

Heat wave conditions intensify in various parts of country

Agency
New Delhi June 2,

Heat wave conditions have further intensified in large swathes of the country as the mercury crossed the 50-degree mark in Rajasthan's Churu. Met Department said, Churu in the western Rajasthan was the hottest place in the country yesterday at 50.8 degrees Celsius, nine notches above normal. The entire state reeled under intense heatwave conditions with Ganganagar recording 49 degree Celsius, while Bikaner sizzled at 47.9 degrees Celsius. National capital Delhi recorded a maximum of 46.1 degree Celsius and the heat wave conditions are likely to persist for the next three days. Met office has issued the highest red-colour warning for the city. Heatwave conditions intensified in Punjab and

Haryana also, with Narnaul sizzling at 47.2 degrees Celsius. Hisar experienced blistering heatwave conditions at 45.6 degrees Celsius, three notches above normal. In Punjab, Amritsar reeled under severe heatwave conditions with 45.7 degree Celsius, up by five degrees above normal. Union Territory Chandigarh sizzled at 42.4 degrees Celsius, three degrees above normal. In Himachal Pradesh, at least four places recorded their maximum temperatures in excess of 40 degrees Celsius. The hottest place in the state was Una at 44.9 followed by Bilaspur 43, Hamirpur 40.6, Mandi 40.5 degrees Celsius. However, capital Shimla and some other parts of the state got some relief from the scorching heat as thundershowers accompanied by gusty winds came towards

the evening. In Jammu and Kashmir, Jammu city recorded a maximum of 43.6 degrees Celsius, 4.2 notches above season's average. While heatwave conditions continued throughout the day, there was a light dust storm in Jammu yesterday. In Uttar Pradesh, the highest maximum temperature was recorded in Banda at 48.4 degrees Celsius. Several areas in the state reeled under heatwave conditions. The heatwave condition continued to prevail in the western part of Odisha while the coastal region encountered high humidity levels. Jharsuguda in the western region of the state recorded a temperature of 42.6 degrees Celsius. Maximum temperatures were markedly above normal at many places over central Maharashtra, east Madhya Pradesh and north interior Karnataka and Kerala.

NDA seeks Speaker who can represent Parliament globally

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New Delhi June 2,

So who will be the next Speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha, which convenes for the first time in a fortnight? A search is underway to find the ideal candidate among Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MPs, 303 of whom will enter the House after the April-May general election. The person chosen to be Speaker will have to almost immediately take key decisions, one of which is to rule whether the Lok Sabha will have a leader of the opposition. The 16th Lok Sabha didn't have one because no opposition party had the required numbers. The search criteria for the Speaker are exacting and precise and divided into four clear markers, HT has learnt. First, the chosen person needs to be a whiz at parliamentary processes. Tricky logjams inside the house can only be broken up by someone who has the rule book at the fingertips, and that's the number 1 criterion. Second, the person would need to put India's best foot forward at international parliamentary forums. A good rapport with non-BJP members is another decisive factor, two senior leaders of the party told HT. And, finally, the person will need to be a parliamentary veteran.



A BJP leader will occupy the Speaker's chair on January 19 after the party emerged with a clear majority in the 543-member Lok Sabha from the general election and has the numbers required to defeat any opposition candidate, if one were to be fielded. "Someone who can effectively and firmly showcase the power of India's parliament democracy to the rest of the world will be the Speaker," the first leader said, requesting anonymity. "New Delhi is keen to show India's emergence as a global power and the role of the Speaker assumes importance in that context." A Lok Sabha speaker represents India in at least four major international events in a year and the BJP-led

National Democratic Alliance (NDA) regime wants to use these forums to deepen its international engagement. The Speaker is the ex-officio president of the Indian Parliamentary Group (IPG), set up in 1949, which functions as the National Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the main branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA). The Speaker is also the chairman of the Conference of Presiding Officers of Legislative Bodies in India and leads most of the parliamentary delegations on overseas visits. "The Speaker's role is not limited to just basic duties of Parliament," the second leader said. With several pieces of

legislation related to reforms in key sectors expected to get a fresh push in the second innings of the Narendra Modi government, the ruling party wants a seasoned politician who can negotiate with opposition parties and prevent deadlocks that delay the passage of such bills. Congress president Rahul Gandhi told his party's MPs on Saturday that the last time if the Speaker gave them five minutes to speak in the House, it may be just two minutes this time around, signalling the opposition party's concern that the treasury benches may silence criticism in Parliament. "But in those two minutes, we will put forth what the Congress party believes," Gandhi said.

NSCN-IM reaffirm stance on 'Naga Integration

Agency
Kohima, June 2,

Leaders of the NSCN (IM)'s Angami region on Friday reaffirmed their stance on 'Naga integration'—territorial integration of all Naga contiguous areas—during a seminar on 'Retrospection on Naga Integration.' The seminar was organised by the Angami region of the NSCN (IM) at Hotel Hut, in Kohima. The Naga aspiration to live under one umbrella of political and administrative entity as "one people, one nation" has been the driving force of Naga "national movement," said Mhiesizokho Zinyü, former president of the Angami Public Organisation, who was the resource person of the day. "The Naga politics has been all inclusive, and there has never been any connotation such as insider or outsider. Any Naga whether living in Nagaland or Assam or Manipur, or Arunachal Pradesh or Burma (now

Myanmar) is a Naga by identity," Zinyü said. "Nagas have a unique history and unique nationality and have upheld it. It has never been conquered or subjugated by any power or nation before the British took over South East Asia. The Nagas had no treaty with any nation. In fact Nagas lived in their own village-states undisturbed," he added. Zinyü urged the Naga people to follow the footsteps of the forefathers, more than ever now, in order to strengthen the unity and integrity of Naga nationhood. "Back then, Nagas had their own form of self-governance governed by traditional practices, customary laws, and religious belief," he reminded. Zinyü went on to say that "survival of the people largely depended on its land and its natural resources. Thus the concept 'Ura Uvie' (our country, our own) is deeply

rooted in the ethos of Naga nationalism," he said. Zinyü added that people living in and around Kohima were more fortunate to have received political education than some other Naga tribes living in remote places. He said that he was "fortunate" to be talking to Angami leaders in the national service. He added that Naga forefathers "with a patriotic urge, believed in the unity and integration of Nagas and they had sworn in the unity of Naga people, in the motto 'Ura Uvie'." Member of the NSCN (IM)'s Collective Leadership, 'Rtd. Lt. Col.' Victor Angami in his short speech said that they will back any party (faction) that works for the welfare of the Nagas in its true sense. He urged Nagas, particularly youngsters, not to take ceasefire lightly. Zeneituo Angami, a 'kilonser' in the NSCN (IM) hierarchy, said that government of India is trying to "disintegrate the Nagas." According to him, the "greatest divider" is the Shillong Accord.

Ahead of assembly show, 3 BJP CMs who stood the test of Lok Sabha polls and gained ground

Agency
New Delhi June 2,

Three Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief ministers—Devendra Fadnavis, Manohar Lal Khattar and Raghubar Das—have emerged stronger after an impressive showing in the general elections, enabling them to tighten their grip in Maharashtra, Haryana and Jharkhand respectively ahead of assembly elections later this year, two senior party leaders said. All three are first-time chief ministers handpicked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 and had initially faced opposition from within the party. "The result of the Lok Sabha elections has established their leadership in the state," the first leader said. Fadnavis (48) led the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance to a huge victory in Maharashtra, winning 41 out of 48 seats. The BJP bagged 23 of the 25 seats it contested. The BJP chose Fadnavis, a Brahmin, as CM ignoring seniors like Nitin Gadkari. He had a rough start with farmer protests and quota agitations, and resignation by veterans such as Eknath Khadse. "Fadnavis has now established

his leadership by delivering a string of victories in local body polls, assembly and parliamentary elections," the first BJP leader said. "The way he dealt with the tricky issue of an alliance with Shiv Sena also earned him respect." Fadnavis is likely to have a greater say in the Maharashtra assembly elections due in September-October, he added. The BJP also won all 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana, where Manohar Lal Khattar (65) took over as chief minister on October 26, 2014. The BJP's decision to appoint a non-Jat chief minister in Haryana did not go down well with the community, but it helped the party consolidate the support of communities, which resented the influence Jats wielded in the previous Congress and Indian National Lok Dal governments. "After initial troubles and some controversial remarks, Lal has managed to emerge as a no-nonsense politician. The victory in the Lok Sabha election will help him firm his grip over the state," the second BJP leader said. The Haryana elections are also due in September-October, and Lal will be in command.

In Jharkhand, the BJP won 11 of the 13 seats it contested in the general election, and this should take the pressure off chief minister Raghubar Das, the first leader said. Das (64) was chosen for the hot seat after his bete noire and former CM, Arjun Munda, lost the 2014 assembly election. Das, too, faced opposition from colleagues. Losses in some bypolls put him in a difficult position, but LS results would have changed that. "He is a non-tribal CM of a state with a sizeable tribal population. The results will help Das silence the critics who predicted his political demise with a grand alliance in the Opposition," the first leader said. Jharkhand goes to the polls in November-December. Das is expected to remain the chief ministerial face of the party. Experts say the three leaders have earned respect even outside the BJP by delivering in LS polls. "All three were known as organisational men, but their ability to deliver victory in the electoral battle will help them emerge as leaders with a certain amount of mass appeal," said Sidharth Mishra, president of the Centre for Reforms, Development and Justice.

Direct tax reform to take centre stage in PM Modi's second term

Agency
New Delhi June 2,

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, in its second term, plans to introduce transformational changes in the direct tax regime by pruning a tax rate that is as high as 30%, widening the tax base and making it easier for honest individuals and corporate entities to comply with tax laws. At the same time, wilful tax evaders and money launderers will not be spared, government officials aware of the plan said. In its first term, the NDA government, led by Narendra Modi, introduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on July 1, 2017, to revamp the direct tax regime. Although it was criticised for its shoddy implementation at the start, GST subsumed a range of

national, state- and local-level taxes and ushered in a uniform tax regime in the country. Now, the finance ministry has been asked to speed up the framing of the Direct Tax Code (DTC) and incentivise individuals and companies to voluntarily file their tax returns, as the government seeks to widen the direct tax base, two officials with direct knowledge of the matter said on condition of anonymity. "We are expecting the task force [on DTC] to definitely submit its report by July 31," one of the officials said, adding that the task force was "reviewing existing income-tax laws and drafting a new direct tax law in consonance with economic needs of the country." The government formed the task force on November 22, 2017, after PM Modi emphasised the need to redraft

the archaic Income-Tax Act, 1961, at the Rajaswa Gyan Sangam, a conference of tax administrators, held on September 1-2, 2017. The task force had been initially expected to submit its report by May 2018, but ran into delays. Lower tax rates, the government hopes, will act as an incentive for taxpayers to comply with the direct tax regime, file returns and pay tax, augmenting its revenue. Direct tax collections amounted to Rs 11.18 lakh crore in the financial year ended March 31, falling short of the target of Rs 12 lakh crore. India's top tax rate, applicable on incomes above Rs 10 lakh, is 30% exclusive of cesses and surcharges. The direct taxpayer base in a country of 1.3 billion people was as low as 74,127,250 in the assessment year 2017-18.

Lowering the tax rate will also leave more disposable income in the hands of consumers, spurring them to spend more, in the process accelerating faltering economic growth. According to the latest official data, economy growth slowed to a nearly five-year low of 5.8% in the January-March quarter, pulling down full-year growth to 6.8%. According to experts, the budget, which will be presented in July, is likely to address key concerns such as sagging economic growth and job creation. According to the latest official data, the unemployment rate was 6.1% in July 2017-June 2018. "There is indeed an unfinished agenda on the tax front which needs to be finished," Dinesh Kanabar, chief executive officer of tax firm Dhruva Advisors, said. "On the direct taxes front it is important that policy direction of reduction in the rate of tax to 25% is implemented in its entirety. The new direct taxes code is in the making and I do hope that with appropriate consultation we will bring about simplification on multiple fronts, create a regime where disputes can be settled without having to undergo a litigation process running for over a decade." The task force working on the direct tax code could recommend the rationalisation of a few income-tax provisions relating to individual taxpayers to increase transparency and accountability, said Naveen Wadhwa, deputy general manager at Taxmann. "If this report is submitted on time, we may expect that some of the recommendations of the task forces are implemented through the amendments in the existing Income-Tax Act," he said.

GOVERNMENT OF MANIPUR

DIRECTORATE OF HANDLOOMS & TEXTILES

NOTICE

Imphal, the 28th May, 2019

No. HC-23/H & T/2017: Interested Entrepreneurs/ Artistsans/ Weavers/ Societies of the Manipur who will actively engage in the field of Handlooms & Handicrafts sector may apply on plain paper to the office if willing to participate in the forthcoming "8th annual edition of HGH (Home Décor/Gifts/House ware)India" which is being held from 2-4 July 2019 in Mumbai.

The last date for applying in the above event is 10.06.2019.

Willing weavers/artisans/entrepreneurs/ Association/Societies may also apply through the website <http://www.hghindia.com> for registration.

Sd/-
Director of Handlooms & Textiles
Manipur
Imphal, 28th May, 2019

(DIPR/Bill/Adv.)