

IN BRIEF

**Sadhvi Pragya 'willing' to take on Digvijaya**

BHOPAL
Hindutva leader Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, who is facing trial in the 2008 Malegaon bomb blasts case, is ready to take on Congress veteran Digvijaya Singh from Bhopal Lok Sabha seat if she is given a ticket by the "organisation". "I am ready to take on Digvijaya Singh if the 'sanghatan' [apparently referring to the BJP] asks me to do so," Ms. Thakur told PTI.

Man booked for beating brother to death

MUZAFFARNAGAR (U.P.)
A man was booked for allegedly thrashing his brother who succumbed to injuries three days later in Lilon village in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district, the police said on Monday. The accused, Rahul, attacked his elder brother Amit on Holi evening (March 21). An FIR has been registered and efforts are on to nab the accused, said the police. PTI

2 injured as robbers loot petrol pump in Kathua

JAMMU
Two persons were shot at by robbers who looted cash from a petrol pump on Jammu-Pathankot highway in J&K's Kathua district, the police said on Monday. Three bike-borne, masked robbers reached the petrol pump on Saturday night and shot at two workers before fleeing with "unspecified amount" of cash. PTI

15 injured as two buses collide in Shimla

SHIMLA
At least 15 people were injured when two buses collided head on in Shimla on Monday, the police said. A Himachal Road Transport Corporation bus and a private bus collided at Beethal around 11.30 a.m. Shimla Superintendent of Police Omapati Jamwal said. PTI

Poll dance



On the beat: Adivasi girls dance during the filing of nomination by BJP candidate Tapan Kumar Gogoi (not in the picture) for the Jorhat constituency, outside the Deputy Commissioner's office in Jorhat, Assam, on Monday. •RITU RAJ KONWAR

Woman candidate on Arunachal Congress list, man files papers

Marina Kenglang claims 'mischief' by State party head as Thinghaap Taiju replaces her

RAHUL KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI

An alleged mischief has made the Congress replace one of its four women candidates in Arunachal Pradesh with a male leader. This has not gone down well with many in the party, which lost two "bankable" women leaders who were denied tickets.

The Congress had on Saturday announced the names of candidates for 53 of the State's 60 Assembly seats, elections for which are scheduled for April 11. The list had the name of Marina Kenglang for the Changlang North seat apart from Dayum Para (Tali), Yaman Bagra (Along West), and Komoli Mossang (Nampong).

But on Monday, the last day of filing of nomination, someone else submitted the papers for the Changlang North seat.

Two nominations

"Only two candidates filed nomination for the Changlang North seat today. They are Tesam Pongte of BJP and Thinghaap Taiju of Congress," Changlang district's Deputy Commissioner R.K. Sharma said.

Ms. Kenglang accused State Congress president Takam Sanjoy of manipulation after failing to stop the All India Congress Committee from nominating her for the Changlang North seat.

"Since I live very far away,

I sent Mahila Congress representatives to Takam Sanjoy to collect forms A and B (required to be submitted by political parties for sponsoring nominated candidates). He refused and instead gave the forms to Mr. Taiju, a former MLA who lost the last election," Ms. Kenglang told *The Hindu*.

'Clerical error'

She said she had urged Congress president Rahul Gandhi to take action against Mr. Takam for disrespecting the AICC list of candidates and undermining the party's policy of providing adequate space to women. Mr. Takam, however, said he went by the list he had and the inclusion

of Ms. Kenglang's name could be a case of "clerical error". "I joined the Congress in 1999 and have been a zila parishad member twice. I fulfilled the criteria to become a candidate but was denied ticket. An individual has kept me out, not the party. I will remain with the Congress because I believe in its ideology," Ms. Kenglang said.

Two other women leaders, however, quit the Congress after being denied tickets. While former Women's Commission chairperson Jarjum Ete joined the Janata Dal (Secular) to contest from Arunachal West Lok Sabha seat, Toko Yaram left the party after failing to get the ticket for Yachuli Assembly constituency.

Heads roll after student dies of food poisoning in Odisha

STAFF REPORTER
BERHAMPUR

Following the death of a student and illness of five others due to food poisoning, the headmaster and a teacher of a residential school at Maringi village of Gosani block in Odisha's Gajapati district were suspended from duty by the administration.

The six students complained of uneasiness and stomach cramps after having dinner on March 23 night. All of them were rushed to a nearby medical centre at Garabandha. One of them, Tuni Raita of Class II, died during treatment. The other five were shifted to the district headquarters hospital in Paralakhemundi on Sunday.

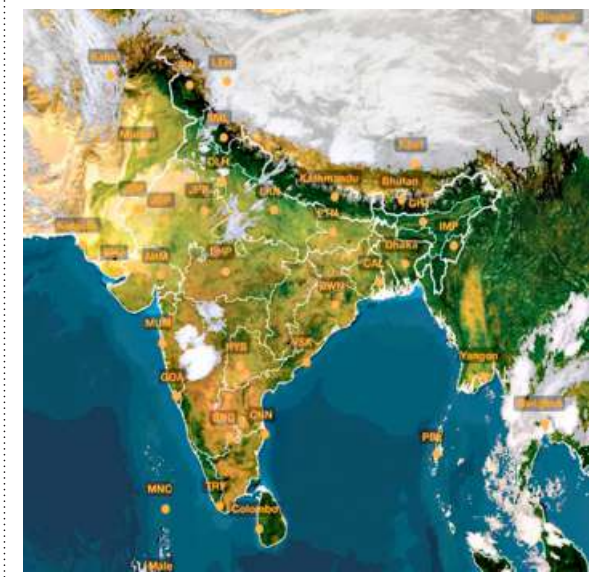
Ramesh Mishra, one of the doctors treating the students, said they had developed serious symptoms of food poisoning like vomiting and loose motion. Their condition has improved after treatment and they may be discharged on Monday night, the doctor added.

The district administration has initiated action against the school headmaster, Umakant Choudhury, and an assistant teacher, Anita Nayak. Both of them have been suspended and an inquiry has been ordered to ascertain the reason behind the food poisoning, said Gajapati District Welfare Officer Santosh Rath. Ms. Nayak was the superintendent of the school hostel.

According to Mr. Rath, samples of the food consumed as dinner by the students on March 23 night have been sent for forensic test. Autopsy report of the deceased girl is awaited. On the fateful day, the students had consumed eggs during lunch and vegetarian fare at night, added Mr. Rath.

WEATHER WATCH

RAINFALL, TEMPERATURE & AIR QUALITY IN SELECT METROS YESTERDAY



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Thunderstorm accompanied with squall/lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Odisha, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Heat wave conditions likely to prevail at isolated pockets over coastal areas of Saurashtra and south Gujarat

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala.....	34.4	17.7	Kozhikode.....	36.0	26.1		
Ahmedabad.....	37.9	21.5	Kurnool.....	40.5	27.0		
Aizawl.....	29.6	16.8	Lucknow.....	34.9	18.8		
Allahabad.....	39.4	17.5	Madurai.....	38.9	25.2		
Bengaluru.....	35.4	22.8	Mangaluru.....	35.8	25.7		
Bhopal.....	38.0	19.0	Mumbai.....	40.3	22.0		
Bhubaneswar.....	38.4	24.8	Mysuru.....	36.4	20.0		
Chandigarh.....	22.0	14.2	New Delhi.....	30.4	17.6		
Chennai.....	33.5	25.9	Patna.....	35.5	19.6		
Coimbatore.....	33.7	23.7	Port Blair.....	31.5	24.0		
Dehradun.....	23.1	16.0	Puducherry.....	34.0	24.9		
Gangtok.....	0.2	16.2	Pune.....	40.2	18.0		
Goa.....	32.4	24.0	Rajpur.....	37.1	21.7		
Guwahati.....	33.8	17.2	Ranchi.....	33.1	17.2		
Hubballi.....	36.0	24.0	Shillong.....	24.0	10.5		
Hyderabad.....	37.7	24.7	Shimla.....	13.0	10.1		
Imphal.....	30.1	11.4	Srinagar.....	19.8	4.4		
Jaipur.....	34.0	20.9	Trivandrum.....	35.4	25.0		
Kochi.....	33.8	26.2	Tiruchirappalli.....	38.5	26.0		
Kohima.....	27.3	12.5	Vijayawada.....	37.2	25.0		
Kolkata.....	35.5	21.5	Visakhapatnam.....	33.6	26.0		

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO ₂	NO ₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE	Yesterday
Ahmedabad.....	62	106	35	131	101	4	In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Talcher, Odisha recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 343 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 43
Bengaluru.....	16	40	43	66	101	4	
Chennai.....	13	36	32	128	101	4	
Delhi.....	18	50	12	149	265	5	
Hyderabad.....	3	81	35	120	117	4	
Kolkata.....	26	159	23	264	193	5	
Lucknow.....	14	117	55	247	101	4	
Mumbai.....	6	38	74	98	169	4	
Pune.....	39	23	48	173	155	4	
Visakhapatnam.....	—	—	—	34	—	—	

Air Quality Code: ■ Poor ■ Moderate ■ Good (Readings indicate average AQI)
SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease