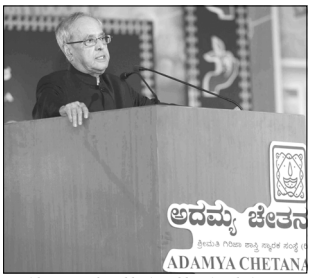
Cooperative spirit will help country to be self-reliant: Prez

BENGALURU, DEC 30 /--/ President Pranab Mukherjee today said cooperative spirit within the country will help it to become self-sufficient, self-dependent and self-reliant in all the fields. He said the developmental objectives of the nation can be achieved with the efforts of both government and people's organisations supplementing each other.

"Bengaluru is emerging as an education hub and the health hub of the rest of India. Thanks to the educationists, philanthropists and medical practitioners and scientists for making their city a centre of both education and health," Mukherjee said. "I have no doubt the way in which the people are developing the spirit of cooperation, the cooperative spirit will truly translate to convert our country to be self-sufficient, self-dependent and self-reliant in all the fields," he added. The President was speaking after inaugurating 'Adamya Chetana Seva Utsava 2017' and Sri Shankara National Centre for Cancer Prevention and Research here, that was attended by Karnataka Governor Vajubhai Rudabhai Vala and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah among others. Adamya Chetana is a charitable organisation started by Union Minister Ananth Kumar in 1997 in the memory of his late mother Girija Narayana Shastry, of which he is the chief patron. The organisation works in the field of education with food, education and health as its core intervention. Lauding Ananth and his wife, Tejaswini for their service to society through Adamya Chetana, the President said "We cannot expect government to do everything".



President Pranab Mukherjee addressing the inauguration of the Adamya Chetana-Midday Meal Kitchen for over one lakh children, at Bengaluru. PIB

"There are many problems which we cannot solve on our own... yes government can do much more than any individual or institutions, but government cannot do everything," he said. Recalling a summit of the heads of governments held in 1995 in Denmark, in which he participated as Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, he said the summit had recognised that it is the responsibility of people at large to remove social inequality, and highlighted the importance of feeding the hungry children. He said "Ten commitments were adopted at the summit, out of which one important commitment was to feed the hungry children, because when you feed a child you feed a generation, you feed your future". Noting that it is students who are going to be our future and generation next, the President said if they become healthy, educated and energetic, they will be an asset to society and family.

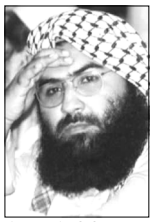
HC grants a day's parole to O P Chautala to attend grandson's engagement

NEW DELHI, DEC 30 /--/ The Delhi High Court today granted parole for one day to ex-Haryana chief minister Om Prakash Chautala, serving a 10-year jail term in teachers' recruitment scam case, to attend his grandson and MP Dushyant Chautala's engagement on January 3, 2017. Justice Vipin Sanghi ordered Chautala's release for a day on his furnishing a bond of Rs 50,000 and directed the INLD leader to surrender on January 4 at 11 AM. The court said it will hear Chautala's main petition against the Delhi government's December 14, 2016 decision dismissing his plea for six months' parole on medical grounds, on January 17. The INLD leader, in his interim application filed through advocate Amit Sahni, had sought two days' parole to attend his grandson's 'roka' and 'ring' ceremonies.

The Delhi government opposed the grant of interim parole saying Ajay Chautala, also a convict in the case, was already out on parole to attend the marriage function of his son Dushyant. Sahni, however, said that as per the parole norms, under special circumstances like in the instant case, two convicts of a case can be granted the relief simultaneously. In his main plea, O P Chautala has contended that the Delhi government's December 14 decision was passed in "an extremely unfair manner upon flimsy grounds". 82-year-old Chautala also said that he is "polio-affected since his birth and has permanent disability of 60 per cent". He said he was on bail during the trial and was released on parole, but he has never misused the same. Chautala, his son Ajay and three others are serving 10-years jail term in the case. The Supreme Court on August 3 last year had dismissed the Chautalas' appeals against the high court's verdict upholding their conviction and sentence of 10 years awarded by a trial court in the junior basic trained (JBT) teachers recruitment scam case. The high court had on March 5, 2015 upheld the 10-year jail term awarded to Chautalas and three others, saying, "The overwhelming evidence showed spine-chilling state of affairs in the country." The father-son duo and 53 others, including two IAS officers, were among 55 persons convicted on January 16, 2013 by the trial court for illegally recruiting 3,206 JBT teachers in Haryana in 2000.(PTI)

China blocks proposal to list Azhar as designated terrorist; India concerned

NEW DELHI, DEC 30 /--/ China today finally blocked India's proposal to list JeM chief and Pathankot mastermind Masood Azhar as a designated terrorist by the UN, triggering a sharp reaction from New Delhi which termed it as "unfortunate blow" and a step that confirms prevalence of double standards in the fight against terrorism.

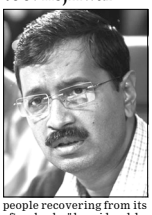


With China blocking India's proposal, which was submitted in February to the 1267 Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council, New Delhi has to make a fresh listing request for Azhar to be banned by the global body, officials said here. After its submission, China twice imposed "technical" hold on the Indian proposal. However, India said it will continue to push forward with resolute determination "through the use of all options available with us to bring perpetrators of terrorist violence to justice". Asserting that its submission received the strong backing of all other members of the 15-member Sanctions Committee, External Affairs Ministry said, "We note with concern China's decision to block the proposal to list Masood Azhar.. The international community is aware that the Pakistan- based Jaish-e-Mohammed which is proscribed by the United Nations, has been responsible for innumerable terrorist attacks on India including the Pathankot Air Base attack. "The inability of the international community to list its leader Masood Azhar is an unfortunate blow to the concerted efforts to effectively counter all forms of terrorism, and confirms prevalence of double standards in the fight against terrorism."

MEA Spokesperson Vikas Swarup also said the decision by Beijing is surprising as China itself has been affected by the scourge of terrorism and has declared opposition to all forms of terrorism. "As a consequence of this decision, the UN Security Council has again been prevented from acting against the leader of a listed terrorist organisation. We had expected China would have been more understanding of the danger posed to all by terrorism and would join India and others in fighting the common challenge of terrorism," he added. (PTI)

Not scared of probe but investigate Sahara diaries too: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, DEC 30 /--/ Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal today dared the Centre to get all the appointments made by his government probed after the CBI filed an FIR into the appointment of city Health Minister Satyendar Jain's OSD. Asserting that he was not afraid of any probe, the AAP chief also wondered whether the Centre would accept a Delhi government-appointed committee to look into the Sahara Birla papers. Kejriwal alleged that the CBI has filed "seven FIRs" against himself and "two" against Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, but did not elaborate. Infresh trouble for the AAP government, the CBI has filed an FIR into the appointment of Jain's OSD while the LG office has recommended a probe by the agency into the appointment of his daughter Soumya Jain as a functionary in the Mohalla Clinic project. "You (Centre) make your committee and get all our appointments probed. And we will form one, and you get the Sahara Birla matter probed with it. Agree? "We are not scared of any probe as we have not done any wrong. Then why are you scared of a probe?" Kejriwal tweeted. In a scathing attack Kejriwal today asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to tender an apology to the people during his address to the nation on New Year's Eve on what he said was a "blunder of demonetisation". Kejriwal, also the national convener of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) which governs Delhi, said Modi has committed a blunder by demonetising high-value notes and pushed India into a deep economic crisis. "Modi had demanded 50 days to implement the exercise, but there's no sign of



people recovering from its after shocks," he said and demanded a roll back, suggesting that Modi should make an announcement in this regard in his address tomorrow. "There's no solution other than rolling back demonetisation," the former Income Tax department official told reporters here. Alleging that the RBI was "tightlipped" on the amount of money demonetised or black money recovered, he asked the prime minister to explain how much of illegal wealth has returned and what amount of money was being pumped into the system. Initial estimates by RBI suggest Rs 14 lakh crore (in high-value notes) was in circulation, which has returned to RBI, but only Rs 4 lakh crore of new currency of Rs 2,000 notes was available for circulation, said Kejriwal, who had criticised the drive soon after it was launched on November 8. Financial experts all across the world have spoken against demonetisation, he said, but only BJP president Amit Shah and "his team of sycophants" were hailing the decision. He also challenged the prime minister to order "any probe" against him. "I am not scared of Modi threats and open to any probe of my accounts by any central agency," he said.

Chopper deal: Delhi HC issues notice to Tyagi on CBI plea against bail

NEW DELHI, DEC 30 /--/ Delhi High Court today sought the response of former IAF chief S P Tyagi on CBI's plea challenging his bail in the AgustaWestland chopper scam case contending that he could "hamper" its probe and "alert" other accused if he remained out of custody.

While Justice Vipin Sanghi issued notice to Tyagi and listed the matter for hearing on January 3, separately, Metropolitan Magistrate Sumeet Anand extended the judicial custody of other two accused, Sanjeev Tyagi alias Julie and lawyer Gautam Khaitan, till January 13. The high court agreed to give an early hearing to CBI's plea challenging the bail granted to the former Chief of Air Staff (CoAS) after the agency said the bail pleas of the other two accused were likely to be heard by the trial court on January 4. 71-year old Tyagi, who was arrested on December 9 along with the Sanjeev and Khaitan in the case relating to procurement of 12 VVIP choppers from UK-based AgustaWestland during the UPA-2 regime, was granted bail on December 26. During arguments in the high court on CBI's plea against Tyagi's bail, the agency said each day he remained out, would lead to its line of investigation getting "exposed" and "hampered" and evidence could also be destroyed. It contended that if Tyagi remained out on bail, he could "alert other potential accused". The agency also said that its probe was "multi-layered" as it was spread across several countries since various companies were allegedly used to "camouflage the bribe money". CBI admitted before the high court that though FIR was registered in 2013, the "real core investigation started only a few months back" and therefore, it did not want Tyagi to be out on bail till the charge sheet is filed. A special court had earlier granted bail to Tyagi, saying CBI has failed to state the alleged bribe amount and when it was paid.

While granting the relief, the trial court also took note of Tyagi's advancing age and his health conditions and said no purpose would be served by keeping him behind bars. CBI had earlier argued before the court that Tyagi had allegedly "abused his official position" and during his tenure as the air chief, he had made huge investments in land and other properties and not disclosed the source of his income. It was also alleged that Khaitan was the "brain" behind how the bribe money had reached India and how several firms through which the money had travelled came into existence. Sanjeev was known to alleged European middleman Carlo Gerosa, the agency had alleged. The CBI had also claimed that alleged European middleman Guido Haschke's statement, which was received through a Letter Rogatory, proved that he was assured by Sanjeev that the latter's brother was going to be IAF chief. (PTI)

ED registers criminal case against Zakir Naik, IRF

MUMBAI, DEC 30 /--/ The Enforcement Directorate has registered a criminal case against controversial Islamic preacher Zakir Naik and his organisation IRF under money laundering laws. Officials said the agency's zonal office here has registered an FIR, called enforcement sase information Report (ECIR) in ED's parlance, against Naik and others after taking cognisance of a similar complaint booked by the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act against them.

The ED, they said, will specifically look into the charges of alleged illegal funds laundered by the accused and the proceeds of crime in its probe. The agency has already scanned some banking transaction documents and other details against Naik and IRF and is now expected to issue summons to take the probe forward. The National Investigation Agency had last month registered a case against 51-year-old Naik under anti-terror laws for allegedly promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion and race. After registering the case against Naik, IRF and others, NIA along with Mumbai police had carried out searches at 10 places in the megapolis, including residential premises of some of the office bearers of the foundation, which was earlier put on restricted list by the Union Home Ministry for receiving funds from abroad. Naik, who has been staying in Saudi Arabia to evade arrest after his name surfaced during a probe into the Bangladesh terror strike earlier this year, has been booked along with unnamed IRF officials under section 153-A of IPC (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony) beside various sections of UAPA. The charges, in the FIR registered by the NIA's branch here, were also slapped under sections 10 (being member of an unlawful organisation), 13 (punishment for being member of illegal organisation) and 18 of UAPA (punishment for being involved in a conspiracy for committing any terror act).

IRF came under the scanner of security agencies after one of the terrorists involved in the Dhaka cafe attack had allegedly posted on social media that they had been inspired by Naik's speeches. Some of the youths from Mumbai suburbs, who had left their homes to join Islamic State earlier this year, were also allegedly inspired by the preacher. Naik's speeches are banned in the UK, Canada and Malaysia. The Home Ministry has alleged that the NGO had "dubious" links to Peace TV, an international Islamic channel, accused of propagating terrorism. According to the Home Ministry, Naik, who heads the IRF, had allegedly made many provocative speeches and engaged in terror propaganda. Maharashtra Police has also registered criminal cases against Naik for his alleged involvement in radicalising Muslim youth and luring them into terror activities. Naik was alleged to have transferred IRF's funds received from abroad to Peace TV for making "objectionable" programmes.(PTI)

Two Malegaon blasts accused dead but falsely shown "alive", claims suspended ATS cop

MUMBAI, DEC 30 /--/ In a sensational claim, a suspended Maharashtra ATS officer has told a Solapur court that two of the absconding accused in 2008 Malegaon blasts case are in fact dead but falsely shown as "alive" by high ranking police officers. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis described the allegation by Anti-Terrorism Squad's(ATS) former senior inspector Mehmood Mujawar as "quite serious" and said the government will look into the matter. The application filed in August before a magistrate court in Solapur claimed that Sandeep Dange and Ramchandra Kalsangra, who are among the accused in the Malegaon blasts case, are "no more". The details of the application surfaced in public domain yesterday. Notably, Mujawar was suspended after a case under Arms Act and criminal intimidation was filed against him in a Solapur court.

"Sandeep Dange and Ramji Kalsangra are in fact no more but are shown alive in Malegaon bomb blast case by high ranking police officers," Mujawar alleged. The application was filed in the court by Mujawar on August 19 this year seeking early disposal of the case under Arms Act registered against him. Mujawar, in his application, alleged that the case was filed against him as a conspiracy and was a pressure tactic as he wanted to reveal the truth about the "death" of Dange and Kalsangra. When asked about Mujawar's claim, former ATS chief K P Raghuvanshi rubbished it, saying, "I don't even remember who this Mujawar is or if he was even part of the team that investigated the case." "At least, in my tenure in ATS, nothing of this sort has happened," Raghuvanshi told PTI. A retired police official, who has worked in the ATS, questioned Mujawar's claim, asking as to why the allegation is being made now after eight years. "Who had stopped this official from revealing these important facts before? We must not believe these claims," the official, requesting anonymity, said. A bomb strapped to a motorcycle exploded in Malegaon on September 29, 2008, killing seven people and injuring around 100. "Although the allegations are quite serious, we will have to look into it because why since 2009 no action has been taken. The concerned person says that the letter was sent to IG(DGP) and still there is no action taken.

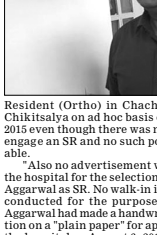
"So I think we need to verify whether what is stated in the letter is really true, whether it is really genuine. I think, as of now I can only say that we will have a serious look at the entire episode," Fadnavis told reporters when asked to comment on the claim by Mujawar. NCP spokesman Nawab Malik demanded a probe into the allegation. According to the investigating agencies, the Malegaon blasts was carried out by right wing extremists and a total of 11 persons are presently in jail in the case, including Lt Col Prasad Purohit and Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur. The state ATS, which was initially probing the case, had charged the accused under various sections of the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) and under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), Indian Penal Code, Indian Explosives Act and the Arms Act. However, when the case was handed over to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the agency filed a supplementary chargesheet by which charges under MCOCA were dropped on the ground that there wasn't sufficient material. The NIA chargesheet also dropped Sadhvi and five others from the list of the accused. Apart from Sadhvi, those given clean chit by NIA are Shivnaryan Kalsangra, Shyam Sahu, Praveen Takkalki, Lokesh Sharma and Dhan Singh. Sticking to his claims, Mujawar alleged that he was slapped with a false case with the intention of "suppressing the truth" about which he had informed the police top brass eight years back.

"I have filed an affidavit before the Solapur court regarding a false case against me in which trial is going on. Senior officials implicated me in a false case because I am aware about the killing of Sandeep Dange and Ramjee Kalsangra," Mujawar told PTI. "To suppress this information, a false case was made against me. I won't name anyone. But, will tell everything in court. Whatever I want to speak I will speak in court only. I don't want to do media trial," he said. "I had given this information to (the then) Director General of Police eight years before. I had sent messages to my seniors in this regard," he said. (PTI)

CBI carries out searches at office of Jain's OSD

NEW DELHI, DEC 30 /--/ CBI today carried out searches at the office of OSD of Delhi Health Minister Satyendra Jain in connection with alleged irregularities in his appointment at Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalya and subsequently as an aide to the Minister. CBI sources said the searches took place at the office of Nikunj Aggarwal, OSD to Jain and Anup Mohta, Director Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalya.

They said the teams have gone to the offices of Aggarwal and Mohta to get records related to appointment and other allegations including Aggarwal's nomination for a course at IIM Ahmedabad and for a trip to Bejing, China. The sources said the team also spoke to Aggarwal in his office. Officials sources made clear that no searches have taken place in the office of Jain and the action is limited only to the office of the OSD and Director of the official as of now. CBI had earlier registered an FIR in connection with alleged irregularities in the appointment of Aggarwal, as OSD to Jain. The agency registered the case on the basis of a complaint from Delhi government's Deputy Secretary Vigilance K S Meena. The complaint is now the part of the FIR. The FIR is against Mohta and Aggarwal, for alleged criminal conspiracy and under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act. BJP leader Vijender Gupta had alleged that Aggarwal is the son-in-law of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's sister-in-law. In its complaint, the vigilance department has claimed Aggarwal was appointed as Senior



Resident (Ortho) in Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalya on ad hoc basis on August 10, 2015 even though there was no proposal to engage an SR and no such post was available.

"Also no advertisement was issued by the hospital for the selection of Dr Nikunj Aggarwal as SR. No walk-in interview was conducted for the purpose," it alleged. Aggarwal had made a handwritten application on a "plain paper" for appointment in the hospital on August 6, 2015 and within four days his appointment was approved without following any procedure, the complaint alleged. "Within few days of appointment of Aggarwal, his services were requisitioned for appointment as OSD to Minister of Health, GNCTD. As per the Residency Scheme, the resident doctors are engaged for working in hospitals, and not for other duties," it alleged.(PTI)

Bus falls into canal in UP, 9 killed

SITAPUR (UP), DEC 30 /--/ Nine persons, including two women were today killed and ten others were seriously injured when an overcrowded bus in which they were travelling, plunged into Sharda canal near here.

Additional District Magistrate, Sitapur, R S Tiwari said the private bus fell into the canal on Leharpur Bisva road under Taalgaon police station when the driver lost control over the vehicle. Local people rushed for help and rescued several passengers. Later, police and civil officials also arrived to gear up the rescue efforts, he said. 10 persons were sent to hospital in critical condition, he added.Rescue operations were underway with the help of divers to trace missing passengers, he said, fearing the toll might rise. A crane was brought to retrieve the bus from the canal, he said.(PTI)