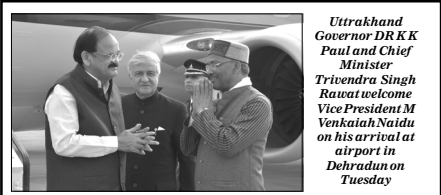


ECHO WORLD



Uttarakhand Governor DR KK Paul and Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat welcome Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on his arrival at airport in Dehradun on Tuesday

THE ECHO OF INDIA

PORT BLAIR • WEDNESDAY • DECEMBER 6, 2017 • PAGE 7

Is Modi govt only for the rich? Rahul

NEW DELHI, DEC 5/- Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi today asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi whether his government was only for the rich as he targeted him over rising prices which has made life difficult for the poor. Talking to twitter in his 'A question a day' series, he hit out at Modi over his repeated 'Jumlas' (rhetoric), and said demonetisation and GST hit the common man's earnings while the rest was taken away by rising prices. He listed out various commodities whose prices have risen in the three years of Modi government which made life difficult for the common man. "My 7th question to the prime minister. People were hit by unkept jumlas, note ban and GST that took away all the earnings. The rest was taken away by rising prices. Living has become difficult due to rising prices. Is BJP



government only for the rich?" he asked. He also tweeted a diagram and a picture of a comparative chart of prices of commodities in 2014 and 2017, illustrating their rise. Gandhi has been posing questions to the prime minister using tagline "22 salon ka hisaab, Gujarat mande jawaab" (Gujarat demands answers for 22 years of BJP rule) in the run up to the Gujarat Assembly elections. He has been demanding answers from him for "unfulfilled promises" made by his party. The Congress vice president had earlier hit out at Modi over various issues including unemployment among youth and "poor" wages to workers, women's safety, education and health through his 'A question a day' series. (PTI)

BJP targets Cong after Sibal seeks deferment of Ayodhya case

NEW DELHI, DEC 5/- The BJP today asked the Congress to clarify if it agreed with its leader Kapil Sibal, who is also the counsel for the Sunni Waqf Board in the Supreme Court sought deferment of the Ayodhya case until after 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The apex court today rejected Sibal's submission that the hearing in Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute be put off till the next general election as the atmosphere was not conducive. BJP spokesperson G V L Narasimha Rao tried to corner the opposition Congress over Sibal's submission in the apex court. "By seeking deferment of the Ayodhya case until after the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, Kapil Sibal has politicised the legal dispute. The Congress must clarify if Sibal is representing the Sunni Waqf Board? Or is it the case that the board and the Congress are working in tandem?" he asked. Rather than seeking an early resolution to this vexed legal issue, why is the Congress party trying to perpetuate uncertainty he asked. Talking at a Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi, who was described as a devotee of Lord Shiva by his party leaders, Rao wondered if the "self-declared Shiv bhakti" had no devotion to Lord Ram. "We are and the Congress is seeking postponement of 2019 polls due to fear of losing them by a wide margin," he said. The Supreme Court today decided to hear the civil appeals filed by various parties challenging the 2010 Allahabad High Court decision on the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute on February 8 next year. (PTI)

Don't politicise school incident: Mamata



Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee honoring over scholarship to a student at the function organised by the department of minorities of the state government —Arijit Ganguly

Key litigants not part of final hearing in SC

AYODHYA (UP), DEC 5/- The key litigants in the 25-year-old Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri mosque dispute will not be part of the final proceedings in the Supreme Court which began today. The temple-mosque dispute reached the local court in 1949, when Mahant Ramchandra das Parahans approached the court for allowing 'darsan and puja' (worshipping and paying obeisance) of Ram Lalla. In the same city, Hashim Ansari, a resident of Kotta locality—about 1.5 km from the disputed site—also approached the court for removing the Lord Rama statue from the Babri mosque. While Mahant Parahans died in July 20, 2003, Ansari died in July last year. As the Supreme Court takes up the final hearing, both of them will be missed, said local resident Mohammad Idris. Ansari was a

witness when idols of Ram Lalla appeared at the Babri Masjid site on the night of December 22, 1949. He was the first to file the suit in the court of civil judge of Faizabad against the illegal encroachment of Masjid by Hindu Mahasabha. With Ansari's death, an era in the Ayodhya dispute ended as he was a witness to 'placating of Idols in Babri Masjid in 1949', unlocking of the disputed structure for worship of the idola as per a court's order in 1987, demolition of the mosque in 1992 and division of the disputed land into three parts by the Lucknow High Court in 2010. He also became the first plaintiff in the Supreme Court in 2011. Another known figure in courts was Mahant Bhaskar Das, the chief litigant in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid

case and the chief priest of the Nirmohi Akhda in Ayodhya. The Nirmohi Akhda priest had filed a claim for the Ramjanmabhoomi land's ownership in 1959. Apart from being the Nirmohi Akhda sarnach, he was the mahant of the Naka Hanuman Gadhii in the temple town in Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh. In 1959, Nirmohi Akhda's mahant Raghubar Das filed a case claiming Ram Janmabhoomi. At that time, Bhaskar Das, who was in charge of rituals at Ram Chabutra on the premises, too joined the case and filed the claim. After the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court gave a verdict in the case on September 30, 2010, Bhaskar Das filed a petition in the Supreme Court for ownership of the entire Ramjanmabhoomi

premises. Bhaskar died in September this year and he too will not be there in court this time. Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) leader Ashok Singhal, who died in 2015 was considered architect of the Ram temple movement. In the 1980s Singhal became a symbol of the Ayodhya movement. He was sent to the VHP by then RSS chief Bala Saheb Deoras in 1981. He had launched the Ram Janki Rath Yatra in 1985 and had demanded the opening of the locks at Ram Janmabhoomi. While opening of the locks was ordered by the local Faizabad court, Singhal launched a movement to burn Ram temple. Though the matter is subjudice, these key figures and their respective role will always be noted in their respective camps. Tomorrow is the 25th anniversary of the demolition of the Babri Masjid. (PTI)

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, DEC 5/- Even as the agitation at G. D. Birla Centre for Education escalated further with the demand for the arrest of principal Sharmila Nath reaching a crescendo, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today said some people were trying to politicise the situation and that the school should be allowed to function normally.

Last week a four-year-old girl was allegedly sexually assaulted by two teachers inside the washroom of the school. The two teachers were later arrested and remanded to police custody. Apparently referring to BJP MP Rupa Ganguly's visit to the school yesterday, the chief minister said some people, who were not directly or indirectly involved in the matters of the school, were trying to take advantage of the situation. "They come to play politics. This is a part of a plan, so that some schools stop functioning here," she said. She added that the girl's family had every right to protest and that they must do it. But the education of the students must not be hampered and the school must function as usual, she said, while speaking at a programme of the minorities department of the state government here. Classes were suspended in the school following parents' protest, which entered its fifth day today. Stating that what had happened in the school was "not right," the chief minister said teachers, particularly those in co-education schools, had to share an extra responsibility and ensure that such incidents did not take place. "Teachers are the pride of the society. They are our guardians, friends, philosophers and guides. One or two teachers may turn out to be bad, but that does not make the whole teaching community bad. Keeping this in mind, the teachers have to isolate those among them who are bad," she said. Mamata said those involved in the incident should face a strong action. "There will be no compromise with the guilty," she said. The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), to which the school was affiliated, should also look into the matter, Mamata said. Meanwhile the Kolkata police, which today called the school principal at Lalbazar to take her version of the incident, has also called the class teacher to the police headquarters tomorrow.

Mamata uses minority function to mock at Delhi pollution

EOI CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA, DEC 5/- While attacking the BJP Government at the Centre Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today singled out the severe air pollution that has devastated public life in Delhi saying, while talking about Swachh Bharat they should first take care of the capital of the country and prevent the life of the general people from being ruined by debilitating smog. "They (the BJP government) are talking of Swachh Bharat. But I must ask them, what about the smog in Delhi... Sri Lankan players are playing wearing masks, what a shame, charity begins at home, they should remember and set their homes first, but I think it is perhaps the political pollution that is causing more pollution," the chief minister today said during her speech at a function of the minority affairs department of the state government at Netaji Indoor Stadium. Even yesterday the chief minister attacked the central government over the severe air pollution in the capital. "It's not a good scene that a visiting team is playing an international game wearing masks. Pollution is worsening every day. This is not earning a good name for the country. I think Delhi must control pollution. They must sit together and decide on it (pollution issue). I felt very

ashamed (seeing the Sri Lankan cricketers wearing masks) otherwise I would not have said this. It is not a political issue but a genuine issue," the chief minister said at Nabanna. Today Mamata also used the occasion to criticise prime minister Narendra Modi though she did not mention his name. "True leaders are those who make nations and not break them, for example we have Gandhi or Netaji. But now we have Modi who fight for the chair only," Mamata said. She also warned the people against those who would use to create divisions in the society on the basis of caste and religion. "There are some people who are hatching a conspiracy to create divisions, you must beware of these people, they may lure you with money, in any case I know you, the chief minister today said during her speech at a function of the minority affairs department of the state government at Netaji Indoor Stadium. Even yesterday the chief minister attacked the central government over the severe air pollution in the capital. "It's not a good scene that a visiting team is playing an international game wearing masks. Pollution is worsening every day. This is not earning a good name for the country. I think Delhi must control pollution. They must sit together and decide on it (pollution issue). I felt very

Apex court to hear pleas on deportation of Rohingyas in January

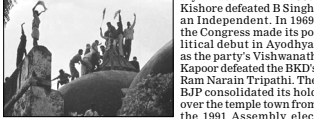
NEW DELHI, DEC 5/- The Supreme Court today said it would hear on January 31 a batch of pleas, including that of two Rohingya refugees who have approached it against the Centre's decision to deport Rohingya Muslims to Myanmar. A bench of Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justice A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud said it would also hear on the next date the interim applications seeking to be implemented as parties in the ongoing case. "We are not rejecting any of the implementation application before us in this matter. We will hear it on the next date," the bench said. On November 21, the apex court had agreed to defer the matter for hearing it today. Two Rohingyas immigrants, Mohammad Salmullah and Mohammad Shaqir, had approached the apex court opposing the Centre's decision to deport over 400 Rohingyas who came to India after escaping from Myanmar due to widespread discrimination, violence and bloodshed against the community there. Various other petitions, including those by former RSS ideologue and Rashtriya Swabhimani Andolan leader K N Govindacharya, the CPI(M) youth wing Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI), the West Bengal child rights body and BJP leader Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, have been filed in the apex court on the matter. The top court had on October 13 said the Rohingya refugee problem was of a "great magnitude" and the state would have to play a "big role" while dealing with the contentious issue. It had earlier decided to give a detailed and holistic hearing on the government's decision to deport Rohingya Muslims to Myanmar, observing that a balance has to be struck between national interest and human rights as the issue involved national security, economic interests and humanity.

Ayodhya: Saffron rules in city

AYODHYA, DEC 5/- Orange flags flutter across Ayodhya on the eve of the day that changed the course of contemporary history in the country. But long before the lotus bloom, here, the temple town had already embraced saffron with the election of its first legislator. Fifty years ago, Ayodhya elected its first MLA in the 1967 Assembly elections after the constituency came into being. The seat was won by B Kishore of the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, the political arm of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the precursor to the BJP. The politically crucial seat of Uttar Pradesh was at the heart of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement which catapulted the BJP to the centre-stage of politics in the nineties with its high-voltage campaign for a Ram Temple in place of the 15th-century Babri Masjid in the city. The mosque was razed on December 6, 1992, leading to riots in which at least 2000 people were killed. Ayodhya is back in the news, with the long-standing Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title dispute coming up before the Supreme Court today, 25 years after the demolition. As members of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, whose offices have been adorned with orange flags and

banners, get ready to mark December 6 as Shaurya Diwas (Day of Courage), old-timers recall the saffron hold over the town. After its formation, the Jan Sangh gradually spread itself throughout Uttar Pradesh, including Ayodhya. Members of Jan Sangh in the initial days were ordinary workers, most of whom came from middle-class families," senior UP BJP leader Shyam Nandan Singh said. In these 50 years, the Jan Sangh and the BJP have won the seat nine times, the Congress thrice and the Janata Dal and the Samajwadi party once each. In the assembly elections in 1967, the Congress made its political debut in Ayodhya, as the party's Vishwanath Kapoor defeated the BJD's Ram Narain Tripathi. The BJP consolidated its hold over the temple town from the 1991 Assembly election, which was won by its candidate Lallu Singh, who retained the seat in 1993, 1996, 2002 and 2007. In 2014, he was elected to the Lok Sabha from Faizabad, which covers Ayodhya, within days of Yogi Adityanath assuming the office of chief minister in March. (PTI)

1st MLA from Jan Sangh



Shashi Kapoor cremated with state honours

MUMBAI, DEC 5/- The skies opened up today as the legendary Shashi Kapoor, the romantic Hindi screen icon of the 70s and 80s, was cremated with state honours at the Santacruz Hindu crematorium here. The long-ailing actor passed away last evening at 11, at the Kokilaben Dhirwadi Ambani Hospital here. He was 79. Shashi Kapoor was given a state funeral, which was held amid massive security around the 12 noon at the crematorium. The actor-producer's body was taken to the crematorium from his Juhu home in an ambulance led by the late actor, who had bid the actor a tearful adieu in the pelting rain. His three children—sons Kunal and Karan and daughter Sanjya—were there as were other members of the Kapoor family and

scores of film personalities to say their goodbyes to the actor who straddled the worlds of commercial and art house cinema. About a dozen policemen draped the actor's body in tricolour, which was later removed for the rituals. There were three rounds of fire to honour the late actor, who had spent over four decades in Hindi cinema. This was followed by a minute's silence. Hundreds of fans with umbrellas and raincoats gathered at the crematorium under the rain and warnings of a cyclone. Celebrities such as Amitabh and Abhishek Bachchan, Shyam Bengali, Shah Rukh Khan, Aftab Khan, Ayan Mukherji, Hansal Mehta, Nandita Das, Lara Dutta with husband Mahesh Bhupathi, and Maharashtra politician Kamad Athawale were among those who paid their respects to the ac-



Amitabh Bachchan comes to pay his respects to his Deewar co-star.

tor, Writer Salim Khan, who gave Shashi Kapoor the iconic one-line "Mere paas ma hai" in Deewar along with Javed Akhtar, was there as well. An emotional Bachchan, who paired with Shashi Kapoor to give hits such as "Deewar", "Silсила" and "Kabhi Kabhie", was seen hugging the actor's family members. Bachchan also visited the veteran actor's residence. Saif, who is married to Shashi Kapoor's granddaughter Kareena Kapoor Khan, arrived early with Ranbir Kapoor. "I used to call him uncle. I was very close to him. It's not only a loss for our family but for Bollywood as well. 'Cher' actor Sanjay Dutt, Naseeruddin Shah, Anil Kapoor and Aamir Khan were amongst those present at the residence for a prayer meeting earlier in the day.