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I was waiting for this moment all my life: Zubin

The German Ambassador, Michael Steiner, who hosted the concert, said that the distance between Munich and Srinagar is 7756 kilometres and music reduces it to zero. "German and European cultural heritage bow to Kashmir, to its history, to its beauty and to its difficult reality and journey", he said.

While acknowledging the support of the State Government and the Chief Minister, Steiner said, "I thank you all, but most of all I thank you all Kashmiris". Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on the occasion while pointing to critics of the concert, said: "If I am asked to do it all over again, I will do it again."

Omar started his brief address by quoting the famous couplet by Amir Khusrau "that if there is heaven on earth, it is here, it is here". He said Shalimar Bagh once again comes alive with the sound of music.

Former Chief Minister and Union Minister, Farooq Abdullah while asked about the concert said: "It was very good. I liked it."

Mehta and his Bavarian State Orchestra played its full cast of works of Ludwig Van Beethoven, Franz Joseph Haydn and Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in front of an invited audience of 2,000 guests.

The concert, "Ehsaas-e-Kashmir" (Feel of Kashmir), kicked off with the maestro leading the orchestra in concert with Abhay Sopori's troupe with traditional Kashmiri instruments. The blend of European and Kashmir music mesmerised the audience and it attracted lot of applause from the audience.

Among the audience were Governor NN Vohra, Union Minister Farooq Abdullah, a number of celebrities and envoys of several countries.

The high-profile event was telecast live by public broadcaster Doordarshan for the first time in Hi-Definition format, which was watched by millions across India and 50 European countries.

Mehta played Symphony No. 5, a composition of the famous German composer Beethoven, a crucial figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras in western art music in the early 19th century.

The other well-known compositions that were played this evening were Concerto for Trumpet by Haydn, the late 18th century Austrian composer regarded by many as "Father of the Symphony", and the Violin Concerto by Russian compos-

Cong puts up united face, seeks cancellation of nomination order

The nominations have been made without consulting us notwithstanding that we are major coalition partner in the Government," the Congress Ministers regretted.

It may be mentioned here that yesterday also the NC-Congress Co-ordination Committee had met in Srinagar under the chairmanship of Prof Soz to sort out the issue arising out of the nominations. The meeting had remained inconclusive with National Conference members defending decision of the Chief Minister on the ground that the Congress had got its four members nominated to LAHDC Leh with the assurance that the NC can nominate its four members to LAHDC Kargil.

However, the Congress was of the view that both NC and Congress should share two members each in the nomination quota of LAHDC Kargil.

Meanwhile, official sources said since the Government was busy in Zubin Mehta's concert in Srinagar today, no decision could be taken on the Congress demand.

The Congress had asked the Government to rescind the order nominating four NC leaders to LAHDC Kargil or explore other legal options of withdrawing two nominated members to replace them with Congress leaders.

Prof Soz has been camping in Srinagar for the past two days to get the nominations withdrawn.

This was after a long time that all Congress Ministers belonging to two party factions headed by Prof Soz and Union Health Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, a former Chief Minister of J&K, have come on joint platform on the issue of LAHDC Kargil nominations.

er Tchaikovsky, one of the most celebrated musicians of the 19th century.

Mehta, who had worked with several international orchestras including the New York Philharmonic and Israel Philharmonic, wove a magic spell and kept his audience in thrall unmindful of the controversy generated by separatists and others objecting to the concert.

Abhay's troupe performed with 15 Kashmiri musical instruments like santoor, rabaab, tumbak, sarangi and matka at the beginning and end of Zubin Mehta's concert.

The concert was held under tight security. The audience had to pass through 3 metal detectors and had to face frisking twice before they were let inside.

The road from Dalgate to Shalimar and Kashmir University to Shalimar was sealed and guests were asked to park vehicles in Kashmir University and at Foreshore Nishat and were ferried to the concert from there in buses and taxis.

The road on either side leading to Shalimar was guarded by Police and CRPF who were also guarding the Dal lake in speed boats to prevent any movement in Dal lake.

The security forces had also erected the barricades in entire city to prevent movement of the people and for the security of the guests.

Meanwhile, life in Kashmir remained paralysed today in response to a strike called by Hurriyat (G) Conference chairman, Syed Ali Shah Geelani against Zubin Mehta's concert.

Shops and business establishments, educational institutions, banks and courts remained closed and traffic was off the roads in Srinagar and other major towns of the Valley in response to the strike call.

Police and paramilitary forces have been deployed in strength to maintain law and order and scuttle any attempt by separatists to stage demonstrations on the occasion of the concert.

All sensitive areas particularly those which witnessed clashes like Maisuma, Rajouri Kadal, Nowhatta, Rambagh, Natipora and Batmaloo were virtually sealed by security forces.

All the entry points to Srinagar were sealed to prevent any protests or militants from targeting the concert. Barricades were erected at several places in Srinagar city and movement of the people was restricted to prevent any protests and for the safety of the guests who were in Srinagar to attend the concert.

Meanwhile, oath ceremony of LAHDC Kargil Councillors, which was scheduled to be held today, has been postponed. The next date of oath would be decided by Ladakh Affairs Department of the Government.

Under Article 93 of LAHDC Kargil Constitution, the oath ceremony of the Councillors and their General Body Meeting has to be held within a month of the notification of 26 elected members of LAHDC Kargil was issued by Deputy Commissioner, Kargil, Fida Hussain on September 2.

Principal District and Sessions Judge, Kargil, Tahir Khurshid Raina had to administer the oath to newly elected and nominated Councillors.

Sources said the Congress leaders from Kargil including district chief of the party Ghulam Raza have been camping in Srinagar awaiting the party high command's nod for future course of action.

It may be reported here that nomination of four NC leaders to the LAHDC Kargil as Councillors had tilted majority in favour of the NC, which, otherwise, the Congress claimed was in its favour.

The LAHDC Kargil has 26 elected members. There was provision of nomination of four members to the Council by the Government.

Eleven Ministers of the Congress, who attended today's meeting, were Tara Chand, Taj Mohi-ud-Din, Peerzada Mohammad Sayeed, GA Mir, Rigin Jora, Sham Sharma, Raman Bahalla, Abdul Muejed Wani (all Cabinet rank), Dr Manohar Lal Sharma, Shabir Khan and Aijaz Khan (all Minister of State with Independent charge).

4 killed in CRPF firing in Shopian

were injured. They have been identified as Head Constable Mushtaq Ahmad, Constable Fayaz Ahmad, Constable Mohammad Yousuf, Constable Ghulam Ahmed, Constable Zahoor Ahmed, Constable Hilal Ahmed, Constable Ghulam Nabi, Constable Rizwan Ahmed, Constable Mohammad Rafique, Constable Ashiq Hussain, Constable Manzoor Ahmed, SPO Gowhar Ahmed and a civilian Shabir Ahmed resident of New Colony Pulwama.

The spokesman said that they were rushed to hospitals and seriously injured have been sent to Srinagar for treatment.

A police spokesman said that a security naka checking party at Budshah Chowk, Srinagar was busy in checking the vehicles. "The naka party asked a vehicle bearing registration number JK01R/5054 to stop. The vehicle dodged the party and fled from the spot. The naka party fired at the tyre of the vehicle, injuring one person Mohammad Iqbal Sheikh of Machuwa Chadoora in the leg. He has been hospital-

ized and is so far out of danger", police said.

However, an eyewitness said the car collided with an ambassador car in which a forest conservator was travelling near Badshah crossing. Police deployed at the spot signalled the driver to stop, but he fled away.

"As the car reached near Badshah Bridge, just 20 meters away, a CRPF man opened fire on the vehicle in which the driver of the car and two other passengers were travelling. One person was injured", the eyewitness said.

After the incident, youths from the adjacent Maisuma area came out of their homes and started pelting stones at the security forces. This led to clashes in the area and police charged batons and fired tear smoke shells to disperse the protesters.

In the meantime, the hardline separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani and moderate leader Mirwaiz Omar have called for one day strike tomorrow against the Shopian killings.

GoI issues advisories to J&K on militancy, law & order, harmony

"Steps have also been taken to keep militancy under check," they said.

Sources said the Government of India officials issued certain guidelines required to be adopted for keeping the State free of violence especially the communal riots before the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. The Centre shared the inputs with top brass of civil and police officers about Jammu and Kashmir especially on militancy, law and order and communal situation.

According to sources, the State officials have assured the Union of India that the Government was fully prepared to meet with any situation and

would adopt a strategy to keep situation well under control before both Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in the State.

They said the Government of India officials would be holding a separate meeting with the State officials in the next few days for a detailed review of the situation on election front. They added that the Central Government was worried that not only the militants but even the anti-social elements would try to create trouble before the elections and that was the reason that it held meeting with top officials of various States including Jammu and Kashmir.

Media Art Association warns agitation

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, Sept 7: J&K Media Art Association has reiterated its demand regarding reactivation of Kashmir Channel by starting commissioning of new programmes for private producers.

Since long the Association has been pleading before D D authorities Mandi House New Delhi but nothing positive has come out till date, it said in a statement issued here today.

The Association office bearers Pushkar Nath Pandita, K K Raina and Pran Nath Pandita warned to come to streets and hold demonstration at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi if authorities failed to do justice with the producers and artists of the State as the authorities at Mandi House have killed the very spirit for which the DD Kashmir Channel was established.

They said that the authorities at Delhi were working against the spirit of the Kashmir Channel and this will not be allowed to

Sanskrit education centre inaugurated

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 7: Centre for Non Formal Sanskrit Education of Rashtriya Sanskrit Sansthan Deemed University, New Delhi was inaugurated at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Mubarak Mandi.

On the occasion, Prof Vishav Murti Sharma was the chief guest, while Dr Ashok was the guest of honour. Principal Shashi Prabha Thapa, Dr Vijender Kumar, Dr Manu Sharma, Jaspal Kour, faculty members of the school and students were also present.

The centre will run three months certificate course aimed at learning Sanskrit in practical way. 50 students enrolled themselves for this course.

Youth injured in house collapse

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 7: A youth was seriously injured after a roof top of a kacha house collapsed in Siot area of Sunderbani.

As per reports, Sunil Kumar, son of Ramesh Chander, resident of Ward number 3, Siot was seriously injured, when the roof top of a kacha house collapsed.

He was rushed to Sunderbani hospital, from where he was later referred to Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) for advance treatment.

Police has taken the cognizance.

Karan Johar receives extortion threat

MUMBAI, Sept 7:

Bollywood filmmaker Karan Johar has allegedly received an extortion threat from underworld goon Ravi Pujari, police said today.

"A text message was received by Karan on his phone from an international number some days ago. The sender demanded money," a police officer said but refused to divulge the exact amount demanded by the sender.

Police indicated that it was the handiwork of Pujari, a fugitive gangster who makes threat calls and sends text messages using internet telephony, making it difficult for the cops to trace the caller's address.

Following this, the producer-director has been provided with security at his residence in suburban Khar here, police said.

Recently, Bollywood producer Boney Kapoor had also received death threats over the phone from an unidentified person, who was also suspected to be linked to Pujari's gang. (PTI)



Dignitaries during safety clinic awareness programme organised by HPCL.

HPCL conducts safety clinic

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 7: Continuing towards its commitment towards safety and security of consumer, HPCL today conducted Safety Clinic through their LPG distributor Shivangi Gas Service at Lawrence Public School, Sidhra.

The safety clinic was attended by teachers and students. Anees Jeelani Qari, Senior Sales Officer, HPCL delivered lecture on safety aspects of LPG and safe handling of LPG cylinders used in houses.

Only standard and ISI

marked equipments like hot plate, LPG surakhsha hoses and oil company supplied LPG regulators should be used as using of non-standard equipments is an unsafe practice, which lead to disaster on account of fire in LPG.

Practical demonstrations were also given by safety consultants Neetu Jamwal and Harbhushan Bharti, proprietor Shivangi Gas.

A safety quiz was also conducted and prizes were distributed among the students.

BJP leaders hold meetings at Banihal, Kaskoot Ukhral

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 7: Meetings of BJP were held at Kaskoot, Banihal and Ukhral under the leadership of Rajeev Charak, State convener of Party's Training Cell. He was accompanied by Vijay Mohan Thakur, district president of the Party, Ramban and Nardh Singh its district vice president.

The people who participated in these meetings highlighted their problems and accused administration of not settling them for years together.

Mr Charak said that there is no facility of blood bank at

Banihal Hospital and doctors are not available in this hospital as well as other hospitals.

He said Primary Health Centre at Mangit has no specialized doctors and it is run by medical assistant only. The buses of Degree College Banihal remain grounded and they are not used for transportation of students.

Vijay Mohan Thakur said that out of 14 computers of GHSS, Banihal 12 are missing. He alleged that the work on Muhun Mangit road which was started in 2007 has not been completed till date.



Cardiologist Dr Upendra Kaul (Dr U Kaul), Executive Director and Dean, Cardiology, Fortis Escort Hospital Delhi examining patients at SRL Diagnostics Gandhi Nagar Jammu on Saturday.

Team of doctors examines patients at SRL Diagnostics

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, Sept 7: Renowned Cardiologist Dr Upendra Kaul (Dr U Kaul), Executive Director and Dean, Cardiology, Fortis Escort Hospital Delhi visited SRL Diagnostics Gandhi Nagar Jammu for OPD, today.

Dr Upendra Kaul examined 55-60 patients and gave medical consultation to the patients. He said that Fortis Escorts hospital is committed to provide world

class medical facility to the people of Jammu by conducting regular OPD at SRL Diagnostics Jammu.

Dr Dheeraj Gandotra cardiologist and Dr Anil Dhar neurosurgeon specialist have already conducted their OPD. Fortis Escort will also organise OPD for other faculties- Orthopedics and Nephrology at SRL Diagnostics Jammu.

Substantive work done, Monsoon Session successful, says Govt

NEW DELHI, Sept 7:

Government today described as "successful" the Monsoon Session of Parliament which saw the passage of the landmark Food Security as also the Land Acquisition Bills.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kamal Nath said "substantive work" was done in the month-long session which had also witnessed the passage of a key economic reform legislation, the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Bill, which was hanging fire for nearly a decade due to political differences.

"We had a successful session

and have passed about 16 Bills in Lok Sabha, besides introducing about eight Bills in Rajya Sabha," Nath said a day after Lok Sabha adjourned sine die.

Lawmakers in the lower House had rushed through legislative business, clearing four crucial Bills on a single day yesterday.

"Some very heavy bills—the Food Security and the Land Acquisition Bills have been passed—and both Houses on several days sat till night."

"So, substantive work has been done in the Monsoon Session of Parliament," he told reporters outside Parliament House.

The Minister, however, rejected suggestions that there had been a "goof-up" in the Constitution Amendment Bill regarding appointment of judges to higher courts.

He said that the Constitution (120th Amendment) Bill, 2013, passed by Rajya Sabha, would come to Lok Sabha in the Winter Session of Parliament.

The first two weeks of Monsoon Session were marred by frequent disruptions over several issues, including the decision on a separate Telangana state as also the alleged land deals of Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law Robert Vadra, Chinese incursions, killing of five Indian soldiers at the LoC and the fuel price hike. (PTI)

President calls for innovative changes in academic system



President Pranab Mukherjee delivers his address at the 2nd Convocation of Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar on Saturday. (UNI)

BHUBANESWAR, Sept 7:

Pitching for a more flexible, transparent and student friendly educational system, President Pranab Mukherjee today said innovative changes were needed to make the country's academic setup globally competitive.

"Academic regulations must be streamlined to create a more flexible, transparent and student friendly educational system," Mukherjee said while addressing the IIT-Bhubaneswar convocation programme.

"Improvement of academic system calls for innovative changes. Our examination system must incorporate modern methods of evaluation. Top quality teachers must be recruited. A spirit of competition among universities must be infused."

Mukherjee said the only way to take India into the league of

leading nations is by producing highly capable engineers, scientists, doctors, academicians and other intellectuals.

He also said that it is the "bounden duty" of all universities and engineering institutes to put research at the forefront of their curriculum and lauded IIT-Bhubaneswar's efforts in this direction.

As many as 129 students are enrolled in PhD programmes in the pursuit of cutting edge results in various fields, Mukherjee said.

"It has also bagged 13 industrial consultancy projects," he added.

The President, however, expressed anguish that due to lack of quality, very few academic institutions can claim global reckoning and there is not a single Indian university or IIT among the top 200 as per international ranking (PTI)

BJP-JD(U) clash in RS

NEW DELHI, Sept 7:

In the backdrop of changed political equations, JD(U) and BJP today clashed once again in Rajya Sabha, third time in the Monsoon session with Shivanand Tiwari from the former NDA ally attacking Narendra Modi for his reported stand on manual scavenging.

This was the first session in Parliament ever since JD(U) walked out of the NDA fold on June 16 over Modi being made BJP campaign committee chief bringing to an end their 17-year-long alliance. Ever since the two parties have been sparing.

This time Tiwari, a senior member of JD(U) attacked Modi referring to a 2008 report in a national daily saying the Gujarat Chief Minister had stated that those engaged in manual scavenging are "doing it because they feel, they get spiritual pleasure".

"We have a Chief Minister, who makes a speech among officials of his state, which is a matter of concern. He says that those who engaged in manual scavenging are doing from generations and that he says he is not ready to accept that they are doing it under compulsion. He says they are doing it because they feel that they get spiritual pleasure. This report was published in 2008," Tiwari said.

As members from some parties asked, who was that CM, Tiwari said, "that Chief Minister is the Gujarat Chief Minister, whose name is now coming as a Prime Ministerial candidate. It was he, who said this...if such a person occupies the Chair (of Prime Minister) in the country even by mistake, you think what will be the plight of the nation."

Tiwari said this while participating in the debate on the

Manual Scavengers Bill.

A few minutes later, the BJP members led by Ravishankar Prasad protested against Tiwari's remarks. Prasad asked Deputy Chairman P J Kurien to expunge these remarks made by Tiwari against Modi.

Kurien said that he will see the records and expunge the remarks if there was anything unparliamentary but added, "I did not expunge. I said I will go through the records," as Tiwari stuck to his guns.

Union Minister Jairam Ramesh was seen trying to broker peace in the House as he walked up to Tiwari as well as the BJP leaders as Najma Heptulla from the main Opposition party got into an angry exchange or words with the JD(U) leader.

This was the third time such a direct clash between the two parties was witnessed.

Earlier Rajiv Pratap Rudy of BJP had questioned the Chair in the House on August 14 as to whether the ruling party of Bihar has now become a partner of UPA soon after he saw JD(U) MP K C Tyagi seated next to Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Rajiv Shukla during Zero Hour.

Before that Shivanand Tiwari had vehemently opposed Leader of Opposition Arun Jaitley's bid to seek an early discussion in Rajya Sabha on the issue of firing by Pakistani forces on Indian soldiers.

As there was no unanimity among Opposition over the issue with Left parties also backing Tiwari's stand, BJP had to withdraw its proposal to discuss the incident before a statement by Defence Minister A K Antony.

The leaders of the two parties have been taking potshots on smaller issues also in this session. (PTI)

No grudge against man who threw ink, says Ramdev

NEW DELHI, Sept 7:

Yoga guru Ramdev today told a Delhi court that he bore no grudge against a man who had thrown ink on him during a press conference here last year with both now having decided against further pursuing the case.

Metropolitan Magistrate Prashant Sharma disposed of the assault case against Delhi resident Kamran Siddiqui, facing trial for throwing ink on Ramdev, and imposed a fine of Rs 2,000 on him.

During the proceedings, Ramdev appeared before the court and said he did not want to pursue the case as being a "saint", he had already pardoned Siddiqui.

Ramdev, who had deposed as a witness in the case before the court on January 22, had said he had pardoned Siddiqui and did not want him punished.

After Ramdev's statement as a witness, the court had asked the accused to apologise to the yoga guru, which Siddiqui had thereafter done.

Siddiqui was facing trial for offences under Sections 355 (assault or criminal force with intent to dishonour a person) and 153 (giving provocation with intent to cause riot) of the IPC for throwing black ink on Ramdev's face while he was addressing reporters on January 14 last year. (PTI)