

JNU harassment row: Women BJP MPs meet LS Speaker, demand action against Akoijam

NEW DELHI: A delegation of women BJP MPs met Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday and demanded action against Congress MP Angomcha Bimol Akoijam, who was recently sacked as a professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) amid sexual harassment allegations. After the meeting, BJP MP D Purandeswari said the delegation drew the Speaker's attention to the allegations against Akoijam and urged him to take appropriate action. "We told the Speaker that the JNU internal committee has held the Congress MP guilty. We urged the Speaker to refer the matter to the Parliament Ethics Committee and also consider whether Akoijam should continue as a Lok Sabha member," Puran-



deswari told reporters in the Parliament House Complex. "The Speaker assured us that he will look into the matter and also consider if it should be referred to the Ethics Committee," she added. Akoijam, the MP of Inner Manipur who was a professor at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems under the School of Social Sciences at JNU, was dismissed with immediate effect on October 9

after an inquiry into the sexual harassment allegations against him. He has, however, denied the charges. At least 11 female students complained against Akoijam in May this year. The complainants alleged that the professor invited students to his campus residence on the pretext of meetings or gatherings and attempted to harass them sexually. Some students al-

leged that he also made obscene and inappropriate remarks in class. Based on a complaint lodged by the JNU's chief security officer, an FIR was registered against Akoijam on Sunday on charges of sexual harassment and insulting the modesty of a woman. Six BJP MPs, who were part of the delegation that met Speaker Om Birla, later held a press conference at the party headquarters. They criticised the Congress leadership for not taking action against Akoijam until now and vowed to fight for justice for the JNU students who "showed courage" in filing a complaint against him. The "studied silence" of Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and

party president Mallikarjun Kharge on the issue demonstrates that the main opposition party practices the politics of convenience and not of principles, they alleged. "It is very unfortunate that the Congress' hand is always with those who exploit women. JNU has dismissed Akoijam, but there is a deafening silence from Rahul Gandhi, Piyanka Gandhi Vadra, Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi," BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj said. She said, "Rahulji, your voice may be very loud when you raise the 'Smash the Patriarchy' slogan, but it falls silent when the issue concerns Bimol Akoijam because the Congress practices a politics of convenience rather than one based on principles."

Rahul, his 'ecosystem' trying to create anarchy in India for 'regime change': BJP



NEW DELHI: The BJP on Thursday alleged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his "entire ecosystem" are trying to create "Bangladesh-like anarchy" in the country to bring about "regime change" and take the seat of power at the Centre. Speaking to reporters at the BJP headquarters here, party spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari cited All India Students' Association (AISA) leader Neha Bora's alleged remarks that she is inspired by the youth-led movement in Bangladesh as "proof of

Gandhi's conspiracy". There was no immediate response from the Congress or Bora to the BJP's charge. "Neha Bora said in an interview that she is inspired by the Bangladesh 'andolan' (movement) and that what happened in Bangladesh should happen in India as well. These are Neha Bora's words but Rahul Gandhi's view," Bhandari charged. They want a Bangladesh-like Gen Z movement in India and their goal is "regime change", he alleged. He further claimed that Bora's remarks

and her presence at Gandhi's recent protest march prove that the Congress leader is hatching a "conspiracy" with his "entire ecosystem" to destroy democracy by fomenting anarchy in the country to somehow bring the Congress back to power at the Centre. "This is not political resistance; this is an anarchic march and an anarchic revolt. Their goal is regime change," Bhandari claimed. "There is a series of patterns which shows that the objective of Rahul Gandhi is not democratic resistance, but appropriation and legitimisation of anarchy. It is (the Congress') fight against the Indian state and Indian democracy," he alleged. Bhandari alleged that Gandhi wants to bring his "family" back to power through such "conspiracy" because the Congress is unable to do it through democratic means under his leadership.

Heavy security in Delhi ahead of CJP's 'Lehra do Tiranga' protest on Oct 16



NEW DELHI: Heavy security will be in place in and around Connaught Place and Jantar Mantar ahead of the CJP's proposed protest on October 16, with several companies of paramilitary forces already stationed in the national capital, police sources said on Thursday. The protest, titled "Lehra do Tiranga", has been called by Cockroach Janta Party

(CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke at Central Park in Connaught Place at 5 pm on Friday. Police will deploy personnel at strategic locations, erect barricades and regulate the movement of protesters and commuters to maintain law and order and prevent any untoward incident, a source said. A senior police officer said Connaught Place is not

a designated protest site. "Jantar Mantar has been denotified as a designated protest site. Protesters can hold demonstrations at Ramlila Maidan, Burari Ground or CBD Ground after obtaining the requisite permission," the officer said. The proposed demonstration was announced after CJP leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka were arrested after reaching Jantar Mantar and remanded to five days of judicial custody by a Special Executive Magistrate. In a statement, Dipke urged citizens to join the demonstration, asserting that waving the national flag was a democratic right. The party has also called for parallel Tiranga marches in other cities at 5 pm on Friday.

'Chitta' delivered at doorstep faster than fast food in Punjab: Pilot slams AAP, BJP over drug problem

NEW DELHI: Congress leader Sachin Pilot has slammed the AAP and the BJP over the drug problem in Punjab, saying the situation is so bad that "chitta" gets delivered at people's doorstep on a phone call faster than pizza and Coca-Cola. The AICC general secretary-in-charge of Punjab also lashed out at the Bhagwant Mann government over the law-and-order situation in the border state, claiming that even in the darkest days of terrorism, police stations were never attacked but now there were grenades being lobbed at police stations and police officers being shot. Pilot said that this "collapse" of law and order is linked with "narco money". While the opposition in Punjab has slammed the AAP government over the drugs



problem and law-and-order situation, the Mann-led dispensation has dismissed the charges as politically motivated. In an interview with PTI Videos, Pilot said, "There is an unlimited supply of 'chitta' (drugs), as they call it in Punjab, and chemical drugs are coming into Punjab from

across the border. And funnily enough, the BJP, which is ruling from Delhi for the last 12 years, is saying 'we will make Punjab 'nasha-mukt'." "What about the drugs that are coming in from across the border? What has the home ministry been doing? ...Rs 21,000 crore worth

of cocaine was seized from Mundra Port in Gujarat. This was seized. So one can imagine how much drugs would have come in," he said. This amount of haul of captured drugs from an international port is a very telling sign of how things have shaped out, the Congress leader said. "Once the drugs reach the Punjab border, how can they be distributed down to the village and mohallas without the consent of the mafia that operates between the police, the administration and the politicians, it is impossible," he said. "People in Punjab say that if you want to order pizza or a coke, it takes half an hour or 40 minutes but one can call and get 'chitta' home delivered faster," Pilot claimed.

He said the drug problem is actually making the entire young generation hollow. The AAP had claimed that it would get rid of the drugs problem in Punjab within three months of forming the government, he said. "Forget getting rid of it. They made it so much worse now. It's actually very disturbing to see visuals of addicts...there are also the zombie drugs, young boys and girls are becoming addicts. So many addiction centres have opened but no one is going there," Pilot said. The government has failed on the law and order front completely and in controlling drugs, he added. Attacking the AAP government, Pilot said police recorded 324 encounters with gangsters between April 2022 and November 2025, roughly one every four days.

Kerala HC suspends sentence of ex-DGP convicted in DA case

KOCHI: The Kerala High Court on Thursday suspended the sentence of former DGP Tomin J Thachankary who was convicted in a disproportionate assets case. Justice A Badharudeen granted the relief to the former officer who was sentenced by a vigilance court to four years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs 30.84 lakh. The order came on Thachankary's appeal in which he has said that the FIR registered by the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau initially covered assets allegedly amassed between January 1, 2003, and March 1, 2005, and was subsequently extended to July 4,



2007. Searches were conducted at various premises on July 4, 2007, and documents were seized, the petition said. After the investigation, a final report was filed, and the case was subsequently transferred between Vigilance courts before being taken up by the Vigilance Court in Kottayam in 2020.

The petition has said the state government subsequently ordered a further investigation after Thachankary complained that several items of income belonging to him had not been considered and that there were errors in the calculations made by the investigating officer. The High Court had later quashed the government's order for further investigation, holding that the government could not order such a probe. However, it permitted the investigating agency to use evidence collected during the further investigation, the appeal has said. Thachankary has alleged in his petition that none of

those documents were produced before the trial court despite his application under Rule 19(4) of the Kerala Criminal Rules of Practice. He has said he had denied the incriminating circumstances when questioned under Section 313 of the CrPC during the trial and had submitted a further statement explaining what he claimed were errors in the calculations and the circumstances in which he was falsely implicated. Thachankary has contended in the appeal that the conviction is unsustainable and illegal, alleging gross misappreciation of the evidence and reliance on erroneous calculations made by the investigating officers.

Oppn slams govt after actor Imran asked to leave India over participation in protest

MUMBAI: Opposition parties in Maharashtra on Thursday hit out at the government over actor Imran Khan, a US citizen, being asked to leave India for participating in a protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. While Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said the government was scared, NCP (SP) working president Supriya Sule said Khan did not commit any crime but only took part in a protest, whereas leaders who have been accused of rape and murder are currently serving as chief ministers of many states. The Mumbai Police have issued a notice to Imran Khan, a Bollywood actor and an American national, direct-



ing him to leave India by October 28 for allegedly violating provisions of the Immigration and Foreigners Act. The action follows the actor's participation in an agitation at Mumbai's August Kranti Maidan on October 10, where protesters demanded the resignation of CEC Gyanesh Kumar. Police had briefly detained Khan during the demonstration. Talking to reporters here,

Raut said, "The government is scared if Imran Khan is asked to leave the country for participating against the SIR protest in favour of the youth." Many Bollywood stars are NRIs and foreign nationals, he said. Raut also sought to know why the government does not ask former Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina to leave the country.

Hasina has been in exile in India after fleeing Bangladesh during mass student-led protests in August 2024. Sule came out in support of Khan and said everyone has the right to protest. "Everyone has a right to protest. Now, someone will say that he (Khan) has a foreign passport. Many of my friends live abroad. They also protest," the Baramati MP said. "He (Khan) is being asked to leave...What crime has he committed? Many who have been accused of rape and murder are chief ministers of many states. The CM of a big state has murder charges against him yet he remains the CM. He (Khan) has just protested," Sule said.

Families, public representatives seek return of bodies of three Keralites killed in Germany fire

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Families and public representatives have stepped up efforts to bring home the mortal remains of three Keralites who died in a fire at a residential building in Germany. The deceased were identified as Sivin Johny (26) of Kalady in Ernakulam district, Nova Sabu (25) of Kattappana in Idukki district and Anjali Sheela Joy (27) of Chemmakad in Kollam district. According to reports, three Indian nationals were killed in a fire at a residential building in Bochum, Germany. Benny Behanan, MP, visited Johny's residence at Kalady on Thursday and met his parents and relatives. In a Facebook post, Behanan expressed deep grief



over the deaths of the three youngsters who went to Germany in search of jobs and to build their lives. He said he was in touch with the German Embassy and friends in Germany to facilitate the return of the mortal remains. He also urged the Central and state governments to expedite the procedures to

bring the bodies home. A relative of Johny told reporters that he went to Germany last month in search of a job and was expected to join work this week. His brother Salvin is a nursing student in Germany. "He was to join a job this week. It was at this time that the fire occurred. We are in touch with Keralites in Ger-

many, who have promised to help bring his mortal remains back to Kerala," the relative said. Tourism Minister P C Vishnunadh visited the residence of Anjali Sheela Joy in Chemmakad and assured the family of all assistance in bringing her body home. Johnson, Joy's uncle, told media that she used to contact her parents every day, but they did not receive a call from her on Tuesday, leaving them worried. Later, relatives abroad informed them of the incident, which friends in Germany subsequently confirmed. Joy went to Germany in July this year in search of a teaching job, he said. "She was working in a warehouse and looking for opportunities in the teaching field. Now, arrangements to

bring her body back are being made. The unfortunate incident saddens the entire family," he said. Relatives of Nova Sabu said she went to Germany in July to pursue studies and work as a gym trainer. Her father, K P Sabu, is a retired police officer, while her mother, Jyothi, works at a public health centre in Chembakappara in Idukki district. "She was very active. She went to Germany to study and worked part-time as a gym trainer. We are in touch with relatives in Germany," a relative told reporters. Public representatives, including MPs and MLAs, have approached the Ministry of External Affairs seeking its intervention to expedite the procedures and facilitate the return of the bodies to Kerala.

SC issues notice to EC on Rahul Gandhi's plea on SIR 'irregularities'

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday sought response from the Election Commission and others on a plea filed by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and several other opposition leaders over alleged large-scale voter deletions and SIR irregularities. The court also issued notice to Gandhi, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and others on a plea against their march to the apex court over alleged SIR irregularities, while observing that nobody can browbeat the judiciary. Taking up the plea filed by the opposition leaders, a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi issued notice to the poll panel, Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi. "We are issuing notice

...Tagging with pending cases. But we would like to ask one of the petitioners about his conduct," the bench said. During the hearing, some lawyers referred to the Congress leader's march to the apex court over the alleged irregularities in SIR. "Nobody can browbeat judiciary. We are not sitting in ivory towers," the bench observed. Referring to the unconditional apology tendered by Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan in a contempt matter, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted that tendering unconditional apology does not mean that actions cannot be defended and said it is a part of procedure. The bench told Mehta that it is not taking cognisance of media reports that authorities tendered unconditional apologies before the

court. The contempt case pertained to alleged violation of the apex court's direction to ensure no "complete prohibition" on Metro and train services in Delhi in the wake of the October 10 protest called by the Cockroach Janta Party. The top court also issued notices to the Centre, others on various pleas related to the Election Commission filed by leaders like Asaduddin Owaisi. The apex court also agreed to examine a plea challenging de-notification of Jantar Mantar as designated protest site. Gandhi and several other opposition leaders had marched to the apex court to file the petition related to SIR on Monday. The city has witnessed several protests demanding the resignation of the CEC over alleged irregularities in the SIR.