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NEARBY



**Kejriwal flags off 104 new
standard-floor CNG buses**

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday flagged off 104 new standard-floor CNG buses, which the government said feature modern technology, including CCTV cameras, panic buttons and hydraulic lifts for differently abled passengers.

CITY ► PAGE 3

**Air quality may dip to
'severe' after Diwali**

NEW DELHI
Delhi's air quality is likely to spike to "severe" category in the early hours of Monday due to the effect of firecrackers on Diwali night. But it will be for a short period with about "half" the magnitude of Diwali in 2018, according to SAFAR.

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**Reply to plea for entry of
women in mosques: SC**

NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Friday gave the government a week to respond to a petition by a Pune couple to allow Muslim women to enter mosques and worship without gender discrimination. A Bench, led by CJI Ranjan Gogoi, asked the government to respond to the petition challenging the prohibition of entry of Muslim women into mosques as illegal and a violation of their dignity.

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Sena sets terms, will talk only to Shah

With greater clout in *mahayuti*, the Thackerays are insisting on 50:50 formula

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The BJP's parliamentary board has authorised state president Amit Shah to speak to Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray on the shape of the coalition government in Maharashtra after Thursday's Assembly election results.

The choice of negotiator from the BJP was conveyed by senior Shiv Sena leaders to the BJP, who said talks should be held at the "top level" and not, as had become the case, between BJP State leaders and Mr. Thackeray. This is one of the terms the Sena has put before the BJP.

The second, and most important condition, is that of



Now for talks: Newly elected MLAs meet Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray at his residence in Mumbai on Friday. ■PTI

having rotational chief ministership: the BJP will have its Chief Minister for the first two-and-a-half years and the Shiv Sena for the rest of the term. Sources in the Sena said both the senior Thackeray and son Aaditya are ada-

mant about this. Mr. Thackeray told a few well-wishers that he too "needed to run my party" and is not settling for anything less than the 50-50 formula.

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BJP, Sena vie for top post

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI

The deadline for government formation is still two weeks away in Maharashtra, but hectic parleys have begun in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena camps over who will be the next Chief Minister.

A day after the alliance regained control of the State by winning 160 seats, leaders of both parties staked claim to the post.

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Murmu is Lieutenant Governor of J&K, Mathur will go to Ladakh

Incumbent Satya Pal Malik shifted to Goa as Governor

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday transferred Jammu & Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik to Goa and appointed Expenditure Secretary Girish Chandra Murmu as the Lieutenant Governor of J&K and Radha Krishna Mathur as the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh.

The Centre withdrew the special status of Jammu &



Girish Chandra Murmu

Kashmir on August 5. The newly created Union Territories of J&K and Ladakh will come into existence on Oc-

tober 31. Though the appointments are made in the name of the President, the Home Ministry is the nodal Ministry.

The Centre also appointed former chief of the Intelligence Bureau Dineswar Sharma, who was the Centre's interlocutor for Jammu & Kashmir, as administrator to Lakshadweep.

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CBI: review bail granted to Chidambaram

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation has asked the Supreme Court to review its judgment granting regular bail to former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram in the case registered by the agency in the INX Media case.

A three-judge Bench led by Justice R. Banumathi had granted Mr. Chidambaram bail on October 22.

DETAILS ON ► PAGE 15

BJP, JJP join hands to form govt. in Haryana

Deputy CM post, RS seat for Dushyant Chautala's party

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister and BJP president Amit Shah, along with Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) leader Dushyant Chautala, on Friday evening announced that the two parties would form a government in Haryana.

The Chief Minister will be from the BJP and the Deputy Chief Minister from the JJP.

The JJP's support to the BJP allows the saffron party to cobble together more than adequate numbers to stake claim to form a government.



Win-win deal: JJP leader Dushyant Chautala, BJP working president J.P. Nadda, Home Minister Amit Shah and Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar in Delhi on Friday. ■PTI

Comfortable numbers

The Assembly election results, declared on Thursday, left the BJP six short of a majority. While eight victorious Independents have pledged support to the BJP, the 10 MLAs of the JJP have made the situation most comfortable for the party.

It would also help the BJP to avoid accepting the support of Gopal Kanda, the controversial MLA of the Haryana Lokhit Party, out on bail in a case related to the suicide of air stewardess Gita Sharma.

"We respect the mandate given by the people of Haryana and have decided to come together to form the government," said Mr. Shah,

who returned early from a three-day trip to Gujarat to help seal the deal.

'Stable government'

Mr. Chautala said that the alliance hoped to provide a "stable and progressive" government, acknowledging that the two parties might have tread different paths in the past.

Sources said the deal might include two Cabinet and one Minister of State berths for the JJP and a Rajya Sabha seat, going forward.

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IT'S A LOST OPPORTUNITY FOR CONGRESS IN HARYANA ► PAGE 14
DAUGHTERS ARE WATCHING, SAYS CONGRESS ► PAGE 14

'Don't take Gopal Kanda's support'

BJP leader Uma Bharti on Friday opposed the party's move to take the support of Haryana Lokhit Party's MLA Gopal Kanda to shore up its numbers. "If Gopal Kanda is the same man due to whom a girl committed suicide and later her mother too, then, we must, for the sake of morality and ethics, not take his support to form a government... The case is still in court and he is out on bail. Elections cannot be seen as a validation of his legal or moral position," the former Union Minister said in tweets. ■ PAGE 14

Apples to ashes



Laid to waste: Burnt trucks parked outside the police station in Chitragam village of Shopian district in Jammu & Kashmir on Friday. Terrorists on Thursday stopped three trucks, killed two drivers and set fire to the vehicles. ■ NISSAR AHMAD (REPORT ON PAGE 15)

In Haryana, a dozen MLAs face criminal cases

New Assembly has three more 'tainted' legislators than the previous one

ASHOK KUMAR
GURUGRAM

As many as 12 MLAs in the newly elected 90-member State Assembly have criminal cases against them, according to a Haryana Election Watch and Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) report. Only nine MLAs had criminal cases against them in the previous House. Besides, only nine women have been elected this time, four less than in 2014.

Congress tops list

The Congress tops the list with four MLAs having a criminal record, followed by BJP with two. Both Indian National Lok Dal and Haryana Lokhit Party's lone winning MLAs face criminal cases.

The cases against all four Congress MLAs and HLP



Sirsa MLA Gopal Kanda

MLA Gopal Kanda are of a serious nature, the report said.

Three of the seven Independents who are set to play a pivotal role in government formation also have criminal cases registered against them, serious one in the case of two.

Analysis of educational qualifications has revealed

that 62 MLAs - 69% of the total strength - are graduate or above, and 27 have declared their qualification as between primary and senior secondary level. As many as 57 MLAs are aged between 51 and 70 and only 10 are below 40 years of age. Seventeen MLAs are between 41 and 50 years of age; the remaining six are in the 71-80 age group.

More crorepatis

The number of crorepati MLAs has increased from 75 to 84 since the previous Assembly - an increase of 10%.

While the 31 Congress MLAs have average assets of ₹16.32 crore, the corresponding figure for the 40 BJP MLAs is ₹12.04 crore. However, the Jannayak Janta Party's MLAs are the richest with average assets of ₹25.26 crore. Formed after a

split in the INLD, the JJP has 10 MLAs in the Assembly.

Each legislator in the present Assembly has average assets of ₹18.29 crore compared to ₹12.97 crore in 2014.

Richest legislator

Independent MLA Balraj Kundu from Israna has the lowest at ₹40 lakh. Mr. Kanda has declared the highest liabilities at ₹78 crore, followed by Badshahpur Independent MLA Rakesh Daultabad at ₹19 crore.

As many as 29 MLAs have been re-elected. The average assets of the re-elected MLAs has increased 24% from ₹13.73 crore to ₹16.98 crore over the past five years.

Gujarat firm wins consultancy bid to redevelop Central Vista

HCP Design, Planning and Management to be paid ₹229.75 crore for masterplan: Hardeep Puri

DAMINI NATH
NEW DELHI

An Ahmedabad-based architecture firm that carried out the development of the Sabarmati riverfront in Gujarat in 2002 has been chosen to lead the Central government's ambitious revamp of Parliament and the Central Vista.

The Central government on Friday announced that it had chosen HCP Design, Planning and Management for its redevelopment of Parliament and Central Vista and the development of a new common central secretariat.

Detailed planning

The firm would now prepare a masterplan for the entire area, from the gates of Rashtrapati Bhavan till In-



Hardeep Singh Puri at a press conference on redeveloping Parliament and the Central Vista on Friday. ■PTI

dia Gate, complete with detailed design for the existing buildings as well as new ones.

For these services, it would be paid a consultancy fee of ₹229.75 crore, Union Housing and Urban Af-

fairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said, adding that it was about 40% less than the initial estimate of ₹448 crore.

Mr. Puri said usually the consultancy fees are about 3% to 5% of the total project

cost. However, he said the final cost of the project would be determined by the tendering process for the projects, which he said would be on the ground by May 2020.

Central Public Works Department officials said the usual formula may not be applicable to this project, with two officials saying a rough estimate was ₹12,450 crore.

Public consultations

Before the masterplan and designs are locked in, Mr. Puri said the firm would have public consultations. The government has set the deadlines of November 2021 for the revamp of the 3-km-long Central Vista, March 2022 for the redevelopment of Parliament and March

2024 for the construction of the common central secretariat for ministries.

Speaking about the need for the revamp, Mr. Puri said the buildings, like Parliament House and North and South Blocks, were constructed around 100 years ago and did not have the space and amenities needed today.

The redevelopment of Parliament would add offices for all MPs and could include a new building connected to the existing heritage structure with a walkway, he said.

He reiterated that the Parliament, North and South Blocks would not be demolished, unlike some of the government offices constructed post-Independence, but their usage could change.

Activists cry foul as govt. notifies RTI rules

'Information Commissions will function like caged parrots'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Activists on Friday decried new rules under the Right to Information Act that have reduced the tenure of Information Commissioners from five years to three, saying the changes would affect their independence. The government had notified the rules on Thursday.

The Right to Information (Term of Office, Salaries, Allowances and Other Terms and Conditions of Service of Chief Information Commissioner, Information Commissioners in the Central Information Commission, State Chief Information Commissioner and State Information Commissioners in the State Information Commission) Rules, 2019 notified by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pen-

sions set the tenure of Information Commissioners at three years and gave the government the discretion to decide on "conditions of service" for which no express provisions are made in the rules.

The Chief Information Commissioner's salary has been fixed at ₹2.5 lakh and an Information Commissioner's at ₹2.25 lakh.

'Violation of procedures'

Reacting to the notification, activist Anjali Bharadwaj of the Satark Nagrik Sangathan said the government had amended the RTI Act in July and had not issued the prescribed rules for nearly three months after the amendment received the President's assent on August 1. She said the rules had been drafted and promulgat-

ed in a "completely surreptitious manner in flagrant violation" of the procedures laid down in the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy of 2014.

"The policy requires all draft rules to be placed in the public domain for comments/suggestions of people. The draft was not available in the public domain and no consultations were held with members of the public," the citizens' group said in a statement.

Among new rules, the government has been given the "power to relax" their provisions, which raised "serious concerns that the government could potentially invoke these powers to determine different tenures for different Commissioners at the time of appointment", she said.