babas and mystics, and bizarre cult practices only add to this chronicle. How does a parent kill a child? How does an entire family get pulled into a suicide pact?

According to experts, religious and spiritual influences can affect life decisions beyond the normal. "Under religious and spiritual influences, a lot of lifestyle decisions get affected, especially in cultures like ours. Some of these changes are extreme, leading to self harming or harming others," Nimesh Desai, director of Delhi's Institute of Human Behavior and Allied Sciences (IHBAS), told news agency PTI. The idea of sacrifice at large is not new to religious or occult practices. Followers have believed "the bigger a sacrifice, the greater is the result", added Narendray Nayak, president of the Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations (FIRA). "Abrahamic religions have their own

versions of sacrifices, like god asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, then god gave him a goat to sacrifice instead. These things are there in all the religions. Jains sacrifice themselves by committing slow suicide, by doing santhara or sallekhana," said Nayak. It goes in the evolutionary order, he asserted.

For a small thing, sacrifice a chicken, for something bigger, a goat and a buffalo and if you still go higher, sacrifice somebody else and the ultimate sacrifice would be sacrificing oneself, he added. From the seemingly well-planned and similar manner of the Burari deaths this week -- the family was found blindfolded and gagged, some of them with their hands tied -- to notes describing steps to attain "salvation" and achieve "something great", the case has pointed to "observance of some definite spiritual/mystical practices by the whole family", say police officials.

# Nizam-era aircraft hangar in Hyderabad collapses

**HYDERABAD, JULY 5 /--/** The nearly nine decade-old "Mississippi" aircraft hangarat Gowliguda here, used by the Telangana State Road Transport Corporation for city bus services, collapsed today. However, no one was injured in the incident.

"The old Central Bus Station (CBS) at Gowliguda which has been a landmark for many decades collapsed on its own at 7.15 am. There was no injury or loss of life to anyone as the complex was vacated a week ago itself in view of the weak structure," senior public relations manager G R Kiran said. The area was barricaded as a precautionary measure, Kiran told news agency PTI. The unique structure i.e., "Mississippi" aircraft hangar, which was imported from the Butler Manufacturing Company, USA was erected in 1930 and it is perhaps the first re-fabricated structure to be installed in Hyderabad to serve passengers, RTC officials said. The old CBS aircraft hangar has been part of Hyderabad's transport heritage.

It has witnessed the transformation of the Nizam's Road Transport Department into Asia's biggest public road transporter (APSRTC-TSRTC), they said. The "Mississippi" hangar served as the first bus depot of the RTD under the Nizam's State Railway. Later, it was converted into a full-fledged central bus station catering to the needs of millions of people for almost six decades. Subsequently, the interstate and district services operated from this hangar was shifted to Imlibun in 1994 and the city bus operations started in 2006.

*The inaugural sessions of the second phase of training for public relations functionaries of Mangan Block on Thursday was conducted by Upadakshya North Thennee Bhutia in the presence of BDO Mangan K. T. Bhutia and zilla and gram panchayat members and GPU functionaries of Mangan block. --- DEEPAK SHARMA*

# Akhilesh, Mulayam propose to build guest house, library in posh Lucknow locality

**LUCKNOW, JULY 5 /--/** Weeks after vacating official bungalows on the posh Vikramaditya Marg here, SP supremo Akhilesh Yadav and his father Mulayam Singh Yadav have sought approval from the Lucknow Development Authority for construction of a guest house and library in the same area. A map was submitted by Akhilesh on June 28 for plot number 1 A Vikramaditya Marg to seek approval for a building in the name of 'Hibiscus Heritage', LDA officials said. On the same Vikramaditya Marg, Mulayam has sought approval for building a library on a separate plot, they said. Both Mulayam and Akhilesh last month vacated their official bungalows on Vikrmaditya Marg following Supreme Court orders. There are reports that Akhilesh is going to construct a hotel on his land. However, the SP leader's close associate and party MLC Anand Bhadauria said a guest house will be built on the spot. "The land is earmarked as institutional. A guest house will come up and not a hotel as being reported," he insisted. As both the plots lie in high-security zones no objection certificates will have to be taken from a number of departments before approval of maps.

Executive engineers of LDA have referred the matter to chief architect of Lucknow Municipal Corporation. NOC has also been sought from Director General (Security), Estate Officer of UP government and general manager of Lucknow Jal Sansthan and Nazul Land Officer of the LDA. The land where the proposed guest house is to be constructed was jointly purchased by Akhilesh Yadav and his wife Dimple Yadav for Rs 39 lakh in 2005.

# Karnataka CM announces Rs 34k cr farm loan waiver scheme in budget

**BENGALURU, JULY 5 /--/** In a big relief to the farm sector, Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy today announced a mega Rs 34,000 crore farm loan waiver scheme in the maiden budget of the Congress-JDS coalition government. Unveiling the budget proposals in the Assembly, Kumaraswamy, who also holds the finance portfolio, said he has limited the loan amount to Rs 2 lakh, as it was "not right" to waiver higher value crop loan. "Due to this crop loan waiver scheme, farmers will get the benefit of Rs 34,000 crore," Kumaraswamy said, seeking to fulfill a major electoral promise made by the JDS in its manifesto for the recently held assembly polls in the state. With the waiver scheme imposing a huge burden on the exchequer, he also announced proposals to mop up additional resources, including increase in the rate of tax on petrol by Rs 1.14 per litre and diesel by Rs 1.12 per litre. The minister also proposed a hike in the additional excise duty on Indian-made liquor by 4 per cent across the board on all 18 slabs. Kumaraswamy recalled his assurance to waive all types of crop loans of farmers taken for agricultural activities within 24 hours of formation of a full-fledged government. "However, even though the people of the state have not blessed a single party government, I have been provided with a good opportunity to form a coalition government and to work as chief minister of that coalition," he said. The chief minister said he had decided to waive all defaulted crop loans of the farmers made up to December 31, 2017 in the first stage. Besides this, it has been decided to credit the repaid loan amount or Rs 25,000, whichever is less, to each of the farmers account, to help farmers who had repaid the loan within time, the chief minister said. The families of the government officials and officials of the cooperative sector, farmers who have paid income-tax for the past three years and other ineligible farm loan recipients will be outside the purview of the loan waiver scheme.

# Oppn DMK asks TN govt to rescind DGP appointment

**CHENNAI, JULY 5 /--/** The DMK today urged the Tamil Nadu government to cancel the appointment of senior IPS official T K Rajendran as Director General of Police (DGP), made last year. Raising the issue in the Assembly, Leader of Opposition MK Stalin said the state government had last year appointed Rajendran as DGP who was about to retire at that time. The present DGP had been in-charge DGP for ten months and later on the day of his retirement on 30 June 2017, he was appointed as head of the State police force at 11.30 PM, Stalin recalled. Citing the 3 July 2018 Supreme Court judgement on police reforms, the DMK leader said the official's appointment should be cancelled and a new head should be named toeing the directions of the apex court aimed at police reforms.

The DMK leader said the incumbent DGP's name figured in a probe by the CBI. Recently, the Madras High Court had directed a CBI probe into Gutkha scam and Rajendran's name figured in the scandal. Several IPS officers felt that their chances of elevation to the top post were "snatched away," (in view of extension of tenure to the incumbent), he said. It may be recalled that the Supreme Court had given several directions on police reforms restraining all states and union territories from appointing any police officer as acting DGPs to avoid favouritism. The top court had said that some States adopted a practice to appoint DGP on the last date of retirement, as a consequence of which the person continued for two years after his date of superannuation.

"Such a practice will not be in conformity with the spirit of the direction," the court had said. In his reply, Chief Minister K Palaniswami said the DGP's appointment was made following the Supreme Court guidelines that were already in force.

*Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandhrababu Naidu lighting lamp to inaugurate the Mass House Warming ceremony of 3 lakhs houses constructed under the NTR Housing Scheme all over the state, at Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium in Vijayawada on Thursday.*

# Dhule lynching: SP says it was spontaneous

**DHULE, JULY 5 /--/** The lynching of five nomads in a remote village of this district of Maharashtra last Sunday was spontaneous, according to a top police official. Dhule's superintendent of police M Ramkumar said many of those arrested have claimed that they joined in thrashing the five men without actually knowing about the provocation. The police has arrested 24 people so far in connection with the July 1 lynching in remote Rainpada village, about 100 kms from the Dhule district headquarters.

, which was believed to have been triggered by a rumour about a child-lifting gang being active in the area. In the videos which went viral, the victims, belonging to Nath Gosavi community, were seen being thrashed with sticks and chappals and stoned after one of them apparently tried to speak to a six-year-old girl.

# Three Rohingya Muslims get Aadhaar, ID cards illegally in Hyderabad; held

Hyderabad, July 5 /--/ Three Rohingya Muslims, including a woman, have been arrested at Balapur here for obtaining Aadhaar cards, voter ID cards, PAN cards and Indian passports by allegedly submitting fake documents, police said today. The trio migrated to Hyderabad in 2013 from Myanmar as refugees but suppressed their identity and fraudulently got the identification documents, they said. They colluded with locals to make false bonafide certificates based on which false declarations were made before government officials by suppressing facts that they were Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar, V Saidulu, a police official said. The accused claimed to be Indian citizens in their applications and procured Indian passports, Aadhaar cards, voter ID cards, PAN cards, driving licence and also opened bank accounts, Saidulu said. Preliminary investigation revealed the three had not registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), he added. Cases were registered against the accused under relevant sections of IPC and Indian Passport Act. Hyderabad is home to an estimated 3,500-4,000 Rohingyas, who stay in camps in different parts of the city. (PTI)

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# Landslide: Army rescues stranded passengers on Mughal Road in Poonch

**JAMMU, JULY 5 /--/** The Army has rescued over 250 passengers trapped due to massive landslides on the Mughal Road in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, an official said here today.

A massive landslide was triggered due to heavy rains near Behramgala in Poonch district on Wednesday night, a defence spokesman said. About 50 vehicles and a large number of travellers got stranded on the stretch, he said adding that a call for help was received by the Army, which immediately sprang into action. The rescue operation was assisted by J&K Traffic Police and Border Roads Organisation personnel from Surankote, he said.

Over 250 passengers were rescued, the defence spokesman said. Medical aid was provided to the injured while blankets and food were also given to the stranded.

# Tuticorin villagers accuse Left outfit of inciting violence

**TUTICORIN, JULY 5 /--/** Over a month after the unbridled violence during an anti-Sterlite protest here that claimed 13 lives, some locals involved in the incidents have claimed they were "brainwashed" by a Left outfit to picket the district collectorate.

Hundreds of protesters had gone on the rampage on May 22, storming the collectorate, setting buildings and vehicles ablaze, and prompting police action that triggered outrage and forced the Tamil Nadu government to close the copper smelter unit.

The outfit--Makkal Adhikaram-- has, however, rejected the allegation. On May 22, after the district collectorate was picketed to seek closure of the copper plant of Sterlite, a unit of the Vedanata group, over pollution concerns, large-scale violence had followed. In the consequent police firing, 13 people were killed on May 22 and 23. Blaming Makkal Adhikaram (People's Power) for the picketing of the district collectorate, Madathur villagers in Tuticorin district accused the outfit and its allied organisations of "changing their hearts".

In a petition to the District Legal Services Authority on July 2, the villagers sought legal help apprehending that several residents may be arrested in connection with the violence. The villagers said in their petition they had assured the district authorities at a peace meeting on May 20 that they would hold a peaceful demonstration at SAV grounds on May 22 to "draw the attention of the government" to the alleged pollution caused by the unit. However, two advocates and their associates "who belong to Makkal Adikaram changed our hearts" in favour of besieging the district collectorate, they claimed.

The two lawyers are now claiming they had nothing to do with the protest, the villagers said, adding it has caused "fear" among them. "We request (the authorities) to avoid linking us with Makkal Adhikaram," they said in their petition, and sought legal support to avert "police trouble" and lead a peaceful life. When asked why the petition was filed long after the violent incidents, D Pon Pandi, the main signatory to the petition and a Madathur resident told news agency PTI: "I have about 40 cases registered against me. We, the Madathur villagers, have got nothing to do with the violence. That is why we have sought legal help." He said people were apprehensive of arrest soon after the conclusion of a local temple festival.