

Kalam kin seeks to defuse row over Gita sculpture in memorial



RAMESWARAM (TN), JULY 30 /-/- An engraved 'Bhagavad Gita' near the statue of late president A P J Abdul Kalam has kicked up a row, with his family seeking to put in to rest by placing a copy of the Quran and Bible near it. "An unnecessary controversy was raised by some people. DRDO officials worked tirelessly for the memorial construction and had not sculpted the Bhagavad Gita near the statue with any (ill) intention. Now we have left two books - Quran and Bible near the statue," his relatives Sheikh Dawood and Salim said. They said they would also place a copy of Tamil treatise Thirukkural near it soon. His relatives said Kalam was a leader to all Indians and no one should seek to politicise the episode. A PM engraved wooden copy of Bhagavad Gita sculpted along with the statue had drawn opposition from various quarters. An MDMK spokesperson said party founder Yalga had already questioned the need for a Bhagavad Gita there, when Kalam had, even in a national form, referred only to the Thirukkural. A PMK leader, who did not wish to be named, also questioned the presence of the holy book, saying Kalam was common to all citizens. The Rs 15 crore memorial was inaugurated on July 27 by Prime Narendra Modi at Peikarambu here, Kalam's native village, on the 'Missile Man's' second death anniversary.

It memorial was constructed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation with which Kalam was associated, and other central government departments. It has on display replica of rockets and missiles on which the late scientist had worked. The Prime Minister had unveiled a wooden statue of Kalam playing the musical instrument 'veena' during its inauguration. The memorial also has about 900 paintings and 200 rare photographs of the late scientist, who held the office of president from 2002 to 2007. (PTI)

PM unhappy with yogi ministry's performance

BY RAHIL NORA CHOPRA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, grapevine has it, is not happy with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for the way in which he is running the government. Recently, the Prime Minister met the UP BJP MPs to hear their assessment of the functioning of the UP Government. Many of them are understood to have complained about the law and order situation, the problem about electricity roads etc. They reportedly cautioned that if the situation did not improve, the party may have to pay a heavy price in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The chief minister met party president Amit Shah and Narendra Modi to brief them about the overall situation and development work done by the government. According to sources, Amit Shah is scheduled to discuss in Lucknow issues of governance, ministers and RSS officebearers amid reports of discontent in the among the party's workers and leaders.

CONGRESS WORRIED ABOUT CROSS VOTING FOR RS SEATS

NIA conducts raid in Jammu over terror funding

JAMMU/NEW DELHI, JULY 30 /-/- The NIA today conducted raids at two places belonging to the close aide of hardline separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani in Jammu in connection with its probe in the terror funding case in the Kashmir Valley, official said. In a related development, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) also issued summons to Naseem, the second son of Geelani, who heads separatist conglomerate Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, to appear before the agency on Wednesday.

His elder son Nayeem has been summoned at the NIA headquarters tomorrow. The NIA raided the office and residence of a lawyer this morning amid allegations about his close proximity with Geelani, said officials, who are familiar with the developments. His foreign trips have come under lens and he will be questioned soon, the officials said. This is the second raid in Jammu in connection with the case of terror funding. Earlier, the agency had raided a businessman. Earlier, the NIA had issued

summons to Geelani's elder son Nayeem, asking him to appear before it for questioning. Nayeem has returned from Pakistan in 2010 after spending 11 years there. He is tipped as the natural successor to the Geelani-led Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, a separatist conglomerate comprising hardline groups. Geelani's son-in-law Altaf Ahmed Shah alias Altaf Fantoosh has already been arrested by the NIA and was being interrogated in the same city, they said. Besides him, Geelani's close aides Ayaz Akbar, who is

woman outfit Dukhtar-e-Millat in its FIR. A surgeon by profession, Nayeem has returned from Pakistan in 2010 after spending 11 years there. He is tipped as the natural successor to the Geelani-led Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, a separatist conglomerate comprising hardline groups. Geelani's son-in-law Altaf Ahmed Shah alias Altaf Fantoosh has already been arrested by the NIA and was being interrogated in the same city, they said. Besides him, Geelani's close aides Ayaz Akbar, who is

also the spokesman of Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, and Peer Saifullah were arrested by the NIA from the Valley last week. Shahidul-Islam, spokesman of the moderate Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, Mehrajuddin Kalwal, Nayeem Khan (of the Hurriyat's Geelani faction) and Farooq Ahmed alias 'Bitta Karate' have also been arrested. All of them have been remanded to 10 days of NIA custody. The NIA had registered a case on May 30 against the separatist and secessionist

leaders, including members of the Hurriyat Conference, who have been acting in connivance with active militants of the HM, Dukhtar-e-Millat, LeT, other outfits and gangs. The case was registered for raising, receiving and collecting funds through various illegal means, including hawala, for funding separatist and terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir and for causing disruption in the Kashmir Valley by way of pelting security forces with stones, burning schools, damaging public

property and waging war against India. In pursuance of this case, the NIA had conducted widespread searches on the suspected persons in Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Haryana and incriminating documents, electronic devices, cash and other valuables worth over crore rupees were unearthed. For the first time since the rise of militancy in Kashmir in the early 1990s, a central probe agency had carried out raids in connection with the funding of separatists and carried out arrests. (PTI)

RJD to move court in a week on new govt in Bihar: Jha

NEW DELHI, JULY 30 /-/- The RJD today said it will move court "within a week" against Bihar governor's invitation to JDU coalition to form government in the state, and hit out at Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for "robbery of the mandate". "I will knock at the court's door, and go to the people's court ('janata ki adalat') as well to tell the masses about the kind of politics being played by the two parties - JDU and BJP," RJD spokesman Manoj Jha said.

The senior RJD leader also challenged Kumar to address a meeting in an area dominated by people from Dalit, Mahadalit and other backward castes, saying "He (Kumar) will face the wrath of the people." "Every mandate has a character and

in Bihar it was the Dalits, the minorities and some progressive sections of the upper caste (which had voted for the previous govt) that were with JDU," breaking the Grand Alliance, the character of that mandate has been dropped," he said. "People of Bihar, including the youth, are feeling cheated about this robbery of the mandate they had given for an inclusive Bihar," Jha said on the sidelines of an event here. The governor's decision to invite Kumar to form the government with the BJP, he said, was a "blatant violation" of the Supreme Court judgement in the Bommai case. "According to the S R Bommai case judgement, it is mandatory to call the single largest party or

electoral bloc first to explore the formation of a government," he said, adding, "we will move court soon, within a week's time." He said the party will go to 'janata ki adalat' (people's court) and tell them about the "conspiracy" hatched by the BJP. "If one looks at the political journey of Nitish Kumar, it is worse than a Machiavellian character. He spoke of 'Sangh-mukt' (RSS-free) India and now he made it a 'Sangh-yukt' (Sangh-driven) Bihar. Attacking Kumar, he said, his political journey also tells about morality in politics. "We were wrong in believing every word spoken by Nitish, which was just rhetoric. For the last one year, he was playing according to the script of Nagpur, the RSS headquarters," he said. "But



history has a different view than contemporary TV anchors. History looks at in a nuanced manner. And, in the eyes of history, Kumar shall appear as somebody who destroyed, deceived the mandate which was won for building an inclusive Bihar," Jha said. Nitish Kumar joined the very people and the philosophy he pretended to be fighting, he said. (PTI)

Bofors case likely to make a comeback in SC

NEW DELHI, JULY 30 /-/- Speculation is rife that the politically sensitive Rs 64 crore Bofors pay-off case will come up for substantial hearing in the Supreme Court soon, amidst a fresh media report suggesting a financial quid pro quo for the Rs 1,437 crore Howitzer gun deal in 1986. BJP leader and advocate Ajay Kumar Agarwal, who had challenged the Delhi High Court May 31, 2005 judgement quashing all charges against the Europe-based Hinduja brothers in the case, said the matter was listed in the weekly list earlier this month, but could not be taken up.

He said the apex court may list the matter after its constitution bench completes hearing on the right to privacy matter and that he was also contemplating filing an application for an early hearing. The apex court in the case, as during the brief hearing in December 1, 2016, the agency had told the apex court that the authorities had not permitted it to file an appeal against the May 31, 2005 verdict. Agarwal said he will try to convince the apex court through his petition that the "High Court had quashed the charges against the accused persons on technical grounds and the order was totally perverse which is liable to be set aside. Justice R S Sodhi of the Delhi High Court, since re-

level. Agarwal, who had contested the Rai Bareilly Lok Sabha elections in 2014 against Congress President Sonia Gandhi, said he will also draw the attention of the apex court that he has written a letter to the Enforcement Directorate seeking investigation into the trail of the kickback money under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1998 and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. In the July 28 letter to the ED, he claimed that the alleged crimes were committed continuously till the year 2006 when two London accounts held by Italian businessman Ottavio Quattrocchi, who has been accused as one of the middlemen in the deal, were de-froze. The BJP leader said he is writing a letter to the CBI asking it to file an affidavit about the facts and course of investigation into the case, as during the brief hearing in December 1, 2016, the agency had told the apex court that the authorities had not permitted it to file an appeal against the May 31, 2005 verdict. Agarwal said he will try to convince the apex court through his petition that the "High Court had quashed the charges against the accused persons on technical grounds and the order was totally perverse which is liable to be set aside. Justice R S Sodhi of the Delhi High Court, since re-

Congress demands Mehbooba's resignation over flag remark

JAMMU, JULY 30 /-/- The Congress today demanded Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's resignation over her flag remarks, saying none has the right to insult the tricolour. The party said she has hurt the sentiments of the people and asked the BJP to explain what kind of freedom is being advocated by their coalition partner (PDP) in the Jammu and Kashmir government and the chief minister. "Congress has taken strong exception to the utterances of Chief Minister. No one has right to insult the national flag as great sacrifices and nation's honour is attached with it," state Congress unit's chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma said here. "Mehbooba has no right to quote the example of national flag in any form and hurt the nationalist sentiments by insulting it, what so ever may be heresongwriting context," he said. Atan event in New Delhi on Friday, Mehbooba had said, "Who is insulting the national flag? Who is challenging the Article 35-A. Let me tell you my party and other parties who carry the national flag there (in Jammu and Kashmir) despite all risks... I have no doubt in saying that there will be no one to hold it (national

flag) (if it is tinkered)," Sharma also hit out at the BJP and accused it of "surrendering their agenda (of alliance)" to remain in power in the state. "We seek answers from the BJP over the statement and utterances of Mehbooba Mufti. She is even questioning the utility of NIA investigations as well propagating her illogical and highly objectionable agenda," he said. "What kind of freedom of idea is being advocated by their coalition partner (PDP) and the chief minister: She (Mehbooba) has lost right to continue in office," he added. Notably, the BJP yesterday expressed shock and surprise over Mufti's remarks and asserted that Article 35-A of the Constitution which grants special status to the state is "not a sacred cow that cannot be touched". The state unit of the BJP said that while the party stands by the Agenda of Alliance with the PDP and won't seek alteration of existing constitutional provision, "it is especially true that Article 35-A has done more harm to the State than any other provision of law". Union minister Jitendra Singh yesterday said the tricolour is "sacrosanct" and termed the chief minister's remarks as "shocking and ridiculous". (PTI)

Eviction cases should be given priority by court: SC

NEW DELHI, JULY 30 /-/- Eviction matters should be given priority by courts at all stages of litigation, especially in cases where the landlord has sought eviction of the tenant from the premises, the Supreme Court has said. The apex court observed that the object of the rent law was to ensure speedy disposal of such matters. A bench of Justices A M Sapre and R Nariman made these observations while dealing with an eviction-related case of Kerala which went on in different courts for over a decade. "We sincerely feel that eviction matters should be given priority in their disposal at all stages of litigation and especially where the eviction is claimed on the ground of bonafide need of the landlord," the bench said. "We hope and trust that due attention would be paid by all courts to ensure speedy disposal of eviction cases," it said while allowing the appeal filed by a landlord against an order of the Kerala High Court. The high court, in its January 2016 verdict, had allowed the petitioner to file one of the eight tenants who was evicted from a rented shop on the basis of an order passed by the trial court. The other seven tenants had not challenged the lower court's order. The high court, while allowing the plea of the tenant, had quashed four separate orders passed by the lower court and remanded the case for fresh trial. The landlord had approached the apex court against the high court's order. In its judgement, the apex court held that the high court had not only erred in entertaining the writ petition filed by the tenant, but also erred in exercising its supervisory jurisdiction by interfering in the trial court's orders. Dealing with the challenge to the high court's order, the top court said that in the absence of "any prima facie case having been made out on any jurisdictional issue affecting the very jurisdiction of the court, the eviction order, the high court should have declined to examine the legality of four orders impugned therein".



Paramej Singh Panma National President of National Akali Dal hold a protest and demonstration against rising prices of Tomatoes, Vegetables and Dals (Pulses), in New Delhi.

AHMEDABAD, JULY 30 /-/- Ahmed Patel's greed to win RS poll will sink Cong: Rupanil

greeted to win the Rajya Sabha poll, he sent 40 Congress MLAs to Bengaluru. Some of them belonged to those districts which are badly hit by flood. Patel forced them to leave their constituencies, as he was only concerned about his Rajya Sabha seat, the chief minister alle. "The people of Gujarat are watching this. I believe that the Gujarat affection for his son Rahul Gandhi just like Sonia Gandhi's affection for her son Rahul Gandhi sank the Congress in the country, Patel's 'greed and desperation' to save his Rajya Sabha seat will eventually sink the party in Gujarat," Sonia Gandhi's affection for her son has drowned the Congress in the entire country. Though the citizens rejected Rahul Gandhi's leadership, Sonia's 'putra moh' sank Congress Similarly, Ahmed Patel's greed to save his Rajya Sabha seat here will sink Gujarat Congress," he said. The chief minister today reached the flood-affected Banaskantha district. After interacting with the locals in Kanjree taluka and other affected regions, Rupanil decided to stay in Banaskantha and Patan for the next five days to oversee the relief operations, a government release said. According to Rupanil, the Congress MLAs from Banaskantha and other affected regions should have stayed with the people in this difficult time. "Out of his

local workers. They are still homeless. They are on the relief operations from Bengaluru. Our MLAs took all possible steps to help the people," Patel said. "Our MLAs were forced to leave their constituencies and their family members were being tortured by the state government," he alleged. "Even now, many Congress workers and leaders are actively involved in helping people. We are here to help people," he said. Patel exuded confidence of winning the Rajya Sabha election, to be held on August 5. "I am sure ahead of winning the poll. Not just those (who are in Bengaluru), some other MLAs are also in my support and I have full trust in them," Gujarat Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel yesterday said that at the time when people of north Gujarat are facing problems due to excessive rains, the entire Congress has gone to Bengaluru to enjoy. The Congress earlier sent 40 of its legislators to a resort outside Bengaluru to prevent desertions from its ranks ahead of the crucial Rajya Sabha polls in Gujarat. In the 182-member Gujarat Assembly, the strength of the Congress has gone down to 51 from 57 after six of its MLAs tendered their resignations, casting a shadow on the fate of Patel in the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls.

PM silent on Panama Paper leaks: Cong

NEW DELHI, JULY 30 /-/- The Congress today said Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks of eradicating corruption during his Mann Bhaskar Yojana programme but has remained silent on the Panama Paper leaks. Congress leader Pawan Khara asked Modi what action had been taken against Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Ranu Singh over the Panama Papers issue, citing the case of Nawaz Sharif who was charged against the case as Pakistani prime minister. "The prime minister speaks at length on corruption, but ignores Panama paper leaks. (Yesterday Con-

gress vice-president) Rahul Gandhi mentioned about Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Ranu Singh's son and Lok Sabha MP Abhishek. His (Abhishek) name appeared in the Panama papers, (but) what action have you taken in this regard," Khara asked, suggesting that Modi should take cue from Pakistan on this. The Supreme Court on July 28 disqualified 67-year-old Sharif for dishonesty and ruled that corruption cases be filed against him and his children over the Panama Papers scandal, forcing the embattled leader out of office.

The Congress leader said the BJP cannot keep "subverting democracy" and "yet come out holier than thou and talk about political integrity." He was referring to Nitish Kumar dumping the grand alliance in the state to come into the NDA fold and the defections of Congress MLAs to BJP in Gujarat, ahead of the Rajya Sabha polls. "Where is the money coming from in Gujarat? Our MLAs said they were offered money (to defect). We are not getting any answers to this in the prime minister's Mann ki Baat," he said.

POLITICAL DELICACIES

Shankersinh Vaghela from the party. The BJP is comfortably placed on the other two seats. BJP president Amit Shah and Union minister Smriti Irani are the candidates for the Rajya Sabha seats from Gujarat.

MAHARASHTRA CONG LEADERS SEEK CHAVAN'S REMOVAL

At a recent meeting held by Rahul Gandhi to discuss the issues of the Maharashtra Congress, state leaders directed their ire at PCC chief Ashok Chavan. According to sources, Congress leader in charge of the Maharashtra Assembly Vijay Wadetiwar, alleged that Chavan was running the party according to his whims and fancies. The leaders are understood to have demanded his removal from the PCC leadership. (IPA)

6 civilians injured in clashes with security forces

SRINAGAR, JULY 30 /-/- Six people were today injured as protesters clashed with security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district after two militants were killed in an encounter. A police official said the clashes erupted soon after the encounter in the Taluk area ended in the killing of two militants. Security personnel lobbed tear gas

shells and fired a few shots in the air to restore law and order in the area, he said. The official said one person, whose identity is being ascertained, was hit by a bullet in the shoulder and rushed to a hospital. Five other persons suffered minor injuries during the clashes, which were going on intermittently till reports last came in, he added. (PTI)