

Rahul to contest LS polls from Rae Bareilly, his loyalist KL Sharma from Amethi

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI/AMETHI: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will contest the Lok Sabha elections from the Rae Bareilly seat in Uttar Pradesh, the constituency held by his mother Sonia Gandhi for the last two decades.

Kishori Lal Sharma, a close aide of the Gandhi family, has been fielded from the Amethi Lok Sabha seat, the party said in a statement on Friday.

Sharma was the key person who looked after the two prestigious constituencies in the absence of the Gandhis.

Rahul and Sharma will file their nomination papers on Friday, the last date for the filing of nominations for the seats.

Rahul Gandhi along with his mother Sonia Gandhi, sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and brother-in-law Robert Vadra have arrived at the Fursatganj Airport

in Amethi ahead of the nomination filing. They were accompanied by former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will also be in Rae Bareilly for the nomination filing besides a large number of party workers and leaders.

The two seats will go to polls on May 20 in the fifth of the seven-phase general election.

Ending days of suspense, the party announced the candidates from the two seats early Friday.

Rahul Gandhi will be contesting from the seat which has been held by his mother Sonia Gandhi, his grandmother Indira Gandhi and his grandfather Feroze Gandhi.

The constituency has also been represented by family members and friends of the Gandhi-Nehru family.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in a message said, "Kishori



Lal Sharma ji has been associated with our family for years. He has always been dedicated towards serving the people of Amethi and Rae Bareilly. His passion for public service is an example in itself."

"Today it is a matter of joy that Congress party has made him the party candidate from Amethi. Kishori Lal ji's loyalty and dedication towards duty will definitely bring him in success in this election. Many best

wishes," she said in a post in Hindi on X.

Deliberations had been on in the party since Thursday on the names of the contenders for the two seats, which have been traditionally held by the members of the Gandhi-Nehru family.

The BJP had on Thursday announced Dinesh Pratap Singh as its candidate from Rae Bareilly. He had lost to Sonia Gandhi in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Posters and banners of Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav were also brought late last evening to the Congress office in Gauriganj.

BJP leader Smriti Irani has already filed her nomination papers from Amethi.

The Uttar Pradesh leadership of the Congress had earlier called upon the Gandhi family to contest both the seats.

SC refuses to entertain plea on 'namesake' candidates in polls

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea that sought a direction to the Election Commission (EC) to take urgent steps for an effective mechanism to solve the issue of "namesake" candidates contesting polls.

After a bench headed by Justice B R Gavai showed disinclination to entertain the plea, the petitioner's counsel sought permission to withdraw it.

The bench, also comprising Justices Satish Chandra Sharma and Sandeep Mehta, allowed the petition to be withdrawn.

"If somebody is born as Rahul Gandhi or if somebody is born as Lal Prasad Yadav, how can they be prevented from contesting elections? Would it not be affecting their rights?" the bench asked advocate V K Biju, who appeared in the court on behalf of petitioner Sabu Stephen.

Describing the issue as

"extremely serious", Biju had referred to Rule 22(3) of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, which says if two or more candidates bear the same name, they shall be distinguished by the addition of their occupation or residence or in some other manner.

"If somebody's parents have given a similar name, can it come in their way of their right to contest elections?" the bench asked.

"You know what is the fate of the case," it told Biju.

The lawyer then told the bench that he is allowed to withdraw the petition.

"Allowed to withdraw," the bench said. The plea said the "wrong practice of fielding 'namesake' candidates is an old trick to create confusion in the minds of voters".

It claimed that the "namesake" candidates may not have any knowledge and awareness about the political and administrative systems in India and they are getting "sponsorships" from rival political parties, including money, materials and other offers.

"However, the petitioner is not claiming that all the independent candidates are fake or not saying that those candidates do not have the right to contest. However, an effective scrutiny and appropriate mechanism should be there to avoid the namesake candidates, which is the need of the hour," the plea said.

INDIA bloc supports anti-national forces and are against Lord Ram, says Nadda

STATE TIMES NEWS
DAHOD: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J P Nadda on Friday accused the INDIA bloc members of supporting anti-national forces, and alleged that they were against Lord Ram.

He also claimed that the Congress party was trying to change the Constitution to provide reservation to Muslims.

In an election rally in Gujarat's Dahod, Nadda said several INDIA bloc leaders are either in jail or on bail, and called the grouping an alliance of dynastic parties and corrupt people.

"The UPA government under Sonia Gandhi's leadership had given an affidavit in the court. After 10 days of rituals, the consecration of Ram Lalla was performed on January 22," he said.

"When slogans were raised at the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in support of Afzal Guru, the mastermind in Parliament attack case who was hanged...The

very next day, Rahul Gandhi went to the JNU to support them. He supported the tukde-tukde gang who backed terrorist Afzal Guru, and his party made one of the gang members a Lok Sabha candidate," Nadda said, referring to Congress leader Kanhaiya Kumar.

The Congress has fielded Kanhaiya Kumar from the North East Delhi Lok Sabha seat this time.

"Aren't they with anti-national forces? Should you vote for them?" he asked.

Accusing the Congress of trying to change the Constitution to grant quota to Muslims, Nadda said, "Yesterday, the prime minister said in clear words that Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar has said reservation will not be granted in the name of religion but for social justice. But they (Congress) are trying to change the reservation given to the SC, ST and OBC communities to Muslims. It will be akin to looting our Constitution."

He said that PM Modi has challenged the Congress to give in writing that it will not do any such thing.

"Congress works to strengthen those powers that weaken and divide the country," he said.

Nadda said that 10 years ago, the common man thought that nothing was going to change, and this is how politics worked. "But when you made Modi the country's prime minister, the same India is going ahead enthusiastically with the pledge of becoming a developed India," he said.

"Earlier, politics was done in the name of caste, religion, appeasement, votebank. The politicians earlier did not do anything for the welfare of society but divided it into different castes. They would raise the voice of castes to create a vote bank for themselves," Nadda said.

But after PM Modi came to power, he challenged this kind of politics and introduced a politics of report card and a politics of development, responsibility and accountability, he said.

Except BJP, every other party used tribals for political purposes. It is the BJP that changed the fate of tribals, he said, adding that PM Modi made a woman from the tribal community the country's President.

"Modi's politics led to India's development, and the poor have benefited from the schemes like health insurance of up to Rs 5 lakh and pucca houses for the poor," he said.

SP College accords farewell to faculty members

STATE TIMES NEWS
SRINAGAR: SP College, Srinagar on Friday gave a warm send-off to three senior faculty members and a non-teaching employee of the college who attained their superannuation on 30th April 2024.

These superannuating faculty and employees include Professor Manzoor Ahmad Wani, Head Department of Botany; Professor Niyaz Ahmad Wani, Department of Botany; Professor Rabia Ahmad, Head Department of English and Kousar Kirmani, Lab Assistant Department of Biochemistry. Director Colleges, Higher Education Professor (Dr.) Yasmeen Ashai, Principal of the college Professor (Dr.) Jeelani Qureshi, Professor (Dr.) Wilayat Rizvi Registrar Cluster University Srinagar; Professor (Dr.) Sheikh Ajaz Bashir Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges, Former Principal Dr. Parveen Pandit, Former Director Colleges Professor (Dr.) Yaseen Ahmad Shah, Former Principal Professor Bashir Ahmad Shah, Former Principal Professor (Dr.) Khurshed Ahmad Khan, Professor (Dr.) Fouzia Principal GDC Ganderbal, Professor (Dr.) Mohammad Farooq Mir Principal GDC Women Nawa Kadal, Prof. Ezzaz Rizvi Principal GDC Kulgam, Prof. Shah-e-Jehan Wani Principal GDC

Frisal, Professor Deeba Sarmand Dean Academics CUS, Professor Khurshed Controller CUS, Dr. Naseer Shah Dean Sciences CUS, Dr. Mushtaq Lone, Professor (Dr.) Sadaf Principal GDC Kangan, Distinguished academics Professor Mairaj-ud-Din Sheikh, Professor Afzal Mir, Professor M. A. Lone, Professor Naser Farhan, Prof. B. A. Mir, Prof. Showkat Zargar, Professor Mukhtar Malik, Dr. Zubaida, Prof. Nighat Hassan, Prof. Anjum Qazi, Professor Rubiya Sultan, Professor Nusrat Syed, Dr. Abdul Hai, Prof. Mujahid Ahmad, Dr. Nikhat Nabi, were present at the farewell event. College Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff of the college also attended the farewell meeting held at College Auditorium.

On the occasion, Principal of the College, Professor (Dr.) Ghulam Jeelani Qureshi congratulated them on the successful completion of their active services. He also highlighted their zeal and dedication towards their work.

Dr. Qureshi said that it is with mixed emotions that the esteemed faculty and staff at SP College, Srinagar bid a warm and heartfelt farewell to Prof. Manzoor Wani from the Botany department, Prof. Niyaz Ahmad Wani also from the Botany department and Prof. Rabia Ahmad from the English department.

Dr. Qureshi said that these distinguished educators have made invaluable contributions to the academic community, inspiring generations of students with their knowledge and passion for teaching. Additionally, we also extend our heartfelt appreciation to Kousar Kirmani, a dedicated Lab Assistant, for her hard work and commitment to excellence.

As these esteemed members of our academic family move on to new endeavors their presence and guidance will be sorely missed. Their legacy within the halls of SP College will endure as a testament to their dedication to shaping young minds and fostering a culture of learning and growth. I wish them all the best in their future endeavors and are confident that they will continue to excel in all their pursuits, he added.

"It is with a heavy heart that we bid farewell to Professor Manzoor Wani, a distinguished Head of the Department of Botany. Throughout his tenure, Prof. Wani has exemplified excellence in academics and dedication to his students. His passion for botanical studies and commitment to research has inspired countless individuals within the department," Dr. Qureshi said.

He said, we gather here today also to bid farewell to our esteemed Professor

Niyaz Ahmad Wani. Throughout his tenure at this institution, Professor Wani has been an exceptional mentor, educator, and colleague. His dedication to teaching, research and his students have left an indelible impact on our academic community.

Dr. Qureshi extended his warm regards and best wishes to Professor Rabia Ahmad, esteemed member of the Department of English. Serving as a dedicated educator, her passion for literature and language has left an indelible impact on the academic community. Professor Rabia's unmatched expertise and commitment to her students have undoubtedly enriched countless minds through her teachings.

I would also like to formally acknowledge the departure of Kousar Kirmani, our esteemed laboratory assistant. Kousar has been an invaluable member of our team, contributing her expertise and dedication to the success of our research endeavors, Dr. Qureshi said.

The proceeding of the felicitation function was conducted by Dr. Shazia Mushtaq, Associate Professor Botany. At the end the vote of thanks was proposed by Prof. Master Showkat, Department of English.

Congress' hand is with enemies of India: Yogi Adityanath



STATE TIMES NEWS
LUCKNOW: Launching a scathing attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and the INDIA bloc, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Friday said it has now become clearly evident that "Congress ka haath, desh ke dushmano ke saath".

According to an official release, the chief minister made this remark -- the hand (election symbol) of the Congress is with the nation's enemies -- in the wake of reports that Pakistan's former minister Chaudhry Fawad Hussain praised Rahul Gandhi and shared a video featuring the Congress leader on social media.

Before embarking on campaign in Sambhal, Badaun and Aonla Lok Sabha constituencies, the chief minister said the elections have reached their peak. So,

Alleging that the Congress has strayed from its path after Independence, Adityanath said, "Motivated by self-interest, it initially fostered national division and pursued appeasement policies for political gain. The adverse effect of appeasement policies was that separatism and extremism reached their peak within the country."

Besides, he also alleged, the Congress government's "corrupt practices" led to the rapid spread of Naxalism. Over the past decade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts have effectively curbed terrorism, Naxalism and extremism, Adityanath said.

"Consequently, a favourable national environment has emerged, fostering development and inclusive welfare schemes. Even those in the most marginalised situation benefit from government initiatives," he said.

"Naturally, the public favours Modi ji on these fronts. We are confident that the populace will resoundingly reject the Congress and the INDI Alliance's divisive and appeasement strategies, ensuring the victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the NDA alliance under Modi ji's leadership with a robust majority to form the government once again," he added.

those who are the enemies of the country will fully exert themselves to destroy the atmosphere which is in favour of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"The citizens across the nation must observe how Pakistan is endorsing Rahul Gandhi. A former minister of the Pakistani government, who shamelessly supported the Pulwama incident, is now openly backing Rahul Gandhi, expressing joy in his support," he said.

He said this shows that both the hands of Congress and the enemies of the country are together.

"If Modi ji and the BJP win, Diwali is celebrated in the country. Whereas if the Congress wins, celebrations take place in Pakistan. The people of the country should understand this difference and reject the anti-national elements," he said.

CEO inspects arrangements at Counting Center for Baramulla PC

STATE TIMES NEWS
BARAMULLA: Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu & Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole, on Friday visited Baramulla and conducted a thorough inspection of the Counting Center and Strong Rooms designated for Baramulla Parliamentary Constituency at indoor sports stadium, Baramulla. The visit aimed to ensure seamless arrangements for

the Lok Sabha Elections 2024. The CEO was accompanied by Returning Officer, 1 - B a r a m u l l a P a r l i a m e n t a r y C o n s t i t u e n c y, Minga Sherpa, Superintendent of Police, Baramulla, Amod Ashok Nagapure, Nodal Officer, Model Code of Conduct (MCC), Syed Qamar Sajad, Assistant Returning Officer, Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina,

Deputy District Election Officer, Ab Rehman Bhat and other concerned officers. During the inspection, the CEO reviewed the facilities and arrangements being put in place at the counting center and the strong room to guarantee a smooth and transparent counting process. He also assessed security measures in place to maintain integrity and sanctity of the electoral

process. The CEO was briefed by the RO regarding the arrangements being made to ensure a smooth electoral process while informing that the district administration is diligently implementing all necessary measures in compliance with the guidelines of Election Commission of India.

In a proactive step towards environmental conservation, P K Pole planted saplings within the premises of the counting center to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the center's surroundings. Speaking during the visit, P K Pole underscored the critical importance of robust arrangements and strict adherence to electoral protocols set by the Election Commission of India for upholding the sanctity of this democratic process.

Tolerance foundation of sound marriage, petty quibbles should not be blown out of proportion: SC

STATE TIMES NEWS
NEW DELHI: Tolerance, adjustment and respect are the foundation of a sound marriage and petty quibbles and trifling differences are mundane matters that should not be blown out of proportion to destroy what is said to have been made in the heaven, the Supreme Court said on Friday while quashing a dowry-harassment case filed by a woman against her husband.

The court said many times, the parents and close relatives of a married woman make a mountain out of a mole and instead of salvaging the situation and saving the marriage, their action brings about complete destruction of the marital bonds on trivial issues.

A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said the first thing that comes to the mind of the woman, her parents and relatives is police, as if police are the panacea of all evil.

No sooner the matter reaches police, even if there are fair chances of reconciliation between the spouses, they would get destroyed, the bench said.

"The foundation of a sound marriage is tolerance, adjustment and respecting one another. Tolerance to each other's



fault to a certain bearable extent has to be inherent in every marriage. Petty quibbles, trifling differences are mundane matters and should not be exaggerated and blown out of proportion to destroy what is said to have been made in the heaven.

"The court must appreciate that all quarrels must be weighed from that point of view in determining what constitutes cruelty in each particular case, always keeping in view the physical and mental conditions of the parties, their character and social status. A very technical and hyper-sensitive approach would prove to be disastrous for the very institution of marriage," the bench said.

The court said the main sufferers in matrimonial disputes are the children.

as a measure of last resort in matrimonial disputes, the court said the police machinery cannot be utilised for holding the husband at ransom so that he could be squeezed by the wife at the instigation of her parents or relatives or friends.

"In all cases, where the wife complains of harassment or ill-treatment, section 498A of the IPC cannot be applied mechanically. No FIR is complete without sections 506(2) and 323 of the IPC. Every matrimonial conduct, which may cause annoyance to the other, may not amount to cruelty. Mere trivial irritations, quarrels between spouses, which happen in day-to-day married life, may also not amount to cruelty," it said.

The top court's observation came in a judgment that set aside a Punjab and Haryana High Court order, which dismissed a husband's plea seeking the quashing of a criminal case lodged against him.

According to the FIR lodged by his wife, the man and his family members allegedly demanded dowry and caused mental and physical trauma to her.

The FIR said the woman's family had spent a large sum at the time of her wedding and also

handed over her "stridhan" to the husband and his family.

However, shortly after the wedding, the husband and his family started harassing her on the false pretext that she had failed to discharge her duties as a wife and daughter-in-law and pressuring her for more dowry.

The bench said a plain reading of the FIR and the chargesheet indicates that the allegations levelled by the woman are quite vague, general and sweeping, specifying no instances of criminal conduct.

"It is also pertinent to note that in the FIR, no specific date or time of the alleged offence or offences has been disclosed. Even the police thought fit to drop the proceedings against the other members of the appellant's (husband) family. Thus, we are of the view that the FIR lodged by the respondent no. 2 (woman) was nothing but a counterblast to the divorce petition and also, the domestic violence case," the bench said.

"For the foregoing reasons, we have reached the conclusion that if the criminal proceedings are allowed to continue against the appellant, the same will be nothing short of an abuse of the process of law and travesty of justice," it added.