

Mah CM Fadnavis, his deputies take oath as MLAs

Oppn MVA boycotts ceremony to protest EVM 'misuse'

MUMBAI, Dec 7 (PTI)

TWO days after being sworn in as Maharashtra Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday took oath as an MLA along with deputy CMs Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar, while the Opposition MVA boycotted the ceremony alleging EVM misuse.

The Opposition members refused to take oath as members of the newly-constituted Legislative Assembly on the first day of the three-day special session of the House, as they raised question marks over the ruling Mahayuti alliance's massive mandate and the trustworthiness of the electronic voting machines (EVMs).

Fadnavis, Shinde and Pawar were administered the oath of office as MLAs by Pro-tem Assembly Speaker Kalidas Kolambkar soon after the proceedings began at 11 am. Before them, Chainsukh Sancheti, Jaykumar Rawal



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde during a special three-day session of Maharashtra Assembly, in Mumbai on Saturday.

(PTI)

(both BJP), Manikrao Kokate (NCP) and Ashish Jaiswal (Shiv Sena) took oath as they have been appointed as members of the Pro-tem Speaker's panel by Governor C P Radhakrishnan.

They were the first to take oath as members of the House on Saturday. CM Fadnavis, who represents the Nagpur South-

West Assembly constituency, took oath as a member of the State Legislature's Lower House for the sixth time, having been first elected as an MLA in 1999.

As Fadnavis' name was called out by the Pro-tem Speaker, he was greeted by members of the treasury benches by thumping their desks. Some members raised

slogans of 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Jai Bhavani, Jai Shivaji'. Deputy CM Eknath Shinde was also greeted with similar slogans with BJP's Ashish Shelar, Girish Mahajan and Ravindra Chavan, thumping their desks before he took oath.

Deputy CM Ajit Pawar sported a traditional red 'pheta' (head gear) with golden border. His party members raised 'Ekach (only one) Dada, Ajit Dada'. Pawar, who represents the Baramati Assembly seat, was first elected as an MLA in 1991.

Talking to reporters on the premises of the Vidhan Bhavan about the Opposition's boycott, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray said, "The MVA has decided not to take oath as members of the House on day one." "When a Government comes to power with such a thumping majority, there are celebrations. But a question arises whether the mandate it received was

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CISF sets 'quality control' unit to boost security

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 (PTI)

CENTRAL Industrial Security Force (CISF) has set up a quality control unit to "enhance" the "operational efficiency" of its aviation security wing that provides a counter-terrorist cover to 68 civil airports of the country.

A spokesperson for the paramilitary force said on Saturday that the Internal Quality Control Unit (IQCUC) will play a "crucial" role in establishing "world-class" security procedures and technology for the airports that are used by lakhs of domestic, international passengers every day.

The initiative is in compliance with the National Civil Aviation



Security Quality Control Programme (NCASQCP) of 2024 issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and the Aircraft (Security) Rules of 2023, he said. The BCAS, under the Civil Aviation Ministry, frames security policies for the Indian Civil Aviation sector.

The new unit will bring about uniformity in civil aviation security procedures and training, recommend new technology available world over, allow internal audits of CISF security units and their protocols and identify "gaps" for improvement.

The unit will be part of CISF's Aviation Security Control Center (ASCC) -- located in the nation-

al capital -- which works as a centralised base for coordinating security at all 68 civil airports that are under the security ambit of the force.

The latest system will also cover the airports that come under Regional Connectivity Scheme (UDAAN), the spokesperson said.

"The IQCUC will be led by a senior CISF officer and a team of certified aviation security instructors will run it," he said.

The about 1.80 lakh people-strong Central Industrial Security Force, under the Union Home Ministry, is the National Civil Aviation Security force and it has deployed around 50,000 personnel to guard the 68 airports.

Rajnath to begin 3-day visit to Russia today

NEW DELHI, Dec 7 (PTI)

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh will embark on a three-day trip to Russia on Sunday to witness the commissioning of a stealth warship into the Indian Navy and hold talks with his Russian counterpart Andrey Belousov on the expansion of bilateral co-operation in co-production of military hardware.

The Russian-manufactured multi-role stealth guided missile frigate INS Tushil will be commissioned on Monday in the coastal city of Kaliningrad.

The warship, billed as one of the most technologically advanced frigates globally, is expected to significantly bolster the Indian Navy's operational capability in the Indian Ocean,

a region that has witnessed increasing Chinese forays.

Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi will accompany Singh to the commissioning ceremony.

Defence Minister Singh will pay an official visit to the Russian Federation from December 8 to 10, an official readout said on Saturday.

It said Singh and Belousov will co-chair the 21st meeting of the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Military and Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-M&MTC) in Moscow on December 10.

The Defence Minister's visit to Russia comes five months after Prime Minister Narendra Modi travelled to Moscow and held summit talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

