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Rain plays spoilsport, RCB and RR get one point each

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NEARBY



Kejiwal to finally begin roadshows today

NEW DELHI

With only 12 days left for the election, AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who has been missing in the election campaign in Delhi for the past few weeks, will take out roadshows starting Wednesday. AAP Delhi convener Gopal Rai said Mr. Kejriwal will not take out any rallies as the party's internal review has shown that roadshows have more impact.

DELHI METRO ► PAGE 1

Mayawati warns Cong. of pulling the plug in M.P.

NEW DELHI

Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati on Tuesday accused the Congress dispensation in Madhya Pradesh of misusing the "government machinery" and declared that her party would reconsider its support to Chief Minister Kamal Nath's government in the State.

NEWS ► PAGE 10

'Submit proof on suppression of evidence'

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the CBI to show one shred of evidence from investigation records to prove that former Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar was involved in the disappearance or suppression of crucial evidence like call data records, to protect "the mighty" in connection with 2the Saradha Ponzi scam case.

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'Progress' in U.N. listing of Azhar, says China

Consultations are under way; decision likely today

SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
SUHASINI HAIDAR
WASHINGTON/NEW DELHI

Citing "some progress" on the issue of listing of the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar as a terrorist at the UN Security Council, China indicated on Tuesday that it was willing to change its decade-old stand opposing the move.

"The relevant consultations are going on within the committee and have achieved some progress," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang, adding that he believed the issue of Azhar's listing, which was put on hold by Beijing on March 13, "can be properly resolved".

Diplomatic sources confirmed to *The Hindu* that Azhar could be placed on the UNSC's 1267 Committee's list of sanctioned individuals and entities as early as Wednesday, once China formally intimated its decision to lift the hold, which it placed on a proposal initiated by the U.S., the U.K., and France after the Pulwama attack in February.

May 1 deadline

A UN diplomat in New York told *The Hindu* that a silence period (during which objections may be raised), which kicked off on April 23, would end at 9 a.m. (New York time) on May 1.

The UNSC 1267 panel last met to discuss the designation of Masood Azhar as a terrorist on April 23, when China and the U.S. disagreed on when the listing would go through, the diplomat said.

CHANGE IN STANCE

■ The U.S., the U.K. and France moved a proposal on February 27 to list **Masood Azhar** under the UNSC 1267 Sanctions Committee as a designated terrorist

■ China placed a hold on the listing on March 13, the fourth such veto in the past decade on proposals to ban Azhar at the UNSC

■ The U.S., the U.K. and France

stepped up pressure, threatening to take the proposal to the full UNSC, rather than the 1267 committee, to force a public vote after the last meeting on April 23



■ Visit by Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale to Beijing on April 22-23, where he shared details on Azhar's terror links including to the Pulwama attack, said to be crucial

On the listing issue, China is still working with the relevant parties and we are in contact with all relevant parties within the 1267 Committee and I believe with the joint efforts of all parties, this will be properly resolved

GENG SHUANG, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman

While China wanted to hold off on the decision until mid-May, the U.S. did not want to wait beyond April 23 to wrap up the process to list Azhar.

Asked specifically about a newspaper report that the listing would be done on May 1, Mr. Geng said, "China is still working with the relevant parties and we are in contact with all relevant parties within the 1267 Committee and I believe with the efforts of all parties, this will be properly resolved."

The Ministry of External Affairs did not comment on the report, as an official said the government would "wait for the decision" before making any statement.

The listing of Azhar, who's organisation JeM was listed in 2001, has been pending for more than a decade.

This is the fourth attempt by countries at the UNSC and India to bring Azhar un-

der UN sanctions. China had vetoed each of the previous proposals citing it had not received enough evidence against Azhar, who was released in 1999 during the IC-814 hijacking in exchange for hostages.

Diplomatic sources said China's turnaround came after Foreign Secretary Vijay Gokhale's visit to Beijing last week, where India shared details of all the evidence on Masood Azhar, including links to the February 14 Pulwama attack for which the JeM had claimed responsibility. American, British and French diplomats had been pursuing the case with China, even threatening to bring the listing proposal to the entire UNSC for a vote if China refused to relent.

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CHINA DEFENDS CRACKDOWN

IN XINJIANG ► PAGE 12

TRANSPARENCY ROAD

► EDITORIAL

Madras HC curbs L-G role in Puducherry

'Amounts to running a parallel govt.'

MOHAMED IMRANULLAH S.
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Tuesday ruled that the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) of Puducherry could not interfere with the day-to-day administration of the Union Territory when an elected government was in place. The court said incessant interference from the L-G would amount to running a "parallel government".

Authoring a 150-page judgement, Justice R. Mahadevan said: "The Central government as well as the

fied, Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah had "specifically in sensitive areas and States, *ex-facie* violated the provisions of the Representation of the People Act and the Election Rules and the process."

The petition said, "It is in the public domain that they have indulged in hate speeches, repeatedly used the armed forces for political propaganda, despite a clear prohibition on the same by the EC."

PM DID NOT VIOLATE CODE OF CONDUCT: EC ► PAGE 10

Apex court poser to poll panel on complaints against PM, Shah

Explain your silence, says Supreme Court Bench

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Election Commission (EC) to explain its silence on the Congress's complaints against the alleged hate speeches and misuse of the armed forces for political propaganda by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah.

A Bench, led by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi, gave the EC time till Thursday to file its response. However, it allowed the EC to

pass whatever "appropriate orders" on the pending complaints. The 146-page petition filed by Congress lawmaker Sushmita Dev said there was one set of rules for Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah and another for the other candidates.

The Congress said 40 representations on the violation of the model code of conduct had been moved in the EC, but no action was forthcoming. The delay was a deliberate action itself.

Since March 10, when the general election was noti-

Army claims climbers sight Yeti footprints

Claim was based on "physical proofs" of "on-the-spot narration, photos and videos"

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Indian Army has claimed that one of its mountaineering teams had sighted footprints of a *Yeti*, a mythical creature that is believed to reside in the Himalayas. The news was trending on social media, all day on Tuesday, with many Twitter users expressing scepticism over the Army's claim.

"For the first time, an Indian Army mountaineering expedition team has sighted mysterious footprints of mythical beast 'Yeti' measuring 32x15 inches close to Makalu base camp on April 09, 2019. This elusive snowman has only been sighted at Makalu-Barun national park in the



The footprints found near the Makalu Base Camp on April 9. • TWITTER/PTI

past," the Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADG PI) said in a Monday night tweet, which included a couple of images of footprints on ice.

The claim was based on "physical proofs" of "on-the-

spot narration, photos and videos," an Army official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. The tweet, the official said, was thought prudent to "excite scientific temper and rekindle interest" in the subject. The Army is expected to release some photos and videos in support of the claim, once its team gets data connectivity.

According to Nepali folklore, the *Yeti* is a giant ape-like creature that is believed to reside in the Himalayas, Central Asia and Siberia.

"We got the inputs about 10 days back and yet we held on to it," the official said. "But then we decided that there are photographic evidences, which match

with earlier theories." Elaborating further, the official said that once the team noticed the footprint, the measurements were taken with a vernier callipers.

"Once the team returns all evidence will be handed over to subject matter experts," the official added.

The Army's first expedition to attempt to scale the 8,485-metre Makalu comprises four officers, two junior commissioned officers (JCOs) and 11 other ranks (ORs) and was flagged off at the end of March. The team is expected to return some time in June. Makalu is 180 km east of Kathmandu and 98 km west of Kanchenjunga.

MHA raises issue of Rahul's citizenship

Action is based on a 2015 complaint filed by BJP MP Subramanian Swamy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has asked Congress president Rahul Gandhi to provide the "factual position" on his citizenship within two weeks, acting on a complaint by BJP MP Subramanian Swamy.

Dr. Swamy has alleged that Mr. Gandhi had declared his nationality as "British" in documents related to a United Kingdom-based company, of which he was a director.

Writing to Mr. Gandhi on Monday, the MHA said it had received a representation from Dr. Swamy that a company, Backops Limited, was registered in the U.K. in 2003 and Mr. Gandhi was a director and secretary in it. The complaint said the annual returns, filed on October 10, 2005, and October 31, 2006, showed Mr. Gandhi's nationality as British, the



SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY, BJP MP

MHA wrote.

"You are requested to intimate the factual position to this Ministry within a fortnight of receipt of this communication," the letter reads.

According to an MHA official, the complaint dates back to 2015. Asked by reporters about the timing of the notice, Home Minister Rajnath Singh said Ministries were expected to act when an MP wrote to them, and

this was a part of the "process".

Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said the question had been settled by the Supreme Court, which dismissed a petition.

The Congress added that the Narendra Modi government had been silent on allegations about Mr. Gandhi's citizenship for the past four years because it knew the truth.

"Prime Minister Narendra

Supreme Court insists on apology from Rahul

Affidavit makes no sense, says Bench

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday made it clear that Congress president Rahul Gandhi had to either offer a clear-cut apology or brave criminal contempt for attributing to the court the phrase '*Chowkidar chor hai*', targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Any person can make a mistake, but having made it, you should go ahead and admit it," Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul on the Bench told se-

nior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who represented Mr. Gandhi. "And what is this "regret" written inside brackets," Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi asked Mr. Singhvi. Mr. Singhvi said his client would apologise for the attribution.

The Bench said it could make no sense of what Mr. Gandhi wanted to convey in his affidavit, which expressed "regret" without apologising.

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Second EC ban for SP's Azam Khan

For provocative speeches against district poll machinery

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Tuesday imposed a second ban on Samajwadi Party candidate Azam Khan from campaigning for 48 hours for giving provocative speeches against district election machinery and also making appeals on religious lines.

The poll panel said the impugned utterances had the propensity to polarise the elections, "which is not confined to the constituency only where the statement was made, but to the other parts as well, due to fast dis-

semination of information in this digital age".

The restriction, which starts at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, also applies on giving any statement to the media.

Religion-based appeals

According to the poll panel, Mr. Khan had appealed to secure vote on religious lines that amounted to the violation of the model code of conduct. The speeches were made in Uttar Pradesh's Rampur from where he fought the Lok Sabha election.

The Election Commission had earlier restrained Mr.

She said she suffered from impaired hearing and was left nervous and scared. Due to her hearing defect, she could not even follow what was dictated by Justice Bobde to the court official as a record of her statements.

She said the panel declined her request to record the proceedings. She was not supplied with copies of her statements made at the hearings of April 26 and 29.

NO INFORMATION ABOUT PROCEDURE ► PAGE 10

Priyanka breaks silence on candidature

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
AMETHI

Breaking her silence over reasons for not contesting the Lok Sabha election from Varanasi against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress general secretary for Uttar Pradesh East Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday said she had the "responsibility of looking after 41 seats and could not focus on just one".

"I didn't pull out. I took the advice of all senior leaders of our party and my colleagues in Uttar Pradesh and they firmly felt that I have a responsibility of looking after 41 seats," she told newsmen in Amethi from where her brother and Congress president Rahul Gandhi is seeking re-election.