

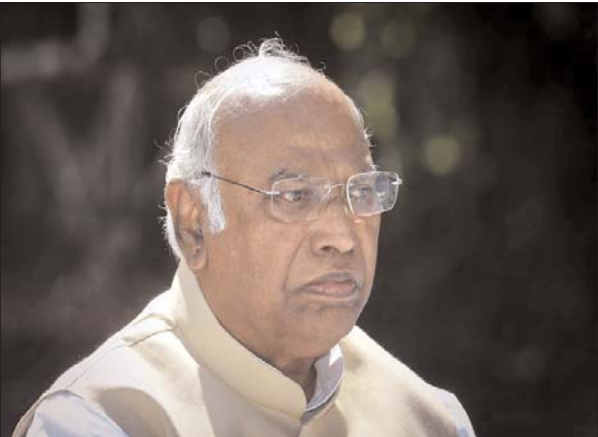
Modi Govt Launching Brazen Attack On Democratic Right Of Indians To Question, Dissent: Khar

NEW DELHI, AUG 18: Congress president Mallikarjun Khar on Tuesday accused the Modi Government of launching a brazen and calculated attack on the democratic right of every Indian to question and to dissent as he condemned its reported takedown orders on social media posts.

In a post on X, he claimed that the Modi government has issued 1.95 lakh blocking orders in just five months - most of them "against students and youth who came out on the streets demanding accountability" from authorities.

"Modi Government has launched its most brazen and calculated attack on the democratic right of every Indian to speak, to question and to dissent.

"Its social media censorship is as condemnable as the lathicharge and pellet guns they used on our youth!" Khar said in a post



on X, referring to the recent Cockroach Janta Party-led protest on the issue of NEET paper leak and reforms in the examination system. News-paper advertising space Khar noted that "what we are seeing today is only the tip of the iceberg. 1.95 lakh blocking orders in just 5 months. One every 68 seconds. Not against criminals, but against students, young Indians who came out on the streets demanding account-

ability for their stolen futures and their rigged examinations."

The Congress chief alleged that the protesters were assaulted in daylight and at the very same time, "post by post and reel by reel, every single voice that supported them was being systematically erased from the internet by direct government order."

"Any creator, any journalist, any ordinary citizen who posts something critical of

this Government today faces immediate takedowns, threatening FIR notices and coordinated intimidation.

"Meanwhile, the ruling party's 'Andhbhakt' freely doxes women, issues rape threats and runs organised harassment campaigns online without a single legal consequence, because none less than the PM follows many such trolls!" the Congress president alleged, citing media reports.

"The Modi Government slashed takedown time to three hours and automated censorship so completely that no human even reads the order before a voice is silenced," Khar said.

According to media reports, the government sent one blocking order to social media firms every minute between March and July this year and over half were sent to Instagram, which was the key protest platform. (Agencies)

CWC Meet On Wednesday; Roadmap To Corner Govt On Student Protests, Ram Temple 'Theft' On Agenda

NEW DELHI, AUG 18:

The Congress will hold a meeting of its working committee here on Wednesday to discuss the prevailing political situation in the country, including the roadmap to step up pressure on the government on issues of students and the Ram temple donation "theft".

The Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting will be held at Indira Bhawan at 3 pm on Wednesday, with party president Mallikarjun Khar chairing it and top leaders, including former party chief Rahul Gandhi and general secretaries Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Jairam Ramesh and KC Venugopal, set to attend.

The opposition party's roadmap to corner the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre on issues of students and the Ram temple donation "theft" would be on the agenda, sources said.

Also, a review of the party's preparations for the Assembly polls early next year would be held. Polls are



likely to take place in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur early next year.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to opposition parties to support a delimitation-linked bill to implement women's reservation in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies is also likely to come up for discussion as there is a possibility that it may be brought by the Government in the near future.

Asked about the possibility

of the government bringing the delimitation-linked bill for implementing women's reservation, Ramesh had last week said, "We are in touch with all parties. We continue to be in touch with all parties, I am sure that this issue will be discussed on August 19, when the CWC meets.

We cannot afford to relax, you know, because they (government) will try all sorts of tricks. But they do not have the numbers, and

the gap between what they claim to have now and what they need is not a small gap. It is a substantial two-digit gap."

After the last CWC meeting in April, the Congress had accused the Modi government of playing politics in the name of the women's reservation law and asserted that the proposed delimitation exercise linked to it is "not constitutional" and can have "grave consequences". (PTI)

Send Your Kids To Village Schools For A Day To Know Rural Students' Plight: Dipke To Politicians

HINGOLI (MAHARASHTRA), AUG 18: CJP founder Abhijit Dipke on Tuesday said ministers and politicians should send their children to village schools for at least a day to understand the challenges of rural students who are forced to walk several kilometres to get access to education.

During a protest in Hingoli over school-related issues, he criticised the Maharashtra government for failing to provide basic transport for rural schoolchildren, saying leaders could arrange buses and trains for election rallies but were unable to provide even a single bus for poor students.

Dipke, who last week launched the 'School Thik Karo' campaign from his native village in Hingoli district, claimed that over the past decade, political debate divided people along caste and religious lines, while core concerns such as education and employment remain un-addressed.

Children in remote areas are often forced to walk 7 to 10 kilometres to reach schools, particularly during the monsoon when roads become muddy and water-logged, the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) convenor noted.

"Will these ministers send their own children to school walking like the children of



villagers?" Dipke asked while talking to reporters.

"Ministers, MLAs and MPs should send their children to village schools for one day and make them walk to school like village children. Then they will understand what these children have to face," he said.

Dipke said the government is responsible for ensuring that such things do not recur and vowed to continue his fight for tribal and poor children. South Asians & Diaspora

"The life of a tribal child should have the same value as the life of a minister's child. The life of that child is not worth any less," he added.

Referring to recent student fatalities in tribal residential schools, he noted that one

student had died in Melghat in Amravati and others in Gadchiroli.

Dipke said he had chosen to hold the protest in Hingoli because he had personally seen his siblings walking to school as children.

"Even today, girls in rural areas have to walk to school. My sisters used to walk to school. I have seen my brothers walking to school. I have personally seen this," he said.

"Even after 15 years, the situation has not changed. This is shameful. Politicians can arrange buses and trains for election rallies, but they are unable to provide a single bus for poor children travelling to school," he charged.

Dipke said his campaign was not against village sarpanches or residents and

that they should instead be involved in improving schools.

"Our fight is not against sarpanches or villagers. We want to work with them. Where do the sarpanches' children study? They study in the same schools. Their children do not go to big schools like the children of ministers or MLAs," he said. "If the government cannot do it, we will do it with the help of villagers," Dipke added.

He alleged that political discourse over the last decade had divided people along caste and religious lines, while basic issues such as education and employment remained unresolved.

"People are being made to fight among themselves, while those in power are benefiting from it. Who is suffering? We are suffering. Who is not getting education? Our children are not getting it. Who is not getting jobs? Our sons and daughters are not getting jobs," Dipke said.

He also criticised the disparity between the facilities available to children of politicians and those available to poor, tribal and working-class children.

"Their children go to America to study. I studied at the same place where their children studied," he added. (Agencies)

GORAKHPUR, AUG 18:

A Facebook friendship turned costly for a man from Gorakhpur's Khajni area after cyber fraudsters allegedly duped him of Rs 15.20 lakh by claiming that a woman's luggage had been detained at Delhi airport, police said on Tuesday.

Indralal Jaiswal, a resident of Khorja alias Bhati village, approached police after realising that he had been cheated. An FIR has been registered against an unidentified woman and the case is being investigated with the help of the cybercrime cell, police said.

According to Jaiswal's complaint, he became friends on Facebook with a woman who introduced herself as Charlotte Olivia and



claimed to be a US resident working in Syria. During their conversations, she allegedly told him that she wanted to visit India.

Later, the woman claimed that she had reached Delhi airport but that officials had detained her luggage and demanded money for its release.

Believing her claims, Jaiswal transferred Rs 15,20,399 from his SBI account through the bank's app to several bank accounts provided by the woman, according to the complaint.

However, the demands for further payments allegedly continued, following which Jaiswal became suspicious

Mental torture drove Twisha Sharma to take extreme step: CBI chargesheet

NEW DELHI, AUG 17 :

The CBI has filed a chargesheet against Samarth Singh and Giribala Singh, the husband and mother-in-law of Twisha Sharma, accusing them of inflicting mental torture on the former actor-model who was found dead under suspicious circumstances at her marital home in Bhopal in May, officials said on Monday.

The 31-page chargesheet with annexure running into hundreds of pages chronicles alleged psychological torture inflicted on Twisha by Samarth and Giribala, a retired district judge, during the six-month of marriage.

Giving a harrowing account of "sustained psychological harm" that drove former Miss Pune to take extreme step, the agency in its chargesheet submitted on August 14 has invoked Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections related to inflicting cruelty by a husband or his relatives towards a woman, abetment to suicide and common intention.

The chargesheet has been filed before the special court of Judge Shobhana Bhalavi in Bhopal.

The agency has kept the probe into alleged dowry death and dowry death open and more chargesheets may be filed based on further probe, the officials said.

According to Twisha's family lawyer, Ankur Pandey, the CBI has sought permission from the court for further investigation into the case.

The CBI has completed the investigation and filed the chargesheet within the stipulated 90-day period. It has



requested the court to allow further investigation into two or three aspects, subject to the judge's permission, Pandey told PTI Videos. South Asians & Diaspora

Twisha, who married Samarth last December, was found hanging at her marital home on May 12. It was alleged in the FIR that Samarth had taken her to AIIMS Bhopal, where he claimed that she hanged herself at home at 10.20 pm.

The doctors at AIIMS informed the police that she was brought dead to the hospital, after which a medico-legal case was registered, the FIR said.

After the initial police investigation and a second autopsy ordered by the Madhya Pradesh High Court to clear critical doubts and address the family's allegations of lapses in the first autopsy performed by AIIMS Bhopal, the CBI took over the probe and arrested Samarth and Giribala.

The second autopsy was conducted on May 24 by a four-member team from AIIMS Delhi in Bhopal. The

postmortem and later board of medical experts from AIIMS Delhi have concurred with the opinion that it was a case of suicide.

"The cause of death is asphyxia as a result of ante-mortem hanging which is suicidal in manner produced by the examined ligature material, the gymnastic belt with a ring. No other injuries of medico-legal importance found on the body of the deceased suggestive of assault/scuffle prior to death," according to the chargesheet.

The central agency said that Twisha, who had worked in South Indian films and was pursuing an MBA, came in contact with Samarth through a dating website which culminated into marriage after several months in December 2025.

The CBI has alleged that in the six months of married life, Twisha was subjected to mental cruelty by accused Samarth on many occasions and was addressed with "derogatory words" about her character despite the fact that the deceased was honest and truthful in telling him

about her past relationships before the marriage.

The agency claimed in its chargesheet that Giribala used to instigate her son from time to time to cause "mental cruelty" to the deceased and also helped in shielding her son when the victim wanted to complain against him.

The monther-son duo allegedly used to "harass" Twisha when she was taking care of her father who had suffered a heart attack in March 2026, forcing her to return to Bhopal.

The probe showed that the central flashpoint involved her "unplanned" pregnancy in April 2026. While Twisha was uncertain about continuing the pregnancy due to the ongoing abuse, the agency alleged that Samarth and his mother pressured her to keep the child even as the husband kept questioning the child's paternity after the abortion.

The mental torture escalated over financial and personal matters as Samarth allegedly started pressuring her to transfer savings of Rs 20 lakh in her demat account into his account for investing in Chinese stock markets.

The CBI alleged that Samarth told Twisha to transfer the Rs 20 lakh investment in equity shares into a joint account which she refused stating the money belonged to her father. This allegedly intensified further cruelty.

Even her professional setbacks were weaponized against her, the agency alleged citing the mocking by her husband that she lost the job because she "did not even

Elephant habitats, corridors being systematically destroyed, will to preserve absent: Ramesh

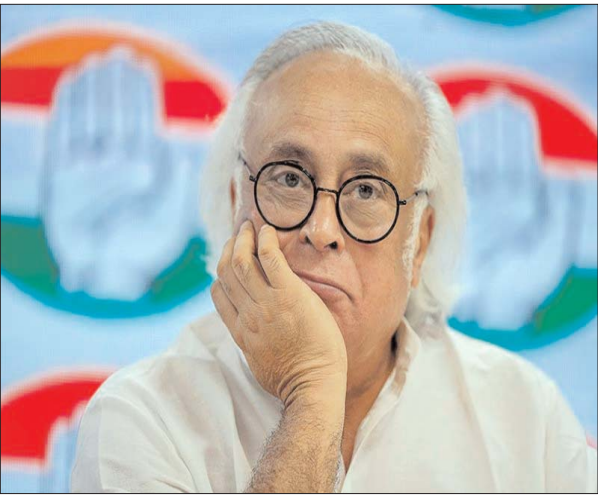
NEW DELHI, AUG 18: Congress leader and former Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh on Tuesday said elephant habitats and corridors are being systematically destroyed by mining and other projects, asserting that the will to protect and preserve is markedly absent.

His remarks came a day after the Supreme Court directed the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) to conduct a nationwide survey to check if any state has constructed obstacles or created blockades in elephant corridors, saying it was unacceptable.

Reacting to the development, Ramesh said, "While elephant habitats and corridors are being systematically destroyed by mining & other projects. Surveys exist."

The will to protect and preserve is markedly absent, the Congress general secretary in-charge communications said.

A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justices Joy-malya Bagchi and V Mohana



made it clear that states cannot construct obstacles in the pathways of elephants to prevent loss of crops and livelihoods.

"Construction of any kind of obstacle or creating blockades in elephant corridors is not acceptable. We are very clear that there cannot be obstacles in the way of wildlife. Elephant herds have a practice of travelling long distances. No state can say that just because crops are getting destroyed, they will have to

construct obstacles on their path," the bench said.

Bagchi said the practice of using fireballs and spikes in West Bengal is prevalent because the elephants come from Nepal and through West Bengal they go to Jharkhand and other states.

CJI Kant said elephants are found in Haryana's Yamuna Nagar area and travel from there to Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.

"No state can block their path," the CJI said.

The top court barred the use of any kind of fireballs or mashaals (torches) to chase away elephants and asked state authorities to implement its directions.

Directing the Centre to submit its report within six weeks, the bench observed that there were already mandatory guidelines issued by the environment ministry to ensure seamless and unobstructed elephant corridors passing through different states.

"However, owing to certain local factors, the elephant corridors have been impeded, blocked or obstructed. We direct the Union of India and the ministry to conduct a fresh survey and submit a comprehensive survey report, including the initiatives and necessary steps taken by them to prevent such obstructions," it said.

The bench said the status report shall also point out the position on the use of fireballs and mashaals or any other coercive action against wildlife. (PTI)