

Mamata's veiled attack on Nitish at Patna rally



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee hugs former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi (left) in Patna

Pay day today, Govt asks RBI to ensure adequate flow of new notes at banks

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /- With Thursday being the pay day, banks are gearing up to face a huge rush as people will queue up at branches across the country to withdraw salaries amid the ongoing cash crunch following demonetisation.

Making matters worse, a large number of ATMs are still dry even 23 days after the government scrapped 500 and 1000 rupee notes earlier this month to crack down on black money. Top government officials say special efforts are being made to pump in additional cash into banks to meet the heavy demand for currency notes on account of salary withdrawal. The Reserve Bank has been asked to ensure adequate supply of new Rs 500 notes at banks and currency printing presses are working overtime to print them, the official said, adding that there is a lag of 21 days for printed notes to reach markets. Bankers fear heavy rush

at the branches for a week as many ATMs are still not functional. Banks may have to lower the withdrawal limit as there is limited cash coming from RBI, said an official from UCO Bank. People are likely to throng at bank branches on December 1 as central and state governments credit salaries and pensions to millions of accounts. At the central level alone, there are around 50 lakh employees and 58 lakh pensioners. Bankers said the government's move last week to provide Rs 10,000 in advance to non-gazetted staff may provide only a slight relief. Many banks have made 'SOS calls' to the Reserve Bank for additional cash for the first few days of December to meet the initial rush of people, already fatigued standing in unending queues to exchange/deposit old notes and make limited withdrawals over the past three weeks after the demonetisation was announced on November 8.

ED conducts raids at over 40 locations to check black money Rs 10 lakh in new currency notes seized from doc's house in city

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /- The Enforcement Directorate (ED) today conducted searches at 40 places across the country in order to check black money held with currency exchanges, hawala dealers and others in the wake of the demonetisation of Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000 notes. Officials said the searches were conducted by multiple teams of the ED in various cities and as many as 100 sleuths along with police

personnel, were undertaking the search operation. In the eastern region, the ED is making searches at 16 places, including six in Kolkata, two each in Bhubaneswar and Paradip (both in Odisha) and Guwahati, among others. Sleuths from the Kolkata zone of the ED seized Rs. 10 lakh cash in new currency from the premises of a doctor during the said operation, even as an assortment of foreign currency worth Rs. 4

lakh was seized from the same area. They said the ED was looking at instances of illegal exchange of old currency and stashing away of new currency to perpetrate activities such as hawala and money laundering. The ED is the central agency to enforce two laws — the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) and the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Canteens and other eateries in Parliament go cashless

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /- The Union government's cashless campaign was today introduced in Parliament where plastic money payment facilities were launched in all canteens and other eating facilities by Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan. The facility has been made available at 19 places in Parliament, including canteens

for MPs and media as well as in the Central Hall. Parliament's Food Committee chairman A P Jithender Reddy, who played a key role in implementing the cashless system, told news agency PTI that the step was taken to make it easy for those making payments. Reddy said in the wake of cash crunch, people have been finding it dif-

ficult to make payments in Parliament canteens. "Sometimes, there was no cash to pay or sometimes there was no change available with the canteen cashier. Card payment will address that situation," said Reddy, a Lok Sabha member of Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). "It is an option. We would like to make it cashless area

'Those supporting demonetisation are traitors'

DURGADAS BANOOPADHYAY

PATNA, NOV 30 /- A day after she dared Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah to divulge their bank account details at the rally at Lucknow, chief minister Mamata Banerjee, who is leading the all India agitation against Modi's demonetisation move, today called those who supported Modi 'traitors' saying they would not be forgiven by people. "If someone comes with us, then it is good. But, it certainly pains us if someone is not with us in the struggle for common people. This is people's cause. People will not forgive 'gadadars' (betrayers)," she said at a rally at Patna that was organised by her party. Incidentally it was Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, who along with Orissa chief Minister Naveen Kumar have supported the demonetisation move of Modi.

And the rally also brought to the fore the widening rift between Nitish Kumar of JD-U and his alliance partner Lalu Prasad Yadav of RJD. In fact Yadav, at whose house Mamata dropped in on Tuesday after she arrived at Patna, sent his party leaders including Raguvansh Prasad Singh, former party MP, Ramendra Dubey, party state president, Manjuka Singh Yadav, general secretary of the party, to name a few, to the rally held at Gardaniabagh at Patna. "The government has taken away the freedom from the people that they have been enjoying for the past 69 years. The government has snatched 'Roti, Kapda aur Makan' from the people... A people's movement was started during the Emergency days. Today, the situation is even worse than Emergency. It can be termed as super Emergency," the TMC supremo said. Raising the issue of funding

of PM Modi's public meetings in foreign countries, she asked "From where do they get money from to hold such mega public meetings in foreign countries like the US?" she asked. The West Bengal chief minister also raised issue of registration of land by BJP in Bihar for opening offices in districts and displaying deed numbers of land purchased by the BJP. She questioned the PM's intentions as to how could BJP buy huge chunks of land in the month of September, a few weeks before the announcement of demonetisation on November 8. Questioning Modi's poll

promise of depositing Rs 15 lakh to every individual's bank account from money stashed away illegally, Mamata said: "What happened to the promise? Not a single paisa came to anyone's account nor any single paisa was brought from the Swiss bank. Entire industry sector and economy are witnessing a slowdown due to demonetisation as a result of which people, mostly from Bihar who have migrated everywhere in search of jobs, are not getting their payments, especially in the jute industry and tea gardens in Bengal," Mamata said.



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee with RJD leader Raghuwansh Prasad Singh during a rally demanding roll back of the demonetisation decision in Patna on Wednesday.

AT A GLANCE

Cheetah chopper crashes in Sukna, 3 army officers die

KOLKATA, NOV 30 /- Three Army officers were killed and a junior commissioned officer was critically injured today when a Cheetah helicopter crashed at Sukna Military Camp in West Bengal. Army officials said the chopper crashed around 11.45 am when it was returning to the camp's helipad at Sukna, near Siliguri, from a routine mission. While three officers died on the spot, a JCO was evacuated and admitted to a hospital in a critical condition.

Sonia discharged from hospital

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /- Congress president Sonia Gandhi was discharged from a private hospital here on Wednesday, two days after she was admitted to the facility following viral fever. "Gandhi has recovered from fever and has been discharged in stable condition," said Dr Arun Kumar Basu, senior consultant, Department of Chest and Pulmonary Medicine at Sir Gangam Hospital. 69-year old Gandhi was discharged at around 11.30 am.

Chinese team meets state govt officials

KOLKATA: A business delegation from Shaanxi province of China today met West Bengal government officials to explore possibilities to how to improve bilateral trade. The delegation, which included representatives of industrial houses, met state chief secretary Basudeb Banerjee, agriculture minister Purnendu Basu and other department officials. Officials said the delegation showed keen interest in improving bilateral trade in between Shaanxi province and West Bengal.

Govt ready for talks on note ban: Naidu

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /- The Union government is ready for a discussion in Parliament on demonetisation and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take part in it, Union minister M Venkaiah Naidu said today as he appealed to the opposition parties not to disrupt proceedings.

Naidu said the mood of the country was in favour of the move which is why the calls for strike and protests by opposition parties will not succeed. "Talking to newspapers on the sidelines of an awareness session on digital transactions for officials of his ministries, he said demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes "is a fact now" and there should be discussion on how it can be implemented smoothly. "They (Opposition parties) should come back to Parliament and give valuable suggestions so that the country

can move forward," said Naidu, who holds information and broadcasting, urban development, and housing and urban poverty alleviation ministries. The minister said that many opposition leaders were now trying to clarify that they were not against the war on black money and demonetisation. "They are all saying this because the mood of the nation is dominantly in favour of the step taken by the Prime Minister," he said. The call for a bandh was a "total flop" and the nationwide protest programmes also failed, he said. "They (Opposition parties) tried to come together but there is now division as some people wanted rollback of the move. I just saw in newspapers that (RJD supremo) Laluji was saying that 'in principle' he is not opposed to the move but he has issues with implementation," Naidu said.

State BJP suspends party leader accused in child trafficking case

Dr Dilip Ghosh was arrested by CID on Tuesday

KOLKATA, NOV 30 /- The West Bengal unit of BJP suspended party leader and medical practitioner Dilip Ghosh who was arrested today by the CID for allegedly being involved in the child trafficking case.

Ghosh had contested the Bidhanagar Municipal Corporation election last year on BJP ticket. He lost the contest. "We have suspended him from all posts till he comes out clean in the probe. What he has done in his professional life is not the lookout of BJP," the party's state president Dilip Ghosh said. BJP was left reeling after the arrest of Ghosh. He had demanded a CBI inquiry into the child trafficking case. Another doctor, Nityananda Biswas, was also arrested by CID sleuths for his alleged involvement in the racket. Ghosh, who was formerly working with state-run R G Kar Medical College and Hospital linked to Sri Krishna Nursing Home, an Biswas had played crucial roles in the child trafficking racket and had been involved with it for a long time, claimed a CID official. With the two arrests, a total 20 people have been arrested by CID in a span of 10 days since the racket was unearthed at Baduria in North 24 Parganas. Ghosh, a resident of Salt Lake, was caught by CID on Tuesday afternoon for an over an hour-long

grilling at its headquarters at Bhawanibhawan. During grilling it surfaced that the doctor, who is in his mid-60s, knew Santosh Kumar Samanta, who was associated with the same nursing home and was also arrested for his alleged involvement

in the racket. The doctor, who was an active member of BJP, was asked to surrender his passport during Thursday's grilling. Biswas, a resident of Parnashree area of Behala, was picked up from his residence, the officer said.



The accused being taken into custody

Three babies rescued

KOLKATA, NOV 30 /- Three babies were rescued from a bush near a canal at Falta in South 24 Parganas district. "We are looking into whether these babies were part of a trafficking racket and also trying to ascertain the identity of these babies," a senior police officer said. He said locals, who heard the cry of the babies, informed Falta police station on Tuesday evening, following which police personnel rushed to the area and rescued them. "The policemen along with the locals launched a search and found the three babies wrapped in a blanket in a bush on the banks of a canal," he said. The three babies - two girls and a boy - have been admitted to a government hospital at Diamond Harbour, the officer said.

Playing of National Anthem at cinema halls mandatory: SC

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /- The Supreme Court today ordered that National Anthems must be played in all the cinema halls across the country. The apex court ordered for playing of National Anthem before the film starts accompanied by the showing of National Flag on screen. SC also stated that everyone



present in the cinema hall must rise at the time of National Anthem playing and show respect towards it. The full version should be played and not the edited part of the anthem. Also, that the National Anthem cannot be played in between the film for any commercial benefit. SC has directed reportedly. The court directed Centre that the order should be given effect in a week's time and be circulated to all the states and UTs. Also stating that there should not be dramatisation of the national anthem and that it should not be printed or displayed on undesirable objects. "People must feel this is my country and this is my motherland," a Bench of Justices Dipak Misra and Amitava Roy said while stressing that it is the duty of every citizen of the country to show respect to the national anthem and the flag. "At the root of protocol for national anthem, is respect for national identity, integrity and Constitutional patriotism," the Bench said while directing the Centre that the order should be given effect in a week's time and be circulated to all states and Union Territories through chief secretaries. It also said no person should take commercial benefits by playing the anthem and that it should not be dramatised.