

...ing to personal attacks... against him as R.P.'s "double... juristic projects which pro...

Rebecca Samervel
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Almost a month after he was arrested, a special SC/ST court on Saturday granted bail to 19-year-old IIT Bombay student Arman Khatri, accused of abetting the suicide of another student, Darshan Solanki, in February. Police had arrested Khatri on April 9. Khatri's advocate Dinesh Gupta had submitted that the first-year student appeared before the special investigation team (SIT) four times, had cooperated with the probe and there was no evidence against him to invoke the abetment of suicide

charge. Granting Khatri bail, special judge AP Kanade said he is to attend the Powai police station (SIT) every Monday and Tuesday between 11am and 1pm till the chargesheet is filed. "The accused shall not make any inducement or threat to any person acquainted with the facts of the case so as to dissuade him from disclosing such facts to the court or to any police officer or tamper with the evidence... shall not leave territorial limits of Mumbai without prior permission of the court... shall not commit any offence similar to the offences of which he is accused in the present mat-

Solanki's parents did not come before the court to oppose his bail plea

ter," the judge said. The FIR was filed under Section 306 of the Indian Penal Code for abetment of suicide and also under the section for criminal intimidation apart from various offences alleged under the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The prosecution had earlier submitted that a message retrieved from Solanki's phone revealed that he had

profusely apologised to Khatri for making communal remarks and also told him he was leaving the city, but instead of accepting the apology, the accused had threatened him with a paper cutter in the days leading to the suicide. The prosecution said this showed Solanki was troubled and distressed because of the accused.

Opposing his bail plea, the prosecution submitted he may try to influence the witness.

Solanki's parents did not come before the court to oppose his bail plea.

Gupta, though, submitted that there are no direct or in-

direct allegations against Khatri. The bail plea said neither Solanki's parents have complained about Khatri nor have they said Solanki had complained that he had threatened him. The plea said college authorities had already given Khatri a clean chit and so had Powai police, the first to investigate the case. In March, an interim report submitted by an IIT Bombay panel ruled out any caste discrimination against Solanki. His "deteriorating academic performance" appeared to "be a strong reason" which affected the student "very seriously", the report has stated.

Judges must choose words carefully: CJI

Lalmohan Patnaik
@timesgroup.com

Cuttack: Judges must choose their words carefully, especially since most high courts are now livestreaming their proceedings on YouTube and every word spoken in courtrooms is in the public domain, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud said Saturday in Cuttack while delivering the inaugural address at a national conference on digitisation, paperless courts, and e-initiatives in the judiciary. "We, as judges, need to

train ourselves because now we are working in the age of social media," the CJI said, explaining why livestreaming places new demands on judges. "A lot of funny stuff is going on YouTube which we need to control, because this is serious stuff. What happens in the court is extremely serious stuff," he said and cited examples of viral clips from the Patna high court when Justice PB Bajantri reprimanded last June IAS officer Anand Kishor, a principal secretary in the Bihar government, for turning up in a casual attire.

"Clips of a judge in the Patna HC asking an IAS officer why he was not appropriately dressed in a suit or somebody in the Gujarat HC saying something about why a lawyer is not ready with her case. Every word that we say in the court is up in the public realm, which we realised when we are hearing the constitutional bench arguments," the CJI said. He said citizens often don't realise that judges say things in court to open a dialogue, but that doesn't necessarily reflect what a judge will ultimately decide.

ALH, a proven helicopter, performed exceedingly well, say HAL officials

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The crash of the Army ALH Mark-III in the Kishtwar district of J&K on Thursday, in which one soldier was killed and the two pilots injured, was the fourth major accident of the chopper in just over six months. The entire ALH fleet in the armed forces — 181 in Army includes over 60 weaponised ones called 'Rudra', 75 in IAF, in Navy and 18 in Coast Guard — have already been grounded twice for technical safety checks since late October last year. There have been several cases of "failure of the collec-

tive", which controls the power to the rotors and back, reported in the choppers over time. The armed forces have also raised concerns about the metallurgy of the "control rods" in the ALH gearboxes. HAL officials, in turn, contend the ALH is "a proven helicopter" that has performed exceedingly well in various utility roles. Since their induction began in 2002, the ALHs have clocked a collective total of over 3.9 lakh flying hours, with the number of accidents per one lakh hours of flying "being lower than international standards". "The two back-to-back ALH crashes in March were unfortunate. But preliminary

inquiries show they were due to maintenance issues. The Coast Guard chopper crash on March 26 was due to the control rods being interchanged wrongly during maintenance," an HAL official said. "The naval ALH crash on March 8, in turn, was related to improper fitment of serrated washers, which were not aligned properly. Both the accidents had nothing to do with design or manufacturing issues," he added. The inquiry into the Rudra ALH crash in Arunachal Pradesh on October 21 last year, which killed two officers and three soldiers, is yet to be finalised.

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