

Acting J-K DGP  
Dilbag Singh  
to continue  
in office: SC

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 20** /- The Supreme Court today said the newly appointed acting Director General of Police (DGP) of Jammu and Kashmir shall continue in office till the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) takes a decision on the matter.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra said acting DGP Dilbag Singh, who replaced S P Vaid, shall continue to operate. It asked the UPSC to take a decision within four weeks on the suitability of senior police officers who can be appointed as the police chief in the state. As per the apex court's verdict, the state government has to give a list of senior police officers to the UPSC to check their suitability and short-list three names from it.

The Jammu and Kashmir government had earlier moved the apex court seeking modification of its order by which prior permission of the UPSC was required for appointing a police officer from among short-listed candidates.

The apex court had on September 11 refused to interfere with the decision of the state government to appoint an acting DGP. The state government told the apex court that the appointment of acting DGP was an interim measure and the decision was taken in the wake of peculiar circumstances and the law and order situation.

**Akhilesh  
deceived all close  
to him: Amar**

**JAUNPUR, SEPT 20** /- Raja Sabha member Amar Singh targeted Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav and alleged that he had "deceived" all those who were close to him.

Talking to newsmen here on Wednesday evening, the Independent MP, who was once an SP leader, said: "There is no one who has not been deceived by Akhilesh... It is in his nature to hurt people." Alleging that the Samajwadi Party was pursuing politics of appeasement, Singh also lashed out at party MP Ram Gopal Yadav, a close aide of Akhilesh Yadav. Recalling his contribution in Akhilesh Yadav's life, Singh said that he had gone to Australia for his education and got him party ticket and made him president. Reiterating his charges against senior SP leader Azam Khan, the Raja Sabha MP said that party was patronising a person who had a "wrong mindset" and makes indecent comments.

"Azam Khan has made indecent comments against my wife and daughters and a CD recording his remarks has been handed over to Governor Ram Naik and chief minister Yogi Adityanath... I am awaiting for action against him, if it is not done from here, I will lodge an FIR in Delhi. I have confidence that the Narendra Modi-led government will do justice with me," Amar Singh added.

# BJP rules out change in leadership in Goa, says Cong playing to gallery

**PANAJI, SEPT 20** /- Goa health minister Vishwajit Rane today ruled out a change in the leadership of the BJP-led dispensation on account of chief minister Manohar Parrikar's ill health, and alleged the Congress was playing to the gallery by staking claim to form the government as it did not have the required numbers.

The government is functioning "very well" and all the alliance partners are firmly supporting Parrikar, who is undergoing treatment at Delhi's AIIMS, the BJP leader asserted. The Congress, which is the single-largest party with 16 MLAs, has staked claim to form the government in the coastal state and said it has the support of over 21 legislators in the 40-member Assembly. The Opposition party's claim comes at a time when the 62-year-old Parrikar is admitted to the All India Institute

of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) for a pancreatic ailment. "The Congress doesn't have the numbers. If they have the support of 21 MLAs, then they should parade them before the governor. They are just playing to the gallery," Rane told newsmen here. The minister claimed the Congress leaders were constantly calling up BJP MLAs and "pleading" for support. Asked about the current political situation in the state, he said: "Where is the question of leadership change? We have our chief minister in place. He is undergoing treatment, but that does not mean we should replace him."

The state government is functioning very well and all the alliance partners are firmly supporting Parrikar, providing stability to the coalition for last one-and-a-half years, he said. On the visit of BJP's Central observers to Goa during the weekend, Rane said,

"The party leaders never discussed about change in leadership during their meeting." Even if there is a question of leadership change, it would be decided by central leaders in consultation with the local BJP unit and alliance partners, he said. "Right now, it is not the time for leadership change in Goa," he added. BJP president Amit Shah had sent three party observers - B. S. Santhosh, Ram Lal and Vijay Parunik - to Goa on Sunday to meet the local leaders and alliance partners and take stock of the current political situation.

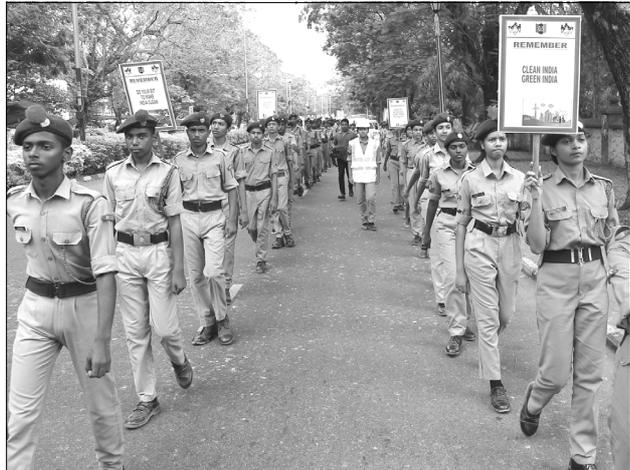
Rane rubbished the Congress's allegations that governance in the state has come to a standstill in Parrikar's absence. "Today's world is technology driven. Files can be cleared on e-mail. Even when I am abroad, if there is any urgent file, clear it on e-mail," the minister said. The Congress, in its memorandum

submitted earlier to Governor Mridula Sinha, had claimed that in absence of the chief minister, the government was not functioning properly. Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Chandrakant Kavlekar said on Wednesday that the Congress had the support of over 21 MLAs, giving it enough strength to form the government in the state. He had earlier said the BJP might force dissolution of the Assembly and another election in just a year-and-a-half. The Assembly polls in Goa were held in February 2017. The state is being ruled by the BJP with the support of the Goa Forward Party (GFP), the Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP), the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Independent MLAs. The BJP has 14 seats in the Assembly, the GFP and the MGP have three each and the NCP has one. There are also three Independent legislators.

# Maulanas recite Quran to invoke blessings for ailing Parrikar

**PANAJI, SEPT 20** /- Maulanas from across Goa today held a "Quran Khawani" here for the speedy recovery of chief minister Manohar Parrikar who is admitted in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Delhi.

Parrikar (62) is admitted at the old private ward under Dr Pramod Garg, professor of gastroenterology and is under observation. According to hospital sources, the Goa chief minister had undergone a series of tests at the premier health institute. "We invited 10 Maulanas from different parts of Goa to the BJP state headquarters where they performed Quran Khawani for one hour and a half (pleading) for half an hour invoking Allah's blessings for Parrikar's recovery," Sheikh Jinaah, president, BPs State Minority Morcha told news agency PTI. Jinaah said that Parrikar has helped the Muslim community in the state in various ways including aiding educational institutions and providing support to construct the Hajj House. He said that, recently, when Goa was falling short of the mandatory number of Hajj pilgrims, Parrikar invited pilgrims from neighbouring Karnataka to fly from here.



NCC Cadets taking out a parade to spread social awareness subjects including Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in Thiruvananthapuram on Thursday.

# Nun's rape: SIT resumes quizzing bishop, Kerala Police Chief Says call on arrest in day or two

**K O C H I / THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT 20** /- The SIT of Kerala Police probing the case of alleged rape of a nun by a bishop resumed questioning him today even as the state Police Chief said a decision on Franco Mulakkal's arrest could be taken in a day or two.

Hours after Mulakkal, accused of repeated rape and sexual assault, appeared before the SIT for interrogation, the state's DGP Loknath Behera said the investigating officer will

decide on whether to arrest him once the examination got over.

"After examining him only a decision will be taken. Investigating team is examining him. Let us wait. A decision will be definitely taken today or tomorrow after the interrogation," Behera told newsmen in Thiruvananthapuram. He said the investigating officer was free to take a call on the issue. When asked whether Mulakkal can be arrested before September 25, the day his anticipatory bail

plea will come up for hearing in the high court, the top police officer said, "I think, legally there is no problem. There is no such law (that bars arrest during pendency of bail plea). That will be discussed with the legal team."

Citing convention, legal experts had said the priest is unlikely to be arrested before September 25. Mulakkal, the bishop of the Jalandhar diocese of the Missionaries of Jesus, the congregation to which the alleged victim also belongs,

was grilled by the SIT headed by DySP K Subhash for seven hours Wednesday. He was asked to appear before it again today. The bishop, who recently temporarily relinquished his administrative responsibilities, joined the probe at around 11 am at the crime branch office, where some members of All India Youth Federation, the students front of the CPI, held a protest demanding his arrest.

He had also staged a protest Wednesday.

Some people also burnt an effigy of Mulakkal. Kottayam superintendent of police Hari Sankar said the bishop's questioning was likely to be over today. Meanwhile, police have tightened security in and around the crime branch office.

The nun has accused the senior Catholic priest of sexually assaulting her repeatedly between 2014 and 2016, allegations denied by the clergyman who has pleaded innocence.

# Pope temporarily relieves Mulakkal of pastoral duties

**K O C H I, SEPT 20** /- Bishop Franco Mulakkal, who was questioned by Kerala Police for the second day over rape charges by a nun, has been temporarily relieved of his pastoral responsibilities by Pope Francis, the Catholic Bishop Conference of India (CBCI) said today.

The Pope appointed Bishop Emeritus of the Archdiocese of Bombay Agnelo Rufino Gracias as the Apostolic administrator of the diocese of Jalandhar with immediate effect, a CBCI statement said. The

announcement came even as the senior Catholic priest is being questioned by the Special Investigation Team for the second day here Thursday.

The Pope took the decision in response to Mulakkal's September 16 letter offering to "step aside temporarily" as the Bishop of the Jalandhar diocese, Kerala Catholic Bishops Council Spokesman Fr Varghese Vallikkattu told PTI. He wrote the letter after Kerala Police summoned him to appear before it for questioning in the case.

# Himachal govt digitises all state gazettes from 1953

**SHIMLA, SEPT 20** /- Himachal Pradesh has digitised all state gazettes from the year 1953 to 2007, an official spokesperson said here Thursday.

The printed gazettes from 1953 to 2007 have been digitalised, indexed and uploaded online in the public domain by Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Library. The gazettes from 2007 onwards have already been published online. Chief minister Jai Ram Thakur recently launched the digitalised gazettes which are available to all stakeholders and the general public at Himachal State Rajpatra Portal (eGazette) <http://rajpatrahimachal.nic.in> or <http://rajpatrahimachal.nic.in>.

The spokesperson further stated that the state gazettes in Hindi and English and both Hindi and English and that they could be searched using date range filter, gazette number, department name in Hindi or English. In addition to this, free text search for all gazette content and combination of contents within the gazette in Hindi and English are available to all stakeholders and general public through the Rajpatra Portal, he added. The software system has been developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) Himachal Pradesh and complete digitalisation work has been done by the Himachal Pradesh Secretariat Library, he added.

# Mayawati criticises Bhagwat's statement on Ram Temple

**LUCKNOW, SEPT 20** /- RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's assertion that a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya will help end tension among Hindus and Muslims drew flak from BSP chief Mayawati who today claimed that a "narrow" mindset was not conducive for cordial relations.

Mayawati also criticised the Centre over bringing an ordinance to ban instant Triple Talaq, saying a 'sensitive' issue was being used for selfish politics. "We do not agree with the RSS chief's logic that a grand temple in Ayodhya will help end tensions between Hindus and Muslims... Relations between narrow, Sanghi Hindus and Muslims will not improve even many temples come up instead of one," the BSP chief said in a party release here. The former UP chief minister said that this kind of move needs to do is to change its "communal and hatred-ridden thinking" and adopt a humanitarian approach in consonance with the Constitution which they have "not achieved so far".

# State Notes Himachal bus mishap toll rises to 3

**SHIMLA, SEPT 20** /- The death toll in a bus accident in Himachal Pradesh's Chamba district has risen to three as one more person succumbed to injuries today, police said. The incident occurred on Wednesday after the private bus hit a crash barrier that prevented it from falling into a gorge in Luna village in Bharnour, around 420 km from here. The bus, carrying as many as 40 people, was on its way to Chhatrari village from Palampur hill station, superintendent of police Monika Bhatnagar said. Chatro Ram (82), a resident of Niyangal village in Kangra district, succumbed to injuries in a hospital here on Wednesday. Bhatnagar said, adding three more injured were in serious condition.

# 2 arrested with meat suspected to be beef

**JAIPUR, SEPT 20** /- Two persons were arrested Thursday with 130 kg meat suspected to be beef in Rajasthan's Bharatpur district, police said. They were identified as Samaydin (32), a wanted criminal in Gujarat, and Shakir (35). Both of them were produced in a court on Friday. Acting on a tip-off, police teams were sent to forest area in Khadiwasi village in the district from where both the accused were arrested, station house officer at Gopalgarh police station Dhara Singh Meena said, adding the police seized a two-wheeler and 130 kg beef from them. He said remains of cow skin, head, hoof and horns were also recovered from the spot.

# Armed men try to snatch chain from scribe in Noida

**NOIDA, SEPT 20** /- Unidentified armed men targeted a journalist in Noida on Wednesday night but failed to snatch his chain after he caught hold of their gun and forced them to flee. The incident took place around 8.30pm when the 35-year-old journalist, who works with a news channel, had gone to withdraw money from an ATM near his house in Sector 78. "I was walking back to my home on the wrong side of the lane. A car was following me on the same side and soon it came and stopped in front of me," the scribe said. "One man came out and asked me the route to Sector 56. While I was guiding him in the way, he took out a pistol and grabbed my chain. When I resisted, he caught hold of my T-shirt while I caught hold of his gun. Soon I raised an alarm after which the man fled the spot in a car," he told news agency PTI.

# Property dealer shot in Varanasi

**VARANASI, SEPT 20** /- A 35-year-old property dealer and her driver were shot by four miscreants near Nand Nagar colony here, police said today. The incident occurred when Nitu Tripathi and her husband Piyush Tripathi were returning home in a Fortuner car on Wednesday night. Four miscreants fired on the car but the driver, Sumit, did not stop. The assailants chased the car, fired over six bullets on the vehicle and fled the spot. The bullets injured Nitu and Sumit, they said. The driver somehow managed to drive the car and reached BHU trauma centre where their treatment was underway, the police said. A case was registered and a man hunt launched to arrest the accused, they said.

# Honour killing: Man found dead in Muzaffarnagar

**MUZAFFARNAGAR, SEPT 20** /- In a suspected case of honour killing, a government official was found murdered in a forest at Kutba village in Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh, police said today. The deceased was identified as Manoj Sharma, who reportedly used to work as a data operator in the office of Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), they said. According to a complaint lodged by the victim's wife Sonia, the 26-year-old man visited his in-laws house on September 18 and was missing since then. A case was registered against the woman's four family members, including her two brothers, circle officer Hariram Yadav said. Manoj and Sonia belonged to different castes and had married against the wishes of the woman's family he said.

# M Ramachandran new Kerala PCC president

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, SEPT 20** /- Congress leaders in Kerala today welcomed the appointment of former Union minister, Mullappally Ramachandran, as the party's new state president and said it would strengthen it. Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, Ramesh Chennithala said Ramachandran's appointment would help the Congress gain strength with the Lok Sabha elections round the corner. AICC general secretary Oommen Chandy said the decision would be hailed by everyone in the party. (PTI)

# CAG questions Gujarat govt's claim on ODF status

**GANDHINAGAR, SEPT 20** /- The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has said that the government's claim of Gujarat being 'Open Defecation Free' (ODF) appears to be wrong, as many rural households were found to have no toilets. In a survey conducted in eight districts, nearly 30 per cent of houses were found to have no toilets, said the CAG report tabled in the state Assembly on Wednesday. The Union government had informed the Lok Sabha in February this year that 11 states including Gujarat had been declared as ODF under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). "The state

government declared all the districts of Gujarat as ODF by October 2, 2017. However, information provided by 120 tested Gram Panchayats under eight selected District Panchayats for the period of 2014-17 revealed that 29 per cent households still did not have access to toilets (individual or public)," the CAG report said.

"Therefore, the claim of the state government that all the districts of Gujarat were ODF did not appear to be correct," it said. The survey was conducted in the districts of Dahod, Banaskantha, Chhotaudepur, Dang, Patan, Valsad,

Jamnagar and Junagadh. Of the total of 54,008 households in eight districts, 15,728 households had no access to toilets, the CAG said. "Audit observed that the administration had declared all the districts as ODF on achieving the targets set out in the baseline survey conducted in 2012," noted the CAG. "However, this list was not updated after 2012 and therefore, a number of households did not have any access to toilets and they remained uncovered," said the report. When the issue was raised with the state government in March 2018, the authorities claimed that all the villages are now ODF, as

more toilets were built later "through CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiative". However, the CAG noted, auditors observed that people were still not able to use toilets due to various reasons. In 41 out of the total 120 test-checked villages, the toilets constructed under the Swachh Bharat Mission could not be used as there was no water connection, it said. In 15 villages "toilets were not being used either due to non-availability of water and soaps or they were incomplete", the report said. In tribal-dominated Kapradra tehsil of Valsad district, over 17,400 toilets were found to be "defunct", it said.