

Lok Sabha polls: AAP's Chabbewal banks on Mann govt's work for victory in Hoshiarpur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

CHANDIGARH: The AAP's Raj Kumar Chabbewal is banking on the Bhagwant Mann government's schemes, especially providing free electricity and setting up aam aadmi clinics, to win the Hoshiarpur Lok Sabha seat.

A radiologist by profession, the former two-time MLA is contesting the parliamentary polls on an AAP ticket from Hoshiarpur, currently represented by the BJP's Som Parkash.

Chabbewal last month quit the Congress and joined AAP.

The 54-year-old also resigned as MLA from the Chabbewal constituency in Hoshiarpur district. He was the deputy leader of opposition in the Punjab Assembly when he quit.

Chabbewal first became an MLA from the Chabbewal assembly segment in 2017 and retained the seat in the 2022 polls.

He had unsuccessfully contested the Lok Sabha elections from Hoshiarpur in 2019, losing to Parkash



by a margin of more than 48,000 votes.

"People are quite happy about the work done by the AAP government in the past two years. With zero electricity bills (300 units of free electricity per month in the domestic category), people are getting relief of Rs 4,000 to 5,000 per month," he told PTL.

People's financial burden has also been lowered following the opening of aam aadmi clinics, where they get free treatment and medicines, he said.

The state government has also shut several toll plazas, bringing relief to commuters, the AAP leader added.

Many steps have been taken to generate employment and around 43,000 government jobs provided in the past two years. The state government is also focusing on the education sector, he claimed.

Speaking on the farming community, Chabbewal said farmers are getting adequate water for irrigation.

Joining AAP in the presence of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Chabbewal had said that he was impressed with the state government's "pro-people" policies, especially for the poor and the weaker sections.

"I am taking the work done by the Mann govern-

ment to the people and seeking their votes," he told PTL. Asked about the rival political parties in Hoshiarpur, Chabbewal said he doesn't see any competition.

The people of Punjab are "upset" with the BJP, he said, referring to the ongoing farmers' agitation, and accused the Centre of not agreeing to their demand of a legal guarantee on minimum support price for all crops.

The farmers were not allowed to head towards Delhi in support of their demands, Chabbewal said.

He also alleged there is "indiscipline and factionalism" in the Congress' Punjab unit and claimed "infighting" has "demoralised" party workers.

The Shiromani Akali Dal, on the other hand, is facing a fight for "survival", Chabbewal claimed.

The AAP candidate also shared his roadmap for Hoshiarpur.

Chabbewal said he will prioritise setting up a government hospital and medical

college. A satellite centre of the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research will also be brought to Hoshiarpur.

The AAP candidate said he will make efforts to bring a rail coach factory to the constituency to boost employment and also work to upgrade the Panjab University's regional campus.

He stressed on the need for a rail link between Tanda and Hoshiarpur and four-laning of the roads between Hoshiarpur and Garhshankar, and Garhshankar and Dasuya to boost economic activity.

He also intends to boost tourism in Hoshiarpur, a sub-mountainous area.

Chabbewal is contesting from Hoshiarpur against the BJP's Anita Som Parkash, the wife of incumbent MP Parkash, and the Congress' Yamini Gomar. The Shiromani Akali Dal has fielded former minister Sohan Singh Thandal.

Polling for Punjab's 13 Lok Sabha seats will be held on June 1.

IAF helicopter roped in to douse forest fires in Uttarakhand

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

DEHRADUN: An IAF helicopter was pressed into service on Saturday to extinguish the raging forest fires in Uttarakhand's Nainital district, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said.

The situation in the district worsened on Friday with the flames reaching the High Court Colony in the Pines area. An MI-17 helicopter collected water in a Bambi Bucket from Bhimtal lake and poured it over the burning forests of Pines, Bhumiadhar, Jyolikot, Narayan Nagar, Bhawali, Ramgarh and Mukteshwar areas of the district, officials said.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said all efforts are being made to bring the fires under control and it will be done soon.

"An IAF helicopter has already started dousing the fires," he said.

Dhami said he will hold a meeting with forest officials in Haldwani later in the day to review the situation.

Three people were arrested in Rudrapur on Friday while trying to set fire to



forests. As many as 31 fresh incidents of forest fire were reported from various parts of the state on Friday, destroying 33.34 hectares of forest land, according to officials.

The fire that broke out in the forest near Nainital took a horrific form on Friday, posing a threat to the residents of High Court Colony. It also affected traffic movement in the area.

Besides forest department staff, Army personnel are involved in efforts to control the fire.

Anil Joshi, a resident of the Pines area and assistant registrar of the Uttarakhand High Court said, "The fire had engulfed an old and

vacant house located near The Pines on Friday. It did not cause any damage to High Court Colony but it came dangerously close to the buildings."

The district administration has banned boating in Naini lake in view of the blaze.

Nainital Divisional Forest Officer Chandrashekhar Joshi said, "We have deployed 40 Manora Range personnel and two forest rangers to extinguish the fire."

From November 1 last year till now, a total of 575 incidents of forest fire have been reported in Uttarakhand, affecting 689.89 hectares of forest area and costing the state than Rs 14 lakh.

Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah actor goes missing, Delhi Police lodges FIR



■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police on Saturday lodged an abduction case over the disappearance of actor Gurucharan Singh of the famous TV serial 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah' fame, officials said. Multiple teams have been formed to find the 50-year-old actor, who is a Delhi resident, after he went missing five days ago, they said.

He was last seen near the Delhi airport with a backpack, the police said citing a CCTV footage.

An FIR has been lodged under Section 365 (abduction) and an investigation has been launched into the matter, they added.

"Actor Gurucharan Singh who plays the role of 'Roshan Singh Sodhi' in the TV serial 'Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah

Chashmah' went missing on April 22 evening," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Southwest) Rohit Meena said. "Singh's father lodged a missing complaint saying his son had left for Mumbai on April 22 at 8.30 pm. He has been missing since then," Meena said.

The actor had left his home here to take a flight for Mumbai. But he did not reach Mumbai, neither he returned to his home and his phone was also unreachable, the complaint stated.

The officer said the police are investigating the entire matter from every angle.

We are looking for footage and we have even found many vital clues through technical investigation.

According to the CCTV footage, he was last seen near the airport with a backpack, the DCP said.

Chhattisgarh: CBI takes over probe in Bhuneshwar Sahu murder case

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: The CBI has taken over the probe into the killing of a 22-year-old man during communal violence in Chhattisgarh's Bemetara district last year and registered an FIR against 12 people, officials said on Saturday.

Bhuneshwar Sahu was killed in the violence that erupted in Biranpur village on April 8, 2023, after an altercation between school-children from two communities. On April 11, Biranpur residents Rahim Mohammad (55) and his son Idul Mohammad (35) were found dead a few kilometers away from the village and there were multiple injuries on their bodies.

According to procedure, the CBI re-registered the state police FIR that named 12 people as accused in the



case, the officials said.

In a statement, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) said, "It was alleged that children studying in class 7-8 of a village were returning from school, when boys of a community working at a junk shop beat them up, on which a meeting was held."

"It was also alleged that when the victim along with his friends went to the locality of the said community in

the afternoon, the members of the community started pelting stones from the roof. The victim fell down and as a result sustained head injuries," it said.

The accused and others allegedly killed the victim using a knife and other weapons, the statement said.

During investigation, the local police found criminal evidence against the 12 people named in the FIR and arrested them, it said. Police

Vedantu students shine again in JEE Main 2024

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Vedantu - a leader in the JEE tutoring space has revealed that 1,698 of its students have qualified for JEE Advanced. The education giant also revealed that 210 of their students scored above 99 percentile, with 641 of their students scoring above 97 percentile.

Pranavanand Saji, one of Vedantu's top students, was recognized as the Overseas Topper of JEE Main 2024 with an All India Rank (AIR) of 31. Moreover, 3 Vedantu students were in the top 500 and 6 Vedantu students had an AIR in the top 1,000. There were 27 other Vedantu students who scored 100 percentile in one or more subjects.

Adding to the joy of the results is the remarkable achievement of their pioneering Vedantu Learning Center in Bangalore, which was established just last year. This center has seen 80% of its students qualify for the JEE Advanced this year. The rea-

son for this success can be ascribed to the personalized learning methods that Vedantu implements at scale.

Leveraging a decade of technological innovation, Vedantu ensures tailored learning experiences both in physical classrooms and through its advanced online platforms. Master teachers, doubt experts, and academic mentors provide personalized attention to each student, employing customized teaching methods. Vedantu's technological infrastructure, on the other hand, helps students amplify their learning from the comfort of their homes.

To maximize the impact of Vedantu's unique and innovative approach to learning, over 30 Vedantu Learning Centers were set up in Chennai, Hyderabad, Delhi, Madurai, Coimbatore, Vizag, Vijayawada, Pune, Trichy, Patiala, Muzzarfarpur, Jhunjhunu, Patna and other cities. These learning centers are equipped with cutting-edge infrastructure, featuring

high-tech classrooms and integrated systems. Their gamified, engaging, and participatory learning environment provides personalized feedback to students by seamlessly tracking class participation, test performance, and assignments. Vedantu's proactive approach to student development ensures parents are well-informed about their child's progress in real time on a daily basis.

"With intrinsically tailored exam courses like JEE, our active learning methodology focuses on providing students the learning experience which mirrors the nuances of the exam and prepares them to achieve their true potential. We congratulate all aspirants who appeared in JEE Main and to the All India Rankers who have aced the examination. This success is a testimony of the determination and hard work of our students, Master Teachers, mentors, doubt experts, student support staff and others." - Anand Prakash, Co-founder

& Head of Academics, Vedantu.

Vamsi Krishna, CEO and Co-Founder of Vedantu, expressed his joy at the stellar performance of students and stated, "This success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, as well as the effectiveness of Vedantu's teaching methodology. To maximize this, we are super excited for the expansion of our Vedantu Learning Centres, which will allow us to reach more students and positively impact their academic journey."

Vedantu has always been committed to providing more students with accessible, affordable and best-in-class education along with exemplary pedagogical support. By opening more learning centers, Vedantu aims to extend its revolutionary and highly-personalized teaching method to more students across the country, ensuring that every student has an equal opportunity to achieve their academic ambitions.

2 CRPF personnel killed in militant attack in Manipur

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

IMPHAL: Two CRPF personnel were killed and two others injured as militants attacked a camp of security forces in Manipur's Bishnupur district in the early hours of Saturday, police said.

The militants attacked an IRBn (India Reserve Battalion) camp at Naranseina in the Moirang police station area, they said.

"The militants fired indiscriminately from hilltops, targeting the camp. It started around 12.30 am and continued till about 2.15 am. The militants also hurled bombs, one of which exploded in the outpost of CRPF's 128 battalion," a senior police officer said.

The deceased were identified as sub-inspector N Sarkar, a native of Assam's Kokrajhar district, and head constable

Arup Saini of Bankura district in West Bengal, he said.

The injured were inspector Jadav Das and constable Aftab Das, he said, adding that they received splinter wounds.

"The two injured personnel were admitted to the Regional Institute of Medical Sciences in Imphal. They are out of danger," the officer said.

The CRPF personnel were deployed to provide security to the IRBn camp.

A massive search was underway to find the perpetrators of the attack, police said.

Condemning the incident, Chief Minister N Biren Singh said, "Such actions demonstrate cowardice against dedicated security personnel who work tirelessly day and night to uphold peace and stability in the state. Their sacrifice will not go in vain."

Highlights of SC verdict in EVM-VVPAT case

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Following are the highlights of the Supreme Court's verdict on Friday that rejected pleas seeking complete cross-verification of votes cast using electronic voting machines (EVMs) with a Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT).

* SC rejects demand for reverting to old paper ballot system.

* SC says EVMs are secure and eliminates booth-capturing and bogus voting.

* SC issues directions on sealing and storage of symbol loading units.

* SC allows aggrieved candidates securing second and third places in poll results to seek verification of microcontroller chips embedded in five per cent EVMs per assembly constituency on a written request upon payment of fee to the EC.

* SC says from May 1, the symbol loading units should be sealed and secured in a container and stored in a strongroom along with the EVMs for a minimum period of 45 days post declaration of results.

* SC says repeated and persistent doubts and despair, even without supporting evidence, can have the "contrarian impact of creating distrust"

* SC says credibility of EC and integrity of electoral process earned over years cannot be chaffed and over-ridden by baroque



contemplations and speculations.

* Justice Dipankar Datta, writing his views in a separate verdict while concurring with the opinion of Justice Sanjiv Khanna, says there seems to be a concerted effort to discredit, diminish and weaken India's progress on every possible frontier and any such attempt has to be "nipped in the bud".

* Justice Datta says democracy is all about striving to build harmony and trust among all its pillars through open dialogue, transparency in processes and continuous improvement of the system by active participation in democratic practices.

* Justice Datta says EVMs have stood the test of time and the increased voting percentage was sufficient reason to hold that the voters have reposed faith in the current system.

Bus catches fire after tyre burst on Mumbai-Pune Expressway; all passengers safe

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

PUNE/MUMBAI: A private bus carrying 35 passengers caught fire after one of its tyres burst on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway on Saturday, in which nobody was injured, officials said.

The incident occurred around 7 am at Aadhe village in Maval taluka of Pune district, they said.

"The bus was travelling on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway towards Pune. When it reached Aadhe village in Maval, it suffered a tyre burst bus and caught fire soon afterwards," a fire official said.

All 35 passengers and the bus driver were safely taken out of the bus in time and nobody suffered



any injury, he said.

Major part of the bus was gutted in the blaze. On being alerted, the fire brigade staff reached the spot and doused the

flames. The fire was doused by the teams of IRB patrolling, Delta Force along with the Vadgaon traffic police department.