

On BJP worker's complaint, Chhattisgarh cops book TMC's Mahua Moitra over remarks on Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Chhattisgarh Police Saturday booked Trinamool Congress (TMC) Lok Sabha MP Mahua Moitra for her remarks aimed at Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The FIR was filed at the Mana Camp police station in the Raipur police district based on a complaint from a local worker of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), who alleged that for the first time, a Member of Parliament, had 'threatened' a home minister. Based on the complaint from BJP worker Gopal Samanto, Raipur district police booked Moitra, the Lok Sabha MP from Krishnanagar in West Bengal, under sections 196 and 197 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023. Section 196 outlines the punishment for offences that promote enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and for acts prejudicial to the maintenance of harmony. Section 197 deals with offences such as imputations and assertions prejudicial to national integration. Speaking to the press Thursday in West Bengal's Nadia, Moitra had questioned the ruling BJP on the issue of infiltration, stating that the onus to curb cross-border infiltra-



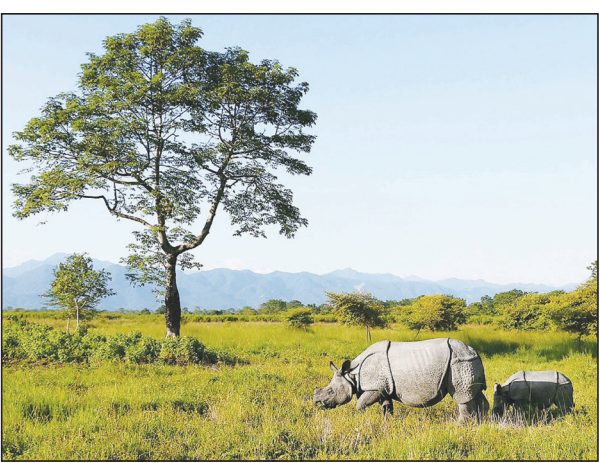
tion is on the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), under Shah. She said Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave out a call against cross-border infiltration in his Independence Day address from the ramparts of the Red Fort while Shah was standing in the first row and clapping. "If we don't have anyone to protect our borders, if citizens of another country infiltrate in huge numbers every single day, and if our citizens complain that they are seeing our mothers and sisters in a bad light and the infiltrators are snatching their lands—then the first thing you should do is cut Amit Shah's head and put it on your table," she said. Adding, in Bangla, "When the home ministry and home minister can't protect the borders of the nation, Prime Minister him-

self is saying infiltrators are looking at our mothers and sisters in a bad light and taking away our lands, who is at fault? The fault is ours or yours?" Two days later, BJP's Samanto approached the police, alleging Moitra had challenged the federal structure of the country and that her statement could spur hatred towards the Bengali community in the country. "This is the first time that an MP elected to the country's highest body, Parliament, has given such a statement related to loss of life against the country's Home Minister. This is a warning to all peace-loving citizens that whoever talks about Bangladeshi infiltration will have to pay the price of their life. Sir, in this letter, I would also like to mention that I myself come from the Bengal

community and am proud of the fact that our society has made an exceptional contribution in the country's freedom struggle, art, literature and science, etc. and due to which our society is receiving special love and respect in the entire region," Samanto alleged in the complaint which formed the basis of the FIR. "Due to this statement of Mahua Moitra, there is a fear that hatred will arise among the people towards the Bengali community and in future, criminal incidents against the people of the Bengali community may also increase. Therefore, by immediately bringing such individuals before the law of the country, they should be prevented from putting the lives of lakhs of people at risk for their own political gain. This is also an open challenge to the Constitution of the country where a democratically elected MP is talking about damaging the federal structure of the country," he alleged. ThePrint reached Moitra for comment via calls and text but had not received any response by the time of publication. This report will be updated if and when a response is received. Moitra had in a post on X on 29 August termed these developments a campaign against her by the "BJP troll cell".

Grasslands in Assam's Manas National Park shrink by 50 pc in three decades

GUWAHATI: Grasslands in Assam's Manas National Park and Tiger Reserve have shrunk by nearly 50 per cent in the last three decades due to various factors, including climate change, officials said. Manas National Park (MNP) and Tiger Reserve Field Director C Ramesh told PTI that grasslands paving the way for woodlands is a natural process that takes over 100 years but it has accelerated in the UNESCO World Heritage Site, forcing herbivorous animals to get concentrated in areas where grasses are available. "We are witnessing that the grassland expanse is shrinking and woodlands are increasing. That's a part of succession, but it is happening very rapidly, and that is a cause of concern for us as grasslands are crucial for the ecosystem," he said. "As per our records, we have lost almost 50-60 per cent of our grasslands in the last 30-35 years," he added. Ramesh stated that the trees and shrubs that are replacing grasslands are of native species. With woodlands replacing the grasslands, animals are getting concentrated in areas that have grass. "Non-territorial animals such as deer roam around the park to feed on grass. Now, they are getting concentrated in available grasslands," Ramesh said. The grasslands of the nation-



al park are unique from a biodiversity point of view as it is the only place in the world where greater one-horned rhino, swamp deer, hog deer, pygmy hog, hispid hare, wild buffalo, Bengal florican, tiger and elephant co-exist in the same habitat. Speaking about the crisis, eminent conservationist and grassland expert Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar told PTI that the grasslands are affected in two ways — biotic and abiotic or anthropogenic. "In the biotic process, a grassland gradually converts into scrubland with the spreading of invasive species, and becomes woodland by succession. Climate change accelerates the spread of invasive species," he added. The anthropogenic pattern means affecting the grassland through livestock graz-

ing, uncontrolled burning and grass cutting for various purposes. Lahkar said that the diversity of grasses has also been declining over the years. "Different animals depend on different types of grasses. So, if a particular species of grass decreases, then the animals dependent on that grass will also gradually vanish from the park," he added. Lahkar said that flood plays a key role in maintenance and management of the sub-Himalayan grassland to a large extent, but areas like MNP usually do not experience continuous flooding, and if it occurs, it typically lasts for only a few hours. "Moreover, nowadays, we are seeing very erratic rainfall. This is gradually impacting the dynamics of the grassland, including changes

in the soil composition," he added. Lahkar said very little emphasis is given in Assam on developing habitats as the primary focus is still on developing infrastructure and combating poaching. Echoing similar views, Gauhati University Assistant Professor (Environmental Science) Minakshi Bora said climate change is responsible for altering MNP's grassland community, enabling invasive species like Chromolaena odorata and Mikania micrantha to thrive. "These species outcompete native vegetation, reducing biodiversity and altering ecosystem processes. Effective conservation efforts are crucial to mitigate the impacts of invasive species and protect the park's unique biodiversity," she added. Bora said that rising temperatures and declining precipitation have disrupted the hydrological cycle in the Manas River Basin. "Data from recent studies indicate a gradual decline in the frequency of rainfall, resulting in reduced summer water flows and increased potential evapotranspiration. a" These factors lead to altered river discharge, frequent droughts and declining water quality, which are directly putting stress on the grassland ecosystems, which we know as the backbone of MNP," she added.

Rajasthan Assembly witnesses uproar; proceedings adjourned till Wednesday

JAIPUR: The Monsoon session of the Rajasthan Assembly began on a stormy note on Monday as Congress and BJP members raised slogans against each other, prompting Speaker Vasudev Devnani to adjourn proceedings till Wednesday. Congress MLAs shouted slogans of "vote chor gadi chhodo" (vote thief, step down) and displayed placards inside the House. Despite repeated appeals for order by the Speaker, the Congress members remained defiant. The Speaker asked them to maintain decorum, saying this is not a marketplace or a street and members cannot behave like this in the Assembly. "This is not a marketplace or a street corner. Maintain

the dignity of the House," Devnani said. Targeting opposition benches, he also reminded the Leader of Opposition to uphold the dignity of the House and refrain from using inappropriate words. BJP MLAs also raised slogans against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, shouting "gaali baaz Rahul Gandhi". The BJP has been protesting against Gandhi for alleged abuses directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mother during the Congress leader's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in poll-bound Bihar. During the proceedings, Devnani informed the House that the Anta Assembly seat (Baran) had fallen vacant due to the conviction of Kanwar Lal Meena in a criminal case.

The report of the Select Committee on the coaching centre regulation bill was also tabled by Deputy Chief Minister and Committee Chairman Dr. Premchand Bairwa. The speaker also read out a message from the Governor regarding the return of a bill. Earlier when the House met for the day, obituary references were made to former governors L Ganeshan and Satpal Malik, former chief ministers Shibu Soren (Jharkhand), V.S. Achuthanandan (Kerala), Vijay Rupani (Gujarat); former MPs Girija Vyas and Colonel Sonaram, former MLAs Madan Kaur, Sohan Singh and Kishna Ram Nai. After paying tributes to departed leaders, the House was adjourned till Wednesday.

day. Tuesday has been declared a holiday in view of Ramdev Jayanti. Speaking to reporters outside the assembly, Leader of Opposition Tikaram Jolly charged that the BJP had rigged both the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. He accused the Election Commission of being complicit and claimed that Congress had exposed its functioning. Former deputy CM and Tonk MLA Sachin Pilot alleged that elections were repeatedly undermined through electoral malpractice. "Some people are trying to steal votes and repeatedly form governments through unfair means. The entire country is now speaking up against this and the Congress will not tolerate vote

theft," Pilot told reporters. "Vote theft is not just happening in Bihar or Karnataka. It has been attempted in Haryana, Maharashtra and Rajasthan too. There must be a thorough investigation. Those sitting in the Election Commission in BJP's disguise must be removed," he demanded. Independent MLA Ravindra Singh Bhati entered the Assembly premises carrying posters demanding implementation of a Khejri tree protection law. "If the state government fails to act in time, I will strongly oppose it," Bhati told reporters. Asked about the uproar in the House, government Chief Whip Jagdishwar Garg told reporters that the Congress has a record of using abusive language.

"It's Getting Late": Trump claims India "offered to cut tariffs to nothing"

NEW DELHI: US President Donald Trump claimed Monday that India has offered to reduce its tariffs on US goods to zero, underlining that New Delhi should have done it years ago. The Trump administration has imposed 25 per cent reciprocal tariffs on India and an additional 25 per cent levies for Delhi's purchases of Russian oil, bringing the total duties imposed on India to 50 per cent, among the highest in the world. Trump has accused India of fueling Moscow's deadly attacks on Ukraine by purchasing Russian oil. However, he has refrained from tougher US sanctions on Russia itself. Defending India's oil purchase, External Affairs Minister



S Jaishankar argued that the same yardstick has not been applied to China and the European Union, the largest importer of Russian crude oil and Russian LNG, respectively. "They have now offered to cut their tariffs to nothing, but it's getting late. They should have done so years

ago," Mr Trump posted on Truth Social, adding that the relationship between the two countries has been a "one-sided disaster". New Delhi said that, like any major economy, it will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security.

Stop more Maratha protestors from entering Mumbai: Bombay High Court directs State

NEW DELHI: In an urgent three-hour hearing on Monday (September 1, 2025), a Special Bench of Justices Ravindra V. Ghuge and Gautam A. Ankhad of the Bombay High Court directed the Maharashtra Government to clear protestors from Mumbai streets by Tuesday (September 2, 2025), 4 p.m. and prevent any more protestors from entering the city. Taking cognisance of news reports and social media videos showing protestors climbing traffic signals, playing kabaddi and tug-of-war, bathing, urinating on streets, and damaging heritage property, the Court said the situation was "untenable" and needed immediate correction.



The Court said protestors must be restricted to Azad Maidan, the only venue where permission was granted for a one-day agitation. "There should be no protest anywhere else apart from Azad Maidan. The life of Mumbaiers should be normalised," the Bench observed. The State informed

the court that permission had been given to only 5,000 protestors for one day, but many more had gathered at other locations, including CSMT, Flora Fountain, and the State Secretariat. The Court questioned why "unauthorised protestors" had not been sent back and instructed the Government

to stop further influx into Mumbai. The Bench also reminded the organisers to adhere to the August 26 order that restricted protest timings to 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The State submitted that activist Manoj Jarange-Patil had refused to accept the Government's notice regarding violation of conditions. "There was no permission for a fast unto death. The organisers had the responsibility to follow the rules, but they have clearly flouted them. Mumbaiers should not be inconvenienced," the court observed. The Bench also directed the State to monitor Mr. Jarange's health and ensure immediate medical assistance if required.

Why Jagdeep Dhankhar is at home in INLD chief Abhay Chautala's farmhouse

NEW DELHI: IT'S far from a surprise that Jagdeep Dhankhar, who has remained out of public view since he stopped down as former Vice-President more than a month ago, has picked Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) chief Abhay Singh Chautala's farmhouse in Delhi's Chhatrapur Enclave to stay in, as he waits for his official residence. The ties between Dhankhar and the Chautalas go back nearly 40 years, to 1989, when Abhay's grandfather Devi Lal — Haryana's foremost Jat leader and then Chief Minister — identified the young lawyer from Rajasthan as a potential "leader". In turn, Dhankhar, also a Jat, always referred to Devi Lal as his "mentor".



Talking to The Indian Express ahead of Dhankhar moving into his farmhouse, Abhay said, "When I learnt Dhankhar ji was looking for a house to stay in and his own accommodation was not ready, I called him and asked him to stay at our place. It is a family gesture towards a person we see as our elder. I told him that he does not need to

look for any alternative accommodation, and that it is his own house and he should come here. He graciously accepted." Dhankhar had caught Devi Lal's eye when he organised 500 vehicles from Rajasthan for an Opposition rally held on September 25, 1989, to mark Devi Lal's birthday, at Boat Club near India Gate.

Devi Lal was at the time one of the leading figures of the Opposition coalition that had come together to challenge the Rajiv Gandhi-led Congress government at the Centre, and the success of the Boat Club rally was a big step in that direction. In the 1989 Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition coalition fought as the Janata Dal. Devi Lal offered Dhankhar the Janata Dal ticket from the Jhunjhunu Lok Sabha seat, and actively campaigned for him. Not only did it strengthen their bond but it also meant that when Devi Lal became the Deputy Prime Minister in the Janata Dal government that replaced the Congress, Dhankhar was catapulted to Union Minister of State (Parliamentary Affairs).

Bengaluru techie, 41, dies after being bitten by snake hiding in his footwear

NEW DELHI: A 41-year-old software engineer in Bengaluru died on Saturday after being bitten by a venomous snake that had slithered into his footwear. The victim has been identified as Manju Prakash, who was an employee of TCS and a resident of Ranganatha Layout. According to police reports and accounts from family members, Mr Prakash had left his Crocs slippers outside the front door of his home. After stepping out briefly to purchase juice from a nearby shop, he returned home and slipped his feet into the footwear, unaware that a snake had taken refuge inside one of the slippers during his absence. Mr Prakash had previously suffered an accident that resulted in a loss of sensation in his leg, a condition that prevented him from feeling the snakebite. Unaware, he took off his footwear and went inside his room to rest. A family worker later noticed a

snake inside the slipper and alerted his father, who carefully removed the reptile, which was found to be dead. A family member said the snake likely died of suffocation inside the Crocs. When Mr Prakash's mother went to check on him, she found him lying on the bed unresponsive, with foam around his mouth and a bleeding leg. The family immediately rushed him to a nearby private hospital, where doctors declared him dead. The shocking incident has raised concerns among residents about the presence of snakes in residential areas, particularly during monsoon seasons when such reptiles are known to seek shelter in homes and gardens. Experts have since urged residents to exercise caution, advising them to check footwear and dark corners of homes for snakes, especially in areas close to greenery or during rainy weather.

the court that permission had been given to only 5,000 protestors for one day, but many more had gathered at other locations, including CSMT, Flora Fountain, and the State Secretariat. The Court questioned why "unauthorised protestors" had not been sent back and instructed the Government

Flood alert in Delhi after 29,000 cusecs of water released from Hathnikund barrage

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has issued a flood alert as the water level of the Yamuna River is expected to exceed the danger level after the release of 29,313 cusecs of water from Hathnikund Barrage on Monday morning. Officials were instructed to maintain strict vigilance, along with patrolling in low-lying areas. "As the water level of ORB (Delhi Old Railway Bridge) may cross the danger level and is likely to exceed 206.50m, a CWC advisory may be expected soon. So, all the Sector Officers are hereby advised to keep a strict vigil in their respective areas and to take necessary action at vulnerable points, such as people residing within the river embankments, shall be warned and shifted to safer places," a Delhi government order said. "The police and the staff of 1 & FC Department would undertake patrolling along right and left marginal embankments and keep vigil round the clock on the vulnerable points, regulators/

pumps, etc. as required," it added. On Thursday, a flood relief camp was set up in Delhi's Mayur Vihar, as the water level of the River Yamuna had crossed the danger mark the previous day. "These tents are set up for people living near the river; they will come out and live in these tents when the flood comes," Ashok, a resident of Mayur Vihar, told ANI about these flood relief camps. Meanwhile, IMD, on Sunday, said that India has recorded one of its highest rainfall levels in decades during August 2025, with exceptional showers across several states. Addressing a virtual press conference in the national capital, IMD Director General Mrityunjay Mohapatra emphasised that monsoon activity revived strongly in the second half of the month and is expected to extend into September with above-normal rainfall. "Rainfall over all of India for the month of August is 268.1 mm, which is the seventh highest since 2001 and



the 45th rank since 1901. Rainfall over north-west India for the month of August is 265.0 mm, which is the highest since 2001 and the 13th rank since 1901. Rainfall over South India (250.6 mm), which is the third highest since 2001 and eighth highest since 1901," the IMD DG said in a press conference.

The IMD explained that the rapid revival of the monsoon from August 14 played a crucial role. "Active to vigorous monsoon conditions prevailed during the second half of August 2025 due to the formation of four low-pressure systems with a total of fifteen days," Mohapatra said.