

Yemen's Houthi rebels **DETAIN** at least 9 UN **STAFFERS** and others in sudden crackdown

DUBAI, June 7 (AP)

AT LEAST nine Yemeni employees of United Nations agencies have been detained by Yemen's Houthi rebels under unclear circumstances, authorities said on Friday, as the rebels face increasing financial pressure and airstrikes from a US-led coalition. Others working for aid groups also likely have been taken.

The detentions come as the Houthis, who seized Yemen's capital nearly a decade ago and have been fighting a Saudi-led coalition since shortly after, have been targeting shipping throughout the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

But while gaining more attention internationally, the secretive group has cracked down at dissent at home, including recently sentencing 44 people to death.

Regional officials, speaking to 'The Associated Press' on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to brief journalists, confirmed the UN detentions. Those held include staff from the UN human rights agency, its development programme, the World Food Programme and one working for the office of its special envoy, the officials said. The wife of one of those held is also detained. The UN declined to immediately comment. The Mayyun Organisation for Human Rights, which similarly identified the UN staffers held, named other aid groups whose employees were detained by the Houthis across four provinces that the Houthis hold — Amran, Hodeida, Saada and Saana.

"We condemn in the strongest terms this dangerous escalation, which constitutes a violation of the privileges and immunities of United Nations employees granted to them under international law, and we consider it to be oppressive, totalitarian, blackmailing practices to obtain political and economic gains," the organisation said in a statement.

Many of the groups mentioned didn't immediately acknowledge the detentions.

One that did, Save the Children, told the AP that it was "concerned of the whereabouts of one of our staff

members in Yemen and doing everything we can to ensure his safety and well-being."

*Surely the righteous
will never be shaken;
they will be remembered
forever. Psalm 112:6*

First session of 18th Lok Sabha likely from June 15: Sources

NEW DELHI, June 7 (PTI)

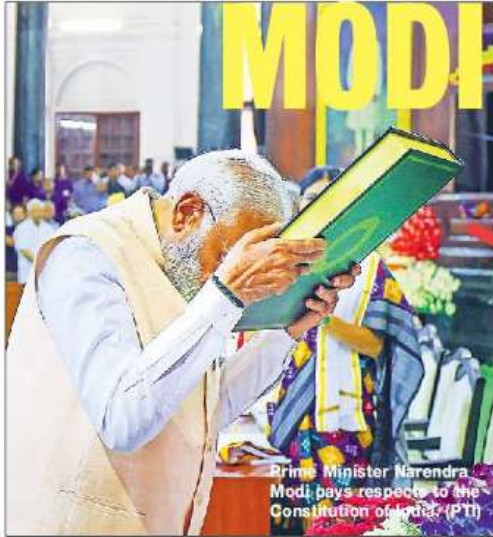
THE first session of the 18th Lok Sabha is likely to begin around June 15, sources said on Friday.

The first session will commence in the third week of June with the oath-taking by the newly elected candidates as members of the House, the sources said, adding the oath-taking is likely to continue for two days, following which a new Speaker will be elected.

The next day, the President will address a joint sitting of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, thus formally inaugurating the session, the sources added.

The final call on the dates of the session will be taken by the new Union Cabinet.

During the session, Prime Minister Modi will also introduce members of his Council of Ministers to both the Houses. The session is likely to conclude on June 22.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays respects to the Constitution of India. (PTI)

MODI IS PM-DESIGNATE

New Govt to take oath on Sunday evening

NEW DELHI, June 7 (PTI)

NARENDRA Modi will take oath as the Prime Minister for a third consecutive term on Sunday evening as President Droupadi Murmu has invited him to form the Government.

Murmu appointed Modi as the Prime Minister-designate on Friday after Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief J P Nadda handed her a letter on Modi's election as the leader of the BJP Parliamentary Party and NDA



leaders submitted their letters of support.

The BJP won 240 seats in the just-concluded Lok Sabha polls, falling short of the halfway mark in the 543-
(Contd on page 3)

◀ Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi being offered sweet curd by President Droupadi Murmu during a meeting as he stakes claim to form the Government at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday. (ANI)

Rupee rises 13 paise to settle at 83.40 against US dollar

MUMBAI, June 7 (PTI)

THE rupee appreciated 13 paise to 83.40 against the US dollar on Friday, in line with a firm trend in domestic equity markets after RBI kept the key policy rate unchanged. A weak American currency against major crosses overseas and lower crude prices in international markets also supported the local currency, forex traders said. However, foreign fund outflows restricted upward movement in rupee, they added.