

Protest For Amit Shah's Resignation Over July 20 Action Will Continue: AISA Chief Neha Bora

NEW DELHI, AUG 1: Demanding Union Home Minister Amit Shah's resignation over the July 20 crackdown on anti-paper leak protesters in Delhi, AISA president Neha Bora said the movement has evolved into a wider campaign seeking accountability from the Centre over the alleged police action.

Bora, who observed a 23-day hunger strike during the agitation, told PTI that the demand for Shah's resignation and the removal of Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar would continue alongside efforts to secure the release of arrested protesters. She emphasised that accountability cannot be limited to low-ranking officials.

"The buck stops at Amit Shah. The buck stops at the commissioner of police. If somebody has to resign or has to be sacked, it is these two people. No low-ranking official's suspension is enough for us," she said.

Questioning the alleged use of pellet guns and excessive force during the July 20 march to Parliament, the chief of the left-wing students' organisation affiliated with the CPI(ML) Liberation said the government failed to explain why security personnel were equipped with pellet guns and "sticks covered with nails".

"We are still seeking answers. Why did you use pellet guns on protesters on July 20? Why were security forces given pellet guns? Why were sticks covered with nails, with which protesters were injured," she asked.

Bora argued that regardless of whether the alleged actions were ordered by a magistrate or senior authorities, political responsibility ultimately rests with the Union home minister.

If it happened on the magistrate's order, then what kind of home minister are



you?... And if it happened on your order, then what kind of a criminal state are you running where pellet guns can be fired on ordinary citizens," she asked.

Bora noted that the alleged police actions fundamentally changed the nature of the movement, transforming it from a focus on the paper leak issue into a broader political campaign against the government's handling of the protests. Newspaper Delivery Service

"A very large section of people used to come to us every day and say that they kept voting for the BJP government, but today, because of their vote, we have to sit on a hunger strike. They would say that because of their vote, students are committing suicide, and now they are very ashamed," the AISA national president said.

"It (movement) is no more about Dharmendra Pradhan. It is about whether the government can be so barbaric with the common citizens of the country," Bora said, claiming that the sense of betrayal among students and the youth was now directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Shah and the Delhi Police commissioner. She reiterated that the demand for Shah's resignation is inseparable from the push for the release of protesters detained during

and after the agitation.

"The protest seeking the home minister's resignation and the release of the arrested students are not different. Both are together because both are a part of state repression," she said, alleging that arrests and criminal cases against students had continued despite assurances.

Regarding the political response to the agitation, Bora said opposition parties had a responsibility to take up people's issues and welcomed the support extended by parties including the Congress as well as student organisations such as the NSUI and Youth Congress.

"If you are a political party, it is your job to express solidarity with the people. It is their job to make people's issues their own issue, raise their voice in Parliament and speak about the suppression of those voices," she said.

When asked whether the agitation might influence electoral politics, Bora refrained from making predictions but expressed her belief that the public will remember both the movement and the events of July 20.

"I think people will not forget this movement. We will not forget that when we put aside divisive politics and fought together for our future, we won," she said.

Bora asserted that protests

demanding accountability for the July 20 police action, Shah's resignation, the removal of the Delhi Police commissioner, and the release of arrested protesters would continue across the country.

The youth-led anti-paper leak agitation, spearheaded by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) and supported by several student organisations, began as a campaign demanding accountability for alleged irregularities in competitive examinations and the resignation of then Union education minister Pradhan.

Protesters attempted to march from Jantar Mantar to Parliament on July 20, resulting in clashes between demonstrators and police.

Protesters have accused the Delhi Police of using excessive force, including pellet guns, tear gas, and lathis, during the crackdown, leaving several demonstrators injured. While the Delhi Police has denied these allegations, the central government maintains that security personnel acted in accordance with the law during the clashes.

The agitation was called off on July 25 after Pradhan resigned and the Centre agreed to the protesters' core demands, including a series of education reforms.

The government also introduced the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill in Parliament to strengthen measures against paper leaks and examination malpractices.

The bill was passed by Parliament on Thursday, with the Rajya Sabha approving it amid a walkout by opposition parties, which have also been demanding the home minister's clarification regarding the alleged crackdown, and have also sought his resignation over the issue.

NEW DELHI, AUG 1: The Indian Army on Saturday bid a final farewell to its former chief General Vishwa Nath Sharma (retd), as his last rites were performed with full military honours here. Gen Sharma passed away in Delhi on Friday morning. He was 96.

"The Indian Army paid its final tribute to Gen Vishwa Nath Sharma (retd), PVSM, AVSM, and a former Chief of the Army Staff. His last rites were performed with full military honours today at the Brar Square Crematorium in Delhi," the Army said.

Army Chief Gen Dhiraj Seth, on behalf of all ranks of the force, laid a wreath and offered his condolences to the bereaved family.

Mizoram Governor Gen V K Singh (retd), a former Chief of the Army Staff, also laid a wreath and attended the funeral, officials said.

The solemn ceremony was attended by various former Chiefs of the Army Staff, the Chief of the Air Staff, the Chief of the Naval Staff, many serving and retired military officers, and family members, who paid their final respects to the distinguished soldier, the Army said in a statement.

Gen Sharma served as the Chief of the Army Staff from April 30, 1988, to June 30, 1990, and was the recipient of numerous distinguished awards during his profes-

PM playing victim card instead of apologising for brutality on protesting students: Congress

New Delhi, Aug 1: The Congress on Saturday said that Narendra Modi is playing the victim card by saying he has forgiven the youth who abused him, and demanded an apology from the prime minister for the "brutality" unleashed on student protesters and the trauma they suffered due to paper leaks. Epaper Subscription Service

The opposition party also claimed that the prime minister's "InstaGram sabhas", which it termed an act of "supreme self-obsession", are fooling no one.

"Late last night, in an act of supreme self-obsession, the prime minister said that he forgave our youth. This is an insult to the nation and to our youth, which has suffered under his government and is legitimately demanding an apology from him. The prime minister's InstaGram Sabhas are fooling no



sional career.

Born in London on June 4, 1930, Gen Sharma was the younger brother of Major Somnath Sharma, the first recipient of Param Vir Chakra in Independent India, and Lt Gen Surendra Nath Sharma, former Engineer-in-Chief of the Indian Army. History

He joined the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, as part of the 5th Regular Course and was commissioned into 16 Light Cavalry on June 4, 1950.

The officer joined 66 Armoured Regiment as second-in-command at the time of its raising on September 1, 1966, and assumed command of the regiment in June 1968 as its second commandant, relin-

quishing command in February 1970, the Army said.

Through his career, Gen Sharma held various staff appointments, including Colonel General Staff of an Armoured Division, Brigadier General Staff of a Corps, Director General of Military Operations at Army Headquarters and Commandant of the College of Combat (now Army War College), Mhow, the statement said.

He also commanded a Mountain Brigade in Mizoram, an Armoured Brigade in Jaipur, a Mountain Division in Sikkim, a Corps in Mizoram and Eastern Command in Kolkata, before taking over as the Army chief.

After retirement, Gen Sharma dedicated four

decades to serving underprivileged communities through a free tuberculosis clinic in Himachal Pradesh.

Travelling by ambulance to remote villages and often trekking to high-altitude areas along with his medical team, Gen Sharma took essential healthcare to people with limited access to medical services, the Army said.

His unwavering commitment to compassionate service inspired future generations of the family, with his son and other relatives carrying forward this tradition of public service.

Gen Sharma's life of distinguished service, courage and dedication to the nation will continue to inspire generations of soldiers, the Army said. (PTI)

Delhi court rejects Govt department's plea to register FIR, upholds magistrate's order

NEW DELHI, AUG 1: A Delhi court has dismissed a revision petition filed by the Delhi Government's Directorate of Employment seeking the registration of an FIR against a private firm and its signatory for allegedly "misappropriating government money" of around 1.94 lakh through fraud.

The court said that since the Government department is already in possession of all relevant documents and the identity of the accused is known, a police investigation is not required.

Additional Sessions Judge Dharendra Rana was hearing a revision plea by the department against a magis-

trate's order of August 2023, rejecting a plea seeking the court's direction to register an FIR against the company and its signatory for "dishonestly and fraudulently misappropriating government money through fraud and cheating."

According to the complaint, the department had issued a tender for "unserviceable items" in 2012, following which the company took the items and provided two demand drafts totalling around Rs 1.94 lakh.

It said that the drafts were not credited due to late submission by the department, and later the bank informed the department that they

had been cancelled, based on the company's request.

The accused alleged the supplied goods were substandard and therefore, payment to the department was withheld.

In an order dated July 14, the court said, "All the documents pertaining to the tender process are in the possession of the department. The documents pertaining to handing over the goods to the accused persons, the copy of demand draft submitted by the accused persons and further communication done by the department in this regard are all matters of record and in documentary

form." South Asians & Diaspora It said the identity of the accused persons is known to the complainant department, and recovery of any case property for which police investigation would be required is not to be done in the present case.

"All these records can easily be proved by the complainants in pre-summoning evidence, and no police investigation is required," the court said. Underlining that there was no illegality, infirmity and error in the Magistrate's order, the judge said, "I find no merit in the present revision petition, and same is dismissed." (PTI)

Hungary braces for a full shutdown of the Paks nuclear plant as the Danube River hits record lows

BUDAPEST, Aug 1: Hungary's only nuclear power plant will shut down for the first time in its history due to record-low water levels on the Danube River, Prime Minister Peter Magyar said Friday, adding that the plant may not come back online for several weeks as the river is expected to continue receding.

The Paks nuclear plant, located around 90 kilometers (50 miles) south of the capital Budapest, is operating at less than half its normal capacity, producing 965 megawatts of power rather than the usual 2,000.

The plant uses water from the Danube to cool its reactors, but the exceptionally low water level has tested the

ability of pumps to bring sufficient quantities into the plant.

Speaking at a news conference at the plant on Friday, Magyar said further reductions in output were imminent later Friday and that the entire plant will likely be powered down by Tuesday or Wednesday. He stressed that the shutdown can be performed safely and poses no risk to the public or environment. Sports News Updates

The Soviet-built, four-reactor plant at Paks accounts for nearly half of Hungary's electricity production. If it is powered down, it will be the first time in its 44 years of service.

Hungary and much of

Central Europe has been in a prolonged period of drought in recent months, disrupting tourism, agriculture and industry and confronting residents with the realities of climate change.

Water levels are not expected to rise on the Danube in the coming days or even weeks as no significant rainfall is forecast.

Magyar said Friday that the Danube's water level has only risen on three occasions in the month of August in the last 20 years, and added that the level at Paks could recede to as low as negative 144 centimeters (negative 57 inches) - far below the previous record of negative 98 centimeters (negative 39 inches) set in 2018.

A level of negative 134 centimeters requires the full powering down of the plant, he said. A negative reading means the river has fallen below the gauge's zero reference level, not that the river is empty.

Hungary's government has requested that large companies that consume large quantities of energy voluntarily reduce their consumption to help stabilize the energy supply, particularly in peak demand hours between 5 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Magyar said Hungarian energy conglomerate MOL had committed to reducing its electricity needs by 65 megawatt-hours, a decrease of 40% from its normal consumption.



the Muzaffarabad region, with protesters demanding protection of their fundamental rights and implementation of commitments previously made by the local authorities.

The Human Rights Foundation (HRF), a US-based rights organisation, condemned what it described as the use of force by Pakistani security forces against unarmed protesters and called on Islamabad to end the crackdown, restore mobile communications and ensure accountability for any unlawful use of force.

Citing a local civil society group, the HRF said security

forces opened fire on thousands of peaceful demonstrators. It also alleged that authorities removed bodies from hospitals and detained activists in an apparent attempt to conceal evidence.

The crackdown has been accompanied by an internet blackout and severe restrictions on media access, making independent reporting nearly impossible," the organisation said. South Asians & Diaspora

The HRF urged Pakistani authorities to "investigate the reported killings, ensure accountability and uphold due process for those detained, while expressing sup-

port for people exercising their rights to peaceful assembly and free expression."

Separately, a delegation of the United Kashmir People's National Party (UKPNP), led by its chairman Sardar Shaukat Ali Kashmiri, met United Nations officials in New York to raise concerns over the human rights situation in Pakistan occupied Kashmir.

According to the UKPNP, the delegation urged the United Nations, governments and international human rights organisations to intervene to prevent further loss of life and protect civilians.

It also called on Pakistani authorities to refrain from using excessive force, return the bodies of those killed to their families, disclose the whereabouts of those allegedly subjected to enforced disappearance or unacknowledged detention, and release individuals it said had been unlawfully detained. (UNI)