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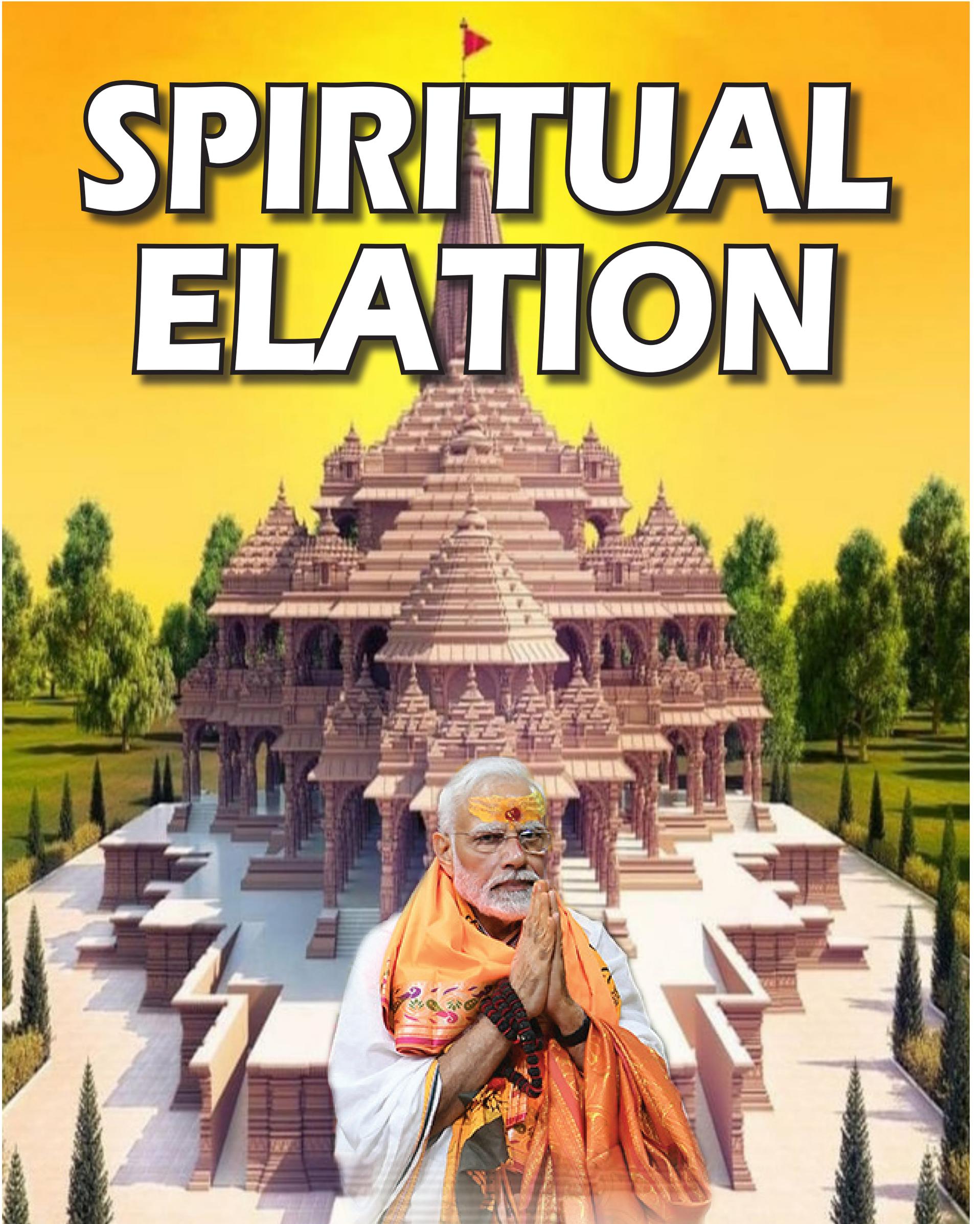
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SPIRITUAL ELATION



**UNION TERRITORY
 INDEPENDENT
 FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURS**

Maldives is facing a boycott from one of its biggest sources of tourism income and one of its long time and strong neighbor, after three of its officials mocked India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, describing PM Modi with derogatory remarks, and that bad odor remains after the Indians have long left their Maldives Hotel rooms, sparking calls from Indian citizens and celebrities across the world to shun the sun-kissed getaway for bewildering domestic destinations instead. The Maldives government moved quickly to distance itself from their comments, suspending the three official, ministers. Maldives government's quick action to suspend the officials and denounce their comments showed how much it values Indian relations. Maldives, despite its new found love with China, it cannot afford to antagonize or damage its India relations. It needs India. Thanks to Maldives. Thanks to the controversy triggered. This has done more good to India than one can imagine. The Indian Nationalist sentiments will boost the tourism within India, that has unending list of mind-blasting and scintillating destinations those are simple serene beauties. Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar islands clusters and Goa & Diu being few among several others in India those are magical and absolutely pristine heavens on earth, beyond compare. When million of foreign nationals throng Indian destinations, why wouldn't Indians do the same for their own Nation's good. The other advantage stemming from this Maldives controversy is that several of Indian island clusters and sea beach destinations will get prioritized attention and would all be engaged in super fast-paced sturdy, dependable and luxuriously inviting all-round infrastructure developments, generating new job opportunities in millions. Just in one click, Indians have also demonstrated to the world that if we unite we can shatter any country's economy, making them tremble. This is lesson for few other neighbors too. But of all the advantages, it is the sad realization of how fragile India's neighbours have knit their relationships with their closest and one of the strongest neighbor, India. India has always been the best, dependable, helping and all season friends of all, especially its neighbors. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Neighbors First" policy is affirmative of how greatly India values its neighbors. The pandemic times saw unlimited flow of aids from India to all its neighbors. Before the world could get the Indian covid-19 vaccine shots, it is the Indian neighbors who got them first for their citizens. That's what India is all about to its neighbors. It is true that it is they who need India more than India needing them. But in reality it is a symbiotic two-way relationship. Both need each other, irrespective of political, economic and other compulsions and issues unique to each. Cordial relationship with all the neighbors is of great value and advantage to both, India and its neighbors. Of late we have seen some of the neighbor drifting away from India, towards China who is siphoning huge funds to them in the name of infrastructure developments. But all know the ulterior motives. It will be late when these neighbors wake up to that realization. Most of Indian neighbors are also neighbors to China. Barring few none of the neighbors have perfectly cordial relationship with India, of late. Most, of late, appear to show cosmetic cordiality than the one with pure selfless heart. Nepal is drifting slowly, on and off based on whose government is in power, towards China. Bhutan is playing games with India on China relationships. Maldives new government is trying to lean towards China. Sri Lanka was drifting towards China, but the realization that they are giving the country in a gold platter to China as they miss installments on investments China made towards its select development areas. But still it cannot stand against China for India. Bangladesh is one who has stood steadfast with India, but still China's offers are lucrative to ignore for them too. Myanmar is another pain border with refugees flowing from their borders into India, uncontrolled. Mauritius has been India favoring neighbor, but its strategic location on the Indian ocean is pricking the eagle eyes of China. The problem with China is that its expansionist postures does not allow it to do investment that does not benefit its expansion programs. China and Pakistan have always been against friendship with India driven by their internal political and expansionist policy compulsions. In fact it is these two neighbors who waged war with India. Yet India has always been and still tries to maintain a cordial relationships with them through dialogues on various platforms, direct and indirect.

Political compulsions will come and go with governments. It will only be advantageous to India and its neighbors to be together for each other, as strong dependable friends and grow their respective economies towards the path of progress and peace for the people of these countries, to start with.

S H A Badshah

SHAH ON MODERN TECH FOR POLICE

Union Home Minister Amit Shah impressed upon the urgent need for the Indian Police force to Adopt AI-Driven Approach, new approach training at all levels and stressed on linking databases to tackle security challenges.

India's top police and intelligence brass converged on an annual deliberation discussing and trying to evolve effective solutions on a host of internal and external security issues, with a focus on cyber-security, artificial intelligence (AI), deep-fakes, security at India's borders, unauthorised people staying in the country, and a road map for the implementation of three new criminal codes.

The discussions were held in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

Discussions were also on coined ideas to tackle challenges ranging from insurgency to radicalisation of youth to modernising the security establishment. Over the years, this conference has emerged as a 'think-tank', facilitating decision-making and formulation of new security strategies. Sources said that the discussions were on three broad topics, emerging challenges in border management and the role of police and interagency coordination, measures to check fraudulent identity documents, and development of a futuristic prison infrastructure.

HM Shah asked the chiefs to train officers from SHO (Station House Officer) rank to DGP level and upgrade the technology from Thana, police stations, to PHQs, Police Head Quarters, for the successful implementation of the three criminal laws those have replaced the age old British Raj laws those were formed at that time to protect the interests of their administration and not the people. He also spoke on the need to link databases and adopt an AI-driven analytical approach for tackling emerging security challenges. HM Shah also emphasised on uniformity of structures, size and skill of counter terror mechanisms across the country. On the Cyber Security front, the meeting dealt with the threat from entities outside the country, like that from China-backed entities,



to cripple India's critical infrastructure. The status of a scheme launched by the home ministry to have cyber commandos in every district to counter cyber threats were also discussed during the meeting with PM Modi, HM Shah and NSA Doval.

Chiefs of security agencies also discussed wide range of policing and internal security issues, including cybercrime, technology in policing, counterterrorism challenges, left-wing extremism and prison reforms, among others. The conference also saw the deliberations on a range of security-related issues of critical importance, including security of borders, cyber-threats, radicalization, fraudulent issuance of identity documents and threats emerging from AI," a senior level official said. The implementation of the new criminal laws replacing the Colonial-era ones and the challenges of adapting the new procedures were the top-most agenda at the three-day security conference in Jaipur recently. Technology upgrades and training with new approaches are a must and most needed for the smoother implementation of the new CrPc laws those have replaced the age old colonial Raj laws. The new laws are focused on the delivery of justice instead of punishment and implementing these laws would transform our criminal justice system as most modern and scientific reiterated the Union Home Minister Amit

Shah said inaugurating the conference.

HM Shah also pointed out an overall improvement in the security scenario in the country since 2014, especially the reduction in violence in three critical hotspots, Jammu and Kashmir, in the northeast, and Left-wing extremism.

"This conference over the years has emerged as a think tank, facilitating decision-making and formulation of new security strategies," Mr Shah said emphasising the uniformity of structures, size, and skill of counter-terror mechanisms across the country.

Sources said that the DGPs of states have been directed to sensitise district police officers in their jurisdiction about problem of overstaying foreigners, besides the creation of a database of foreigners staying illegally in the country. The states have also been told to identify individuals or groups that provide support to overstaying foreigners, and review voter lists to see if such people have obtained Indian identity cards, the source further added. The DGPs were also asked to ensure that hotels routinely fill C-forms – a mandatory foreigners' registration form.

The conference is a hybrid one with 250 top cops, senior cops, and chiefs of Central Police Organisations attending physically in Jaipur and over 500 police officers of various ranks joining virtually from across the country.

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 OIA, Phase-I, New Delhi - 20 EDITOR : S.H.A. Badshah,
 E-MAIL : editor@utindependentindia.com,
 TEL : 011-43721468,
 MARKETING : +91-9213947445
 WEBSITE : www.utindependentnews.in
 E-MAIL : utindependentindia@gmail.com
 ADVERTISEMENT E-MAIL : utindependentindia@gmail.com
 SUBSCRIPTION E-MAIL : utindependentindia@hotmail.com
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NEW FORCE

Rashtriya Manav Party? Yogesh Shetty? Sounds a bell? Yes, it is the same Hotelier-turned-socio-political activist who made heads turn in politics when he took the political circles by storm saying he is for humanity and not divisions in the society on caste basis, especially when every political party is doing politics only by dividing the society on caste and related issues.

Unique Ideology; Low Profile; High Thinking; No Caste Politics; Cordiality; Easy Access; Listen More Trait; Humble; For The Voice of The People - is all about Rashtriya Manav Party Chief Yogesh Shetty, who knows the nitty-gritty of politics drawing his strength from his 30 years long association with the Congress party.

Yogesh is all for setting highest ethical standards in politics, ensuring transparent and accountable governance encouraging citizen participation in shaping the destiny of a Progressive Nation. It is all about leading the party and the Nation with unflinching integrity where the Voice is of the People is Prime and that alone matters.

Here is a rising politician so different and yet instantly acceptable, who believes truly in Humanity as one society and believes nothing can divide a united society. Pleasantly, at last, the people will be able to see a political party Leader with a different ideology that believes only in 'One World, One Humanity' without any bias of caste, religious faith, and creed and status. A party that believes that the society comprises of only Men and Women. RMP is also one party with a difference that gives equal status, regard and respect to the unfortunate Eunuchs community.

Yogesh Shetty the National President of Rashtriya Manav Party (RMP) says that "we measure our success by the positive changes we bring to the lives of the people we serve". Yogesh Shetty believes

in shaping destiny of people where every citizen plays a crucial role. This ideology in itself sets RMP apart.

RMP and Yogesh Shetty are all about Empowering India and Uniting Humanity without any bias of any type. Welcomingly, the Rashtriya Manav Party is fast emerging to be a dedicated formidable political force committed to the betterment of India and its people. Established with a strong belief in hu-

man-centric governance, PMP aims to bring about positive changes in the society by upholding the principles of equality, justice, and progress. PMP's journey is marked by the spirit of inclusivity and the unwavering resolve to build a brighter future for all Indians.

RMP's Shetty says "We have consistently fought for the rights of marginalized communities and have been at the forefront of initiatives to combat discrimination and inequality. Our commitment to social justice has contributed to a more inclusive and equitable society."

While on Social Justice advocacy, Yogesh Shetty said that they champion policies that promotes social justice and an inclusive economic growth, ensuring a fair and equitable society leading to building stronger communities that bridges the gaps and foster understanding among diverse communities, uniting people for a common purpose, more so on one common socio-political platform, RMP.

PMP's focus on innovation and education prepares the youth of the country for bigger roles for their and the country's brighter and prosperous tomorrow, the correct way to empower youth through meaningful education.

Talking about his and his party's vision for a progressive India, Yogesh Shetty said that at Rashtriya Manav Party, "we are driven by a vision for India where every citizen is empowered with equal opportunities. We aspire to eradicate poverty and discrimination, creating a nation that stands as a global symbol of progress and unity. Our commitment extends to building a strong, self-reliant India that cherishes its cultural heritage while embracing a dynamic future".

Yogesh is also absolutely committed and very passionate about his Mission to empower Indians through human-centric governance, promoting equality, justice, and progress. We are dedicated to creating a brighter and more inclusive future for all Indians.

RMP supremo Yogesh is very passionate about creating a world where every youth facing challenges can reach out and find support for education, employment, and more. RMP's goal is to extend their reach to every region, ensuring easy and instant accessibility to all. Yogesh also is very vocal about their guarantee



for equal opportunities to all and eradicating discrimination at all levels. It's all about helping people of India realizing the dreams, and more so, doing your dreams and Making Things Happen.

Yogesh is absolutely committed and very passionate about his Mission to empower Indians through human-centric governance, promoting equality, justice, and progress. We are dedicated to creating a brighter and more inclusive future for all Indians.

Yogesh has very clear philosophies on Social Justice Initiatives where the party will resolutely for the rights of marginalized communities, and

working towards eliminating discrimination and inequality in our society. His commitment to social justice contributes to the creation of a more inclusive and equitable society, where every individual has equal opportunities and rights.

For Yogesh Shetty, RMP is not a political party, but a mission to succeed and empower every Indian for an inclusive growth and unending prosperity. In such a short time Yogesh has established his party's strong footprints in over 30+ States and UTs. National and other stronger regional political parties initially sidelined, ignoring him to be of any challenge to them. Now it is

reversed. Right from BJP and Congress to every other regional party wants him to be their ally as they now recognize that his association will enhance their people outreach. It is said that several leaders and workers of other parties like Congress and BJP, who are disillusioned are moving away from them to join hands with RMP.

Yogesh said the forthcoming 2024 general elections are very important to him as this would give a wider platform to promote his brand of people-centric politics. He also said that his party would contest to win at least 35-40 LS seats with likeminded people joining him in his 'Mission Empower India'.

FALL AND FALL OF KEJARIWAL!

There appears no respite from whirlpool of problems for the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejariwal who is being haunted by scams after scams as they unfold one after the other. CM Kejariwal's free fall from grace has been really dismal, especially for a man who has been self-proclaiming to be the sole surviving cleanest man on earth.

CM Kejariwal has skipped past three of the ED summons, providing one flimsy reason or the other for smart skipping of the ED summon notices related to the Delhi Excise Liquor and Money Laundering scams. Smart and shrewd and an adept political actor CM Kejariwal is, he has already planned for a 10-days Gujarat 2024 election campaign launch plan visit, as ED prepares for its 4th summon! These amount to making fun of the central investigating agencies? Does this jell with the stature of a man who keeps self-claiming to be the lone clean political man existing on earth as on date?

In February 2023, then Delhi deputy CM Manish

Sisodia was arrested by the CBI for alleged irregularities in the framing and implementation of the now-scraped Delhi's new excise policy. The policy was withdrawn amid allegations of foul play by the opposition. AAP Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh was also arrested in the same case in October 2023. At least 14 people have so far been arrested by the agency, and ED had approached the court seeking permission to investigate AAP as a beneficiary of the "proceeds of crime".

Under CM Kejariwal every revenue earning department of his government is rolling under heavy losses, daily losses, running into crores. For instance the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) is running on a daily loss of Rs 9 crore and above. Delhi power supply is running into daily losses, thanks to his mindless freebies politics. As if these are not enough, newer multi-crore scams and frauds have cropped up to haunt his sleep further, like the Rs 70K Crore unjustified debt of Jal Board and hundreds of tenders to private contractors in smaller



amounts to circumvent the need of tenders.

The latest of the scams to hit the board is the Mohalla Clinic row where it has been alleged that the Delhi Government's central procurement agency had distributed sub-standard medicines to the chain of Mohalla Clinics and state run hospitals and Mohalla Clinics prescribed fake lab tests done on ghost patients to mint crores of illicit money.

It should be interesting to know the smart and shrewd mindset of this self-touting clean man. He is the only Chief Minister in the country who does not have any portfolio, meaning thereby he does not have any responsibility

of any Ministry or department of the Delhi Government for which he is the governing boss. One should understand the underlying reasons for this. He has no responsibility to sign even a single document related to the government or its departments. Should there be issues, like the string of scams as it is now, Kejariwal will escape unscathed all as none of the file notes or the documents would have his signature. This would mean that he would escape all allegations, at the cost of his ministers and so called friends.

The Liquor scam has certainly impaired the government revenue earnings and also is involved extending undue benefits

to private players, circumventing rules. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejariwal and his AAP, which came to power by claiming to be the champions of honesty, have now emerged as an undisputed "epitome of corruption".

An adept political actor, Kejariwal has been able to create a hue and cry at the ED summons creating a false panic and also to get public emotions kindled in his favour, that conspiracy is being hatched to arrest him. But in reality there appears nothing of that sort and the summons were mere notices for his personal presence to help gather and reconfirm answers for few questions they have in their list. If Kejariwal is so clean as he keeps claiming to be, why is he afraid of ED? No fire without spark?

CM Kejariwal is encircled by host of multi-crore scams of all sorts involving almost every revenue earning department of his government. All said his AAP as a party might just scrape through, but Kejariwal may not be able to wriggle out of all the controversies so easily!

Lovely Mission

Arvinder Singh Lovely, the Delhi Congress President has become proactive. It is his image that is at stake, especially after his brief exit and crossover to BJP and then back to Congress, and he wants to make sure the 2024 LS elections is a reversal of what happened last time in 2019 when Congress received a bad drubbing at the polls.

Arvinder Lovely, the current President of the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (Delhi PCC) was elected to the Delhi Legislative Assembly 1998 as the youngest MLA, from Gandhi Nagar constituency. He is a 4 times member of Delhi State Assembly.

Considered close to former Delhi Chief Minister late Shiela Dixit then, has been the Minister with multiple responsibilities of Urban Development & Revenue, Education, Transport, Tourism, Languages, Gurudwara Election, Local Bodies & Gurudwara Administration.

A keen socio-political-academic activist right from young age, he started with the student union to become General Secretary of Delhi Pradesh Youth Congress and then General Secretary of National Students Union of India (NSUI) before he was giv-

en the mantle of DPCC.

A city that has seen no development at all in the last 10+ years under the current Delhi CM Kejariwal, was buzzing with all round development work during late Shiela Dixit tenure of 15 years. There is no denying and the people of Delhi still remember late Shiela Dixit for the passion she had, to develop Delhi as a world class city. Whatever one sees as Delhi today are all the massive development work implemented by her. Lovely was one minister in her cabinet who worked as a seamless support system to her and ensured the development works in the capital city went on unhindered.

Arvinder Singh Lovely has been the longest standing Education Minister in Delhi, bringing in many reforms that stand as testimonies even today. He introduced the Point System of admissions into Delhi schools, aiming to abolish bias and corruption in the admissions processes. He also introduced the EWS (Economically Weaker Section) & Laadli Schemes in Delhi schools.

Replacing the killer blue line busses with modern low-floor busses and upgrading the entire Delhi Transport Corpora-

tion (DTC) buses to clean energy CNG busses in a record 6 months is a feat that should be credited to Lovely as the Transport minister then. He also built 18 new DTC bus depots and 4 new bus terminals to decongest the city. His political career also boasts of awards for being the best Delhi MLA twice, 2002 and 2003, and also an award for making the Delhi education ministry as the best performing ministry during his tenure.

Lovely has great challenges cut out for him. In the first place he has to rejuvenate the party where the party workers morale have been down since the painful 2014 and 2019 drubbing congress received at the hands of the growing popularity of BJP. Delhi scene was too pathetic as in Delhi assembly elections it got reduced to single digit and in LS elections it finished with no seat, and in fact came third and fourth in all the Delhi constituencies.

The newly formed opposition grouping is another pain that Lovely has to deal with. While Rahul Gandhi was more keen to content all after the new opposition group formation he is looking for at least 6 seats, while AAP Kejariwal is



willing to offer only 2 seats in Delhi. Lovely has to deal with this too.

With the all crucial 2024 elections just few months away, Lovely and his Delhi PCC have lot to do. Lovely, a low profile politician

has been a good administrator and a do-getter that should see his congress party congress presidency sail through in the midst of interesting political events those would unfold pre and post 2024 poll.

SIDDU SKILLS

Siddaramaiah, fondly called Siddu, is an experienced and one of the most tactful and skillful politicians who has the capacity to quell rebellions quickly and interestingly sway them all to his camp. A popular Congress party leader from Karnataka has been in the limelight of the state politics since past four decades.

Siddaramaiah, 75, also referred to fondly by his nickname Siddu, a 9 times MLA, is the 22nd Chief Minister of Karnataka, since 2023 from the Congress party. He has been the Chief Minister earlier too for a full five year term from 2013 to 2018. Siddaramaiah also is the current Leader of the Congress Legislative party. He won from the Varuna assembly constituency.

He has served as the Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka from 1996 to 1999 and from 2004 to 2005 while he was a member of the Janata Dal and Janata Dal (Secular). He also served as the Leader of the Opposition in Karnataka Legislative Assembly on two occasions from 2009 to 2013 and from 2019 to 2023. Siddaramaiah was a member of various Janata Parivar factions for several years. He got his political grooming and popularity from Rama Krishna Hegde and later from H D Deve Gowda of Janata Dal (S).

CM Siddaramaiah also holds the record of presenting state budget 13 times as a finance minister in Government of Karnataka. Despite allegations of mounting debt on state exchequer by the opposition, he is known for maintaining fiscal prudence within the ambit of Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act of the state. Hailing from a farmer's family he has always been humble and has been popular among the party workers and supporters owing to his easy accessibility and the patient hearing he gives to all. Leaving the legacies of the Janata Dals, he projected himself as the champion of the backward classes and has been with the congress party since 2006. Having seen the ups and downs in state politics his most testing times was in 2019 when

the state went in for by-polls for 15 assembly seats when as many Congress MLAs had crossed over to Yedurappa's BJP-JD(S) leading to the formation of the new government then. Siddaramaiah, much against his claims his congress party won only 2 of the 15 contested in the by-poll.

An firm stand against corruption in the state's governance in the last six months is seen as Siddaramaiah government's commitment to transparency and accountability to people which the Karnataka CM thinks is reshaping the governments relationship with its people, fostering trust and confide now.

The last 6 months of governance has seen the Karnataka government fulfill all the election promises in the state, but all done in a hurry, possibly as the all crucial 2024 general elections are chasing them to be alert and in a bid to sway the voters away from the rising popularity of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his BJP-NDA combine. However, Siddaramaiah feels that he has been steadfast in congress party's electoral commitment to empower the people and design a sustainable and progressive future for the state that well be set as a model for others to follow.

It is needless to add that the congress has been adapting the unsound and mindless Kejariwal freebies model in Karnataka and other states just to entice the voters, unmindful of the draconian negative role this will play in the developmental process of the State. However, it is opposition politics to capture the power at any cost.

But Karnataka CM has been very tactful in handling the freebies by ascribing them as empowering the people for a better lifestyle. For instance he says that the free tickets for women though has dented the exchequer by over Rs 2300 core in just 6 months, he highlights that over 60 Lakh women are benefiting from this free ticket scheme, meaning thereby the women are getting empowered to that extent. However, it is true that electricity and



food are not luxuries but basic necessities and that his Gruna Jyothi and Anna Bhagya schemes have ensure betterment of lives of lakhs of BPL families.

His tenures had been full of challenges and allegations of corruption, but he manages to sail through despite the bottlenecks. A tactically skillful leader has been adapting tact's to quell or sideline those who could pose opposition to his game plans. For instance a few months ago he organized a special dinner meet that saw all his loyal ministers in attendance and Dy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar was conspicuous by his absence. Then again recently a 2nd special dinner meet was arranged which, dissimilar to the earlier one, Chief Minister did

not attend, but all his loyal ministers from SC and ST were in full attendance sparking speculations that more Dy CMs may soon be named before the 2024 LS elections, thus further sidelining the ambitious D K Shivakumar. Politically, Siddaramaiah had proven to be an astute opponent for the Bharatiya Janata Party that was and still is growing in influence. The Karnataka Chief Minister took the battle to the BJP, positioning himself a strong ideologically adversary, on every polarising debate. This, possibly wrapped with the freebies, made voters sway to his camp.

After months of intense campaigning that extended to Telegana as well, winning the elections and fighting off inter-

nal rifts, and of course still fighting, Siddaramaiah has begun and completed well the first 6 months of his second term as the Chief Minister of Karnataka, development would sure be a victim though, but who cares! After all elections are to be won any which way! keeping low profile, working silently with hardly any mass publicity campaigns self-promoting him, and with his skills of keeping the party's Delhi bosses on his side and ensuring that infighting does not spill over to damage the party image in public, indeed Siddaramaiah as of now has kept the congress party in the state well under his control. The next 6 months including the 2024 effects on his second term as CM should be interesting to watch.

86 YEAR OLD PAINS VIJAYAN!



Miscalculation, or say misreading by CPI-M gave room for an instant new star from an unexpected corner of the State. It was felt that as if Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan played into the hands of his opponents, Congress and BJP. The partially blind 86-year-old's, Mariyakutty Chacko, street protest took CPI-M off guard, forced the Left government to release partial widow pension dues and overnight earned her fandom among Pinarayi Vijayan baiters. If there are 'Modi Baiters or Haters', there are also other leader 'baiters and haters'. In fact Mariyakutty shared the dais, to the utter surprise and shock of CPI-M, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi who was in Kerala recently on his tour of Lakshadweep and Kerala that he used for launching his 2024 election campaign in the southern State.

Modi should mean oppose anything, good or mindless. CPI-M was quick to accuse Mariyakutty she was lying. The party and its mouthpiece, Deshabhimani, set out to counter the campaign. Deshabhimani published a front-page report, claiming Mariyakutty owned two houses and earned rental income from them, besides possessing 1.5 acres of land. The report claimed her daughter was a nurse overseas.

The 86 year old was not to be cowed down. Counter-campaign started. She challenged the CPI(M) and Deshabhimani to substantiate their allegations or face legal proceedings. She quickly secured official endorsement that she didn't possess the properties claimed in the Deshabhimani report. The strong willed 86 old women soon proved too many of the CPI-M claimed information wrong. Mariyakutty, who is partially blind, lives in a tin-covered shed with the youngest of her three children, who sells lottery tickets in Adimali for a living. Another child, a daughter, lives close by while the third is a preacher at a church in New Delhi. Mariyakutty, who dropped out of school before completing primary education, had settled in Adimali with her parents at the age of 12. She worked as a daily wagger all her life. Her husband died 36 years ago. A defamation suit by Mariyakutty followed. Deshabhimani was forced to offer Mariyakutty an unconditional apology and withdraw the contentious report even as she became an overnight star in the local media for boldly taking on the ruling dispensation. Congress and BJP leaders visited Mariyakutty and offered support for her cause.

The CPI(M) appears to have played it wrong with its

outright branding of Mariyakutty as a person with political motives. Few in the party would have imagined that an octogenarian widow would defiantly hit the streets, not only to be lapped up by political rivals but even ending up sharing the dais with PM Modi.

As a senior CPI(M) leader concedes: "A blunder committed by our party and its cyber warriors has put the government in a spot. They misjudged Mariyakutty and her intentions. The party's local intervention in the matter backfired too. Kerala now has a new political star. Mariyakutty rose to fame and became a darling of the Opposition when she, along with another widow from Adimali, 80-year-old Annam Joseph, hit the streets with begging bowls, lamenting how the Vijayan government had not disbursed money to them under the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme for the past five months. The scheme provides for a monthly widow pension of Rs 1,600, of which Rs 200 is paid by the central government and the rest by the state. She was taken lightly then.

Over time, Annam stepped into the sidelines, and it was Mariyakutty who emerged as a face of the widow pension campaign. A jolted Vijayan government paid a month's pension arrears to all widows in the state. Around 260,000 BPL (below poverty line) widows and divorced women received Rs 1,600 as pension for the month of August 2022. However, pension dues of the subsequent months are yet to be cleared by the government, apparently due to financial constraints. Is Mariyakutty Chacko, who rubbed shoulders with Modi, Kerala's new political star? Doesn't appear so! Political controversies, as is their nature, fade from public memory over time. Mariyakutty may meet the same fate, but for now she is all fired up.

Row Over Gold SMUGGLING



Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently addressed a massive public rally in Thrissur in Kerala, soon after his Lakshadweep visit. Thrissur is touted to be BJP's one sure hope for LS seat from this southern State, Kerala where BJP is trying to establish its political footprints. One of PM Modi's comments in the public rally has sparked a controversy giving more opportunity for the opposition leaders to attack the PM.

Row was triggered over PM Modi's remarks on Kerala gold smuggling. Addressing a huge gathering at Thrissur in Kerala, PM Modi said that 'everyone knew which office was involved in gold smuggling', an oblique reference to the Kerala Chief Minister's office.

An indirect reference made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi regarding the alleged links of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's office with gold smuggling has triggered questions from the Congress camps on why the Centre was not acting against the Kerala CMO. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president K Sudhakaran and opposition leader V D Satheesan asked why the central agencies failed to take effective action even as the Prime

Minister said that the involvement of an office in gold smuggling was well known. Alleging a nexus between the ruling CPM and the BJP, the Congress leaders said that though various central agencies launched a probe into the involvement of the Kerala chief minister's office, the investigations came to a halt just ahead of the 2021 assembly polls. Even as central agencies carried out raids at offices of chief ministers and ministers in many non-BJP ruling states, in Kerala no such actions were initiated, the Congress leaders pointed out.

CPM state secretary M V Govindan said that the Prime Minister was "spreading lies" over the gold smuggling row "as central agencies failed to curb gold smuggling".

Meanwhile, the CPM and Congress leaderships in Kerala rejected Modi's assertion that the BJP would win seats in Kerala in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Modi's hopes of BJP winning seats in Kerala by highlighting 'Modi's guarantees' will not work, they said. During his speech at Thrissur, one of the most hopeful seats for the BJP in Kerala, Modi highlighted various welfare schemes initiated by his government and termed them as 'Modi's guarantees'.

K-SMART DIGITAL FOR GOVT SERVICES

Kerala Government launched K-SMART App for Digital Access to Local Government Services. The next phase will involve extending its reach to Gram Panchayats. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan inaugurated the K-SMART application recently, aiming to provide uniform digital access platform to services offered by local self-government bodies through a unified platform across the state. During the

launch, the chief minister said that the government's objective is to leverage advanced technology for the improvement of various sectors in society. With the introduction of K-SMART (Kerala Solutions for Managing Administrative Reformation and Transformation), Kerala CM Vijayan said that services provided by local self-government bodies will now be available at citizens' fingertips. Developed by the

Information Kerala Mission for the Department of Local Self-Government, the app will be initially implemented in corporations and municipalities across the state. The next phase will involve extending its reach to Gram Panchayats. Officials highlighted that the K-SMART will streamline local government services in Kerala with its 35 different modules. These modules encompass a wide range of services, includ-

ing birth, death, and marriage registrations, business licenses, property taxes, and more. Citizens can now access all these services through a single platform by logging into the web portal and providing the necessary information.

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different modules. These modules encompass a wide range of services, including birth, death, and marriage registrations, business licenses, property taxes, and more. Citizens can now access all these services through a single platform by logging into the web portal and providing the necessary information. Initially, eight services will be available, covering areas such as the registration of births, deaths, and marriages, business licenses, property taxes, among others, officials added.

'TO DEFEAT BJP'

Secular parties have teamed up to defeat BJP and not to gain power says CPI.

CPI General Secretary D Raja said all secular democratic parties have teamed up together to defeat the BJP in the upcoming 2024 general elections and not for grabbing power. In an interview to media, Raja, who is on two-day Jharkhand visit, said the current situation in the country "is grave and disturbing" and there is a need to uproot the saffron party for the sake of democracy. "Secular democratic parties in the country are of the view that all must come together to defeat the BJP. This is not for getting political power, but to safeguard the Constitution, the democracy, the nation and its future. That understanding is gaining momentum," said Raja. "Who will be the leader of the group is not an issue at all. Everything can be discussed and decided collectively as the parties are matured enough," he said.

"We had such experiences when the United Front was formed and leadership questions were addressed after winning. Even a common minimum programme



was discussed and accepted. There was no problem. Everything went smoothly and everything was discussed collectively. There are no pre-conditions for the unity of the secular democratic parties," Raja said. Raja alleged that RSS was forcing the saffron party to push its agenda that resulted in increasing attacks on Dalits, minorities, women and others in the country. "Ever since the BJP came to power, the RSS has become aggressive and is forcing the government to follow its agenda. That is the reason why we are witnessing increasing attacks on minorities, Dalits, Adivasis and women. The

public sector is being dismantled and privatised. The government is openly siding with big corporate houses and even Parliament is being made redundant," the senior CPI leader said. "This government has become adamant and arrogant. It does not allow opposition parties to raise their concerns," he said. On the situation in Manipur, Raja blamed the BJP for the violence in the northeastern state. The senior CPI leader also questioned the manner the wrestlers' protest was handled. "See what is happening to the wrestlers who brought laurels to the country, but PM Modi has not uttered a word on them. The BJP government has failed to provide good governance. There is growing discontent against the BJP across the country," Raja said.

Raja also alleged that the BJP was using all tools to harass democratically elected governments in Jharkhand, Delhi and Tamil Nadu. "PM Modi and his government are trying to intimidate opposition parties and non-BJP governments. They think they can hoodwink people by taking such actions. But citizens are mature enough and understand what the Modi government has done to the country," CPI's Raja said.

Kerala Model FOR W BENGAL!



CPI(M) is satisfied and planning to adopt the Kerala model of governance of Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan for Bengal once they come to power there of which they are fully confident of.

CPI-M feels that for the past many years, the structure of development has been top-down but now it has to change to bottom-up where changes need to be made from the grass-root level and eventually create an environment where people can live up to their expectations and choice.

The CPI(M) is looking ahead to a regeneration of the party in West Bengal, seeking to adopt a 'Kerala model' with a 'bottom-up' structure where change would begin from the grass-root level. A total of 15 members from West Bengal were elected to the CPIM's Central Committee recently.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 23rd Party Congress in Kerala, the West Bengal CPI-M secretary Md. Salim said that the party is adopting several measures for its regeneration in Bengal where the Kerala model will be its aim.

Md Salim said, the cocktail of corporate politics, crony capitalism, and religious fundamentalism needs to be removed. India needs an inclusive economy, not an exclusive one."

He further said that the Mamata Banerjee government in the last decade has allegedly created an atmosphere of terror and torture leading Bengal to darkness. "We need to protect the basic tenets of the constitution which is allegedly under threat by the fascist forces in the form of BJP and in Bengal, the TMC. "These

two parties are the same. What is today's TMC is tomorrow's BJP and vice versa."

CPI-M leader further added that Nandigram and Singur incidents were orchestrated by Mamata Banerjee with help of her former aide and now BJP leader Suwendu Adhikary, and the late Maoist leader Kisanji. It was a hoax to deceive people and curtail Bengal's dream of growth and development."

A total of 15 party members from West Bengal have been elected to the CPIM's Central Committee. The names are Md Salim, Surya Kanta Mishra, Tapan Sen, Nilotpal Basu, Ramachandra Dome, Sridip Bhattacharya, Amiya Patra, Rabin Deb, Sujan Chakraborty, Abhas Roy Choudhary, Rekha Goswami, Anju Kar, Samik Lahiri, Deblina Hembram and Sumit Dey. Meanwhile, Md Salim highlighted that the decision of the Calcutta High Court to let the CBI probe the murder of Bhadu Sheikh, alongside Rampurhat arson that killed eight people, was welcomed by the CPI-M which believes that these two cases are interrelated and unless probed together, justice will be denied as Mamata Banerjee government is allegedly trying to suppress evidence.

"This has been our demand since the Rampurhat arson. Our lawyers had been pushing for the same. However, the state's advocate general and centre's additional solicitor general kept asserting that Bhadu Sheikh's murder need not be included in the CBI probe. This proves that TMC and BJP work hand in glove," added the CPI(M) leader.

CPI-M To Win Back SC-ST

CPI(M) is all out to appease the SC and ST communities. Reason is very simple, the all crucial 2024 election is just few months away. More so, once 'natural allies' of the Left parties, these communities have been gravitating towards the Sangh Parivar of late. So the plan is to win back their trust before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

CPI(M) state secretary Mohammed Salim has asked his party leaders to work towards gaining acceptance in communities such as the Kurmis, an OBC community that has demanded Scheduled Tribe status in several states, and the Matuas, a key Scheduled Caste community in Bengal, ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The instructions came at the three-day extended state committee meeting held recently in Howrah.

According to CPI-M sources present in the meeting, Salim said that reaching out to these downtrodden communities must be part of the party's strategy. He reportedly said that the BJP and the TMC are trying to divide these communities on communal lines, while exploiting their poor financial conditions. It is the responsibility of the CPI(M), Salim exhorted those present, to help these people to combat the real problems they

face. While the CPI(M) doesn't practice identity politics, it labels the lower categories of the social caste hierarchy as its 'natural allies'. Farmers, labourers and other working class people from across the caste hierarchy, including from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and the backward classes, have been the party's electoral base during its earlier 34-year-long regime in West Bengal. However, as support for the Left waned, some of the gap was filled by the Sangh Parivar, including the RSS and the BJP. The results were clear in the 2014 and 2019 parliamentary polls. The BJP won five of the ten reserved SC seats and both the parliamentary constituencies reserved for STs.

In fact, even before her ascension to power in 2011, Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee had started reaching out to these communities. She even fielded members of the Thakur family, the leaders of the Matua community, during the elections and made one of them a minister too in her first cabinet. However, her ties with these people were short-lived, as they soon turned to the BJP.

For the CPI(M), on the other hand, the decline of support from these communities is a national phenomenon, amidst alle-

gations that the party has not nurtured SC or ST leaders for top leadership positions in the organisation. This criticism sticks to the Left parties despite multiple members from SC/ST/OBC communities taking up key administrative positions in multiple states. The seventh Chief Minister of Tripura, Dasarath Debbarma, former MP from Jhargram in Bengal, Dr. Pulin Bihari Baske, and the state's former tourism minister, Dinesh Chandra Dakua, all hailed from tribal communities. "These are leaders of the past. What about the next gen of leaders from the SC and ST communities? There are none in the party, barring a few such as Deblina Hembram and Ram Chandra Dome," a party leader says.

Dome, a Dalit, and Hembram, a tribal, are leaders from Bengal who have recently been inducted in the CPI(M)'s central committee. "The contentious Citizenship Amendment Act is popular amongst the Matua community, who are Hindu refugees from Bangladesh. The CPI(M) claims that the BJP is trying to use the CAA to divide the Matuas and the Muslims on communal lines. BJP and TMC are trying to divide these communities. CPI-M wants to win them all over again to their fold.

VALLAVAN ON CBI's EAGLE EYE?

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Corruption in the UT of Puducherry knows no bounds. Goes on fearless. Some top bosses in the Administration continue to protect the corrupt. Losses to the government exchequer continues as the corrupt officials guide the wrong-doers to commit tax frauds against personal gratifications. Illicit money being siphoned off and being converted to assets in own and in the name of relatives and friends to escape punishment in case caught.

Officials of UT of Puducherry have been under the central investigating agencies radar for some time now. Their eagle eye is rowing to pin the Kingpins of corruption. Shocking information has come to the fore regarding the incident in Puducherry where the CBI sleuths arrested 4 people including a woman in connection with a bribe complaint in the Commercial Tax Department.

Following this arrest, there is speculation that Collector Vallavan, who is alleged to be close to the Pondicherry Chief Minister N Rangasamy, may also be brought into the ambit of CBI investigations. The case of arrest of four persons including two officers in the raid conducted by the CBI officers in the Chief Minister Rangasamy's department has caused a shock in Puducherry. When investigating the background of this, it was revealed that the CBI had been monitoring the commercial tax department under Chief Minister Rangasamy for a long time and the employees who took the bribe were arrested on time, against a laid trap.

In a pilot session of sort, Sleuths of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) from Chennai raided the Department of Commercial Taxes office (GST) in the UT of Puducherry, which is directly under the Chief Minister N Rangasamy's portfolio. According to official sources, a team led by Inspector of Police Muthukumar, CBI, Anti-Corruption Bureau, launched the search of Puducherry Commercial Taxes department, following complaints of irregularities. The searches were conducted under the security cover provided by the Territorial Police.

Four persons, including two Assistant Commercial Tax Officers (ACTOs) of the Puducherry Com-

mercial Tax Department have been booked by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), Chennai, on bribery charges and also under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and for criminal conspiracy. Consequently, ACTO officers A Anandan and P Muruganandam, along with Radhika Arun, a woman tax consultant dealing with tax-related subjects and Solai Selvarasu (Cholai Selvaraj), a partner of Sri Solaimalai Poly Pack Industry have been arrested. The move comes after a team from the CBI Chennai office, last weekend, laid a trap for the accused persons. A case was registered earlier.

Selvaraj hails from Ariyur area of Puducherry. In the same area, he owns a plastic factory called "Money Bakers", a unit of Solaimalai Poly Pack Industry. Selvaraj has been allegedly filing manipulated false accounts for many years regarding raw material, production and sales of his products. He has been filing manipulated accounts to escape paying tax dues. Eventually he was caught filing false returns. Selvaraj, who evaded tax, approached Income Tax Practitioner Radhika Arun to resolve the issue. The corruption game starts from here.

Selvaraj company showed tax evasion of over Rs 50 Lakh. Subsequent to this, the consultant, Rathiga Arun, informed Selvaraj that the tax liability with penalty for the year 2023 alone was in excess of ₹12.35 lakh. Radhika Arun informed Selvaraj that if 30 % of the current tax liability including penalty, which amounted to ₹4 lakh if paid as a bribe, Anandan could arrange to create a tax demand for the firm to pay largely reduced tax without the penalty. Selvaraj pleaded inability to pay. Consequently, the bribe amount was finalized for ₹2. 80 lakh," the FIR revealed. The trap was laid.

First, the CBI officials went to the particular plastic factory and conducted an investigation. ACTO (Assistant commercial tax officer) Anand was first caught by the CBI officials in the ongoing search. In the investigation, it was revealed that Anand had negotiated with the president of the plastic plant, Cholai Selvaraj through Radhika Arun, and had taken Rs.2 lakhs as advance to settle the case.

CBI officials were tipped off about the trio's plan. Subsequently, the cell phone conversation of the trio was intercepted by the CBI officials. It is also confirmed that Anand, Murukanand and Radhika jointly intimidated Selvaraj to cough up bribe money. Murukanand, who was arrested, was a clerk in Karaikal. Later he was transferred to Puducherry as ACTO (Assistant commercial tax officer). Muruganandam, it is alleged, used to blackmail the businessmen and factory owners who maintain false accounts. ACTO (Assistant commercial tax officer) Anand, who works in the commercial tax department together with Muruganandam had been allegedly engaged in illegal bribe money collection, with the alleged connivance of their boss Vallavan.

CBI interrogations of the arrested has revealed that the trio have negotiated and settled several such cases running into several crores of rupees for various customers in the last few years.

The commercial tax department for the district is under the Collector Vallavan, who is being considered the most powerful bureaucrat in this UT owing to his closeness with the CM. It is being rumoured that the recent 4 people arrest was a just a ploy to reach and tighten the noose around the allegedly corrupt Collector Vallavan, under whom the administration is seeing one of the worst rampant corruption.

In Puducherry, the lands of French nationals worth crores were expropriated. French Nationals' properties were grabbed using fake will, fake IDs, fakebirth and death certificates, fake deeds, fake names by the land mafia with the connivance of corrupt government servants with the approval of their super boss. Then there was the case of temple land grabbing. The land grabbing transactions value alone has been estimated to cross Rs 5000 cores. In all these, again alleged involvement of Collector Vallavan popped up. Former chief minister Narayanasamy alleged that 5,000 original documents were deleted from the official portal of the deed registry department.

More than 17 people including Vigilance Police District Registrar Ramesh, Tahsildar Balaji and Deputy Registrars were



arrested in the land-grabbing cases. Assistant Registrar Chandramohan was in CBI net in Karaikal bribery case. The officers arrested, it is alleged had revealed the name of the actual perpetrator of the corruption in the administration. All point to a particular officer, Collector Vallavan.

Similarly, IAS in Puducherry smart city project tender malpractice. Names of officers Raju, Arun, Chief Minister's office Assistant Amuthan, Excise Assistant Commissioner Sudhakar were paraded before the Central Enforcement Directorate and the name of the allegedly corrupt Collector Vallavan also named in this high-profile case. Allegations against Vallavan are endless. He is said to have amassed wealth and is alleged to have several thousand crores of assets amassed from his current position that has all of the green pasture money minting departments with him. It is said he has assets worth

the UT's years budget.

People have long been demanding high level probe against him to unearth the truth and cease the illegal asset he has allegedly made using his current multi-department position and his alleged closeness with the Chief Minister who otherwise carries a clean image.

Allegations against Vallavan have all the potential to malign the name and clean image of the Chief Minister M Rangaswamy. Allegations remain the way they are until and if proved wrong. The allegations against the Collector Vallavan needs in-depth investigations where he may either be declared clean or be accused for punishment. He being one of the most shrewd and intelligent of course, it may not be that easy to excavate the illicit assets so easily or pin him down on the allegations being fired against him. It would be an herculean task for the central investigating agencies.

AGENT PANDE



S.H.A. BADASHAH

Avinash Pande now has an important new role of overseeing Uttar Pradesh as its Congress Party General Secretary in-charge. He has come in place of its earlier in-charge, the high-profile, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Is he the right choice for this State, a sensitive State where the party has already been decimated to literal non-existence? Then the biggest challenge is to take on the UP mass leaders like strongman and firebrand leader CM Yogi Adityanath who would be joined by the fiery Home Minister Amit Shah and of course the tactful master political magician PM Narendra Modi along with other senior leader to form a formidable 2024 election campaign team. BJP is already proactive and already is in its aggressive 2024 poll campaign mode.

Native of Nagpur in Maharashtra and a lawyer by profession, Pande rose to prominence in Congress party through the party's students' wing and the Youth Congress. He held various positions in the party at the state and

national levels during his decades-long political career.

The former Rajya Sabha MP was in-charge of the party in Jharkhand and was a member of the Congress Working Committee before he has been made UP in-charge. Before the 2018 Rajasthan election, he was the in-charge of the state. However, looking at his ineffectiveness in amicably settling the high-pitched tussle between Sachin Pilot and Ashok Gehlot, Pande was removed from the post to save the party in Rajasthan.

It is alleged that his stint as in-charge of Jharkhand was full of controversies. He was alleged to have been involved in the dealings of the Coal mafia in the State and that he used the party position and the party name to make personal gains. Loyal workers also allege that his stint in Rajasthan was nothing better. With Ashok Ghelot the most experienced stalwart and Sahin Pilot the young gen leader having their deep money pockets, the party loyalists allege that the state in-charge was involved in using both the leaders names for personal gains. The loyalists say that it was fee loot out there Rajathan and later in Jharkhand in the name of the party. Party workers say that Pande has done nothing worthwhile anywhere so far, in neither of the States he held charger earlier. In fact they say he has only maligned and dwarfed the party stat-

ure and prospects and its name in both the states.

The party workers are worried what this new in-charge will do in UP which is already in non-existence mode. There is no life left in the congress party in UP, thanks to the negligence the party bosses showered on this State, wrong choices of leaders they promoted and the neglect the good hard working and mass loved leaders received from the party in this State. Many loyalists ask in sarcasm a to what this political shop-owner will do here to revive the party, leave alone winning elections ever under him. They also complain that Pande never is cordial, never accessible and never meets either the workers or the leaders down the line. All know that it was Congress that was once ruling this vast State with majority. It is because of the LS seats won from this State that Congress was ruling the centre comfortably. But all these are days of the past history. Several loyalists ask if such a day will ever come again?

For rejuvenating and upping the morale of the workers in the State it is imperative for the party to have loyal, committed, honest and hard working leaders who know the pulse of the workers and leaders down the lane from state, city, district to bloc levels. This is something that looks impossible for the party at this stage, having lost all the time it had. But nothing is impossible!

ANIL SHASTRI SIDELINED!



Late Lal Bahadur Shastri was one of the most respected and loved Prime Ministers of India, though his term was too short. He was secularist to the core and refused to mix religion with politics and stayed that way till his last breadth. He lived and died for the Nation. He was a fearless politician and a brilliant thinker with extraordinary will power. While Gandhi's birthday is remembered and celebrated, Shastri is all forgotten, literally. He deserves more than what is being meted out to him, to remember him.

Hard working and clean politicians, such from illustrious Shastri family members, who sacrificed their lives for the country and the party have been totally ignored by the grand old party. that now, of late, is focused on promoting and depending on those with bureaucratic backgrounds and tall talks, and more so with the skills to remain in Gandhi family good books. Sadly the congress party has strayed too from its principles of simplicity and probity and taking all along with them.

Anil Kumar Shastri, a senior leader of the Indian National Congress. He is known for his outspoken views. Presently, he is Chairman of the Hindi Department in All India Congress Committee (AICC). He was elected to the 9th Lok Sabha from Varanasi in 1989 as member of Janata Dal and was a Minister of Finance. Anil Shastri, son of former Prime Minister late Lal Bahadur Shastri, has been instrumental in promoting higher education, especially in the fields of management and has the Minister of Finance in Janata Dal government in 1989. Anil Shastri is Holding Trustee of Lal Bahadur Shastri National Memorial Trust which is involved

with various socio-cultural activities and manages several higher professional management institutes in the country.

A strong advocate and has been vocal that the congress party will stay united only under the Gandhi family umbrella. One wonders why honest and clean leaders are always ignored in the congress party. Anil Shastri had proved his mantle and skills as a Union Minister earlier, but his stint in the congress party has been still, motionless and eventless. It is also sad that none in the Congress every have thought of using him.

Undoubtedly, Anil Shastri's low profile and silent working for the party good have been sadly mistaken by the party bigwigs close to the Gandhi family as non-performer and hence, has been sidelined. The congress party is in no great strong position. It is only trying its play the catch up game, though very late, with the ever aggressive and always proactive BJP-NDA combine. Congress needs leaders of great value and who have clean image in public and are also popularly known. Anil Shastri surely has great potentials. Loyal party workers said that they would be ever be happy and willing to support and go with principled leaders like Anil Shastri. They all feel that such honest party workers should not be ignored. This is peoples' wish. But what about the party bosses?

Paan Banarasiwala!

Mohan Prakash is the Congress General Secretary in-charge of Bihar, yet another important State for the Congress party, where Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD) and Janata Dal Uited (JDU) are dominating Bihar State politics. Mohan Prakash, an erstwhile Janata Dal leader and V P Singh loyalist, has been sent by the Congress party only to be sandwiched and crushed between the two powerful Bihar State stalwarts, JDU's Nitih Kumar and RJD's Lallu Prasad Yadav. Mohan Prakash is one of the spokespersons in Indian National Congress. He has been MLA once from Rajakhera constituency (Rajasthan) but lost his deposit in the next election. Mohan Prakash is one of the prom-



inent leaders of Congress. However, though crossed over from Janata Dal to Congress, his mindset still is that of the ones practiced in his erstwhile political party JD. He was once considered V P Singh loyalists, who promoted Prakash to popular politics.

When C P Joshi was in-charge Congress won 28 LS

Seats in Bihar. But unfortunately all the later leaders who were in open collusion with RJD's Lallu Prasad Yadav that reduced the Congress tally from Bihar to just about 4 LS seats. Even the current Bihar Pradesh Congress Committee President Akhilesh Prasad Singh and his supporters in the State are openly said to be a Lallu Yadav supporters and is swayed by Lallu on most of the issues. In fact many ask if he is a Congress leader or that of Lallu Yadav's RJD? There is no denying that Lallu Prasad Yadav is one of Bihar's popular Leader and has always been trying to reduce the prominence of other parties in Bihar, for obvious reasons. He has ensured most in the Congress are pro-Lallu, literally

making them all anti-Congress, making them ruin the Congress party from within. The current Congress Party in-charge of Bihar is nothing better, as he is also one of the admirers of Lallu and the Janata Dal philosophies are still deep inside his political thinking. Under this backdrop Mohan Prakash takes over as in-charge of Bihar. The Congress workers do not seem happy with him as Mohan does not carry any credence of having done any good for the Congress party anywhere earlier. The loyal party workers say that he only finished the party wherever he went and that he has no party worker following anywhere with him. He also is not known as a Leader with cordial relation, who interacts with the party workers and sup-

porters and state, district and bloc level leaders.

With RJD's Lallu Yadav and the JDS Nitish Kumar stirring up Bihar politics with their own brand of antics, it is not going to be easy for the Congress to motivate, rejuvenate and win seats. In fact it is said that unless there is no change of guard, in Bihar the Congress will not be able to win even a single seat. The problem also is that the Congress party has not worked at the constituency levels to produce winning candidates. Mohan Prakash appears to be having an uphill task in Bihar where he has to keep this party flocks together in a State where Nitish Kumar and Lallu Yadav are active and command more popularity and people following.

KEJARI'S MOHALLA CLINIC IN CBI NET!

A new scam from the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejariwal's government has been unearthed. This is the most shameful of all scams of Kejariwal government as this compromised the health of the public seriously by supplying sub or non-standard medicines. This is just because they were to be distributed free to the public? More shamefully fake lab tests prescribed by Mohalla Clinics were allegedly conducted to siphon of the health budget money illicitly.

The new Mohalla Clinic scam involving alleged low poor standard medicines and fake lab tests on ghost patients has rocked the political and bureaucratic circles. There is no area that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejariwal appear to have spared off corruption and scandals in his government.

Fake lab tests, sub-standard medicines and Doctors marked attendance in their absence, compounders and untrained helpers in Mohalla Clinics acting in place of absent doctors, is all about the Delhi Mohalla Clinic row.

The AAP-led Delhi government's flagship healthcare project Mohalla Clinics have come under the Central investigating agencies radar. The Union Home Ministry has ordered a CBI probe into the

matter of "sub-standard" medicines in Delhi government hospitals and the Mohalla Clinics and the fake lab tests in the name patients who never were there.

In December last year, Delhi Lieutenant Governor, VK Saxena, had recommended a CBI probe into the alleged procurement and delivery of "sub-standard" drugs to Delhi government hospitals and mohalla clinics. These purportedly inferior medications were obtained through the Central Procurement Agency, a division of the Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejariwal-led AAP government's health department, and subsequently distributed to various medical facilities throughout the national capital. There were also other allegations of fake lab tests conducted on non-existing patients.

Following numerous complaints by patients and their families, samples were collected from three major hospitals - IHBAS, Lok Nayak, and Deen Dayal Upadhyay. It was discovered that some of the medications in question were critically essential antibiotics and steroids used for treating lung and urinary tract infections, inflammation, and swelling, as well as anti-anxiety, anti-epilepsy, and anti-hypertension

drugs.

These drugs, procured using substantial budgetary funds, pose a significant danger to public health and safety. There are also possibilities of several companies, suppliers, and drug controllers from other states could also be implicated in the distribution of these substandard medications. The CBI probe in the substandard medicines comes as further trouble for the Delhi Government as the situation entails the involvement of multiple parties from different states, including CPA-DHS, GNCTD, suppliers, manufacturers, and state agencies.

The Drug Controller within the Delhi Health Department initiated the investigation upon receiving complaints of inferior quality medications being supplied in government hospitals. Samples were analysed in both government-approved and private laboratories, revealing that over 10 per cent of the tested samples were substandard. According to the Vigilance Department, of the 86 samples sent, 8 failed the quality control tests, although some results are still pending. The failed drugs, which included Amlodipine, Levotiracetam, and Cephalexin, were determined to be below the necessary quality threshold.

The Directorate of Vigilance (DoV) concluded that due to the high failure rate, it was essential to expand the scope of testing and cease distribution of these drugs immediately. The DoV also recommended probing the role of suppliers outside the Central Procurement Agency, asserting the need to understand the motives behind the provision of substandard drugs. The department suggested blacklisting these companies and dealers involved in this grave malpractice.

The Health Department also found that some doctors and staffers of several Mohalla Clinics adopted "unethical" practices to fraudulently mark their attendance via pre-recorded videos. Patients at these mohalla clinics were given medical consultations and medicines by unauthorised staff in the absence of doctors. Further, a review of sample lab testing data for three months - July to September 2023 - obtained from two private service providers was carried out. It was found that fake mobile numbers were used for registration of patients and subsequent lab tests that were done on them. There was also duplication of mobile numbers.

The health department inquiry report revealed that

there were over 3,000 records of different patients with the same mobile number - 9999999999 - while in the case of 999 patients, their mobile numbers were repeated 15 or more times. Similarly, 11,657 patients had the mobile number zero registered against their names, while more than 8,000 patients had the mobile number columns in their registration database blank. The report stated that the payments from these fake practices were being made to private labs.

These cannot be dismissed as mere ignorance of the health care staff but surely "It is indicative of a scam running in hundreds of crores of rupees". Delhi government in a hoodwink move blacklisted few private players. But interestingly, the AAP-led government's de-pannelment move came well after 3-months exposure of fake lab testing reports. With AAP government getting deeper into scams after scams, should be interesting to watch its supreme Arvind Kejariwal wriggling out moves to escape direct actions on him. Being a smart chief minister without portfolios, it is only natural that if anyone gets caught, it will be one of his ministers and staff members and not him! Smart guy!

VIJAYAN SKIPS TEA

Thiruvananthapuram: The venue of the oath-taking ceremony of two ministers on Friday revealed the extent of differences between Kerala Raj Bhavan and the Left government, with Governor Arif Mohammed Khan and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan refusing to acknowledge each other's presence.

The oath-taking ceremony took place against the backdrop of an ongoing feud between the Governor and the ruling Left, marked by heated exchanges. In the brief five-minute ceremony held at Raj Bhavan lawns, neither Khan nor Vijayan exchanged glances despite being seated side by side. In addition Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his Ministers Skipped the Tea party gathering, post Oath Ceremony, a gesture to snub the Kerala State Governor. In the brief five-minute ceremony held at Raj Bhavan lawns, neither Arif Mohammed Khan nor Pinarayi Vijayan exchanged glances despite being seated side by side. Following the conclusion of the ceremony, the Governor promptly departed from the venue without extending any greetings to the Chief Minister. The feud between the two institutions was evident as the CM and most of his ministerial colleagues chose to skip the tea party organised at Raj Bhavan, post oath-taking ceremony. Only Forest Minister AK Saseendran, along with the new ministers K B Ganesh Kumar and Ramachandran Kadanapalli, were present at the gathering. Later, Raj Bhavan released photos featuring Khan alongside the new ministers and their families. In recent weeks, the state has witnessed dramatic scenes and verbal clashes between the Governor on one side and the Chief Minister and the SFI on the other. This discord revolves around the appointments made by Khan to the senate of some universities in the state.

SMOOTH OPERATOR

Congress sweeping Karnataka a few months ago was the hard work of the congress workers and the party leaders. But it was not just hard work but coordinated efforts among the leaders and the workers at all levels and the data collected from different districts that was put to correct use for the party leaders to benefit from. The need also was to keep track of what the opposition was up to and doing and how to counter their strategies.

All these are possible only with a good smart and efficient War Room in-charge. Bureaucrat turned politician Sasikanth Senthil was the key War Room in-charge during the Karnataka state election times. Senthil had headed the Congress' war room in Bengaluru and was one of the key strategists in the Karnataka elections, where the Congress got a massive mandate, giving its best-ever performance in the state since 1989. Looking at his efficient handling of the Karnataka congress war room affairs, Senthil was appointed the Chairman of the Central War Room for the Rajasthan state assembly elections. This entailed the ex-IAS officer turned politician to interact with congress stalwarts like Ashok Ghelot and young gen leaders like Sachin Pilot to learn more of the party politics and the related intricacies. Senthil played a key role in formulating the narrative against the Basavaraj Bommai-led BJP government over corruption through various ways, especially the "40 per cent commission govern-



ment" plank, the "PayCM" campaign, with posters featuring a QR code and a photograph of CM Bommai titled "PayCM" springing up across Bengaluru. A native of Tamil Nadu and a 2009 batch Karnataka cadre IAS officer, Senthil had resigned from the IAS while serving as a Deputy Commissioner (DC) in the communally sensitive Dakshina Kannada district in September 2019, stating that it was "unethical" for him to continue in his line of duty "as a civil servant in the government when the fundamental building blocks of our diverse democracy are being compromised in an unprecedented manner". He severely criticised the Narendra Modi-led BJP government's Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) / National Register of Citizens (NRC) proposal, and had travelled across the country. He later joined the Congress party in 2020. Sasikanth Senthil, Former Karnataka cad-

re IAS officer and a dalit face of the Congress, now turned Politician, is said to be a Frontrunner for Tamil Nadu Congress Pradesh Congress Committee President Post. The party is currently facing an infighting. Among the warring factions, the bureaucrat turned politician appears to be favoured candidate for this all important position as several feel that the party now needs more dynamic, vibrant and young blood like Senthil to revive the party prospects in the forthcoming 2024 general elections. Sasikanth Senthil has done and doing his bit, including the solo motorbike tour of Tamil Nadu that he undertook after the Karnataka elections. He is not a man to sit and rest. The party leadership does not want to take any chances as it wants to win all the congress LS seats it would get as its share in Tamil Nadu alliance as every count in its bag would add to its power to bargain if the opposition win to form a government at the centre after 2024 elections. Talks are also rife in political circles that the best way to reward Senthil without disturbing the current state leadership balance is to offer him a Rajya Sabha seat from Tamil Nadu where congress will soon have one seat going vacant shortly.

Ex-IAS officer of Karnataka cadre, Sasikanth Senthil, a native of Tamil Nadu, who quit the civil services to join the Congress party in 2020, is going places in a short time of induction into the country's grand old party.

OPPOSITION AFRAID OF OWAISI?

Asaduddin Salahuddin Owaisi, 4 times Lok Sabha MP from Hyderabad and President of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) is one firebrand leader who is uncompromising and fights full hearted for the good of his Muslim community. He is one of the top 500 influential Muslims in the world, undoubtedly. He is also one leader whom the opposition parties don't want to be friends with, as they fear they be branded an anti-Hindu party!

Name Owaisi sounds alarm bells in the ears of opposition parties, confusing them as to how to deal with this firebrand 'Muslim community good' focused leader. His oratory magnetises the masses, though not all get translated to votes.

Owaisi has been trying to polarize and consolidate the Muslim voters across the country. Over the past decade he has been expanding his AIMIM footprints. The electoral performance of AIMIM in the last two elections in UP, Bihar and Jharkhand is shattering the dreams of the opposition. Opposition are worried the Muslim votes will only start getting split further as AIM-

IM advances with SP and BSP already splitting them along with the Congress. A very tricky and interesting situation indeed!

Recently a gathering of 26 opposition political parties unveiled a new oppositional alliance grouping christened I.N.D.I. alliance, aimed at challenging Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP-NDA combine might in the forthcoming 2024 elections, with sole objective "remove-Modi". This new grouping saw long term political adversaries like TMC, Congress, Left and AAP coming together.

Interestingly, Owaisi was conspicuous by his absence, who has been fearless and prominent critic of the BJP government and a supporter of the earlier UPA-1 and UPA-2 governments of Dr Manmohan Singh. The most interesting question is Why AIMIM and Owaisi were overlooked? The clear reason is all are afraid of Owaisi and his brand of politics.

One of the main reason behind AIMIM's exclusion from the opposition meet is the party's strong pro-Muslim image. Though Owaisi claims that the party fights for the rights of Muslims, Dalits, and Adivasis, AIM-

IM primarily resonates only with the Muslim community. Furthermore, the party's presence is limited to one Southern state, Telangana, where it holds only 7 MLAs and enjoys the support of Telangana CM K Chandrasekar Rao, who surprisingly is not a part of the new opposition grouping.

But AIMIM's performance in UP, Bihar and Jharkhand in the last two elections have rung the alarm bells for other opposition parties. Most of in the new opposition grouping feel that Owaisi's total pro-Muslim image will pose a risk alienating non-Muslim voters and impact badly the alliances so called secular vote base.

Owaisi on his part laughs at the new found love among the opposition bloc and he reminds that though these guys shun the mention of the word "Muslim", they forget that the congress and several other parties have been winning elections only with the support of the Muslims.

Owaisi hit out at the political scenario in India, three years after the Independence, since the year the Indian Constitution came into effect. Owaisi



alleged that 'Secratian politics' has been going on since 1950 and did not start on 2014, hinting at the fact that the Congress had been responsible for marginalising Muslim politicians.

"The opposition leaders don't want to be associated with Muslims because they fear it would hurt their non-Muslim vote banks, but all want the Muslim votes to win", laughed Owaisi. Without the Muslim League Rahul would not have won the Waynad LS seat, pointed Owaisi.

Offering advice to Muslims, Owaisi urged them not to vote blindly, highlighting instances of leaders shifting allegiances after elections. "We are not in the I.N.D.I. alliance and I don't care about it. It would be suffocating there" said Owaisi.

DURAI RELUCTANT POLITICIAN

Durai Vaiko the businessman turned politician is the son of the firebrand MDMK supremo Vaiko, the founder of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK). Durai's father Vaiko, ousted by the DMK in 1993 for his opposition to dynastic rule in the party, broke away to float the Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, MDMK.

Durai Vaiko, a MBA graduate, was appointed as the Chief Secretary of MDMK, is one of the party's star campaigners and leads the internet wing for MDMK. He also owns V Realty Private Limited, a construction firm. Durai's political career graph spiked when Vaiko contested the Lok Sabha election from Virudhunagar constituency in 2014.

Durai Vaiko received appreciations cutting across party lines when he set up several medical and relief camps during the Covid-19 pandemic help-



the affected, needy, helpless and the stranded. The debate over dynasty politics in Tamil Nadu had revived after the entry of Durai Vaiko, son of G Vaiko who famously rebelled against Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) supremo M Karunanidhi for favouring his children in the party hierarchy.

Durai's elevation to The HQ General Secretary, party's highest decision making body, was

through a democratic process within the party and on a 104 out of 106 votes, an absolute landslide support to his nomination by MDMK party leaders. Durai's entry into active politics was rather by compulsion than options. Durai Vaiko had to take on the mantle of the party from his father further owing to great pressure and love from his party ranks and files and the unending love the party workers, supporters and the people of

the State.

Durai a honest, hard working and low profile but a good orator has been very vocal about the dynastic politics and keeps saying that he would step down the moment his party chooses a more effective leader to lead the party towards its set political objectives.

Durai, 50, who worked in an American MNC, and ran his own business, got into active politics in the past 3 years since his father's health at 77 started deteriorating. Durai said that when his father underwent a heart procedure three years ago, the MDMK cadre was anxious about the future of the party as he stepped in for campaigning, seat negotiations and attending weddings and funerals in place of his father. Durai hopes to channelise his frustrations as a common man to connect with the Tamil people.

Durai's father Vaiko

had been against current chief minister M K Stalin's rise in the DMK, and they saw each other as rivals for the state's political future. It was eventually Stalin's race to win while Vaiko has fallen off the political radar reducing MDMK that is viewed as having only a puny presence now. But Durai has other plans and this is where his entry and presence takes significant strides to make his opponents think many times before they discount MDMK as a spent force.

Durai, like his father Vaiko, has very cordial relations with all, party workers, supporters and all political parties and also the local administrations and the government bureaucracy in the State. He also has been doing good work in the bastions of the party and also his father's constituency. These people contact programs would all come handy when MDMK unfolds its 2024 poll strategy.

HAT-TRICK



the cause of his island population.

The Sansad Ratna Awards are presented annually to the top-performing parliamentarians based on their performance, while the Sansad Maha Ratna Award is presented once in 5 years of consistency in performance in both the houses of the parliament.

As such, Kuldeep Sharma has been championing the cause and issues of this remote islands cluster earning the name and love of the islanders. His initiatives have ranged from jobs for the island youth, establishment of a AIIMS with ultra modern medical facilities, shelters and public conveniences for the poor island tribal population and pushing for advanced medical equipments in the island's health care centres. He also has taken up vigorously the commissioning of new and completion of crucial infrastructure projects and facilities including resolving the water and power crisis in this remote islands cluster.

Kuldeep has become one of the respected and winning candidate in this small remote UT among the political party candidates.

UT of Andmand & Nicobar island cluster Cogress Party MP Kuldeep Rai Sharma bagged the prestigious Sansad Ratna Award for the 3rd consecutive year. His exceptional contributions and unwavering commitment to the region's welfare have earned him this revered award. He is one of the 5 MPs from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha to be decorated with this recognition.

This prestigious Sansad Award hat-trick re-establishes MP Kuldeep Sharma's exceptional parliamentary contributions, reflecting his commitment and dedication in serving

CPI-M ON A&N INFRA



Ayyappan expressed dismay over the delay in commencing the construction of the proposed roads in the areas. The tribal and local population are suffering owing to the lack of and also improperly maintained roads. The A&N CPI-M secretary also urged for the replacement of the iron bridges with the most durable and stronger cemented bridges that would address the woed of transportation faced by the villagers and commuters to and fro from the areas.

CPI-M Secretary's assertions on the urging the needs and addressing the pressing needs of the people prompts for immediate action by the authorities to correct the infrastructural shortcomings, underscoring the importance of reliable and safe transportation networks across the islands cluster for the welfare of the islanders and the tourists to the island destinations.

CPI(M) Urges Immediate repair of roads and bridges in Diglipur. CPI(M) Andaman & Niobar State Organising Committee Secretary D Ayyappan, has called for the urgent need for repair of existing and construction of new roads and bridges in the Laxmipur and Madupur Panchayat areas.

MODI IN ISLAND



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Lakshadweep has created developmental buzz for this otherwise totally neglected island cluster since independence, despite the fact that the innocent and poverty-stricken islanders had returned powerful MPs and Minister as their representatives to Delhi. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi posted photos of his sojourn in Lakshadweep, it could have passed as just another location in India that the PM wanted to put the spotlight on. He praised the pristine waters. He urged Indians to dekho apna desh. He sat down with a notebook and penned his thoughts about Lakshadweep and went snorkelling in the clear blue waters. He penned great inspirational words to describe and mirror to the world the incredible serene bewitching beauty of these heaven on earth island destinations. Lakshadweep is not just a group of islands; it's a timeless legacy of traditions and a testament to the spirit of its people. My visit has been an enriching journey of learning and growing. PM Modi visited Agatti, Bangaram and Karavatti in Lakshadweep for the launch of various projects to uplift lives through enhanced development. In addition to creating futuristic infrastructure, it is also about creating opportunities for better healthcare, faster internet and drinking

water, while protecting as well celebrating the vibrant local culture. The projects that were inaugurated reflect this spirit.

In Lakshadweep, PM Modi took the opportunity to interact with various beneficiaries of Government of India schemes. It's inspiring to see firsthand how these initiatives are fostering better health, self-reliance, women empowerment, improved agricultural practices and more. The life journeys I heard were truly moving," PM Modi said.

On the mesmerising landscape and serenity of Lakshadweep, PM Modi said, "In addition to the scenic beauty, Lakshadweep's tranquility is also mesmerising. It gave me an opportunity to reflect on how to work even harder for the welfare of 140 crore Indians." Reflecting on his "exhilarating" snorkelling experience PM Modi said that for those who wish to embrace the adventurer in them, Lakshadweep has to be on their list. Terming the early morning walks on the beaches of Lakshadweep as "blissful", PM Modi said,

"Those early morning walks along the pristine beaches were also moments of pure bliss." Maldives, part of the same island chain in the Laccadive Sea as Lakshadweep. Some must have seen the posts by the PM as a potential threat to their importance as tourism destination that might have triggered the unwarranted controversy. With everyone's attention on Lakshadweep right now, many of us are planning a sweet getaway to this pristine island. Here's what you need to know when it comes to Lakshadweep. Reaching this island destination is not all breezy, but with a little effort, once you reach this stunning destination, you will see that it was all worth it. With everyone's attention on Lakshadweep right now, many of us are planning a sweet getaway to this pristine island. Here's what you need to know when it comes to Lakshadweep. Reaching this island destination is not all breezy, but with a little effort, once you reach this stunning destination, you will see that it was all worth it.

ANDAMAN KADALAN

The Congress party in the UT of Andaman and Nicobar islands cluster got a boost recently as Karti Chidambaram paid a good will visit to the island recently. He interacted with the Tamil population in this remote island cluster. Karti Chidambaram, the Congress Lok Sabha Member of Parliament from Sivaganga was elected in the 2019 general election, winning the seat held seven times by his father, P. Chidambaram.

A sports enthusiast, Karti Chidambaram has been associated with tennis for over three decades and is the Secretary-General of the Indian Tennis Players Association (ITPA). He has held the position of Chairman of the Organising Committee for Chennai Open and was a former vice-president of the All India Tennis Association. He currently is also the vice-president

for the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association. He is also the President of the Tinp Bowling Federation of India and Chief Patron of the All India Karate-Do Federation. He is a member of the inaugural class of the India Leadership Initiative (ILI) of the Aspen Institute, Chairman of the Asia 21 India Chapter of The Asia Society and co-founder of the Chennai Chapter of Young Entrepreneurs Organisation. Karti Chidambaram is the Founder and Conventor of G67, a platform of like-minded, educated, aspirational youth of Tamil Nadu to voice their opinion and champion relevant social causes. A businessman-politician has taken his father's legacy well and has been travelling wide.

His latest visit to the remote UT of A&N is said to be a personal visit of Karti. But, a devoted party worker that he is, he

had taken the opportunity to interact with the Tamil population in the island. He listened to their issues, party standing in the island per their view and improving its prospects, issues they are facing as migrant from Tamil Nadu to A&N, among others. He is said to have assured them that he would connect with the party and the government to resolve their issues quickly. A bold parliamentarian, Karti always has been vocal about anything on any topic including his own party that he thinks is correct. This many time got him into messy situations like the recent one related to his comments on Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Karti undoubtedly is a serious and aggressive politician and also a businessman who has been doing good for the party for long and it is time for the party to recognize his skills and value for the party in Tamil Nadu.

BJP 2024 PREPAREDNESS



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his BJP are uncompromising and follow their own rules, beating the opponents hollow, all the time. BJP is a party that is proactive and moves with strategies taking the opponents off guard. Does things those stun the opposition. Does unconventional things that later become models to follow by the opposition parties.

BJP watches every step of the opposition to check and monitor and more so fine-tune its own plan implementation actions. Opposition is no match to BJP in poll preparedness or strategy plans. But BJP is also not a party that will leave anything to imagination or show complacency. They are the most dissatisfied lot, always alive, always wanting more.

BJP's aggressive election campaign in fact started at least 2 years ago. They have been preparing for well planned strategized push across the constituencies, step by step. Some are known through media, and there are several strategies those have still not hit the media. BJP's 'cross 400' LS seats campaign is strategy in itself that talks about Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team's long-term vision.

Their fast-forward special focused plan push for around 160 LS seats, which BJP considers is weaker for them is yet another aggressive campaign signal. Interestingly, for the past over a year, the party has deputed senior leaders including Union ministers to oversee the election preparation in seats where it either never won or lost by a thin margin, and even those seats where it won with lesser margins.

Having set a mammoth 400+ LS seats target for 2024, BJP sources

also revealed that the party has also set up special panel under party President J P Nadda to recruit influential leaders and sitting MPs from opposition parties where BJP feels does not have a winning candidate in its basket or where it feels the voters sway would benefit the party.

BJP may also announce the candidates for such LS seats in next few weeks to ensure that these so termed weak areas have enough time to understand and campaign for longer time. 'North to South, East to West BJP everywhere' is their election maxim.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has instructed Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members, leaders, workers and supporters, to work in "mission mode" and ensure the full implementation of government projects and welfare schemes, without any lag in welfare schemes. This is a novel people outreach program that is also to ensure that benefits of every scheme has reached the intended beneficiary. This is one head start to popularize the "Modi Guarantee" assurance to the people, the voters. Additionally, the government aims to ensure that eligible individuals are not left out of welfare schemes through the "Viksit Bharat" Campaign, using not the government machinery, but the party workers and supporters. In states where the BJP is not in power, the cadre has been instructed to ensure that there are no obstructions created in the disbursement of aid under central government schemes.

The party is naturally preparing for the 2024 general elections, working overtime and aims to win many more seats than in 2019, target 400+. PM Modi has emphasized the importance of empowering

women, the poor, young, and farmers through government programs. So PM Modi is making sure that the BJP-NDA combine is moving forward on the path of building a developed India by empowering the country's main pillars, the youth, farmers, women and the poor.

'Weekly Meet, Morcha Prabharis', yet another BJP's Strategy add-on For 2024 Lok Sabha Polls. A separate committee has been formed to look after new members who would join the party ahead of the elections.

With few months remaining for the Lok Sabha polls, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is preparing for the elections with BJP National President JP Nadda and Union Minister Amit Shah leading and monitoring the preparedness. As per the top source in the party, "Every week there would be a meeting of National General Secretaries strategizing for Lok Sabha polls 2024. Sources have revealed that the party has put its top leaders in charge of groups or schemes that the party believes are critical to the victory.

The BJP has rejigged Morcha Prabharis, and two separate groups and for beneficiaries (Labarthis) too have been formed. A separate committee has also been formed to look after new members who would join the party ahead of the elections.

Committee for four broad categories (Poor, farmers, youth and women) and in charges have also been formed with Morcha prabharis for each of them. For Poor - SC Morcha / OBC Morcha, Mahila / Mahila Morcha, Yuva / Yuva Morcha, Mahila Self-Help Groups, NGOs, Farmers / Kissan Morcha, Tribal / ST Morcha, Minorities Morcha, Swanidhi scheme, among others are some of the cells formed which would be looked after by respective morcha prabharis.

Going by what is being told, some seen, BJP is leaving nothing untouched or leaving anything to chance. Everyone, including management and political science students and experts have lot to learn from the BJP and PM Modi!

NADDA MOTIVATES!



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) National President J P Nadda is on North and East India tour to oversee the party's preparedness and plant implementation progress for the 2024 general elections where BJP is on its way to their 3rd consecutive term in office, and of course to motivate its workers to get into top gear election mode. He is in a 3 days visit to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh after his Chandigarh tour where he will review the BJP's strategy for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. He also discussed seat-sharing arrangements with alliance partners-Asom Gana Parishad and United Peoples Party Liberal. BJP National President JP Nadda targeted the Congress on its new campaign, Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is set to undertake the "Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra: from Imphal on January 14, which will culminate in Mumbai on March 20 covering over 6,000 km and passing through 14 states. Taking a jibe at the Congress organized Bharat Jodi NYay Yatra that started from Imphal, Manipur, Nadda termed it as "Bharat Todo Anyay Yatra". "I am surprised Congress chose NE to start their Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. To me it seems like the Bharat Todo Anyay Yatra. It is strange that Congress, which laid the foundation of injustice and broke India is now undertaking Bharat Joda Yatra," Nadda said in Guwahati while addressing a meeting of the BJP state executive. The BJP president added that the Congress is unfit to run a government but even be in opposition as well. Adding further Nadda

said that the newly formed opposition grouping I.N.D.I. alliance, of which Congress is a key constituent, has key goals, to protect property and families of leaders of parties in the alliance.

Mentioning about the development works undertaken in Assam and northeast in the past 10 years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP president urged party workers to work hard to ensure another victory in the 2024 general elections so that the momentum of development and connectivity continues.

Addressing a crowded party workers meet at the Chandigarh BJP office, JP Nadda said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has a special connection with Chandigarh and that he was confident in the city workers and in their ability to further the development initiatives initiated by the PM. While addressing the BJP workers in Chandigarh, Nadda also exhorted the BJP workers to gear up for the Lok Sabha polls and ensure huge margins of victory. During his first visit to the city since BJP's big victory in three assembly elections, Nadda attributed the success to their collective efforts and predicted a resounding victory in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. He exhorted party workers to gear up for the impending electoral battle. During the visit, Nadda also held a meeting with the core committee members of BJP Chandigarh, gathering insights into the political landscape and providing organisational directives.

EPS Consolidating AIADMK

SHANKAR

Edappadi K Palaniswami, fondly called EPS appears to be doing well in consolidating his position in the party, All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and repositioning and rejuvenating the image of the party in the minds of the workers, supporters and the ultimate voters. A low profile and soft spoken experienced leader proved his adversaries both within and outside the party wrong when he became the 7th Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu (2017 to 2021) amidst severe infighting within AIADMK following the demise of the party's towering leader and former TN Chief Minister late J Jayalitha. He then slowly took control of the party, extended cordiality and imposed faith on senior leaders and ensured all of them came back to his camp who all together unanimously made him the General Secretary of AIADMK, a position the late CM Jayalitha held for several decades.

Previously, EPS has served as the Interim General Secretary (2022-23), Joint Co-ordinator (2017-22) and Head Quarters secretary (2016-22) of AIADMK.

EPS, currently the Leader of Opposition in Tamil Nadu State Assembly, is on pro-



active 2024 general election preparation mode where he has the stake to prove AIADMK as a formidable political force that no one can take lightly. His bold decision to sever the poll alliance with BJP-NDA grouping quoting unacceptable statements from Tamil Nadu BJP chief Annamalai on his party's senior leaders. Since this parting of ways with BJP, it has been a task for both the former poll allies to move forward without the help of each other. But EPS has come out of the shadows and now is a strong leader not to worry about the smaller pictures

but work towards the bigger ones that lay in front of the party. With the all crucial 2024 general elections just a few months away, EPS knows he cannot take things easy and has to be on the move all the time. He also knows the infighting within the party is not yet over and aspiring leaders would always pose a problem anytime, especially crucial times in politics.

EPS a shrewd politician that he has become, with his easy accessibility to all and his friendly cordial nature has won him the praise from his own party workers and supporters and of course the party leaders, has been working with focus to bring the backward and minority communities along with SCs, STs and OBCs along with the other upper and other castes back into the fold of AIADMK as it was before. Party's former leader late Jayalalitha, a Brahmin herself, was the darling of the masses from all communities and tool all along with her and ensured everyone's interests were looked after. EPS, following the lines of his mentors, is doing great and AIADMK is no more a weakened party in the State, but has become a formidable political force that none now can discount or ignore. DMK better watch out!

STALIN'S Succession Plan?



Tamil Nadu politics is heating up again, for a different reason. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister embarking on a foreign tour late February 2024. He is to tour Europe while attending the Devos investor fair and also visiting Spain. CM Stalin's foreign tours are not new and are oriented towards garnering foreign investments to Tamil Nadu to boost the State's economy, bring in new businesses and mass generation of new job opportunities.

But this isn't the news. Important is that CM Stalin's foreign tour planned for next month has given space for speculations.

Speculations have been rife in Tamil Nadu's political circles about the possible elevation of CM Stalin's son, DMK leader and Sports Minister Udhayanidhi as the Deputy Chief Minister of the state in the days to come.

Sources within the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) say that TN-CM MK Stalin is expected to embark on a foreign trip in February, paving the way for Udhayanidhi Stalin to assume the role of his father's deputy. The anticipated elevation is speculated to occur following the party's Youth Wing meeting scheduled in Salem later this month.

Party leaders and workers acknowledge Udhayanidhi Stalin's active involvement in the party affairs assisted by Sabareesan, Stalin's son-in-law who has taken very important roles in the party, especially in the wake of several leaders of the party coming under CBI and ED scanner and some of them languishing in jails already for the

past several months. It is said that Sabareesan is slowly getting deep into the funds generation systems and management.

Meanwhile, Udhayanidhi, while speaking to the media, downplayed the entire episode and called it to be a 'rumour'. "Only the Chief Minister has to take the decision. It is just a rumour", Udhayanidhi said.

Reacting to the reports, DMK's main adversary All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) stressed that Udhayanidhi becoming a Deputy Chief Minister can't be dismissed as a rumour as it is a fact. In fact since Udhayanidhi Stalin was given the party ticket to fight first and then immediately made a minister had made political circles air their views, kindling speculations of continuance of dynasty rule in Tamil Nadu politics, with none worth any name to challenge them at this point.

There are also speculations that he would be made the CM face in 2026 assembly elections. Opposition parties certainly would not miss an opportunity to criticize. A senior opposition leader said that Father, son, grandson and great-grandson are the only people whom the party thinks is capable of leading the party, which shows that there is no democracy in the DMK and said that DMK is the perfect example of 'parivarvad' in the name of democracy.

All said it is the acceptability of the people of the State that would matter, not the views of the political parties, allies or the opposition!

Jawahirullah Mission



There is one Muslim leader who is preaching non-violence and making all efforts to unite the community for their own good and in their own interests to stand united to fight united against atrocities and favoritisms against them. Dr Prof M H Jawahirullah is currently the elected member of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly 2021 from Papanasam Constituency. He had represented the Ramanathapuram constituency in his earlier term in the TN Legislative Assembly.

Dr Jawahirullah represents the Manithaneya Makkal Katchi (MMK) party of which he is the founding member and present leader. He also is the founding member of Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam (TN-MMK). Dr Jawahirullah has been actively involved in the non-violent struggle for the rights of minorities especially Muslims in India. He has always been working towards

and calls for the coordination of all Muslim groups in India for positive development.

His Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam (TMMK) organization mobilized hundreds of volunteers to help in rescue work when a tsunami struck the coast of Tamil Nadu in 2004 and it also played an important role in 2007 during negotiations to secure reservations for Muslims in government jobs. Former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, late M Karunanidhi had appreciated his dedication and hardwork towards the upliftment of his community, and won an award for recruiting the highest number of blood donors in emergencies. TMMK runs 148 free ambulances in Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu Muslim Munnetra Kazhagam (Tamil Nadu Muslim Progress Conference) or TMMK, also founded by Dr Jawahirullah, is a Muslim non-governmental apolitical organisation established in the state of Tamil Nadu in India in 1995. The TMMK describes itself as "a mass based" organization, or say a mass movement that works for the larger good of the Muslim community in Tamil Nadu.

The objective of TMMK is to protect the rights of the Muslim community in a democratic manner. TMMK has its branch offices in all the districts of Tamil Nadu and in several villages of the state. It also has its foreign offices in Malaysia, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other gulf

countries. TMMK has more than 1 lakh members. TMMK was very actively involved in Tsunami relief work and their volunteers worked hand in hand with the government teams. TMMK also regularly organises several social services initiatives, including blood donation camps, eye camps and free ambulance services to poor. Jawahirullah is one of the key respected Muslim leaders in Tamil Nadu who has the capacity to mobilize support for his ideologies and causes for which he works relentlessly. A low profile but pro-active socio-political activist has cordial relationship with all political parties and bureaucracy of both local, State and Central government. Easily accessible to all, he has one of the best connect with his party and organization workers and supporters.

He is appreciated by his party workers and supporters describing him as peoples man as he solves majority of their problems quickly due to his cordial relations with all. MMK, a poll ally of AIADMK, had fought and won 2 of the 3 seats it contested in 2021. With the AIADMK having severed its poll alliance with BJP-NDA combine, it should be interesting to see who MMK would go with during this 2024 elections. There are some from within the party who advise going with DMK this time around whom they feel would act as custodian of their community interests.

SPIRITUAL ELATION

Kindled Hindu sentiments; Brimming with Emotions; Spiritual Elation; High-pitch Religious Fervor; Architectural Marvel; Grandeur Ifra; Religious Capital Development; Mammoth Event; high-profile invitees; High-voltage hype; terribly disturbed opposition; This is what is Modi's Shri Ram Mandir Vision is all about! Its also about fulfillment of a divine dream of hundreds of cores of Hindus.

The Holly Shri Ram Mandir consecration, the Lord Ram Lala Pran-Pratishtha, ceremony is religiously highly auspicious and highly emotive for the 120+ crore country's Hindus and millions of those who believe in this faith globally, and politically high-voltage sensitive occasion! Ayodhya becomes a Hindu Religious Landmark.

Amidst the unfortunate opposition politics of politicizing a Hindu religious divine dream that has turned into a top mammoth event which is destined to leave a permanent imprint in the minds of at least the next three generations, an unforgettable effect for at least the next 300 years.

Modi is truly passionate about the people of the country. For him religious faiths do not matter and believes in his brand of New India secularism of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayaas" for Atma Nirbhar Bharat. With the Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF) having informed that they don't have funds to develop the Masjid along with their planned hospital, PM Modi has expressed willingness to build a planned a memorable Masjid in the 5 acre land specially allotted to the community in Ayodhya, should they accept his offer. The Muslim populations of the country are happy, leaving aside the opposition political parties.

Hindus across the world are all set to celebrate a 2nd Deepawali on 22nd Jan 2024 when Ram Lala, the young baby form of Lord Rama, will take HIS place at the Shri Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. The Hindu religious fever hits the sky with devotees across India and the globe are awaiting anxiously for this day. Their decades and decades of wait ends this day, only to begin an all new journey with Lord Ram, the most revered incarnation of the Lord Vishnu.

Adding to the hype is PM Modi's announcement that he is starting the 11 days special ritual "anusthan" ahead of the Shri Ram Mandir consecration ceremony and urging the Nation to prepare themselves to celebrate the 2nd Deepawali on 22nd and lighting of minimum 5 diyas (Mini lamps) outside every home across the country.

India is under the grip of the religious fervor kindled by the much-awaited construction and consecration or say the 'Pran-Pratishtha' of Ram Lala, the young baby Lord Rama at the Shri Ram Temple at Ayodhya on 22nd Jan 2024. The Sanatana Dharma is at its height of rejuvenated re-establishment, in a manner befitting only to Lord Rama, a reincarnation of Lord Vishnu during the Treta Yuga, the second of the four yugas, the world ages.

This Lord Shri Ram-Temple has not used even a gram of steel. Basic material used is High Grade "Rolled Compacted Concrete" without Steel. Ram Mandir complex has been constructed in the traditional Nagara style exhibiting the stunning and bewildering heritage and architectural mastery of the ancient Indian civilization.

The trust and managing committee of the Shri Ram Mandir have made mammoth arrangements to make this occasion historic and memorable. The Shri Ram Mandir trust and the organizing committee has released a select set of visuals of the mandir, night and day, which are spellbinding and the world is on owe over the mammoth intricate sculpture work across the mandir pillars, walls, doors, roofs and the special idols and deities, to name a few. This in itself has created a great hype which will culminate to pulsating and dramatic finish of the wait and beginning of a new journey for Hindus, the Lord Ram devotees on 22nd Jan.

Apart from this high-voltage religious ceremony being telecast from all Indian states with all TV Channels covering this mega Hindu religious event, arrangements have been made for live telecast from Times Square New York city in USA!

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be inaugurating the whole consecration ceremony, along with UP



CM Adityanath who made the astounding arrangements steering from the front, and the cabinet ministers in attendance. The temple trust's guest list for the consecration ceremony comprises over 7,000 people, featuring cricket icons Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli, Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan, as well as billionaire industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani. It is really going to be one of mega and memorable religious event ever to be organized in this century.

The Shri Ram Mandir in Ayodhya is a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Rama built at Ram Janmabhoomi, the birthplace of Rama. The temple is a testament to religious faith and an architectural marvel in the modern world. It's also a symbol of India's spiritual heritage and the enduring legacy of Lord Rama, the "Maryada Purushottam" meaning "a respected gem among men" or "the perfect man".

The Ram Mandir is a turning point in India's cultural history. It's a symbol of the ability to protect self-respect and liberate society from injustice and atrocities. This Shri Ram Temple reflects the cultural and spiritual heritage associated with Lord Rama and holds immense cultural and religious significance for the Hindus. The very grandeur of the temple structure echoes and mirrors the richness

of the ancient Indian civilization. Lord Shri Ram Mandir is a colossal structure of architectural marvel of modern times that emanates the divine vibes and waves that cannot escape anyone's spiritual self.

This Hindu Holly temple is a three-story structure built in 70 acres of land, with 70% green area. Has 392 pillars and 44 gates. The main sanctum will house a child form of Lord Shri Ram, and the first floor will feature Shri Ram Darbar. The doors are made of Teak-wood and gold plated. The idols are made up of 60 million years old Shaligram Rocks, brought from the Gandaki River in Nepal. The Temple Bell is made of Astadhatu (Gold, Silver, Copper, Zinc, Lead, Tin, Iron and Mercury), weighs 2100 Kgs and the sound of the bell can be heard up to a distance of 15 Kms. The temple consists of 5 Mandapas: Nritya Mandapa, Rang Mandapa, Sabha Mandapa, Prarthana Mandapa, Kirtan Mandapa. Within the temple complex there would be several other structures and temples dedicated to other Hindu Gods and the ancient temples structures already in the complex would all be renovated and rebuilt to stunning new architectural standards.

The Ram Mandir built after long legal altercation, along with being a testament to religious faith, Shri Ram Mandir stands as

an architectural marvel of modern times. As a living testament to the spiritual heritage of India and the enduring legacy of Lord Rama, this temple will go a long way in making Ayodhya the spiritual capital of India and the world.

Yes, Exactly, Ayodhya the spiritual capital of India and the world!. That's what the Indian government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is all upto. India's Hinduism despite being one of the world's largest practiced and accepted religions, does not have a revered place to converge on. It is all scattered across the country. Majority of others have. For Muslims it is Mecca-Medina. For Christians, Vatican City. For Sikhs, Amritsar. And now for Hindus, Ayodhya! Wow! That's futuristic vision of PM Modi!

To keep pace with the expectations of the Hindu devotees, Ayodhya city has been developed on global standards, cleanest, wide roads, all walls across the city painted beautifully depicting the images of Hindu Gods, host of Hotels, Inns and Guest Houses, super efficient and effective city passenger commuter system, among others, and to top it all an International Airport, a global standard Railway Station Junction and Interstate Bus Terminus. Opposition is failing to read between the lines. It's all advantage BJP-NDA all the way!

VASAN SILENT!



GK Vasan is worrying about his and his party's future direction to choose, with 2024 general elections just a few months away! After making entries and exits from the Congress Party, he currently is the President of the regional political outfit, Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC). Vasan has been a Rajya Sabha Member and served as Minister in the Union Government under UPA 1 & UPA II regimes of former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, including as a Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Union Minister of Shipping and as an In-charge Minister for Labour. Vasan, 59, the son of the popular Tamil Nadu Congress leader GK Mooppanar, was born into a very affluent agricultural landlord family in Tanjavur district in Tamil Nadu. Some of his political achievements are interesting. He took charge as Chief of TMC after the demise of his father Mooppanar in 2001 to become the youngest President of any regional political party then.

In the same year in the 12th Tamil Nadu State Assembly elections TMC won 23 of the 32 constituencies it contested under Vasan. Soon in the same year Vasan merged his TMC with Indian National Congress to become the youngest Tamil Nadu State Congress Committee President. Later in an alliance with DMK the Congress contested and won all the 10 seats it contested under his leadership. It was in recognition of this political poll feat that the congress party nominated him to the Rajya Sabha.

However, owing to differences, Vasan once again split from Congress to reestablish his earlier party, TMC, founded by his late father G K Mooppanar. Since then Vasan has been actively touring the districts in a bid to connect with his supporters and workers

to tell them TMC is back in the region. However, political observers view that his popularity rating has come down drastically owing majorly to his political affiliation cross overs.

Some loyalists close to him also said that he was trying to establish a connect with the ruling BJP to support them in a bid to get a national role as a Union Minister again. But, they say, this did not work out as the BJP leaders are experienced and know what to expect from whom and what's the swing sway factor of a regional leader towards the voters. However, sources said that the BJP is not averse to having TMC as an ally in its BJP-NDA grouping, suspecting that his loyalty may not be absolute to BJP-NDA combine. It is also said that Vasan has been trying to reestablish a connect with the congress again but that those near and around Congress senior leader Rahul Gandhi, and majority of the party workers in Tamil Nadu does not like him and don't want him in any active role back in the party. Some old loyalists of TMC view that Vasan does not enjoy the age old magical connect either with his own TMC party workers or the leaders of either Congress, DMK or BJP. Cordiality of Vasan with the workers, voters and the political leaders have all dwarfed over the years making one wonder the political future of Vasan and his TMC in the political power game, in the complex political jungle web of today where it is the power rule of BJP-NDA combine that the Congress-UPA or say the newly formed opposition grouping is trying to play the much delayed catch-up game. Where is that G K Vasan whom one knew as a young magical politician and why is he silent, despite having an active regional political outfit and his vast political experience in various roles in different governments and political parties?

Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) founded in 1989 exclusively for the Vanniyar caste in northern Tamil Nadu has been having alliances with BJP and congress on an on-and-off basis, driven by opportunism of different nature and categories.

Dr Anbumani Ramadoss, son of PMK founder Dr S Ramadoss, rose to prominence as an aggressive leader of the Vanniyar caste after 2010. Though his PMK now is a part of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, NDA, since 2014, he was with the Congress-led UPA alliance too earlier when he was the Rajya Sabha Parliament Member in 2004. A Ramadoss was the Minister of Health and Family Welfare then in the First Manmohan Singh ministry as a part of the UPA-1 government.

He was then elected as Member of Parliament in 2014, the lower house of the Parliament of India from Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu as a part of BJP-NDA combine alliance.

PMK's aggressive protests damaged the image of both the party and its supremo Ramadoss due to which he lost the 2016 Tamil Nadu State Assembly elections even after he was declared the Chief Ministerial face of PMK. Later he also lost the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

He became a Member of Parliament from Dharmapuri Lok Sabha Constituency in 2014 as a part of the NDA with Bharatiya Janata Party, but lost badly in 2019 LS electios. But consequently he has been elected to the Rajya

PMK UNDECIDED



Sabha again with BJP-NDA alliance support.

A Ramadoss, current president of the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) a political party that was founded by his father Dr S Ramadoss in 1989 for the Vanniyar caste in Tamil Nadu, has been pursuing overly aggressive protests and stand on its touted issues for the Vanniyar community.

As a Union Minister in the earlier UPA-1 PM Manmohan Singh government he was caught in a host of controversies, especially with the AIMS top management, including the public spat and sacking of AIIMS Director Dr P Venugopal who was one of the most celebrated and country's foremost cardiologist. Ramadoss also was alleged to have parked himself then in the AIIMS guest house for over 3 months against the rules and conventions of AIIMS and allegedly started interfering with the day-to-day affairs of India's foremost premier medical institution.

There were also several allegations of misappropriation and mismanage-

ment of budgeted funds and promoting select few choice officials, random vendetta transfers, promoting and favouring select health sector issues and businesses for personal gains. There are allegations from his own PMK and also his then ally Congress workers and leaders that he is only using the alliance banner to promote his own personal interests. However, Ramadoss remained, though arrogant, but popular leader among his community that his party PMK stood for.

A Ramadoss was expecting several favours in the form of central roles in the government, his PMK being a BJP-NDA ally. But Prime Minister Naredra Modi's BJP government went on with its own preset agenda. Loyal and honest party workers say that the BJP knew that his rise to popularity was solely due to the blessings of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister late M Karunanidhi, BJP knew whom to favor and when and kept Ramadoss in tenterhooks, but never offered him any central positions knowing well that his entry would antagonise many and create more controversies.

All said, the honest and loyal workers say that their boss is in total dismay and overly concerned about the future, what if the current government continues? PMK got its wakeup call a decade ago!

CHINRAJ NOT FAVORED BY DMK

KMDK's AKP Chinraj, its lone MP from Namakkal, is appearing to be losing the special favour he received from DMK in Tamil Nadu during the previous general election. In 2019 KMDK aligned with DMK and fought as an ally of UPA and hence was given the LS ticket from Namakkal by DMK. Chinraj fought the elections on the DMK symbol, 'Rising Sun'.

Kongunadu Makkal Desiya Katchi (KMDK), a splinter party of Kongunadu Munnetra Kazhagam (KMK) with a vote base mainly concentrated in western districts of Tamil Nadu and has just One Member of Parliament from Namakkal Lok Sabha constituency in Tamil Nadu. The party has 4 district councilors and 10 union councilors.



KMDK is considered a Gounder based caste outfit with its presence in western districts of Tamil Nadu i.e. Kongu Region and hence KMDK Chief considered a leader Kongu region, of the Gounder community.

Chinraj is soft spoken and low profile, but is vo-

cal about the cause of his community issues. As a Parliamentarian, he was not much heard nor was seen to be proactive, but with decent attendance in the Parliament.

He lying low profile has become a disadvantage for him, as people have started considering him a weak politician that he is not. It would serve him good if he becomes more vocal in the parliament and lets the world know of his presence and the issues of the community he is championing.

With the 2024 general elections just a few months away, it would be to his advantage that he becomes proactive in this political bastion that the DMK would not be able to say no to him for his re-nomination to his LS constituency.

HATRICK DPP

Taiwan national elections was one of the closely watched polls as China was wishing a change in the Taiwan leadership. Just before the elections, Taiwan accused China of an unprecedented campaign of poll interference after Beijing threatened new trade measures against the island.

Current President Tsai Ingwen, the much loved President ever of Taiwan, legacy continues. She was not allowed to contest for the 3rd term, prohibited by Taiwan law. Lai Ching-te labelled as China's 'troublemaker' and who was denounced by China as a dangerous separatist, wins the Presidential elections.

In an apparent rebuff to China, Taiwanese voters swept the ruling Democratic Progressive Party's (DPP) Presidential candidate Lai Ching-te into power, strongly rejecting Chinese pressure to spurn him, as China said it would not give up on achieving "reunification".

Lai's party, which champions Taiwan's separate identity and rejects China's territorial claims, was seeking a third successive four year term, unprecedented under Taiwan's current electoral system. Lai vowed to stand up to China, but also sought dialogue with them in line with the wishes of the Taiwanese people.

Lai, the current Vice



President, was facing two opponents for the presidency - Hou Yu-ih of Taiwan's largest opposition party the Kuomintang (KMT) and former Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je of the small Taiwan People's Party, only founded in 2019. Both conceded defeat.

In the run-up to the elections, the opposition party, Kuomintang, warned voters that choosing Lai Ching-te could lead to unrest. Lai, on the other hand, said he is committed to preserving peace and the status quo across the Taiwan Strait and boosting the island's defences. He also pledged to try to engage with China.

Lai had told reporters the election would serve as a "testament to our commitment to democracy", adding that China's alleged interference in this election was the "most serious" yet.

POPULAR HASINA

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has secured her fourth straight term in a controversial election with the main opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) boycotting the poll. Bangladesh PM Hasina will serve another five years in office after her party the Awami League and its allies won 225 of 300 parliamentary seats contested.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed Sheikh Hasina and congratulated her for her 'historic win'. In a telephonic conversation, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Sheikh Hasina for her historic fourth term win in the recently-concluded Bangladesh general elections. PM Modi also congratulated the people of Bangladesh for the successful conduct of elections. "We are committed to further strengthen our enduring and people-centric partnership with Bangladesh," he said.

Sheikh Hasina is all set to return as the Bangladesh Prime Minister



as her party, Awami League, was declared winner in the results of the 12th Bangladesh general election. Securing a fifth overall term, the 76-year-old politician has been governing the South Asian nation since 2009.

Earlier in the day, Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka Pranay Kumar called on Sheikh Hasina and conveyed the greetings on behalf of his country. Ambassadors from other nations, including Russia, China, Bhutan, the Philippines, Singapore and Sri Lanka also called on the Bangladesh premier and pledged their continued support to Bangladesh.

Bangladesh now is one of the fastest-growing economies in the region, even surpassing its giant neighbour India. Its per capita income has tripled in the last decade and the World Bank estimates that more than 25 million people have been lifted out of poverty in the last 20 years. It is also the world's second largest garment producer after China. But the economy spun into turmoil in mid-2022 following the pandemic and a global economic slowdown and the country was pushed back dismantling majority achievements, but successfully wriggling out of this economic slowdown.

RETURN OF TOBGAY

India's key ally and neighbor Bhutan has held the General Election, as economic crisis hits 'national happiness' index of this tiny Himalayan Kingdom.

Both the contesting parties committed to a constitutionally enshrined philosophy of a government that measures its success by the "happiness and well-being of the people", not GDP or growth.

The picturesque Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan went into general election with serious economic challenges calling into question its longstanding policy of prioritising "Gross National Happiness" over growth. Foremost in the minds of many are the struggles facing the kingdom's younger generation, with chronic unemployment and a brain drain of migration abroad.

Tshering Tobgay of Bhutan's liberal People's Democratic Party (PDP) is set to return as Bhutan PM after liberal PDP wins elections led by Tobgay who has won 30 seats in the 47-member



parliament or National Assembly, with the rest of the seats going to the Bhutan Tendrel Party (BTP).

PDP leader Tshering Tobgay, 58, who was Prime Minister from 2013 to 2018, is set to become the new premier for a second five-year term. Tobgay campaigned on the promise of boosting the economy and reducing unemployment rates, despite the country's constitutionally

enshrined philosophy of measuring success in terms of "Gross National Happiness" instead of gross domestic product (GDP).

India is Bhutan's biggest donor, and while the Himalayan nation has no ties with China, it is in talks with Beijing to resolve its border disputes with them. The negotiations are closely watched by India, which has its own border dispute with China.

ECONOMY WORRIES ANWAR

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia's Prime Minister and Finance Minister Anwar Ibrahim has announced a major cabinet reshuffle and promised to focus on the economy, health and education amid growing public concern about the country's economic situation. The cabinet rejig will increase the size of the cabinet to 60 ministers and deputies compared with 55 previously.

Malaysia's Anwar Ibrahim has revamped his a year old cabinet, as the public worry about dipping economy and are of the opinion that the country's economy is losing its direction. Anwar promises to focus on economy, education and health as he splits up ministries and creates new posts.

Anwar has been leading a so-called unity government, made up of his reform-minded coalition, former rival UMNO and other smaller parties, since hard-fought elections in November last year. But his support has waned amid frustration among his supporters at the slow pace of reform and broader concerns about the state of the economy. A survey published last month by the Merdeka Center, a local polling firm, found 60 percent of Malaysians felt the country was going in the wrong direction, with nearly four out of five identifying the economy as the nation's biggest problem.

CORPORATE BUSINESS

60 Crore In 3 Months Fraud!

Two College dropouts from Gujarat made Rs 60 crore in just 3 months and would have continued their free illicit money run, but their luck ran out as the Mumbai Police zeroed in on them quickly based on a victim's complaint.

Online fraudsters are mushrooming across the country, fearless and freely siphoning out several hundred thousand crores, day in and out, victimizing lakhs and lakhs of innocent, but greedy, common men. Here is yet another "Complete the Task" fraud where the victim is asked to click on a YouTube link and do simple tasks like, 'like and subscribe' or 'write a simple review' and the likes.

Two college dropouts from Gujarat, Rupesh Pravikyumar Thakkar, 33, and Pankajbhai Govardhan Oad, 34, have been arrested for cheating people through online scams, whom they had lured with offer of huge easy money for doing simple online tasks. Fraudsters majorly are using WhatsApp for initial lure messages to innocent prospects, once targeted victim in net, Telegram is used for communications and YouTube for completing the tasks. The victims in this case also are majorly teenagers, youth and those from lower middle class, who were lured with jobs and investments, promising them fat salaries, bonuses and also high minute-to-minute returns on their short-term tasks initially, and later on



their lured investments mostly running into few minutes to an hour.

The Mumbai Police stumbled upon the scam while probing an online fraud case of Rs 2.45 Lakh. The victims of these two fraudsters runs into crores of people spread across the country. The police said that the money in small to big amounts have been deposited by victims from across the country majorly using UPI and very few using NEFT payment systems.

As per the report, the police found Rs 1.1 core in their bank accounts and froze them. On further investigations they found that the fraud duo had cheated thousands of others to the tune of Rs 60 crore. But despite their arrest, the kingpin, Alex, of the racket remains at large. Police suspect him to be hiding in London.

The scam came to light after a 19-year-old student of VJTI, Krish, complained to the Mumbai police. Krish lost the money he had been given by his parents for his

expenses including college fees, food, hostel charges, et all. He said that he had come across an offer for online jobs and was "hired" to write restaurant reviews. He was offered a basic salary of Rs 10,000 per week and had to work for only an hour or two a day. The fraudsters had also promised him a bonus of Rs 3,000-Rs 5,000 which would be settled daily. All payments were to be made and received only through online payment and banking channels. Additionally, Krish told the police that a woman called Maria asked him to invest Rs 1,000, for which she said he would get a profit of Rs 300. She apparently said if he invested Rs 2,000, he would earn Rs 600, and on an investment of Rs 3,000, he would earn Rs 900, all instant, in few minutes. "Krish invested Rs 1,000 and after the completion of the task, he received a message that he had earned a sum of Rs 1,650 against his investment. In various installments Krish invested Rs 2.45 lakh, and he got messages of his earn-

ings, but when he tried to withdraw his earnings he was unable to do so," senior inspector Deepak Chavan of the Matunga, Mumbai, Police station said. The police sought help from cybercrime officials before nabbing the two accused.

Mumbai Cyber and Crime Police cell sleuths team led by Chavan along with Sanjay Pardeshi, Santosh Pawar and others started tracing the bank account into which Krish's money was transferred. They found it was in the name of a company which had been closed. The fraudsters had opened all the traced bank accounts with forged and bogus documents.

33 debit and credit cards, 32 bank accounts all over India, six high-end mobile phones, 28 SIM cards, rubber stamps, fake agreements and various other discriminating documents were recovered from the raids at places of these two frauds.

These two fraudsters are just one of the many pawns in the hands of the Kingpin, Alex, who is believed to be operating from abroad and currently holed up in London. The police have still not been able reach him to apprehend. Online frauds are increasing uncontrolled with no fear of getting caught. Shockingly, the most touted to be secure online payment systems of UPI and NEFT are being freely misused to commit frauds. Finance Ministry, Reserve Bank of India and other involved payment pro-

cessing and settlement agencies are surely concerned and are trying to evolve mechanisms for early detection for financial frauds and booking of culprits. But it is not enough to be concerned and do just talking. This has to end quickly as it involves siphoning off of hard earned money of innocent citizens.

The resolutions should also include educating the people not to become greedy for quick money and fall prey to these frauds who will use one trap or the other. People should be educated that money does not grow quickly or automatically and takes time to grow. People should be educated to differentiate between quick money growth promises of fraudster schemes and higher return government recognized schemes like mutual funds and SIP which are also speculative but are lesser risk-oriented and more so fully transparent.

But more importantly, the government should evolve laws making space for fast track court processing financial fraud cases and stricter punishment for the fraudsters without any leniency of any sort. The financial strain of a person leading to non-commitment of financial promises and intended commitment of financial frauds are sea apart. Financial frauds should be treated on par with heinous crimes like murder. A real murder could end few lives but financial frauds claim the total death of livelihood and mental sanity of crores of people at one stroke of unearthing of a financial fraud. Government and its agencies should think serious on financial frauds.

ERODE A POLLUTION CITY

Erode the city of textiles and hosiery is becoming a pollution bomb. Erode in Tamil Nadu is located on the banks of the Kaveri river and is surrounded by the Western Ghats. Erode is the seventh largest urban agglomeration in Tamil Nadu. Erode meaning two streams, this city possibly gets its name originating from the two water streams, Perumpallam and Pichaikaranpallam Canals.

Erode is the city of textiles, hosting large number of dyeing units. It is a textile hub specializing in handloom and knitwear. Erode is also among the largest producers of best quality turmeric. Erode is home to a host of food products manufacturers, including the poultry and coconut products.

Other major industries include leather processing, paper manufacturing and sugarcane processing. There are several small and medium-scale industries like dal mills, cotton mills, vanaspathi manufacturers, wax, screen printing, and

printing presses are located in the city. In short this is a city of buzzing commercial activities for varying businesses, but textile and textile dyeing being one of the major revenue earners for the government and the local population.

Kalingarayan Canal, a 90.5 km long irrigation canal in the Erode district, constructed by Kongu chieftain Kalingarayan in an amazing wave pattern to reduce water damage to the canal banks and increase the ground water table, irrigates approximately 15,743 acres of agricultural land. The canal's source is the Kalingarayan Anicut near Bhavani. The canal connects Bhavani and Noyyal rivers, two major tributaries of the Kaveri. It is one of the oldest river linking projects in India. The canal begins at Kalingarayan Anicut on Bhavani river and joins Noyyal river near Kodumudi. The canal crosses three other canals via aqueducts namely Sunambu canal near Suriyampalayam, Pichaikaranpallam

Canal near BP Agraharam and Perumpallam Canal near Karaivaikkal.

Erode falls under the river and green belt area. Its environmental fabric is being shattered especially by the mushrooming textile and leather industries who all operate without following the pollution control norms. The affluent waste is drained into the canal without being treated. Solid waste are simply littered around the canal and river beds polluting the canal water and the farm land with hazardous waste.

Due to the high industrialization in Erode, a vast number of textile dyeing units and leather processing units have come up in the city and its surroundings. Most of these units discharge their untreated effluents into this canal leading to high pollution, causing several severe health issues to the public.

Chennai Silk's SCM Mills is alleged to be the leader of pollution in the city. It is alleged that they, in contravention of the prescribed

pollution waste treatment guidelines and mandatory processes, the hazardous untreated wastes from the factory are directly drained into the Kalingarayan canal, allegedly during the night hours when the city literally sleeps.

It is being alleged that the companies and units in Erode are flourishing despite flouting all pollution and other set norms with the connivance of several unscrupulous officials including the site engineers and other related department officials. It is only natural that with such a large scale commercial activity rampant corruption becomes a close ally of the wrong-doers in their quest for making huge illicit money. It is alleged that the officials-businesses-polity-police collection agents collect a whopping amount of over Rs 1.5 crores every month with the booty being split between the illicit money stake holders.

The neighboring city of Thirupur, yet another hub for textiles, especially the hosiery items, is nothing better, where pollution and rampant corruption have be-

come a part of daily life.

It is alleged that none of the complaints filed against this pollution leader firm have seen any action from the administration, as the officials are alleged to be on the payroll of SCM Mills owner Paramasivam, highlighting the rampant corruption fanned by this firm in the local administration and polity. The environmental issues have seen several protests since it heavily damages the underground water potential and agriculture in this area. All these allegations need to be investigated by the relevant agencies. People now demand that multi-corner action need to be taken immediately by the Pollution control board, Green Tribunal and the vigilance agencies to investigate the illicit money minted by the corrupt and the greedy businesses like Chennai Silk's SCM Mills and several other such units who are flouting the prescribed norms. People are also looking for action from the District Collector to save this city from becoming another pollution bomb and a hub for corruption.

₹500 CRORE SAHITHI LAND SCAM

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) attached Rs 161.50 Crore worth of properties of Sahithi Infratec Ventures India Private Limited and its managing director, B Lakshminarayan, former director, S Purnachandra Rao, their family members and related entities in the alleged Rs 500 Crore real estate scam. The properties include both immovable and mobile assets.

The real estate firm is accused of intentionally delaying land acquisition, permissions, and or physical execution of the projects with an intention to defraud those who paid the company. In April 2023, ED had searched the offices of the Phoenix Group, another real estate firm, as part of the investigation.

ED initiated attachment proceedings under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) based on the cheating cases registered by the Telangana police against the Sahithi Infratech and

its promoters.

Sahithi Infra had promised delivery of flats and villas to around 655 buyers in the name of different real estate projects but allegedly defrauded them all. ED investigation has revealed that Sahithi Infra collected more than Rs. 250 crore from customers for its 'Sarvani Elite' project at Ameenpur village alone, among other projects. The company that was to deliver the completed flats and villas gave nothing to them. Neither they were capable of returning the money as all the collected amounts have been misappropriated and siphoned off to personal accounts.

ED probe further revealed that the real estate firm paid Rs. 32 crores to Omics International Limited with an agreement in 2020 for the development of nine acres of land held by Omics International in Ameenpur Village. However, Omics International transferred only two

acres of land amounting to Rs. 3 crore to Sahithi Infra, and was in possession of the remaining Rs 29 crore which should have been returned by it to Sahithi. ED considered Omics was in possession of the proceeds of the crime.

ED investigation also revealed that Sandu Purnachandra Rao, former director of Sahithi Infra and the then head of the sales and marketing team misappropriated Rs. 126 crore collected from customers. Around Rs. 50 crore collected from customers in cash between 2018 and August 2020 was part of misappropriated money.

Further investigation has uncovered that S Purnachandra Rao owns immovable properties worth crores of rupees either in his name or in the name of his family members or entities, which were acquired by him mainly after resigning from Sahithi Infra by laundering the proceeds of crime.

JAPAN DEVASTATED

Tokyo: Japan has been shaken by yet another killer earthquake measuring 7.5 magnitude in the richter scale, considered a very strong earthquake. Japan woke up to a severe earth quake on the New Year day. Several hundreds killed and go missing after the severe earthquake Japan experienced recently. The 7.5 magnitude quake destroyed and toppled buildings, caused fires and knocked out infrastructure on the Noto Peninsula on Japan's main island Honshu, just as families were celebrating New Year's Day.

The powerful quake flattened parts of central Japan. Even after a week after the earthquake, thousands of rescuers were battling blocked roads and poor weather to clear the wreckage as well as reach almost 3,500 people still stuck in isolated communities.

With heavy snow in places complicating re-

lief efforts, almost 30,000 people were living in around 400 government shelters, some of which were packed and struggling to provide adequate food, water and heating. Almost 60,000 households were without running water and 15,600 had no electricity supply. Road conditions have been worsened by days of rain that have contributed to an estimated 1,000 landslides.

Japan experiences hundreds of earthquakes every year, though most cause no damage because of strict building codes in place for more than four decades. But many structures now have become older, especially in rapidly ageing communities in rural areas like Noto. The country is haunted by the monster quake of 2011 that triggered a tsunami, left around 18,500 people dead or missing, and caused a nuclear catastrophe at the Fukushima plant.

VEGETABLE SELLER TO ONLINE FRAUDSTER

A 27-year-old Vegetable and Fruit seller earned Rs 21 crore (US\$ 2.8 Million) in 6 months by offering fake work-from-home jobs was arrested by the Uttarakhnad Police recently. The fraudster Rishabh Sharma was directly involved in 37 cases of fraud that were registered in 10 Indian states including Gujarat, Punjab, Delhi- NCR, Telangana, Maharashtra, UP, Delhi, Karnataka and Bihar, and played key roles in over 855 other cases. He allegedly worked for international cartels and funneled the money to countries like China, Singapore, and Hong Kong through hawala and cryptocurrency.

A few years ago, the fraudster was selling vegetables and fruits in Faridabad, Haryana. Like most other businessmen, he also incurred massive losses during the pandemic and had to wind up. For the next few months, he took up various jobs, including WFH jobs, to sustain his family.

How did he con people? He met an old friend who was already involved

in orchestrating online frauds. In just six months, since he started committing frauds, he netted Rs 21 crore. Sharma first created a fake website of "Marriot Bonvoy", marriotwork.com that was similar to the original website of the hotel chain, marriott.com. Police said that fraudster Rishabh Sharma made calls from a stolen database provided by his unseen bosses from abroad. He then would send them WhatsApp messages and lure them into the scam. Those who responded to them were tricked into the investment scam. For instance in this case, a businessman from Dehradun, Uttarakhand, got a Whatsapp message, regarding a work-from-home opportunity about a part-time job to write reviews for the "Marriot Bonvoy" group of hotels. Since the offer and the website seemed genuine, he called on the number provided with the message. A man identified himself as Rishabh Sharma, a representative of Marriott Bonvoy. He introduced the victim to his colleague Sonia, who

claimed to be an associate of one of the hotels of the group, the complaint filed stated. Sonia took on from there. She sent links to the victim and started communications through Telegram group and the victim businessman was asked to write favourable reviews for the hotel on the website (fake) and also answer questions from guests and customers, again all fake. The victim, after few initial payments of gain through his ICICI Bank account, the victim was enticed to invest for huge quick returns. The victim said that every time he would ask for returns, they would persuade him to invest more, saying the profits could run into at least a crore to start with. After a while, they stopped responding to victim's calls and messages and switched off the numbers. The businessman had already invested over Rs 20 lakh by then with the fraudsters.

Police are also probing allegations that Rishabh worked for cartels based abroad and routed money to countries like China, Singapore and Hong Kong

through hawala and cryptocurrency. He started carrying out frauds only six months ago and pocketed over Rs 21 crore, most of which is believed to have come from the hefty commissions he earned from these international gangs. He was an agent of one of the international gangs. Usually, these agents don't have any information on the actual mastermind who smartly operates remotely from a remote overseas location using these fraud agents. Many online frauds that sought to target people with WFH offers, YouTube 'likes' and 'subscribe' and other such schemes had links with gangs in China, Singapore, Hong Kong and Dubai. These gangs employ "agent" in India to open multiple bank accounts where the stolen money is initially parked and then route these illicit money to other countries through hawala and cryptocurrency.

As such frauds gets unearthed and as investigations goes on and on, one wonders how come the fraudsters use almost the same techniques and

still the now educated common man falls prey to their traps all the time. While these frauds initially appear genuine, but leads to total death of livelihood and mental sanity of affected victims when such scams unearthed. These have to stop instantly. One wonder if the age old paper-based transactions were better and less prone to frauds of strangers compared to online frauds where the scammers and victims never know each other.

One would observe that all the online fraudsters use the same means: initial enticing message through WhatsApp, once in net communications through Telegram groups and links for tasks are those of YouTube. Payments are through the UPI and RTGS/N EFT systems. When all frauds are happening through these, then it should be easier for the investigating agencies to go to the depth of these chat tools and the loopholes in the digital payment systems to evolve lasting solution to deter these frauds from committing crimes.

MEGA 9 LAKH Cr MINING SCAM

JITENDRA KUMAR DAS
A mega Rs 9 Lakh Crore Mining scam in Odisha has been exposed. This massive scam has happened between the years 2000 and 2014. This is the value of rare natural resources, majorly minerals like iron ore, manganese, etc, illegally mined, meaning thereby the bureaucracy-mafia-polity nexus have caused this mammoth loss to the Odisha government exchequer. This possibly could be one of India's largest ever mining scam. Opposition parties highlighting the loot of the state government exchequer have demanded high level CBI and ED inquiry into the whole mega multi-lakh core scam.

To understand the mining scam in Odisha it is important to know the basic structure and the modus operandi. It is all about illegal mining, flouting of rules with the CMO's endorsement and high-end corruption running into several thousands of crores. Several of the mining leases have allegedly been allotted to the relatives and friends of the Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Of the 196 mines leased, under direct supervision and intervention of the Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 176 mines are said to be located in the dense green forest zone. As per the provisions under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 no State Government or other authorities are allowed to permit mining in forest areas without prior approval of Central Government. Key Central Government's mining approvals in forest areas for State governments comes from Ministry of Mines and Ministry of Environment and Forests (MOEF).

These forest area located mines allegedly have been allowed by the CM Naveen Patnaik government, to be mined without any approval from MOEF. More shockingly at least 98 of these leased mines do not even have the approval and or Environmental Clearance (EC) from the Central

Pollution Board and department of Forests. These does not here. Of these illegally allowed mines, over 75 mines are extracting minerals, majorly minerals like iron, manganese, etc., in excess of the stipulated extraction per day tonnage. It is not just about illegal mining but destroying the environment. These mines operating without mandatory clearances have badly affected the natural water flow from the related rivers and its tributaries. Similarly, 31 of these illegally functioning mines are intercepting the Elephant Corridor project in Sundargarh, Keonjhar district. As these human interventions are flourishing minting illicit money, the elephants and other wild animals in the forest areas are finding alternate routes for their survival. Human settlements of the tribals, farmers and agricultural farms fall in their alternate survival routes and areas. Many lives are at risk causing loss to lives and crops.

The clean flowing river water has been badly polluted. The environment has been totally destroyed causing serious health issues to the habitants of the nearby areas like respiratory issues, cancer, etc.

All the MLAs of BJP have met the Chief Minister, Governor, Prime Minister and President and have also given a letter highlighting the issues related to mining flouting all rules and fanning endless corruption. Right across, one can observe that it is total corruption running into several hundred thousands crores for the illegal mining, even from restricted areas, that is being fanned, allegedly, directly by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). In fact many allege that the Chief Minister himself is directly involved in this historic mega mining scam. The lessees who are flouting the rules to mind the precious mineral wealth are not being penalized, but in fact encouraged as the illicit money flow to the polity is too inviting to be stopped.

Veteran Bharati-

CBI PROBE DEMANDED



ya Janata Party (BJP) Leader, legislator and Leader of the Opposition in Odisha Legislative Assembly (OLA), Jayanarayan Mishra took to the media to expose this historic mega mining mafia scam in Odisha, demanding immediate investigation by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

BJP leader Mishra also said that he has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, drawing his attention to the open loot of rare natural resources, mineral of different types, a mega Odisha mining scam to the tune of Rs 9 lakh crore, under the very nose of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik government and has sought a CBI probe.

"Naveen Patnaik, Odisha CM of 24 long years, is the mastermind and solely responsible for this alleged mega mining scam which is considered as the biggest mining scam ever in India. After deep study on the subject from the relevant documents made available to me such as the committee and commission reports, interim court orders and other relevant documents, I draw this opinion," Mishra said. Mishra added that shockingly, CM Patnaik did not halt the renewal applications of all these mines even after the commissions and committees instituted to inquire into these illegal mining in Odisha had been submitted and contents revealed. In

this press conference, state spokesperson Manoj Mahapatra, state media coordinator Sujit Kumar Das were prominently present

Mishra said that without the blessings of the CMO the alleged mega mining scam involving such a massive amount running into several lakhs of crores could never have happened. Mining is being allowed by allegedly flouting all the rules and norms by the lessees owing to their alleged nexus with the Chief Minister. The whole scam involved a very complex web of processes like, among others, organising the tender and award of leases, involvement of few chosen bureaucrats; facilitating operations of mining of minerals without the mandatory approvals, managing transportation of the illegally mined materials, parking of the illegally looted minerals, managing legal hurdles, sale of these illegally mined minerals and illicit sale proceeds. All these cannot happen without the nexus of the officials right from district to state government and Indian Bureau of Mines levels, mines mafia and the polity.

The State's natural resources, mineral wealth, is being looted without fear and causing huge loss to the government exchequer. The whole environment has been destroyed. The mining mafia is being provided with legal cov-

er allegedly by the politicians and the conniving officials with the direct alleged involvement of the CMO.

All these cannot be just allegations. Why is the Chief Minister not initiating immediate action to halt these illegal mining if he is clean and not involved. People are not only demanding a high level CBI investigation but also want all these illegal mining to be immediately stopped at all costs.

The MOEF and Ministry of Mines are aware of all these. Why are they quiet and not taking any action against these illegal mining? Why is the Central Pollution Control Board and the Green Tribunal are afraid of taking any action against them? With so much rampant corruption being reported for so long what the internal vigilance and Enforcement Directorate are doing without taking any action against the culprit mine lessees and the conniving officials? Why and whom are they trying to protect or they are being pressurized to keep away? It is absolutely imperative that the nature's equilibrium should not be disturbed for commercial and personal gains at any cost. People are waiting for the agencies to intervene and take immediate action against the perpetrators of corruption, book the culprits, cease all their assets, and punish them all.