



THE ECHO OF INDIA



Oppn unrelenting, Centre waits to hit GST gong

'Half-baked' launch a 'self-promotional spectacle': Rahul ■ 'Inspector Raj' is back: Mamata

NEW DELHI, JUNE 30 /- Union minister N Venkatesh Naidu today appealed to the Opposition Congress to join the mid-night launch event of landmark tax reform GST and not to spoil the aura of this solemn occasion for "silly reasons". Naidu claimed that the Congress is objecting to the launch at the Central Hall of Parliament as it has not been able to accept that Narendra Modi has been elected as Prime Minister of India. He, however, asked the Congress to

reconsider its decision to boycott the ceremony. "This is a political decision taken by the Congress party and its friends for political reason. They alone will be able to explain the reason," the Union minister said at an Aaj Tak Conclave on GST when asked about the Congress boycott.

The BJP leader said it looks "really silly and childish" on the part of the Congress to boycott as it has been part of the GST process over the years. "What is

there to object... They are objecting to function of the day," he said, while appealing to opposition parties, particularly the Congress, to join this combined effort. "It's a culmination of effort made by all of us. Let us join launching of this programme. It is not a celebration. It is an introduction of revolutionary taxation transformation. Please join the same," he said. "It is a solemn occasion. We will have great revolutionary taxation transformation. That was a national inte-

gration and this is economic integration. This is the launching of the function, that's all," Naidu added. "Their question is why mid-night. This government works 24x7," he said, adding that this government does not believe in event management and the Congress was doing this for the last 50 years. Earlier today, Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi today dubbed the GST implementation as a "tamasha" (gimmick) and said the tax reform measure was being rushed

through in a "half-baked" manner as a "self-promotional spectacle", Rahul, who is currently abroad on a holiday hit out at the government, accusing it of being "insensitive". "A reform that holds great potential is being rushed through in a half-baked way with self-promotional spectacle #GST Tamasha," he said on Twitter. The Congress leader said India deserved a GST roll-out that did not put crosses of its ordinary citizens, small businesses and traders

through tremendous pain and anxiety. Slamming the Modi government over the GST roll out at midnight tonight, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee today said it would bring back the dreaded "Inspector Raj".

In a scathing attack on the Centre, Mamata said the GST rules would lead to harassment of small traders and businesses. "At the stroke of midnight on 14th August, 1947, India won her freedom. Now, at the midnight of

30th June, 2017, freedom and democracy stand to face grave danger," she said in a Facebook post. Mamata, a strong critic of BJP-led NDA government at the Centre, said: "I am shocked to find that the GST rules contain a rather draconian arrest clause which can lead to major harassment of businesses, particularly the small and medium, with some sections even being non-bailable too." The mockery of Inspector Raj is back," she said on the social networking site.

Prezroots for tolerance, saying it helps society move forward

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, JUNE 30 /- Probably on his last visit to Kolkata before he demits office, President Pranab Mukherjee today stressed the importance of tolerance in society saying in a democracy it is one virtue that enriches the society and helps in its progress. The President made this comment while delivering his speech at the inaugural ceremony of the bi-centenary celebrations of the publication of Bengali newspapers and magazines organised by Press Club, Kolkata at Rabindra Sadan in Kolkata. "In a democracy there is a variety of opinions and views and it is important to put importance on all of them. That is a mark of improvement of the society. In fact the more a society accommodates free thinking and variety of opinions, the more it enriches itself," the President said. His words gain importance in a situation when cow vigilantes are creating mayhem across the country and there are allegations of attempts of extreme views being imposed on others who do not subscribe to them. Mukherjee, while recounting the progress of newspapers, said it was social media now which had made a tremendous impact in the society, and internet had become the greatest discovery of man in recent times. "First it was print media and then it has progressed to electronic media and now it is the age of social media which is making a tremendous impact in the society. It has another side too but I don't want to go into it. The reality is social media has now become all-pervading," Mukherjee said. The President might have kept in his mind the use of widespread use of twitters, blogs and facebook by all politicians for spreading their messages and responses to developments. He also said that politics and the press have an intertwined relation and that neither of the two can live without the other. "Politicians and media people are like water and fish. At different times various political leaders have used the media for spreading their messages. And this tradition is still going on," the President said.



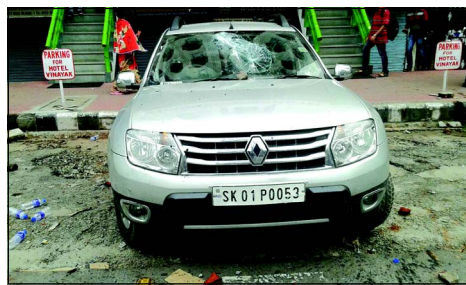
President Pranab Mukherjee delivering the speech at the function at Rabindra Sadan

Sikkim vehicles targeted again

Siliguri Mayor alleged TMC for the act

EOI CORRESPONDENT

SILIGURI, JUNE 30 /- With vandalising another Sikkim number vehicle on Friday at Siliguri CPM veteran and Siliguri Mayor Ashok Bhattacharya blamed Trinamool Congress for the unruly act. Friday around 5 pm a Sikkim number registered vehicle 'Duster' was vandalised just after the massive rally taken out by Siliguri based Forum for Unity and Peace concluded. Miscreants smashed window panes of the Duster bearing registration number SK 01 P 0653 by sticks and burning stones which was parked outside Hotel Vinayak along Hill Cart Road. The owner of the vehicle was shocked to see the vehicle when he returned from the doctor's chamber where he brought his wife for the treatment. When asked about the whereabouts he did not reply properly due to fear he just said, "My name is Palzor and I am from upper Gangtok, came here for my wife's treatment." He was shivering with fear and soon left the area within a minute driving his vehicle towards Sevoke. He, towards



Mayor Ashok Bhattacharya strongly condemned the continuous attack on Sikkim vehicles in Siliguri. He said, "This is the act of Trinamool goons who want to create communal feeling among the brothers of hills and plains. Agitation was held earlier during Left Front regime but these kinds of acts never took place. Attacks on Sikkim vehicles on regular basis is unacceptable." When asked to Hill Trinamool Congress president Rajen Mukhia said, "I condemn the attack on Sikkim vehicles and this should not be repeated again. Agitation either in plain or hills should not turn violent attacking people and damaging properties." He said that matter will be informed to party chief in Kolkata.

Congress leader and president of Indian National Trade Union Congress Darjeeling district, Aloke Chakrabarty said that attacking vehicles will make the situation more violent and asked the Bengal government to immediately inform the Centre for its intervention to maintain peace in hills. He said, "I strongly condemn the attack on Sikkim vehicles and local administration should play an active role to stop such shameful acts."

According to source more two vehicles were attacked in NJP and near Champasari more within 24 hours. A Sumo driver from Sikkim was manhandled near Champasari More on Thursday evening.

TMC hill top brass appeal Morcha leaders to withdraw bandh and choose democratic movement



PRASHANT ACHARYA

SILIGURI, JUNE 30 /- TMC hill spokesperson Binny Sharma on Friday termed the ongoing agitation by Morcha as just to vanish 'flourishing' Trinamool from the hills. Sharma along with TMC hill president Rajen Mukhia appeared before media after long time just to appeal hill people not to burn the houses, damage properties and launch the movement in a democratic way maintaining peace in hills. The duo called a press conference at Siliguri Journalist Club and requested Morcha to withdraw strikes for the peace and development of the hills.

Sharma said, "If your (referring to Morcha) destination is achieved by burning the houses then burn our houses too, we can even die for that. But the achievement will not be achieved by agitating in hills you all have to knock the door of Prime Minister and 'gharao' the house of Darjeeling MP S S Ahluwalia who won from hill promising to solve the problems of people here." Sharma further said, "The agitation for Gorkhaland is not new, in 1986 around 1250 people died officially but what had happened leaders after getting chairs forget everything. Same in 2007, where people sacrificed for the separate state, but all went in vain. This agitation launched by Morcha is just to banish TMC from hills after they saw our party winning seats in civic polls in Mirik and received votes in other regions." Binny also blamed hill leaders for hiring food items for them from neighbouring Sikkim, Nepal and Doars and left other people suffer from hunger. TMC hill president Rajen Mukhia, "I was also Gorkhaland supporter during 80's but now realised that center will not allow separate state but hang on with interim measures that has been seen till now." He questioned why are the MLAs of the hills not resigning if they don't like to live in Bengal. Mukhia also requested Morcha to withdraw strikes. According to Mukhia till now agitators have burnt 12 houses and damaged 11 owned by TMC leaders and supporters in hills.

State asks for 10 companies of CRPF for Darjeeling

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, JUNE 30 /- As the indefinite shutdown of the Hills called by the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) entered its 16th day today, the state government today demanded 10 companies of CRPF from the central government to control the situation in Darjeeling. This was today announced by DGP state police Surajit Purokayastha at a media conference at Nabanna. The DGP who also announced that District Home Guard Raj Kanojia was being sent to the hills to monitor the situation and take necessary measures to control the situation also said that the state government would take stern action against those who indulge into criminal activities like violence, arson and loot. "We will not tolerate any kind of law and order disturbance in the hills," the DGP said. The top police official also said that the state government would award Rs 25 lakh to the next of kin of Aniket Chhetri, the truck driver who died because of violence in Darjeeling.

TMC leader and vice chairman of Mirik municipality attacked



EOI CORRESPONDENT

SILIGURI, JUNE 30 /- Trinamool Congress leader and vice chairman of Mirik Municipality Mani Kumar Zimba was attacked by miscreants last night at his residence by throwing petrol bombs while he was sleeping. The incident took place around midnight when some miscreants threw petrol bombs into Zimba's bedroom by breaking a window. Zimba was injured and soon rushed to Mirik hospital and later today after-

noon he was shifted to a private nursing home in Siliguri for treatment.

Tourism minister Gautam Deb along with Hill TMC leaders Rajen Mukhia and Binny Sharma visited the nursing home and met Zimba to enquire about his health. Deb said, "By attacking our leaders and supporters Morcha is trying to create fear among all to join their party which is unacceptable."

Law will take appropriate action against the people who are involved in the attack, he said.

State BJP to engage its traders cell to counter CM's charge

KOLKATA, JUNE 30 /- The West Bengal wing of BJP has decided to engage members of their traders cell and other front organisations to raise awareness-cum-training programme on Goods and Services Tax (GST) among small and medium traders of the state. The decision comes in the backdrop of BJP facing flak from Opposition especially Congress and Trinamool Congress over the roll out of GST from July 1. "There is lot of confusion among traders regarding what will be the actual rate of tax, how much will be the difference from the previous tax slabs. So we have decided that we will organise small workshops in association with various traders organisation to raise awareness about GST and benefits this system will bring for the traders," a senior state BJP leader said. The state BJP leadership feels that such workshops will also be utilised to counter chief minister Mamata Banerjee's charge regarding GST. "Resource persons would enlighten the participants about the GST and also give answers to their queries. Apart from this we will also tell the traders not to pay heed to what TMC and Congress are saying."

EXPERIENCE A BRAND NEW WAY TO BOOK HOLIDAYS

ALSO BOOK FLIGHT TICKETS

RAIL TICKETS

BUS TICKETS

CAR RENTAL

HAILAND

SINGAPORE

DUBAI

INDIA

CONTACT US AT :

www.travel.yakthung.org

NH 31, PHANSIDewa MORE, AMARPALLY SILIGURI-734013, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

+91 9002644505 / 9002744506 / 9000528501

E-mail: yakthung@yakthung.org