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Unprecedented; ECI curtails...

Election Commissioner Sunil Arora and fellow commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra.

The vandalisation of Vidyasagar's bust and clashes during Shah's road show in Kolkata on Tuesday triggered a fierce blame game between BJP and the Trinamool Congress.

Shah, at a press conference here, alleged that Mamata Banerjee's TMC was involved in vandalising the bust and unleashing violence during his roadshow in Kolkata on Tuesday as part of a "conspiracy" to blame the BJP.

On its part, the TMC released videos to claim that "BJP goons" damaged the statue of Vidyasagar and said the videos not only establish what the saffron party did, but proved that Shah is a "liar" and a "dhokebaaz" (betrayer).

BJP has crossed...

The majority figure. It is going to cross 300 after the seventh phase and the NDA under Prime Minister Narendra Modi will form the government again," he told a press conference here.

The seventh and last phase of the elections for 543 Lok Sabha seats is due on May 19. A party needs to win 272 seats for a simple majority. The BJP had won 282 in 2014.

Mocking the proposed meeting of opposition leaders and the move by some regional parties like TRS to form a federal front, Shah said such meetings do not affect the BJP whose seats, he added, are not going to come down.

They may meet to elect a leader of opposition, he said, adding that results even this time may not give any party enough number of seats to elect a leader of opposition from its ranks.

The Congress, the main opposition party, had won only 44 seats in 2014, less than the minimum 10 per cent of seats a party needs to win to claim

the post of the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha.

Girl who visited...



People staging protest after cremation of KAS officer.

constituted a six-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the case. Headed by SP South Vinay Kumar, the SIT comprises SDPO East Dy SP Ravinder Singh Rahi, Dy SP Special Branch, Zahid Wani, Inspector Ravi Singh Parihar, Inspector Mohammad Aslam and Sub Inspector Deepak Thakur. Official sources said that the team will submit its report as soon as possible. The 2004 batch KAS officer, Sushil Attri was found hanging in the flat number 303, Daffodil Block in Ansal Flats at Sainik Colony yesterday afternoon. Reportedly, he had called up his girl friend to the flat, who declined. However, upon his reported threat of committing suicide in case she did not come, the girl visited the flat and came out crying probably after seeing Sushil Attri hanging. By the time the neighbours assembled, she managed to flee from the spot.

During initial investigations, police suspected it a case of suicide and started inquest proceedings.

Meanwhile, the KAS Officer's Association has expressed grief and shock over the demise of Sushil Kumar Attri, KAS Officer of 2004 batch, who was posted as Deputy Director ICDS Jammu. In a condolence meeting convened by President Tasaduq Hussain Mir on Wednesday in

Civil Secretariat, the office bearers of the Association and various other officers present expressed shock over the tragic demise of their colleague. The officers prayed for eternal peace to the departed soul and forbearance to the bereaved family at this hour of grief. Among other officers, the condolence meeting was attended by Zubair Ahmed Secretary Culture and Technical Education. His colleagues and batchmates described Sushil Attri as an energetic and lively Officer, with great administrative acumen. They believe that his demise is an irreparable loss to the entire KAS fraternity.

BJP under Shah...

in an atmosphere of intimidation and BJP is committed to restore true democracy in every part of India, including Bengal.

Recalling the experience of North East, Dr Jitendra Singh referred to the State of Tripura where people had voluntarily come out in large numbers to get rid of nearly a quarter century of Marxist regime and replaced it with a BJP Government, and said that in Bengal too the era of hegemony under Mamata Banerjee is soon going to meet its end in the hands of BJP. The uncalculated violent attack by TMC activists yesterday, he said, is indicative of Mamata Banerjee having conceded the defeat even before the election results are out.

When asked about the BJP delegation's meeting with the Election Commission last night, Dr Jitendra Singh disclosed that he was part of the party delegation comprising senior leaders Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, Nirmala Seetharaman, Arun Singh, GVL Narasimha Rao and Anil Baluni who put across the Party's view on the Bengal issue before the Chief Election Commissioner and his team.

The delegation sought Election Commission's immediate and effective intervention so that the State administrative machinery was not allowed to be misused to influence the electoral process.

Trucker, associate nabbed with 210 Kg poppy straw, Rs 90,000 cash

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Continuing its crackdown against drug menace under Operation Sanjeevani, Police on Wednesday arrested a trucker and his associate and recovered 210 kg poppy straw and Rs 90,000 cash from their possession.

As per the details, a joint party of Police Station Bagh-e-Bahu led by SHO, Insp Sunil Kumar Sharma and SOG Jammu led by SI Shabir Kohli, during checking near Environmental Park, stopped a truck (PB65K 1613), for checking. On checking, 210 kg of poppy star and Rs 90,000 cash were recovered from the possession of driver and conductor which were identified as Dalbir Singh, son of Karnail Singh, resident of Ward No. 13, Bhagwan Pura, Ludhiana and Lakhwinder Singh, son of Balkar Singh, resident of Maehhi Wada, Ludhiana. The duo was arrested and a case vide FIR No. 44/2019 under Sections 8/15 NDPS was registered in Police Station Bagh-e-Bahu.

Jawan injured in landmine blast near LoC

STATE TIMES NEWS

MENDHAR: An army man was injured in a landmine explosion near the Line of Control (LoC) in Mendhar Sector of Poonch district on Wednesday.

As per the details, soldier namely Sepoy Shilving Appa of 12 Madras Regiment was on routine patrol duty in forward area of Dehari Dabasi in Mendhar sector when he accidentally stepped on a mine near the (LoC). In the incident, the soldier sustained serious injuries in his legs.

Injured soldier was evacuated to a nearby health facility where from he was later shifted to army's Command Hospital in Udhampur.

Seven gamblers arrested

STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Police on Wednesday raided a gambling site and arrested seven gamblers.

The gamblers were arrested following a credible input about gambling offences in Natipora area of Chanapora.

Officers from the local police unit while making the arrests have seized stake money of Rs 14,600 from the gamblers.

A case FIR number 88/2019 under relevant sections of law has been registered and investigation has been initiated.

Criminal nabbed with revolver, live cartridges

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Gandhi Nagar Police on Wednesday arrested one criminal with revolver and two live cartridges.

As per the details, a party from Gandhi Nagar during Naka checking at Digiana Pulli Jammu intercepted one pedestrian who on seeing the police party tried to escape under suspicious circumstances but was chased/caught by the police party.

During questioning, he disclosed his name as Anil Sharma alias Kali, son of Durga Dass, resident of H. No. 100 Bhagwati Nagar Jammu and on checking/frisking One revolver along with two live cartridges were recovered from his possession.

He was arrested and a case vide FIR No. 123/2019 under section 3/25 Arms Act was lodged. The arrest was made by Insp. Sunil Singh Jasrotia SHO Police Station Gandhi Nagar. He was assisted by SI Sandeep Bhagat Incharge Police Post Digiana.

Stolen bike recovered, lifter held

STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: Police on Wednesday arrested a vehicle lifter and recovered stolen bike from his possession.

Reports said that based on a report of one person namely Deep Singh, son of Babu Singh, resident of Bali, Udhampur reported at Police Station Udhampur that some unknown thieves have stolen his motorcycle (JK02 AX 5919) which was parked outside his house at Bali. A case vide FIR No. 209/2019 under Section 379 RPC was regis-

tered at Police Station Udhampur and investigation was started.

During the course of investigation, police zeroed some suspects and ultimately recovered the stolen motorcycle from the possession of one accused namely Sunil Kumar, son of Om Parkash, resident of Sambal Danga near Railway Station, Udhampur.

Bootlegger nabbed with illicit liquor

STATE TIMES NEWS

UDHAMPUR: Police on Wednesday recovered 100 quarters of illicit liquor from a bootlegger at Bus Stand Udhampur area.

Reports said that police party of Police Station Udhampur during patrolling caught one suspected person at Bus Stand Udhampur for checking who tried to hide himself from the police party. The aforesaid person was taken into custody and during his search 100 quarters of illicit liquor were recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Balbir Singh, son of Shankar Singh, resident of Jakhiani, Udhampur. He was arrested and case vide FIR No. 226/2019 under section 48(A) Excise Act has been registered against him in Police Station Udhampur.

Thief arrested, stolen CDU Telecommunication Box recovered

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Police on Wednesday arrested a thief and recovered stolen item (CDU Telecommunication Box) amounting to Rs. 4.5 lakh on his disclosure. Auto Rikshaw used in commission of crime was also seized.

Reports said on March 10, 2019, one Sheesh Ram Sharma, son of Hans Raj Sharma (Driver of Vehicle No. JK21C-4237 attached with Reliance-Jio Company) reported at Police Station Satwari that some unknown persons had decamped with CDU Telecommunication Box from his Vehicle. Cost of Telecommunication box was approximately Rs 4.5 lakh.

Upon this, a case vide FIR No. 47/2019 under Section 379 RPC was registered at Police Station Satwari and investigation was set into motion. During course of investigation, many suspects were rounded up. Consequently, one suspect namely Ashok Kumar, son of Bansi Lal alias Kaka Ram, resident of R S Pura, Ward No. 11, H. No. 131, Mill Area, confessed his involvement in the case and upon his disclosure, the aforesaid box was recovered from his possession today. Auto Rikshaw (JK02BU 4538) used in commission of crime was also seized.

Mortar shell found

STATE TIMES NEWS

R S PURA: An old mortar shell was found in R S Pura on Wednesday.

As per the details, owner of a brick kiln Raj Kumar informed the police that an old mortar is lying in his brick kiln following which police along with bomb disposal squad rushed to the spot and diffused it.

Drug peddler held with heroin

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A drug peddler was arrested with heroin by police on Wednesday at Bathindi.

As per the details, on a tip off, police laid a Naka in the area. During checking, police intercepted a man and on his search recovered 2 grams heroin from his possession. The accused identified as Abdul Qayum, resident of Qazigund was arrested and a case under relevant sections of law was registered against him.

4 women injured in assaults

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Four women were injured in separate assault cases in city on Wednesday.

As per the details, Sarbjot Kour, wife of Gagandeep Singh, resident of Gardigarh lodged a complaint with Satwari Police that her husband attacked her with an intention to kill her. Police has registered a case and started investigation.

Meanwhile, Santosh, wife of Ashwani Kumar, resident of Bishnah; Bimla Devi, wife of Bodh Raj, resident of Bishnah and Seema Devi, wife of Chand Kumar, resident of Pallanwala were also injured in assaults at their respective areas.

Police has registered all the cases and started investigation.

Thousands of stranded vehicles cleared along Jammu-Srinagar NH

STATE TIMES NEWS

BANIHAL/JAMMU: Thousands of stranded vehicles were cleared off the Jammu-Srinagar national highway on Wednesday despite rocks sliding intermittently from a hillock overlooking the strategic road, officials said.

The 270-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, was closed for vehicular traffic Tuesday morning following multiple landslides in Digdole area of Ramban district. The highway was reopened for vehicles early Wednesday after a 15-hour clearance operation but a fresh slide and intermittent shooting of stones hampered the movement of traffic, the officials said. "The movement of vehicles was better compared to the previous couple of days. Over 4,000 stranded vehicles were cleared from both sides during the day," Deputy Superintendent of Police, Traffic, in Ramban, Suresh Sharma, said. Vehicles on the highway usually run alternatively from the twin capitals of Srinagar and Jammu in view of the ongoing four-laning. Residents blamed construction companies for the frequent closure of the highway, alleging that the poorly planned and slow pace of work are the main reasons for the present status of the highway.

Several videos, meanwhile, are making rounds on the social media showing stranded commuters risking their lives to cross the landslide-hit areas. "We are taking extreme precautions while allowing the vehicles through the problematic zones," Sharma said, requesting the commuters to cooperate with the traffic police to avoid any untoward incident.

JK Police to set up web-based Inventory Management System

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir Police will set up a web-based Inventory Management System (IMS) for procurement, warehousing, allotment and weapons and equipment management in the state, officials said.

The police headquarter has floated a notice inviting tender (NIT) seeking bids from vendors for the IMS. "E-tenders have been invited from reputed vendors and firms for survey, preparation, customization, installation, testing, commissioning and maintenance of web-based IMS," Assistant Inspector General of Police (AIG), Provision and Transport, Mubassir Latifi said in the NIT on Saturday.

He said the system would be completely automated, user friendly and available from a dedicated cloud server 24x7, adding it will work on a wide range of browsers, operating systems and devices. Latifi said the IMS should have live tracking features for allotted stores and end management services for weapons and equipment.

The J&K Police emphasised that its data is highly sensitive and must be handled accordingly at all times. "Appropriate highest standards of data encryption and cyber security protocols must be built into the system and the server, whether physical or cloud it must be secure", Latifi said.

The IMS must be developed in two months, he said.

Two primary stores located in Jammu and Srinagar, besides the 125 districts and battalion level stores and the sub-stores should be connected on the IMS, the officer added.

India joins global initiative to combat extremism online

AGENCY

NEW DELHI: India joined France, New Zealand, Canada and several other countries on Wednesday in launching a major initiative in Paris to combat terrorism and extremism online and secure the internet. The initiative - 'Christchurch call to action' - was named after the New Zealand city where 51 people were killed in an attack on mosques, officials said.

"A free, open and secure internet is a powerful tool by which to promote connectivity, enhance social inclusiveness and foster economic growth," the declaration on Christchurch call to action said. It said the internet is, however, not immune from abuse by terrorist and violent extremist actors, and there was a need for collective efforts globally to secure the internet from terror groups.

"This was tragically highlighted by the terrorist attacks of 15 March 2019 on the Muslim community of Christchurch terrorist attacks that were designed to go viral. "The dissemination of such content online has adverse impacts on the human rights of the victims, on our collective security and on people all over the world," it said.

The declaration said the Christchurch attack highlighted the urgent need for action and enhanced cooperation among the wide range of actors with influence over this issue, including governments, civil society, and online service providers, such as social media companies, to eliminate terrorist and violent extremist content online. The event to launch of the initiative was attended by several world leaders and high-ranking officials

including from India, diplomatic sources said. The initiative outlines collective, voluntary commitments from governments and online service providers intended to address the issue of terrorist and violent extremist content online and to prevent the abuse of the internet.

"All action on this issue must be consistent with principles of a free, open and secure internet, without compromising human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression. "It must also recognise the internet's ability to act as a force for good, including by promoting innovation and economic development and fostering inclusive societies," it said. The countries which were of the initiative expressed commitment to ensure effective enforcement of applicable laws that prohibit the production or dissemination of terrorist and violent extremist content, in a manner consistent with the rule of law and international human rights law, including freedom of expression, according to the declaration.

It said they will also to counter the drivers of terrorism and violent extremism by strengthening the resilience and inclusiveness of their societies. Those who are part of the initiative will also encourage media outlets to apply ethical standards when depicting terrorist events online, to avoid amplifying terrorist and violent extremist content. They will also support frameworks, such as industry standards, to ensure that reporting on terrorist attacks does not amplify terrorist and violent extremist content, without prejudice to responsible coverage of terrorism and violent extremism.

IMS students bag 1st positions in BBA, BCA 1st Semester Results

STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Rohit Kumar, son of Namak Chand has secured first position in BBA stream by scoring 342 marks out of 450 and Shiv Arjun Sharma, son of Shiv Kumar has also secured first position in BCA by scoring 368 marks out of 550 in the 1st semester, result of which was declared recently. Director IMS, Dr. Ajay Sharma congratulated the students for their excellent results. The Management of IMS also congratulated the students for their outstanding performance and assured their continuous support in providing quality education to the students in the competitive learning environment in future also. They also complimented the parents of the students for providing necessary support and encouragement to achieve desired results.

Democracy has turned to Goondacracy in West Bengal: Modi

AGENCY

T A K I / D I A M O N D HARBOUR: A day after the violence during Amit Shah's roadshow in Kolkata, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched a broadside against Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday saying that democracy has turned to "goondacracy" in West Bengal.

Banerjee, he alleged, had created a state of Emergency in the state and said her government is out to destroy everything in the state.

Only people's conviction and courage will evict her "torturous rule", he told election rallies at Taki on the Indo-Bangla border in North 24 Parganas district and at Diamond Harbour in South 24 Parganas district ahead of the last phase of polls.

The days of the "bua-bhatija" government in the state are numbered going by the mood of the people and help BJP win the majority of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state, Modi said.

The Prime Minister was referring to Banerjee and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee, who is considered the number two in TMC and is seeking re-election from Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha seat.

"Everybody has the feeling that elections in the state are being held after Emergency. You (Banerjee) have created a state of emergency in the state. Your fight is against the people of West Bengal, not BJP".

People will have to decide whether democracy needs to be protected in West Bengal. "Democracy has turned into goondacracy in West Bengal. But goondacracy will not

work anymore. TMC goons have made life hell for the people of the state," he said. The people of West Bengal have shown respect to Banerjee by making her the chief minister of the state. "But her hunger for power has throttled democracy in the state. Didi should not be kept in power", Modi said. The entire nation had seen (on TV) how the roadshow of BJP president Amit Shah was attacked by the TMC goons and is anxiously watching the outcome of the poll results in West Bengal, he said.

Shah's roadshow in Kolkata was attacked Tuesday after Banerjee had asserted that TMC will take revenge against BJP, Modi claimed.

"Didi's (Mamata) goons carrying guns and bombs are bent upon destruction ... Her government is out to destroy everything in the state... People's conviction and courage will evict the torturous rule," the prime minister said. "Didi is frightened by the rise of BJP in West Bengal ... In 2019, Didi will be finished. The kind of violence which she is committing will help BJP get win the majority of the 42 parliamentary seats in the state and help it cross the 300 mark in the Lok Sabha polls", Modi said.

The people of Bengal have made up their mind to end Banerjee's "despotic rule" he claimed and added that once BJP comes to power infiltrators will be identified and refugees will be given protection and made citizens, he said.

The BJP manifesto has promised the introduction of the National Register of

Citizens across the country. Keeping up his attack on Banerjee, Modi said "You have looted peoples' money in chit fund scams and when they sought explanations you abused them".

He also held her responsible for destroying the state's culture of 'Bhadra Lok'.

Modi said that Bengal is the land of the seer Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Netaji. "People will not tolerate Didi anymore. The people have made up their mind and now is the time to get rid of her...The youth are facing a challenge. Revolt is being noticed among the people".

He alleged that BJP leaders are not allowed to hold rallies and its candidates are being attacked.

Stating that the TMC supremo does not have faith in the country's prime minister, Modi said "She has difficulties believing in surgical strikes or air strikes. She relies more on the prime minister of Pakistan. Is this democracy?"

In a scathing attack on Abhishek Banerjee, Modi said he will lose the elections this time and once the results are announced his office would be locked.

He criticised Banerjee also for sending BJP youth wing activist Priyanka Sharma to jail for morphing a picture of her on Facebook.

"What happened to you Didi? I heard you are also a painter and your paintings were bought for crores (a reference to her paintings being bought by Saradha group chief Sudipta Sen). I request you to draw one nasty picture of me and come to my residence to gift it. I will preserve it in my lifetime," he added.

Hafiz Saeed's brother-in-law arrested in Pakistan

AGENCY

LAHORE: Outlawed Jamaat-ud-Dawa's top leader and Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed's brother-in-law Hafiz Abdur Rehman Makki has been arrested for hate speech and criticising the Pakistan government, police said on Wednesday.

Makki, head of JuD's political and international affairs wing and in-charge of its charity Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation (FIF), was arrested during a government

crackdown against the outlawed organisations.

Punjab police spokesperson Nabila Ghazanfar confirmed Makki's arrest. She, however, did not explain the charges under which he was arrested.

Sources said Makki has been arrested for making a hate speech in Gujranwala city, some 80-km from Lahore.

The sources also said his arrest should be seen in connection with the government's steps to comply with the requirement of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist, and the US, since 2012, has offered a USD 10 million reward for information that brings him to justice.

Saeed is keeping a low profile and currently living at his Lahore residence under high security. For the first time in two decades, Saeed was not allowed to enter and deliver weekly sermon at JuD headquarters in Lahore since early

this March. The JuD and its sister organization Falah-i-Insaniat (FIF) leadership has already gone underground in the wake of the government's action against the proscribed organizations. In February, Paris-based international terror financing watchdog FATF decided to continue the 'Grey' listing of Pakistan for its failure to stop funding of terrorist groups such as the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the JuD. The Pakistan government has launched a crackdown against the outlawed organisations under the National Action Plan 2015 to eliminate militancy and extremism from the country's soil. The Pakistan government had arrested over 100 members of banned outfits including the Jaish-e-Mohammed chief Masood Azhar's son and brother and taken control of JeM, JuD and FIF properties including seminaries and mosques across the country apparently under immense international pressure. The government

terminated the action in accordance with the National Action Plan and meeting the obligations of the Financial Action Task Force.

The Imran Khan-led government has also announced the freezing of accounts and seizure of assets linked to organisations banned by the UN Security Council. The government banned 11 organisations for having links with the proscribed outfits JuD, FIF and JeM on Saturday. After the February 14 Pulwama terror attack, in which 40 Indian security personnel were killed by a suicide bomber of the Pakistan-based JeM, prime minister Khan had said Islamabad would not spare any group involved in militancy or using Pakistani soil for any kind of terror activity against other countries.

The FIR, like the JuD, was also banned in March by the Pakistan government.

Recently, the government announced to take control of more than 30,000 religious seminaries.

WEATHER

Temperature (Jammu)
 Max: 33.8°C Min: 25.2°C
 Humidity
 Max : 39 Min : 37

Temperature (Srinagar)
 Max: 23.3°C Min: 09.0°C
 Humidity
 Max : 76 Min: 43
 Sunset : 19:26 Hours
 Sunrise : 05:30 Hours