

‘Ensure only certified ads are played in media’

ARANYA SHANKAR
NEW DELHI, MAY 3

DELHI CEO Ranbir Singh Thursday directed government officials and media outlets to ensure only content certified by Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) is played on various media.

The direction was issued during a meeting of officers of Information & Broadcasting Ministry, All India Radio, Cellular Operators Association of India and representatives of various FM radio channels.

While Singh did not respond to calls and texts by *The Indian Express*, an official said that the meeting was called to “sensitise” these mediums about the content being broadcast.

“In the meeting, the officials were basically told that any kind of political advertisements — be it ads on radio, TV or bulk SMSes that are sent — need to be pre-certified by the MCMC,” the official said. “We even shared a sample copy of certification with them so they know how it looks like,” he said.

The meeting comes after various cases of content being played, allegedly without pre-certification, came to the fore.

The Delhi CEO’s office had earlier written to the Election Commission, which had pointed out that content being played on NaMo TV was not certified by the MCMC. Similarly, a video by the BJP depicting Army in operation also faced the axe of the Delhi CEO who issued a notice to the party, saying they were sharing the clip on social media without removing the edited portion.

East Delhi Returning Officer K Mahesh has also issued show-cause notices to makers of the film *PM Narendra Modi*, cricketer turned BJP East Delhi candidate Gautam Gambhir, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and DMRC with regard to MCMC certification.

The Election Commission had made it mandatory for political parties and candidates to take MCMC certification for political advertisements on social and electronic media platforms.

ANIL BAJPAI SAYS INSULTED BY CM

Joining BJP, AAP legislator blames Kejriwal, ‘politics of appeasement’



Anil Bajpai said he will campaign for BJP’s East Delhi candidate Gautam Gambhir. Anil Sharma

AAP says Gandhi Nagar MLA cheated trader community

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 3

TWO DAYS after Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia alleged BJP was attempting to lure seven AAP MLAs by offering them Rs 10 crore each, party MLA Anil Bajpai joined the BJP Friday.

Bajpai, who represents Gandhi Nagar constituency, accused Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of “misbehaviour” and listed AAP’s “politics of appeasement” as the reasons for him quitting the party. The latter is in line with BJP’s claim that the Kejriwal government enhanced allowance for Imams ahead of the Lok Sabha polls to garner Muslim votes.

Responding to the development, AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj said it was part of an “old strategy of the BJP to lure voters ahead of elections”.

“This week BJP miserably failed to gather crowds in the rallies of Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh in Delhi. This has pushed BJP to desperation. We exposed BJP in 2014 through a video

sting operation in which their Delhi vice-president was offering Rs 5 crore to our Sangam Vihar MLA to switch sides to BJP,” Bharadwaj claimed.

Hours before joining the BJP in the presence of Union Minister Vijay Goel and Delhi BJP in-charge Shyam Jaju at the party’s Delhi headquarters, Bajpai alleged that “apart from Kejriwal, even the AAP’s East Delhi Lok Sabha candidate used terms such as *bewkoof* against him”.

“Who has not been insulted by the CM? He calls people *tuchha*, *bewkoof*. Why will I be in a party which has no respect for its MLAs? The Lok Sabha in-charge calls MLAs fools. The party indulges in politics of appeasement,” Bajpai told *The Indian Express*.

The 62-year-old said the “BJP has an ideology and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has some vision”. He claimed he had also opposed AAP’s overtures to the Congress for an alliance. Bajpai said he will now campaign for BJP’s East Delhi candidate Gautam Gambhir.

Asked about Sisodia’s allega-

tion that seven AAP MLAs have been offered Rs 10 crore each by the BJP to switch, Bajpai said: “They keep levelling allegations only to apologise later. Who will give me Rs 10 crore? You can carry out a survey in Gandhi Nagar. I still stay in a rented place and I will quit politics if the allegations are proven true.”

Reacting to his former colleague’s remarks on alliance, Bharadwaj pointed out that Bajpai had served Congress for 15 years before joining AAP. “Traders in Gandhi Nagar have faced sealing and sustained losses in business due to BJP’s central government and MCDs. By joining the BJP, he has not only deceived AAP but also cheated the trader community in Gandhi Nagar,” the Greater Kailash MLA said.

Delhi Assembly officials said there will not be any by-election in the seat as under Section 151A of Representation of People Act 1951, by-election cannot be held if the term of the Assembly is less than one year. Assembly polls are due in Delhi in less than a year.

SOURAV ROY BARMAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 3

BJP’S NORTH West Delhi candidate responds to claims made by his political rivals.

How would you respond to AAP’s claims that you have converted to Islam and can’t contest from a reserved seat?

He (Arvind Kejriwal) is an expert in spreading fake news. Unfortunately, even media publishes such allegations without cross-checking. I have a passport, the world knows me. Had I converted to Islam, there would have been a series of procedures like *sunnat*. My passport name would have changed. There would have been *kohram*. If someone goes to the dargah of Nizamuddin Auliya wearing a skull cap, will he become Muslim? Kejriwal is insulting the entire Valmiki community by levelling such frivolous allegations. He is a habitual liar who has mastered the art of apologising later... he is sensing a defeat so he has instructed his partymen to spread confusion about me.

Do you feel the allegation has communal overtones?

Yes, and then they dub the BJP as communal. What have you got to do with someone’s religion? We should rather talk about the nature of a person, whether his character has blemishes or not. The AAP is desperate, its MLAs and MPs are deserting it.

There is also a video AAP is circulating.

In the video I am praising Sufi Pir Tahir ul Qadri. It was his birthday and he had requested me to send a video clip. How does praising him or saying I am impressed by him make me a Muslim? In that case, if a Muslim praises a Hindu saint, does that make him a Hindu?

Will you take legal action?

Yes, the papers are ready. But I am giving him (Kejriwal) time to apologise.



Hans is BJP’s North West Delhi candidate. Amit Mehra

The AAP has branded you as an outsider. Are you finding it difficult to shed the tag?

I have a house in Rohini and I keep performing in Delhi. Have I come from Italy? The Delhi CM originally hails from Haryana. Why doesn’t he stay in Haryana and contest polls there? In any case, I am a *dehati* and have established a great connection with villagers of North West Delhi.

Did BJP let you choose the seat?

I have been associated with BJP for two years now. It is a party where you have to work selflessly and one has to accept wherever the party deputed you.

What is the central theme of your campaign?

The campaign theme is my hero, (PM Narendra) Modi ji. I mainly speak about national security. We will survive only when the country survives. The way Masood Azhar has been designated a global terrorist, the way China was convinced, these are important achievements. Also, the way he responded to Pakistan and got Abhinandan back. There’s no one with guts like him.

Will celebrities campaign for you?

Party president Amit Shah will. Daler Mehendi, a relative, and singers Mika Singh and Sapna Choudhury too will campaign.

At this village, Modi gets traction, not MP

SAKSHI DAYAL
GURGAON, MAY 3

AT BISSAR Akbarpur village in Nuh’s Tauru tehsil, a group of men gathered at a tea shop Thursday afternoon to discuss the two jansabhas that took place earlier in the day — one addressed by Rao Inderjit Singh, the incumbent MP and BJP candidate from Gurgaon, and the other by Captain Ajay Singh Yadav, the Congress contender.

Hours earlier, Singh referred to national issues, aligning himself with the BJP’s emphasis of the need to “strengthen” the country, which he claimed “only Narendra Modi can do”. Yadav

contradicted this, asking “where the chowkidar was sleeping” when the Pulwama attack took place. While Singh urged people to “give your vote for the country” and not waste it on “personal problems” with MLAs, zila parishad or panchayat, Yadav spoke of unemployment, increasing expenses, and the tendency of the BJP to divide people “over caste and religion” — in the name of “Ram”, “Ganga”, and “gaumata”. He said the Congress was “the only party” that would “take everyone along”.

At the tea shop, the conversation among residents indicated that though Singh was facing immense anti-incumbency sentiment, his pitch found a res-



Bissar Akbarpur village is located in Nuh’s Tauru tehsil

onance. “We admire what Modi did with Pakistan and the Balakot strikes. It made the world more cautious when it

came to dealing with us. It is because of those strikes that even China had to back down over Masood Azhar. They did not want to risk angering Modi,” said Om Prakash, who retired from the Navy several years ago and is now engaged in farming.

Others reiterated this, crediting BJP and the PM for bolstering the country’s “self-respect”.

Yadav, in his speech at the jansabha, had alleged that “this is the first time” Singh was visiting the village. Asked about the allegation, residents confirmed it, and the conversation shifted to their disappointment with the MP.

“There are six roads that have been built in the village since he

came to power, but those were initiated by our local MLA. The MP has never visited. The last time he came was also during elections,” said Rajbir, a labourer. “Water and electricity is fine, but there is a massive drainage problem. The village practically drowns during monsoon. A building for a dispensary was built but nobody was appointed to run it.”

Residents say that the closest hospital is “around 5 km away”, but reaching there is a problem in the absence of a bus service.

Atar Singh, a bus driver, said, “We also need a hospital for animals. When cattle fall sick, we have to call a doctor from outside.”

NOTICE BOARD

CORPORATE ASSOCIATE DIARY

APPOINTMENTS, MOVEMENTS, CELEBRATIONS, HONOURS



ANNOUNCEMENT-IOCL, HALDIA REFINERY

Commissioning activities are in full swing for Rs 4190 crore DYIP Project at Haldia Refinery. The DYIP project consists mainly of DCU (1.7 MMTPA), Coker LPG-Merox (70 TMTPA), CGO-T (1.4 MMTPA) and associated facilities.



MOU-NHPC

An MoU has been signed between NHPC and the Indian Army for ‘Construction of underground caverns & semi-underground bunkers’ at various locations in India on turnkey basis on April 25, 2019 at NHPC Corporate Office, Faridabad.



ANNOUNCEMENT-RVNL

The 29.27 Km long Ultra-rapid-Shrirajnagar second line was commissioned on April 24, 2019. RVNL, a Miniratna (category 1) CPSE under the Ministry of Railways, undertook this doubling work successfully.



MoU-BHEL

BHEL & ARAI have signed an MoU for cooperation on various projects related to e-mobility. In the presence of Dr. A.R. Si-hag, Secy, DHI, the MoU was signed by Rashmi Urdhwarshes, Dir, ARAI and Renuka Gera, GM-I/c (ESSG), BHEL.



PROGRAMME-SCOPE

R Kumar, Chairman, SCOPE & CMD, NLC India Ltd addressed valedictory session in Advanced Management Prog with theme “The Power of Thinking Big: A Prog for High Potential Leaders” organized jointly by SCOPE & SPJIMR.



CSR ACTIVITY-PNB

A CSR activity was organised at Palna on Apr 26, wherein Baby food & Infant accessories for the children of ‘Palna’ NGO was provided in a simple function organised by PNB Prerna.



CONFERENCE-NHPC

Balraj Joshi, CMD, NHPC addressed the Technical session of the Inter-Ministerial Conference on ‘Future Strategies for NIRM’ at New Delhi on Apr 26, 2019. Joshi gave a special presentation titled ‘Rock Mechanics in Hydroelectric Projects’.



FAIR-EPCH

EPCH had set up India Pavilion at Hong Kong Gifts & Premium Fair, in which 38 Indian handicrafts showcased their innovative and exquisite gifts and premium products. The show was held from 27-30 April, 2019 in Hong Kong.



ANNUAL QUALITY CIRCLE SUMMIT-BHEL

29th Annual Quality Circle Summit was held at BHEL Haridwar. The one-day summit was inaugurated by Kamlesh Das, Dir (E,R&D) BHEL, followed by a grand opening ceremony.



ACHIEVEMENT-RailTel

It was a proud moment for RailTel when all 30 students of its CSR initiative Akansha Super 30, Dehradun made it to JEE Mains which brings them one step closer to securing admission to premiere league engineering colleges of India.



IDEA MELA 2019-HALDIA REFINERY

Haldia Refinery organized “Idea Mela 2019” to invite bright minds to share their ideas to improve reliability, simplifying the processes, increased energy efficiency, productivity and profitability of the Corporation.

SAIL In line with the guidelines issued by the DPE, GoI & with the approval of the Ministry of Steel, SAIL has introduced its Pension Scheme. As per the approved SAIL Pension Scheme, all executive employees who were on rolls of the company on or after 1st Jan, 2007 as well as non-executive employees on rolls of the company on or after 1st Jan, 2012, shall be covered in this scheme.

Indian Oil Corporation’s (Indian Oil) Research & Development Centre at Faridabad crossed a major milestone this week by filing its 1,001st patent, the first among Indian oil & gas PSUs to do so. The R&D Centre’s IP (Intellectual Property) portfolio comprises 794 active patents, of which 542 patents were granted abroad and 252 in India.



INITIATIVE-PRSI

Public Relations Society of India, Delhi Chapter, supported a noble initiative to support underprivileged students of Uttarakhand organized by Hans Foundation and Samaarambh Foundation.

MALBEC WORLD DAY
Embassy of Argentina hosted 9th edition of Malbec World Day on Apr 24, 2019 in New Delhi. On Apr 17, 1853, the 1st programme to promote the national wine industry was launched in Argentina. The occasion was graced by a special list of guests, who got better acquainted with the Argentine culture & spirit, in which wine plays a leading role.

APPOINTMENT

NHB The Government of India in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commission has appointed Satish K Nagpal as Chief Vigilance Officer of National Housing Bank with effect from April 18, 2019. Nagpal is a Chief General Manager of State Bank of India. He is a science graduate from the University of Delhi and had joined SBI as Probationary Officer in 1983. He has extensive experience in almost all areas of Banking with specialization in Credit and International Banking. He has worked in SBI offices in various geographies across the country.

RVNL The doubling & electrification of Guntur-Tenali railway line was commissioned on April 25 with the running of the prestigious long distance Andaman Express, connecting MGR Chennai Central with Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra station. RVNL undertook this project of doubling and electrification within targeted time successfully.

6 DECISION 2019



PDP has fielded Mehbooba Mufti in Anantnag and state party chief Ghulam Ahmed Mir is the Congress candidate

J&K parties express concern over low turnout in Anantnag seat

NAVEED IQBAL
SRINAGAR, MAY 3

AHEAD OF the last leg of polling for the Anantnag Parliamentary seat in Jammu and Kashmir, political parties have expressed concerns over the low voter turnout in the last two phases of polling for the constituency. The low turnout is especially impairing the position of the PDP, the party whose leaders have largely represented the area in Parliament as well as the state Assembly.

The Anantnag constituency, which has been at the heart of a renewed phase of militancy in the state, is voting in three phases. Anantnag and Kulgam districts (that form part of this seat) voted on April 23 and April 29, respectively, while Shopian and Pulwama districts of the constituency will go to poll on May 6.

This year, areas that traditionally voted for the PDP and recorded a moderate turnout have seen a significant dip in polling percentages this election. The Anantnag Assembly segment, formerly represented in the state Assembly by PDP founder Mufti Mohammad Sayeed as well as current party chief Mehbooba Mufti, recorded polling percentage of 41 per cent in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections and just over 40 per cent in the 2009 general elections, but this figure has plummeted to 3.47 per cent in this election so far.

Other areas that voted in favour of the PDP in previous Parliamentary elections — Bijbehara, Pahalgam, and Devsar — have also shown similar trends.

Parties attribute the steep fall in polling percentage to the security scenario on the ground, and the clubbing of polling booths. While the PDP admits that the next phase remains critical, and the low turnout hurts the PDP directly, it also states that the turnout is also a message against the electoral process. “Low voter turnout is because democracy is limited to the election process... A boycott represents less interest in elections. People are not voting for NC (National Conference) or PDP but preferring to keep away because of a loss of faith in process,” PDP youth president Waheed Para said.

Even as the PDP weighs its chances, the Congress has been chipping away at the former's vote share in South Kashmir and has fielded its state chief Ghulam Ahmad Mir, an Anantnag local, from the seat. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Mir said that apart from the deteriorating security scenario, the clubbing of polling booths has also discouraged voters from coming out. “All over the country, the Election Commission is making efforts to ensure every voters gets to cast their vote, but in Kashmir, some polling stations are 7-8 km apart.”

Mir added that with the atmosphere being tense, “people connected to political parties have barely managed to vote, while even their families have not”.

Meanwhile, NC spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar stated that while distances have discouraged people from stepping out to vote, “the security forces have not stopped its crack-down....The low turnout does not benefit anyone and is in fact a reflection of the Centre's imprudent policies in South Kashmir”.

Raje legacy son's hurdle, Cong choice fights right-wing image

DIPANKAR GHOSE
BARAN, MAY 3

IT IS noon on voting day, and Mohammad Faisal still doesn't have the mark of indelible ink on his finger. Across the road from the grocery shop he is sitting at is the government school that acts as one of the polling stations in Mangrol, 30 km from the town of Baran, part of Rajasthan's Jhalawar-Baran constituency, and there are no queues. “Here, you either vote early, or you vote late. In between it is too hot,” he said.

There is another reason for the delay, a new piece of information that is making him pause and think.

In his smartphone is a WhatsApp message he is showing to four others. The forwarded post claims that Pramod Sharma, Congress candidate from Jhalawar-Baran and a former BJP leader, was responsible for communal violence in Habeebpur in 2014. “Look at the photograph. Sharma is in an RSS uniform. I don't know if the message is true, but I know he is very right-wing. Dushyant ji, though, has never made communities fight. What do you think?”, he asked the audience. The response was the same.

“Before this message came, I was going to vote for the Congress. But this made me think. Dushyant ji has never made Hindus and Muslims fight. While giving this turncoat the ticket, the Congress didn't even look at his history as an RSS man. Now maybe I will vote for Dushyant because despite being from the BJP, he has never shown headline views. Even in the BJP there are good people, like Vajpayee was. Mangrol has a sizeable Muslim population, we are all thinking this today,” said Shoaib Khan, one of the four men.

The fight in Jhalawar Baran, bordering Kota in Rajasthan, is between Dushyant Singh, son



Gujanpura polling station in Rajasthan's Baran district

of former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje, and Sharma, who left the BJP some years ago. The seat is a BJP bastion, with Raje winning it from 1989 to 2003, and Dushyant winning from 2004 to 2019.

But the Congress is confident that this is their best chance. “In the state election, people voted against the BJP because of anger against her (Raje), and that will spill over to the Lok Sabha elections against her son. Yes, we have heard that some Muslims are not happy with our candidate, but this is just propaganda that he was involved in violence, it is false. A large majority will still vote against Modi, and if our candidate can cut into some Brahmin votes, then it will become a fight,” a district Congress leader said.

If the split in the Muslim votes because of the Congress's selection of candidate may help the BJP, one of the dangers for the BJP candidate is the perception that his family and Modi may not be pulling in the same direc-

tion. In Baran, Ram Singh Kandara, a local VHP and Bajrang Dal activist who is part of Gau Rakshak Dals and campaigns for the BJP, said, “This time campaigning has not been so strong. Modiji didn't want Vasundhara Raje to win, so she lost. Even her son is not for Modi. People here are angry with the family because Jhalawar, where they are from, has been developed, but not Baran. In any case, the family thought they owned Rajasthan. That anger may not have fully subsided.”

Across the constituency, especially in Baran, people speak of unemployment, water scarcity and one crop season. The BJP, which had a government at the Centre and also in the state till three months ago, is blamed for much of these. Despite that, there is a consensus that Dushyant Singh is in pole position, with many still voting in Modi's name.

Baran resident Suján Singh Rathore said, “But these local issues might swing the election too. If Dushyant wins by a huge margin, some of it will be because the Muslims believe he is more moderate than the Congress. If the Congress pulls off a win, it will be because of the perception that the BJP candidate himself may not be completely aligned with Modi, and anger against a Chief Minister who led the state for so long.”

SEAT WATCH HAJIPUR

Paswan record gives brother edge, RJD banks on ‘popular’ candidate

SANTOSH SINGH
HAJIPUR, MAY 3

IJP PRESIDENT Ram Vilas Paswan has won the Hajipur seat eight times since his first win in 1977 when he won by a record margin of 4,24,545 votes against Congress candidate Baleshwar Ram. A resident of Khagaria, Paswan's candidature was then announced by none other than the pioneer of the Sampoorna Kranti movement Jai Prakash Narayan.

In 1989, Paswan improved on his record by defeating Congress's Mahavir Paswan by 5,04,448 votes. For years now, Hajipur has been synonymous with two things — its bananas and Ram Vilas Paswan.

At Mahua on Thursday, Paswan emotionally spoke about his association with Hajipur and his decision to not contest Lok Sabha polls anymore. “I got my brother Pashupati Kumar Paras to contest from here because my supporters wanted someone from my family. My wife Reena Paswan was unwilling and my son Chirag is contesting from Jamui. We agreed on Paras, who is my Lakshman. If he wins, it will

SEAT WATCH HOSHANGABAD

Battling internal conflict, BJP, Cong shift focus to their national leaders

MILIND GHATWAI
HOSHANGABAD, MAY 3

IT'S STILL a year for Anuj Malviya to turn 18 but if he could vote, he would have voted for Rahul Gandhi, the youngster said. “The promise of Rs 72,000 per year (under Congress's promised NYAY scheme) sounds more credible than the one about transferring Rs 15 lakh in bank accounts at one go,” said the teenager, at the family's retail shop near the bus stand in this town in Madhya Pradesh.

His father Narendra, in his late-forties, however, said he will back Prime Minister Narendra Modi when the constituency goes to the polls on May 6, even though others in his family are staunch Congress supporters. “*Log BJP ko gaali de rahe hai par Narendra Modi unke dimag me bhara hua hai* (People are critical of the BJP but are rooting for Modi),” he said.

The father-son duo's reflections could well be the story in short for candidates of both parties in Hoshangabad — the focus more on national leaders of either party.

On Tuesday, Modi and Rahul addressed rallies almost simultaneously at Itarsi and Pipariya, both in Hoshangabad district. The venues — in the same constituency — and the timing was sheer coincidence, but in a way the voters were helped to make up their mind because few here speak of the candidates.

The BJP has retained Rao Uday Pratap Singh, who won by a margin of nearly 3.9 lakh votes in 2014. The Congress has fielded Shailendra Diwan, 39, whose father Chandrabhan Singh was a minister in the Digvijaya Singh government in the 1990s.

Aware of the differences within the ranks, leaders of both parties find it easier to seek votes in the name of their national leaders than talk about the candidates and risk driving local rivals into inaction. When they are through with the national leaders, they talk for and against the four-month old Kamal Nath government in the state.

A day after Modi's rally, the BJP held a meeting of its OBC Morcha in the presence of party's state president Bhagat Singh Kushwah at the BJP's Hoshangabad office. During the meeting,

2014 LS POLLS VOTE SHARE		
BJP's Uday Pratap Singh	64.8%	
Cong's Devendra Patel	27%	
2009 LS POLLS VOTE SHARE		
Cong's Uday Pratap Singh	47.7%	
BJP's Rampal Singh	45%	

lasting more than half-an-hour, neither Kushwah nor any local leader even mentioned the candidate's name. They focused on the PM's caste and his government's achievements. Local BJP leaders are carrying their mutual grievances from the Assembly polls to the General Election.

Factionalism in the Congress appears to be worse. The tussle over district president chief's post began a year ago, intensified before and after the Assembly polls, and it has left telltale signs on preparations for Lok Sabha elections, with cadres confused about whose orders to follow.

Chief Minister Kamal Nath, who is also the state Congress chief, had to recently intervene and tell local leaders to wait until the elections are over for him to sort out the differences.

Uday Pratap, the sitting BJP MP, had won from Hoshangabad in 2009 on a Congress ticket. He defected to BJP before the 2014 General Election and won with a handsome margin. Not every local BJP leader, however, has still reconciled to the defection. The election this time is, thus, being fought with leaders suspicious of others' intentions.

Of the eight Assembly segments in Hoshangabad seat, BJP had won all four in the district last year. The Congress won two of the three segments in Narsinghpur district and one in Raisen district.

“*Jamke sabotage chal raha hai dono side mein* (saboteurs working on both sides),” said Dushyant Chouhan, who owns Highway Glory dhaba, on the road between Hoshangabad and Itarsi. He said instructions have gone from certain leaders to their cadres to settle scores with rivals who harmed them during the Assembly polls.



KETTLE ON POLL BURNER

Independent candidate from Amritsar, Sham Lal, campaigns with a kettle, which is his election symbol, on Friday. Lal says he is a follower of Mahatma Gandhi's ideals and identifies himself as Sham Lal 'Gandhi'. Rana Simranjit Singh

JHARKHAND: THE PROMISES ON 6 KEY ISSUES

Oppn parties promise changes in land acquisition law, BJP silent

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, MAY 3

IN THE run up to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, *The Indian Express* analysed six key issues affecting Jharkhand, where STs and SCs form around 40 per cent of the population, and the importance given to them in the manifestos of political parties. The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), which are contesting on four and two seats, respectively, have announced a Jharkhand-specific manifesto, while the CPI-ML (Liberation), Congress and BJP have announced national-level manifestos with implications in the state.

Land acquisition

The BJP government in the state has introduced amendments to the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013. The amendment provides for exemption from social impact assessment for government infrastructure projects, including schools, hospitals and colleges. This has led to disaffection towards the government and massive protests.

The Congress promises that “distortions that have crept into the text and the implementation” of the Land Acquisition Act will be removed. The JMM promises to abolish the Land Acquisition (Jharkhand) Amendment Act, 2018 while the RJD “assured” that the party would work to abolish the amendments. CPI-ML (Liberation) promised scrapping “all state-level land acquisition laws” and enact an agricultural land protection act. The BJP does not mention anything about land acquisition in its manifesto.

Forest Rights Act

Enacted with a view that tribal and other traditional forest dwellers should get control over natural resources, it triggered widespread protests when the Supreme Court ordered to evict people whose claims to forest land were rejected. As per submissions in the Supreme Court, 1,07,187 claims were filed by STs and 3,569 claims by Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs) in Jharkhand. Of these, 27,809 claims filed by STs and 298 claims of OTFDs were rejected. The SC later stayed its order as it sought to know whether the evictions were

made on the basis of incomplete data or arbitrary grounds.

The BJP manifesto does not say anything about FRA. However, it says the party “continuously protected and promoted the interest of forest dwellers particularly the tribal communities” and provided basic amenities. Congress promises that distortions that crept in the implementation of FRA will be “removed” and the authority of the gram sabha will be “obeyed and upheld”. It also promised time-bound review of all rejected claims and disposal within six months. JMM promises to cancel all changes made to the Act, and to simplify the process for forest dwellers to get pattas. RJD promises to form a separate department to deal with the issue. CPI-ML (Liberation) wants to roll back “dilution in FRA”.

Aadhaar-based authentication

The Jharkhand government's decision to make Aadhaar linkage mandatory had reportedly led to denial of grain entitlements and pensions to many households. There were reports of “starvation deaths” after some could not get ration.

BJP says the “trinity of Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and mobile has weeded out over 8 crore fake beneficiaries, and prevented leakages of more than Rs 1 lakh crore” and that the party created a transparent mechanism for “directly delivering basic services to the bottom of the pyramid”. The Congress promises that it will ensure that the linking of Aadhaar is voluntary but it will be encouraged. It says that no one shall be excluded because of non-linking of Aadhaar and promises to “amend the Aadhaar Act, 2016” in order to “restrict the use of Aadhaar to subsidies, benefits and services provided by the government as was originally intended under the law”. Due to “inherent limitations of biometric identification”, Congress also promises an alternate instrument of identification under the law. CPI-ML (Liberation) promises to scrap Aadhaar Act and remove the requirement for Aadhaar for all welfare services. RJD and JMM say they will stop mandatory linking.

Sarna code

Tribals have for long demanded a separate Sama religious code in the Census so that they are not identified as Hindus. Tribals have led

several protests in the past over the issue. While there is no mention of it in the BJP manifesto, state leaders have promised to implement it in their election speeches. Congress has not mentioned it either but local Congress leaders have been promising to implement the code. The JMM and CPI-ML (Liberation) are silent on the issue. The RJD promises to “implement/recognise” the code.

Jobs, especially MGNREGA

Migration has been a pressing issue in Jharkhand as people look for jobs in other states. Areas such as Lohardaga and Gumla are hubs of human trafficking. NREGA Watch, which keeps track of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), in a study conducted earlier this year, concluded that eligible households only got 40 days of work on an average instead of the 100 provided for under the Act. In Jharkhand, daily wage was revised by Rs 3 to Rs 171 under MGNREGA last month. The study also found that payments were pending to many households.

The BJP's manifesto does not mention anything on MGNREGA. The CPI-ML (Liberation)

promises to expand MGNREGA to ensure a minimum 250 days of employment. Congress promises to launch MGNREGA 3.0 to address issues of water security, soil quality and issues “that aggravate farmers' distress”, and to increase the guaranteed days of employment to 150 wherever 100 days have been achieved. The JMM promises to increase employment to 150 days besides an unemployment allowance. The RJD manifesto also promises to increase employment to 150 days and fix the minimum wage at Rs 300.

Sedition and Pithalgadi

Many people were booked under IPC 124(A) during the Pithalgadi movement and some are still in jail.

Congress promises to scrap the sedition law, while the CPI-ML (Liberation) says it will also ensure the release of those arrested under this law. The RJD manifesto remains silent on the issue. While the BJP has not mentioned it in its manifesto, several leaders have mocked the proposed scrapping of the sedition law. JMM says they will try to curb police's powers to arrest people for non-heinous offences.

7 DECISION 2019



Cong first disregarded surgical strikes, now saying me too: PM

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, MAY 3

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi on Friday mocked the Congress over its statement that the UPA government had also conducted surgical strikes during its tenure.

Addressing a rally in Sikar, Modi said, “Yesterday, they came up with six dates and said that these are the dates when surgical strikes were conducted during their tenure.”

He said, “*Pehle upeksha, baad mein virodh, aur ab, humne bhi kiya thha, me too, me too...* (First disregard, then opposition, and now they are saying ‘we also did it, me too me too’)”

Modi said that Congress can conduct a strike on paper while sitting in an air-conditioned room. “*Jab kagaz par hi karni ho, jab video game mein hi strike karni ho, toh 3 ho ya 6 ho, 20 ho ya 25 ho, ye jhoote logon ko kya farak padta hai ji* (When you have to conduct it on paper or in video games, then be it three or six or 20 or 25, what difference does it make to these liars),” he said.

The last 12 seats of Rajasthan’s 25 seats vote on Monday.

Earlier in the day, at a rally in Hindaun, Modi said that the UN Security Council’s decision to list Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist was the third surgical strike against Pakistan.

“Two days ago, a big enemy of India and ringleader of terrorists, Masood Azhar, was declared a global terrorist by the world’s biggest organisation. Sitting in Pakistan, this *aaka* (chief) of terrorists was giving wounds to India for several years. Several brave mothers of Rajasthan lost their brave sons. Several brave sons of Rajasthan were martyred. *Lekin ab is aatanki ka Pakistan mein mauj karna mushkil ho gaya hai* (Now it has become difficult for this



PM Modi at an election rally in Bikaner, Rajasthan, on Friday. *PTI*

terrorist to enjoy in Pakistan,” he said.

The Prime Minister said that the BJP’s and the Congress’ way of dealing with terrorists cannot be compared, “We have proved that barring two-three districts of Jammu and Kashmir, terrorists can’t attack the Army and citizens as per their wish. *Agar aap goli chalaoge toh Modi gola chalaega* (If you fire a bullet then Modi will fire a bomb),” he said.

He said that rather than celebrating the decision on Masood Azhar, Congress “*apna hi mazaak udwane mein lag gayi hai* (is making a fool of itself).”

Attacking Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, recently seen in a video purportedly holding snakes, Modi said, “There was a time when the Congress’ dynast (referring to Jawaharlal Nehru) used to be happy while showing a ‘dance’ of snakes and mongooses... They are forgetting that India has moved beyond snakes... India is now a country of mouse charmers.”

PM’s remark an abuse to courage and bravery of soldiers, says Cong

New Delhi: Taking umbrage at Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s remark that the Congress is lying about surgical strikes under the UPA government, the party on Friday said the statement is an abuse to the bravery of soldiers and it has never used the strikes as election fodder.

In a statement, Congress claimed, “Tragically, Modi ji has even faulted the statement of the then Army chief, General Bikram Singh on the surgical strike dated December 23, 2013... This reflects political bankruptcy of a prime minister when faced with an imminent defeat in the 2019 elections. *PTI*

Rahul: Chowkidar chor hai slogan so popular that Modi avoiding word ‘chowkidar’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
JAIPUR, BHOPAL, MAY 3

CONGRESS PRESIDENT Rahul Gandhi on Friday said that the slogan “chowkidar chor hai” has become so popular that Prime Minister Narendra Modi now avoids using the term “chowkidar” in his speeches, as people may be prompted to respond with “chor hai.”

Rahul on Friday addressed rallies in Madhya Pradesh’s Rewa and Rajasthan’s Bharatpur.

In Bharatpur, he said that Modi no longer speaks on corruption, farmers’ issues or giving employment to the youth, like he did before the 2014 general election. He promised that under a Congress-led government at the Centre, no farmer will be sent to jail for non-repayment of loans, and a separate Budget will be made for farmers.

The Congress president added that within a year, a Congress government will fill up 22 lakh government posts, and 10 lakh youth will get jobs at panchayats level.

At Rewa, Rahul accused Modi of protecting the interests of a few individuals during his five-year tenure.

He alleged that the Prime Minister has become a watchman for a handful of industrialists.

The Congress leader claimed that the Election Commission had asked him to avoid uttering the slogan *chowkidar*, but it is not his fault that the slogan is popular with the people.

“Is it my fault?” he asked the crowd, and claimed that Modi hesitates while speaking in public and relies on teleprompters nowadays.

The Congress leader said, “You have heard Modi’s speech. He used to talk about (his) 56-inch chest. What is happening now? It is clearly written on the teleprompters. Modi-ji, don’t talk about (the 2014 election promises of) employment (generation) and giving

Rahul writes to Amethi residents: Will speed up projects ‘blocked’ by BJP

Lucknow: Congress President Rahul Gandhi made a written appeal to the people of his constituency referring to them as “*Parivaar*” (family) and Amethi as his “*Karmabhumi*” (seat of work).

Rahul, who is also contesting from Wayanad in Kerala, promised the people of Amethi that several development projects in his constituency, which he alleged that the BJP had stopped, would be restarted if the Congress was voted to power. Seeking blessings and love, he asked people of Amethi to give strength to him again as a member of their family.

Rahul began his latter by writing, “*Priya Amethi wasiyon* (Dear residents of Amethi),” adding that Amethi was his family, which gives him strength to stand with the truth and listen to the suffering of the poor and the weak and be able to raise their voice. He said Amethi gives him the strength to take a pledge for equal justice to all. *ENS*

Rs 15 lakh (to each Indian) even by mistake, else it can damage (the BJP’s prospects).”

Addressing a crowd in Bharatpur, Rahul said, “The entire country knows that let alone Rs 15 lakh, Narendra Modi has not deposited even Rs 5 in people’s bank accounts.”

On the NYAY scheme, the Congress’ promised minimum income guarantee programme, Rahul claimed that it will benefit 5 crore families, and 25 crore people.

“Modi-ji opened bank accounts but didn’t put a single rupee in them. Now, the Congress wants to put money in those very accounts he had opened.”

Yechury says wrong to claim Hindus can’t be violent, BJP seeks apology

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, MAY 3

CPI(M) GENERAL secretary Sitaram Yechury triggered a controversy on Thursday, saying that it would be wrong to say Hindus can’t be violent because there are ample examples in epics and history that Hindu rulers were not averse to violence.

At a symposium on “Parliamentary system-elections and democracy” in Bhopal on Thursday, the CPI(M) leader referred to BJP’s Bhopal candidate Pragya Singh Thakur’s assertion that “Hindus don’t believe in violence” and said the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are filled with instances of violence. “An attempt is made to portray followers of other religions as violent,” he said.

He alleged that the BJP tried to change the political narrative by fielding Pragya Singh after sensing defeat in the first three phases of polling. He said the BJP had been trying to polarise voters on communal lines for a long time.



CPI (M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury

Congress candidate from Bhopal and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Digvijaya Singh was also present at the event.

Yechury alleged that from the beginning, the RSS aimed at “*Hindukaran*” (saffronisation) of *sena* (military) and militarisation of Hindus and said its model was based on the one followed by Mussolini in Italy.

He said there was a spurt in terror incidents in the last five years, leading to deaths of security personnel and civilians. Referring to terror incidents in Kashmir and the recent Maoist attack in Gadchiroli, he said, “How can it be said that the country is in safe

PETITION BY 21 POLITICAL PARTIES

SC to hear Oppn plea on making EC match more VVPAT slips

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 3

THE SUPREME Court on Friday agreed to take up a petition seeking a review of its April 8 order in which it had directed the Election Commission of India (EC) to increase the number of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) subjected to random verification using their Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) from one to five per Assembly segment.

The court will hear it next week. The petitioners, leaders of 21 political parties, said they were “constrained” to seek a review of the order given by a bench of Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi and Justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjiv Khanna due to “certain subsequent developments that have taken place in the first phase of polling held after the passing of the order... coupled with a few vital facts and crucial ground.”

The petitioners said that percentage-wise, the April 8 order had raised the number of EVMs subject to random verification from 0.44 to a “mere 2 percent”. This, according to them, “will not make any substantial difference to the situation that existed prior to the passing of the impugned order”.

“Therefore, even though the petitioners have succeeded on the merits of their contention, their success does not resolve their grievance or cause any meaningful change to the situation that they were originally aggrieved over,” reads the petition, which was filed through Senior Advocate Abhishek Singhvi.

The petition said that while passing the order, the court agreed that if the number of

EXPLAINED

What prompted Oppn parties to seek review

IN THE first phase, the petitioners said, many EVMs and VVPATs across the country were found to be defective/faulty. It was reported that in some cases voters would vote for one party, and the EVM would record their vote having been cast for another party, the petition says.

Besides, law and order problems were reported in many areas. The petitioners say these developments make mandatory random check against VVPAT “even more crucial”.

These subsequent developments also “seriously called into question” the “credibility” of EVMs, the petitioners state.

machines which are subjected to verification of paper trail can be increased to a “reasonable number”, it would “lead to greater satisfaction amongst not only political parties but the entire electorate of the country but the court has only increased the said number to five”.



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Uttar Pradesh’s Rae Bareilly constituency on Friday. *PTI*

Priyanka: Stopped children from raising wrong slogans

MAULSHREE SETH
LUCKNOW, MAY 3

A DAY after the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) directed the Election Commission (EC) to act after a group of boys was purportedly heard making “derogatory remarks and using abusive language” in the presence of Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra while she was campaigning in Uttar Pradesh, the Congress leader on Friday clarified that the clip is edited and she had stopped the children from raising wrong slogans.

“*Main saitalis saal ki hun. Maine rajneeti bhi isliye nahi ki kyon ki main apne bachhon ki parwarish achi tarah se karna chahti thi. toh kaise main galat sanskar sikhaaongi?* (I am a 47-year-old. I never did politics actively so that I could take care of my children. I can never teach anything wrong to the children),” Priyanka told mediapersons in Rae Bareilly.

She further claimed that as soon as she heard the children say something wrong, she stopped them — which can be seen in the full video. Alleging that the video has been edited to suit needs, Priyanka told mediapersons,

“*Woh to jhoothon ke business mein hain. Hum to sachayi ke business mein hai* (They are into the business of lies. We deal in truth).”

Addressing a nukkad meeting in Rae Bareilly, Priyanka said, “*Sabse bara rashtravad kya hota hai... desh prem. Aur Pakistan se humein surakshit rakh rahe hain yeh bahut bari upalabdhi hai... Sab khush hain ki Pakistan se surakshit rakh rahe hain, lekin kisaan ke khet bhi to surakshit kariye...* (The biggest nationalism is love for the country. It is a big achievement that you are keeping us safe from Pakistan. Everyone is happy that you are keeping us safe from Pakistan but you should also secure the fields of farmers). Slamming Priyanka at a rally in Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accused the Congress leader of teaching children to abuse.

Referring to Priyanka as “Congress ki shehzadi”, Adityanath said in an age when children should be taught “sanskar”, the “*shehzadi*” is teaching them abusive words. He said the “royal family” is not seen in the area except during the elections. He also told the gathering that just like the royal family does not recognise them rest of the year, they should also treat them the same way.

Assam BJP MLA: Muslims are like cows that don’t give milk

ABHISHEK SAHA
GUWAHATI, MAY 3

A BJP MLA in Assam has courted controversy with his remark in which he indicated that the minority community is like a cow that does not yield milk, and asked what is the use of giving fodder to such cattle.

Prasanta Phukan, the MLA representing Dibrugarh, made the comments while talking about the voting pattern among Muslims in the Lok Sabha polls.

While Congress’ Leader of Opposition in Assembly Debabrata Saikia wrote to the Speaker on Thursday, demanding action against Phukan and alleging that he likened Muslims to “cows”, and for having allegedly “denigrated them as unproductive cattle”, Phukan on Friday said that he only meant that seeking votes from the Muslim community is “of no use”.

Phukan told *The Indian Express*, “My point was simple. I said 90 per cent Muslims do not vote for us. I used an Assamese proverb -

what is the use of feeding a cow fodder if it does not give milk... I never intended to call the Muslim community ‘cow’. I said it is no use seeking their votes.”

Phukan had earlier this week told a local TV channel: “Ninety per cent Hindus voted for the BJP, and 90 per cent people from the Muslim community did not vote for us. If a cow is not giving milk, what is the point of feeding it fodder?”

The remarks had invited sharp reaction from many sections of the society.

In his letter, Congress’s Saikia wrote, “Shri Phukan unequivocally termed the Muslim community of Assam as ‘cows that do not yield milk’, because, according to him, 90 per cent of the community did not vote for the BJP in Lok Sabha elections. Shri Phukan further stated that the government should not work for the welfare of Muslims because ‘there is no benefit in providing fodder to cows that do not yield milk’.”

BJP state vice-president Taufique Rahman said the party has until now not issued any official statement on Phukan’s comments.