

16th Lok Sabha Ends Its Term

NEW DELHI: As the curtains came down on the 16th Lok Sabha on the last day of the Budget session, the members recalled their experiences, with some of them becoming emotional.

They also praised Speaker Sumitra Mahajan, the second woman Speaker of the Lok Sabha after Meira Kumar, for her efforts to run the House smoothly while the Prime Minister Narendra Modi enumerated a number of achievements during his tenure and also took jibes at his political opponents.

Here is what the leaders said:

* Narendra Modi: This Lok Sabha would be remembered for the highest number of women MPs, out of which 44 are first-timers. For the first time, maximum number of women ministers are in the Cabinet and we have two women ministers in the Cabinet Committee on Security.

India is now the 6th largest economy and close to becoming 5-trillion dollar economy.

* Congress leader K.C. Venugopal: Even though the government was not ready to approve us as a recognised opposition party, we cooperated in a larger way for a healthy legislative process. Now, our future lies in the hands of the people. We are going to face the electorate.

* Samajwadi Party's Mulayam Singh Yadav: I wish all the

members of this Lok Sabha win again and return to this House. The Prime Minister has worked for everyone. He tried to take everyone along with him. I hope he returns as Prime Minister again.

* Trinamool Congress' Sudip Bandopadhyay: The 16th Lok Sabha was full of excitement, tensions, anxiety, agitations, few good quality speeches, few unwanted and unexpected economic decisions and many other activities.

* BJD's Bhartruhari Mahtab: During the 16th Lok Sabha, the country witnessed, after a lapse of 30 years, a government which had a mandate of full majority. In 2014, the country gave a full majority, but at the same time, we should also understand the country also gave a fractured opposition.

* NCP's Supriya Sule: During the last five years that we have spent together, we have had our good moments and some sober moments.

* Apna Dal's Anupriya Patel: It has been an enriching experience to see how this great institution works, how every voice is heard and how every ideology across the country gets space.

* Revolutionary Socialist Party's N.K. Premchandran: All of us talk about 'discussion', 'debate' and 'decision' but there should be 'dissent' also.

Priyanka Vadra Road Show



Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Jyotiraditya Scindia during a road show in Lucknow on Feb 11, 2019. (Photo: IANS)

Kulbushan Jadhav Case In ICJ

NEW DELHI: The public hearing in the Kulbushan Jadhav case will commence from Monday before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday.

Jadhav, 48, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court for espionage in April 2017 following which India moved the ICJ. A 10-member ICJ bench restrained Pakistan from executing Jadhav till the case was adju-

dicated. Pakistan had stated that "Jadhav was not an ordinary person as he had entered the country with the intent of spying and carrying out sabotage activities" in Balochistan. India denies the charges.

Jadhav was apprehended on March 3, 2016 after illegally crossing into Pakistan from Iran, according to Pakistani officials. Indian officials say he was abducted from Iran and taken to Pakistan against his will.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar

declined to go into the details of it.

"The oral proceedings on the International Court of Justice are commencing on February 18. India will present its case before the court. Since the matter is sub judice, it is not appropriate for me to state our position in public. Whatever we have to do, we will do in the court," he said in response to a question.

The ICJ will hold public hearings in the Jadhav case from Monday to Thursday, according to the ICJ website.

Taj-View-Garden Inaugurated

AGRA: Union Culture Minister Mahesh Sharma here on Thursday inaugurated the green river front on the Taj Heritage Corridor, sandwiched between the Agra Fort and the Taj Mahal.

The debris and dumps of garbage on the stretch along the Yamuna river have been cleared and a lush green "Taj-view-garden" has been developed.

The minister also opened a permanent exhibition of photos at the facilities centre on the eastern gate of the Taj Mahal. Sharma asked officials to develop the park as an international attraction with appropriate amenities to enable tourists spend evenings in the shadow of the Fort and the Taj. "Taj Mahal is our precious heritage and we want our historical glory presented before the world," he said.

The controversial Rs 175-crore Corri-

dor project had brought down the Mayawati government in 2003. The UP Horticulture Department in collaboration with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has resurrected the project.

The Supreme Court in 2006 had asked the ASI to remove debris from the corridor site and develop the 80-acre of reclaimed land as a green buffer to insulate the Taj Mahal from air pollution. But for want of resources, it took more than a decade for work to start. Till recently, the land was being used as a dumping ground for garbage and also as burial place for children and aborted foetuses.

The 80-acre platform, recovered through dredging of the river bed and refilling of the open space, had been left unfinished after corruption charges were levelled against Bahujan Samaj Party.

Vizag Getting A New Airport

VISAKHAPATNAM: The foundation stone for Bhogapuram Greenfield International Airport in Andhra Pradesh's Vijayanagaram was laid on Thursday.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, who performed the ground breaking ceremony at Bhogapuram, about 40 km from here, said the airport would spur the economic development of north coastal Andhra. To be developed on 2,703 acres under public-private partnership mode, it will be an integrated airport with an Aerocity, a Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility and an Aviation Academy.

The need for a greenfield airport was felt in the region due to limitations in expansion of Visakhapatnam Airport, which belongs to the Indian Navy and also the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh.

Officials said this would be developed on the lines of the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport at Shamshabad on the outskirts of Hyderabad. The airport would come up between the national highway and the coast. The location was selected after surveys by the state government and also Airport Authority of India (AAI) found it suitable. Visakhapatnam Airport handles 10 lakh passengers annually.

Trinamool Congress MLA Shot Dead, BJP Blamed

KOLKATA: Trinamool Congress legislator Satyajit Biswas was shot dead by unidentified assailants at a Saraswati Puja programme in West Bengal's Nadia district on Saturday evening, police said.

The Trinamool accused the Bharatiya Janata Party of being involved in the murder, but it denied the charge and called for a Central Bureau of Investigation enquiry, if needed.

Biswas, 37, the lawmaker from Krishnaganj (SC), was fatally shot while attending the puja inauguration programme in Phulbari along with state minister Ratna Ghosh and Trinamool district president Gourishankar Dutta.

The newly-married legislator was fired upon multiple times from close range when he was coming down the stage after the

programme.

Biswas, a popular scheduled caste leader, was rushed to a local hospital where he was declared dead. The Trinamool alleged a BJP hand behind the crime.

"BJP and (its leader) Mukul Roy harboured a deep grudge against him as Biswas became an MLA at a time when Roy had betrayed us. The killing is the result of that conspiracy. We will see its end. There will be an inquiry by the police.

Four people, including Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Mukul Roy, have been booked by police on Sunday, and two arrests have been made.

A number of Trinamool leaders have termed the murder as a "political killing" and blamed the BJP of eliminating a popular youth leader like Biswas to gain political ground in the district.

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