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NEARBY



CBI gives clean chit to Rakesh Asthana

NEWS | PAGE 12
The CBI on Tuesday filed a chargesheet in a case of alleged bribery against its former second-in-command Rakesh Asthana and others, giving a clean chit to him and another official. "The investigation has not revealed any role of public servants," said a CBI official.

Supreme Court to hear Omar sister's plea today

NEWS | PAGE 12
A petition filed by Sara Abdullah Pilot, the sister of former J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, will be heard by a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, led by Justice N.V. Ramana, on February 12. She has approached the court against the government's move to charge him under the Public Safety Act.

Kafeel Khan released from Mathura jail on bail

GHAZIABAD
Kafeel Khan, the paediatrician who was arrested on January 29 from Mumbai for making an inflammatory speech at Aligarh Muslim University against the CAA, was released from Mathura jail on Tuesday after being granted bail by an Aligarh court.

HC seeks Centre's reply on Jamia violence plea

NEW DELHI
The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought the Centre's response on a petition seeking a court-monitored probe by a committee into the police crackdown at Jamia Millia Islamia on December 15 last year.

CITY | PAGE 3

OPPORTUNITIES | PAGE 15

AAP sweeps Delhi with 62 seats, BJP trounced

■ AAP gets 53.6%, marginally below its 54.2% share in 2015

■ BJP wins 8 seats, 5 more than 2015, with 38.5% vote share

■ Congress candidates likely to lose deposits in 63 seats

**JAIDEEP DEO BHANJ
JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI**

Arvind Kejriwal and his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) were voted back to power with a massive mandate in the Delhi Assembly election as the party won 62 seats in the 70-member House.

The party dropped just five seats and less than a percentage point in vote share from its stellar 2015 showing. Despite a hard-fought and bitter campaign that saw big guns, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah address rallies, the BJP managed to win only eight seats, up five from its 2015 tally. The Congress, yet again, failed to open its account – the party's candidates looked set to forfeit their deposits on 63 of the 66 seats contested.

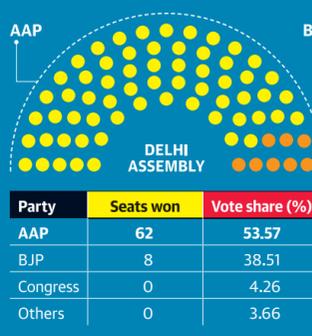
Speaking after the victory, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "The people of Delhi have given birth to a new kind of politics – the politics of work. This is a vote for those who build schools, who provide electricity and healthcare. This augurs well for the country."

Ministers post wins
The AAP secured 53.57% of the vote share, while the BJP got 38.5% and the Congress 4.3%. Though three of the AAP's incumbent Ministers – Manish Sisodia, Kailash Gahlot and Satyendar Jain – were trailing after the first few rounds of counting, they went on to retain their seats.

Raghav Chadha, Atishi Marlena and Dilip Pandey from the AAP, who lost in the 2019 Lok Sabha election, strode into the Assembly. On the other hand, former AAP Minister Kapil Mishra,

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The Aam Aadmi Party surged back to power in Delhi, winning 62 out of the 70 seats. The BJP managed to add only five seats to its tally of 2015 for a total of eight, while the Congress drew a blank again. The BJP improved its vote share by 5.8 percentage points, while AAP's vote share dipped by 0.7 percentage points



All smiles: AAP workers celebrating their party's victory in the Assembly election at the party headquarters on Tuesday. • R.V. MOORTHY

'A referendum on BJP politics'

Congratulating Arvind Kejriwal for his resounding victory, Opposition parties said the BJP's defeat showed that politics of polarisation didn't pay dividends. West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, in a tweet, said, "Leaders playing on faith through hate speech and divisive politics should take a cue, as only those who deliver on their promises are rewarded." | PAGE 13

who left the party and fought on a BJP ticket, was defeated. Anil Bajpai, also a former AAP legislator, however, retained his Gandhi Nagar seat.

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Ti-

Nitish gets a reason to smile

The Delhi Assembly election results could provide a reason for Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to smile, say political analysts. The BJP-led NDA's crushing defeat at the hands of the AAP would now embolden the Janata Dal (United) chief to drive a harder bargain for seats with the BJP, in the upcoming Assembly election in the State, they say. | PAGE 13

wari, while accepting responsibility for the dismal performance, argued that the party had been able to increase its vote share. "I congratulate Arvind Kejriwal... In comparison to 2015, the

Politics of hatred rejected

Aam Aadmi Party legislator and Leader of the Opposition in the Punjab Assembly Harpal Cheema on Tuesday said the party's victory in Delhi was a clear message that politics of hatred is not accepted by people as they have voted for development. AAP, he said, would replicate the Delhi model in Punjab in the 2022 Assembly election. | PAGE 2

BJP's vote share has registered an increase, which is the result of the hard work put in by its workers... these results also seem to herald the dawn of a new political era in the city, which has be-

Lack of local narrative

The BJP's sixth consecutive loss in an Assembly poll – although the party managed to form a government in Haryana – points to a very real problem for the party. The State-level narrative of the party has not been as appealing as that of PM Modi at the national level, so much so that even Mr. Modi's campaign did not manage to lift the party's fortunes. | PAGE 13

come bipolar instead of triangular," he said.

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WINNING FORMULA | EDITORIAL
ELECTORAL DICHOTOMY
| DATA POINT

All AAP Ministers sans CM and his deputy see rise in vote share

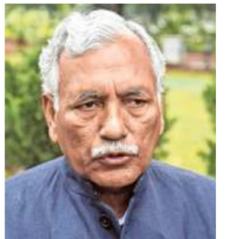
Speaker, too, emerged victorious

**STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI**

All sitting Ministers in Delhi's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government as well as the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly retained their seats in the Assembly election. And all of them, except the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister, also recorded a rise in their vote share compared with the previous election.

Some Ministers, including Manish Sisodia, Kailash Gahlot, Satyendra Jain, and Speaker Ram Niwas Goel emerged victorious in tight contests – all of them winning with a margin of less than 10,000 votes. Others, including Arvind Kejriwal, Gopal Rai, Rajendra Pal Gautam and Imran Hussain, won their seats with comfortable margins of more than at least 20,000 votes. Chief Minister Kejriwal, who won by margin of 21,697 votes, saw a drop of 3.04 percentage points in vote share.

Scare for Sisodia
Deputy Chief Minister Sisodia, who encountered the largest drop in vote share of 4.31 percentage points from 2015, won after a neck-and-neck battle with the BJP's Ravinder Singh Negi in the Patparganj constituency. Mr. Sisodia, who had won by a margin of 28,791 votes in 2015, looked to be losing the seat as Mr. Negi maintained a lead in the first 10 rounds of counting. However, once he overtook his rival in round 11 in the afternoon, he man-



Ram Niwas Goel

aged to hold on and won by a margin of 3,207 votes. Similarly, Speaker Goel trailed in the first 11 rounds of counting in the Shahdra constituency before the trend reversed and he managed to win by a margin of 5,294 votes.

Health Minister Satyendra Jain more than doubled his margin of victory, retaining the Shakur Basti constituency with a margin of 7,592 votes over the BJP's candidate S.C. Vats.

Transport Minister Gahlot, who won from the Najafgarh constituency, was the biggest gainer in terms of vote share, improving on his previous victory by 15.6 percentage points.

In Seemapuri, Minister of Tourism Rajendra Pal Gautam won by the largest vote margin among all ministers – at 56,108 and a 2.78 percentage point increase in vote share. In Balimaran, Minister of Food and Civil Supplies Imran Hussain won by a margin of 36,172. Minister of Labour Gopal Rai won the Babarpur seat by a margin of 33,062.

U.S. President Trump confirms India visit on February 24, 25

He and wife Melania will travel to Ahmedabad and Delhi

**SRIRAM LAKSHMAN
WASHINGTON**

U.S. President Donald Trump will visit India on February 24 and 25, as per an official announcement from the White House on Monday.

Mr. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump will visit New Delhi and Ahmedabad. The White House said Ahmedabad was chosen for the visit as Gujarat was home to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and played an "important role" in Mahatma Gandhi's life.

"The President and The First Lady will travel to New



Donald Trump

Delhi and Ahmedabad, which is in Prime Minister Modi's home State of Gujarat and played such an important role in Mahatma Gandhi's life and leadership of the Indian independence movement," a statement from the

Office of the Press Secretary said.

Confirming the visit, the Ministry of External Affairs in statement on Tuesday said, "During the visit, President Trump and the First Lady will attend official engagements in New Delhi and Ahmedabad, Gujarat, and interact with a wide cross section of Indian society."

Prime Minister Modi and Mr. Trump had spoken over the weekend, the White House said.

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TRUMP SHOW | PAGE 12

Thakur, 11 others get life term in shelter home case

6 others sentenced up to 7 years in jail

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

A special court here on Tuesday sentenced Brajesh Thakur and 11 others, including three women, to life imprisonment for the sexual and physical assault of girl inmates of a shelter home in Muzaffarpur, Bihar.

Additional sessions judge Saurabh Kulshreshtha also imposed a fine of ₹32 lakh on Thakur.

Six others were sentenced up to seven years in jail. Rosy Rani, who was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, has already served the term. Therefore, she has

been released. The court had earlier held Thakur guilty under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

The charges included aggravated penetrative sexual assault, gang-rape, rape and other relevant provisions under the Indian Penal Code and the Juvenile Justice Act.

Vijay Kumar Tiwari, Gudu Patel, Ramanuj Thakur and Kishan Kumar were also convicted of aggravated penetrative sexual assault, rape, gang-rape and other related offences.

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Gargi College students boycott classes

**STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI**

Students of Gargi College staged a strike and boycotted classes for the second consecutive day on Tuesday in protest against the February 6 incident when they were al-

legedly harassed and sexually assaulted on campus during a college festival.

Several students and teachers from different departments held a meeting to constitute a fact-finding committee. Ashna, a final-year

student, said, "A general body meeting [of students and teachers] was held to constitute a committee which would investigate the events that happened during the fest."

DETAILS ON | PAGE 3

Government can seek fresh execution dates, says SC

Solicitor General calls for separate executions of Nirbhaya case convicts

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed the Union government to approach the trial court for issuance of a fresh date for the execution of the death sentence of the Nirbhaya gang rape convicts.

Appearing before a three-judge Bench led by Justice R. Banumathi, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said the Nirbhaya convicts were trying the patience of the nation.

Mr. Mehta made a chilling reference to how policemen who gunned down the four gang rape and murder accused in Hyderabad were cheered by people, calling

the incident a symptom of people losing faith in the process of law.

"This case [Nirbhaya] is of 2012 and I am still struggling to execute the death sentence. They [convicts] are acting in tandem to misuse the law by filing one petition after the other... People will stop having faith in the judicial system. Seven years have gone by and the convicts are still playing the judicial system... It is in situations like this that people celebrate encounter killings," Mr. Mehta submitted.

The Solicitor General said convicts Mukesh, Vinay and Akshay have seemingly ex-



Steel will: The parents of the Nirbhaya rape case victim outside the Supreme Court in New Delhi in December. • PTI

hausted remedies. The fourth, Pawan Gupta, is yet to file a mercy petition.

Fresh plea
Mr. Mehta said a plea to fix a new date for the executions in the trial court would immediately see one or the oth-

er of the four convicts move court in a bid to further prolong the process.

As indicated, within a few hours of the hearing, Vinay moved the Supreme Court challenging the rejection of his mercy petition by the President.

Victim's kin move court

A Delhi court on Tuesday sought the response of the four death-row convicts in the Nirbhaya gang-rape and murder case after a petition was filed by the victim's parents and the Delhi government seeking issuance of fresh death warrant. PTI

Mr. Mehta stressed that the Supreme court should instead focus on the government's appeal to allow the four convicts to be separately executed. The court issued notice to the four convicts on this point and scheduled a hearing for February 13.

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