

### Case against Kerala ex-transport minister over sleaze talks

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, MAY 29** /- A local court today registered a case against former transport minister A K Saseendran and directed him to appear before it on July 28 in connection with his purported sleaze talk with a woman, which was aired by a television channel in March. Saseendran had quit on March 26, the day a newly launched television channel aired the sleaze audio clip. Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) P V Anish Kumar, before whom the case came up, also directed issuance of summons to Saseendran to appear before the court here on July 28. The case was registered against Saseendran, an NCP MLA, on a complaint from a woman media personnel of the TV channel that the former minister had been allegedly harassing her over phone with his alleged sexually explicit talks.

The offences against Saseendran pertain to sexual harassment, stalking and insulting the modesty of a woman. The channel had maintained that the alleged lewd phone calls were made to the woman during a sting operation. The LDF government had constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the matter. Five media persons of the channel, including its CEO Ajithkumar, had been arrested. Reacting to the development, Saseendran said he welcomed the court decision. "It is a natural action," he said at Kozhikode, adding that when the court gets into the matter, it will naturally be an action. "Now I have been given an opportunity to be heard", he said. Saseendran said he had welcomed the investigation earlier itself. (PTI)

### Virbhadra, his wife granted bail in DA case Political vendetta, says Singh

**NEW DELHI, MAY 29** /- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh and his wife Pratibha Singh were today granted bail by a special court here in connection with a nearly Rs 10 crore disproportionate assets case. Special Judge Virender Kumar Goyal granted the relief to all the accused on a personal bond of Rs one lakh each and one surety of the like amount. The court, however, asked them not to leave the country without its prior permission. Earlier in the day, the CBI had opposed the bail plea of the Chief Minister saying they may influence the witnesses and the ongoing probe in a disproportionate assets case against them. The public prosecutor said Singh was a member of the state and if granted bail, no one will be able to come forward to depose before the court.

In their bail plea, Virbhadra Singh, who has not been arrested so far, and the other accused submitted that the investigation was complete as the CBI had already filed the charge sheet. But the CBI said the investigation in the case was still on and granting of bail might hamper the probe. Singh, a 70-year-old politician had also cited several medical reports, saying he was suffering from serious ailments. The accused person also claimed that they will be

## Modi govt only 'inaugurated, renamed' projects of UPA: Sena

**MUMBAI, MAY 29** /- The Shiv Sena, a key ally of the BJP, today said the Narendra Modi government only "inaugurated and renamed" the projects started by the previous UPA dispensation and nothing new, barring demonetisation, has been achieved in its three years in office. The Sena, a constituent of the NDA government, also asked if the common man and farmers, who were among the worst hit by demonetisation, were part of its third anniversary celebrations.

Apart from the note ban, nothing new has been done by the government, the Sena said in an editorial in party mouthpiece 'Saamana'. "Some important and big projects were started by the previous government and they were just being inaugurated and renamed with vigour," it said, citing the examples of the Bhupen Hazarika Dholu Sadiya bridge in Assam and the Chennai-Nashri tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir. The Modi government's "bold and ambitious" decision to scrap high-value notes led to a lull in industrial activities and large-scale job cuts in the IT segment, the party said.

The note-ban came as a blow to farmers, who are finding it hard to get agricultural loans ahead of the kharif season, the Marathi daily said. It has been over six months since demonetisation was announced. The decision badly affected the district co-operative banks, which are a key source of farm loans. The government is happy over the bull run in the stock market, but appears unperturbed about distressed farmers and "destruction" of district co-operative banks, it said. The Sena mouthpiece also hit out at the RBI over the scrapping of the high value notes. "Who gave the RBI the right to throw into dustbin the hard earned money of farmers?" it asked. (PTI)



Welfare Party activists protesting against the new cattle slaughter rules by conducting a symbolic cattle market in front of General Post Office in Thiruvananthapuram on Monday.

## Symbol case: Dhinakaran seeks bail, police opposes it

**NEW DELHI, MAY 29** /- AIADMK (Ammu) faction leader TTV Dhinakaran today sought bail in a special court and said while he was booked for graft charges, public servant was made an accused in the Election Commission bribery case.

His bail was vehemently opposed by the Delhi Police Crime Branch which said he had conspired with others to undermine the sanctity of the electoral process through corrupt means and practices. Special Judge Poonam Chaudhry after hearing the arguments reserved the order on the bail application for May 31. Dhinakaran's close associate Mallikarjuna, who was arrested with him on the night of April 25, also sought bail on the ground that no recovery was made at his instance and he had joined the investigation even though no summons were issued to him by the police.

The court also extended till June 12 judicial custody of Dhinakaran, Mallikarjuna, alleged middleman Suresh Chandrasekar and alleged hawala operator Nathu Singh. Co-accused Lalit Kumar, who was also alleged to be a hawala operator, is in judicial custody till June 5. During the two-hour long hearing, senior advocate Aman Lekhi, appearing for Dhinakaran, argued that the police was desperate to keep the leader in custody and he cannot be denied bail on the ground that it was a serious case. "Police say there is accusation against you, so you cannot get bail. My conduct of joining the investigation makes me a public servant," he said. He also mentioned section 8 of Prevention of Corruption Act in the case but what was the haste and hurry to impose this provision. "None of the arrested accused are public servants. It is sheer abuse of law. Public servant stands unidentified. He is not before this court. There has to be at least one public servant for imposing graft law," the counsel contended. Senior advocate Mohit Mathur, appearing for Mallikarjuna, supported Lekhi's argument for invoking the graft law. There has to be a public servant accused in the case. He said police arrested Mallikarjuna as a "convenient person to be arrested". The counsel also said when the accused were arrested, police said they have to identify the Election Commission officials allegedly involved in the matter and after over a month, they are opposing the bail on the same ground. Public Prosecutor Balbir Singh opposed Dhinakaran's bail plea, saying he was an influential person who could influence witnesses and tamper with the investigation.

He also argued that the case cannot be segregated in piecemeal at this stage as the offence of criminal conspiracy was involved and it was not a fit case for granting bail. The court had on May 22 dismissed the bail plea of Chandrasekar saying it was not appropriate to grant him bail at this stage as it was a serious crime and he could tamper with the evidence. Earlier, police had sought the consent of Dhinakaran and Chandrasekar for taking voice samples but both had denied. Dhinakaran was arrested here on the night of April 25 after four days of questioning for allegedly attempting to bribe unidentified Election Commission (EC) officials to get the undivided AIADMK's two leaves' election symbol. His faction had hoped to obtain the symbol for the bypoll to the R K Nagar Assembly seat in Tamil Nadu, which was later cancelled by the EC after the alleged irregularities were reported in the media. The bypoll was necessitated following the death of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa who was elected from the constituency. The EC had frozen the AIADMK's symbol after two factions of the party - one led by Dhinakaran's aunt Sasikala and the other by former chief minister O Panneerselvam - staked claim to it. Dhinakaran has been accused of allegedly arranging the money from undisclosed sources and getting it transferred from Chennai to Delhi through illegal channels. Mallikarjuna was arrested for allegedly facilitating a Rs 50-crore deal between Dhinakaran and Chandrasekar.

### Yoga day celebrations should not be confined to Doon: U'khand CM

**DEHRADUN, MAY 29** /- Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat today said programmes to mark international yoga day on June 21 in Uttarakhand should not be Dehradun-centric but should be held at all places of tourist and religious interest throughout the state. Rawat, who held a meeting with officials to review preparations for the event, asked them to organise yoga sessions not just in Dehradun but at all places of tourist, religious and cultural importance in the state besides unexplored areas which can generate tourist interest but have not been promoted internationally as a destination. "It will help popularise as yet unexplored spots of natural beauty as new tourist destinations," he said. Govindghat, Hemkund Sahib, Triveni Ganga and banks of the Ganga where Ganga aarti is performed should also host yoga sessions on the day, he said. June 15-21 will be observed as yoga week during which a 'Walk For Yoga' will be held with ministers and officials participating in it to inspire more and more people to incorporate yoga into their lives, he said. Spiritual organisations associated with yoga like Parmartha Niketan, Gurukul Kangri and Shantikunj also attended the meeting. (PTI)

### Cross defamation cases: Court issues NBW against Medha Patkar

**NEW DELHI, MAY 29** /- A Delhi court today issued non-bailable warrant (NBW) against Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) activist Medha Patkar for her failure to appear in cross defamation cases filed by her and KVIC Chairman V K Saxena. Metropolitan Magistrate Vikram Vaid took strong objection to Patkar's absence and rejected her request for exemption from appearance through a counsel, who did not possess an authorisation letter from her, saying the grounds taken by her were "not convincing" and "do not inspire confidence of the court". Patkar through a proxy counsel claimed that she was in a demonstration in a village in Madhya Pradesh and she could not get a confirmed train ticket to the national capital to appear in the defamation cases involving her and Saxena, who as a President of the Ahmedabad based NGO, National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCCL), were embroiled in the legal battle. Saxena, who is now the Chairman of Khadi Village and Industries Commission (KVIC), said he has been regularly appearing in the case, whereas the accused has remained absent for no valid ground on previous occasions.

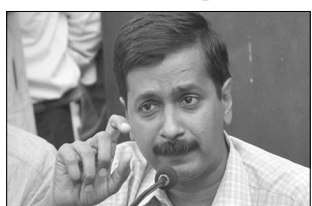


### Maoists condemn Akshay, Saina in Pamphlet

**RAIPUR, MAY 29** /- In a pamphlet claimed to be that of Maoists, actor Akshay Kumar and badminton player Saina Nehwal have been condemned for extending help to the kin of CPFR personnel killed in the recent Naxal attacks in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district. However, the police are yet to verify the authenticity of the pamphlet. "We condemn the financial assistance given to the families of the jawans who were killed in a PLGA (People's Liberation Guerrilla Army) attack by actor Akshay Kumar and badminton player Saina Nehwal..." reads the pamphlet in circulation here on the social media. The PLGA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of India (Maoist). The pamphlet, purportedly issued by the 'south sub-zonal bureau' of the banned outfit, further says, "We request eminent personalities, senior artists, players and celebrities to stand by the poor people of the revolutionary movement and condemn the government oppression and violation of human rights." Akshay and Saina had given financial assistance to the kin of martyrs who were recently killed in two Maoist attacks in Sukma district. On April 24, at least 25 CPFR personnel were killed and six wounded in Sukma, in one of the deadliest attacks by the Naxals. Prior to it, the Naxals ambushed a CPFR patrolling team on March 11 in the district in which 12 personnel lost their lives. In the pamphlet, the central government is accused of killing 'innocent' tribals in the name of 'Operation Green Hunt'. (PTI)

## Kejriwal seeks quashing of summons in HC

**NEW DELHI, MAY 29** /- Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal today moved the Delhi High Court seeking quashing of summons issued by a trial court in a complaint case alleging that he gave false information to the poll panel in his affidavit in the run up to the 2013 assembly election. The trial court had issued summons to Kejriwal in February last year on a criminal complaint filed by Neeraj Saxena and Anuj Agarwal on behalf of an NGO, noting that the Chief Minister had prima facie "willfully concealed" and "suppressed" details. Kejriwal has not ap-



peared before the lower court as he was getting exemptions from personal appearance. The trial court had on December 24 last

year granted bail to him. Taking note of the chief minister's plea challenging the summons, Justice I S Mehta today issued notice

and sought the response of the complainant in the matter. It asked Saxena and Agarwal, the private complainants, to file their replies by August four. Earlier, the NGO had approached the Delhi High Court with a plea seeking quashing of Kejriwal's nomination papers on the ground of "illegalities" in his affidavit. The High Court had refused to entertain the petition and directed the petitioners to approach a magisterial court. The NGO, in its plea in the high court, had alleged that Kejriwal had violated provisions of the Representation of the People

(RP) Act by submitting an affidavit which had incorrect details of his assets and income at the time of filing of the nomination. The offence under section 125-A of the Act entails a punishment of six months jail term or fine or both. The complaint was filed under several sections of the RP Act and the IPC for the alleged offences committed by him before holding the office of the Chief Minister of Delhi. The complaint alleged that Kejriwal falsely gave his Delhi address so as to qualify for contesting the polls in the capital though he was living at Ghaziabad

in Uttar Pradesh. This prima facie amounted to willful concealment, suppression and furnishing of false information, it was claimed. (PTI)

## Karni Sena calls Rajput bodies to unite for quota demand

**AHMEDABAD, MAY 29** /- Rajasthan-based Karni Rajput Sena today appealed to all Rajput bodies demanding reservation to come under a united banner in a bid to "pressurise" the Central government to review the current quota system. Karni Sena president Mahipal Singh Makrana told reporters here that nearly 15 lakh Rajputs would gather in Delhi by this year-end to raise their demand for reservation. The Rajasthan-based outfit has been holding agitations demanding reservation for the economically weaker sections among Rajputs and other upper castes for the last few years. According to Makrana, who was here as part of Karni Sena's exercise to expand its

base in the poll-bound Gujarat, where elections are due later this year, the current reservation system has failed its purpose. "There are many Rajput bodies in different states which are running their reservation reservation system. Now, we want to bring all such state bodies under the banner of Karni Sena, so that we can give a united fight and pressurise Central government on the issue," he said while addressing a press conference. Makrana said the Karni Sena wants economic condition of a community to be made as the key criterion for granting reservation. "We strongly believe that poor people from unreserved category should

get benefits of reservation. Economic condition should be made the key parameter for reservation (policy). To mount pressure on Centre government (and) to pass a law regarding the same, we have planned a mega gathering of 15 lakh Rajputs in Delhi at the end of this year," he said. He clarified that Karni Sena did not want reservation for Rajputs at the expense of other communities which have been availing benefits under the OBC quota. "We want economic condition-based reservation for Rajputs and other castes. For that, government has to pass a law in order to increase the existing percentage of quota and take it beyond the cap of 50 per cent. To compel the government to do so, we will show our strength in Delhi by this year-end," he said. Makrana said Karni Sena has over 6.5 lakh registered members in Rajasthan alone, where they have already asked for the 14 per cent reservation for Rajputs on the basis of their economic status. "In Gujarat, we have already appointed conveners in Rajkot and Saurand. Now, we will increase our base here gradually. We have undertaken similar exercise in other Hindi-speaking states, such as Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. Our aim is to bring every Rajput under one banner," he added. (PTI)



Returning officers A K Pande (R2) and Justice Gayn Sudha Mishra, former Supreme Court judge accompanied by other officials on the way to Rajasthan. Cricket Association official after completion of RCA election, as Ruchir Modi son of Lalit Modi and Congress General Secretary C P Joshi contesting the election for the post of RCA President. RCA Academy in Jaipur on Monday.