

Ex-DSP convicted in Khalra case not found at address in jail records

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HOSHIARPUR

FORMER Punjab Police DSP Jaspal Singh, a life convict in the 1995 abduction and murder of human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra who was released on bail in 2023, could not be found at the village address mentioned in the Nabha jail records, officials said on Friday. The verification followed a request from the prison authorities amid renewed

When the Punjab government did not receive any application from the home ministry, how can the chief minister sign any file or send it to the Governor?

public attention on the Khalra case after the release, and subsequent takedown, of the film 'Satluj' from ZEE5, which is based on the activist's life. Assistant Sub-Inspector Jaswinder Singh of Sadar police

said the jail authorities through an official communication sought to verify if Jaspal Singh was living at Manjhi village in Hoshiarpur district, as mentioned in his jail records. When police went to the



Jaswant Singh Khalra

village, the sarpanch and residents told them that Jaspal Singh was not living there, the ASI said. SHO Baljinder Singh Malhi said Jaspal Singh was released from the Nabha jail on interim bail on May 27, 2023, under a court order.

The verification established that he was not living at the address mentioned in the jail documents, he said. 'Satluj' starring Diljit Dosanjh Daljit as Khalra, which was earlier titled 'Punjab '95', was released

on ZEE5 on July 3 before being removed from the platform two days later. Directed by Honey Trehan, the film depicts Khalra's investigation into the "illegal" cremation of thousands of bodies claimed as "unidentified" by police during the militancy period in the state. Khalra was abducted from in front of his house in Amritsar in September 1995.

Punjab AAP media in-charge Baltej Pannu said that any application for premature

release in a CBI case is decided by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and not the Punjab government. Jaspal Singh's remission application was filed before the home ministry in 2017, which was rejected in 2018, after which the governor also rejected the plea, Pannu said. Another recommendation was forwarded to the home ministry in 2019, while similar applications of the other surviving co-convicts were rejected in 2023, he said.

Himachal rains: Schools shut in Sirmour, Solan

All teaching and non-teaching staff, however, were ordered to remain present at their respective institutes; two persons sustained injuries after stones fell from a hillside onto a moving vehicle in the Arki area

HANS NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA

FOLLOWING relentless rains in parts of Himachal Pradesh, all government and private educational institutions and Anganwadis remained shut in Sirmour and Solan districts on Friday, officials said. The MeT department in Shimla has forecast heavy rainfall in many parts of the state, cautioning against possible landslides, flash floods, uprooting of trees and road blockades.

According to separate orders issued by the deputy commissioners of Sirmour and Solan, Priyanka Verma and Manmohan Sharma, respectively, continuous rainfall is leading to obstruction of rural roads, increased risk of landslides and general



disruption of normal life, particularly in the rural and hilly areas. Such inclement weather conditions are likely to endanger the life and safety of students commuting to and from schools across the district, the orders said.

An order to shut educational institutions in the Paonta subdivision of Sirmour district was issued late on Thursday. On Friday

morning, the SDMs of Nahan, Sangrah, Pachhad and Rajgarh subdivisions in the district issued similar orders to keep schools and colleges shut. All teaching and non-teaching staff, however, were ordered to remain present at their respective institutes, officials said. In Solan district, two persons sustained injuries after stones fell from a hillside onto a moving ve-

hicle in the Arki area. The injured have been admitted to a hospital in Kunihar for treatment, officials said. The Innova Crysta carrying five people was travelling on the Gambharpul-Sarli road when stones fell on it suddenly.

The owner of the car, Maher Chand, was among the injured. Similar incidents were reported from several locations along the Kalka-Shimla National Highway, leading to the closure of one lane. According to officials, rockfalls occurred between Wagnaghat and Kandaghat, and between Dharampur and Chakki Mod on the highway. The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has restricted traffic to a single lane as a precautionary measure, the officials said.

Venu questions PM's silence on Ram Temple donation theft

HANS NEWS SERVICE
DEHRADUN

CONGRESS General Secretary KC Venugopal on Friday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's silence regarding the alleged theft of offerings and donations at the Ayodhya Ram Temple, demanding a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the matter.

Addressing a press conference here on the final day of his two-day visit to Uttarakhand, Venugopal said that for several years, the BJP, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) have been collecting donations in the name of the Ram Temple, and the trust authority has misappropriated that gold and money. The Congress leader said, "I have just one question: who is responsible for the theft of donations? The Ram Temple Trust was formed under the supervision of the prime minister. Why is he silent on this issue?" Demanding an investigation under the supervision of the



Supreme Court, Venugopal said that the party would raise this matter prominently in Parliament. Uttarakhand Congress General Secretary and party in-charge Kumari Selja, and state president Ganesh Godiyal were also present at the press conference. Referring to the assembly elections scheduled for early next year in Uttarakhand, Venugopal said he had reviewed the party's election preparedness over the past two days. During this period, he held meetings with

senior party leaders, the state political affairs committee, district Congress committee presidents, frontal organisations, departments, as well as incumbent and former MLAs.

He said, "I am happy to state that the party organisation and leaders in the state are ready to contest the election with full strength. All leaders in the state will fight together and win." After interacting with leaders in various meetings, Venugopal formed the impression that the people of the state

are opposed to the current government. He said that the BJP government has caused significant disappointment among the people over the last 10 years, and the Congress will make an all-out effort to capitalise on the prevailing anti-government sentiment in the state. He alleged that unemployment and the resulting migration are the biggest issues in the state, yet the BJP government has done "nothing" to address them over the past decade.

'SP, Cong allowed namaz at Hanumangarhi temple'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AYODHYA/BASTI

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday accused the Samajwadi Party and the Congress of disrespecting Hindu faith, alleging they had earlier allowed namaz to be offered at the Hanumangarhi temple in Ayodhya and demanded that they apologise for the "sin". Addressing a public meeting in Bikapur in Ayodhya after inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of 217 development projects worth over Rs 432 crore, Adityanath said those who now claim to speak for faith had committed a "sin" by allowing namaz to be offered on the steps of Hanumangarhi.

"They had namaz offered at Hanumangarhi. Can anyone imagine Hanuman Chalisa being recited inside Jama Masjid? Can any government or the Samajwadi Party or the Congress ever make that happen? If not, then why was this sin committed at Hanumangarhi? Who was responsible for it?" he said.

The chief minister was apparently referring to an incident from November 2003 when an attempt was made to offer namaz outside the Hanumangarhi, a temple dedicated to Lord Hanuman, but permission



was not granted by the local police. When asked about the namaz incident, former UP Director General of Police and BJP MP Brij Lal on Friday told PTI, "This is correct.

This incident dates back to November 2003 during the month of Ramadan. "Back then, the BSP government led by Mayawati had exited," Brijlal recalled suggesting that the entire 'namaz plan' was made during then Mulayam Singh Yadav government allegedly at the behest of "an officer with Samajwadi Party-Leftist leanings." "The plan was to hold roza ifaar after namaz. But this couldn't succeed as the then SSP Faizabad (now Ayodhya) Rajeev Sabharwal firmly said he won't allow this," Brijlal recalled. Following the opposition, namaz was finally offered at the Hanumangarhi mahant's residence adjacent to the temple.

"The original plan was to offer namaz right outside Hanumangarhi but police didn't allow it," Brij Lal stated.

Ayodhya's Bhadarsa town renamed Bharat Nagar

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AYODHYA

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday announced that the newly constituted Khiloni-Suchitaganj nagar panchayat in Ayodhya district would be renamed after Maa Jwala Ji, while the municipal town of Bhadarsa would henceforth be known as Bharat Nagar. Addressing a public meeting in Bikapur, Adityanath said the demand for renaming Khiloni-Suchitaganj had



been raised by local BJP MLA Amit Singh Chauhan.

"The MLA has requested that the Khiloni-Suchitaganj Nagar Panchayat be named after Maa Jwala Ji. I announce that it will be known as Maa Jwala Ji nagar panchayat," the chief minister said. Adityanath also announced the renaming of Bhadarsa, saying the town would now be known as Bharat Nagar, while the area associated with Bharat Kund would also be identified by that name. Taking a swipe at the Samajwadi

Party, he said, "You have recently seen the conduct of the Samajwadi Party's representatives in Bhadarsa. That reflects their true character. Bhadarsa will now be known as Bharat Nagar".

Bhadarsa was in news in 2024 for rape of a minor in which SP leader Moid Khan was arrested. Khan was set free by court even as his shopping complex was razed by bulldozers over alleged irregularities. The chief minister said the new name honours Bharat, the younger brother

of Lord Ram, whose devotion and sacrifice remain an enduring example. "Bharat spent 14 years near Bharat Kund while faithfully carrying out Lord Ram's command, with Lord Ram's 'padukas' symbolically ruling Ayodhya. It is difficult to find a brother like Bharat anywhere in the world," Adityanath said. He added that Ayodhya's cultural legacy is recognised across the country and said the renamed Bharat Nagar would be developed further as a nagar panchayat.

MP Cong chief's brother detained in drug seizure case

HANS NEWS SERVICE
INDORE

THE police in Indore arrested two men and seized about 11 grams of brown sugar besides detaining two others including Nana Patwari, the younger brother of Madhya Pradesh Congress chief Jitu Patwari, in connection with the case. The Congress leader claimed that it was a false case and accused of the ruling BJP of doing vendetta politics. The arrested men allegedly told police that they were going to deliver the drug to Nana Patwari and another person, an official said. "The Rajendra Nagar police arrested Irfan Khan alias Golu Chanderi and Sanjay



Kaushal alias Ronnie Bhai... 10.8 grams of brown sugar was recovered from their possession and an SUV was seized," said Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Narendra Rawat. A First Information Report was registered against them under the Narcotic Drugs

and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. During the preliminary interrogation, the two accused told police that they were going to deliver the brown sugar to Nana alias Kulbhushan Patwari and Manav Gangwani, the DCP claimed. -- PTI

Man beaten to death by lover's family in Kaushambi

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KAUSHAMBI

A 19-year-old man, who was in a relationship with a young woman here, was allegedly beaten to death by her family members when he went to meet her, police said on Friday. Three police teams have been constituted to arrest the accused, who are absconding since the incident, police said, adding that two suspects have been taken into custody for questioning. The incident took place in Mahua Khada village under Manjhanpur police station limits on Thursday night, they said. Manjhanpur Circle Officer Shivank Singh said Ram Badan Lodhi, a resident of



Osa village, lodged a complaint alleging that his distant relative Rakesh Lodhi had assaulted his son Shiv Prasad, leading to his death. According to the complaint, Rakesh Lodhi informed Ram Badan over phone that his son was assaulted. The victim's family members subsequently reached the accused's house and took the injured youth to the district hospital, but he succumbed to injuries on the way, the officer said. Police and

senior officials visited the spot after receiving information. Preliminary investigation has revealed that Shiv Prasad was apparently in a relationship with Rakesh Lodhi's daughter and had gone to meet her at her house on Thursday night. During this time he was assaulted, Singh said. He said the young woman also sustained injuries in the incident and has been admitted to the district hospital. Her condition is stable. The body has been sent for post-mortem, police said. Based on a complaint by the deceased's family, a murder case has been registered against Rakesh Lodhi and his family members. PTI COR KIS SMV SMV ARB ARB 07101616

'Akhilesh banned Kanwar Yatra while BJP welcomed devotees with petals'

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BASTI

UTTAR Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday targeted Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, alleging that the previous government imposed restrictions on Hindu traditions, such as the Kanwar Yatra, while the BJP government welcomed kanwariyas with flower petals.

Addressing a gathering in Basti after inaugurating and laying the foundation

'I feel that, in the near future, the Samajwadi Party president, too, is waiting to wear saffron attire and join you in the Kanwar Yatra. He seems to be hoping for an invitation, so that he can also go and shower flower petals'

of 77 development projects worth over Rs 504 crore, Adityanath mocked Yadav, claiming that the SP chief is now "waiting to participate" in the very same Hindu event which his government had allegedly banned.

"When Shiv devotees, the kanwariyas, carry water from Saryu in Ayodhya to Bhadeshwar Nath Dham

(in Basti) to perform 'jal-abhishek' of Lord Shiva, we shower flowers upon them from a helicopter. But the (former) Samajwadi Party government had banned this 'Kanwar Yatra'."

"They used to say that the 'Kanwar Yatra' should not take place. They used to impose restrictions on Durga Puja, disallowed the

celebration of Shri Krishna Janmashtami, and banned the 84-Kosi Parikrama. Now, no one can impose such restrictions. No one can stop it now," he said. Taking a jibe at Yadav, the UP chief minister said, "I feel that, in the near future, the Samajwadi Party president, too, is waiting to wear saffron attire and join you

in the Kanwar Yatra. He seems to be hoping for an invitation, so that he can also go and shower flower petals." He also levelled serious allegations on the Samajwadi Party (SP), saying that whenever the Waqf Board designated a piece of land as a "graveyard", the SP members would displace the poor, Dalits, and the

marginalised people from that land. "Earlier, land was encroached upon in the name of graveyards, and the poor were harassed. If the Waqf Board declared a plot to be a graveyard or Waqf land, no one dared to object, and the Dalits, the poor, and the marginalised were uprooted. It was these SP people who carried out



such work," he said. Hitting out at other opposition parties as well, he said,

"This was the very 'contract' held by the SP, BSP, and Congress."