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8TH DAY



[Kolkata Plus]

Budget session begins amid protests

Statesman News Service

KOLKATA, March 8: The government's apprehensions about the agitation led by the Trinamul Congress over the allegedly forcible acquisition of farmland for a Tata Motors project in Singur came out in the open at the beginning of the Assembly Budget session this afternoon.

The government was willing to discuss with leaders of the Opposition "aspects pertaining to the Tata small car project at Singur which has caused concern to sections of the Opposition and others," Governor Mr Gopalkrishna Gandhi said in his address, triggering off a series of protests from Trinamul members, led by Mr Partha Chatterjee and Mr Saugata Roy. The Governor's address painted a rosy picture of the state's economy and performance of various departments including commerce and industries. "There are about 175 industrial projects in the pipeline," Mr Gandhi said.

Trinamul legislators entered the House wearing black aprons, chanting slogans against the state administration being described in flattering terms. Even those covering up their mouths as a "symbol of silent protest," did not remain silent for long. Congress legislators, led by Mrs Deepa Dasmunshi, wife of Union information and broadcasting minister Mr PR Dasmunshi, joined the bandwagon trying to disrupt the Governor's speech. However, in a marked departure from the usual trend, none of the members of the Opposition entered the well of the House or rushed towards the speaker's podium.

Interestingly, the information technology sector had a very brief mention in the governor's address, the most notable statement being that the NeoIT, a US-based organisation, has projected Kolkata to emerge as the third most attractive BPO destination by 2010. Mr Gandhi surprised the House with his special tribute to the first five women members of the Assembly, Meera Dasgupta, Hemprabha Majumdar, Hashina Murshed, Begum


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Farhat Bano Khanam and Ellen West. “On International Women’s Day, let us pay homage to five great women who stepped into this House seventy years ago,” Mr Gandhi said in Bengali. Later, leader of the Opposition Mr Partha Chatterjee and Congress legislative party leader Dr Manas Bhuniya said they would raise all the raging issues that the governor had “bypassed” in his address.

Discussion on this Kolkata Plus item

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No discussions on this item

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