

IN POLL OPENER, MODI INVOKES NATIONAL PRIDE

PM begins: Terrorists, Pak want me to lose, Opp to win

Says SP-RLD-BSP alliance in UP stands for Sarab (liquor) that harms people



ARUN SHARMA, LALMANI VERMA & AMIT SHARMA
JAMMU, MEERUT, MARCH 28

CLAIMING OPPOSITION parties are competing to "become heroes in Pakistan" where they are "getting great media coverage" and "applause". Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday said "terrorists and their supporters across the border are today praying they somehow get rid of the chowkidar and the mahamilawati (he calls the Opposition impure) come to power in Delhi".

Opening his party's poll campaign for the Lok Sabha elections with three rallies Thursday — in Meerut, Rudrapur and Jammu — Modi also trashed the alliance of Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Lok Dal and Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh, saying it stood for "sarab" (liquor) which was "harmful for the health" of the people: "SP-RLD-BSP... yeh sarab aapko barbaad kar degi."

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a rally in Meerut on Thursday, Gajendra Yadav

SP, BSP, Cong on 'Sarab' jibe: Shows mindset... doesn't suit PM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, LUCKNOW, MARCH 28

OPPOSITION PARTIES reacted angrily to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'sarab' (liquor) jibe at the SP-RLD-BSP alliance in UP. The Congress sought an apology from the Prime Minister, saying he had mocked the democratic system by insulting three political parties and asked whether a Prime Minister should use such language, and whether his remarks amounted to violation of the model code of conduct.

While BSP chief Mayawati said the Prime Minister's remark was reflective of his "casteist and distorted mindset", SP leader Akhilesh Yadav said the "teleprompter" had exposed that "those who promote intoxication of hatred" do not know the difference between 'sharab' and 'sarab'.

Mayawati said: "Undermining the dignity of the... CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Best evidence was withheld: Samjhauta judge slammed NIA

SOFI AHSAN
PANCHKULA, MARCH 28

COMING DOWN heavily on the NIA, the Panchkula special court judge, who last week acquitted all four accused in the Samjhauta Express blasts case, said he was doing it "with deep pain and anguish" because a "dastardly act of violence" was going unpunished.

In a 160-page order which was released Thursday — the verdict was delivered on March 20 — special NIA court judge Jagdeep Singh said the "best evidence" was "withheld" by the prosecution and was not brought on record. He said some of the cited independent witnesses were never examined or sought to be declared hostile for cross-examination when they chose not to support the prosecution case.

Naba Kumar Sarkar alias Swami Aseemanand, Kamal



All accused were acquitted by Panchkula court

Chauhan, Rajinder Chaudhary and Lokesh Sharma were acquitted by the court on March 20. Sixty-eight people including 43 Pakistan citizens, 10 Indian citizens and 15 unidentified people were killed in the blasts which took place on the Attari-bound Samjhauta Express on February 18-19 night in 2007. Two explosions took place in two unreserved coaches between Divana and Panipat in Haryana. Two

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2.16% HIKE Rural distress and demand up, NREG gets lowest wage hike for 2019-20

SHALINI NAIR
NEW DELHI, MARCH 28

FOR THE year 2019-20, the Ministry of Rural Development notified statewide wages for unskilled manual workers under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act which translate to a 2.16 per cent average annual hike — the lowest ever.

So with effect from April 1, rural NREG labourers in six states and Union territories will see no annual increase in their daily wages this financial year while workers in another 15 states will get a daily wage hike of between Re 1 and Rs 5.

Daily wages will remain unchanged in states such as Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal while it will increase by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Record foreign inflows push Sensex up 7.5 per cent in March

GEORGE MATHEW
MUMBAI, MARCH 28

INDIA'S STOCK markets rallied nearly 7 per cent in March, sending the benchmark Sensex to a new peak as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) brought in Rs 34,053 crore, the largest monthly inflow in the stock market's history.

The previous high was Rs 30,906 crore in March 2017 — the Sensex has gained 2,678 points during the month despite

Global slowdown helps rush into India

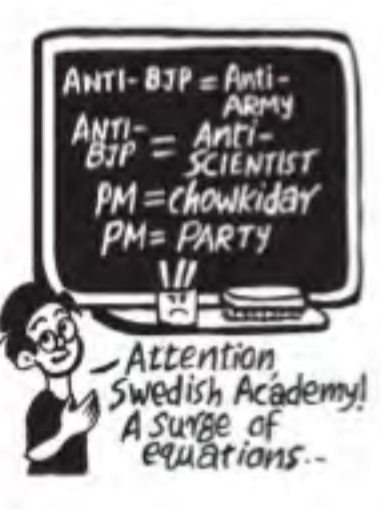
THE IMPENDING slowdown in US may lead to cut in rates. So foreign investors are betting on high-growth India. Their hope of political stability trumps fears of uncertainty, at least for now. How long will the flow last? FPI money is hot money, it can exit quick if circumstances change.

uncertainties surrounding the general elections. On Thursday, continuing the rally, the Sensex soared 413 points, or 1.08 per cent, to close

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



Attention Swedish Academy! A surge of equations...

Pak denies again: No terror camps at 22 sites India flagged, no Pulwama link of those held

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, MARCH 28

A MONTH after India handed a dossier on the Jaish-e-Mohammad's involvement in the February 14 Pulwama attack, Pakistan has said that it examined the 22 "pin locations" shared by India, but found no terror camps there. Pakistan also said that it could not establish any links between the 54 people detained by its investigative agencies and the Pulwama attack.

The Pakistan Foreign Ministry said it was willing to allow visits to these 22 "pin locations", where India had said terrorist camps existed.

This is the first time that Pakistan has officially conveyed the outcome of its investigations into the dossier, which was also shared by India with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) members. Key excerpts of the dossier were shared with all UN members, as India launched a diplomatic offensive to list JeM chief Masood Azhar as a global

terrorist under the UNSC Resolution 1267 Sanctions Committee.

Pakistan on Wednesday handed over its "preliminary findings" and sought more "information or evidence" from Delhi to take the process forward.

The Ministry of External Affairs' official spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said "India is disappointed at Pakistan's response to our detailed dossier" on the JeM's complicity in the Pulwama attack, the presence of its terror

EXPRESS NETWORK



US MOVES TO BLACKLIST MASOOD AZHAR PAGE 9

Nothing to do with BJP, Modi biopic producers reply to EC

KRISHN KAUSHIK
NEW DELHI, MARCH 28

RESPONDING to the Election Commission's notice Thursday, the producers of PM Narendra Modi, a biopic of the Prime Minister, have denied any link with the BJP and said they had "put in their personal money for the making" of the film.

"The allegations made linking our client's movie with a political party merely on a few public events, Facebook posts and tweets are not only false but have no basis in either fact and/or law," said Hitesh Jain, lawyer for the producers — Anand K Pandit, Sandeep Singh, Manish Acharya and Suresh Oberoi.

Incidentally, Jain, a partner at Parinam Law Associates, is also a shareholder and director of BlueKraft Digital Foundation — the "technology and knowledge partner" for Exam Warriors, authored by Modi and released last year.

According to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs' records, Jain owned 50 per cent of the shares in BlueKraft as on March 31, 2018.

On March 2 this year, BlueKraft released another book, Mann Ki Baat - A Social Revolution on Radio, 50 Episodes Special Edition, a compilation of Modi's Mann Ki Baat radio programme. This was BlueKraft's second book on Mann Ki Baat, the first was released in 2017 at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Last year, BlueKraft also released a series of videos, titled Yoga with Modi.

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