

# BJP & corruption like Laila-Majnu, says Singh as AAP quits JPC on bills to oust jailed PM, CMs

NEW DELHI, AUG 24

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday said it will stay out of the Joint Parliamentary Committee reviewing the bills that propose to remove jailed PM, CM and ministers held in custody for 30 days.

It is the third Opposition party after the Trinamool Congress and Samajwadi Party to do so.

AAP's Rajya Sabha leader Sanjay Singh said the three Bills were "unconstitutional" and aimed not at ending corruption but at targeting Opposition leaders, toppling Opposition governments and "ending democracy in the country".

"We will not join the Joint Committee. The purpose of this Bill is not to end corruption because the BJP loves corruption and the corrupt," Singh said. "The relationship between corruption and the BJP is like that of Laila and Majnu, Romeo and Juliet. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP loves the corrupt. In which party are leaders like Ajit Pawar, Narayan Rane, G Janardhan Reddy, B.S. Yeddyurappa, Mukul Roy,



Himanta Biswas Sarma, Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha leader Derek O'Brien on Sunday said, "More parties calling out Modi coalition's stunt to form a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC). VALUELESS JPC."

On Saturday, the Trinamool Congress had declared that it would not nominate any member to the JPC proposed to examine the Constitution (One Hundred and Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, which seeks to dislodge any minister in India if jailed for 30 days on serious charges.

In a blogpost, O'Brien cited three reasons for the party's decision, pointing out that the chairperson of the JPC is decided by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the chairperson of the Rajya Sabha, with members nominated by parties based on their strength.

"This makes these committees skewed towards the ruling majority because of their numbers in the Houses. The chairperson of the JPC would have been a BJP MP," O'Brien wrote. He also noted that the Samajwadi Party had taken the same position.

While the Trinamool had

argued at a meeting of the bloc last Wednesday, the day the Bills were referred to the committee, that the entire Opposition should boycott the JPC proceedings, CPIM and RSP leaders opposed this view.

They contended that boycotting the JPC was not prudent as it would deprive them of an official platform to record their opposition.

A section of other leaders were also inclined to participate.

The bill proposes to amend Article 75 of the Constitution, which governs the appointment and responsibilities of the council of ministers, including the prime minister.

Defending the bill, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told BJP supporters in Kolkata's Dum Dum on Friday, "A government employee loses his job if he is arrested. But there was no law for PMs, CMs and ministers."

Without naming them, Modi referred to two Bengal ministers who were arrested, one of whom remains behind bars, and asked, "Should such people be allowed to remain in their posts?"

## Mumbai crosses 50 lakh vehicles; 88% are cars and two-wheelers, buses under 1%

MUMBAI, AUG 24



Private vehicles continue to dominate the roads of Mumbai, with two-wheelers and cars accounting for nearly 88 per cent of the city's 50 lakh-plus vehicle population, while public transport buses make up less than a per cent, as per a report. According to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's "Environment Status Report 2024-25", Mumbai's vehicle population crossed the 50-lakh mark in 2024-25, a gradual rise from 45,37,211 in 2023 and 47,59,976 in 2024 to 50,54,907 as of March 2025.

The report, released earlier this week, stated that of these, two-wheelers (59.34 per cent) and cars, jeeps, and station wagons (28.72 per cent) together make up nearly 88 per cent of the city's vehicles.

The remaining vehicles included 5.02 per cent autorickshaws, 3.27 per

cent taxis, 0.42 per cent other vehicles contributing goods vehicles, 0.02 per cent tractors/trailers, and 2.72 per cent vehicles categorised as other.

At least 2.94 lakh new vehicles were registered in Mumbai between April 2024 and March 2025, reflecting a significant rise of 6.2 per cent in registration, the report stated.

Of the newly registered vehicles, 60.87 per cent were two-wheelers, followed by cars, jeeps, and station wagons at 23.94 per cent, taxis and cabs made up 6.26 per cent, autorickshaws 3.06 per cent, and goods vehicles 4.43 per cent.

Buses accounted for 0.73 per cent of the total, with tractors/trailers and

just 0.09 per cent and 0.6 per cent, respectively.

As per the report, the highest number of 39.83 lakh (78.79 per cent) vehicles run on petrol, followed by 5.63 lakh (11.15 per cent) on diesel and 4.36 lakh on CNG.

Mumbai has just 48,854 electric vehicles, followed by 11,418 that run on LPG and 10,832 on other fuels.

The report also pointed out that the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) undertaking was operating a total of 2,731 buses till the end of March. These buses include 612 owned by the BEST and 2,119 operating under the wet-lease model.

## CISF to raise first all-women commando unit for counter-terror operations

NEW DELHI, AUG 24

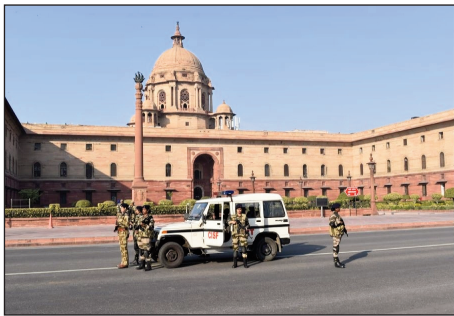
The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has decided to create an all-women commando team for conducting specialised counter-terrorist operations, officials said on Sunday.

A group of 100 female personnel deployed across the country as part of the aviation security group (ASG) guarding civilian airports are the first to be trained for the task.

The about 1.70 lakh-strength CISF is primarily tasked to guard 69 civil airports, the Delhi Metro and a number of other vital installations in the government and private domain.

"The training for the first batch of the women personnel in commando skills has been started at a training centre located in Barwaha, Madhya Pradesh.

"This eight-week advanced commando course will prepare women personnel for quick reaction team (QRT) and special task force (STF) duties at



high-security establishments and plants," a CISF official said.

The personnel will be trained in physical fitness and weapons training, live-fire drills under stress, endurance-building exercises like running, obstacle courses, rappelling, survival training in forests, and a 48-hour confidence-building exercise designed to test decision-making and teamwork under adverse conditions, he said.

The central armed police force, which functions under the Union home ministry, has 12,491 women (8 per cent of its strength) in its ranks at present.

## Noida man accused of setting wife ablaze over Rs 36 lakh dowry shot in leg while fleeing custody: Police

NEW DELHI, AUG 24

A man accused of setting his wife ablaze over a dowry demand of Rs 36 lakh was shot in his leg by police while fleeing custody on Sunday in Greater Noida, an officer said.

Vipin Bhati was being escorted for a routine medical check around 1.30 pm when he tried to flee, according to the Gautam Buddh Nagar Police PRO. "He was chased and apprehended after being shot in the leg," the officer said.

Bhati, a native of Sirsa village under Kasma Police Station limits, was arrested on Saturday after a disturbing video surfaced on social media showing him and another woman assaulting his wife, Nikki, and dragging her by the hair.

Another clip showed Nikki,



severely burnt, walking down a staircase before collapsing.

She succumbed to burns while being taken to a hospital Thursday night.

Nikki's elder sister, Kanchan, who is married in the same family, recorded a video of the attack and accused Bhati and his family members of killing her sister for dowry.



"We were beaten and tortured for days. They were demanding Rs 36 lakh. They hit her on the neck and head, threw acid, and set her on fire in front of her child," Kanchan told reporters. She said she, too, was assaulted when she tried to intervene.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police Sudhir

Kumar had on Friday said that police got a call from Fortis Hospital informing them that a woman with burn injuries had been admitted and was referred to Safdarjung Hospital.

"Police immediately left for Safdarjung Hospital, but the woman succumbed to her injuries before the team could reach the hospital," he said.

Kanchan said that their in-laws wanted her sister to go away so that Vipin could be remarried. "They slapped me. I was injured and unconscious the entire day," Nikki was cremated by her family members.

Based on Kanchan's complaint, a case was registered against Nikki's husband, Bhati, and his family at Kasma Police Station.

Nikki married Vipin in 2016 and the couple has a son.

## Din in Dima Hasao: Congress cites report, targets Assam government for forced tribal land acquisition

NEW DELHI, AUG 24

Congress on Sunday said that the forcible tribal lands acquisition of 1000 acres in Assam for a private cement factory has forced the Gauhati High Court to ask whether Constitutional safeguards in tribal areas have any real sanctity in the state.

"This is the reality of Assam today. A judge of the Guwahati High Court is forced to ask whether

Constitutional safeguards in tribal areas have any real sanctity and meaning and is compelled to express his deep concern at the forcible and violent acquisition of 1000 acres of tribal lands in Assam for a private cement factory," Jairam Ramesh wrote on X, citing a news report.

In Dima Hasao, a remote hill district of southern Assam bordering Manipur and Nagaland, nearly 3,000 bighas (around 1,000 acres) of land have been transferred from an area long inhabited by tribal communities.

The land was allotted to Mahabal Cement Pvt. Ltd., which was acquired by New Delhi-based JK Lakshmi Cement in February 2024.

The company said the land was "only barren land," needed for



mining and cement production. Petitioners call it an "involuntary" seizure of ancestral territory. The proposed factory site, just nine kilometers from Umrangso town, cuts through two inhabited villages, Nobdi Longkukro (Dimasa) and Choto Larpheng (Karbi).

The Online had reported that during a hearing on August 12, Justice Sanjay Kumar Medhi of the high court said: "3000 bighas! The entire district? What is going on? 3000 bighas allotted to a private company? We know how barren the land is... 3000 bighas? What kind of decision is this? Is this some kind of joke or what? Your need is not the issue, the public interest is the issue."

Calling the allotment "extraordinary," the bench directed the North Cachar Hills

Autonomous Council (NCHAC) to produce policy documents and records justifying the transfer. It also reminded authorities that Dima Hasao is a Sixth Schedule district, where indigenous rights have constitutional safeguards.

The trouble began in mid-2024 when the autonomous council summoned villagers for a public hearing. Locals said there was no discussion and it was an announcement that land would be taken for compensation. Many villagers, unaware of their rights, initially agreed, according to the India Today report, which Ramesh cited.

Villagers allege the council received nearly Rs 50 crore for facilitating the deal, while only about Rs 2 crore reached affected families. Most households reportedly got cheques of Rs 2

lakh; village heads received Rs 15 lakh. Feeling cheated, Dimasa families of Nobdi Longkukro returned the cheques. On May 16, they filed a formal complaint alleging coercion and misinformation.

On July 31, 2024, protesters clashed with officials. Three youths filed a police complaint and accused Monjit Naiding, an executive council member of NCHAC, of snatching a gun from his security guard and firing shots to scare villagers. No one was hurt. Naiding has denied the charges, calling them "false and baseless." The unrest soon spread to Karbi-majority Choto Larpheng, where residents also rejected compensation.

By August 2024, activist Babojit Langthasa filed a PIL, which was later dismissed for lack of locus. In December, villagers themselves approached the high court; their petition was admitted in January 2025.

Justice Medhi's remarks during the August hearing has been widely shared, putting spotlight on a district otherwise known for its hot springs, migratory bird habitats, and fragile ecology.

The court has ordered NCHAC to produce records and its land allotment policy at the next hearing.

## Isro completes first air drop test ahead of December Gaganyaan mission

NEW DELHI, AUG 24

The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) on Sunday carried out its first Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT-01) of the parachute-based deceleration system developed for the Gaganyaan programme.

The test validates the parachute system for the upcoming Gaganyaan mission, which aims to send humans into space.

The IADT-01 was a collaborative effort involving Isro, Indian Air Force (IAF), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Indian Navy, and Coast Guard.

The test evaluated the full parachute deployment sequence — including extraction, drogue chute deployment, and final main parachute activation — to simulate real atmospheric re-entry conditions.

"ISRO successfully accomplishes first Integrated Air Drop Test (IADT-01) for end to end demonstration of parachute based deceleration system for Gaganyaan missions. This test is a joint effort of ISRO, Indian Air Force, DRDO, Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard," Isro wrote on X.

Earlier Sunday, defence minister Rajnath Singh said Gaganyaan mission symbolises a "new chapter" in the journey of Atmanirbhar Bharat and called astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla and the other three chosen Gaganyatris as country's "gems" and pioneers of

national aspirations.

"We do not see space only as a field of research, but as the future of tomorrow's economy, security, energy, and humanity," Singh said.

He said that India is advancing beyond the Earth's surface into "new frontiers of space." "We've already marked our presence from Moon to Mars, and today, the nation stands fully prepared for missions like Gaganyaan," the defence minister said.

Union minister for science and technology Jitendra Singh has said that the development and ground testing of the Human Rated Launch Vehicle (HLVM3) for India's first human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan, has been successfully completed, ANI reported.

In a written reply in the Lok Sabha, Singh stated, "As per the vision envisaged by the Government of India to land an Indian on the moon by 2040, the mission aspects, configuration of the launch vehicle and orbital module systems have been taken up. Training modules, including incremental training for the ongoing Gaganyaan programme and the proposed landing of an Indian on the Moon, are in line with the requirements of mission timelines."

In 2027, India will attempt its first human spaceflight under the Gaganyaan mission, followed by Chandrayaan-4 in 2028, a mission to Venus, and the establishment of the proposed Bharat Antariksh Station by 2035.