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Country punishing Congress for its 'sins': Modi

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAIPUR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the country is punishing the Congress for its "sins" and the party that had once won 400 seats is unable to contest 300 seats in this Lok Sabha election.

"Those who cannot contest elections, cannot win elections have fled the field. This time, they have come to Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan. The condition of Congress is so bad," Modi said at an election rally in Jalore district.

Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi is among the MPs elected to Rajya Sabha from Rajasthan in February. Several Congress veterans have not been fielded in this Lok Sabha election, but the party has rejected suggestions that they were shying away from contesting.

"In the first phase of voting, half of Rajasthan has punished Congress. Rajasthan,



which is full of patriotism, knows that Congress can never make India strong," PM Modi said.

He said the country does not want the conditions which existed before 2014 to return.

"The Congress has hollowed out the country by spreading termites of nepotism and corruption. And today, the country is angry with the Congress and is punishing it for these sins. The youths are so angry that they do not want to see the

Congress' face again."

Modi was addressing the public meeting in Bhimtal in support of BJP candidate Lumbaram Chaudhary.

"The Congress has itself to blame for its present condition ... The party that had once won 400 seats is unable to contest 300 seats on its own. Today, the condition of Congress is such that it is unable to find candidates.

"They have formed an opportunistic INDI Alliance, (it is like) a kite whose string has been cut before it could

fly," he said.

Modi said it was an alliance only in name as its constituents were fighting against each other in many states.

"In this Lok Sabha election, there are twenty five per cent seats in the country where people of this alliance are busy finishing off each other, contesting elections against each other.

"If there is so much fighting before the elections, then you can imagine how much more they will fight for the loot after the elections. Can we hand over such a big country to these people?"

Modi alleged that the Congress, which ruled for 60 years, had deprived "our mothers and sisters" of even "small things like toilets, gas, electricity, water, bank accounts".

Referring to the rule of the Congress-led UPA, PM Modi alleged that people

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

8 IEDs, 2 wireless sets seized from terrorist hideout in Rajouri

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

RAJOURI/JAMMU:

Security forces on Sunday busted a terrorist hideout in a village in Rajouri district, leading to the recovery of eight Improvised Explosive Devices, or IEDs, two wireless sets, and some ammunition, officials said.

The recovered material was in a highly rusted condition, indicating that the hideout was in use when terrorists were operating in the district before it was freed of militancy over two decades ago, officials said.

They said police assisted by the Army launched a search operation at Azmatnagar village in Thanamandi area, 30 kms from Rajouri town, and unearthed the hideout.

While one of the IEDs weighed 1 kg, the rest were half a kg each, the officials said.

Three magazines of AK-47 rifle, 102 rounds of ammunition, one charger, and two wireless sets were the other items seized.

If Congress-allies win, there will be riots, atrocities: Amit Shah

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

KATHIHAR:

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday charged the Congress-led opposition with being soft on terror and indifferent towards the uplift of deprived castes, and alleged that their return to power could cause "riots, atrocities and poverty".

Addressing an election rally in the Kathihar Lok Sabha constituency of Bihar, the former BJP president also credited his party with having given the nation, in Narendra Modi, its "first OBC prime minister" who has "put an end" to dynasty politics.

"Modi wiped out Naxalism and reined in terrorism. When the Congress was in power, terrorists struck at will and nobody could muster the courage to retaliate. In

contrast, the attacks in Uri and Pulwama were followed quickly by surgical strikes and Balakot airstrikes. Our security personnel went across the border with



Pakistan and the terrorists were bumped off in their own hideouts," said Shah.

He also slammed Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge for taking exception to raising the issue of abrogation of Article 370 in poll rallies outside Jammu and Kashmir, saying "it is a matter concerning the whole

country".

"People from Rajasthan and Bihar have shed their blood fighting the insurgency there. Now Kashmir has been fully integrated with the rest of the country," he said.

In his speech that lasted barely 15 minutes, Shah, who spoke in the presence of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the JD(U) president, also dwelt at length on the alleged anti-OBC stance of the Congress, which has sought to reach out to the backward classes with the promise of caste census, besides forming alliances with parties like the RJD that have roots in the Mandal movement.

"The Congress slept on the Kaka Kalelkar Commission report and when recommendations of

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Movable property of drug peddler attached in Jammu

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police here on Sunday attached movable property worth lakhs of an alleged drug peddler here, an official said.

Anil Singh alias "Furtilla", a resident of Hamirpur village of Khour, is presently lodged in jail after he was detained recently under PIT NDPS Act on the orders of the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, a police official said.

The attached property includes a Sports Utility Vehicle (SUV), he said, adding that the property, identified as ill-gotten gains acquired through illicit drug

trafficking, was uncovered during thorough investigation conducted by the police team of Akhnoor Sub-division.

Singh is named in five FIRs lodged in police station Akhnoor under various sections of the Ranbir Penal Code, Arms Act and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act at police station Akhnoor between 2011 and 2023, the official said.

He said the seizure of the property serves as a stern reminder of the unwavering commitment of police to eradicate the drug menace from the society.

People of PoK will demand to be with India seeing its development: Rajnath

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SILIGURI (WB):

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday asserted that considering the development taking place in India, the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir will themselves demand to be with this country.

Singh also said India was taking giant strides in the defence sector, maintaining that the country is fast turning into a defence-equipment exporting nation from that of an importer.

"PoK was, is and will remain ours," Singh said, addressing a rally at Siliguri in Darjeeling constituency,



where the BJP has renominated sitting MP Raju Bista.

"The way the country is developing and its economy growing, the people of PoK will themselves demand to be with India," he claimed.

The senior BJP leader said India has attained a stature where no one can browbeat the country. Singh also asserted that India does not interfere in the

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Defence Minister to visit Siachen today

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will on Monday visit Siachen and interact with the soldiers deployed at the world's highest battlefield.

Last week, the Indian Army marked the 40th year of its presence on the strategically significant Siachen Glacier.

The Siachen Glacier at the height of around 20,000 feet in the Karakoram range is known as the highest militarised zone in

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

25 drug peddlers jailed for one-month ahead of elections in Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Sunday said 25 'chronic' narcotic smugglers in Poonch were detained and jailed for a month amid intelligence reports that they pose a

threat to the peaceful holding of Lok Sabha polls in the border district. Poonch is part of Anantnag-Rajouri parliamentary constituency, which is going to polls in the third phase on May 7.

Hailing from different areas falling in the jurisdiction of police stations of Poonch, Surankote, Mandi, Mendhar and Gursai, the police said they have been

found involved in peddling of drugs in their areas and were also implicated in various cases under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

"They have become a potential threat to the lives of the younger generation of the district. It was also reported by many people and intelligence agencies that these individuals might pose a threat to the peaceful electioneering process," police said in a statement.

It said more detentions of the identified drug peddlers cannot be ruled out in the coming days.

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

OGW held with pistol, two grenades in Poonch

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

POONCH/JAMMU: An overground worker (OGW) was arrested and a pistol and two hand grenades were recovered from his possession in Poonch district on Sunday, officials said.

The OGW identified as Qamaruddin, a teacher by profession, was arrested following the recovery of the illegally smuggled weapons from Pakistan from his house at village Hari Budha in Mandi area, they said.

They said a joint search operation by police and army was launched in the village early Sunday on specific information.

The operation is still continuing and further details are awaited, the officials said.

Meanwhile, police assisted by the Army also cordoned off Kalaban top Pathnateer in Mendhar sector this morning and a search operation was underway.

The operation was launched following information about suspected movement in the area, the officials said.

WEATHER
Temperature (Jammu)
Max: 32.6°C Min: 17.1°C
Humidity
Max: 60 Min: 34
Temperature (Srinagar)
Max: 20.2°C Min: 8.4°C
Humidity
Max: 84 Min: 77
Sunset: 19:04 Hours
Sunrise: 05:53 Hours

Creation of Anantnag-Rajouri seat done without application of mind: Azad

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR:

Democratic Progressive Azad Party leader Ghulam Nabi Azad Sunday said the delimitation process, which led to the creation of the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seat in Jammu and Kashmir, was done without application of mind.

Azad said the delimitation commission should have recommended increasing the number of Lok Sabha seats in Jammu region to three without tinkering with the seats in the Kashmir valley.

"If they had to increase the seat for Jammu, they should have made three seats there. No Kashmiri would have made noise against it. What difference would one seat make in 550 seats? By making it 2.5 seats for each region, they have widened the differences within the



(Anantnag-Rajouri) constituency," he said.

"The delimitation of constituencies was done without application of mind. If they had seen physically where Rajouri-Poonch is and where this (Anantnag) is

and if they had travelled by road, they would have known that these two regions are divided by mountains for thousands of years," Azad told reporters while campaigning for his party candidate Mohammad Saleem Parry in the Kokernag area of Anantnag district.

Azad said campaigning in the election is going to be difficult. The candidates will find travelling between two regions cumbersome.

"The road remains closed due to snow for six months in winter. What kind of constituency is this? With due respect to the Election Commission and the Delimitation Commission, the process has not been done with application of mind. "This exercise cannot be done through Google. These things are done on the basis

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Traffic disrupted for several hours on Jammu-Srinagar NH

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

BANIHAL/JAMMU:

The traffic on Jammu-Srinagar national highway was disrupted for several hours on Sunday to repair some cracks that were found in the middle of the road near Banihal, officials said.

The vehicular movement on the 270-km highway - the only all weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country - was stopped from both sides around 11.30 am after "some cracks developed in the middle of the road at Hingini in Ramban district," officials of the traffic department said.



After over five-hours of restoration work, the stranded traffic on the highway was restored, they said.

The highway is witnessing

frequent disruptions over the past five days owing to heavy rains that triggered landslides, mudslides and

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9

Opposition's false portrayal of ground situation in border state misleading people: Dr Jitendra

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI:

The people of Jammu and Kashmir after living in a period of normalcy following the scrapping of special status to the erstwhile state feel encouraged to seek a true democracy, Union Minister Jitendra Singh told NDTV in an interview.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's April 12 speech in Udhampur in the Union Territory about restoring statehood and holding a state election, Mr Singh said it is the Opposition's false portrayal of the ground situation in the border state that is misleading people.

Udhampur, where voting was held on April 19, is

Singh's Lok Sabha constituency.

"Elections had been happening for decades in Jammu and Kashmir, but with a very small voting percentage. It was a travesty of democracy that we had a voting percentage of just about 10 per cent. People would elect MPs and MLAs, particularly from Kashmir valley, and they would go on becoming MPs, MLAs, ministers, generations after generation," the Union Minister of Science and Technology told NDTV.

"They have now cultivated

a vested interest in the continuance of militancy. In the shadow of militancy and

would manage their victory, election after election," Singh said, in what was also seen as taking a swipe at dynastic politics.

The Abdullah family of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference had been a strong political force in the region.

"Now that it (Jammu and Kashmir) has opened up, I think this is in the true spirit of democracy that we have a huge turnout, which also happened in the District Development Council (DDC) election," Mr Singh said.

The DDC election was held after the centre in

terrorist, they can have close elections with a limited voter turnout which would of course be managed by them, and then they



held after the centre in

August 2019 scrapped special status to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution.

"We had a huge voter turnout (DDC elections) even in Kashmir valley. The situation has dramatically turned for the better. The most evident proof of that is the fact that we had more than two crore tourists in Kashmir valley. No tourist would risk their family just by assurance handed out by the government, or by a travel agency unless they get information from their own sources," Singh said, adding that is what has encouraged and emboldened the common man on the streets of Kashmir valley to come out and aspire for true democracy.

Woman, partner arrested for killing husband

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police have arrested a woman and her partner for killing her 33-year-old husband and trying to portray the murder as a road accident, an official said on Sunday.

Naresh Chander, son of Achrur, resident of Bhaberwah in Doda was brought to Jammu's Gandhi Nagar hospital by his wife Shallu Devi in the early hours of April 7. She claimed that Chander was injured in an accident in the Gole Gujral area of Poonichak in the city's outskirts, a police spokesperson said.

"The victim was brutally murdered in Seora area falling under the jurisdiction of PP Poonichak, Jammu on Sunday 6th April, 2024 evening", the spokesperson

added.

On 7th April, 2024 at about 03:00 hours, information was received at PP Poonichak through PCR Jammu to the effect that one person namely Naresh Chander, son of Achrur, resident of Bhaberwah had died due to road accident near Revenue Complex, Gole Gujral and his dead body was lying at Gandhi Nagar Govt. Hospital, Jammu while his wife was admitted there in injured condition.

On receiving this information, an Investigating Officer was deputed to Gandhi Nagar hospital, who took the dead body into custody, recorded the statements of the wife of deceased and other witnesses. After that postmortem of the

■ CONTD ON PAGE 9