S. Jeet Singh

## **BHOG AND ANTIM ARDAS** Nith profound grief and sorrow, we regret to infor

the sad and peaceful demise of our beloved S.Jeet Singh (Retd. Medical Department) R/o Mohalla Radio Station Poonch At present: Upper Gadigarh Near Tube Well Jammu who left for his heavenly abode on 18th March 2024

Bhog and Antim Ardas shall be performed as per the following scheduled programme:-

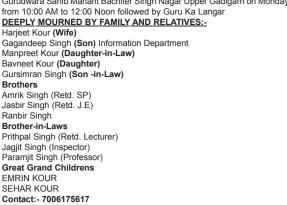
Aramb Shri Akhand Path Sahib at our residence Upper Gadigarh Jammu on Saturday (23-03-2024) at 09:00 AM.

Bhog Shri Akhand Path Sahib at our residence on Monday (25-03-2024) at 09:00AM

Gurudwara Sahib Mahant Bachiter Singh Nagar Upper Gadigarh on Monda

Gagandeep Singh (Son) Information Department Manpreet Kour (Daughter-in-Law) Bavneet Kour (Daughter) Gursimran Singh (Son -in-Law) **Brothers** Amrik Singh (Retd. SP)

Brother-in-Laws Prithpal Singh (Retd. Lecturer) Great Grand Childrens



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NEW DELHI: Tobacco

STATE TIMES NEWS

smokers are at a higher risk of developing tuberculosis and experiencing more severe forms of the disease, experts said on Saturday.

Additionally, exposure to second-hand smoke can worsen tuberculosis (TB) outcomes and hinder treatment effectiveness, the experts said as they emphasised the urgent need for strengthening tobacco control laws to combat this dual threat.

World Tuberculosis Day is observed on March 24. The date marks the day in 1882 when Dr Robert Koch announced that he had discovered the bacterium that causes TB, paving the way for diagnosing and curing this

According to the World Organization's (WHO) Global TB Report 2023, India accounted for the highest number of tuberculosis cases in the world in 2022, representing a staggering 27 per cent of the global burden, India recorded 2.8 million (28.2 lakh) TB cases in 2022.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious vision to strates the government's commitment to addressing this

World TB Day: Tobacco smokers at higher risk

issue comprehensively, the experts said. One significant factor exacerbating the TB burden in India is the connection

between tuberculosis and

tobacco use, they said. According to the Global Adult Tobacco Survey in India, a staggering number of individuals are tobacco users.

"To combat this dual threat of TB, there is an urgent need to strengthen tobacco control laws. By implementing stringent tobacco control measures, India can mitigate the impact of tobacco use on TB incidence and mortality Bhavna Mukhopadhyay,

Executive, Voluntary Health Association of India said. "Moreover, there is a press-

ing need to enhance tobacco cessation services to support individuals in quitting tobacco use and reducing their risk of TB and other related health complications," she added.

Tuberculosis, primarily caused by mycobacterium tuberculosis, poses a complex challenge in India, where roughly a quarter of the population is infected and at risk

of developing the disease.

Recent research has shed light on a correlation between tobacco consumption and TB. illustrating how smoking significantly increases the risk of contracting, developing, and dving of TB.

"Studies indicate that individuals who smoke tobacco are 2.5 times more likely to develop pulmonary tuberculosis compared to non-smokers. TB patients who smoke face double the risk of death during treatment as smoking not only heightens susceptibility to TB but also undermines treatment effectiveness," said Dr Sonu Goel, Professor, Department of Community Medicine and School of Public Health PGIMER.

"It also increases the likelihood of relapse and adds to the burden faced by patients and healthcare systems alike," Goel said.

Additionally, the widespread prevalence of tobacco use, with an estimated 10 per cent of India's populace being tobacco users, further complicates efforts to combat TB in India, Goel said.

"By quitting smoking, individuals can protect themselves and their communities

of developing tuberculosis, say experts from the devastating impact

> Despite commendable initiatives by the central government, such as and Other Cigarettes Tobacco Products (COTPA) and the National Tobacco Control Programme (NTCP), stronger enforcement and evidence-based interventions are imperative to effectively curb tobacco consumption,

of TB," Goel added.

Moreover, there is a growing consensus on the importance of collaboration between health sectors to efficiently address the tobacco-TB connection, utilising existing TB infrastructure to tions effectively, they said. The intertwined relation-

ship between tobacco smoking and tuberculosis presents a formidable challenge to public health in India, they said. Coordinated efforts, encompassing both preventive and treatment strategies, are essential to combat tobacco use and mitigate its adverse impact on TB incidence, progression, and mortality, the experts said. PTI

# TMC terms CBI raids on premises of Mohua Moitra as 'vendetta politics', BJP hits back

STATE TIMES NEWS

KOLKATA: The TMC has dubbed the ongoing CBI raids on the premises of party leader Mahua Moitra in connection with the alleged cash-for-query case as "vendetta politics" and a desperate maneuver by the BJP to misuse the central agencies ahead of the elec-

The CBI on Saturday conducted searches on the premises of former TMC MP Moitra in multiple locations, Kolkata, in connection with the case, officials said.

Teams of the central probe agency reached Moitra's residence in Kolkata and other cities informed about the search proceedings and started the operation, they said.

Senior TMC leader Santanu Sen said, "This is an attempt to divert the public and media's attention from various burning issues. The BJP appears to be sensing growing public discontent, and they are using every means at their disposal to change the narrative. This is a clear example of vendetta politics.".

He said the BJP is misusing central agencies ahead of the Lok Sabha polls to intimate the opposition.

"When the model code of conduct is in place, the BJP is sending its most trusted allies, CBI and ED, to raid our nominees.

the However, Bengal BJP has dismissed these allegations as base-

The EC must look into it,

West Bengal Samik spokesperson Bhattacharva Whenever the ED or CBI raid TMC leaders, they cry foul and accuse it of being

politically motivated. "Whatever Moitra has done is a shame for democracy. The reality is that the TMC is deeply mired in corruption, with nearly every leader facing corruption allegations," he said.

Moitra was expelled from Lok Sabha last year after a parliamentary panel found her guilty in the cash-forquery case.

She has termed it as vendetta politics to scuttle her voice in the floor of the

# Nine former Himachal MLAs, including six from Congress, join BJP

### **STATE TIMES NEWS**

NEW DELHI: Nine former Himachal Pradesh MLAs, including six disqualified Congress legislators and three Independents who resigned, joined the BJP on Saturday amid the continuing political crisis in the

The former lawmakers slammed the Congress government in the state headed Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, saying development work has stalled since it came to

They joined the BJP in the presence of Union Minister Anurag Thakur, former Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur, its national general secretary Arun Singh and state unit president Rajeev

Welcoming the former lawmakers into the party, Anurag Thakur said their will further strengthen the BJP as he accused the Congress gov-

ing to fulfil its promises, leading to all-round anger among people.

Anurag Thakur said six of the former lawmakers. despite being Congress MLAs, supported the BJP in the recent Rajya Sabha election as they chose to reflect the "public anger" against the Sukhu government. The former Congress MLAs who joined the BJP are Sudhir Sharma, Ravi Thakur, Rajinder Rana, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal, Chetanya Sharma and Devinder Kumar Bhutto -all disqualified on February 29 for defying a party whip to be present in the House and vote in favour of the state government during a cut motion and budget.

Ashish Sharma, Hoshiyar Singh and KL Thakur, who electedIndependents and resigned on Friday, also joined the BJP, with Singh saying they decided to be part of the country's development journey under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Development works in the state have stopped since the Congress came to power, he

BJP leaders cited a host of development measures taken by the Modi government for the state, including highway and rail projects, and said the former MLAs decided to strengthen the prime minister's leadership.

These former lawmakers will be given due respect in the BJP, they said.

They are expected to contest the bypolls from their respective seats as candidates of the saffron party.

Thakur Ramdescribed the six former Congress MLAs' joining the BJP as a big political development for such a small state, noting that several of these leaders had held senior positions within the party. The former Congress leaders slammed the party, saying its national leadership is no longer visible and offers no vision for the country, leading to its "disintegration".

Sharma, a four-term MLA, alleged that there is no atmosphere for development in the state while the Congress is disintegrating because its leadership lacks vision for the country and has nothing to offer except criticism of Modi.

Rana echoed his view and blamed the Congress leadership for causing a "political disaster" and said they are hopeful of putting the hill state on the path to development, a pointer to the BJP's efforts to bring down the government through bypoll wins and further defections from the grand old party.

"We want to contribute to the development of the country," he said.

The Election Commission has announced bypolls for the six constituencies held by these former Congress

Bypolls are expected to be announced on the three held Independents too.

The Congress government was last month plunged into a crisis after the BJP won the Rajya Sabha poll for the state's lone seat due to the support of these nine

Though Sukhu has been putting up a brave face and there appears to be no immediate threat to his government, the BJP is looking to bring down his dispensation with bypoll wins amid a view that it may draw more legislators of the ruling party into its

With the disqualification of the six Congress MLAs, the strength of the ruling party came down from 39 to 33 in the now 62-member assembly. Its original strength is 68. The BJP has 25 members.

only in the case of a tie dur-The resignations of the

The Speaker, who can vote

ing a floor test, is affiliated to the Congress. three Independent MLAs have further reduced the

assembly's strength. PTI.

# Jaishankar dismisses China's claims on Arunachal Pradesh as 'ludicrous'

## **STATE TIMES NEWS**

SINGAPORE: External Affairs Minister Jaishankar on Saturday dismissed China's repeated claims on Arunachal Pradesh as "ludicrous" and asserted that the frontier state was a "natural part of

In probably his first public comments on China's  $_{
m claims}$ frequent Arunachal Pradesh and its opposition to Indian leaders visiting the state, Jaishankar said it was not a new issue. "This is not a new issue. I mean China has laid claim, it has expanded its claim. The claims are ludicrous to begin with and remain ludicrous today," he said in response to a question on the Arunachal issue after delivering a lecture at the prestigious NUS Institute of South Asian Studies here. He emphasised that Arunachal Pradesh was a "natural part of India." "So, Generational shift started in Cong in several states,

I think we've been very clear, very consistent on this. And I think you know that is something which will be part of the boundary discussions which are taking place," he said.

Jaishankar's comments came days after the Ministry of External Affairs dismissed the Chinese defence ministry's assertions "We have noted the com-

ments made by the Spokesperson the Chinese Defence Ministry advancing absurd claims over the territory of the Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh.

"Repeating baseless arguments in this regard does not lend such claims any validity. Arunachal Pradesh was, is and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. Its people will continue to benefit from our development programmes and infrastructure projects,"

ment.

Earlier, the Chinese foreign ministry had objected Prime Narendra Modi's recent visit to Arunachal Pradesh.

"We reject the comments made by the Chinese side regarding the visit of the Minister to Prime Arunachal Pradesh. Indian leaders visit Arunachal Pradesh from time to time, as they visit other States of India," the MEA said in a separate response last

Objecting to such visits or India's developmental projects does not stand to reason. Further, it will not change the reality that the State of Arunachal Pradesh was, is, and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. The Chinese side has been made aware of this consistent position on several occasions, the statement

# Congress' disqualified Himachal MLAs join BJP

NEW DELHI: Six former MLAs of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly, who were disqualified as Congress legislators after defying a party whip, joined the BJP on Saturday amid the continuing political crisis in the state.

They joined the BJP in the presence of Union Minister Anurag Thakur, former Himachal chief minister Jai Ram Thakur and its state unit president Rajeev Bindal.

Welcoming the former lawmakers into the party. Thakur said their presence will strengthen the BJP further as he accused the Congress government in the state of failing to fulfil its promises, leading to allround anger among people.

Thakur said these leaders supported the BJP in the recent Rajya Sabha election, reflecting "public against

Those who joined the BJP are Sudhir Sharma, Ravi Thakur, Rajinder Rana, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal. Chetanya Sharma and Devinder Kumar Bhutto -all elected on a Congress ticket and disqualified on February 29 for defying a party whip to be present in the House and vote in favour of the state government during a cut motion and budget.

The Election Commission has announced bypolls for their constituencies and they are expected to contest as BJP candidates.

Three Independent MLAs -- Ashish Sharma, Hoshivar Singh and KL Thakur -who submitted their resignations on Friday, are also likely to join the BJP soon.

The Congress government led by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu was last month plunged into a crisis after the BJP for the state's lone seat due to the support of these nine

Though Sukhu has been putting up a brave face and there appears to be no immediate threat to his government, the BJP is looking to bring down his dispensation with bypoll wins amid a view that it may draw more legislators of the ruling party into its fold.

With the disqualification of the six Congress MLAs, the strength of the ruling party came down from 39 to 33 in the now 62-member assembly. Its original strength is 68. The BJP has 25 members.

The Speaker, who can vote only in the case of a tie during a floor test, is affiliated to the Congress.

The resignations of the three Independent MLAs have further reduced the assembly's strength. PTI.

STATE TIMES NEWS NEW DELHI: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh has said the much-needed generational shift in the party has already been heralded in several states, making it difficult to write off the grand old party even though many have already penned its obituaries.

Such a change has already been initiated in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, he said, adding that other state units of the party will follow "There has been a genera-

tional shift in Madhya Pradesh. For the Congress. what has happened in Madhya Pradesh is a huge transformation," Ramesh said, adding the party has shifted from a generation of 70-year-old leaders to those who are 50 years old.

"Both the Pradesh Congress Committee chief Legislature Party leader are of a completely different generation.  $\operatorname{For}$ Congress to make that step is huge," he said during an interaction at the PTI office

This shift was replicated in Rajasthan and a newer leadership is coming to the fore there. In Chhattisgarh the party still has many experienced faces, Ramesh

He said that in Telangana too, "you see new people coming in. One of the reasons we won in Telangana is actually a lot of new people were projected. Our chief minister was a new person in the Congress. He joined the Congress two to three years ago." "This generational shift has to take place. No doubt about it. New faces... But, it is difficult in the Congress because

people have been in the party. It's easier for the BJP as it is a start-up in many of these states," the Congress general secretary in charge communications

The former union minister said one of the disadvantages with the grand old party is that it has been entrenched and one is not able to give opportunities to new people to come in.

"But, that (generational shift) is happening slowly. It's happening in a couple of states. It should happen faster for sure," he added.

Asked whether such a change is required at the central level, he said one should not ascribe too much importance to individuals as the Congress is the only party to have an elected president. The party systems have to be strengthened instead. Ramesh said.

On whether this Lok Sabha election is a fight for survival, he said many have written obituaries of the Congress but it is difficult to write off the party. "Many times, writing obituaries has been a favourite pastime for commentators. But the Congress will come

back. I'm sure," he said. "I think the Congress is giving its all, in spite of what has been happening in the last month. But, you can't write off the Congress. I think it is too deeply ingrained (into the country)," the Congress leader said.

Ramesh said he has seen that in several parts of the country where the Congress has no MP or MLA, the party flag still flies there. The party has received a very good response in Gujarat, Maharashtra and some other states during

Rubeena Javeed and Dr

Shazia Shafiq. The event was smoothly moderated

can't write off party: Jairam Ramesh the two Bharat Jodo yatras he said.

> Ramesh, however, did not speculate on the numbers that the party would get in these Parliamentary elections but exuded confidence along with other parties, they would get a majority in the Lok Sabha.

> He also expressed confidence that the Lok Sabha results could spring a surprise this time just like in 2004 when the Congress was written off, but emerged as the singlelargest party. "Similar questions were raised in 2004. So, I would not put it past the realm of possibility that you will be in for a big surprise," he said.

Ramesh felt that after Hemant Soren and Arvind Kejriwal's arrest by federal agencies, the BJP would target some more leaders in the days to come. PTI.

Drone recovered near international border in

Punjab's Tarn Taran

### STATE TIMES NEWS CHANDIGARH: A drone

### was recovered from a field near the India-Pakistan international border in

### Punjab's Tarn Taran district on Saturday, a BSF spokesperson said. The Border Security Force (BSF) troops along

with the Punjab Police personnel recovered the unmanned aerial vehicle from a wheat field near Mehandipur village, the spokesperson said. The drone was a DJI

Matrice Model-300 RTK. PTI.

## Henna Art Competition under SVEEP campaign held people, particularly young adjudicated

**STATE TIMES NEWS** SRINAGAR: As a part of ongoing Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation program (SVEEP) campaign, Henna Art Competitions were on Saturday organized at Women's College NawaKadal and Women's College Zakura to encourage the students casting their vote for the first time in the upcoming Lok

Sabha elections-2024. The Competitions were organized on the directions of District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to spread awareness among

voters, for participating in the upcoming General Elections with enthusiasm. Speaking about the initiative of Henna Art Competitions, the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, praised the students for their enthusiastic participation and lauded their creativity and talent

The DEO also commended the efforts of the Principals and Staff of both the Colleges for making events successful and highlighted the importance of Voting in democratic

displayed during the com-

Women's College Nawa Kadal, the event was organized by the Department of Home Science under the supervision of Principal, Prof (Dr) Mohammad Farooq Mir which saw an overwhelming and active participation of Students from different Departments of

the College. The Competition began with the orientation session of the participants wherein thev were instructed about rules and regulations to be followed

throughout the event. During the Competition, the participants put a lot of effort in the hopes of generating awareness of voting and wrote slogans like "Hamara Vote Hamari Sarkar" and "Shape tomorrow by voting today".

Position and Participation Certificates were awarded

After the culmination of the competition, valedictory session was held during which Trophies and merit Certificates were distributed among the First three

to all other participants. On the occasion. Principal Women's College Nawa Kadal encouraged students for their active participation and insisted them to partake with the same enthusiasm in future

Prof. Iftikhar ul Nisa (Head, Department of Chemistry), Dr. Rifat Aman (Head, Department of Education), Dr. Asmat Ara (Head, Department of Music) and Dr. Nuzhat Qazi (Assistant Professor, Department of Education) acted as Judges for the

Similarly, at Women's College Batpora, Zakura, Henna Art Competition was organized by the National Service Scheme (NSS) and Electoral Literacy Club aimed to

promote cultural expression while fostering electoral awareness among new voters particularly the students about the importance of active participation in elections with a special emphasis on the upcoming Lok Sabha Election.

The event commenced with an inaugural address by Principal of the College, Prof (Dr) Tehmina Yousuf. In her address she highlighted the significance of such events in spreading awareness and educating young voters about their duties towards the nation. The competition was

by Dr Farhat Hassan, NSS Programme Officer, and Dr Salfie Muzaffar, Electoral Literacy Club Convenor. After a display of excep-

tional talent and creativity, various students emerged as winners. Henna

Competitions

SVEEP in City Colleges were conducted under the overall supervision of Nodal Officer Colleges for SVEEP, Prof (Dr.) Sheikh Aijaz Bashir.