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In Focus

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee takes a photo of the crowd at a rally in Murshidabad on Monday. Express

Amid El Nino scare, Met Dept forecasts a near normal monsoon

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, PUNE, APRIL 15

AMID FEARS of a subdued monsoon this year due to a developing El Nino condition over the Pacific Ocean, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Monday said that rainfall as a whole during the fourmonth monsoon season would be 'near-normal'.

In the first long-range forecast for this season, the IMD said rainfall was likely to be 96% of the long period average, or LPA. The LPA, defined as the average of monsoon rainfall over a 50year period between 1951 and

2000, for the country is 89 cm. The IMD also said the possibility of rainfall being excessive or 'above normal' was very low. The forecast of 96% is at the lower end of the band in which

rainfall is classified as 'normal'. "The good news is that 2019

will have a near normal south west monsoon seasonal rainfall between June-September of 96% of the long term average, with a model error of plus or minus 5%," M Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, said at a press conference.

93

Source: IMD, Pune

78

2009

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

72-HR BAN FOR YOGI, AZAM; 48 HRS FOR MAYA, MANEKA

After SC prod, EC cracks whip on Yogi, Maya, Khan, Maneka

CJI bench to poll panel: What are you doing about it?... answer, or we will get CEC



ON THE day it was asked searching questions by the Supreme Court on the action taken against leaders for provocative speeches during the poll campaign, the **Election Commission Monday** invoked its extraordinary powers to temporarily ban four political leaders — UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BSP chief Mayawati, Union Minister Maneka Gandhi and SP leader Azam Khan — from campaigning.

While Adityanath and Khan were barred for three days (72 hours) starting Tuesday morning, Gandhi and Mayawati cannot campaign for two days (48 hours). The punitive action was

taken against the BSP chief for appealing directly to Muslim voters in Saharanpur and Bareilly districts during a joint rally of the BSP-SP alliance on April 7. Adityanath was punished for his "Ali and Bajrangbali" remark at a Meerut rally on April 9 and the "green virus" comment which was a reference to Muslims. Maneka Gandhi was barred

for saying, at a meeting in Sultanpur on April 11, that she will not be inclined to help Muslims if they do not vote for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



"Agar Congress ko Ali par, Sapa-Baspa ko Ali par vishwas hai, hame bhi Bajrangbali par vishwas hai"

YOGI ADITYANATH UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER



"Mein 17 din mei pehchan gaya ki inke neeche ka jo underwear hai woh khaki rang ka hai"

AZAM KHAN SPLEADER

samaj... vote baantna nahin... ek tarfah vote BSP, SP, RLD ke umeedwaron

MAYAWATI BSP CHIEF



bina hogi... phir Musalman aata hai kaam ke liye ... mein sochti hoon rehne do"

MANEKA GANDHI UNION MINISTER

EC wants Vellore polls cancelled: Money used to influence voters

ABANTIKA GHOSH, ARUN JANARDHANAN & **RITIKA CHOPRA**

NEW DELHI, CHENNAI, APRIL 15

IN WAKE of cash seizures from DMK leaders over the last two weeks, the Election Commission (EC) Monday recommended to President Ram Nath Kovind that elections in the Vellore parliamentary constituency be cancelled. It cited the suspected use of money power to influence

voters. Vellore is scheduled to go to polls with the rest of Tamil Nadu

on April 18. It is unclear whether the two Assembly seats, Ambur and Gudiyattam, under the Vellore LS seat, facing bypolls will also be countermanded or go as planned on Thursday.

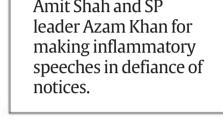
Rashtrapati Bhavan received the EC's proposal Monday night. The recommendation, The Indian Express has learnt, will be shared with the Law Ministry for its views on Tuesday. However, cancellation is imminent since the President, in this case, has little choice but to accept the EC's proposal.

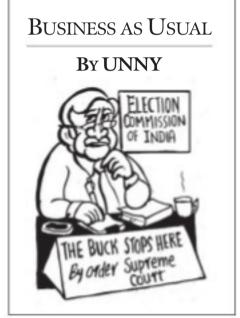
Once notified by the PAGE 6.7.8 CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



In 2014, Shah, Azam faced ban

THIS IS only the second time the EC has imposed a temporary ban on a political leader's poll campaign. In 2014, it barred now BJP chief Amit Shah and SP leader Azam Khan for making inflammatory speeches in defiance of







FULL COVERAGE

RAFALE: LEKHI'S CONTEMPT PLEA

Misquoting the apex court: SC asks Rahul to explain, BJP says he lies

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI. APRIL 15

THE SUPREME Court Monday sought an "explanation" within a week from Congress president Rahul Gandhi following a plea seeking initiation of contempt proceedings against him for allegedly attributing to the top court certain remarks in its Rafale matter order.

It was hearing a plea by BJP leader Meenakshi Lekhi who contended that Gandhi, while referring to the court's April 10 order rejecting the Centre's objections to the admissibility of certain documents submitted by review petitioners, had attrib-



uted his own statements about

'chowkidar chor hai' to the court ruling. After the bench of Chief

Iustice of India Ranjan Gogoi and Justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjeev Khanna clarified that it had not made any such observation, Union Minister and BJF leader Ravi Shankar Prasad asked the Election Commission to take "serious cognisance" of **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

By BJP chiefs in Himachal Pradesh and Kerala, two speeches: 'abuse & hate'

KAVITA UPADHYAY & SHAJU PHILIP SHIMLA,

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APRIL 15



Delivered on Sunday by BJP chiefs of Himachal Pradesh and Kerala, these speeches triggered complaints to the Election Commission. While Himachal BJP chief Satpal Singh Satti



Satti (left) and Pillai

referred to a purported Facebook post to use the word "ma.....d" in the context of Rahul Gandhi, his Kerala counterpart made a derogatory reference to Muslims.

Addressing a meeting of BJP workers at Ramshehar in Solan district which falls under the Shimla (SC) Lok Sabha constituency, Satti said Sunday: **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

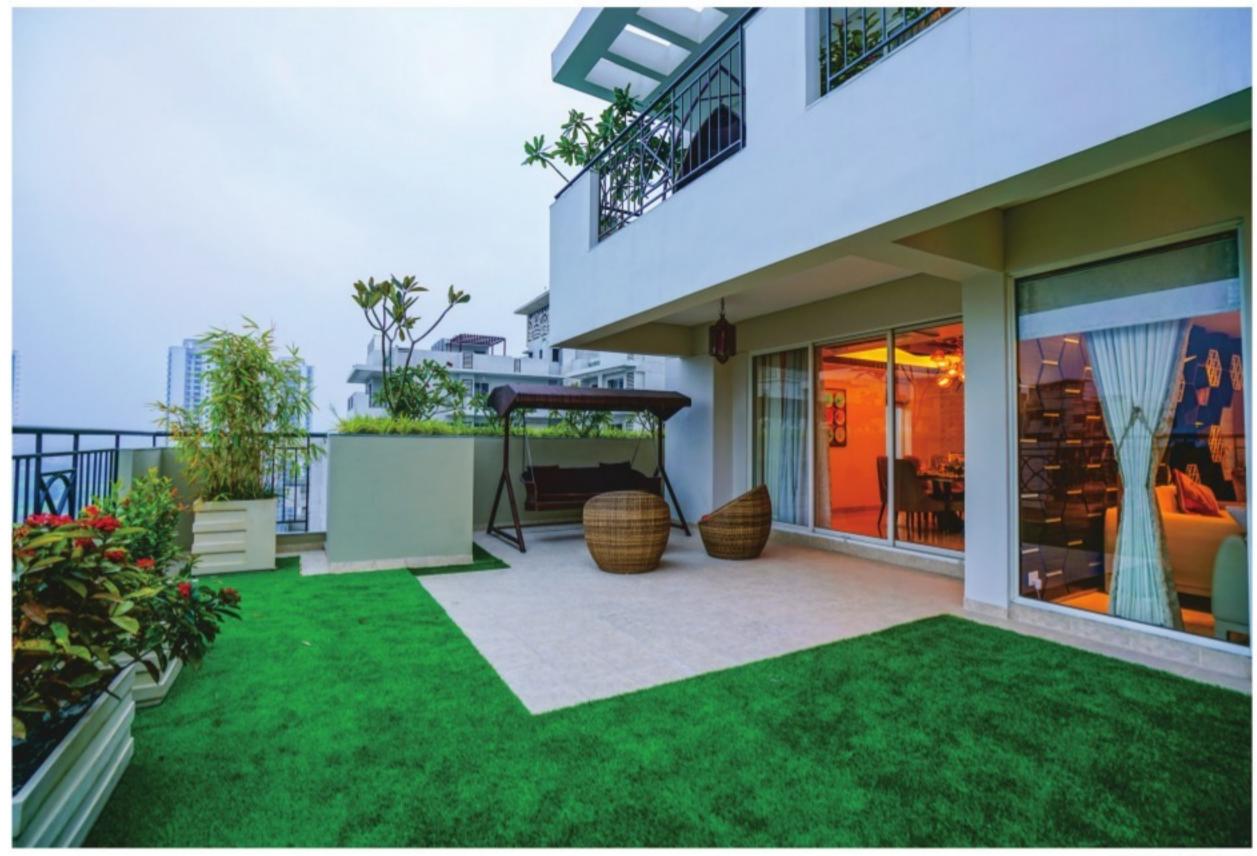




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