

HIDMA'S KILLING  
IS IT PRICE OF A BROKEN PROMISE ?

VOL. 24 | ISSUE 1 | PROBE TIMES | NOVEMBER 15 | 2025

TRANSPORT MAFIA  
THRIVES ON  
CORRUPTION

COMBAT  
AIRCRAFT  
PROGRAM  
ADANI TO GET  
CONTRACT?

NOVEMBER 15, 2025

# PROBE TIMES

EXCLUSIVE REPORT



## DELHI BLAST A NEW D-GANG ON THE RISE



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Managing Editor

**Pandarinath Prabhala**

Editor

**Srishailam Silveri**

Executive Editor

**Rajeswar Balipi**

Columnists

**Pratap Reddy Kasula**

**Raja Chemikala**

**Harshavardhan Erra**

Photos

**Pedapudi Prasad**

Cover & Layout

**Niranjan Govindu**

Printed & Published by

**PROBE TIMES MEDIA**

Editorial office

**PROBE TIMES**

B-105, Bharani Apartments, Salem Nagar Colony,

Malakpet, Hyderabad. 500036, Phone:

9666242767, Email: [probetimesinfo@gmail.com](mailto:probetimesinfo@gmail.com)

India's decades-long battle with Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) appears to be entering its most decisive phase. Once entrenched across the "Red Corridor," the Maoist insurgency is now a fraction of its former strength its armed capability diminished, territorial hold fractured, and ideological resonance fading. But while the decline is unmistakable, it is neither linear nor irreversible. The story is less about a dramatic collapse and more about a slow deflation shaped by state strategy, development shifts, and the movement's internal decay.

At its peak between 2009 and 2012, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) wielded substantial disruptive power. The MHA's Annual Report 2011–12 recorded over 1,700 violent incidents annually, and large swathes of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh were classified as "severely affected." This was the period when then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh famously termed LWE "India's single biggest internal security challenge" (2006) a statement that captured the insurgency's strategic salience and the anxieties it generated in New Delhi.

Fast forward to 2023–24, and the contrast is stark. Violence has declined by nearly 77% since 2010 and deaths by over 85%, according to the Ministry of Home Affairs LWE Division (2024). The number of affected districts has fallen from 223 in 2010 to just 45 today, with only a core cluster primarily in parts of Sukma, Bijapur, Dantewada, and Gadchiroli still witnessing intermittent attacks. For a movement that once aspired to encircle Indian cities through "liberated zones," this represents a strategic rout.

The reasons are multi-layered. First, the state's security response has evolved beyond the heavy-handed, poorly coordinated operations of the mid-2000s. Forces such as the CRPF's CoBRA battalions, the Greyhounds in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, and coordinated interstate operations have consistently squeezed the Maoist operating space. The establishment of fortified Forward Operating Bases, improved road connectivity under the Road Requirement Plans (RRP-I and II), and increased use of UAV-based reconnaissance tipped the tactical balance.

Simultaneously, governance interventions though uneven began addressing long-standing structural deficits. The Aspirational Districts Programme (2018), targeted expansion of PMGSY roads, and better delivery of welfare schemes eroded the insurgency's narrative of state absence. As the NITI Aayog's ADP evaluation reports note, improvements in healthcare, schooling, and financial inclusion in previously unserved tribal belts created social pressures that the Maoists struggled to counter.

But it would be simplistic to credit state action alone. Much of the insurgency's decay is internally generated. Testimonies of surrendered cadres documented in MHA's Surrender and Rehabilitation Scheme reviews (2018–2023) highlight disillusionment with the movement's dogmatic hierarchy, resource scarcity, forced recruitment, and the leadership's inability to adapt to a changing socio-economic landscape. The CPI (Maoist) failed to attract younger tribal populations whose aspirations increasingly align with mobility, education, and state benefits rather than revolutionary upheaval.

Yet the decline is not a guarantee of permanence. Violent ambushes Sukma (2017), Gadchiroli (2019), Bijapur (2021) are reminders that residual Maoist units remain lethal, especially in forested trijunctions where state penetration is thin. Governance continues to lag in precisely those pockets where the insurgency still survives. Land alienation, forest-rights conflicts, and minerally rich territories with opaque corporate-State engagement remain unresolved fertile ground for future resentment.

**TEAM PROBE TIMES**



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# The Rise and Fall of Hidma

**For decades, security forces chased a whisper named Hidma. This week, the whisper fell silent. The man who engineered some of India's deadliest Maoist strikes is dead and an era built on fear, secrecy, and jungle warfare may be dying with him.**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

For decades, the name Madvi Hidma drifted through the forests of Bastar like a warning. Part myth, part menace, he was the Maoist commander who lived in the shadows and made the state bleed. With his killing in a predawn encounter, that shadow has finally lifted and a defining chapter of India's left-wing insurgency has snapped shut.

## The Making of a Rebel

Born in 1981 in the tribal village of Puvarti in Sukma, Hidma grew up knowing the forest as his first teacher. The state was distant; the Maoists were not. He dropped out of school early, joined the People's War Group as a teenager, and slipped into the insurgent ranks with the instinct of someone who belonged to the terrain.

Security officials say his rise was powered by three assets: fearless mobility, absolute local support, and an unmatched understanding of Bastar's interior maze. By his mid-20s, he was already a name the older leadership had begun to notice — and rely on.

## The Shadow General

Once he took over PLGA Battalion No. 1, Hidma transformed it into the Maoists' most lethal strike force. He was not merely a gunman; he was a tactician who choreographed ambushes with eerie precision. Under his command, the battalion was linked to some of the bloodiest attacks, including the Dantewada massacre (2010) and the Jhiram Ghati strike (2013).

A senior intelligence officer once described him as "a man who could disappear into a forest even when standing in front of you." Another said he ran an "impenetrable, tribal-first network that no outsider could infiltrate."

To counter-insurgency units, he was the "white whale" — always seen, never caught.

## A Tribal Face at the Top

Hidma's ascent changed the internal chemistry of the Maoist hierarchy. He became Secretary of the Dandakaranya Special Zonal Committee, and later one of the youngest members of the CPI (Maoist) Central Committee.

For the first time in years, a tribal commander, not a senior

non-tribal ideologue, shaped the insurgency's military strategy across Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Odisha. His rise soothed deep resentments among tribal cadres who long felt overshadowed by leaders from outside Bastar.

### The Crumbling Fortress

But by 2025, the Maoist stronghold was cracking. Roads, telecom towers, and political awareness were cutting through areas once sealed off by fear. Operations intensified, drones and long-range sensors entered the jungle, and informant networks grew in places the Maoists once controlled absolutely.

Even Hidma's bases, ones commanders called "untouchable" — were being breached. His tribal support, once his strongest shield, had begun to thin.

### The Last Gunfight

On 18 November 2025, the forest finally gave him up.

Around 6:30 a.m., in the Maredumilli forests near the Andhra–Chhattisgarh–Telangana tri-junction, the elite Greyhounds team closed in after days of silent tracking. What followed was a short, violent exchange.

Hidma refused to surrender. When the gunfire ceased, six Maoists lay dead, including him and his wife Raje (Rajakka). Security forces recovered AK-47s, pistols, explosives, detonators, and symbolically the final proof that the most elusive Maoist commander had been cornered.

### A Decisive Phase

The timing could not have been more significant. Home Minister Amit Shah had declared only weeks earlier that "the backbone of this violent movement has been broken" and that the insurgency would be "eliminated by March next year." Hidma's death pushed that claim from political promise to strategic momentum.

Inspector General P Sunderraj called the killing part of a "decisive phase" in counter-insurgency - a phase the state has long waited for.

### Home coming and Ashes

Back in Puvarti, grief mixed with pride. Villagers carried the bodies of Hidma and Rajakka to the cremation ground. They offered blankets, shawls, and quiet prayers. Someone placed Hidma's mother's shawl over the pyre — a final gesture for a man who was both their son and their storm.

### The Forest Warrior's Legacy

Hidma's life was forged in Bastar's jungles; his myth was built in its battles.

To the state, he was the architect of bloodshed. To Maoist sympathizers, a martyr. To many in Bastar, a contradiction - a protector who became a destroyer.

His death may not end the Maoist movement, but it does end an era: the era of commanders who could melt into the forest and move cadres across borders with nothing but instinct and influence.



## HIDMA'S KILLING

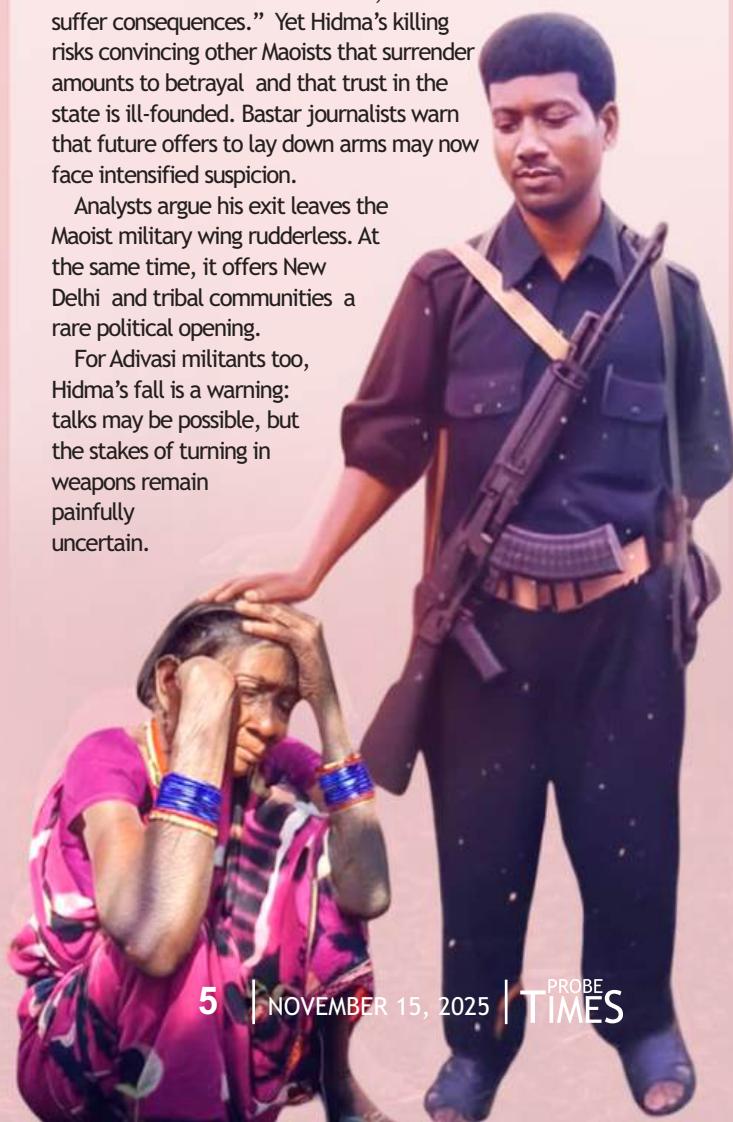
# Is it Price of a Broken Promise ?

**B**efore his fatal encounter, key Maoist commander Madvi Hidma was reportedly ready to lay down arms not before the police, but before his own community. According to Bastar journalists, he told them, "If the top leadership agrees ... I will too ... this fight cannot be won against the state."

His death on 18 November 2025 in Andhra Pradesh dealt a heavy symbolic blow, but more importantly, it may undermine a fragile hope within the ranks: that surrender could be honorable and safe. Security officials insist the message is clear: "No choice but to surrender, or else suffer consequences." Yet Hidma's killing risks convincing other Maoists that surrender amounts to betrayal and that trust in the state is ill-founded. Bastar journalists warn that future offers to lay down arms may now face intensified suspicion.

Analysts argue his exit leaves the Maoist military wing rudderless. At the same time, it offers New Delhi and tribal communities a rare political opening.

For Adivasi militants too, Hidma's fall is a warning: talks may be possible, but the stakes of turning in weapons remain painfully uncertain.





# The Killer Doctors

A dramatic night scene of a car accident. In the foreground, a white car is partially visible, with its driver-side door open. In the background, a vehicle is engulfed in flames, with bright orange fire and thick black smoke rising into the air. The scene is illuminated by the fire and some ambient street lights, creating a somber and urgent atmosphere.

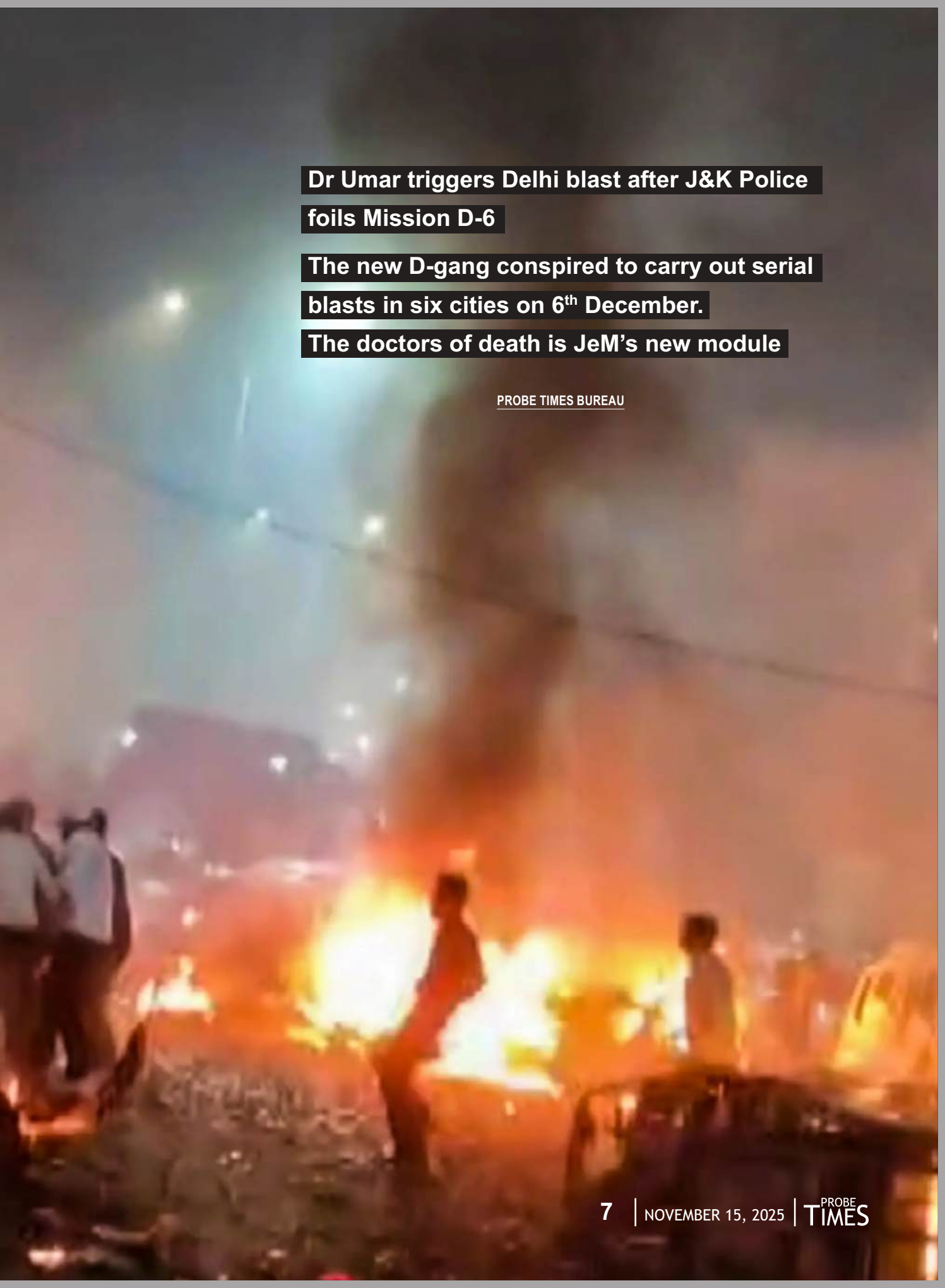


**Dr Umar triggers Delhi blast after J&K Police  
foils Mission D-6**

**The new D-gang conspired to carry out serial  
blasts in six cities on 6<sup>th</sup> December.**

**The doctors of death is JeM's new module**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU



KASHMIRI DOCTOR  
TRIGGERS DELHI BLAST

**I**t appears Dr Umar Mohammed aka Umar Nabi was supposed to carry out the suicide attack on December 6, while other members of the terror module carried out similar attacks in five other cities across India.

But he panicked when Jammu and Kashmir police began arresting several members of the Pakistan based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) sponsored doctors' terror module since October 30 and was on the run. With no escape in sight, he carried out suicide attack on November 10 in Red Fort area in the National Capital, officials said.

According to officials, the new D-gang had planned to execute Mission D-6. It all began when Dr Shaheen, while employed at Kanpur's GSVM Medical College, came in contact with an Indian origin doctor abroad, who shared radical videos and literature.

Over a period, she came in contact

**The trio along with other members, the new D-gang nurtured their evil designs. The trio are said to have travelled to Turkey where they met their handler and hawala channel to receive funds**

with Pakistan sponsored handlers and was radicalised to carryout subversive activities. Then she found placement in Al-Falah University. Meanwhile, Dr Muzammil Shakeel and Dr Umar Ahmad of J&K, who were radicalised

by Moulvi Irfan Ahmad of J&K joined the same university. It is not clear whether the duos joined Al-Falah coincidentally or as part of a design.

While at this university, the trio along with other members, the new D-gang nurtured their evil designs. The trio are said to have travelled to Turkey where they met their handler and hawala channel to receive funds.

By 2022, the gang began collecting arms and ammunition and instructions regarding the targets. It also began procuring explosive material, detonators, vehicles and communication devises to carry out the attacks. Ones the material was ready, the gang, under the instructions of the handler, decided its Mission D-6, officials said.

Unfortunately for the gang and fortunately for India, Moulvi Irfan Ahmad ordered putting up of posters in the name of JeM, issuing death threats to some officers. Soon, local police



launched investigations and picked up Moulvi Irfan. During questioning, he spilled the beans about the new D-gang.

On October 30, the J&K Police came to Faridabad with search warrants. They arrest Muzammil from Al-Falah University and took him to J&K on a transit remand. After thorough interrogation of Muzammil, J&K Police return to Faridabad on November 8 and recover an assault rifle, a pistol, three assault-rifle magazines, 83 rounds, two extra pistol magazines, and seven live cartridges from a Swift car on the campus.

The next day, police recover 358 kg of ready to use explosives concealed in 12 suitcases from a room in Dhauj, near the university. They also recover timers, batteries, cutters, detonators, face masks, wigs, wires, and material used for making improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

On November 10, police recover 2,553 kg of ammonium nitrate – meant for use in making IEDs - packed in sacks from the house of a man

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## **On November 10, police recover 2,553 kg of ammonium nitrate – meant for use in making IEDs - packed in sacks from the house of a man identified as Imam Ishtiyag in Haryana's Fatehpur Taga**

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identified as Imam Ishtiyag in Haryana's Fatehpur Taga. Dr Shaheen was also arrested and taken to Srinagar.

Umar Mohammed, missing since Muzammil's arrest on October 30, was seen going in and out of Delhi more than twice. Meanwhile, police continued to recover more vehicles, explosives and arrest more people

connected with the gang.

Officials said Dr Umar, who was mentally prepared to carry out suicide attack, appears to have panicked that he would not be able to carry out the task if he was arrested. Consequently, he triggered the blast at 6.52 pm, near the Red Fort.

The entire security apparatus woke up to the devastating blast. Searches and arrests were intensified. Quickly, the government handed over the investigation to the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The NIA on Sunday arrested Amir Rashid Ali, a resident of Kashmir. According to the agency, he conspired with Dr Umar to carry out the suicide attack. The car used in the suicide attack was registered in the name of Amir Rashid.

The NIA has examined 73 witnesses so far in connection with the case. The agency said it is working in close coordination with Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh police and various sister agencies.







# A New D-Gang on the Rise

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

Until now, Indians knew one D-gang, run by underworld don Dawood Ibrahim.

Prominent members of this gang along with the don are sheltered in Pakistan ever since the devastating 1993 serial bomb blasts in Mumbai.

Over a period, the D-gang diversified and mostly limited to drug and arms smuggling, extortions and hired-killings. The old D-gang is now termed as senior citizen batch by the agencies.

But, 32-years-later, emerges another D-gang - this time not a mafia syndicate, but the cold-blooded doctors' terror gang. Some members of this new gang executed the suicide-car bomb blast near Red Fort area in the National Capital.

Names such as Dr Umar Mohammad, Dr Muzaffar Ahmad, Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather, Dr Muzammil Shakeel, Dr Shaheen Sayeed, Dr Mohammed Arif Mir, and Dr Farooq Ahmad Dar have now surfaced, and the list continues to grow. Reports suggest that nearly 15 more doctors may be part of this new "D-gang".

These are not foot soldiers but doctors - individuals from affluent Kashmiri families, with impressive educational backgrounds and comfortable lifestyles. They lived in large houses with gardens, earned well, spoke fluent English, and were tech-savvy professionals. One would assume they had no reason to be drawn into violence. Yet, beneath that polished exterior, they were radicalised to work for Pakistan-sponsored separatist

agenda.

The November 10, 2025 car bomb blast near Red Fort, killing 13 people and injuring more than 20, demolished a convenient myth that has floated around Kashmir's troubled history that terrorism in the valley is blue-collar phenomenon driven by poverty, lack of education, and exploitation. The reality, however, has always been far more disturbing.

Sources say that Kashmir's terror ecosystem has been powered by individuals who grew up on privileges - educated, well-placed, and economically comfortable. Many lived in spacious homes, owned land, and enjoyed social standing. Yet, they chose to lend their intellect, networks, and credibility to the machinery of terror.

The recent terror plot uncovered in



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**Thirty- two-  
years-later,  
emerges another  
D-gang - this  
time not a mafia  
syndicate, but  
the cold-blooded  
doctors' terror  
gang. These are  
not foot soldiers  
but doctors -  
individuals from  
affluent Kashmiri  
families**

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Haryana's Faridabad once again exposes this deeper ideological foundation. The involvement of these medical professionals is not an aberration. The death of a suicide-bomber doctor and the arrest of other medical professionals prove that the successive governments at the Centre have chosen to look away from the core reality that terrorism in Kashmir is fundamentally orchestrated by Pakistan in the garb of a religious war.

What is more disturbing is that there appears to be serious lack of coordination between the police and intelligence wings of the states as well as the central agencies.

Sources say that the Jammu & Kashmir police did not share the information about Dr Nisar Ul Hassan, who was posted in the Medicines Department of SHMS Hospital, Srinagar but was dismissed on November 21, 2024 along with three other officials for their terror links. As a result, he joined Al-Falah University, Faridabad, Haryana, and is said to be a part of the new D-gang.

Since the Jammu & Kashmir police did not share these details with their counterparts in Haryana, the new D-gang nurtured its evil designs right under the nose of the double-engine government and the administration did not even know that Al-Falah University has become the camp office for the

terror gang.

It is time for the agencies to strongly recognise the truth that the pattern of professionals camouflaging their stature and skills to serve extremist goals is not limited to isolated incidents. Over the years, numerous terror investigations have exposed a tightly woven nexus of politicians, activists, doctors, lawyers, teachers and even law enforcement officers. Further, the idea that radicalisation is confined to the uneducated or economically vulnerable does not hold up to scrutiny. The valley's conflict has always had its most critical support from within the educated class, whose influence and networks amplified its reach.

The recent arrests of Kashmiri doctors planning attacks far from the valley underscore a reality. Radicalisation in Kashmir is not a fringe phenomenon - it is deeply institutional, socially enabled, and often silently endorsed.

The Faridabad case is a reminder that the conflict in Kashmir cannot be understood through simplistic narratives of poverty or deprivation. It is a complex and deeply ideological battle and the country should recognise the extent to which radicalisation has penetrated even the most privileged segments of Kashmiri society.

Cops bust Bio-Terror module

# Hyderabad Doctor is the Kingpin

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

There is a famous saying, “An empty mind is devil’s playground”. And this is true with Doctor Ahmed Mohiyuddin Saiyed of Hyderabad.

Arrested by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) early November for plotting to carryout biological attacks in India, Ahmed used to browse through social media platforms as he has no job to work.

Despite finishing his MBBS from China, Ahmed could not start practice in India because he could not succeed in the qualifying exam in India. However, he managed to land a ‘work from home job’ with very little work to do.

Sources said he kept himself browsing through social media platforms as if to show that he was busy. During such browsing, he came in touch with a Pakistan-sponsored handler on the internet. Immediately, his empty mind was radicalised by the handler to

some extent.

However, Ahmed did not have much patience. So, he only used to browse very short videos and reels on the social media. He was convinced that ‘he had to create awareness in the minds of Muslims before carrying out any task given by the handlers, sources said.

But, he has been a medical student and had good knowledge about chemicals and their processes. So, his handler encouraged Ahmed to research and prepare biological weapons with indigenously and freely available material. Consequently, he started research and decided to prepare ricin out of castor beans and its oil, sources said.

Even as his research was at initial stages, Gujarat ATS discovered that Ahmed is friends with Azad Suleman Sheikh and Mohammed Suhail Mohammed Saleem Khan of Uttar Pradesh, who had conducted recce at several locations in Ahmedabad, Delhi and Lucknow for carrying out attacks. With specific inputs about Ahmed’s travel to Gujarat where he

had collected some weapons and was on his way to Uttar Pradesh to meet his associates, the ATS nabbed him.

Subsequent searches at his residence led to the recovery of three sophisticated pistols and live cartridges. The ATS also recovered literature related to preparation of ricin, castor beans, castor oil and other substances for preparing the deadly biological weapon, sources said.

During questioning, Ahmed is learnt to have told the police his plans about unleashing mass destruction by using the biological weapon. The ATS found that Ahmed is connected to a Pakistan-based handler Abu Khadija, said to be affiliated with the Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISKP). Sources said the accused had been receiving detailed instructions on preparing the toxin and was “awaiting approval” before proceeding with tests.

Ricin is of the world’s most lethal biological agents, produced from castor beans.



# D Gang to revive LTTE

## Drugs to flood South India

The threat of unholy nexus between Dawood Ibrahim and remnants of LTTE looms large over India

PROBE TIMES BUREAU



**L**iberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a designated terror outfit, has been trying to revive ever since it was defeated in May 2009 after the death of its founder Velupillai Prabhakaran.

An international network of sympathizers attempted to revive the organization through political and fundraising activities, but not with any success mainly due to lack of funds and leadership.

It may be recalled 1165 Indian Peace Keeping Force soldiers were killed in action during their deployment in Sri Lanka and the LTTE assassinated India's former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi in 1991. Besides, India had to endure severe law and order issues when the outfit was at its peak.

The end of LTTE was really a good development for India and the news about attempts for its revival always caused alarm for Indians. Unfortunately, the beaten remnants of LTTE found a saviour in underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, a designated terrorist and most wanted criminal.

Intelligence agencies suggest the D-Gang, which has faced severe losses in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Northern states, has been trying to explore routes through South India to further its drug business with the help of LTTE network. This would be a perfect opportunity for the beaten outfit to make a comeback.

The LTTE will get the much-needed funds for revival if a tie-up materialises with the D gang. With the latter capable of supplying arms along with drugs, the remnants of LTTE are seeing a ray of hope in Dawood Ibrahim.

On the other hand, it becomes easy for the D gang to strengthen its drug business using the expertise and experience of LTTE, an intelligence officer said adding that when the organisation was at its peak, LTTE smuggled drugs into Sri Lanka and India. Thus, its cadres are well versed with the old routes of smuggling via land and sea.

In fact, the LTTE controlled the southern drug market when the organisation was at its peak. It had complete control over the gangs that operated from Sri Lanka and India. Now the D gang making inroads into the

southern market with the help of LTTE is bigger worry for the agencies.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) had arrested LTTE operative Satkunam aka Sabesan for his involvement in smuggling drugs and arms from Pakistan. There are many other former LTTE operatives who have contacts with criminal gangs in Sri Lanka and India that are involved in drug and arms smuggling, intelligence official said and added that these operatives are always ready to help D gang in return for the much-needed money for revival of their organisation.

The intelligence inputs are certainly a serious cause of concern for India because its cities are already facing the drug menace. Three cities – Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Chennai have already becomes hubs of drug trade.

Drugs have already entered educational institutions in these cities, while the authorities are finding it very difficult to check the menace. It will be disastrous if D gang succeeds in its efforts to seal a deal with LTTE, said a senior police officer.

# Bangladeshi infiltrators growing threat to India

Indian National status given for new borns of infiltrators

Intelligence identifies 50,000 birth certificates

Infiltrators causing demographic imbalance

PROBE TIMES BUREAU



**T**he increasing influence of Pakistan's ISI and its sponsored terror groups in Bangladesh is now said to be a serious security concern for India.

Taking advantage of the ouster of Sheikh Hasina's regime in Bangladesh and in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor, Pakistan has opened Bangla front to revive and intensify violence in India.

In this backdrop, presence of Bangladeshi infiltrators across the country is a serious threat to the country, particularly for South India because large number of illegal immigrants localized themselves in this part of the country.

Intelligence officials say as many as 10 lakh Bangladeshis are living in Bengaluru, while their number is about two lakhs and five lakhs in Hyderabad and Delhi respectively. Most of these illegal immigrants have secured Indian identity cards such as Aadhaar, ration card and voter ID cards.

What is more interesting is that the births and deaths registrar in Hyderabad has recorded the nationality of the new born kids of these infiltrators as 'Indian National'. The intelligence wing has identified about 50,000 birth certificates showing the children of illegal immigrants as 'Indian Nationals' after which the certificates have been put on hold.

Sources said, now the births and deaths registrar is issuing the certificate showing the nationality as 'Bangladeshi' so that they can be deported when time comes.

Intelligence sources said Bangla infiltrators have strategically settled in and around Sriharikota, home for the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, run by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). This was discovered during a simple survey carried out a decade ago by the OCTOPUS wing of the state police.

Though the infiltrators primarily entered India for livelihood, some of them could be sleeper cells of the terror outfits, an official said adding that in any

case they cause demographic changes resulting serious imbalances in the society.

Further, these infiltrators can inflict starvation for the locals as the private sector prefers cheaply available labour for unskilled jobs like construction workers, watchmen, maid servants, meat industry, cloth manufacturing and animal skin processing etc.

Besides, the female infiltrators from Bangladesh are being exploited by forcing them into prostitution, sources said.

Intelligence officials say that the infiltrators always carry emotional connect with their native land. Hence, it is easy for terror groups to radicalize the infiltrators, particularly in the present circumstances when Bangladesh is under the grip of fanatic Islamic groups, sources said.

Intelligence officials say that it is time for the Indian government to carry out the legal process for identification of infiltrators and deport all of them in the larger national interest.



# Death on wheels

**Private buses turning out to be killers**

**Transport operators resort to blatant violation of laws**

**Transport mafia thrives on corruption and lack of political will**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**L**uxury private travel buses plying between cities at times turn out to be wheels of death if the recent incidents near Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh and Jaisalmer in Rajasthan are any indication.

It may be recalled 19 people were killed when Vemuri Kaveri Travels bus on its way from Hyderabad to Bengaluru caught fire after a collision with a motorcycle near Chinnatekur village on the outskirts of Kurnool in the early hours of October 24, 2025. Similarly, 20 passengers were burnt alive and 15 others sustained critical injuries after a private bus on its way from Jaisalmer to Jodhpur caught fire on the afternoon of October 14, 2025.

The clamour about safety protocols, investigation and claims of stern action against erring travel operators died down

within days. And the travel operators continue to operate with more vigour even as the authorities look the other way, thanks to the 'rotting corruption' in the departments concerned and lack of political will to curb the illegal practices of the transport operators, who have taken the form of 'Transport Mafia'.

It is pertinent to mention here that hundreds of private buses operate from Hyderabad to various cities – Bengaluru, Vijayawada, Mumbai, Shirdi, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. The operators openly sell tickets – both offline and online – as if they are permitted to do so under 'stage carrier' permit.

However, none of these buses have 'stage carrier' permit. Instead, most of the buses are given permits under 'tourist' and 'contract carriage' category. Under both these categories, the transport

operators cannot sell tickets to individual passengers unlike stage carriers. But this rule is blatantly violated by the transport operators.

The transport operators widely advertise on the buses as well as on social media platforms that tickets can be purchased on 'so and so' website or manually at the booking offices of the respective travels. Yet, authorities concerned never act for obvious reasons.

Most of the tourist buses operating 'from and to' Hyderabad are registered elsewhere in the tax heavens – North East, Odisha, Daman and Diu for, the road taxes in those states are much lesser than other states. According to RTA officials, the buses registered with any state should ply in that particular state at least ones in three months.

Further, the buses must be physically



presented before the respective RTA officials for inspection during renewal of fitness etc. However, none of the private buses follow the rule. In most cases, RTA officials in North Eastern states and other parts issue fitness certificate without checking the bus.

Taking advantage of this, some transport operators are even operating more than one bus on same registration number. Such instances were identified and name sake action was initiated in the past.

Officials say the private transport operators are bolstered to change the design and seating of in their buses resulting in safety issues. For instance, the V Kaveri Travels Bus that killed 19 passengers near Kurnool was originally registered in Daman and Diu. Later, it was re-registered with Odisha transport department and was permitted only to have seating. But the bus was converted into a sleeper coach without authorisation and the RTA officials concerned were not even aware of it.

What more! The tourist buses are not authorised to carry luggage, whereas the design of the buses is altered in a way to accommodate maximum luggage in a separate compartment built beneath the seating. In this compartment, the private buses transport all kinds of goods including inflammables every day. Thus, the passengers are in a way traveling on a

moving incinerator.

Take the case of V Kaveri Travels bus that killed 19 people near Kurnool. Hundreds of mobile handsets were being transported along with other goods on the fateful day. When fire broke out, the batteries exploded accelerating the fire.

Sources said the private bus operators also facilitate smuggling of gold and other high-value articles, electronic, electrical appliances, paints, plastic goods, food grains and other material. Since all these are transported in completely covered compartment beneath the seats and since there is no check on this mode of transport, huge amount of tax is evaded in the origin and destination states.

It is pertinent to mention here that the Jabbar Travels Bus that killed 45 passengers after it caught fire following an accident in October 2013 was carrying inflammables including a motorcycle with its fuel tank full of petrol.

The RTA officials are happy with occasional inspections, while traffic police in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are jubilant over imposing fines on private buses for the great violation of 'No Parking' almost every day. Thus, the administration is happy generating revenue through fines for very minor violation of 'No Parking', while the greater violations that cause crores of rupees loss for the exchequer and

endanger the safety of the passengers are simply ignored for two obvious reasons.

One reason is undoubtedly alleged corruption, while the other important reason is lack of political will. The political will is lacking because most of the transport operators themselves are prominent persons in politics. Besides, the transport operators are rich and well connected. They influence the party in powers if officials are not in their favour.

It may be recalled here that a minister's brother barged into transport department office in Hyderabad a few years ago when an upright officer began tightening the noose around private travels flouting norms. The upright officer was replaced with another official of their choice when they failed to 'influence the earlier officer'.

What is more pathetic is that successive governments have weakened state road transport corporations allegedly to help the private transport operators. The long distance and inter-state luxury buses operated by the governments lack proper maintenance (allegedly deliberate) due to which passengers prefer private buses despite knowing the risks.

It is time the states coordinate with each other and introduce common laws and common taxation and ensure strict enforcement of the laws to prevent irreparable loss to the innocent passengers.





# Bihar Results

## How the NDA Scored a Historic Victory

**INDI Alliance must introspect its strategy as Hindutva agenda makes inroads across the country**

**T**he National Democratic Alliance (NDA) registered a historic landslide victory in the Bihar Assembly elections, while the Mahagathbandhan suffered one of its most severe defeats.

The NDA's decisive win came even as the Election Commission (EC) faced sharp criticism. One allegation raised was that, in some constituencies, the number of votes counted exceeded the votes polled. Critics claim the elections were neither free nor fair, with Congress leader

Rahul Gandhi at the forefront of these accusations.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin also questioned the EC's credibility, stating that the Bihar results did not erase its "misdeeds and reckless actions." He argued that the EC's reputation had hit rock bottom and called for a stronger, more impartial body that inspires confidence even among losing parties. Despite these concerns, the EC has shown little willingness to address the allegations.

Adding to the debate, Prof. Madabhushi Sridhar, Dean of the School of Law at Mahindra University, introduced a new theory. In a recent article, he explained how Artificial Intelligence (AI) may have played a role in the elections, alleging that the NDA used AI-driven misinformation campaigns that significantly influenced the outcome.

Questions around the fairness of the EC are not new. Rahul Gandhi's "vote theft" campaign tapped into long-standing public doubts. Yet the EC offered neither





convincing clarifications nor credible efforts to restore trust, responding instead with what critics call political statements.

Concerns about EVM tampering also resurfaced. Political parties have been demanding a return to ballot papers, citing potential vulnerabilities. A viral video of Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu explaining possible EVM manipulations intensified these fears.

Despite these controversies, the NDA's victory cannot be dismissed. However, the nature of the outcome raises suspicions. Stalin had earlier said that welfare, social and ideological alliances, and sustained campaigning decide an election's fate—perhaps a comment directed at the INDI Alliance's defeat.

Rahul Gandhi attracted immense crowds with his “vote theft” campaign, yet the Congress and the RJD failed to convert this enthusiasm into votes. Gandhi continues to assert that his fight is for democracy and the protection of the Constitution, but it is unclear whether voters are responding to these broader ideological narratives.

Though concerns about threats to democracy, weakening constitutional values, and rising hyper-nationalism are real, such issues influence elections only when backed by strong people's movements, like the JP movement. Today, very few voters personally remember the excesses of the Emergency. Simply comparing NDA rule to authoritarianism may not resonate when its effects are not directly felt by the public. The ruling regime presents itself as democratic while exercising tight control over institutions. The Opposition argues that even the EC is under the BJP's influence, which makes it less accountable to either voters or rival parties.

Stalin highlights the need for state-specific strategies that align with local aspirations, alongside broader campaigns for constitutional values. Simply urging voters to oppose the NDA is ineffective; the Opposition must clearly explain what it offers and convince voters that it will implement its promises.

In this context, it is worth examining whether the RJD succeeded in building voter confidence in its promises, especially in the face of the NDA's portrayal of the Lalu Prasad Yadav era as “jungle raj.” The INDI Alliance promised “one job per household,” addressing unemployment and migration—two chronic issues in Bihar. The NDA, by contrast, promised just one lakh jobs. Yet voters placed their trust in Nitish Kumar. This paradox can perhaps be explained by Nitish's effective management of caste equations.

While the people of Bihar may not have rallied behind the Hindutva agenda, it is undoubtedly making quiet inroads across the country. This trend may even pose a future challenge to Nitish himself.

For years, the EC has failed to curb the flow of money during elections. Now, it appears to be increasingly lenient on violations of the Model Code of Conduct—an advantage that worked in the NDA's favour in Bihar.

As for Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, he must articulate state-specific socio-economic strategies, strengthen the INDI Alliance's cohesion, and clearly outline future plans. Only then can he hope to build a broad-based movement capable of rallying people behind him.



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**Questions around the fairness of the EC are not new. Rahul Gandhi's “vote theft” campaign tapped into long-standing public doubts. Yet the EC offered neither convincing clarifications nor credible efforts to restore trust**

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# Congress Finds New Fuel

**Congress win boosts Revanth Reddy's government, proving strong mobilisation and minority support despite financial strain and opposition disarray**



RAJA CHEMIKALA

**T**he Congress Party's emphatic victory in the Jubilee Hills by-election has done more than simply fill a legislative vacancy—it has injected a dose of much-needed vitality into a government struggling under the weight of financial strain, coalition pressures, and the inevitable fatigue of two years in office. In a state where political winds can change direction with little warning, the bypoll result arrived as a relief, a reassurance, and in many ways, a recalibration for Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and his team.

For months, Telangana's political climate had been thick with restlessness.

The Congress government, elected on a bouquet of bold promises after a bruising fight with the KCR-led BRS, found itself cornered by economic realities far harsher than its electoral rhetoric had acknowledged. Revanth Reddy has been unusually forthright in conceding that the state is in deep financial trouble. Nearly the entire revenue pool is swallowed by recurring obligations—salaries, pensions, debt servicing—leaving almost nothing for capital expenditure. As the Chief Minister himself has been telling audiences, “there is no money for development works.”

That admission, in a political ecosystem that thrives on big-ticket inauguration ceremonies and visible welfare rollouts, was risky. It allowed the opposition—

especially K.T. Rama Rao of the BRS—to sharpen its attacks. KTR repeatedly challenged Revanth Reddy to a public debate, throwing down gauntlets on issues ranging from irrigation to farmer distress to fiscal mismanagement. Meanwhile, within Congress itself, fault-lines were slowly resurfacing as senior leaders angled for cabinet reshuffles and political territory. For a government still in its early years, these were the kind of headaches that could slow momentum and muddy public perception.

It was into this climate that the Jubilee Hills bypoll entered—first as a local contest, then quickly snowballing into what many interpreted as a referendum on the Revanth Reddy administration. And

when the results came in, the message was unmistakable: the Congress still has the ability to organise, mobilise, and win even when the political narrative seems to be tilting out of its favour.

### The Strategy That Worked

Much of the credit for the Congress's victory lies in its meticulously layered campaign. It wasn't simply a matter of public sentiment turning in the ruling party's favour; it was the product of what insiders describe as an "all-hands-on-deck" approach. The Congress leadership deployed ministers across divisions, assigning micro-responsibilities that ensured constant ground contact. Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka oversaw coordination like a war-room general, while MLAs, MPs, MLCs, GHMC leaders, and scores of workers from various districts camped in Jubilee Hills in the weeks leading up to polling.

Booth-level management became the campaign's backbone. Congress cadres didn't just knock on doors—they built hyper-local promises into the narrative. Personal assurances, rapid response teams, and targeted canvassing in basti clusters created a sense of political intimacy that opposition parties struggled to match.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy himself turned the constituency into something of a temporary headquarters. Long before the election schedule was even announced, he was conducting reviews, engaging resident groups, and signalling that the government viewed Jubilee Hills as a prestige fight. Over the last six days of campaigning, the CM transformed the neighbourhood into a political amphitheatre roadshows, small gatherings, corner meetings, and open assurances that he would personally shepherd development if Congress candidate Naveen Yadav was elected.

It was a narrative that blended accountability with emotional appeal, and it worked.

### The BRS Miscalculation

The BRS, which had hoped to reclaim its stronghold with Sunita, the widow of former MLA Maganti Gopinath, found itself unable to consolidate sympathy or organisational strength. The party had improved its

performance compared to its disappointing Lok Sabha numbers from earlier in 2024, but the gap between "improved performance" and "winnability" remained wide.

Internal assessments from the BRS now concede that the campaign lacked coordination and a unified message. While many voters fondly remembered Gopinath's local development efforts, that nostalgia did not convert into votes. Negative personal campaigns against the candidate, though condemned by the party, did little to help. The BJP's limited and lacklustre presence further weakened the opposition front, inadvertently allowing the Congress a clearer path.

In the post-result narrative, the BRS has resorted to familiar allegations—misuse of government machinery, intimidation, large-scale voter list discrepancies, and distribution of money. Some leaders insist that nearly half the voters had "unclear or untraceable addresses," creating fertile ground for fraudulent ballots. Though complaints were lodged with election authorities, BRS leaders say they were ignored. But even in the world of political theatre, these claims have lacked the sharpness and supporting evidence that could alter public perception.

### AIMIM's Silent But Significant Role

One factor analysts broadly agree on is the silent realignment of minority votes. Congress benefited from the tacit goodwill of AIMIM in Hyderabad's urban pockets—a development that strengthened Naveen Yadav's position considerably. The appointment of former cricketer

Mohammad Azharuddin as Minority Welfare Minister, along with his active involvement during the campaign, played well with Muslim-dominated bastis of Jubilee Hills.

Equally important was Congress's decision to field a local candidate. Naveen Yadav, despite earlier defeats, had a rooted presence in the constituency—something that neither BRS nor BJP could leverage through their candidates.

### A Victory With Larger Implications

For Congress, the win arrives at a time of organisational recalibration. With Mahesh Kumar Goud newly appointed as PCC chief, the bypoll result acts as a stabiliser—psychologically and politically. It gives Revanth Reddy room to breathe and, perhaps more importantly, room to govern.

Yet, the underlying challenges remain: a strained exchequer, high expectations from welfare beneficiaries, internal factional pressures, and the looming demand for faster development in urban constituencies. Jubilee Hills may have sent a positive message, but it also amplified a warning—that political support today hinges not just on charisma or historical loyalty but on delivery, dialogue, and visible governance.

This by-election was not just a contest to fill a seat. It was a political mood scanner for

Telangana. And for now, the reading appears to be cautiously optimistic for the Congress.



# Sheikh Hasina sentenced to death

**Prosecutors requested the tribunal to confiscate the assets of the three accused upon conviction and distribute them to the families of the victims.**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**B**angladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) pronounced a death sentence for former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on November 17. The Tribunal found her guilty on the charges of crimes against humanity.

The Tribunal also convicted Hasina's two top aides - former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and former Inspector General of Police, Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun. However, Mamun has been granted a pardon after he turned approver.

Hasina has defied the court's orders by refusing to return to Bangladesh to face trial, while Asaduzzaman is currently a fugitive.

Prosecutors have charged the accused with five counts, including failure to prevent murder, which constitutes crimes against humanity under Bangladeshi law. They sought death penalty for the accused.

The prosecutors also requested the tribunal to confiscate the assets of the three accused upon conviction and distribute them to the families of the victims.

Reacting to the verdict, Sheikh Hasina, who is living in exile in India said, "I wholly deny the accusations that have been made against me in the ICT." The judgement has been made by a "rigged tribunal established and presided over by an unelected government with no democratic mandate". She said in a statement that they are biased and politically motivated. In their distasteful call for the death penalty, they reveal the brazen and murderous intent of extremist figures within the interim government to remove Bangladesh's last elected prime minister, and to nullify the Awami League as a political force.

She also said she was not afraid to face her accusers in a proper tribunal where the evidence can be weighed and tested fairly. "That is why I have repeatedly challenged the interim government to bring these charges before the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Hague."





# Sindh willing to Reunite with India



PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**S**hafi Burfat, Chairman of the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM), has expressed support for Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's recent remarks on Sindh and signalled Sindh's willingness to consider a confederation with India based on mutual respect, sovereignty, and shared civilisational ties.

Rajnath Singh had stated that although Sindh is not within India's political boundaries today, it remains an integral part of India's civilisational and cultural memory. "Sindh may not be with us geographically, but civilisationally it has always been a part of India," he said at an event in New Delhi.

Welcoming these comments, Burfat said, "We strongly acknowledge and appreciate his remarks made at the event organised by the Vishwa Sindhu Foundation."

Burfat accused Pakistan of carrying out state terrorism, enforced disappearances, and violence against Sindhi political activists, alleging that mutilated bodies continue to be found across the province.

**Shafi Burfat, Chairman of the Jeay Sindh Muttahida Mahaz (JSMM) expressed willingness to consider a confederation with India based on mutual respect, sovereignty, and shared civilisational ties**

He described Pakistan as "a lethal poison for the very existence of the Sindhi nation."

He emphasised that Sindh is not only the homeland of Sindhi people but also the cradle of ancient civilisation, noting that India derives its name from the Sindhu region. The Sindhi leader argued that the region's cultural and historical connections

lie with India, not with Arab or Turkic powers.

"Our civilisational, cultural, and historical roots have always been deeply linked with the land of Sapt Sindhudesh, India," he wrote in a post on X.

Burfat alleged that Sindh was forcibly incorporated into Pakistan through "British-engineered political manipulation and religious deception" and is now subjected to systematic distortion of its history.

He warned that the Sindhi language, identity, and cultural heritage are under threat, accusing Pakistan's Punjab-dominated establishment of imposing an Islamic theocratic order on Sindh.

He claimed vast tracts of Sindh's land, rivers, and coastline have been taken over by "Punjabi imperial interests," while the province's economic resources are being exploited and its demographic structure deliberately altered.

Burfat said Rajnath Singh's suggestion that Sindh could one day become part of India represents a "ray of hope" for the survival and resurgence of the Sindhi nation.

# 45 Hyderabad Pilgrims killed in Saudi

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**A**s many as 45 pilgrims from Hyderabad were killed when a bus carrying them caught fire after a collision with an oil tanker near Madina in Saudi Arabia. One pilgrim, Mohammed Abdul Shoaib, survived and was undergoing treatment at a hospital.

Hyderabad City Police Commissioner, V C Sajjanar has said that a group of 54 pilgrims from Hyderabad had left for Jeddah on November 9 and were scheduled to return on November 23.

The pilgrims left for Madina on

Sunday night after performing 'Umrah' in Mecca. On its way, the bus caught fire after colliding with an oil tanker when the bus was about 25 km away from Madina.

"Four pilgrims had stayed back in Mecca while four others left for Madina in a car. The bus was carrying 46 pilgrims," Sajjanar said.

The victims include 17 males, 18 females and 10 children. Most of the pilgrims were from Asif Nagar, Jhirra, Mehdiptnam and Toli Chowki areas of Hyderabad.

Minister for minority welfare Mohammed Azharuddin said a control room has been opened at Haj House to

provide information to families of the victims.

The minister said the government would make arrangements to send at least one person from every family of the deceased. The government will arrange passports if those who want to travel do not have passports.

Azharuddin said the bodies were charred beyond recognition. A DNA test is also likely to be conducted to identify the victims. He said he spoke to the Indian Consul General, who told him arrangements would be made for the burial of the victims in Saudi Arabia. He said that usually, pilgrims who die in Saudi Arabia are buried there.



# 840 million Women faced partner violence



PROBE TIMES BUREAU

A new landmark report from the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN partners reveals that violence against women remains one of the most pervasive and neglected human rights crises globally, with almost no meaningful progress in reducing it over the past two decades.

According to the report, 840 million women—nearly 1 in 3 worldwide—have experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence by a non-partner during their lifetime.

Disturbingly, this figure has barely changed since 2000. In just the past year, 316 million women, or 11% of women aged 15 and older, were subjected to intimate partner violence. The reduction rate for intimate partner violence is an almost negligible 0.2% per year, indicating that efforts to prevent it are failing to keep up with the scale and

urgency of the problem. For the first time, the report provides global and national estimates for non-partner sexual violence, finding that 263 million women have been assaulted by someone other than a partner since the age of 15. Yet the report cautions that this is likely a substantial underestimate, given widespread under-reporting rooted in stigma, fear of retaliation, and inadequate legal protections.

WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus condemned the ongoing crisis, calling violence against women an ancient and entrenched injustice that still lacks serious political or financial commitment. He emphasised that every statistic represents a woman or girl whose life has been deeply altered, and that empowering women is essential for global health, peace, and equality.

Despite increased understanding of what works to prevent violence, the report warns that funding for prevention and

survivor support is diminishing. In 2022, only 0.2% of global development aid went to programmes aimed at preventing violence against women, and financial support has declined even further in 2025. This comes at a time when climate change, conflicts, economic instability, and rapid technological shifts are heightening risks for women and girls, especially in vulnerable regions.

Violence has long-term consequences for women's physical and mental health, including higher risks of unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and depression. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable: in the past year alone, 12.5 million girls aged 15–19—or 16%—experienced intimate partner violence.

The prevalence of violence cuts across all countries, but the burden is disproportionately high in least-developed, conflict-affected, and climate-vulnerable regions.





# Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft Program

**Government plans to involve private companies  
HAL to be side-lined, Adani to get the contract ?**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**I**t appears the Indian government is interested in encouraging a private player for its ambitious Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) program.

The government is of the view of that its Atmanirbhar Bharat goal cannot be achieved without the involvement of private players to meet the requirements of defense sector. As part of this, the government seems to have formed evaluation criteria to bring the private players into defense manufacturing.

It may be recalled the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) have shortlisted seven consortia for the Rs 15,000 crore AMCA manufacturing deal. With selections expected by Mid-2026, bidders are expected to demonstrate technical expertise in design absorption, prototyping, and serial production of the fifth-generation stealth fighter, slated for first flight in 2028.

At present, Hindustan Aeronautics

Limited (HAL) is the largest India's defence firm as well as the only combat aircraft manufacturer in India. Its confirmed contracts under execution stand at around Rs. 2.52 trillion. Yet, the Indian government, for the reasons best known to it, has engaged Boston Consulting Group (BCG) for undertaking a study for the revamp of the government run HAL.

Even as analysts express disappointment over engaging BCG as it will expose the strengths and weaknesses of India's defence manufacturing sector to an American company, the government is all set to structure the selection criteria for its AMCA program in a manner to involve private companies, sources said.

The seven consortia shortlisted include Larsen & Toubro (L&T) teaming with Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL), HAL partnered with two smaller private firms, Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL), Kalyani Group allied with BEML Ltd, Adani Defence & Aerospace and BrahMos Aerospace Thiruvananthapuram Ltd (BATL).

Two high-level panels will scrutinize

proposals through technical audits and capability demos, with prototypes targeted for 2029. However, sources in the knowhow said the government might as usual favour Adani Group with this ambitious project. Interestingly, the Opposition parties, particularly Rahul Gandhi has been making scathing allegations that every major project in India is being awarded to two groups – Adani and Ambani.

On one hand, the government has engaged American company, BCG, for a study aimed at the revamp of HAL. On the other hand, it is trying to involve private sector in AMCA program thereby side-lining the public sector industry.

At a time when word is doing rounds that most of the private sector defence research and manufacturing companies in India are controlled by U.S. and Israel, and when Opposition is crying foul over privatisation of everything, the government's alleged plan to involve private companies in AMCA manufacturing program is certainly sending wrong signals, sources said.



# India Poised to Finalize \$450 Million BrahMos Missile Export Deals

**Demand for BrahMos Missiles at peak after Operation Sindoor**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

India is reportedly on the verge of securing defence export contracts worth approximately USD 450 million for its BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, a move that could significantly advance the government's push to expand indigenous defence exports.

The deals, which are expected to be signed with friendly foreign countries impressed by the missile's capabilities, are in their final stages, according to defence sources. The BrahMos, developed jointly by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia, has attracted international attention following its recent

operational deployment. "The agreements worth around USD 450 million are expected to be finalized soon," a source told ANI. "These are likely to pave the way for additional orders, as global interest in the missile remains strong."

The BrahMos missile was recently showcased at the Dubai Air Show, drawing significant attention from potential buyers. Following its operational deployment against Pakistan, the Indian Defence Ministry also approved substantial procurement orders to equip Indian Navy warships, as well as air- and ground-launched variants for the Indian Air Force.

During the conflict, the missile was used to target Pakistani air bases and

military installations, striking with high precision. The Indian Navy plans to deploy BrahMos on its Veer-class warships, while the Air Force intends to integrate it with its Su-30MKI fighter jets.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has previously praised India's indigenous defence systems, including BrahMos, noting their performance during the conflict as a testament to the strength of the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative.

Industry observers say that securing these export contracts will not only enhance India's defence export profile but also bolster production capabilities and strengthen strategic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region.

# Tainted Cop Runs away like Thief

## ACB SLEUTHS NAB HIM AFTER A FILMY CHASE



In a case that can be described as the fence eating the crop, a Sub-Inspector of Police took to heel to escape from arrest. This incident happened in Tekmal Police Station in Medak district of Telangana.

The police officer, named Rajesh, had demanded a bribe of Rs. 30,000 from the complainant, accused in a case of theft, to see that the case against the accused is closed in Lok Adalat.

Earlier, the SI issued a notice under section 35(3) of the BNSS Act 2023, which requires the police to issue a notice of appearance to a person against whom a reasonable complaint has been made or credible information exists that they have committed a cognizable offense, but arrest is not immediately required. This section is designed to protect personal liberty by making arrest an exception.

Sources said the SI threatened to complainant that the latter would be arrested if the money he had demanded is not paid. On the other hand, the SI assured that the case would be closed in Lok Adalat if the bribe is paid.

Consequently, the person being threatened by the SI approached the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) and filed a complaint against the police officer.

The anti-corruption agency stepped in and waited outside the police station even as the complainant went in and handed over the bribe on November 17. Soon, the complainant signalled the ACB sleuths.

Upon noticing the ACB sleuths, the SI, despite being a police officer himself, took to heel like a thief to escape arrest. However, the ACB sleuths chased him and pinned him down in the agricultural fields near Jai Durga Bhavani Wines in Tekmal.

ACB sleuths recovered the tainted amount from the possession of SI, Rajesh. Officials said the SI has performed his duty improperly and dishonestly to obtain undue advantage. He was later produced before the designated court and sent to prison. Further probe is underway into the past deeds of the tainted police official.





## ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS

# The Road to Obesity and Diabetes

India is witnessing record-high consumption of ultra-processed foods, a trend strongly linked to rising rates of obesity and diabetes. A new study published in The Lancet reports that these foods—extremely high in fat, sugar, and salt—are filled with additives, stabilizers, emulsifiers, colourants, and flavouring agents that can harm health. Young adults under 30 make up the largest consumer group in the country.

The study highlights a dramatic surge in national retail sales of ultra-processed foods, which grew from \$0.9 billion in 2006 to nearly \$38 billion in 2019, marking a forty-fold increase. Today, retail shelves are packed with pre-packaged items such as chips, instant noodles, biscuits, sugary drinks, and packaged cereals.

Attractive packaging and addictive flavours are major reasons these products appeal to children and young adults.

Researchers warn that long-term consumption of such foods leads to obesity, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, mental health disorders like depression and anxiety, and even premature death. In India, obesity rates have climbed significantly—from 12% to 23% among men and 15% to 24% among women. Ultra-processed food intake also raises the risk of metabolic syndrome and certain cancers, particularly colorectal and breast cancer. It can cause inflammation and may contribute to conditions like leaky gut over time.

Studies also indicate that diets high in ultra-processed foods contribute to poor overall nutrition and are linked to increased risks of depression, anxiety, dementia, and Alzheimer's disease.

Experts stress the urgent need for coordinated policies to curb the production, marketing, and consumption of these high-calorie products while improving the availability of healthier alternatives. They recommend strong regulations requiring manufacturers to disclose ingredients clearly and place front-of-pack warning labels highlighting harmful levels of salt, sugar, and fat.

Given the addictive nature of ultra-processed foods, doctors also advocate banning their advertising and sponsorship.

# Most Indian Patients Carry Multidrug-Resistant Superbugs

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**A**n alarming new study reports that over 80% of patients in India carry multidrug-resistant organisms (MDROs)—the highest rate globally.

Published in *The Lancet*, the study warns that India has become the epicentre of a growing superbug crisis, with many patients found to be carrying several highly resistant bacteria at the same time. Researchers have called for urgent policy changes and a nationwide effort to promote responsible antibiotic use.

The study examined more than 1,200 patients undergoing a common endoscopic procedure across India, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United States. India recorded the highest prevalence of MDROs at 83%, followed by Italy at

31.5%, the US at 20.1%, and the Netherlands at 10.8%.

Among Indian participants, 70.2% were carrying ESBL-producing bacteria—organisms resistant to many commonly used antibiotics. Even more concerning, 23.5% harboured carbapenem-resistant bacteria, which are resistant to last-resort antibiotics. While carbapenem-producing bacteria were almost absent in the Netherlands and rare in the US, their high presence in India highlights the severity of the problem.

The study noted that patients with chronic lung disease, congestive heart failure, recent penicillin use, frequent hospitalisations, or prior medical procedures were more likely to carry MDROs.

Experts from AIG Hospitals in Hyderabad explained that these resistant

organisms force hospitals to rely on stronger, more toxic drugs, extend recovery times, increase complications, and significantly boost treatment costs.

In a country where nearly 58,000 newborns die each year due to resistant infections—and where ICUs and cancer units regularly confront hard-to-treat bacteria—the findings provide clear evidence that antimicrobial resistance (AMR) has become a national health emergency.

To combat AMR, the researchers recommend careful, responsible antibiotic use by healthcare providers and the public. They also call for stricter regulation of prescription-only medicines, routine screening before medical procedures, and the use of single-use devices for high-risk patients to reduce transmission.



# 80%

**MULTIDRUG-RESISTANT ORGANISMS (MDROS)  
INDIA: HIGHEST RATE GLOBALLY**





# Even roasted chana, sweets and savoury items adulterated

**Cancer causing synthetic dye Auramine O being used  
Shivsena UBT MP, Priyanka Chaturvedi demands action**

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**T**he negative impact of use of chemicals in farm practices is catastrophic in India. Now, added to this, adulterants in food processing have become another serious cause of concern.

The use of banned synthetic dyes in food processing is causing serious health problems. Calcium carbide is used to ripen fruits while urea is added to milk to chicken, mineral oil is mixed with edible oils and chalk powder is added to flour.

Yet another adulterant named Auramine O, a synthetic dye used in textile and leather industry is used to make roasted chana to ensure it looked bright yellow. This synthetic dye is also being extensively used in sweets and savoury items.

Experts say auramine, a carcinogenic dye, causes cancer. Using it in foods is not merely a violation of food safety norms but a threat to the health, safety and trust of millions of Indian citizens.

Auramine is strictly prohibited under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. It is recognised by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (WHO) as a potential carcinogen, linked to cancers of the liver, kidney, and bladder, as well as



neurological harm, they said.

Shiv Sena UBT MP Priyanka Chaturvedi has written a letter to Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda, raising serious concerns about the illegal use of Auramine in food items and demanded urgent action.

She demanded that the Ministry should issue a national health alert on Auramine contamination and take strict measures to prevent food adulteration of any form in future.





# Nightmares and Daytime Hallucinations Could Signal Lupus Onset

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

New research suggests that an increase in nightmares and daytime hallucinations—sometimes called “daymares”—may serve as early warning signs for autoimmune diseases like lupus.

Lupus, an autoimmune inflammatory disease, can affect multiple organs, including the brain. Mental health and neurological symptoms such as depression, hallucinations, and loss of balance may indicate an impending disease flare, when symptoms temporarily worsen, according to a study led by researchers at the University of Cambridge and King’s College London.

The team surveyed 676 lupus patients and 400 clinicians, and conducted detailed interviews with 69 individuals living with systemic autoimmune rheumatic diseases, including lupus, alongside 50 clinicians. The findings, published in

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eClinicalMedicine, revealed that disrupted dream sleep was the most common symptom, experienced by three in five patients. Of these, about a third went on to

develop lupus within a year.

Nearly one in four patients reported hallucinations, which were seen in 85% of lupus cases. Additionally, three in five lupus patients and one in three individuals with other rheumatology-related conditions reported increasingly vivid and distressing nightmares prior to experiencing hallucinations. These nightmares often involved scenarios of being attacked, trapped, crushed, or falling.

Melanie Sloan of Cambridge University emphasized the need for doctors to discuss these symptoms with patients and document disease progression. “Patients often recognize which symptoms indicate an imminent flare, but both patients and clinicians can be reluctant to discuss mental health and neurological symptoms, particularly if they don’t realize these can be part of autoimmune diseases,” said Sloan, lead author from the Department of Public Health and Primary Care.



# CJI Calls for Indianising Judiciary

SRISHAILAM SILVERI

Newly sworn-in Chief Justice of India (CJI) Justice Surya Kant has called for a transformative shift in India's legal system, urging a move away from colonial-era structures toward a justice-oriented, people-centered, and authentically Indian jurisprudence.

Soon after taking charge as the 53rd CJI, Justice Surya Kant underscored the need to make the judiciary more accessible and inclusive, rooted firmly in Indian social



and cultural realities. He stressed that the time had come for the country to develop its own "Swadeshi Jurisprudence."

"Transforming the Indian judiciary from a colonial legacy into a truly Indian

institution requires a multi-pronged approach," he said. "Our court procedures and statutes were crafted for a colonial framework. Revising and indigenising these systems to reflect contemporary Indian society is essential."

He reiterated that the justice system must become justice-centric, not procedure-centric, so that technicalities do not overshadow the actual delivery of justice. "Colonial courts were meant to serve imperial interests and often alienated the public. Streamlining processes, reducing technical hurdles, and expanding digital access can make justice far more approachable," he noted.

Calling for greater sensitivity toward rural and marginalised communities, the CJI added, "A truly Indian judiciary must prioritise inclusivity. Rural citizens should be able to approach courts without fear or confusion. Justice must not intimidate—it must empower."

## A Career Marked by Reform and Compassion

Justice Surya Kant brings over three decades of distinguished judicial service.

- ▶ Born: February 10, 1962, in Haryana
- ▶ Began his career as an advocate at the Punjab and Haryana High Court, earning a reputation for deep constitutional insight and balanced advocacy
- ▶ Became one of the youngest Senior Advocates at age 37
- ▶ Appointed judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in 2004
- ▶ Served as Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court, where he introduced wide-ranging reforms in case management, court processes, and legal aid
- ▶ Elevated to the Supreme Court of India in 2018, authoring landmark judgments on criminal law, constitutional rights, environmental issues, and social justice

Known for a compassionate and solution-driven judicial philosophy, he has often been praised for combining clarity of thought with administrative strength.

As Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), he strengthened legal aid mechanisms, expanded access to justice for vulnerable communities, and promoted alternative dispute resolution.

## A Reform-Oriented Tenure Ahead

Justice Surya Kant is expected to push for major reforms, including reducing judicial pendency, modernising infrastructure, and advancing the Indianisation of legal processes to better serve ordinary citizens.

His vision—anchored in accessibility, inclusivity, and India's cultural ethos—signals the start of a potentially transformative era, one that seeks to replace colonial vestiges with a justice system that is truly Indian, modern, and humane.



## BRS MLAs Defection case

# Finish it or face contempt: SC to Telangana Speaker

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**T**he Supreme Court has taken a serious note of Telangana Assembly Speaker Gaddam Prasad Kumar's alleged refusal to decide disqualification petitions against 10 BRS MLAs who defected to the Congress despite the top court setting a three-month deadline in July.

A three-judge bench, presided over by Chief Justice of India B R Gavai, asked the Speaker to decide the petitions by next week or face contempt action.

"It's for him to decide whether he wants to take action or face contempt proceedings by the court... This is gross contempt of court... Finish it by next week or face contempt, it is for him to decide. We have already held that he doesn't enjoy constitutional immunity when considering the matters. He has to decide where (he) has to celebrate his New Year's Eve," the CJI told Senior Advocate A M Singhvi, who appeared for the Speaker.

The bench comprising Justices K Vinod Chandran and N V Anjaria was hearing a plea seeking contempt of court proceedings against the Speaker for not deciding the disqualification petitions within the time set by the court. The bench issued notice to the Speaker returnable in two weeks.

The court then stated that the primary objective of the anti-defection law was to curb the evil of political defections, and the sole purpose of entrusting the role of adjudication to the Speaker was to prevent delay and ensure an expeditious decision on disqualification petitions.

The apex court said the Speaker, in his capacity as a tribunal in deciding disqualification petitions, does not enjoy any "constitutional immunity".

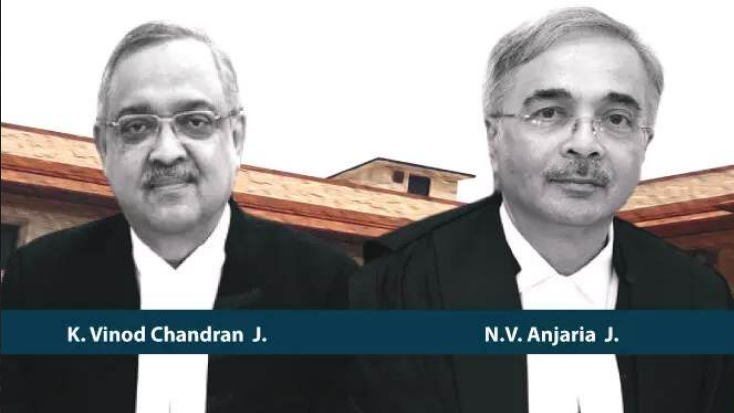
The Supreme Court also asked the Telangana Speaker not to allow the MLAs, against whom disqualification petitions have been filed, to protract the proceedings and said that adverse inference can be drawn against any MLA who attempts any delaying tactic.



The ruling pointed out that the Speaker had not issued notice on the petitions seeking disqualification for almost seven months and stated, "If we do not issue any directions, it will amount to allowing the Speaker to repeat the widely criticised situation of 'operation successful, patient dead'."

Noting the recurring instances of Speakers allegedly sitting on disqualification proceedings, the SC also asked the Parliament to review the present mechanism contemplated under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

The BRS had initially moved the Telangana High Court, where a single-judge bench gave the Speaker four weeks to fix a schedule for hearing the disqualification petitions. On an appeal by the Speaker, a division bench set aside the single-judge order and asked the Speaker to decide the petitions in a reasonable time. The Supreme Court set aside the order of the division bench.



K. Vinod Chandran J.

N.V. Anjaria J.



The background of the top section features a stylized illustration of the Supreme Court of India's dome on the left, rendered in white and red. On the right, a white CCTV camera is mounted on a metal pole, with a bright light source behind it creating a lens flare effect. The title 'CCTVs in Police Stations' is overlaid on this image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

## CCTVs in Police Stations

# SC Slams Centre, States

SRISHAILAM SILVERI

**T**he Supreme Court on November 25 pulled up the Centre and several state governments for their continued failure to comply with its directions mandating functional CCTV cameras in all police stations.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta, hearing the suo motu case, expressed frustration that the Union appeared to be taking the apex court “very lightly.” The court’s concerns were amplified by a media report revealing that 11 people had died in police custody in Rajasthan in the first eight months of 2025—seven of them in the Udaipur division alone.

Senior advocate Sidharth Dave, assisting the Court as amicus curiae, presented a detailed chart showing the status of compliance across states. He pointed out that most states had failed to implement Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the installation, maintenance, and preservation of CCTV footage. He also highlighted that agencies such as the NIA and CBI lacked dedicated budgets for

**The apex court had previously mandated CCTV installation in all police stations to ensure transparency and prevent custodial torture. The footage to be preserved for at least 18 months**

CCTV infrastructure. The Bench lauded Madhya Pradesh as a “model state,” where every police station reportedly connects to a central surveillance control room. However, it took strong exception to the Centre’s repeated failure to file affidavits or compliance reports. “The Union is still lacking in compliance. The Union is taking the court very lightly. Why?” the Bench asked. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta

assured the Court that an affidavit would be filed, but the Bench insisted, “Not just an affidavit, but compliance is expected. Now this country will not tolerate this blot.”

The Supreme Court noted that only 11 states and union territories had filed compliance affidavits.

Giving a final three-week deadline, it directed all remaining states and Central agencies to submit their reports by December 16. It warned that failure to comply would compel the personal appearance of Chief Secretaries of defaulting states and the heads of investigating agencies.

The apex court had previously mandated CCTV installation in all police stations to ensure transparency and prevent custodial torture. Its orders require full coverage of police stations, with footage preserved for at least 18 months in digital or network video recorders.

In 2023, the Court had given the Centre and states a “last chance” to comply within three months and made Station House Officers personally responsible for CCTV maintenance and data backup.



# PIL against rising airfares

## SC issues notice to Centre

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**T**he Supreme Court issued notice on November 17 on a public interest litigation (PIL) challenging “opaque, exploitative and algorithm-driven” pricing practices in India’s civil aviation sector, and questioning the reduction in complimentary check-in baggage limits for passengers.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta sought responses from the Centre, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERAI) within four weeks, after hearing the plea filed by social activist S. Laxminarayanan.

Counsel for the petitioner submitted that air travel, recognised as an essential service under the Essential Services Maintenance Act, has become increasingly unaffordable due to “unregulated, unpredictable and exploitative” fare mechanisms.

The petitioner argued that sudden fare spikes driven by opaque algorithms, last-minute surcharges, and the unilateral

reduction of free check-in baggage allowances from 25 kg to 15 kg disproportionately affect passengers with urgent medical, educational, or work-related travel needs.

The petitioner argued that “airfare can double or even triple within hours due to opaque, algorithm-driven dynamic pricing mechanisms adopted by airlines,” disproportionately affecting those who cannot plan in advance, including patients, students, and migrant workers.

The PIL highlighted instances where fares rose “four to six times within hours” during crises such as the Pahalgam terror incident and peak events like Maha Kumbh.

Terming such hikes “arbitrary, unacceptable and violative of Article 21”, it contended that leaving prices entirely to market forces is incompatible with the constitutional guarantee of life with dignity.

“When citizens are

compelled to travel by air due to emergencies, allowing such exploitative pricing is a direct assault on the right to life,” the petition stated.

The PIL also challenged the steep cut in complimentary baggage allowance. It argued that airlines have reduced the free check-in baggage from 25 kg to 15 kg without justification, a reduction of 10 kg or 40 per cent of the erstwhile entitlement, thereby converting what was earlier part of the ticketed service into a new revenue stream forcing passengers to pay up to Rs 6,000 extra for the lost 10 kg at current excess-baggage rates.

Neither DGCA nor AERAI has the power to review or cap airfares or ancillary fees, the plea claimed, adding that the non-binding DGCA Passenger Charter offers no enforceable protection to consumers.

Referring to the Rajya Sabha Standing Committee’s March 2025 report, the petitioner has urged the apex court to direct the Centre to create an independent aviation tariff regulator with quasi-judicial powers to oversee fare structures, monitor compliance, adjudicate grievances, and impose penalties.





# Silent Crimes, Loud Consequences

## Why India Must Wake Up to Its Environmental Emergency

India's remarkable economic rise is often celebrated — but beneath the progress lies a quieter, more dangerous story. Environmental crimes in India, from illegal waste dumping and rampant deforestation to river pollution and wildlife trafficking, are inflicting deep and lasting damage on the nation's ecosystems, public health, and future security. These crimes are neither victimless nor invisible; their impact ripples through communities, economies, and biodiversity, threatening the very foundations of sustainable growth.

Environmental crimes don't just degrade landscapes — they destabilize societies. The illegal trade of natural resources weakens legitimate markets, destroys livelihoods, and reduces future options for environmentally sustainable development.

### India's Unique Burden

As one of the world's largest and most diverse countries, India faces immense environmental pressure. A vast population and expanding demand for land, water, and resources intensify the strain on ecosystems. Recognizing this, the Constitution under Part IVA places a fundamental duty on every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment, including forests, rivers, lakes, and wildlife.

### The nation also has a robust legal framework, led by six major laws:

The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981  
The Water (Prevention and Control of

Pollution) Act, 1974

The Environment Protection Act, 1986  
Hazardous Waste Management Regulations

The Wildlife Protection Act, 1976

The Indian Forest Rights Act, 2006

Yet, despite these laws, enforcement gaps allow environmental crimes to flourish.

### Solutions for a Cleaner, Safer Future

#### 1. Strengthening Enforcement & Accountability

Stricter monitoring, real-time data systems, and transparent reporting can transform compliance from a formality into a measurable obligation. Effective environmental protection requires seamless coordination between pollution control boards, law enforcement agencies, and local governing bodies.







## 2. Harnessing Technology & Environmental Forensics

Environmental forensics — a powerful hybrid of environmental science and forensic science — now enables authorities to trace pollution sources through biomarkers, isotope analysis, spatial mapping, and advanced analytics. These techniques allow rapid identification of offenders, ensuring evidence-backed enforcement and quicker justice.

## 3. Responsible Waste Management

Segregation at source, decentralized composting, and collaborations with sustainable waste-management organizations can prevent pollution before it begins. Effective waste management is one of the most immediate solutions within the reach of both institutions and citizens.

## 4. Corporate & Citizen Responsibility

Industries must shift from basic compliance to genuine commitment by embracing ESG goals, circular economy models, and zero-waste operations. Citizens, too, hold immense power: reporting violations, reducing consumption, choosing eco-friendly alternatives, and participating in local initiatives can collectively drive transformative change.

## 5. Education & Advocacy

Environmental literacy is the strongest long-term weapon.

Schools, colleges, and community groups must be empowered to teach sustainable practices, ensuring tomorrow's citizens are informed, conscious, and proactive.

## When Citizens Act, Crimes Collapse

**Environmental protection cannot rely solely on government machinery. While authorities enforce the law, citizens uphold the moral and social responsibility of safeguarding natural resources. Everyday actions make a difference:**

Report illegal dumping, burning, or pollution.

Reduce plastic use and segregate waste.

Demand transparency from industries and local bodies.

Participate in clean-up drives and spread environmental awareness.

Environmental crimes thrive in silence — but silence can be broken.

## From Reaction to Prevention: India's Path Forward

With stronger systems, scientific tools, and social participation, India can shift from damage control to proactive protection. If compliance becomes culture and sustainability becomes a shared mission, environmental crimes will no longer be inevitable — they will be preventable.

Sustainability is not merely a government program. It is, and must be, a people's movement. Together, we can build a future where environmental responsibility is not just a legal duty but a common value woven into everyday

# Hyderabad Zoo Secures ISO-9001:2015 Certification for Fifth Consecutive Year

Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad, has once again been awarded the ISO-9001:2015 certification, marking its fifth consecutive year of recognition by the International Standard Organization. The certification acknowledges the zoo's continued efforts in wildlife conservation, particularly of endangered species, through improved care, planned breeding, collaborative research and capacity-building initiatives.

The certificate for 2024–25 was presented by A. Sivaiah, Managing Director of HYM International Certification Pvt. Ltd., to the zoo's administration team led by Dr. Sunil S. Hiremath, Director of Zoo Parks, Telangana, and J. Vasantha, Curator of Nehru Zoological Park.

Vasantha noted that Nehru Zoological Park remains the only zoo in India to secure the ISO-9001:2015 certification for

**The certificate for 2024–25 was presented by A. Sivaiah, Managing Director of HYM International Certification Pvt. Ltd., to the zoo's administration team led by Dr. Sunil S. Hiremath, Director of Zoo**

five consecutive years. She added that the team would continue to strengthen conservation efforts while building on

recent initiatives. Spread across 380 acres adjacent to the historic Mir Alam Tank, the zoo was established in 1963 following the relocation of earlier enclosures from Public Gardens. According to its official website, the zoo's natural landscape attracts both migratory and resident bird species. It is also the first zoo in India to exhibit animals in zoological order in open enclosures.

Home to 192 indigenous and exotic species, the zoo houses 2,240 animals, including 664 mammals, 1,227 birds, 341 reptiles and eight amphibians. Widely regarded as one of Asia's finest zoos, it draws nearly 30 lakh visitors annually.

Nehru Zoological Park also features several speciality attractions such as the Safari, Nocturnal Animal House, Reptile House, Birds of Prey enclosures and a Butterfly Park—some of which were introduced for the first time in India.





# Bollywood Beauties in D-gang's Drug Network



PROBE TIMES BUREAU

Actors Shraddha Kapoor, Siddhanth Kapoor and Nora Fatehi appear to have landed in some trouble with their names figuring in a case related to narcotic drugs.

The actors are likely to be called for questioning in the days to come, sources in the Mumbai police said.

The matter pertains to Rs 252 crore mephedrone trafficking racket. The Mumbai Police Crime Branch has claimed a significant breakthrough in the drug case with the recent deportation and arrest of key suspect Mohammed Salim Mohammed Suhail Shaikh from Dubai.

Shaikh, a close associate of underworld drug lord Salim Dola, who is linked to the Dawood Ibrahim syndicate, has made explosive revelations during interrogation, pointing to high-profile drug-fuelled parties organised in India and abroad, attended by several Bollywood celebrities and influential figures, sources said.

According to sources, Shaikh has named

**Bollywood actors  
Shraddha Kapoor,  
Siddhanth Kapoor,  
Nora Fatehi, politician  
Zeeshan Siddiqui,  
son of veteran  
Congress leader  
Baba Siddique,  
Alishah Parkar, son of  
the late Haseena  
Parkar, producer  
Abbas Mastan and  
rapper Loka, among  
others named**

Bollywood actors Shraddha Kapoor, Siddhanth Kapoor, Nora Fatehi, politician Zeeshan Siddiqui, son of veteran Congress leader Baba Siddique, Alishah Parkar, son of the late Haseena Parkar, producer Abbas Mastan and rapper Loka, among others, as attendees and participants.

The probe has further uncovered that the drug parties extended far beyond Mumbai and Goa, with numerous events hosted in Dubai and Thailand, where supplies were channelled through Indian-origin businessmen.

The case is now being jointly investigated by the Mumbai Crime Branch and the Enforcement Directorate, which suspects that profits from the narcotics trade were laundered into legitimate channels via hawala networks and real estate investments.

Interestingly, Shraddha Kapoor has played the role of Haseena Parkar in the 2017 biographical film titled 'Haseena Parkar', while her brother Siddhanth played the role of underworld don Dawood Ibrahim.

Haseena Parkar is none other than the biological sister of Dawood Ibrahim. Meanwhile, refuting the allegations, Nora Fatehi wrote on Instagram, "I DONT go to Parties.. Im constantly on flights.. Im a workoholic, I dont have a personal life.. I dont associate myself with people like that."



# Rest in Peace

## Test Cricket: Harbhajan

PROBE TIMES BUREAU

**F**ormer India spinner Harbhajan Singh has delivered a powerful critique of the state of Test cricket in India, expressing deep frustration over the type of pitches being prepared for matches.

Reacting to India's 30-run defeat to South Africa in the first Test at Eden Gardens—a match that ended inside three days while chasing a modest target of 124—Harbhajan said the excessively bowler-friendly and under-prepared surfaces are harming the sport rather than helping it.

Calling the situation “the destruction of Test cricket” and even declaring “Rest in peace Test cricket,” Harbhajan argued that these pitches artificially

inflate bowlers' achievements while stunting the genuine development of batters.

According to him, such surfaces have been prepared for several years, but criticism has been muted because India has often won, and certain players have benefited statistically. However, he believes this success hides a deeper problem.

Harbhajan emphasised that these conditions do not allow players—especially batsmen—to grow or learn the skills needed to succeed in varied situations around the world. Instead of

progressing, teams are “going around in circles,” as matches become more about surviving the pitch than showcasing batting or bowling quality. He questioned what separates a truly skilled bowler from a batsman when the conditions themselves are responsible for most dismissals.

He described the situation as “sad to see” and urged cricket authorities to reassess how pitches are being prepared, warning that the current approach undermines the very essence of Test cricket.

The former off-spinner, who took 417 Test wickets, spoke with particular authority given his own success at Eden

Gardens, where he claimed 13 wickets in the iconic 2001 Test against Australia.

**SHAMEFUL PITCHES!  
THIS IS NOT NOT  
TEST CRICKET!**

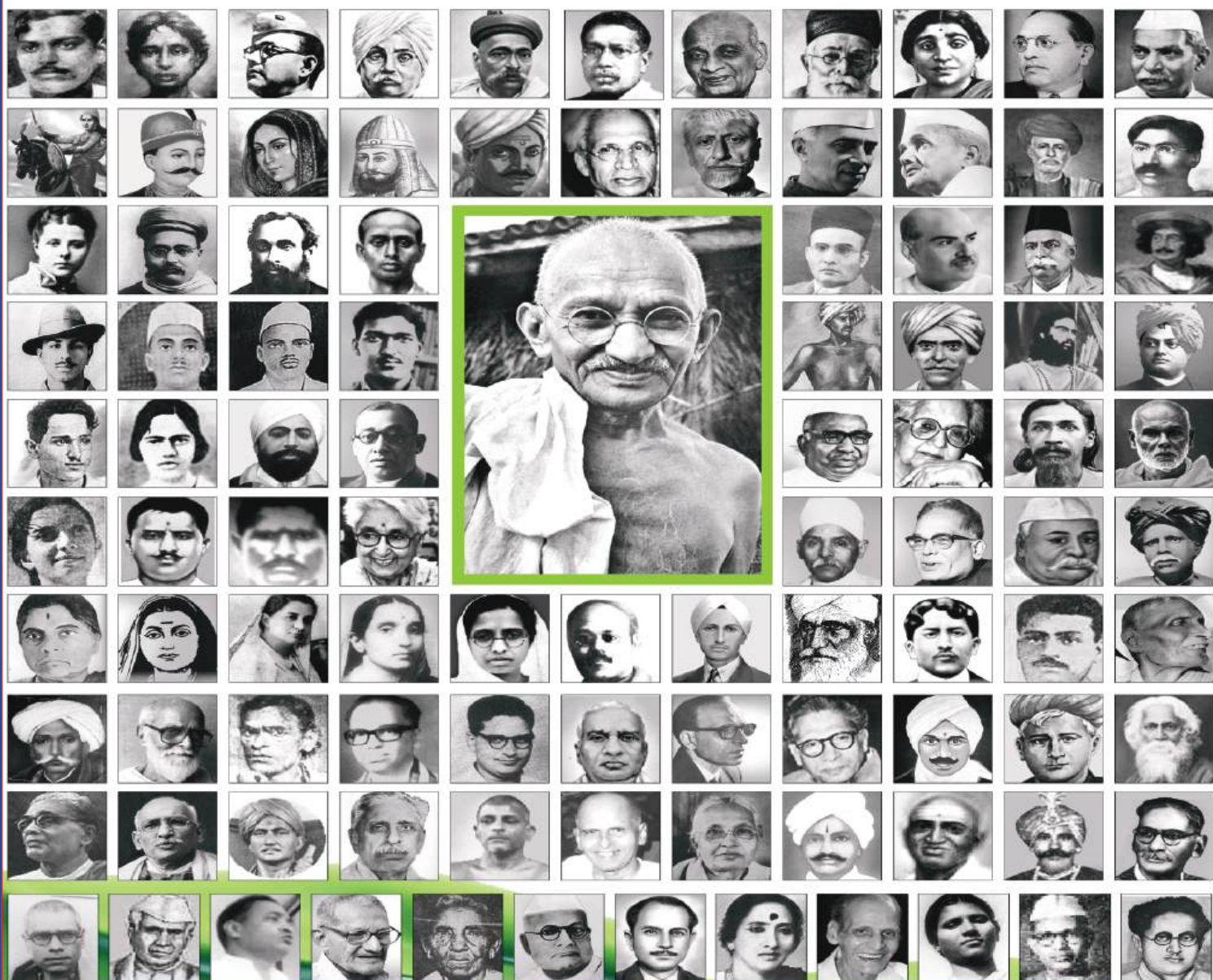




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