

# UNION TERRITORY INDEPENDENT

₹20

DECEMBER 16-31 2023

VOL . 33

ISSUE 12

NEW DELHI

PAGES 20

www.utindependentnews.in

US 50c | UK p50

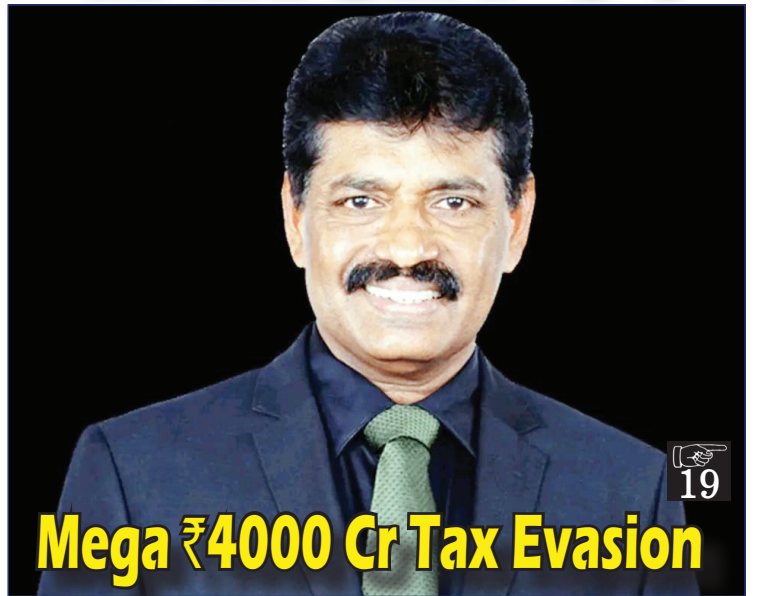


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UNION TERRITORY  
INDEPENDENT

# J & K MARCHES TO DEVELOPMENT

The long debate on the abrogation of Article 370 by the BJP government gets the legal nod. Now no one on earth can debate if Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. It was, it is and it will always be. Politicians had taken too much freedom and took undue advantage of Article 370 since 1949, few years after independence. This will bother some, but we as true Indians are not bothered about them. Now elections could be held and a true democratic nationalist government could be formed.

Repealing of Article 370 involved the Presidential Order, Resolutions in Parliament and promulgating Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act that bifurcated the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories, Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. So due process was done by the government.

India's apex court has unanimously ruled the removal of Article 370 as constitutionally valid. Five senior-most judges of the Supreme Court of India unanimously delivered a historic judgment upholding the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A as valid, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and that the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act of 2019 and the Presidential Order surrounding the abrogation is absolutely constitutionally valid.

Through its judgment, the Court has upheld the sovereignty and integrity of India, something that every Indian cherishes. The Supreme Court observed that the decision taken on 5th August 2019 to abrogate Article 370 which ended the special status of the erstwhile state of J&K, was done to enhance constitutional integration and not disintegration. The Court also recognised the fact that Article 370 was not permanent in nature and that Concurrence of the State Government isn't required.

The apex court also held that Article 370 was actually a feature of asymmetric federalism. The Court held that this cannot be considered as sovereignty for the state of Jammu and Kashmir. There has been a long heated debate relating to the abrogation of Article 370, but the apex court of the country has expressed its firm verdict on this, quelling all negative debates. Article 370 could have had devastating effects if would not have been repealed.

Advantages for Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh are many. The government would be able to implement programs without any hindrance in uniformity with those of other State those include and also effectively address: Integration and Development, National Security, Ending Discrimination, especially against women, Dalits, and other marginalized groups in Jammu and Kashmir, Transparency and Accountability, Economic Prosperity allowing for greater investment, development of tourism, and job creation in the region.

The Impact of Article 370 Abrogation are in front of everyone. These never could have been thought of before. The results are heart warming for an Indian state that went through bad times since independence. Let us look briefly at the changes those have taken place and the advantages this region has been experiencing since the abrogation of 370. List long and primarily includes: Decline in violence which according to official data, the number of terrorist incidents has decreased by over 50%, Improved Economic Development and unhindered implementation of government schemes without any class, creed, caste, religion or status bias and more so Enhanced Infrastructure development, Increased Tourism that brings in more revenue to the government and private enterprises.

The Election Commission of India has been directed by the Chief Justice of India to conduct elections for the Jammu and Kashmir assembly by the end of September 2024. This would also mean the statehood would be restored soon. The recent judgment by the Supreme Court has not only upheld the principles of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat', but it has also served as a powerful reminder of the importance of unity and a collective dedication to good governance. This decision showcases the court's commitment to strengthening the fabric of our nation and reinforcing the values that define us as a society. All Indians should be proud that there would no more be any debates casting doubts on J&K, which is and will ever be an integral part of India. Now Kashmir can feel and breath real freedom that was denied to the people of J & K since independence.

S H A Badshah

# RIISING FAKE MEDICINES



Spurious goods are not new. But there has been an alarming rise in fake, counterfeit, medicines. This is playing with the health and lives of the people. This needs immediate attention by the government and its vigilance agencies to curb this rising fake medicines run in the market.

These fake medicines manufacturers, in Benami company names with fake licenses and forged documents, flourish with the help of their marketing professionals and unscrupulous wholesalers. Of course these fraudsters develop a complex of web of fake medicine distribution channels that would take long time for the agencies to track and throw their noose around the actual perpetrators of such fake medicine makers and dealers. Many times fake medicine makers just push their fake medicines with fake batch and other manufacturing details, along with the original brand medicines in which case detection of spurious medicines becomes more difficult.

Recent catch of lakhs worth of fake antibiotic medicines by Gujarat State's Food and Drugs Control Administration (G-FDCA) authorities in Gujarat is just the tip of the iceberg. In the raids conducted by G-FDCA across cities in Gujarat, hundreds of boxes of different types of fake antibiotic medicines were seized.

Four persons were arrested. Some of the people from whom the drugs were recovered were working as medical representatives of benami companies and providing it to doctors. The interrogations and investigations by the agencies has revealed a complex web of distribution network. Since they were not able to provide more details, they have been handed over to police after registering a case against them.

The FDCA carried out the raids, acting on a tip-off. A case has been registered with the police in the fake drugs racket case under the provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

As per an official statement by H G Koshia, Commissioner, FDCA, Gujarat, following a tip-off, the FDCA officials had conducted a raid at the home of a man identified as Khimaram Kumhar, a resident of Khadia area in Ahmedabad. Hundreds of boxes with spurious antibiotic medicines, cash and indiscriminating documents were said to have been seized by the sleuths.

In the primary investigation, the drugs were found to be manufactured by a company, M/s. D G Pharmaceuticals, in Himachal Pradesh. However, when cross-checked, it was found that no such company exists in Himachal Pradesh.

During his questioning, Kumhar named another accused, Arun Kumar Amera of the Vatva area, from whom he had purchased the drugs. Meanwhile, Amera told the FDCA authorities that he bought the drugs from one Vipul Degda. When a Food Inspector traced Degda's residence, they found several boxes of the fake antibiotic drugs. Degda informed FDCA officials that he got the fake drugs without bills from a man he identified as Darshan Kumar Vyas, a resident of the Navrangpura area of Ahmedabad. Vyas has denied the claim. On examination of Degda's phone and other seized, it was found that he supplied fake antibiotics to various doctors and medical stores without bills in different cities of Gujarat. Further investigations are on, G-FDCA officials said.

In another recent instance in Kolkata, The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) East Zone conducted raids after

getting a complaint from Sun Pharma Laboratories Limited regarding the selling and storage of suspected spurious (counterfeit) of their products. In the raid CDSO seized several crores of rupees of Counterfeit medicines of leading manufacturers like Sun Pharmaceutical, Alkem, Cipla, Glenmark, GSK, Abbott, Novartis, Dr. Reddy's, Aristo of reputed brands like Augmentin, Pan-D, Pantocid DSR, Urimax-D, Clavam. These spurious medicines were seized from unlicensed premises situated at 82, Mou-lana Shaukat Ali Street in Kolkata.

Fake medicines is a multi-billion US\$ trade. These are just few to mention only of those getting caught frequently dealing in spurious medicines. The ones flourishing in the fake medicine trade are far too many compared to those being caught. These fraudsters are playing with the lives of millions, as they flourish until they are caught either on a tip off or complaints direct from the affected or a whistleblower. It is known for years that the market is full of counterfeit medicines, especially of the premium brands and high priced and or fast selling medicines.

The culprits are not just of the makers and the distribution channels of these spurious medicines, but also the conniving officials driven by quick money greed, who keep this fake medicines industry always flourish. This should stop instantly. Government should frame very stringent laws that the very thought of the punishment should deter the fraudsters. It is for the investigating agencies to find ways to detect them instead of waiting for someone to complain or a tip off. It is necessary to develop a data mining and analysis fusing it with information gathered through smart human intelligence.

# Lessons From High-End SECURITY BREACH



Country and the Lower House of the Parliament was left rattled, on the anniversary of the 2001 Parliament attack, after a meticulously planned dangerous security breach unfolded in the Lok Sabha while proceedings were ongoing. It is a great relief that nobody was harmed in the security breach in Parliament. However, it is a tragic coincidence that the breach occurred on the same day as the deadly and tragic Parliament attack in 2001. Terrorists of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed outfits attacked the Parliament complex on this day in 2001, killing nine people outside the Parliament.

In two separate incidents, happened on the same day and almost at the same time, two men, both carrying smoke canisters jumped from the visitors' gallery and ran into the Lok Sabha chamber. In the other incident, a man and a

woman were detained outside Parliament, also with coloured smoke canisters that exploded and spewed red and yellow smoke. This overly serious and dangerous security scare was not an impromptu act but the result of a carefully crafted plan that had been in the works for over a year, the arrested suspects revealed during questioning. The breach was orchestrated by a group of six individuals, of whom two managed to infiltrate the Lok Sabha chamber. During Zero Hour, they leapt from the public gallery, discharged yellow gas from canisters, vociferously shouted slogans.

The mastermind behind the plan was Lalit Jha, identified as the sixth accused in the case who is on the run. While the chaos ensued inside the Parliament, Lalit Jha was tasked with filming the disturbance from outside and more so in the heat of the moment, as the situation

escalated, Lalit Jha fled with the mobile phones of all involved, ensuring no immediate communication could be traced back to them. This is sounds absurd. How a guy could just run away with his camera and cell phones of all the accused and arrested right through the nose of the security personnel and the Delhi Police? This means in addition to the security breach, the personnel on duty also were not alert and spontaneous in their action. This is yet another dangerous situation.

Irrespective of the facts of this incidence as to who did it, why they did it, we have to learn as to how they did it and look at the impact and review loopholes in the security of India's Parliament House that houses the top law makers while in session.

Should this have been a sinister design and if the gas emitted would have been poisonous or have had the capacity to explode at a given

time, it is beyond imagination what could have happened. Parliament hosts the law makers of the country during the session days. The house always has several VIPs including several ministers, and even Prime Minister, inside the house. If anything sinister would have happened, the country would have gone into an anger mood. This could have given rise to a public commotion leading to country-wide violence. It is soothing that nothing serious happened. But this needs introspection and deeper review of the security arrangements in the Parliament House and also in all places hosting sensitive personalities.

After the 2001 parliament attack by a group of terrorists, the security scenario was revamped and several checks introduced before anyone enters the House. Several advanced technology have been introduced in the security checks. Sever-

al security rings have been put in place. All thought that all were in place and our Security system is now full and fool-proof. But the current security breach incidence has proved all these wrong. The security system in place now does have several loopholes. They all need to be plugged.

Investigation by a high level committee is good, but that is not the important point now. The need of the hour is to analyse the ways the intruders used, the loopholes they made use of and plug all of them instantly. This is a case not just of domestic or internal security, but also points at impending danger to our country.

The National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is an adept in security issues. He and Home Minister Amit Shah should quickly pull up their sleeves, get to work and beef up the security at all points to a real full-proof mode.

# KEJARIWAL GROUNDED

The recent 5 State election results has shattered the dreams and dampened the future of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) boss Arvind Kejariwal. Of the 5 States, AAP contested in 3 Northern States. It fielded its candidates in 205 assembly constituencies. Aam Aadmi Party lost in all the 205 constituencies it contested in the Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh elections, failing to secure even 1% of the vote in any of the 3 states it contested. Just losing is different, but all its candidates lost their deposits too, speaking volumes of the popularity of the self-touted clean man! Ahead of next year's general elections, the results are a setback for a party that rules Delhi and Punjab, and nurtured ambitions of doing well nationally. AAP contested 66 seats in Madhya Pradesh, 85 in Rajasthan and 54 in Chhattisgarh, losing in every seat and all their candidates losing their deposits. In Madhya Pradesh, the party bagged just 0.53% of the vote, lower than even NOTA (0.98%), while in Chhattisgarh it got 0.93%. In Rajasthan, the party got just 0.38% of all votes. Arrogant and a vacuum speaker as he has been, Kejariwal said the results were not weather-vanes ahead of the 2024 general elections. Referring to the landslide win of BJP in all the 3 heartland states, Kejariwal said this is however not reflective of the mood of the nation for Lok Sabha. AAP, a constituent of the newly formed Opposition's 28-party grouping, now has lost its sheen in the group with these electoral losses. All know that he won Delhi and Punjab purely on Freebies politics and when these two States were in different situations. Kejariwal as such is neither a good politician nor a good administrator. In fact he is the only Chief Minister in the county who does not hold any portfolios, and hence has hardly anything to sign. Caught in a web of several scams, from Liquor to Jal Board scams, he is only running to be away from the grip of the ED and CBI to escape detention, which he feels will happen going by the scale of these scams. His close aids languishing in jails for the past few months on money laundering cases. All the Delhi government public utility departments are running on per day losses. For instance the Delhi Transport Corporation is incurring a loss of Rs 9.8 Crores a day. Kejariwal literally has become an empty vessel, making only noises, but nothing inside. In all Kejariwal has been reduced and fallen from grace so badly that his and his party's future has become a question mark for himself. It is said majority of the AAP MLAs are concerned at the lost image and are said to be looking for other banners for the next elections. A sad and unfortunate situation for AAP's Kejariwal.

# TRANSSHIPMENT HUB IN ANDAMAN

Centre is evaluating developing a mega Bulk Cargo Transshipment Hub in North Andaman's Atlanta Bay. The Indira Point, the southern most tip of India will be developed as a major tourism destination. Considering the strategic location and other facilities available the Indian government is assessing the feasibility of developing a mega Bulk Cargo transshipment hub, and developing this into a major harbor, in Atlanta Bay near Diglipur in the Andaman and Nicobar (A&N) Islands. The hub is part of the Galathea bay project, worth ₹44,000 crore, and is on the route from East and North East India to East and South East Asia, Australia-New Zealand countries, and construction materials to Bangladesh and Myanmar. Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal announced the highlights of this project under consideration for quick plan implementation and to develop the southern most India as a major global tourism destination. As per the Maritime India Vision 2030, it is planned to develop Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) islands and Lakshadweep Islands for tourism and other initiatives. Currently a jetty with 5m draft allows berthing of inter-island vessels of 4m draft.

Once developed, travel time between major ports in Andaman and Kolkata will be reduced from 72 hours to 15 hours, the Minister said. The Atlanta Bay has a natural draft of 19-20m, there is availability of natural break and it is well connected by road, the Ministry said in a statement adding sufficient land can be reclaimed from the sea.

This transshipment hub is on the route connecting East and Northeast India to East and South East Asia, countries in the Australia-New Zealand region and is also on the route through which coal, sand and other construction materials, as well as iron ore are transported to Bangladesh and Myanmar. Once operationalised, the bulk cargo transshipment port will give a further boost to the Indian economy as well as to India's neighbours. The proposed port is 565 km from Yangon, 765 km from Sittwe [Myanmar], 1,000 km from Chittagong, 1,100 km from Kolkata, 1,000 km from Barisal [Bangladesh], and 80 km from the Coco Islands where the Chinese have a defence base.

On Thursday, Mr. Sonowal took an aerial survey of the International Container Transshipment Port (ICTP), a Sagarmala Project being

developed at Galathea Bay, and also visited Indira Point, the southernmost point of India's territory at Great Nicobar Island of A&N Islands. He directed officials concerned to explore the possibility of developing the Indira Point area as a tourism destination and develop required tourism amenities and facilities for the same, the Ministry said.

There are 58 projects worth ₹7,622 crore in A&N which are being monitored under Sagarmala programme and 15 projects worth ₹469 crore funded under Sagarmala and Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS). All projects are being implemented by Andaman Lakshadweep Harbour Works (ALHW). Eight projects worth around ₹211 crore are funded by Sagarmala; four projects worth ₹216 crore are funded under CSS; and three projects worth around ₹42 crore are funded by Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA). One project worth ₹13.5 crore has been completed; four projects estimated at ₹173 crore are under implementation; one project worth ₹26 crore is under tendering and nine projects estimated at around ₹256 crore are under development, the Ministry stated.

# Haldar Urges Administration

UT of Andaman & Nicobar island cluster's (A&N) remote locations and the geographic and demographic limitations of this territory are being unduly exploited by the private players. Sea routes are the only mode of economic cargo transportation to and from the mainland like Chennai, Kolkata and Vishakhapatnam and also the inter-island transportation.

The ocean shipping trade is a roaring business of the shippers and ship owners in this UT islands cluster as every single movement of human force or goods is totally dependent on sea transport. These are provided and run by private enterprises. There is no monitoring or control over their businesses or the rates being



charged by them.

For instance, earlier the per container charges were around Rs 25,000 to Rs 30,000. As against these earlier rates, the current per container sea shipping rates are touching and even going beyond Rs 90,000 per container. The sea shipping rates have witnessed three to four

times increase in the recent years. Despite several complaints by the people the shipping rates are only increasing with every passing time.

The transportation of vehicles plying between the mainland and Port Blair and from Port Blair to other and Southern group of islands i.e. inter-island transportation are also very high and are being hiked by the private players too frequently.

These rates are absurd and are abnormally on very higher side. This is one of the key reasons, why the prices of goods and essential commodities are sky rocketing in this UT islands cluster territories. The poor people are being subjected to more irony in their lives and they are unable

to bear the uncontrolled and unchecked increasing prices in every sphere of their lives.

If these are not controlled and or tangible solutions not evolved the woes of the island residents will keep on increasing leading to dissatisfaction and revolt against the government and the local administration.

The Andaman & Nicobar Democratic Congress President P K Haldar highlighting these pains of the people of the islands cluster has urged the Lt Governor and the Chief Secretary to intervene to set things right in the larger public interest of the islanders. Haldar has suggested and requested for the introduction of Government Cargo Ships to ply with high

frequencies between the mainland ports and Port Blair and Port Blair to other island areas as the only immediate bail out solution for the suffering traders and the people of this islands cluster. This will not only minimize the commodity and essential goods rates in the island, but also will dissuade the private shippers from fleeing the islanders.

Haldar has suggested and urged the Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal and the UT's Lt Governor and Chief Secretary to sanction enough number of cargo ships to be very frequently operated by Shipping Corporation of India with lowest shipping rates to benefit the island traders and the residents.

# Mohan Pradesh

New MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav's political career began with his first election as an MLA in 2013, and he was re-elected in the subsequent 2018 Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly election.

Mohan Yadav's influence within the state's political landscape was further enhanced when he took the oath as a cabinet minister in 2020, in the government led by Shivraj Singh Chouhan. Yadav, 58, hailing from OBC that accounts for over 48% of the States's population, is said to be close to the RSS ranks and its bosses. Mohan Yadav, son of a tea-seller, is well connected with the cadre of both RSS and BJP and has always been easily accessible to people of the state.

Hours after he was sworn in as Chief Minister, he got into action and announced several new initiatives. How much will he match the popularity of Chouhan?

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in a landslide victory cruised to a two-thirds majority in the Madhya Pradesh Assembly bagging 163 seats of the in the 230 seats Madhya Pradesh (MP) State Assembly, failing all the political predictions that BJP will have to slog against the Congress. Congress touted to form the next government in MP finished with meagre 66 seats.

Here too, it was the Modi magic again. The Modi, Shah, Yogi trio, the three man army swept the polls. Aam Aadmi Party all of whose candidates lost their deposits said that the election results are not reflective of 2024 polls. Simkilar to Ghelot of Rajasthan, In MP too, State Congress Party Chief Kamal Nath's experience or his touted hold on the voters did not work for the party.

Interestingly, in MP too the BJP fought the elections without projecting any CM face. Apart from Shivraj Singh Chouhan there were too many contenders for the top executive post. Possibly this strategy too worked too good for the BJP as the field was kept wide open for anyone to be the CM, once the elections are over. This made each and every leader to name worked overtime across the State to ensure a landslide victory for the party.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi of course was their lucky charm and magic wand to sway voters to their camps. But



it was all the way Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Jotiraditya Scindia show across the State right from the word go for the elections. Scindia's, who crossed over to BJP two years ago, image and reputation was at serious stake. He had to prove his worth to the party and his strength in his bastion. He worked hard with blitzkrieg campaigns across the full election time. His charm, oratory power and the love of the people in his bastion showered him with their full support. He emerged joyous with about 30-40 MPs winning from his bastion. This was commendable.

Chouhan's governance had several benefit schemes that did really reach the intended beneficiaries. Chouhan did a lot of work in the agriculture with MP being one of the most fertile grounds for mass cultivation. He phenomenally increased access to irrigation, a factor that had always been a burning issue for the farmers. During his tenure the irrigated land area doubled with full infrastructure developed all around for the farmers. This was one significant achievement that the voters realized and appreciated and with open heart voted for him.

Chouhan put in a highly effective and organized procurement system and ensured highest procurement prices for the cultivators, exceeding the Minimum Support Price (MSP), a model that UP's Yogi Adityanath has mastered. The procurement centres were not limited to mandis, but he spread them across the State near the field areas. Chouhan also gave away largesse to them. He transferred Rs 6000 to their accounts over and above the cash incentives the farmers are getting from the Central scheme which almost is same as what he gave from the State

funds. Farmers naturally were only too happy. They wouldn't want BJP to go.

Chouhan also is credited for doing a lot for the women folk. He did a lot to empower them. He announced a 'game changer' schemes like 'Mukhyamantri Ladli Behna Scheme', Mukhyamantri Kanyadan, 'Ladli Laxmi', among others which all translated to cash incentives for the women of the State. Women of the State were also only too happy to support BJP government in the state.

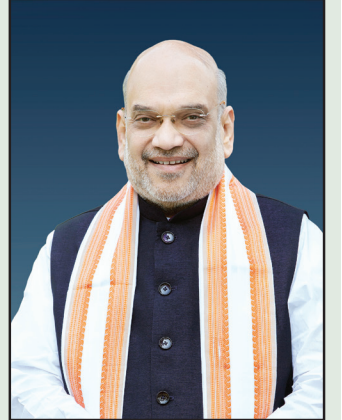
All these were not poll promises, but the ones Chouhan government implemented and the beneficiaries were in crores. With all these in his armory, it is no surprise BJP was voted to power again in MP. More so, BJP leaders, MLAs, MPs and the BJP and RSS cadre down the line were able to successfully tell the voters of their achievements and literally convinced and made them march to voting booths.

The choice of Chief Minister was another master stroke. Bringing in a new and young face in Mohan Yadav was incredible and unthought-of by the prediction pundits. In Yadav BJP has struck a deal with the Yadav community in UP and Bihar where they are in majority. Shivraj Singh Chouhan loyalist, by making Mohan Yadav the CM the BJP has also placated the outgoing CM should he develop any ill feelings and upped his spirits. The 2024 elections should see him at this best again.

Mohan Yadav also has two deputies, Dy Chief Ministers, in Jagdish Devda and Rajendra Shukla and former Union Minister Narendra Singh Tomar who contested the MP assembly elections would be the Speaker. It is all about Social Engineering and bringing in younger faces without annoying the senior leaders.

# SMOOTH Operator

It was Home Minister's oratory power again that silenced the opposition ranks in the Parliament. Armed With Data, Amit Shah Set the clear tone For 2024, and also clarified Centre's Position On Manipur. HM Shah said the BJP believed in "politics of performance and politics with uncompromising principles."



Home Minister Amit Shah this winter session, listed out the achievements of the Modi government in the past nine years, taking on his political opponents and also clarifying all the efforts made by the centre in addressing the ethnic violence in Manipur. In short it was a 2024 tone set smartly and wisely with anecdotes, appreciative arrogance, sarcasm and humor. He is an adept in all these. The Home Minister's speech was marked by the extent of preparation, nature of delivery and detailed rebuttals evidencing that he was aware of the questions opposition leaders had and would raise in the debate. He often quoted data for every claim, and contrasted every accomplishment with how the opposition handled the subject when in power. His speech was broadly divided into three areas - achievements of the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, political rebuttals and Manipur; but the underlying tone was the emphasis on national security and the attention that the government had paid to three turbulent zones of the country, namely Jammu and Kashmir, Maoist violence areas and the north-east. He said the government had actually taken extra care to ensure these zones were free from conflict and on the path to progress. While speaking on Manipur, unlike the other areas, HM Shah maintained a non-aggressive tone, somewhat also seeking support but also sounding optimistic to address the crisis. Just a few hours before he spoke in parliament, HM Shah had a long meeting with Manipur's hill-majority Kuki groups. Shah, who spoke for a little over two hours, possibly the longest ever of his in the Parliament, steered clear of politics over sexual crimes while speaking on Manipur, without any direct reference to rape cases in opposition-ruled states, calling the recent case of a rape and parading of a Manipur woman as shown by a viral video a "blot on humanity." Shah added that from changing the DGP (Police Chief) to sending a security adviser, to ensuring essentials, CAPF (Central Cops) and army personnel to Manipur, the centre has been working with all its might, untiring and facing created challenges for a just and lasting peace solutions. It was also HM Shah's sharpest political attack when he said he has records to prove that the highest number of communal incidents have taken place under the rule of former Prime Ministers. On the famous opposition maxim and thrust on 'garibi hatao' first, Shah said the problem with the opposition was that they only spoke while BJP government is getting everything done. Earlier in the day, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi launched a scathing attack on PM Modi during the no-confidence motion debate in Lok Sabha today. Mr Gandhi said the government has left Manipur "divided and broken". The popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi remained the centre point of Mr Shah's speech, which gave a glimpse into what PM Modi is likely to speak in parliament during this winter session.

# Vijayan Concern On WOMEN HEALTH

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has announced that the government has made plans ready to vaccinate women against cervical cancer. CM Vijayan has said the state has decided to launch steps to vaccinate women against cervical cancer. Kerala CM Vijayan has said the state will devise an effective model to provide vaccines to women against cervical cancer. Vijayan said the vaccination drive will be carried out in a model similar to that of developed nations. He was speaking at the inauguration of the new cancer specialty block



of Ernakulam General Hospital. "Latest studies about our state suggest that around 7 lakh people above 30 years of age in the state are likely to have cancer. Among these, the most common is breast cancer. The

data also indicates that cervical cancer is also on the rise. So we have decided that in the model similar to developed countries, we will initiate steps to give vaccinations to resist cervical cancer," he said.

The chief minister said the state was taking strong steps to fight cancer. "As a part of our mission to fight cancer, funds were allocated separately for three main cancer centres in the state. At the same time, a lot of innovative facilities have been brought to the Regional Cancer Centre in Thiruvananthapuram and the Malabar Cancer Centre during this period," he added.

# REJECT DOWRY SEEKERS

Thiruvananthapuram Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has urged women to develop the courage to reject dowry-seekers. He urged young women to be bold to reject marriage proposals if the groom or his family demands dowry and move on.

"Avarodu than podonnu parayanam (say a strict no to them)," said CM Vijayan at a press conference after interacting with invited guests as part of the start of the Ernakulam leg of the Navakerala Sadas public outreach programme of the Cabinet at Angamaly.

Stating that the Kerala Government has taken a serious view of reports that a 27-year-old woman Dr A J Sahana, a postgraduate doctor at the Government Medical College Hospital in Thiruvananthapuram had committed suicide owing to distress over dowry demands, CM Vijayan urged society to support the fight against dowry. The government will ensure stringent action as per the law against those demanding dowry, he said.

Women need grooming to say 'hell with you' to dowry seekers, say men-

tal health experts.

The experts are worried that the families often do not oppose dowry outright, but only recognise it as a problem when the demands become unaffordable.

Despite high academic achievements and financial independence, women in Kerala find it challenging to implement Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's suggestion to respond with a firm 'poda' (get lost) to suitors and or their families demanding dowry. Recent deaths among educated middle-class women following dowry demands raise alarming concerns about a potential trend.

However, mental health experts and social activists are not surprised by the situation where bright women and men succumb to challenges in life.

"Shahna is just a symbol or a representative of the youth who lacks the resilience to deal with adversities in life, despite education. Her suicide should not be seen as that person's weakness. It is the index of the weakness of the system that brings up the youngsters without necessary life skills,"

said a senior psychiatrist at Medical Trust Hospital and a member of the State Mental Health Authority.

Dr E A Ruwise, who is accused of backing off from the marriage for dowry, is also a representative of the problems faced by youths. A person who doesn't want to comply with evil practices become a helpless victim if the social order is like that.

Anishia Jayadev, president of Centre for Film Gender and Culture Studies emphasised the importance of early grooming to tackle the challenges. "When we live in a world where the women have no avenues to address the concerns, such incidents are inevitable," she said.

Kerala CM Vijayan's advise to women need to be taken seriously and the society activists and the government should take instant initiatives to educate women and bring in the needed courage to say no to such evil demands. The centre and the states should frame such stringent laws against dowry that the dowry seekers should shiver in fear and dissuade them from such demands.

# UNFIT VENU

Congress Party never is and has been in learning mood from their failures. The Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge also has not been active in re-vamping the party as if the 2024 elections are not any importance to him nor the party. The same Rajaji Marg hand wave situations appear to be continuing. The appointment of K C Venugopal as AICC General Secretary (Organisation) has never been welcomed or accepted by a major section of party workers. The organizational position is a very important portfolio of the party and such sensitive jobs should be given to responsible, committed and party-passionate leaders and to the ones who believes in partying all the time, say honest and loyal workers of the party. Many are at a loss to understand how a person like Venugopal who has criminal cases against him, with key charges of rape and playing with the modesty of women in the Solar scam Kingpin case, was given this responsibility that involves overseeing the party across the country. His key handicap is also lack of Hindi knowledge. Just throwing few English words here and there does not do any good for the party, say the loyalists. The loyal and party-passionate workers and leaders say that nothing good for the party has happened since Venugopal was appointed the Party General Secretary to look after organizational functioning. He never visits party office, never interacts with workers or anyone except the high profile men in business.

The Congress workers and the leaders in Kerala are accusing AICC General Secretary (Organization) K C Venugopal for ruining the party in the State. Despite the fact that Venugopal has been damaging the party not only in Kerala but also in other states, Rahul Gandhi has elevated his position by appointing him AICC General Secretary (Organization) and later on ensured his entry to the Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan. Problem is not really with him, but his greed for power. He wanted to be the CM of Karnataka that did not happen. The surprising part is that the high command and especially Rahul Gandhi, depends on him for political advice. It is unfortunate.

With a well-thought plan, Venugopal advised Rahul Gandhi to contest from Wayanad in Kerala



during 2019 Lok Sabha Elections. It ensured defeat of Rahul Gandhi in Amethi as the electorates thought that Rahul Gandhi is not serious about Amethi. Actually, Venugopal thought that if Rahul Gandhi will emerge victorious from Amethi, he will retain Amethi and by-elections will be held in Wayanad from where he will contest but the plan failed as Rahul Gandhi faced defeat in Amethi. However, he got success to ensure a Rajya Sabha berth from Rajasthan despite the fact that a large number of Congress leaders opposed his nomination. A senior leader of Kerala said that Venugopal is not a mass leader but by doing housework of veteran Congress leader late K Karunakaran, he achieved the ladder of success. The post of organizational secretary needs able and party passionate mass popular leaders who know the pulse of the workers and supporters at the grass root level and not those who use the party banner for personal gains. He is useless and the high command must sack him," said the leader. When Venugopal was AICC in-charge of Karnataka, he, in nexus with the BJP, damaged the party adversely. "He used to visit state capital and stayed star hotels partying. The party workers and leaders are of view that his continuation in the party is not good for the party's future prospects. He must be removed," say majority congress workers and leaders. Just keeping the top boss, especially, Rahul Gandhi, serves no good for the party. Instead of being seen with the Party President Mallikarjun Kharge, his efforts always to be with he congress supremo. It is Congress President who needs support from senior leaders to take the party ahead and ensure a great performance in the 2025 elections in the midst of issues and challenges. But this is not happening. The President is left alone to perform, which is not justified.

# STOP BJP

Country will be in danger if BJP wins 3rd term said Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan warned that the country would face an 'insurmountable danger' if the BJP returns to power for a third term, accusing them of trying to destroy the country's diversity. Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan warned that if the BJP comes to power for a third time, the country would be in an "insurmountable danger" and there would be no point in regretting it thereafter. Attacking the BJP-ruled Centre as well as the RSS and Sangh Parivar, Vijayan accused them of trying to destroy the diversity in the country and create a nation based on religion. The Kerala CM claimed that communal clashes were taking place in the country based on cows, the kind of food

that should be consumed and by depicting one group of citizens as enemies of the nation. He contended that everyone, irrespective of his or her religion, caste or creed, is entitled to equal protection of law, but that is being changed in the country. All this has created fear and apprehension among minority communities, the CM claimed while speaking at an event in North Kerala district.

"The country has realised this fact and public opinion is that this danger has to be avoided. Therefore, a unified front of secular-minded groups and people has been created with the aim to defeat the BJP and ensuring it does not return to power for a third term," the Kerala CM said.

He said that the BJP had also realised that a third term may not be possible. The CM added that this



realisation has led them to take some dangerous steps as indicated by some recent incidents. Vijayan said the recent raids by various central agencies in four opposition-ruled states in the country "show how the BJP is going to respond to the changing circumstances".

"More such actions can be expected from them, but it would not be sufficient to change or sway the people's mind. The unified front to defeat the BJP is strong and needs to be strengthened further," Kerala CM Vijayan added.

# VOICE OF VISWAM

CPI's Binoy Viswam blasted BJP on the bills related Election Commission of India (ECI) saying they are to hoodwink the public and sabotage democracy in the country. Referring to the ECI related bills, Viswam said that the BJP wants to convert ECI into a 'Goat In Their Farmhouse', indirectly referring to ECI is a puppet in the hands of BJP and its bosses.



Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023 is a ploy by the BJP to sabotage democracy and ensure that only one party continues in power, said CPI Parliamentary Group Leader Binoy Viswam during the discussion on the Bill in the Rajya Sabha today. Viswam further said that the Bill goes against the legislative intent of the Constituent Assembly. Through this Bill, "the BJP wants to make the Election Commission a goat in their farmhouse", he added. Only the previous day, the members of the BJP were enthusiastically upholding the verdict of the Supreme Court in the Article 370 matter. It took them less than 24 hours to forget the Supreme Court, that is the nature of the BJP, Viswam added. Dr Ambedkar was quoted by many of the members of BJP but only to dilute what he said. It's clear that the makers of the constitution wanted the Election Commission free from any kind of control by the Executive. In their greed for power, BJP is reversing that and brining the ECI fully under government control.

BJP speaks of Dr. Ambedkar but follows Hitler's footsteps. Hitler came to power through parliamentary system but his hatred to parliamentary democracy was such that he conspired to set fire to the Reichstag (German par-

liament). BJP is also against parliamentary democracy and they are trying to sabotage it internally. Free and fair elections are not important for them. In a meeting of the BJP Karyakartas in 2018, Amit Shah said that if the BJP wins the 2019 elections, they will continue in power for 50 years. This Bill is an attempt to fulfill that vision and to keep BJP in power, Viswam quoted. Binoy Viswam also raked in the issue of steady decline in vacancies in Public Sector Banks. Attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, Viswam said that Job openings in Public Sector Banks have seen a sharp decline since the Modi regime came to power. In response to a parliamentary question by CPI Parliamentary Group Leader Binoy Viswam regarding the vacancies in Public Sector Banks, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance Dr Bhagawat Karad's written reply showed the steady decline in recruitment public sector banks. The advertised job vacancies at the clerical level fell from 27538 in 2019-2020 to 12009 in the year 2022-2023, which is less than half the jobs in four years. In order to perform well in the highly competitive banking sector, it is crucial for PSBs to have efficient and regular recruitment processes.

Out of the 136,377 jobs advertised for the post of of-

ficers, clerical and sub-staff, only 123,781 have been recruited from 2019 to 2023. According to the IBPS data, 8.49 lakh applications were registered for clerical jobs in 2021-22 alone. As against this only for 17475 jobs were advertised and far lesser were recruited. This massive mismatch between job-seekers and number of jobs available exposes the hollowness of the Modi Government's claims of creating jobs as well as their apathy towards public sector Banks. From the year 2016, Government has also capped management level hiring for public sector banks, even after bank employee associations and state banks urged the Government to relax the cap for employment as it will boost efficiency.

PSBs are the channel of delivery for all government schemes but the government is choking them by depriving them of manpower and using their funds to benefit cronies. Responding to the answer, CPI MP Binoy Viswam stated that "the Modi Government is trying their best to harm public sector banks. They have failed in creating jobs as their own data is telling.

They are neither truthful to the youth of the country nor to the public money. The stability of the Indian economy during the 2008 recession was attributed to the efficiency of the public sector banks but the Government is trying to destroy the time-tested institutions. Indian banking sector is a source of employment and with 40 percent of the applicants being women, it is also a source of social justice and opportunity. Government should deal with PSBs in a just manner and should not keep them short-staffed. The youth of the country is yearning for stable jobs and the government should pay heed to it, added Viswam.

# TARGET-30



Left front parties are already in 2024 top gear mode. Left parties draw their strength majorly from the Trade Unions and the leftist-oriented thinking youth. Many NGOs are associated with the left front. The left parties have decided to become proactive to stop the unstoppable 3rd term march of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They are working out their detailed campaign plans to disrupt the BJP designs to grab the 3rd term at the centre.

It is understandable that the left front with their close allies would all work together towards meeting their larger common goal, if not to dethrone BJP, at least reduce their MP counts in the forthcoming elections. Left parties have come together to garner at least 25-30 seats in the 2024 general elections.

Their minimum Target-30 march has already received a head start with Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's Cabinet on Wheels yatra covering all the assembly constituencies in the State.

It is all important for the left parties to corner minimum 25-30 Lok Sabha seats in the 2024 elections to keep its upper hand for bargaining in the newly formed opposition grouping I.N.D.I. alliance after the elections and in case the alliance manages to get the numbers to form the government at the centre. In a bid to strengthen its foothold and outreach to the people of Kerala to ensure it bags the maximum LS seats in the forthcoming crucial 2024 general elections, Kerala CM Vijayan had come with and successfully implemented a brilliant mass public outreach events-filled programs based state-wide yatra termed "Nava Kerala Sadas" (New Kerala Meeting). This follows his earlier state-wide public outreach program where he went in for review of government program and schemes and their implementation status across the state. The left party leaders have already started mobilizing their cadre in their bastions ahead of the forthcoming gener-

al elections. Their cadres are being trained to mobilize support for the left front and the intricacies of booth level management.

Leading Left party leaders like CPI-M's Sitaram Yechury, CPI's D Raja, Dipankar Bhattacharya of CPI-ML, among others are coming together to work in tandem with each other to accomplish their key objective to garner maximum number of LS seats. They are all working to be on the same page, meticulously planning to challenge the onslaught of the Modi wave that is becoming powerful across the country.

Trade Union leaders are connecting with their respective affiliated left parties on strategies to mobilize their cadre and their plans to expand their cadre strength. Left fronts are prominently stronger in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Bihar to name a select stronger few.

Left parties are dependent on the Kerala Chief Minister Vijayan's moves to strengthen his hold on his state electorate. Vijayan is one who is bold, outspoken and a firebrand leader who is adept in pre-planning to mobilize the cadre and supporters and leave a lasting left party brand image in the minds of the electorate. Vijayan is hopeful that the left would win at least 15 seats from Kerala alone. Then there is West Bengal and also Bihar and Jharkhand where CPI-ML hold is much stronger.

Left party MPs are the most active in parliament with maximum attendance and are the ones who keep raising issues after issues for quick resolutions by the central government. Left MPs are those Parliamentarians who are outspoken and fearlessly fight for the cause of the people promoting their brand of ideologies.

Left parties are silently working towards their minimum Target-30 objective. Once this accomplished the Left would be in a stronger position to sway decisions in the newly formed opposition grouping and even in the government.

# PBMC DACOIT?



UT of Andmand & Nicobar Islands cluster (A&N) is one of the most remote areas of the country that is receiving most attention under the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which otherwise had remained the most neglected territory despite its strategic importance to India, from military and economic standpoints.

Being a remote territory and also comparatively smaller than other UTs, anything that happens here takes time to come to the fore in public glare. Rampant corruption has been routine affair in this UT, despite the efforts of the Lt Governor and Chief Secretary and other honest senior officials who have been working overtime to set the Administration right and ensure benefits of development percolate down to the common man, majorly being the tribal population.

A&N cluster's hygiene and sanitation is one important function of the Port Blair Municipal Council (PBMC), which is the only Urban Local Body in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

its main functions are, among others, to development and providing basic amenities, street lighting & water distribution and maintenance of public streets, roads, drains, providing drinking water facilities including providing water tankers in the town and sub urban areas, maintenance of public conveniences, waste management, providing civic amenities Public Health, hygiene and Sanitation, implementation of poverty alleviation programs of the government, approvals and regulating construction activities.

Sanitation is one area, everywhere across the

country, where fraudsters find abundant space to earn illicit money at the cost of the government exchequer. Sanitation is no small job for any administration. A&N cannot be far away from corruption and illicit transactions in the name of keeping the townships and dwellings clean for the sound health of the people.

It is alleged that there is one official in Port Blair Municipal Council who is said to be openly and fearlessly fanning corruption through illicit transactions of vendors. Sanitary Inspectors wield huge powers in this Municipal Board. Sanitary Inspector is the overall in charge of all sanitary aspects of the area placed under his charge. He is literally the boss to supervise the work of Sr. Sanitary Supervisors and the entire team under him including the outsourced agencies and vendors. His prime profile also includes taking suitable steps for keeping the drains cleared of solid and other wastes and also to be responsible for regular cleaning of the sea beach and seashore of the town area. As said earlier, sanitation is one of the key jobs of the Municipal Board. Here comes the interesting role of one of the Sanitary Inspectors in this island's Municipal Council. It is alleged that one of the sanitary department official, an Inspector, Vijay Tiwari, is said to be ruling this area fanning corruption and making huge illicit money using the loopholes in the administration. He sure has accomplices too, per the allegations leveled by the people in this island cluster. The PBMC has divided the area into 24 wards covering about 41.22 sq.km having a population of around 1,40,572. The division by 24 wards is for ease of management of areas covered by the municipal council. This involves picking up the daily waste and separated by defined categories of waste and dumped in designated sites, against proper municipal authority receipts and certificates. These jobs are outsourced. To perform this task the outsourced agencies are approved to deploy 4 waste collection vehicles in each ward. Here is where the foul play action starts.

There are 24 wards with 4 waste pick up, or say collection, vehicles with approved staff for each vehicle. The outsourced agency is paid a contracted amount per vehicle per

day for the contracted waste collection, separation and eventual dumping in the waste dump yard. This means a total of 96 waste collection vehicles are to be deployed every day for the designated job.

Here comes the alleged active foul play role of the outsourced agency in connivance with the said Sanitary Inspector Vijay Tiwari. It is alleged that instead of the mandatory deployment of 96 waste collection vehicles, not even half the required number of vehicles are deployed. It is alleged that only around 20 to 30 vehicles ply for the said sanitation job purpose. But the certificates and daily receipts are allegedly given for the full deployment of 96 vehicles instead of the actual 20-30 vehicles those are in reality being used.

The outsourced agencies submit bills for the full permitted 96 vehicles, bills passed and amounts transferred to the outsourced agency in payment cycles per the municipal board's practice and rules and regulations. This literally means that the outsourced agency allegedly gets the extra payment for 66 -76 vehicles those were not deployed at all. It is alleged that this extra payment received is split between the outsourced agency and the said Sanitary Inspector. This allegedly amounts to a huge amount in running into several lakhs of rupees per month.

Such is the alleged rampant corruption and illicit transactions in PBMC in the garb of cleaning the city in this remote islands cluster. This sure is just the tip of the iceberg. Why the vigilance officials have still not acted on this huge illicit siphoning of government exchequer? Who are all protecting this "khuda mafia" in this remote UT islands cluster? Who are pressurizing the Chairperson, Sr Vice-Chairperson and Jr Vice-Chairperson from taking any action against this corrupt official and his accomplices in this government money loot? It is also being alleged that this official has been in this position for the past several years without getting a transfer. How come? Will the Chief Secretary of the Administration take note of this and initiate inquiry into this alleged malpractice and end this loot and also suspend the alleged official and book his and his accomplices for penal action against them?

## Tribal Supari Farmers BEING LOOTED !

The woes of the poor Supari, known by its common names Betal Nut or Areca Nut, growers of UT of Andaman & Nicobar islands cluster have increased in the past few years. Their income have drastically dwarfed owing to illegal import of these nuts from neighboring countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand to name a few. The spurious goods and smuggled goods mafia Raj is on the rise in this island cluster affecting badly the livelihood of the poor farmers and original goods dealers in this remote UT island cluster.

The Supri, or the Areca nuts or say the Betal nuts growing has been dwindling in this island cluster owing to unchecked large scale illicit import of this cultivated item from across the borders through sea routes that the smugglers consider as safe smuggle transport avenues.

Earlier one truck load of this Supari item used to cost around Rs 5 lakh and the Supari growers used to get a decent amount that kept their interest in this supari cultivation going. But over the past few years this cultivation is seeing a downward trend owing to smuggled supari that costs just about a small percentage of the usually traded amount. In addition the arrogance of the corrupt GST officials, considering this a milking item, demand lakhs of rupees as bribe to release the supari containers shipped out of Andaman & Nicobar islands. This again is discouraging the traders from buying locally resulting in very low yield prices for the ultimate cultivator, the poor farmers. They buy at very low prices but sell them at highest prices thereby depriving the supari cultivators their just yield buy price. They are simply being looted. Ironically, the Administration is not taking up the GST issue with the officials of the States of shipment release making this a economically unviable trading with the islanders as the buyer has to pay huge bribes

in addition to paying the demurrage charges of port warehouses. Supari growers are only hoping to get this resolved by the Administration soon to help them carry on with their cultivation for their livelihood. UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands cluster is fast becoming world's one of the most favored tourist destinations. Despite several fast-paced development projects, personally monitored by its able Chief Secretary, this remote islands cluster faces innumerable challenges, the most disturbing being the illegal migrations and smuggling. This remote UT faces threat to their internal security, majorly through non-conventional threats such as illegal migration from littoral states of the Bay of Bengal, poaching of marine and forest resources, arms and narcotics smuggling through uninhabited islands. These add the woes of the islanders hosting majorly tribal communities and generations of those who have reached this island clusters and have made their permanent homes.

Illegal migration and free-for-all smuggling has been inflicting large scale damages to the economic vibrancy of this UT. Smuggling has become rampant, unchecked. Apart from the agri items, drugs and counterfeit and illegal import items are flourishing with smugglers mafia controlling whole illegal movement of these goods. Drugs smuggling which was on the rise already has reached its heights compared to the size of this islands cluster. Drugs smuggling is also affecting the lifestyle of the youth, eating away their career and lives. Youth are falling prey to these drug-lords in the islands. It is time the Administration took bold initiatives to curb this smugglers run in this island cluster. People are looking up at the Chief Secretary and of course the LG to intervene, book the culprits and put an end these illegal activities and save the youth and the farmers of this UT islands cluster.



## Agent Randhawa !



Congress had to face yet another electoral loss in Rajasthan, especially when the all crucial 2024 general elections are just a few months away and it is important that the grand old party fairs well to gain the lost glory and national limelight all over again.

Here too a Congress Party State in-charge is being blamed as the root cause for the electoral loss in Rajasthan, say Congress party loyalists who worked hard in the state election campaign. Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, the ex-Punjab Dy Chief Minister, 3 times Punjab Congress MLA and the Congress Party in-charge of Rajasthan, appears to be the party defeat cause. He is known more only for creating controversies with his speeches just to impress the party bosses. Sukhjinder Randhawa stoked controversy with his contentious remarks against PM Modi, claiming that he must be finished in order for the country to be saved, calling for his figurative death as a politician, while addressing a rally in the poll-bound Rajasthan few months ago. Party loyalists complain that he is hardly interested in the party affairs and that his full time functions is just to impress the top super bosses. Right from the day Randhawa was appointed the Congress Party in-charge of Rajasthan, the Congress Party leaders and workers in Rajasthan were unhappy are said to have been totally dissatisfied with his appointment a State in-charge. Congress party loyalists claim he has never been active in party politics in the State. In his own constituency in Punjab, the party loyalists note, that he hardly interacts with party workers and supporters and never gives heed to the peoples' problems in his area. If this is true, what to talk about Rajasthan for which he is the in-charge.

It is alleged that Randhawa never visits the

party office and never interacts with party workers and supporters. He also has never planned for or conducted any worthwhile activities to campaign for the party, while the BJP and even other smaller parties have started active campaign for the coming State and General elections, proactively. Congress will lag behind in popularity, the honest party workers fear, raising their genuine concern. But who is there to hear them? Honest party workers allege that he always ignores them and that he recognises and talks only with influential people in business and polity. This allegation speaks volumes of his inside story and nose-up attitude. Congress workers say that Randhawa has always been a controversial politician even in Punjab and none ever like him. They went on to say he was winning the Punjab Legislative elections with unimpressive margins and solely due to the Congress and Rahul-Sonia image in the constituency, which even otherwise has been a Congress stronghold for a long time. Congress workers say that anyone with Congress ticket will win in this Assembly constituency. Congress workers want their party bosses at the HQ to look into all these allegations and rumours and bring in someone honest and lovable as State in-charges, if the party really wants to win back the confidence and love of the people. Many allege that he has damaged the party image in the State and whatever little left of the image and reputation of the Rajasthan Chief Minister had been slowly eroded. If these are true to be believed, the Rajasthan loss was only natural. It is an irony that when the party bosses are slogging to revive the fortunes of the party, such narrow minded selfish motivated leaders are working for their own self interests and downgrading the party reputation in the minds of the party supporters that will only have ill effects in elections. The Congress Party President should review and strengthen the party at levels by bringing honest and hard working leaders to the fore, effect changed in the office bearers at party ad organization levels, including those from the younger generation, should he really wish that the grand old party regain its lost grounds across the country. He being a senior leader of vast experience and having risen from grass root level, he can do a lot to revive the party fortunes. Loyal leaders and workers are waiting anxiously for his bold actions.

## Selja Blamed for Defeat

Selja Kumari, the Congress state in-charge for Chhattisgarh is being blamed for the drubbing the Congress party receive in the recent assembly elections, where it lost to BJP, garnering just 35 seats in the house of 90 seats. Congress lost out on over 33 seats it contested to BJP and few other opposition parties.

Loyalists claim that Selja never was active in the State nor was she proactive to gauge the mood of the voters. When the BJP workers and supporters knew even much before election dates were declared, how and why the congress party state-in charge Selja missed out to read the undercurrents flowing in favour of BJP, ask the loyal workers who felt bruised at the party's defeat. Congress otherwise was predicted to win, albeit with slender majority. Selja, starting her political career rise as President of Haryana Mahila Congress, a three time Lok Sabha MP from Haryana, had been the Minister of State for Education in late Narsimha Rao government and later was the Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment in the previous Dr Manmohan Singh government.

After losing out on her LS elections in 2019, she returned to Haryana State Politics, a more greener pasture and was appointed the President of Haryana State Congress, much against the wishes



of the state senior leaders and workers of the party. As the assembly elections were announced, she was the Congress Secretary State in-charge of Chhattisgarh which was not received well among the senior leaders in the then state government and the party. Chief Minister Bhupesh Bhagel government as such was facing several corruption charges, with Bhagel himself having been named in the sensational mega Mahivir Betting App scam. Though the political pundits predicted a possible hung house with fierce political fight between the ruling congress and the challenging BJP in the State that saw BJP's state strongman Raman Singh ruling for 3 terms. When the going was not so smooth and easy for the Congress party in the State and with elections announced, she was never in mood to work seriously for the party, say the loyal workers. Selja as such was known to be arrogant, not easily accessi-

ble and more on partying sides rather than working at the grass root level to motivate the party workers and boost the morale of the state leaders. Her touted appreciations for having worked for the empowerment of women and the marginalized communities was not visible at all during the course of the recent state election campaigns.

Loyalists complain that her hard to get access attitude deprived the party workers and state leaders to converse openly and freely to let her know of the issues in countering the BJP onslaught whose machinery was in super top gear with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the campaign from the front with seamless duo support from HM Amit Shah and UP's Yogi Adityanath who along with every other BJP leaders were proactive and taking the state by storm with the aggressive campaigning. Should these be true, it is time for the party bosses to act bold.

It is a misfortune that the Congress party is not able to bring in honest and party-passionate leaders to work for the good of the party. It is time the Party President Mallikarjun Kharge pulls up his sleeves to rejuvenate the party by boldly replacing the older ones with honest, hard working, non-controversial and mass leader with strong grass root level connections.

## Useless Randeep

The recent electoral loss in Madhya Pradesh (MP) is majorly ascribed to the failure of Congress party in-charge for the state. There were concerns at BJP's aggressive campaign and Shivraj Singh Chouhan's commendable performance as the state Chief Minister. Modi's rising popularity, who was leading the BJP election campaign from the front, was also a great concern. The infighting within the party with dissatisfaction of Kamal Nath, especially after Joytiraditya Scindia changed sides.

MP is a large state with voters from all castes and categories. Such a state needed an effective congress leader with a winning steak mindset who could not only imbibe confidence and moti-

vate the leaders and the workers of the party and unite them together as a team to aggressively campaign for the party but also who could form campaign strategies. Unfortunately, per loyal workers of the party, Randeep Singh Surjewala was not of that required caliber for a state like MP. Loyal workers complained that Surjewala never interacted freely with anyone. A person whose rise in the party was owing to his closeness with the charismatic Haryana leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and a person who could not retain even his own MLA constituency naturally could not have been the best fit for such high profile job to work with great experienced leader like Kamal Nath



to steer the party to victory. This will certainly not work for the 2024 elections. It is for the Party President Mallikarjun Kharge to pull up his sleeves and decide if he should look for able, committed and party passionate leaders or would want to keep those who thinks are close to the top bosses to keep them in good spirits. Congress President needs to act fast and bold, with not much time left for countering the 2024 onslaught against BJP's all out poll aggression for Modi's 3rd term.

# DEO SAI SUCCESS



BJP has chosen a tribal leader to be the new Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, the State the Saffron party had pulled off a resounding victory wresting the State from the Congress, in a huge turnaround from 2018, failing several media and political pundits who all had predicted its route in this State.

A very prominent and popular tribal face of BJP, Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and former Union Minister Vishnu Deo Sai who was elected MLA from Kunkuri, is all set to become the new Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh.

Vishnu Deo Sai, 59 years, hailing from an illustrious political family, four times Lok Sabha Member and two times MLA of the former undivided Madhya Pradesh takes the mantle of the State from Congress. Sai said while quickly fulfilling all the programs and schemes under Modi Guratee would be his motto, providing housing to 18 Lakh families per election manifesto would be his top priority. PC Mohan, the Lok Sabha MP from Bangalore Central constituency, called Sai "a grassroots leader". At an election rally, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had said that he would make Sai a "big man" if he is voted to power. Shah seems to have kept his word! Former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh while wishing the new CM nominee said he would surely be successful in bringing progressive changes in the state by fulfilling the promises of BJP's Sankalp Patra (Modi's Guarantee) with full dedication and under the double engine government of BJP, Chhattisgarh will develop at double the speed setting new records under Sai's State Leadership.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) pulled an amazing electoral victory in Chhattisgarh that stunned not only the Congress, but also majority media, political pundits and of course the exit polls all predicted Congress's straight 2nd term victory in Chhattisgarh and doom for BJP in this State. Factors like "Modi Guarantee" and impressive slogans like "Ghar Ghar Modi" reverberated throughout the Modi's election campaign, worked to its full creating an all new Modi wave that would surely echo in the 2024 general elections, advantage BJP. Bharatiya Janata

Party's highly impressive win stunning the overconfident Congress is not by chance. It was the hard work of the BJP cadre who literally went door-to-door convincing voters and also bringing them in droves to the polling booths. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the election campaign from the front, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath built the formidable fort around the campaign, the BJP cadre workers extended the ground support to their leaders high voltage campaign. Modi's face and his

magical oratory, his teams energetic support, winning the women voters with their electoral Modi Guarantee, high end corruption directly involving Congress CM Bhagel and more such factors cumulatively worked in BJP's favour. The undercurrent that was flowing against the Congress and in favour of BJP was ignored by the prediction pundits.

The BJP inflicted considerable damage on Congress in all the major regions of the State, including the tribal belts of Bastar and Sarguja. Considered underdogs in the run-up to the Chhattisgarh Assembly elections, the BJP stunned the ruling Congress and made a spectacular comeback in the State, winning 54 of the 90 Assembly seats.

The Congress, in contrast, witnessed a major reversal of fortunes with its tally coming down to 35 from 71 seats in the outgoing Assembly and less than half of the 75 plus slogan it had coined.

Setting a personal setback for incumbent Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, nine of the 12 Ministers in his Cabinet lost. Congress heavy weight losers included Deputy Chief Minister T.S. Singh Deo and Congress State President Deepak Baij. In a State where it had ruled for three uninterrupted terms between 2003 and 2018 under a single Chief Minister, Raman Singh, the BJP did not even present a chief ministerial face this time against the Congress's Bhupesh Baghel. Undoubtedly it was the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, his magnetic oratory and the "Modi Guarantee" along with "Ghar Ghar Modi" that echoed right across the campaign that the BJP's highly charged workers effectively and joyfully percolated down to the grass root, the eventual voters. It would not be exaggeration that Modi's focus on the women power turned electrifying resulting in permanent added votes for the saffron party. The term "Modi Guarantee" refers to the delivery record on welfare schemes run by the BJP-ruled Centre and a string of electoral promises it made ahead of the polls. The BJP's poll plank rested on these "guarantees", combining them with the issue of rampant corruption in Baghel government. BJP's slogan

"Aur Nahin Sahibo Badal ke Rahibo (Chhattisgarhi for We won't tolerate any further, and will bring a change) echoed the narrative it successfully built against the Bhupesh Baghel government that was badly entangled in rampant corruption accusations. But it was the Mahadev Betting App scam that cost the Chhattisgarh CM Baghel the most. The tribal card of BJP won new voters. Congress ignored the issues of the tribal and converted Christian community in the state.

The Mahtari Vandan Yojana, a cash assistance scheme that promises ₹12,000 for every married woman in the State, similar to the Ladli Behna scheme, that set as a game changer in neighbouring Madhya Pradesh, and its aggressive push consolidated women voters in BJP's favour. It also countered some of the Congress' promises on paddy procurement with its own set of promises in its manifesto. Baghel's Congress government also has done very badly on infrastructure development in the State as all their focus was on appeasing the communities and farmers, but without any developmental guarantees. Just loan waivers no more an attraction. They are bored. They want something more. BJP had the answer.

However, all said corruption in Baghel government was one of the major issues for the drubbing Congress received ahead of the 2024 general elections. Corruption allegations were piling up right from the liquor scam, the coal scam, the Mahadev Betting App scam, youths were cheated in Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission (CGPSC) recruitments, backtracking on promises made to women, Quota politics and corruption and favouritism in government jobs were all key factors that cumulatively cost the Congress badly. The Congress' focus on the rural belts was expected to create some damage in the urban areas but the BJP won in the rural regions as well despite the Congress promising a loan waiver, a promise that had catapulted it to power the last time. But the overall outcome where BJP has wrested the power from the Congress is a case to ponder that has come just a few months ahead of 2024 elections.

# Lalduhoma Takes Over

The expected happened in Mizoram. Right from the beginning BJP had to face challenges of the echo of disturbances in the neighboring Manipur, a state that has long been facing ethnic violence. The opposition gunning for Prime Minister Modi to deface his rising popularity left nothing to imagination in taking the opportunity to bash the government from all sides. BJP was naturally on the back foot, but Modi's campaign in this North Eastern state was nothing less to campaign in other poll bound states. He did his best, but the Manipur issues reverberated all through the campaign, advantage the opposition.

Zoram Peoples Movement (ZPM) founder of the Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) who in coalition formed ZPM and fought the elections under this banner. Resigning from the security service to the former Prime Minister Late Indira Gandhi, he was elected as Member of Parliament to the Lok Sabha from Mizoram in 1984 on a Congress ticket. He left Congress to form his own political outfit. Lalduhoma has an impressive government career graph. From 1972 to 1977 Lalduhoma worked as Personal Assistant to the Chief Minister of Mizoram.

Following his graduation, he appeared for Indian civil services examinations at Shillong qualifying the Indian Police Service in 1977, he served as a squad leader at Goa to crush delinquent hippies and smugglers. Recognising his achievement he was transferred to serve as security in-charge of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at New Delhi in 1982. He was given special promotion as Deputy Commissioner of Police. He was also secretary of the organising committee of the 1982 Asian Games, chaired by Rajiv Gandhi. Mizoram's new Chief Minister has brim full of challenges to face, meet and resolve quickly. Peoples expectations are very high from him.

winning the seat for the third consecutive time. Compared to Congress, BJP has done better in Mizoram. Congress presence in the 40-member assembly has drastically shrunk to 1 from 5 seats, the BJP could increase its tally in the state for the first time with 3 seats. This, when the Congress had 20.82% votes and BJP only 5.06% votes. In the present scenario, the BJP has become the third largest party in Mizoram, leaving the Congress in the third position only in terms of vote share.

There are several highlights in this election. As a first in this border State, three women MLAs have won. While two of them belong to the ZPM, Prova Chakma is from MNF. While Prova Chakma defeated a BJP candidate to become the first woman MLA from the Chakma community, Baryl Venneihangi, a popular news anchor, defeated an MNF candidate and Rajya Sabha member. Interestingly, the sitting Chief Minister got defeated. However, in Mizoram's electoral history, whenever a ruling party loses elections, the chief minister is defeated too. Significantly, while the ZPM had a good show mostly in the urban pockets as it won all the 12 seats in Aizawl City, four in Lunglei and all three in



Zoram Peoples Movement (ZPM)'s Lalduhoma takes over as the 6th Mizoram Chief Minister. Lalduhoma is the founder of the Zoram Nationalist Party (ZNP) who in coalition formed ZPM and fought the elections under this banner. Resigning from the security service to the former Prime Minister Late Indira Gandhi, he was elected as Member of Parliament to the Lok Sabha from Mizoram in 1984 on a Congress ticket. He left Congress to form his own political outfit. Lalduhoma has an impressive government career graph. From 1972 to 1977 Lalduhoma worked as Personal Assistant to the Chief Minister of Mizoram. Following his graduation, he appeared for Indian civil services examinations at Shillong qualifying the Indian Police Service in 1977, he served as a squad leader at Goa to crush delinquent hippies and smugglers. Recognising his achievement he was transferred to serve as security in-charge of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at New Delhi in 1982. He was given special promotion as Deputy Commissioner of Police. He was also secretary of the organising committee of the 1982 Asian Games, chaired by Rajiv Gandhi. Mizoram's new Chief Minister has brim full of challenges to face, meet and resolve quickly. Peoples expectations are very high from him.

Serchhip, the MNF won all 10 seats in the rural areas. BJP has won both the seats of the Mara tribal community and Congress has won one seat from the Lai tribal community area of Lawngtlai district. Apart from the specificities, these elections are important for the main political players of the state in many ways. The ruling party wasn't able to return to power. The ZPM created important history in the politics of Mizoram, despite being new political outfit. Challenges for ZPM are multifold. It will be challenging for Lalduhoma to keep together the two factions of ex-Congress and ex-MNF leaders who had shifted to his party. In the Congress, post its poor show, the leadership of state president Lalsawta will likely face a serious challenge from within the party.

There is good news for the BJP-NDA front. The ZPM is likely to join the BJP-led North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA) and the NDA, as Mizoram is dependent on the BJP-led Union government for its economic needs. With 2024 election looming around, this certainly is a shot in the arm for the BJP.

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# REVANTH RAJ

Anumula Revanth Reddy, 54, the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee, (TPCC) Chief and MLA representing Kodangal Assembly Constituency, takes over as the Telangana's 2nd Chief Minister.

Earlier he was the Parliament Member from Malkajgiri Lok Sabha constituency. He took the mantle as TPCC Chief in 2021 and in a short time he showed his calibre as a leader to reckon with, leading his Congress party to victory.

Revanth Reddy starting his political stint as BJP's Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) student wing member in 2007, was elected as Member of Legislative Council. Later he joined N. Chandrababu Naidu's Telugu Desam Party (TDP) to become their MLA beating the congress candidate then. He was also the Floor Leader of TDP. Since 2017 after skirmishes with TDP, he had moved to the Congress party and now he is their choice Chief Minister. In the current 2023 Assembly



elections though he lost to BJP in Kamareddy assembly constituency, he won from his 2nd constituency Kodangal. His meteoric political rise is impressive.

Revanth Reddy, the Telangana Congress chief, and now the Chief Minister, who led the party's election campaign from the front, is being widely credited for the party's victory in the state Assembly election. Reddy's untiring campaign and

coordinated efforts that led the party to victory has duly been rewarded by Congress High Command.

Young for his role, expectations from Revanth Reddy as the Chief Minister are many. So are the challenges too with infighting galore in the state unit of his party. But going by his career success graph one could only expect a remarkable Chief Ministerial performance.

# Mehroz Role In Victory Script



There was yet another key person from Karnataka who helped in the scripting of the Congress Victory in Telangana. The pivotal role of the Karnataka Ministers, MLAs, MLCs and their deployment was meticulously orchestrated by the Telangana war room Head, Mehroz Khan, who is also from Karnataka Congress. Mehroz, proficient in Kannada, Hindi, and Telugu, coordinated with MLA candidates and Karnataka Ministers, MLAs, MLCs and other willing leaders and workers, addressing both sides' requirements, the availability of dates and constituency-specific research data. More significantly he also helped in tightening the party campaign loopholes.

The war room also focused on how minorities, OBCs, and Dalits could be consolidated. In a significant repletion of what BJP and RSS workers did in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Booth-level workers were trained to ensure they brought their voters to the polling booths. KPCC leaders, who had faced elections just months ago, put their expertise to use once again in Telangana. Mehroz Khan said, "Many urban candidates wanted DK Shivakumar, and many rural candidates wanted Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to campaign for them. The war room also provided talking points and research data to all the in-charges. Coordinating between the candidates and the star campaigners was a challenging task, as we had to match the available dates of leaders." Mehroz Khan's hard work, efforts, efficiency in plan implementations and applying his own mind per changing and need-based situations really call for great appreciation in a party where largely party-lethargic leaders are solely dependent on the face value of the Gandhi parivar. He indeed deserves appreciation from all quarters. It is time the grand old party recognized such dedicated and party passionate workers and professionals.

# Shadow CM Vallavan

**Our Special Correspondent**

The stories of corrupt practices of the Puducherry Collector Vallavan, touted to be too close to the State Chief Minister continues. The newer ones are the grievance of the MLAs and Ministers claiming their works are being hindered and the alleged brokering he is said to have orchestrated in favour Muthamma, Secretary, Labor Welfare Department in the serious and controversial case of ballast of 3 boilers in Solara Active Pharma (Chasan Chemicals), that resulted in deaths and injuries of several employees. In the history of the Puducherry Assembly, there would have never been an official who would have damaged the image of a Chief Minister so badly and who would have projected himself as the de-facto, shadow Chief Minister. The ruling party ministers and MLAs are lamenting that Puducherry Chief Minister M Rangasamy, who is said to not bow down even to BJP leadership, his current ally, has now become a helpless and controversial Chief Minister of this UT State, thanks to his blind faith and closeness to a top, alleged to be a corrupt and controversial, District Collector in the Administration.

Political parties and local population allege that District Collector E Vallavan is fully and directly involved in several illegal transactions. E Vallavan, IAS from the AGMUT cadre, is the current Puducherry Collector who also holds the charge as Secretary to the Government (Local Administration, Excise, Information and Publicity) and also is the Excise Commissioner of Puducherry district. Every department he holds is rich pasture for minting illicit money. He is the most favoured officer of the current Chief Minister N Rangaswamy, which is unfortunate. It is being alleged that the key perpetrator of fearless and rampant corruption in this district is Vallavan, a mere promote by the CM Rangaswamy, who left several of honest and able officers with better experience for the post behind. He is said to be too close with the select politicians and especially the Puducherry Chief Minister N. Rangasamy, who hence has knowingly given this corrupt officer the multiple responsibilities of green pasture departments like Revenue, Excise, Local Administration, Excise Commissioner in addition to being District Collector. It is said that wherever allegations of irregularities, land grabbing, fake and forged deeds and registrations arise in Puducherry, Vallavan's name comes first who has been saving the officials under him smartly based of his closeness with the CM Rangasamy.

It is to be noted with keen interest that despite several able officers in waiting, this allegedly corrupt official Val-

lavan has been given charge of key multiple departments. Why? Should be a good matter to delve on and investigate. In fact Vallavan was a promote, as he is a favoured official of the boss of the government.

The allegation that processing and fixing the files of the ministers are being done only at the instance of Vallavan, instead of CM Rangaswamy. This is now echoing all over the Assembly, but none dare speak against him, owing his too too close relationship with the CM.

Rangaswamy otherwise is an able and soft spoken and easily accessible CM, that all the 30 MLAs in Puducherry approach the CM daily for constituency issues, welfare assistance and concessions. Chief Minister Rangasamy helps MLAs of any party without bias. CM has provided government cars even to MLAs of opposition parties to attend to constituency work.

But it is being alleged that this is changing. Chief Minister Rangasamy signed requests of the ministers and MLAs presented as files and sent to Secretaries and other officials of respective departments are all coming back without getting attended or processed further, as the alleged corrupt official, Vallavan, calls the shots and does the work of only those who listens and favour him. It is being alleged that their complaints to the CM have all gone on deaf ears as he, allegedly, is in the grip of this top district administration official who is said to be shadowing the CM to all places, interfering even in routine works of the government..

A recent case of boiler explosion in a chemical factory that resulted in deaths and several getting injured and the protests of the employees quelled with ease and bailing out the Labour Secretary from the onslaught and serious complaints of the employees. Solara Active Pharma (Sasan Chemical) a chemical factory located in Kalapattu, Puducherry. Boilers exploded in their factory on Nov 4 midnight. 300 people were working per shift. In the south side of the plant, 3 boilers exploded in quick succession. A laborer named Nedunjezhian, who was undergoing treatment in a life-threatening condition, died when the boiler exploded with a loud noise. Yuvraj, a 16-year-old child laborer who was illegally employed in the factory, also died. It is said that here are always more than 50 people working in the boiler area. More than 10 workers came screaming with burns on their bodies during the shift change time. After first aid, Pimms was sent to hospital. As the fire could not be extinguished for more than 5 hours and the chemical fumes could not be controlled, the public lost patience and entered the plant and smashed the goods. In order to escape from eye

irritation and suffocation, the fishermen there fled their homes and ran to the sea in fear of their lives.

Constituency BJP MLA Kalyanasundaram, Nehrunagar MLA, Vanniyar Sangha and other leaders like Senthil Gounder and former MLA Anbazhagan rushed there upon getting the information. It is being alleged that the employees and the people around the area insisted on giving immediate and good treatment to the injured in good hospital, but the factory management did not listen to them. The employees were in anger that the company management did nothing to listen to their requests and attend to their woes, as the injured were left to mend themselves with proper medical treatment at hand for them.

It is said that the District Collector Vallavan kept a calculated silence, as he was in hush-hush interaction with the Labor Secretary Muthamma who was being flooded with complaints and protests to act against the factory management. The allegations are that the Labor official was trying her best to save the factory management from any criminal actions against them, with Vallavan, allegedly, helping her to broker between them. At the insistence of Vallavan, it is being alleged that the Puducherry government has not released complete information about the health of those undergoing treatment. No adequate compensation to the dead and injured either yet, even after the incidence happened. Where exactly the wounded were taken remains still a mystery. No legal case has been registered yet against the said chemical plant. It is further alleged that the police along with factory hired local thugs to threaten agitating workers against their protest and demand for action against the management. It is further alleged that even the ex-Minister Shahjahan from Kalapet constituency, who should have joined and supported the protesters and a supplier of water to the factory did not show up at all. It is seriously alleged that even Kalapet constituency MLA Kalyanasundaram of BJP is favoring the plant management and owners. Kuppusamy, an independent MLA from Orleanspet, is still struggling for to assess and get the information on actual casualties and injuries in this incidence.

It is said that such fatal incidences happen regularly in this plant, casualties occur and never any action is taken against them. It is said that In 2022, two people died in a similar accident in this plant. No action taken against them. No compensations given to the employees yet.

The employees and the honest officials of the company say that this accident would never have occurred if the Department of Labor and



the Department of Environmental Protection had conducted frequent inspections of the chemical industry. With Vallavan brokering and on their side, these departments avoid any visits to the factory, against allegations of regular illicit payment in crores to them, again allegedly though Vallavan. Thousands of Indian child laborers are engaged in dangerous work in several of the factories in Puducherry. It is the irresponsibility of the authorities for not providing them with fair relief under the law. In fact the authorities should act against employing child labor in these plants.

It is said that Congressmen Joseph and Chandrasekhar, who were supporters of this killer Sasan Chemicals plant, were assassinated one after the other. During the last Congress regime in Puducherry, due to the dispute over the labor contract at the Sasan Chemicals plant, goons took turns killing each other in Kalapet constituency.

The connivance of the The Sasan Chemicals plant management and the monthly procurement officers allegedly with the local police are the reasons why this block is always tense. Authorities are not taking any action at all against this killer plant that has led even to gang war between the suppliers.

There are more related to this killer chemical factory. Due to the negligence of this factory and negligence of the government officials, two workers died in a fire accident in this factory last year. Had the authorities taken action against the management per law, the explosion at the Sasan plant and the loss of life of the loss of lives would have been never happened.

A case of murder should be registered against the above-mentioned private company owner, high-level government officials, labor secretary, director of labor welfare department, and environment department officials whose negligence and dereliction of their duties caused the death of the work-

ers. Child labor employment by the companies across the state should all be investigated and such labor employment should immediately be stopped. The current demand of the people are that this killer chemical factory should ordered to immediately shut down and thorough investigation should be conducted on the safety aspects being followed by the factory management and the loss lives in this plant in fatal incidences over the years.

Collector Vallavan and Labor Secretary Muthamma conducted a cursory inquiry into the lthaoss of life and limb in the Sasson Company accident. Sadly again, Collector Vallavan's name is publicly mentioned in Smart City project tender scam, Kamatsiyamman temple land grabbing, government alienation for cricket ground in Thuthipatta village, barren land grabs, multi-crore properties grabbing of French citizens, Sasson factory accident, the list endless. However, why is Collector Vallavan, a nominated (CONFED) IAS officer acting as a shadow Chief Minister who sways Chief Minister Rangasamy to his heart's content, still not transferred to another state as per Govt Banyan rule? What is the reason CM Rangaswamy is persisting with the continuance of allegedly corrupt Collector Vallavan despite mounting complaints against him from all quarters? Is it true that Vallavan says that he keeps the CM's administrative secrets with him because he knows them? There are several honest, able and more experienced officers in UTs to replace Vallavan, who has been in the State administration longer than he should have been. The demand is that the Home Ministry act immediately on this, order high level investigations against Vallavan and immediately suspend, or at least immediately transfer him to any remote north eastern states and meanwhile seize all his assets and punish all the culprits, including the conniving officers.

# Bhajan Lal Rajasthani

Bhajan Lal Sharma, 54, the first time MLA won from Sanganer Assembly Constituency with an impressive margin, takes charge as the new Rajasthan Chief Minister. Sharma's political journey in Rajasthan has been marked by significant achievements. He has served as the BJP State General Secretary four times.



The long serving BJP leader has been keeping a low profile. Soft spoken, Sharma has been with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM) outfits, rising from being Village Sarpanch at the age of 27. Bhajan Lal Sharma has two deputies in Diya Kumari and Premchand Bairwa.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has won the State elections hand down garnering 115 seats in the 199 seats State Assembly, with congress bagging only 69, underperforming as against exit poll predictions. Of the 9 Independent candidates won, 4 are BJP rebels. Two Congress turncoats who crossed over to the saffron party lost, one to BSP and the other to Congress.

Congress was going through a faction fighting within the party between Ashok Ghelot and Sachin Pilot. Sachin's image was at stake for all the claims he made as he having sizeable support of the voters. Sachin should be credited for he worked hard and untiring in all the constituencies considered his bastion. But the overall performance of Congress has been poor, with over 17 of the 25 ministers in the outgoing Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government in Rajasthan, including Govind Ram Meghwal, who also led the party's campaign committee, lost in the assembly elections.

Experience, magic and benefit schemes could not save Ashok Ghelot, who as such was facing challenging situation within the party where several of his own supporters were not happy with him clinging to the CM's chair. Over the past several months Gehlot, 72, tried every trick up his sleeve to retain the post. Gehlot introduced a slew of welfare measures, including cheaper cooking gas for the poor and a ₹25-lakh medical insurance scheme. The old pension scheme was back for government employees. But all these fell flat in front of BJP's aggressive campaign and the increasing popularity of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Congress failed to buck the state's three-decade revolving-door trend in which

the voters have rejected the party in power.

For BJP Rajasthan was as important as other States to measure its prospects and in its run for the 2024 general elections which would decide Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 3rd term in office. All the bigwigs of the party were on campaign blitzkrieg. Former Chief Minister and front runner in the current elections Vasundra Raje Scindia image was at risk. She had to prove her credibility as a strong leader and vote swayer, as she thought the party was sidelining her. She did what was expected. 40+ MLAs from her bastion won the election. She was also the one, despite being a contender and front-runner for the top post, who announced the selection of the Bhajan Lal Sharma as the new Chief Minister.

BJP's campaigning was fierce. They nothing to doubt. The trio, Modi, Shah and Yogi, got the seamless support from other star campaigners and senior leaders. BJP and RSS cadre literally went door-to-door mobilizing added support for the BJP and did a great job in booth management. Modi's charm worked. He led the BJP campaign from the front. Shah was all fire.

Yogi's hardline hindutwa presented as the new age secularism of taking all together independent of caste, creed and status worked wonders. The 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', Sabka Vishwas, Sabhka Prayas" was something the voters seemed convinced with. The 'Modi Guarantee' worked magic on the voters. It was a triumph for "honesty, transparency, and good governance," of BJP at the Centre that appeared to have percolated down to increase in voting percentage for the saffron party.

BJP leaders attribute the clear victory in three states to Modi's leadership, Amit Shah's strategic acumen, and the party's welfare policies. Despite opposition claims that these results won't impact the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the polls in Mizoram, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana are widely considered a crucial precursor to the national elections. Modis magic and

charisma her too that never took a break to dwarf. Their aggressive campaign left nothing to imagination.

The 2023 5 state elections has also catapulted and expanded the saffron footprints in Mizoram, a North Eastern State and where it has won 2 priced seat and increasing its tally to 8 from one in Telangana, a Southern State. All these would count in BJP-NDA run for the crucial 2024 elections that is just few months away.

The choice of Chief Minister and 2 Dy Chief Ministers in Rajasthan served multiple purposes, log term and 2024 in view. Social Engineering was in place, caste and class well balanced, with long-term gains in mind, more so the all crucial 2024 general elections. He also kept the active senior politicians in great spirits as he made enough space to pass on the governance baton to younger generation.

The first time MLA Bhajanlal Sharma chosen as the Rajasthan Chief Minister is a Brahmin. He has two Dy Chief Ministers. First is Diya Kumari, a member of the Jaipur Royal family who fits Modi's multiple bills for BJP, a Rajput face in a state that is dominated by the community, and more so a woman. She relinquished her Lok Sabha MP post to contest state election. The other deputy CM is Prem Chand Bairwa, a member of the Dalit community that makes up over 16% of India's population, and whose elevation gives the BJP a positive campaign platform for 2024 among the dalit community. BJP leadership also made sure the senior leaders get their due roles and responsibilities. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh as an observer did a great job in keeping the flock together and ensured smooth and unanimous endorsement of prospects for the Chief Ministerial berth.

Opposition and political pundits made negative comments on the delay in choosing Chief Ministers. But Modi took all off-guard. The Chief Ministerial choice for Rajasthan, in fact the CMs of all the BJP won states, is all about Social Engineering at its height and reconfirmed Modi's political mastering.

# COMMANDER NADDA



Jagat Prakash Nadda, a Lawyer by profession is the 11th National President of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), since 2020, a role that took over from Amit Shah. A Rajya Sabha Member from Himachal Pradesh has held different organizational positions including being BJP's Working President and Parliament Board Secretary, Nadda had been the Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 1st term from 2014 to 2019.

An astute politician of high caliber with great moral values, a 3 times MLA from Bilaspur, Himachal Pradesh, had also been Cabinet Minister in the Himachal Pradesh State Government and Leader of Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly of BJP.

Nadda actively participated in various movements run by Jai Prakash Narayan during his young age. He was associated with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and was elected ABVP's National Secretary in 1989. In 1991, he was made the President of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha. His political career graph has seen only spikes since then.

A smart strategist, Nadda rising from the grass-root level, is understood well the party the issues and moods of the workers and his easy accessibility has made him a loved party leader who interacts with leaders, workers and supporters freely. An adept in creating and maintaining lasting relationships, is on cordial terms with all, including the opposition parties.

A great orator, Nadda has always been proactive, working towards ex-

panding the foot prints of BJP across States, lending a seamless support to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. His soft-spoken nature, a firebrand leader though, has imbibed confidence in his party with leaders and workers turning to him for all their solutions.

Nadda already is in 2024 top gear mode. With 12 State in BJP bouquet and the recent thumping victory in the 3 hindi heartland States in the recent assembly elections, Nadda exuded confidence in winning big in the forthcoming 2024 general elections. He is to chair meeting with party's National Office bearers and leader of sub-wings in preparation for the 2024 elections, which is just about few months away.

The meeting sure is to review the 5 state election results, work on resolving issues to ensure maximised outreach to the people and also to discuss the progress and outcome of "Viksit Sankalp Yatra", a nationwide campaign launched by the government to popularise and raise awareness about the welfare schemes of the central government.

Nadda reaffirming his confidence in the voters for Modi's 3rd term, dismissed the new found love of the opposition parties forming a new grouping and their unity as a mirage. A mature and shrewd politician that he is who is close with the ranks and bosses of RSS, does not dodge even tough questions and is clear and of course candid about what he, his leaders and the party thinks and wants and what lay ahead for the party to ensure continuing love for the BJP and PM Modi and his team.

# DRUGS HUB!

## Our Special Correspondent

This otherwise beautiful city continues to roll under the menace and rule of the drugs mafia destroying the lives of youth in the city. It is alleged that Ganja, also called Cannabis, and other drugs flow freely among the school and college students destroying their lives, as the drug-lords of the drugs-mafia mint money fearless, unchecked and uncontrolled. The drug peddlers and goons import and manage the smuggling, distribution and sale of these drugs in the city of Coimbatore with total impunity, with the law enforcement officers protecting them. The drug smuggling into the city, it is alleged, happens during night hours, when the city sleeps. The drugs arrive and disembark from the midnight trains from Delhi, Guwahati, Calcutta, Assam, Chennai and Uttar Pradesh. They also come through road transport at midnight. From these midnight trains and buses Ganja, cannabis, drug dealers unload bundles of drug packets and move them away for further distribution to their targets, majorly all innocent youth. It is said that the So-termed 'green' hemp and Bee Area cannabis are sold at a lower price, while processed out-of-state cannabis, called 'brown', are sold at a higher price.

Even air routes are used to bring these dreaded life-destroying drugs into the city. It is alleged that

Cardboard boxes duly labeled 'Handle with Care' are routinely brought into the city with cannabis duly and securely packed and taped and categorized as parcels. There are allegations that bundles of ganja from Siruvani, Anaikatti, Tadagam and Velliangiri areas are arriving and landing at many places in Coimbatore. It is said that drug cartels and the complicit unscrupulous police officials are behind drug peddling problems in Coimbatore. But they are just one of the conniving officials. There are also several others from other departments. It is alleged that several key officials from police, transport, railway and interstate bus terminals, among others, are all said to be on literal payrolls with added incentives of these drug mafia goons.

The drug peddling is a menace, but is multi-crore money minting business for the mafia, filled with goons of all sorts whose jobs is the intimidate and terrorise those who are posing a problem in their illicit business. It is a big money game. The money for the peddlers and the conniving officials are said to so huge that none would want to shy away from this anti-society activities.

In further shocking revelation the law enforcement officials are driving this illicit business to great heights in the city. In recent shocking revelation, it is alleged that even some Police Stations in city are

deeply involved and have become centre for drug peddlers and goons who use the space freely. It is alleged that their Raj in the Police Stations are so strong that the drug peddling goons even influence and decide on cases those come to the police stations, extracting money from the complainants and or the rich complainants and the accused. Men in uniform are the most respected in the society. But some evil-minded ones in uniforms take undue advantage and become a terror figure in the society, forgetting that they are also a part of it. The involvement of some Police Stations are so intense, it is alleged that they are responsible for bringing in drugs safely, arrange for distributing them, selling them, keeping accounts and splitting commissions and of course protecting the drug dealers. Youth do not have free money with them. They are dependent on their parents for all their needs. But with drugs having become a habit and with they not having enough money to buy drugs, they resort all sort of petty and bigger crimes. Some affected Parents report with growing concern that the ratio of involvement of school and college students has drastically increased in the recent times in murder, robbery, robbery and the likes in the city, and that the innocent and helpless students themselves are being pressurized to get involved



as false witnesses.

To hoodwink the public, it is alleged, the media is approached to highlight the anti-drug action of the department. Where only petty thieves, small time robbers and anti-social elements are falsely booked as if they were fanning the menace. Later, it is alleged, are freed changing and or amending the complaints against them. The main drug-lords are never booked, though they all know who is responsible for this increasing evil menace in the city, owing to the mafia's money power that influences the polity too. This is an alarming situation. A recent case in view, it is alleged that one such drug-centre is the Saibaba Colony Police Station. Residents of the area are horrified to report that ganja peddlers are roaming freely in the Saibaba Colony police station and the neighboring areas in Coimbatore. It is alleged that an influential and powerful ganja dealer, basically a goon, along with his gang, has developed very close relation with the police officials in this police station. It is alleged that they even decide the entire affairs of the Saibaba Colony police station. It is said that the income of the unscrupulous and conniving police officials have tripled because of these people who

sit inside the station and conduct panchayats as policemen, extracting money from the complainants and also the accused.

Ironically the honest but helpless police officials in this station complain that many investigations and case records are directly reviewed and decided by the ganja peddlers in the police stations who are present in this space whole day. This is an addition income for the drug peddlers with total police protection. All these are happening, it is alleged, in the broad day light and no one dare question them.

The police is fully aware of these. But the money game is so big that they intentionally turn a blind eye and let these happen. Money greed is the root cause of all illicit and evil activities. They have the full data of the drug peddlers and the goons of the drug mafia and the key drug-lords who ruling the business with impunity, but dare not take any direct action to book them, file strong cases and put them all behind the bars. With allegations having been made, why the City Collector is sitting idle? People are demanding that the Superintendent of Police, SP, of the city take immediate action to book these evil criminals and free the city off the drug menace.

It is real Paradise on Buses! Shocking revelations have come to the fore of special super Luxury busses are being used for partying where everything from wine and dinner flows like a river with voluptuous beauties entertaining the select private customers. People now call these "Paradise Busses".

Earlier allegations were that the Coimbatore city, called the Manchester of India, has become the most preferred destination for drugs with the drug mafia overly active doing a flourishing business fearlessly and uncontrolled and unchecked. Several revelations have confirmed this. Where there if free flow of drugs and liquor, women pleasure cannot lag behind.

The new revelations are further shocking. It is

# Sex On Wheels!

alleged that prostitutions is at its height in this city. Public allegations point to roaring high-money minting prostitution business, all being done in secrecy from well developed luxury lodges, cottages and villas in Coimbatore. Select high-profile customers are solicited for the purpose.

Super Luxury Omni buses ply between Coimbatore and cities like destinations in Kerala, Ooty, Kodaikanal, Chennai and Trichy at midnight. Sleeper seats are pre-booked, reserved, by Brokers in these luxury sleeper buses. Hired voluptuous beauties occupy these sleeper seats as the bus leaves. Pre-booked special customers board these luxury Omni

busses as normal passengers at departure destinations as well as en-route.

This is a multi-hour cruise and a luxury affair in an air-conditioned Omni bus environment, with drugs, wine and liquor party and frolics with beauties who are specially hired to entertain the customers. It is alleged that the rate for this luxury trip with the hired women ranges from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25000 for a few hours of pleasure in a moving luxury bus. It is said if a customer wants to take a beauty out after the partying, the rate ranges from Rs 50,000 to even a lakh and a half.

It is alleged that the innocent young girls are trapped into this by the

goons and make them to work as sex workers against their will. As this goes on, the women then become a full time professional sex-worker. It is said several budding models and small time film and TV actresses are provided by the gang for a higher rate for these customers.

It is alleged that some special luxury Omni buses are running for this purpose. Public is not allowed in these buses en-route. It is also alleged that these luxury buses are marked separately, pre-informed and are not checked mid-way by traffic and other transport officials or police.

More shocking are the allegations that special

days and buses are marked for high profile officials, politicians and even top executives from corporate houses. It is said the Customers call these busses lavishly loaded with drinks and beauties as "Paradise Bus" and "Sex on Wheels".

If these rumours and allegations are to be believed as a secret happening in this city of Coimbatore, top officials from Police and administration should also be aware of these, but possibly are keeping a calculated silence owing to pressure from elsewhere.

The transport vigilance department should immediately investigate, lay a trap to catch them and free this city from this anti-social unacceptable activities. People also ask why the Collector is not acting quick on such activities in this city. They are not wrong.

# Social Engineering Master Strokes



their Chief and Dy Chief Ministerial choices in all the 3 States they won with thumping majority. Social Engineering was in place, caste and class well balanced, with long-term gains in mind, more so the all crucial 2024 general elections. He also kept the active senior politicians in great spirits as he made enough space to pass on the governance baton to younger generation.

For instance the choice of first time MLA Bhajanal Sharma as the Rajasthan Chief Minister, a long serving BJP leader and a Brahmin, and the choice of two Dy Chief Ministers. First is ex-Lok Sabha MP Diya Kumari, a member of the Jaipur Royal family who fits Modi's multiple bills for BJP, a Rajput face in a state that is dominated by the community, and more so a woman. The other deputy CM is Prem Chand Bairwa, a member of the Dalit community that makes up over 16% of India's population, and whose elevation gives the BJP a positive campaign platform for 2024.

The choice of Mohan Yadav as Madhya Pradesh, superseding the huge line up of old guard aspirants, demonstrates his caste and class arithmetic that would come handy in 2024 election battle. Mohan Yadav's choice would reverberate in UP and Bihar where Yadav communities are in majority and this choice sends positive signals to the community in these states too.

The choice of Vishnu Deo as Chhattisgarh Chief Minister, a tribal, again sends positive vibes for the party as Modi is set to appease this segment, in long terms. Not just this. Modi made sure the party fabric was kept in place. The announcements and first congratulatory wishes with personal meetings also has its own significance. While the outgoing long-served Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan was the first to go, meet and wish the new CM, the Rajasthan Chief Minister announcement was made by Vasundra Raje Scindia, a strong contender for the post. Modi's choice of roles as observers in the won states again is no small game plan. Here too he made sure the active senior leaders have the highlighted say, keeping them on his side in great spirits. Prime Minister

Narendra Modi, like all successful political leaders, has a comprehensive panoramic vision, which, accompanied by an inspiring narrative, helps him identify key battles. He draws up deft strategies of attack, strikes at the most opportune moment, leading from the front, to rout any opposition he may encounter.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reconfirmed beyond doubts his continuing political strength and unflinching political wisdom in changed times. Recent 5 State elections have established PM Modi as the undoubted master stroke politician, a political marketing Guru. He has ensured to fail every prediction of the political pundits. It was simple Modi's BJP sweep across the Hindi belt, the heartland, once again.

It was Modi all over again who lead the election campaign. with BJP cadres and workers and the contesting candidates leaning heavily and expecting Modi to electrify and super-charge the workers and voters to mobilize more and more support to the party.

While the BJP established its firm unshakable hold in the Hindi Heartland, Congress tried its hand in expanding its political footprints in the South by taking Telangana slice, after its recent victory in Karnataka.

With the Congress losing out on Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, the party has lost its sheen and toehold in the north, with only Himachal Pradesh in its basket. For the BJP, the Assembly elections results strengthened its grip on the Hindi heartland. Ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP, along with its allies, has spread its reach over north, west and north-east India. The increased vote share in the south, Telangana, is no less achievement. The Congress and other Opposition parties have a presence only in the south and the east.

BJP's literal three man army drubbed all and badly punctured the opposition energy. Modi has set his sail for his confident third term joy-rendezvous at the centre. BJP, despite it's yet to succeed 'Mission South' programs, appears all set to rule for the next several years. The election strategy of the BJP was

clear right from the word go. Modi, Shah and Adityanath formed the core of the campaign team with defined responsibilities assigned to each of them. While PM Narendra Modi was to strategize and implement countering the Congress Party's overtures and USPs to voters, Home Minister Amit Shah was marshalling the frontlines with sharp talking points and the backroom through faction management and UP CM Yogi Adityanath had the difficult role in projecting the hardline Hindutva stance without hurting the sentiments of others. It was new secularism definition that really was true to its slogan mid of sab ka vikas, sab ke saath, sab ka prayas. They were whol-heartedly supported by their star campaigners and every worker and supporters.

BJP election machinery was always in top gear. The trio held untiring multiple election rallies every day across the poll bound states. It was literal campaign blitzkrieg. They were very clear. With their high decibel campaign through their firebrand oratory excellence they aimed to swing the fence-sitter voters to their camp while overly charging up their committed voter base and also making them mobilize expanded support to BJP. The committed cadre made sure through their door-to-door campaigns to make the voters march to the polling booths, shedding their lethargy that engulfs specially during election voting times.

Going by the election results, there is a chemistry of a leader and the arithmetic of numbers. The chemistry works in the BJP's favour; the arithmetic needs more focused working, because each and every seat has to be fought for with total intensity, with the right kinds of candidates. But the issue is, the BJP must not get complacent. Opposition unity is not to be ignored. Modi has to fight it out.

However, with the big comfortable landslide wins in the heartland States, Team Modi has dispirited the Congress dreams, terribly weakened the thinking of the newly formed opposition grouping alliance and has super charged its confident bid for repeat in 2024 for hat-trick at the centre, reassuring him a record 3rd term.

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Modi is a Master Politician. Where the thinking of the political pundits, media experts and exit poll specialists ends, Modi's thinking begins. With Modi and Amit Shah duo and Yogi Adityanath charging-in to make this a trio, everything becomes possible for BJP, as of now.

Right from the word go, Modi took all off-guard with his masterstroke strategies and unwavering decisions – right from election strategy and tone, distribution of tickets, field-

ing sitting MPs to ensure assembly constituency cluster wins to Chief Minister and Dy Chief Minister choices, Modi struck all off-guard, springing in surprises, but spelling boldly his social engineering expert wisdom.

The Chief and Dy Chief Ministerial choices, that took the political pundits off-guard, have made Modi a Social Engineering Master Politician. His political wisdom even in changed times is unflinching. Modi really knows what to do, with whom, when and how. He left no vacuum anywhere or anything to doubts about his strategic political thinking for the New India, and with 2024 in mind and long-term gains for him and BJP.

While the people, opposition and the political pundits waited with bated breath, PM Modi and HM Amit Shah took all by off-guard, surprise, with

# EX-VC STILL PARTYING

## Hope Less Education Ministry

Pondichery University witnessed that no other university would have ever encountered in the Indian education history. With no one taking any action against Prof Gurmeet Singh the Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Pondicherry University against his alleged corrupt practices, despite students, staff and political parties protests, eventually the matter went to the court. It was shameful that the Court eventually had to intervene to order a CBI inquiry into the affairs of a very prestigious Educational Institution, Puducherry University and against its then VC.

It was alleged that since Prof Gurmeet Singh, now the ex-VC, took charge as Vice Chancellor of this prestigious Puducherry University, corruption had become rampant, literally in every activity of the University. He was not alone; had like-minded accomplices in the shameful games of corrupt practices, it was alleged. Complaints were pouring in on the rampant, open and uncontrolled corruption in Puducherry University on all its activities. It was an endless corruption list starting right from adopting corrupt practices in recruitment, the alleged marks scandal of all times of this University to awarding building, new and renovation, contracts. All these alleged were being done freely, fearlessly and openly. They fear nothing and none, alleged the peo-

ple, students and the honest staff of the University. Even his personal character has received a bash, as his own wife is said to have filed a complaint with concerned authorities that his husband is cheating on her and that he is in live-in relationship with another staff of the University.

Even the appointment of the Dy Registrar M P T Sagayaraja was being questioned as there appeared flouting of rules related to his age and qualification and the way he was appointed by the VC. It was alleged then that he was also to awarded increments that he did not deserve and was not entitled to. All these appeared happening at an apex educational Institution, a University, and that too at a University that had always been regarded as the most prestigious. It is these Institutions that create geniuses out of the young minds. If the mind of the Leader of such a sacred Institution is corrupt and greedy for power and money, what could the young students enrolled in Institutions under this University expect to become or be? There was a public outcry to not just oust the VC but to initiate high-level investigations against his misdeeds and mismanagement of University funds, book him and his accomplices for the wrong they have done, arrest them immediately without any further delay and attach all their assets. Stu-

dents, honest Teachers and staff had been filing their complaints against these for months with several authorities related to monitoring and controlling of this Institution. But nothing was happening. People were very concerned as he had become powerful with several politicians and officials supporting him, for whatever would have been reason. The corruption and atrocities at this sacred Temple of Education had reached such heights that the Court doors had to be knocked. Hearing the complaint filed by the President of the Democratic Youth Federation of India, the Madras High Court directed the CBI to intervene and proceed with the investigations, relating to the favoritism, corruption, flouting of rules and laid down norms and misappropriation of University funds by various officials of the University. Surprisingly, the CBI inquiry never happened till his recent retirement. As all these were happening, despite the piling up of allegations of corruption against him, Dr (Prof) Gurmeet Singh got an extension in his services and then eventually he retired as he had completed his full service term of his career. He retired recently.

One would have thought with his retirement all these would have been over and with time people will forget. But no. This is not to be so. Those in such heights of power allegedly tasting free



flow of illicit money, such people will never quit their ways in life. Even after all these allegations and more so even after his official retirement from services, it is said that he still controls the University functioning through his close aide Tharanikkarasu, who's a junior professor in the University. Prof Gurmeet Singh is still within the University campus in using Pondicherry VIP Guest House. He is still getting all the same facilities, including freely using the University car provided to him when he was the VC, all petrol, maintenance and other expenses being paid by the University. Not just this, his son also is allegedly using the Pondicherry University facilities and is roaming around the city in the University owned car, again will all expenses borne by the University. It is also being alleged that Dr Gurmeet Singh is building huge luxurious palatial bungalow in Auroville, near Pondicherry, at a whopping cost, which people say is totally disproportionate to his known and informed sources of income.

Dy Registrar M P T Sagayaraja also has since retired recently. Even with so many allegations having piled up against him too, includ-

ing his appointment as Dy Registrar at 58, allegedly a close aide of Dr Gurmeet Singh, he has been appointed on contract basis as OSD with a salary of Rs 1 lakh a month, with all earlier and more facilities continuing. A case in this regard is to come up soon.. If sources and allegations are to be believed, there is also the case of Chitra, wife of DMK leader Sivakumar, who allegedly provided false documents to get her job in the University. There are allegations of her involvement in several corruption case in the University, including the Dental students marks scam. She is also alleged to have amassed disproportionate wealth to her known and informed sources of income. All these are just tip of the iceberg? CBI should immediately speed up their investigations against all these corrupt, related to this university and book them all, cease their assets and book them for stringent punishment for their wrong-doings.

People are now urging the Union Education Minister to appoint senior IAS officers as VC and Registrar positions, until Regular VC and regular Registrar are recruited applying due procedures.

# CASTE BLANCHE IN HP

Congress is not behind the BJP when it comes to balancing acts and caste equations in its party and especially when it comes to top State leaderships while forming state governments. Going by what one sees in Himachal Pradesh, Congress does not lag behind Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Social Engineering, though done for varying purposes.

Caste balances and creation of new positions are generally to assuage any bruised egos and prevent factionalism that may threaten newly-formed governments. The political parties keep a futuristic vision and work on tangible caste equations in place and also keep the sentiments of the senior leaders who may not get into a annoying mode those may affect future prospects of the party.

Naming Mukesh Agnihotri as Himachal Pradesh

(HP) Dy Chief Minister and induction of 4 more ministers weeks after the formation of the Congress HP government, is one glaring point in case. Agnihotri, the leader of the opposition in the outgoing Himachal Pradesh assembly then, was the first Deputy Chief Minister of the hill state in what was being seen then as a balancing act of the grand old party following protests by loyalists of the royals, after Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu was chosen for the top executive post and announced as the new Chief Minister, who enjoyed the popularity and sizeable support among majority of the elected MLAs in the Himachal Pradesh State Assembly. While sociological factors are important during elections for certain states in India, the dynamic factors play a more prominent role in others. Himachal Pradesh signifi-

cantly differs in its social and economic landscape when it comes to electoral voting. While Hidutwa card played for the BJP in several States, it did not work good for the BJP in Himachal Pradesh elections in 2022. Politics in Himachal Pradesh broadly has been bipolar since past 40 years with the Congress and the BJP being the chief contenders.

Himachal Pradesh is a small state, by area, with a high literacy rate where majority, over 52%, population belong to higher castes of Rajputs and Brahmins, closely followed by OBC and Scheduled Castes, with others following, albeit in smaller percentages. While the upper-caste Rajputs and Brahmins hold sway over the other social groups, SC, ST and OBCs also comprise a significant part of the state. Elections in Himachal Pradesh are



mostly centres around issues of governance, development, and livelihood, leaving aside earlier concerns like old and new Himachal, the horticulturist-agriculturist divide, and caste patterns.

Naming of Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, a Rajput, was in line with the practice where all the previous Chief Ministers of Himachal Pradesh who have all been from the Rajput clan. But this having bruised the egos and sentiments of the royals, the Dy Chief Minister Agnihotri was inducted and to keep the

caste equation in place to pacify other groups, 4 more ministers from other social groups like SC, ST and OBC were inducted. With these balancing social groups act in place supported by efficient governance by HP Chief Minister Sukhu, HP is moving forward fast-paced with stability and with hardly any factionalism within the party that could threaten Congress Party prospects in the forthcoming 2024 general elections where every party in the opposition is dreaming to foil 3rd term bid of BJP at the centre.

# CRORES OF LOSS TO EXCHEQUER

## NTPC COLLUDES WITH CHINESE COMPANY

Uncontrolled and openly fanned continuing Corruption galore in one of Government of India's Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) going by the allegations being made against some chosen vendors and top notch officials in this Maharatna PSU. In a shocking revelation, allegedly a rogue Chinese company is being encouraged and openly promoted by India's power production major National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) resulting in whooping losses to the PSU and risking the quality and lives of the plant's employees, and the project itself. An exemplary example allegedly is the case of 3X500 MW Jhajjar project where NTPC is said to have incurred several Hundred Crores Loss and inordinate delays in this project commissioning and naturally production. It is alleged that the entire Flue-Gas Desulphurization (FGD) plant of the Jhajjar project could not be made operational even after one year of completion of erection of the said FGD plant. The alleged nexus between some unscrupulous employees of NTPC allegedly with the absolute blessing of a top NTPC management officer and a rogue Chinese company are said to be the cause for this huge loss to the exchequer of the government.

The alleged instance involves United Burgmann Power (Anhui) Co., Ltd, said to be a Chinese power related equipment manufacturer and supplier to NTPC and a top notch NTPC Project official. The allegations are mounting on this Chinese firm and the NTPC vis-à-vis the erring official of the PSU.

The key allegation: M/s United Burgmann Power (Anhui) Co., Ltd (UBPAC) is alleged to be using unethical business practices and circumventing minimum technical sub-vendor Qualifying requirements, and securing huge orders from NTPC worth several million dollars for supplying their products to Flue-Gas Desulphurization (FGD) plants in several NTPC Power Plants. It is alleged that this Chinese firm has been allowed to adopt this practice for the past several years and that majority in the trade and NTPC

are fully aware of these but have been forced to turn a blind eye owing to the nexus with top PSU officials and the fear that they may be victimized for unearthing the fraud Co-officials nexus.

It is seriously alleged that the alleged malpractices by the Chinese company, UBAC, includes forging the reference project Purchase Order, Performance Certificates, forging their own Business License with a false date of incorporation, and more seriously even forging another manufacturer's ISO:9001, ISO:14001 and OHSAS:18001 certificates and presenting them as their own. At the centre of all these is the alleged direct involvement of NTPC Project Director Ujjwal Kanti Bhattacharya who is said to be encouraging such malpractices and high-end corruption in this Maharatna PSU. It is alleged that all these were possible for the Chinese company to accomplish with ease and without getting caught or being disqualified only owing to their nexus with the erring NTPC officials allegedly blessed by the NTPC Project Director Bhattacharya.

In fact it is being alleged that it is only at the insistences of this top NTPC Director-Projects that even the Vigilance department of the NTPC has been suppressed and hushed up in a hurry, and hence are not proceeding with any action against either the rogue Chinese company or the NTPC official, even after alleged complaints filed with them by honest people and honest qualifying and more capable vendors and sub-vendors.

Insiders allege that the very repeated failures of the said Chinese company UBAC supplied equipment and other items is a proof of these serious allegations, because of which the entire FGD plant of NTPC's Jhajjar project could not be made operational even after one year of completion of erection of the FGD plant. Even till date, this rogue Chinese company has not been able to find a workable solution to the design and manufacturing flaws in their supplied equipment and related items to the NTPC project. It is said with the

connivance of the unscrupulous PSU officials the Chinese company has been given many extended time frames to set things right, but it has not been able to resolve the problems thereby leaving the entire FGD plant in Jhajjar project inoperative. This has resulted in a huge loss to NTPC by way of higher IDC cost and this has also delayed the intended improvements on the area's air quality. In another interesting evidence of the fraud committed by the Chinese company, it is alleged that they, as part of the qualifying documents for NTPC's Sipat Stage-I 3x660MW Project, provided a reference of the 'Shanxi Luneng Hequ Phase-I 2X600MW Project', which were submitted through GE Power India in October 2019. The Performance Certificates states that this reference project was commissioned in January 2008. However, the said Chinese company was formed only in August 2011. This clearly means that the said rogue Chinese company never existed at the time the reference project's FGD plant was commissioned. It is alleged that they even forged their date of establishment on their Business License to an earlier date of August 2005 to link credibility to their false claim of having executed the above referenced project. Thus, it is abundantly clear that all documents related to the above project, such as the Purchase Order (dated July, 2007) and Performance Certificates, have all been allegedly fabricated by the said Chinese company. Furthermore, it is further alleged that the name of the said Chinese company mentioned in Chinese script on the Chinese copy of the above submitted Purchase Order dated 2007 is identical to the present name of the Chinese company in Chinese script, the way it appears on their Business License. But if other than what is being construed to be, the reference project PO should have been different. It does not end here. There are more such anomalies. Similarly, questions are being raised regarding the genuineness of the qualification documents related to Yunnan Investment Group Zhaxi



Energy Co. Ltd. Phase-I 2 x 660MW Power Plant (Zhaxi Project) that the offending Chinese company had submitted to NTPC through Reliance Infrastructure for the 3x500MW Jhajjar Project in 2018. As per report issued by Chinese Ministry of Environmental Protection (August, 2014), the Zhaxi Project, including its FGD systems, was inspected and approved by the Chinese Ministry in 2014 but interestingly the alleged PO submitted by the offender company bears the ordering date of 2015, which is a year later. This alleged inconsistency in the PO date undoubtedly casts doubt on the authenticity of the documents submitted for this reference project too.

The confirmation of forged or say falsified company incorporation documents is further magnified by scanning the website of the Chinese Government, National Enterprise Credit Information Publicity System, <https://www.gsxt.gov.cn/index.html>, along with its auto-translation to English by Microsoft Edge browser, the alleged Chinese company, having Unified Social Credit Code of 91341181580100146C, was incorporated only on August 16, 2011 where as the Chinese company is allegedly indicated its establishment date as 2005? This is allegedly was one of the documents submitted by the alleged rogue Chinese company in the case as its business license through BHEL-PEM for seeking approval for NTPC's 3x800MW Patratu Project.

It is clear and evident that after having successfully hoodwinked all with total impunity and with ease with the connivance of the PSU officials, for the above detailed two NTPC prime projects, the said rogue Chinese company using the same already NTPC approved documents qualifying documents, has allegedly secured more and

more orders from the PSU for several other NTPC projects.

Are all these just allegations? Does not appear so from the details of evidences. Should these be just allegations, once having been made is it not the duty of NTPC to clarify and present the truth to the public?

Even if these are just allegations, why the Vigilance department has been keeping quite? Why the alleged Project Director and his accomplices not yet been suspended and high level inquiry instituted against them? Who are all protecting these corrupt officials and the Chinese company? Why the Chinese company has not yet been blacklisted by NTPC? As the loss to the exchequer runs into several hundreds of crore, with project commissioning delays further aggravating the losses to the PSU, shouldn't a CBI investigation be ordered by now to bring the truth out and book the culprits and cease and attach their assets and punish them all for their wrong-doings?

One can only wait and watch and see if any high-level punitive action is being initiated!

Among all these mele and furore among the Vendors and sub-Vendors on rampant corruption and open involvement of his top Executive officer, the Project Director, and possibly several other officials, what are the reasons or pressure on him that the NTPC Chairman & Managing Director Gurdeep Singh is overly silent on the whole matter? Is he protecting or is he being pressurised to protect the culprit officials and the rogue Chinese Company? NTPC CMD is known for his reputation as an able and clean but strict administrator. This image is at stake. Such a silence only creates more confusion and could kindle speculations of his indirect involvement too!



# CORPORATE

# BUSINESS

## ₹62,476 Cr FRAUD

## VIVO IN SFIO NET

Chinese companies continue to face the heat in India. Chinese companies also continue with their games of siphoning off huge amounts running into several hundred thousand crores amounting to money laundering.

Several Indian agencies and authorities have come down heavily on illicit transactions and circumvention of apparent legal obligations by Chinese companies, using the loopholes in the system. Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) to probe into Vivo following ED allegations of money laundering, while MG Motor India faces a broader investigation after adverse RoC findings from a 2022 case.

Vivo Mobile India, the mobile major and MG Motors India, the auto maker have been under the radar of Indian agen-

cies for some time now. Registrar of Companies (RoC) initiated preliminary investigation into the affairs of Vico and MG Motors. After its investigations the ROC had advised the Ministry of Corporate Affairs for a detailed investigation as they found enough evidence of alleged irregularities against them.

Taking on from the ROC's initial findings, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has ordered detailed investigations over alleged financial and accounting irregularities in the books of account of MG Motors India and Vivo Mobiles India. Enforcement Directorate (ED) also has been investigating the financial irregularities of both the companies leading to money laundering. Ministry of Corporate Affairs now is to refer the case

of vivo money laundering to Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) that specializes in fraud investigations of companies.

In the case of Vivo, the ED has alleged that Vivo has "illegally" transferred Rs 62,476 crore to China to avoid payment of taxes in India. This is a serious case of money laundering. This comes almost two months after the ED arrested four executives of Vivo Mobiles, including a Chinese citizen, as part of an ongoing investigation into alleged money laundering activities by this Chinese firm.

MG Motor India faces a broader investigation after adverse RoC findings from a 2022 case.

Last year in 2022, the investigation agency ED raided 48 sites linked to vivo and its associates as part of the money laun-



dering investigation, accusing the company of illegally siphoning money to China to evade Indian taxes through companies it indirectly controls.

The MCA has also instructed the agencies to conduct an extensive investigation into the financial records of MG Motor India. This follows findings of irregularities by the Registrar Of Companies (RoC), who have examined the company's records in a case from 2022.

Separately, the ministry has asked its regional director to undertake a wider probe into the books of MG Motor India following adverse findings by the registrar of companies (RoC) that looked into the compa-

ny's records in a 2022 case, they added.

After the arrest of its officials, Vivo had said it "firmly adheres to its ethical principles and remains dedicated to legal compliance" and that it will exercise "all available legal options".

Vivo, amidst arrests related to alleged money laundering, reaffirmed that it firmly adheres to its ethical principles and its commitment to legal compliances, while MG Motor India denied any knowledge of an MCA probe or requests for additional details on governance standards.

To be seen is the final outcome of the probe against both MG Motor India and Vivo Mobiles India.

# Multi-Crore GST Scam Busted

The tax sleuths have busted a roaring Multi-crore GST fraud in NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh (UP). UP NOIDA Police recently arrested four more persons in connection with its ongoing investigations into a multi-crore GST fraud case. The police have recovered 54 SIM cards, 41 forged stamps, 18 forged Aadhaar cards, 16 forged PAN cards, and 20 bank cheque books, among other items from the accused.

A total of 29 people have been arrested so far in the case. Officials said that those arrested are part of the extended team of the larger group, allegedly running the scam. Earlier, 25 scamsters were arrested after conducting raids in several UP districts to arrest the gang members. During interrogation and with the help of evidences, four more have been arrested.

Sleuths have recovered data of 250 bogus companies, used to fraud-

ulently claim Input Tax Credit. Along with this, several crores in eight bank accounts, linked to these accused have been frozen so far," said Harish Chander, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) NOIDA.

Police said that the gang with the help of fake firms, would raise e-way bills to avail input tax credit (ITC) or GST refund from the government. ITC is the GST paid by a taxable person on any purchase of goods or services that are used or will be used for business. Several of their shell companies presented even papers showing import-export business with firms based in countries like Singapore, Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand and the Philippines.

Investigations have revealed that the fraud gang used to make fake bills worth Rs. 70 lakh to 80 lakh every day. One Nishant Agarwal has been identified as the Gang Master, who helped in floating bo-

gus companies, with the data he accessed from the gangs associated with an earlier case, in which 25 were arrested.

Nishant the Ring Master of the fraud GST Mafia gang is currently absconding and the investigating agencies feel that he may have relocated to Mumbai to escape immediate attention and arrest. He used to travel abroad for the smooth functioning of his bogus companies, the police said.

In a previous case, the police successfully froze ITC worth Rs. 4,000 crore, which was claimed on behalf of bogus companies. Around 3,350 bogus companies have emerged in the probe so far and the financial transactions shown by them are above Rs 15,000 crore.

An FIR under IPC sections 420 (cheating), 467, 468 and 471 (all related to forgery) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) has been registered. Police have is-

sued a 'Look Out' Notice and have announced a cash reward of Rs 25,000 each for all the absconding gang members of this multi-crore tax scam that has dented the government exchequer by several hundreds of thousands crores.

It is both shocking and very sad to note several of the gagsters arrested so far are highly educated with professional degrees like MBA. How true it is that a "man with a pen can steal more than a man with stealing hardware tools".

Latest government thinking to do away with arrests in GST and other tax evasion cases of less than Rs 3 Crores is really good that would go a long way in reducing the administrative costs in investigations, arrests, maintaining the culprits in custody, etc and also relive those who have failed to pay taxes owing to their financial stress situations.

At the same time this also has possibly come as a

shot in the arm of the tax evaders and fraudsters! As such, majority scamsters and intentional tax evaders resort to several multiples of much smaller transaction amounts, as they are though very cumbersome and time consuming, are also convenient, less highlighted and more difficult to detect quickly with information gathering using human intelligence unless fused seamlessly with data mining, data analysis and transaction behavior analysis.

However, with so many huge GST and other tax frauds coming to the fore every day, it is imperative that the government formulates such stringent laws with heavy punitive measures including ceasing and attaching the assets of their family members, friends, relatives and others also in Benami names along with other heavy punitive awards, for the intentional tax evaders and fraudsters.

# Mega ₹4000 Cr Tax Evasion

## THIAMBARI MUTHU

The Vaigai Industries in Karaikal operating in Melakasakkudi village and Karaikal Chlorates Industries operating in Kanchipuram Koilpattu village areas continue with their environment destroying and critical pollution creating activities with their illegal activities in their chemical plants. Strong public anger is being felt across the belt. Vehement public protests are being witnessed in Puducherry, especially in and around the villages of Melakasakkudi and Kanchipuram Koilpattu, next to Karaikal, demanding for immediate closure and removal of these two dangerous chemical producing plants. Social organizations and activists are accusing the Puducherry government of favoring these two dangerously polluting chemical plants and are avoiding to take any penal action against them.

It is being alleged that Vaigai Chloride Industries and Karaikal Chlorates Industries are illegally smuggling fertilizers to Puducherry those are intended to be supplied to farmers in Tamil Nadu and are allegedly reported to have committed a huge fraud amounting to at least Rs. 4,000 crores.

Late Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha was overly concerned and sent a letter to the Central Government on 12.08.2009 stating: Fertilizers including potash, which were intended to be provided at concessional price for the farmers of Tamil Nadu, have been smuggled to two chemical companies operating in Puducherry. As a result, the Tamil Nadu government incurred a whopping Rs 4,000 crores loss. In reality it is alleged that the actual loot exceeds Rs 30,000 crores, but most of the figures are being suppressed.

In her letter to the then Prime Minister, Jayalalitha had also urged that a CBI inquiry be ordered in this regard to book the culprits who had illegally smuggled the inventory out of Tamil Nadu, depriving the farmers of this all important agricultural fertilizer. Vaigai Chemical Industries Limited and Karaikal Chlorates, the two companies in Karaikal, have misused fertilizers including potash, which were given to farmers at concessional rates.

## Demand To Close Factories

There has been massive corruption related to this illicit smuggling and diversion of this fertilizer from poor farmers in the area. The Government of India imports potash fertilizers from Russia and Israel at a cost of around Rs.15,000 per Ton. Every month, 40 thousand tons of fertilizers are shipped from Israel to India through Tuticorin, Kakinada and Mangalore ports. Tons of this fertilizers meant for farmers at subsidized rates @ Rs 5,000 per Ton and being smuggled out, diverted and sold at huge rates illegally. This potash fertilizer is the raw material for making potassium chloride which is also used to make crackers and explosives. Explosive salt (Potassium Nitrate) and detonator sticks used to break rock have been produced using the fertilizer.

Vaigai Chemical Industries, which is operating in Melakasakkudi area in Puducherry, has been given permission to produce only 9 metric tons of potash. However, the company produces about 40 metric tons of potassium chloride every day. Also, it has stored more fertilizers than allowed, without paying any tax levies. In fact these companies are not worried at all about taxes it is evading for the past several years. It has been revealed that despite knowing this fact, the Commercial Tax Department officials allegedly have remained silent.

Karaikal Chloride plant operating in Kanchipuram Koilpattu area of the same Melakasakkudi village had received permission for this chemical production in the amount of 16 metric tons. However, it was found that the Karaikal Chloride plant had produced 60 metric tons instead of the sanctioned amount.

It is being alleged that Vaigai Chemical Industries and Karaikal Chloride have produced huge excess quantities running into several tons illegally and kept a large amount of potassium chloride chemical in the warehouses inside the plant premises illegally, evading taxes, government exchequer incurring huge losses.

How much potash has been supplied to Vaigai Chemical Industries

and Karaikal Chloride for the last 30 years? The accounts need thorough investigation. This matter casts great doubts. Over 2,000 MT of potash were seized and sealed after Puducherry Agriculture and Revenue Department officials conducted a surprise raids at their premises. A case was also registered under the Prevention of Hoarding of Essential Commodities Act based on this seizure from the plants. Both Vaigai Chemical Industries and Karaikal Chlorate plants allegedly flourished during the former Puducherry Chief Minister Vaithilingam-led Congress government, which was in power from 2008 to 2011, and late Tamil Nady CM Karunanidhi-led DMK government in Tamil Nadu. The AIADMK when came to power then, had expressed its suspicion that potash, which was supposed to be given to farmers at subsidized rates with the help of the government, were being smuggled out for used by these chemical plants for illegal purposes. It also came to light that these governments have sold potassium chloride to various agencies for making fire crackers and explosives. Apart from Karaikal, there are many potassium sellers in Tamil Nadu. It has come to light that the central government has so far incurred a loss of over Rs.4000 crores owing to this smuggling and illicit supply of this fertilizer to the chemical plants.

It is seriously alleged that several states in India are involved in this scam. Way back in 2009, former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister late Jayalalitha had urged the Centre for a thorough CBI inquiry into these malpractices. It was revealed that Madurai industrialist and Tamil Nadu Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Neethimohan started an agricultural products company in Madurai and imported potassium chloride as a fertilizer product for agricultural needs, but eventually used for illegal production of the dangerous chemical used for making explosives. It also came to light that he bought potassium chloride as if to make fertilizers from his factory in Karaikal and Madurai,

but used it for making explosives that fetches huge money running into several hundred crores.

Based on complaints, 5 persons namely Tamil Nadu Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Neethimohan, owner of Vaigai Chemical Industries, Thanasekaran, Vice President of Vaigai Chemicals, Fertilizer Distributors Selvaraj, Shanmugam and Karaikal Chloride Factory Chairman Manohar were arrested by CBI on 7.1.2010.

The above 5 have allegedly smuggled out the fertilizer illegally those were imported by ship from Israel for farmers. The fertilizer was stored, it is alleged, in the coocon of Vaigai Chemical Industries Limited and Karaikal Chloride Factory at Melakasakkudi, Puducherry. This fertilizer has been used illegally to eventually produce potassium chloride.

These two companies have violated the Essential Commodities Prevention Act and the Explosives Act. The CBI alleged that they were involved in a multi-crore fraud involving the manufacture of explosives in violation of prescribed norms.

The CBI has accused the Vaigai Chloride Factory in Karaikal of committing a fertilizer fraud of Rs 192.33 crore, revealed from their preliminary investigations. Four factories namely Vaigai Chloride, Karaikal Chloride in Melakasakudy, Kumaran Chemical and Sun Chemical in Vanjoor, Vaigai Chloride in Karaikal, and Sun Chemical in Vanjoor were accused of alleged smuggling of potassium chloride fertilizer meant for providing to farmers at subsidized rates in Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry. Following complaints, the CBI officials confiscated 1195.75 tons and 67 tons of potassium chloride stored in excess in the godown inside these factories. In 2010, CBI arrested 11 dealers from Madurai who supplied subsidized fertilizer to industries. CBI officials led by CBI Inspector Rajendran submitted a 1,000-page charge sheet to Justice Sundararajan of the Karaikal Criminal Arbitration Court in connection with the fertilizer scam of the two factories.



In connection with the case, 18 including Sun Chemicals factory directors Sriram Ashok, Jayaseelan, Manokaran, Rajasekaran, and seven dealers, and Kumaran Chemical factory directors Johnson, Thangaraj, Thillaraj, Sapitha and three dealers appeared before the court.

Palanichamy and his wife Seeni Roja Karaikal surrendered before the Second Criminal Arbitration Court who were wanted in connection with the fertilizer scam.

Vaigai Industries Limited and Karaikal Chloride plants in Puducherry, have been accused of smuggling farmers' manure, hoarding, tax evasion, illegal explosives manufacturing and detonator supply in nexus with several unscrupulous corrupt officials.

Eram Community Organization has sent complaints with evidence to the Central and State Governments and is preparing to file a Public Interest Litigation. These are serious violations of law. These industries are causing huge loss to the exchequer. The delta region is systematically being destroyed. Pollution is causing serious health issues for the residents in the area of these plants. Green Tribunal should intervene to save this area and the residents from their miseries. These two and their accomplices have looted the government goodowns, evaded taxes running into several hundred thousand crores. The demand of the people is for immediate shutting of these dangerous chemical industries and removing them from the area and the culprits be booked, their assets in all forms and names be instantly ceased and attached and quickly award the stringent punishment for their heinous crimes of destroying the environment and causing dangerous health hazards to the people of the area.

# UNESCO Declared Heritage Site In Danger

## Sand-Bricks Mafia Turns Land Mafia

Coimbatore: Thadagam valley for long been in the limelight for all wrong reasons. Legal and illegal quarrying and illegal brick kilns by the 'Sand-Brick Mafia' syndicate were ruling this valley. They were all cumulatively destroying the very fabric of nature's spellbinding serene beauty of this popular Thadagam Valley in the Western Ghats range in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, which otherwise was a dotting tourist destination.

The bewilderingly beautiful Valley is home to several wildlife species, majorly the elephant clan. Thadagam valley, is an important drainage basin and elephant & wildlife migratory corridor near Coimbatore. Thadagam Valley area was once a reservoir, collecting water from many streams originating in the surrounding hills, which are part of the Western Ghats range, and falling in this valley. From here, the Sanganur canal carried water to the Singanallur lake and the Noyyal river. According to a 2013 report prepared by the EIA Resource and Response Centre, New Delhi, the Sanganur valley was an important water source for agricultural and domestic use not too long ago. But not anymore. The valley's ecosystems and biodiversity were under threat from the activities of hundreds of illegal and some legal brick kilns and quarrying of red sand operating in the area, ruled by the Sand and Bricks Mafia. Most of these kilns started off as cottage units in the late 1990s in the predominantly agricultural panchayat unions of Chinna Thadagam, 24 Veerapandi Pirivu, Nanjundapuram, Pann-

imadai and Somayampalayam. Today, they're part of a large and organised industry, some of them even employ robotic machinery.

Environmentalists have documented the indiscriminate mining of red sand. Though the mining and brick kiln making in these village panchayat areas in the Valley were stopped following large scale complaints and inaction by the Administration and the State government, the intervention of the Madras High Court in June 2021 halted the activities. But several electric poles are still left in dangerous conditions on the edges of mining pits. Added to this is the continuing emission of polluting smoke from burning firewood and coal, 24/7, from these illegal kilns has taken the air quality in these areas to dangerous levels.

People in the area and nearby villages are down with permanent diseases reducing human, livestock and wildlife's life span. Environment of the valley is still being destroyed by these illegal businesses of the Brick and Land Mafias in a planned manner.

With the money minting business of sand quarrying having dwarfed and brick kilns almost in shut mode owing to legal intervention by the High Court, the 'Sand-Brick Mafia' syndicate had to look for other avenues to exploit this valley to continue with the illicit money minting business.

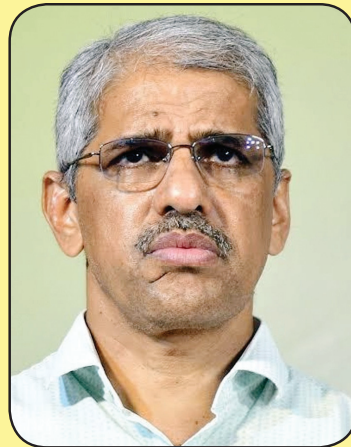
The Sand and Brick Mafia now have turned to other lucrative alternate business in this valley. Easiest next money spinning business is real-estate development.



Now they have turned to this lucrative sector and have turned "Land Mafia" in this beautiful valley. Now the valley area is facing a different issue of destruction of the environment. The land mafia has started illegally constructing commercial and residential buildings grabbing government and private land, and are now cumulatively destroying the very fabric of nature's spellbinding serene beauty of the of this popular Thadagam Valley in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

It is alleged that illegal constructions of commercial and premium residential buildings are in full swing in the valley. Recent desperate fast-paced illegal development by the land mafia in nexus with officials and polity, constructing commercial and residential buildings illegally grabbing vast lands in the valley is disfiguring the natural environment of the valley.

To construct buildings the land mafia have already blocked 3 main waterways by filling mud and stones in them to cut plots for sale. Blocking of waterways in this beautiful valley has blocked not only the water resources but also the routes of wildlife like elephants. With their habituated routes blocked, elephants



and other wildlife find alternate routes through farm lands and other areas where the villagers inhabit. Blocking of water ways also has affected the water resources in the valley areas.

These illegal activities have displaced the whole ecosystem, destroying the natural environment and forcing the wildlife and the inhabitants along this route to find newer paths and water sources. There are also increasing incidents of wildlife destroying farm lands and people losing their lives to wildlife who are forced to change their regular routes now.

The area already has private housing, restaurants, inns and entertainment parlours to cater to tourists visiting this valley, much against the local population protests. Additional activities of grabbing the valley areas is further destroying the environment, it is being alleged by the activists and the local population.

With so much destructions happening and several local people losing their lives owing to wildlife-human -clash is not moving the District Administration or the Government to swiftly act to halt and clear the area of all construction activities, reopen all the pits and wa-



terways to restore them to original nature ways and save the environment of this serene nature's bewildering valley's beauty.

Shocking to all, the Divisional Revenue Officer P K Govindan claims that it is 'patta' land and hence land development in the valley area is not objectionable. So the administration has given a clean chit to the fast-paced construction activity in this valley area?

Who are all to blame, the Administration, government and or the polity? Why the Collector is not intervening to halt this mass destruction of nature? All are responsible for this tragic state of affairs that is systematically destroying this beautiful valley. Why are they not waking up to the need of the burning issues?

Why even the Green Tribunal, State Government and Forest and Environment Ministries are complacent to the cold blooded murder of the environment in Thadagam Valley? Who will end the mafia raj there and restore save the environment from further destruction. Will these illegal sites and buildings be demolished, the culprits behind the bar and their assets confiscated and attached to the government exchequer?