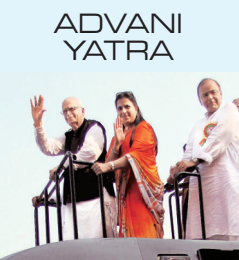


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# Maharashtra first to have standard ambulance design

PRITHA CHATTERJEE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 20

**M**AHARASHTRA's emergency medical system, envisaged after the serial blasts in 2006, and marked with incessant delays since then, is finally on track. The state government has now roped in experts at AIIMS to provide technical support in the planning and design of the 937 ambulances it plans to roll out under the NHRM.

"There are no standards in India on the design of ambulances. The Maharashtra government is the first to acknowledge the need for proper designing and planning of not only the ambulances, but an entire trauma management system. We have been asked to provide consultancy services," said Professor Shakti Gupta, head of hospital administration at AIIMS.

However, the project has been marked by delays and controversies. The first tender awarded to Satyam's EMRI in 2008 had to be hurriedly withdrawn after the Satyam scandal. "AIIMS has helped us in the role of a consultant in providing complete technical support in the design of the ambulances. Since the 1,000-odd ambulances will be deployed across the state, including remote areas, we did not want to leave any lacunae in the design and technical viability," said Health Minister Suresh Shetty.

## DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS

### Cabin ▶

AIIMS has fixed the minimum length at 310 cm and width at 1,500 mm

A minimum of two windows on each door leaf and one openable (sliding/tilting/roll down) window on each side wall. The inside of the compartment will also have a 40-mm thick non-toxic insulation for reduction of heat and noise. For maintaining noise levels in the patient compartment, levels measured at six different locations — patient ear, rear side of interior of ambulance, front side of interior of patient compartment, on left and right side of patient cabin with reference to centreline of the cabin — should not exceed **80 dB(A)**

### Equipment

**Mandatory for oxygen cylinders** to have certification from the Chief Controller of Explosives, Government of India, Nagpur. The pneumatic transport ventilator, defibrillator, cardiac monitor, suction pump and other equipment have all been standardised

### Lighting

Diffused flicker-free automotive grade (12V, minimum 4,000 deg Kelvin) lighting in patient compartment as standard

### Stock ▶

**83 DRUGS** will be stocked in each ambulance

AIIMS has also provided specifications for the vehicle engine and tyres

The ambulances have been designed on the basis of international standards with specifications for body structure, vehicular design and interior chambers.

"Ambulance design should be based on ergonomics or the science of designing a space after taking into consideration the relationship between workers and

their environment. The height and width specifications are very important for ensuring adequate space for moving the patient in and out," explained Dr Gupta.

The positioning of the medical equipment and the doctor or paramedics with respect to the patient is also crucial. "AIIMS did a study of road ambulances in India under the Ministry of Road Transport and found gross inadequacies in the volumetric space distribution. For example, the doctor's seat is almost always adjacent to the patient instead of facing him/her. The seating space is narrow, with gas cylinders and monitors crowded inside in a totally unscientific manner," said Dr Gupta. The lighting in ambulances is also crucial and nearly all Indian ambulances use regular tubelights, which is totally unacceptable as a doctor may be required to perform emergency procedures.

"We are trying to cover all aspects to prepare the best possible structure that will set an example for other states," Shetty said. However, with such strict standards, the tendering process has been given an extension since only two companies have come forward, while others have sent queries. The government has invited experts from AIIMS to meet the companies and clear their doubts. The tendering process has also been extended as the government hopes to ensure more participation.

## Rahul security breached again, man caught with revolver

**LUCKNOW:** A man carrying a firearm was caught near Rahul Gandhi at Amethi in Uttar Pradesh on Thursday — the third such incident this year — raising questions on his security arrangements.

Special Protection Group (SPG) men caught a youth carrying a revolver as he approached Rahul Gandhi near Ram Leela ground in his constituency, Amethi. The weapon was not loaded but the man carried cartridges in his pocket.

Similar incidents had taken place in Noida on May 12 and in Aligarh on July 17.

District SP Vijay Singh Meena told *The Indian Express* that Rahul Gandhi stopped his vehicle seeing a crowd of locals waiting for him at a crossing. When he was shaking

hands with the people and talking to them, a youth carrying an application moved close to him.

The SPG men spotted a revolver stuck in his waist, overpowered him and handed him over to the police.

Meena said the youth, who identified himself as Pradeep Soni, was a jeweller who runs a shop at the nearby market. The weapon he carried was licensed. He had bought it after his father and brother were murdered four months ago, police said. Soni wanted to hand over an application to Rahul Gandhi, requesting for action in the murder case. He told the police that he had met Rahul Gandhi during his visits in the past, the SP said.

BHUPENDRA PANDEY

## From the FRONT PAGE

# Bloody Libyration

intended to display it in Misrata's central square.

Within an hour of the news of Gaddafi's death, the Arab twitter-sphere lit up with gleeful comments, many of them hinting at a similar fate awaiting other Arab dictators — most notably President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen and President Bashar al-Assad of Syria.

One of them read: "Ben Ali escaped, Mubarak is in jail, Gaddafi was killed. Which fate do you prefer, Ali Abdullah Saleh? You can consult with Bashar."

Another was more direct: "Bashar al-Assad, how do you feel today?"

A popular link showed a cartoon with portraits of the five dictators — the first three with big red X's painted over them — while below them walks an angry-looking man totting a large brush covered with red paint. Written on the man's clothing is "the people", in Arabic. Mahmoud Jibril said he had no details on how Gaddafi had been killed, but added that he was confident that the death had not been caused by NATO warplanes — one of several rumours that flew as the news broke.

In a statement from NATO's Libya operations headquarters in Naples, spokesman Col Roland Lavoie confirmed that its aircraft had struck two armed Libyan military vehicles near Sirte but that NATO officers had no idea who may have been in them. "It is not NATO policy to target specific individuals," he said.

Mohamed Benrasali, a member of the national council's Tripoli Stabilization Committee, said fighters from Misrata who were deployed in Sirte had told him that Gaddafi was

captured alive in a car leaving Sirte. He was badly injured, with wounds in his head and both legs, and died soon after, Benrasali said.

Al Jazeera quoted an unidentified official of the Transitional National Council as saying Moussa Ibrahim, a former spokesman of Gaddafi, had been captured near Sirte.

There were unconfirmed reports that one of Gaddafi's feared sons, Muatassim, had been captured or killed with his father. The whereabouts of another son, Seif al-Islam, who has been on the run since the fall of Tripoli, remained unclear.

The Obama administration, a major supporter of the anti-Gaddafi rebels, was initially cautious in its reaction, apparently awaiting irrefutable proof of his death. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, asked about it during a trip to Pakistan, said: "If the reports are true, I think it offers a new opportunity for Libya to move forward to the future."

At the European Union headquarters in Brussels, President Herman Van Rompuy said Gaddafi's death "marks the end of an era of despotism," AFP reported.

Officials of the post-Gaddafi government had said that Gaddafi's death or capture would allow them to declare the country liberated and in control of its borders, and to start a process that would lead to an election for a national council within eight months.

Earlier on Thursday, Libyan fighters had announced the fall of Sirte, Gaddafi's last remaining bastion. A military spokesman for the interim government, Abdel Rahman Busin, said, "Sirte is fully liberated." **NYT**

## Paid news: EC disqualifies DP Yadav's wife

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 20

IN A move that is likely to act as a deterrent against the menace of 'paid news' in all future elections, the Election Commission on Thursday disqualified Umlesh Yadav, a sitting MLA from Bisauli in Uttar Pradesh, and also barred her from being member of any legislature in the country for the next three years.

The action came in the form of a 23-page order signed by all the three Election Commissioners. It was taken on grounds that Umlesh Yadav, wife of BSP leader D P Yadav, had provided false information on her election expenditure incurred on 'advertisement' published during the 2007 assembly elections in two Hindi dailies.

The issue was brought to the notice of the EC in April last year after the Press Council of India (PCI) passed its judgment on a complaint filed by one Yogendra Kumar against the two dailies — *Dainik Jagran* and *Amar Ujala* — for publishing paid news on eve of assembly election for Bisauli. Kumar had complained that 'paid news' items were published just a day before polling in favour of Umlesh Yadav, who was contesting as a Rashtriya Prativartan Dal candidate.

Both newspapers challenged the allegation and asserted that the said item was an advertisement (ADVT) as mentioned at the bottom of the said article and also furnished bills for it. "The format of impugned material was such that it would appear as a news report to the layman.... The act was not only unethical

by journalistic standards but also in violation of election laws," PCI had said.

Based on PCI's ruling, the EC had held the said items as paid news and sought details of Umlesh Yadav's poll expenditure from the District Election Officer. It was then found the expenditure on the said paid news was not clear from the account submitted by her.


In response to a notice from the EC, Yadav denied issuing the advertisement. In their replies, the dailies furnished details of the bills issued in the name of D P Yadav, the then chief of Rashtriya Prativartan Dal, who merged his party with BSP in 2008. After further examining the issue, the EC concluded that Umlesh Yadav had "failed to lodge her account of election expenditure in the manner required by law".

## France assures stringent safety for Jaitapur plant

**NEW DELHI:** India and France have resolved to strengthen and widen bilateral ties and have made commitments to increase cooperation on a range of issues, including high end defence technology and nuclear energy during the visit by French Foreign Minister Alian Juppe.

After extensive talks between Juppe and his Indian counterpart S M Krishna, the two countries resolved to co-operate in joint defence research and development programmes and named the Short Range Surface to Air Missile (SRSAM) project and the Kaveri jet engine programme as priority areas.

Civil nuclear co-operation was also one of the key issues discussed with both nations looking forward to the finalisation of the contract to construct reactors at the Jaitapur plant at the earliest. Juppe assured India that stringent safety standards would be implemented in the Jaitapur plant even as Krishna reaffirmed India's commitment to the nuclear power project. **ENS**



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## Kiran Lokpal Bedi buys discount air tickets, gets hosts to pay full fare

On at least 12 occasions, she used her gallantry medal to get 75% discount on Air India tickets, then submitted inflated invoices to claim full fare, even Business class, reimbursement

AJMER SINGH  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 19

**K**IRAN Bedi, one of the most vocal members of Team Anna, who riled Members of Parliament with her Ramnath Gopalvarni act, may herself have some explaining to do. The issue: the inflated travel expenses she has been charging NCOs and institutions which invite her for seminars or meetings.

Records of bills, invoices and copies of cheques with *The Indian Express* show that Bedi, who is entitled to a rebate on Air India tickets as a gallantry award winner, pays discounted fares but charges her host institutions the full fare. She has also, at times, claimed Business class fare while flying Economy.

*The Indian Express* has 12 recorded examples of this, some of which date back to 2006 when Bedi was a serving IPS officer. Her last such travel for which an inflated invoice was sent was as recent as September 29.

Reimbursement cheques these fares were credited to Vision Foundation, headed by Bedi.

Kiran Bedi and Anna Hazare during the latter's fast at Ramnath Gopalvarni in Delhi in August.

**BEDI'S CA SURESH VYAS: IT'S ACTUALLY A SAVING**  
"What appears as a mismatch is actually a saving for the foundation. This is how the travel money is saved with information to the invitee by economising the expenses so that the same is used for travel where invites for causes of the foundation do not offer travel cost but are valuable to visit."

**BEDI: WE'RE TRANSPARENT, READY TO BE AUDITED**  
"We follow transparent methods of functioning and volunteer to be questioned or audited. Every penny in our work is accounted for and is for the facilitation of causes we espouse... We have been very conscientious of trust and responsibility... And hence punctual and meticulous in our systems."

Hyderabad on Air India (AI 560), then Hyderabad-Chennai (AI 546), in Economy class. The next day, she took a flight back to Delhi (AI 539).


**Total fare paid: Rs 17,134.**  
Invoice generated for: Rs 73,117 (payment is pending).  
While Bedi flew Delhi-Hyderabad, onward to

**Total fare paid: Rs 14,097.**  
Bill submitted for reimbursement received: Rs 42,109.  
First National Montessori Conference paid, SBI cheque.

**MARCH 6, 2009:** Fly Delhi-Mumbai-F-688, IC 6055.  
Total fare paid: Rs 14,097.

THE INDIAN EXPRESS: OCTOBER 20, 2011

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