

City	max	min	City	max	min	City	max	min
Ahmedabad	30	25	Chennai	37	24	Indore	29	22
Bangalore	27	18	Kochi	31	23	Jaipur	34	24
Bhopal	32	24	Lucknow	34	27	Kolkata	35	27
Chandigarh	34	26	Hyderabad	30	22	New Delhi	36	26
						Nagpur	32	23
						Panaji	29	23
						Pune	26	21
						Guwahati	33	26

Irregular... manjul



I have got good news, sir. Your tailor is safe

Short stories

30 children hospitalised

Lucknow: At least 30 children were hospitalised as they fell ill after drinking branded cold drinks at a fair organised in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao district, police said on Monday. "All the children are serious," said police inspector Anand Kumar Verma. On Sunday night, the children complained of severe stomach ache and started vomiting. The cold drinks stock has been seized and sent for testing.

AIADMK activist killed

Theni (TN): An AIADMK worker was killed and nine others injured when a scaffolding of a cut-out collapsed here, where party leader Jayalalithaa addressed a public meeting, the police said. Saleth (65), a party worker, died on his way to the hospital on Sunday night after suffering a head injury. The injured have been hospitalised. Senior party leaders blame the police for not providing "proper security" for the leader.

India asks Lanka for Tamils' safety

New Delhi: Voicing concern over the plight of civilians caught in the Sri Lankan Army offensive against the LTTE in rebel-held areas, India has asked Colombo to ensure their safety and security. "We have already expressed our concern to the Lankan authorities," defence minister AK Antony said. "While taking action against the LTTE, steps should also be taken to protect the civilian Tamils in Sri Lanka and ensure their safety and security," he added.

Freedom at last



Women prisoners being released from Puzhal Jail on the occasion of birth centenary celebrations of DMK founder CN Annadurai in Chennai on Monday —PTI

Malda flood situation improving

Malda: The flood situation in Malda district, Bengal, which had claimed eight lives and affected nearly 50,000 people, has improved with the water level of the major rivers receding. Official sources said on Monday that while Ganga was flowing 2m below the danger level, that of rivers Fulhar and Mahananda had come down considerably. Gadaichar area in Manikchak block was experiencing severe erosion caused by the sharp fall in the river Ganga, irrigation department sources said.

Re1 per kg rice scheme in TN

Chennai: Tamil Nadu chief minister M Karunanidhi on Monday launched the Re1 per kg rice scheme for ration card holders through PDS shops here to commemorate DMK founder CN Annadurai's birth centenary. He sought the co-operation of all political parties for smooth implementation of the scheme, under which 20kg of rice would be provided to card holders at a price of Re1 per kg, instead of the previous price of Rs2 per kg.

Backward run for awareness

Puducherry: To highlight the need to protect the ozone layer, 10 youth of a local NGO here ran backwards for 10km through the main streets of the city. They commenced their programme on Sunday from Beach Road near the Gandhi statue here and ran through important segments in and around the town, a spokesman said, adding the object was to generate awareness on the need to protect the ozone layer.

Free, but still in chains



Dalits at a rally to protest against atrocities on their community in Patna on Monday —PTI

Terror strikes miss Patil target

Despite growing calls for the home minister's scalp, he is unlikely to be removed now



Policemen who played a key role in defusing several bombs on Saturday, at a meeting with Delhi Police commissioner YS Dadwal in New Delhi on Monday, where they were rewarded —PTI

Tall claims but little leads

Puneet Nicholas Yadav, New Delhi

Almost immediately after Saturday's serial blasts, Delhi Police had made tall claims of unearthing "vital leads" in the case and "cracking it soon". Two days later, the cops were repeating the same claims, with hardly anything new in hand.

However, what continued on Monday, was the process of detentions and attempts to get sketches made of suspects based on descriptions provided by a few eye-witnesses. Police have now detained about 13 people from the National Capital Region, five of these are eye-wit-

nesses but details about the rest have not been divulged.

Senior officials of the Delhi Police's special cell claimed they would be able to release sketches of some suspects but failed to do so until late evening.

An official said the cops were raiding hideouts of SIMI activists across the NCR. Sources revealed at least five people were detained from Sanjay Colony in Faridabad. Various teams of Delhi Police have also been sent to various parts of Uttar Pradesh, considered a hotbed of SIMI activities, and especially to villages in Azamgarh district.

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Tauqeer ally held in Bijapur

Kunal Chatterjee, Bangalore

The Corps of Detectives (Bangalore) has picked up a 23-year-old youth, Mohammad Sami, suspected to be a close friend of Abdul Subhan Qureshi alias Tauqeer, the alleged mastermind of the Saturday blasts in New Delhi.

The CoD picked him up from his Bijapur residence in the wee hours of Monday. He has been brought to Bangalore for interrogations.

Sami is a third-year student of architecture studying in CAB College, Bijapur. He was earlier picked up by the Bangalore po-

lice based on information from Gujarat police, but let him off the hook as no terror links could be substantiated.

Sami was interrogated on Monday and the police were hoping he spilled the beans about the whereabouts of Tauqeer.

A senior CoD officer said Sami was seen with Tauqeer around a month ago in Bangalore and this time they have enough evidence to prove his connection with him.

Sami's father, a government official who retired three months ago, could not believe his son was into terror activities.

'Pak backing terror in India'

New Delhi

Charging Pakistan with supporting terror modules operating in India, defence minister AK Antony on Monday said it was a "serious" matter.

"Militants are getting support from across the border and it is a fact. Already the home minister (Shivraj Patil) and others in government have expressed their opinion on this. It is a matter of serious concern," Antony said on the sidelines of a seminar. On the increased infiltration attempts by militants along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir, he said the recent Pakistan Army firing along the LoC was to assist infiltration by militants. —PTI

Kicking up a storm



Kaalapoottu, an ox race, being held during Onam celebrations at Palakkad on Monday —PTI

Deedar-e-Anjuman ban to stay: SC

Rakesh Bhatnagar, New Delhi

The supreme court on Monday refused to quash the Union government's order banning Deedar-e-Anjuman for indulging in 'subversive' activities mostly in some western and southern states, as judges concerned with mounting terror told the organisation's counsel "your professed activities may be something but your general activities are different".

While dismissing Deedar-e-Anjuman's petition challenging the Un-

lawful Activities Prevention Appellate Tribunal headed by Delhi high court justice Mukul Mudgal, the apex court bench of justices Arijit Pasayat and MK Sharma underlined the tribunal's ruling that the 82-year-old organisation was actively involved in anti-national and anti-religious activities in Goa, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Deedar was first banned in 2001 for two years after it was accused of engineering blasts in various cities in south India. Justice Mudgal on Feb-

Javed M Ansari, New Delhi

Beleaguered Union home minister Shivraj Patil is likely to ride out the latest clamour for his head in the aftermath of the spate of bomb blasts in different parts of the country. Despite the disquiet both within the party and amongst its allies over Patil's stewardship of the ministry, party insiders believe he will survive the chop primarily on account of the Congress leadership's reluctance to act against him.

The leadership itself is in a bind. Its reluctance to remove Patil stems from two factors. Dismissing him at this juncture will be interpreted as bowing to pressure from the BJP. Secondly, it will mean a tacit admission of the government's inept handling of the terror attacks. So Patil, despite attracting flak for his three costume changes while visiting the victims of the Delhi blasts on Saturday, is unlikely to be changed.

High-ranking party leaders point to the numerous occasions in the past when similar demands have been made but the Congress leadership has remained unmoved. On Monday, RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav called on UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi and prime minister Manmohan Singh to do something on the issue. But officially the Congress continues to back its embattled home minister. Party spokesman Abhishek Singhvi said the "blasts were not a referendum on the home minister's performance".

Speculation regarding Patil's future had gathered momentum after his absence from the high-level meeting between Gandhi and party bigwigs on Monday afternoon. Patil incidentally was chairing an international conference on terrorism at Vigyan Bhawan at the time, but it did little to douse the speculations.

The meeting, called by the Congress chief to discuss the series of blasts and the communal violence directed against Christians in parts of the country, was attended by external affairs minister Pranab Mukherjee, defence minister AK Antony, her political secretary Ahmed Patel, All India Congress Committee general secretaries Digvijay Singh, Margaret Alva, Jannardhan Dwivedi and Veerappa Moily.

Meanwhile, brushing aside speculation that he would be asked to step down, Patil asserted he enjoyed "full blessings" of the Congress president. "Well, I have full blessings of my leader," he told a television channel. Asked if he was troubled by the fact that he was not called to the party meeting on Monday, Patil said: "Do not put me on the defensive. That is not the style my leader works, my party works. My party's ethos is to do justice and to see it is done in a manner which contains and control criminal and terrorist activities..."

Samajwadi Party leader Amar Singh also rallied to Patil's defence. "The only crime he (Patil) did was to change his clothes three times (on Saturday). Can you remove him for this?" Singh said.

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Agonising search for the missing

Gyan Varma, New Delhi

Two days after all blast victims and injured have been identified by the police, some family members are still searching for their loved ones missing since Saturday when the Capital was hit by the serial blasts that killed 24.

Apart from checking each and every hospital personally, family members are also putting up posters of their loved ones around hospital campuses, urging the hospital staff to try and find out if their kin have been admitted there. At least four such posters have been put up at the Ram Manohar Lohia and Lady Harding hospitals, some promising rewards for any information on the missing. Among



A Karol Bagh blast victim at RML Hospital in New Delhi on Monday —PTI

dra Singh Chauhan, who had gone to Ghaffar market with his children and is missing ever since.

Then there is Rani, waiting at RML hospital for information on her husband Mukesh Kumar, who was at Ghaffar market. "He sells herbal oil at Ghaffar market. On Saturday he told me he would come home early and bring a birthday present for our daughter whose birthday is on September 18. But he has been missing and I fear the worst," she said, adding, "I have been running to different hospitals and mortuaries but have not been able to find my husband. I am worried as we are not getting any information and I have three children to look after."

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Men's groups want 'offensive' ad off air

Vineeta Pandey, New Delhi

The latest Kitply commercial, in which a wife slaps her husband on their wedding night because their bed made from ordinary plywood kept creaking, has not gone down well with men organisations, who feel that the ad and its likes promote domestic violence. They have complained to the Advertising Standards Council of India asking it to ban the commercial.

"It's a derogatory commercial, which promotes physical, emotional and financial abuse of men. Kitply may consider it a joke, but violence is not funny; be it against a man or a woman. We are sure you would find the same commercial with reversed roles revolting and so, we urge you to revoke the commercial immediately and take strong legal actions against those who promote domestic violence," said Save Family Foundation (SFF), an organisation for harassed men, in its complaint. "It is evident corporates are also responsible for 56,000 married men committing suicides, as they encourage wives to hit their husbands and justify it as alright because it is telecast on the TV," the complaint stated.

Said Swarup Sarkar of SFF, "There a big hue and cry if a wife is hurt by her husband, but a blind eye is turned when there's a public display of a wife hitting her husband. Any sort of violence be-

tween the spouses is considered illegal and termed as domestic violence or gender violence across the world. Depicting violence on national TV is unacceptable."

Some groups have also written to Kitply asking it to withdraw the commercial or face legal action and have also called to boycott any product whose ads talk or promote domestic violence. Some women organisations have also joined in the campaign.

Talking to DNA from Kolkata, a Kitply official acknowledged receiving complaints to withdraw the commercial. "We do not feel the ad is offensive. But since there are complaints, we will discuss it in the managing committee meeting this week. It will be difficult to withdraw the ad because we have already tied up with the TV channels. But the final decision will be taken in the meeting," said Sandeep Sawalka, senior operations manager of Kitply.

Men groups have also protested against a Hindustan Lever Limited, Ponds commercial promoting a scar-removing fairness cream and an ICI-Prudential Insurance commercial. "The Ponds ad terms husbands as wife beaters and the ICI ad portrays verbal and economical abuse against men," said Suresh Ram of Chennai-based organisation Indiya Kudumba Pathukappu Iyaakam.

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