

Sitaram Kesri, a Dalit, wasn't allowed to complete term as Cong chief: Modi

MAHASAMUND (C'GARH), NOV 18 /- / Hitting out at the Congress and the Nehru-Gandhi family, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday claimed that Dalit leader Sitaram Kesri was not allowed to complete his term as Congress president and was "thrown out of office" to make way for Sonia Gandhi. Addressing a rally on the last day of campaigning for the second and final phase of the Chhattisgarh Assembly polls, Modi said four generations of a family ruled the country and "benefited from being in power", but the country did not benefit from their rule. "The country knows that Sitaram Kesri, a Dalit, was not allowed to complete his five-year-term as the Congress president. He was thrown out of office and to the footpath to make way for Sonia Gandhi as the new party chief," he said. "Earlier, Delhi had a remote-controlled government. The remote was in the hands of a

family, which was afraid of the BJP," Modi said, targeting the Congress and the Gandhis. He challenged the Congress to select someone "capable" as its president, who did not belong to "that one family". "Remember the days when four generations of a family ruled the country. What was the fate of the people? They only thought about the welfare of one family but never thought about the welfare of the people. How can we trust them that they will fulfill the aspirations of the people now," Modi said. He claimed that Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh had to face a lot of challenges from the then Congress-led government at the Centre. "For 10 years, the Centre was ruled by a remote-control government, which never paid attention towards Chhattisgarh," the prime minister said. He praised the high voter turnout in Bastar in the first phase of the Chhattisgarh polls on November 12 and also in the panchayat election in Jammu and

Kashmir and claimed that the people had given a befitting reply to those spreading terror. "Despite being threatened by Naxals with guns and bombs, a huge voter turnout was recorded in Bastar. The poor tribals have shown faith in democracy and given a befitting reply to bombs and guns," Modi said. "Similarly, yesterday elections were held for the panchayats in Kashmir. Earlier, people used to skip conducting polls there. After Governor's Rule was imposed, we decided that the power of Kashmir should rest in the hands of the people of Kashmir. "Terrorists had given a bandh call in Kashmir, but look at the turn of the people of Kashmir in democracy as a voter turnout of around 60-70 per cent was recorded. They have given a slap on the face of separatism and terrorism. They have shown the strength of democracy," he added. Jammu and Kashmir recorded 74.1 per cent polling in the first phase of the

panchayat polls held Saturday in 47 blocks - 16 in Kashmir, 21 in Jammu and 10 in the Ladakh region. Lashing out at the Congress, Modi said, "The doors have been opened for the welfare of Kashmir. Who had stopped the Congress from doing this earlier? They played backdoor games with terrorists which will not be allowed anymore. We took courageous steps one by one." He also targeted Congress chief Rahul Gandhi over farm loan waiver, an issue that has taken centre stage in the Chhattisgarh polls. "As elections approach, the Congress plays a game of promises. But they cannot mislead the country anymore. They must answer what did they do for the welfare of our farmers when they ruled for four generations. They kept the farmers in a pathetic condition during their 50-year rule. Had they strengthened the farmers, fulfilled their requirements, our farmers would have been prosperous," the prime minister said. (PTI)

Hookah bars permanently banned in Punjab as Prez Kovind okays Bill

NEW DELHI, NOV 18 /- / Hookah bars have been permanently banned in Punjab as President Ram Nath Kovind has given assent to a bill from the state to check use of tobacco. Punjab is the third state in the country after Gujarat and Maharashtra where hookah bars or lounges were banned through law. The president has given assent to the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2018 recently, a Home Ministry official said. The Punjab assembly had passed the Bill in March. The objective of bringing the law is to check the use of tobacco in various forms and prevent diseases caused by the use of the tobacco products. Hookah bars are establishments where people share 'sheeshas' from a 'hookah' which is placed at each table or bar. The hookah has a long pipe for smoking that passes smoke through a container of water to cool it. There were complaints of use of drugs in these bars in Punjab, an official said. The official said as per available data, an hour's average of hookah smoking

contains 20-200 puffs, which can deliver 50 litres of smoke, containing harmful and carcinogenic chemicals. Smoking of hookah increases health risks including exposure to toxic chemicals that are not filtered out by the water, and also the risk of infectious disease like tuberculosis resulting from sharing a hookah, another official said. Punjab Health Minister Brahm Mohindra, who had moved the Bill in the assembly, had said there was a new trend of 'hookah-sheeshas' smoking and it has been increasing day-by-day in Punjab. These bars are being opened in restaurants, hotels, and clubs and hookahs are even served at marriages venues. The youth, including girls, are using hard and soft drugs in hookah and 'sheeshas' bars, Mohindra had said. "Hookah-sheeshas bars are just like drug consumption rooms and they are a new threat to our youth. The owners of such cafes are providing every facility to our youth for soft drug addiction in a very comfortable and friendly atmosphere. The most harmful ingredient in hookah is nicotine, which is known to be carcinogenic," he had said. (PTI)

'Agra citizens launch drive to rid Yamuna of garbage'

AGRA, NOV 18 /- / Agra citizens, including young boys and girls, Sunday launched a massive cleanliness drive to rid the Yamuna of garbage dumps in it. Aimed at conserving heritage monuments along the Yamuna besides cleaning the river itself, the drive, named River Connect Campaign, succeeded in fishing out tonnes of garbage, including up litter, polythene bags, plastics, immersed idols in the river, construction material, from the river during the day. Besides youngsters, senior citizens too actively participated in the river cleaning drive, working as volunteers of various voluntary organisations. Talking of the drive, River Connect Campaign member Jugal Kishor Pandit said, "People have been dumping all sorts of domestic waste in the river. Thousands of idols were immersed in it." After the water level went down, the garbage dumps have resurfaced and are attracting insects, mosquitoes and even bodies of animals are piling up on the river bed spreading the stink," he added. A large number of foreign tourists stop at the Etmoudaulla view point park, near the tomb of I'timad-ud-Daulah, commissioned by emperor Jahangir's wife Nur Jahan for her father Mirza Ghiyas Beg, to take shots of the monument, said environmentalist Devashish Bhattacharya.



VICE PRESIDENT M. VENKAIAH NAIDU AND OTHERS DURING THE LAUNCH OF KERA UNIVERSITY (BASED IN SRI CITY NEAR CHENNAI), IN NEW DELHI ON SUNDAY.

It's now or never for us in Madhya Pradesh: Scindia

SHIVPURI (MP), NOV 18 /- / As his party makes an all-out effort to wrest control of Madhya Pradesh from the BJP, senior Congress leader Jyotiraditya Scindia feels it is "now or never" for the party that has remained out of power in the state for 15 straight years. Scindia, a powerful Congress leader from the state, however sought to steer clear of reports about rift among party leaders for the chief ministerial post and said he is not running for any chair and has no intention of contesting that his party forms the government. The Member of Parliament from the Guna-Shivpuri constituency, who secured a win during the last Lok Sabha elections in 2014 despite most of his party colleagues facing a defeat amid a widespread Modi wave to cool it, has to contest in four dozen assembly constituencies in last six days and plans to cover 50-60 more seats before campaigning ends on November 26. Voting will take place for 230 assembly seats on November 28, while counting is scheduled for December 11. The state has always seen a direct fight between the BJP and the Congress, though the saffron party has been in power continuously since defeating the Congress in 2003.

Talking to PTI during his election campaign, Scindia said his party needs to be relentless until 5 pm on November 26 when the campaign would end. Asked if this was the best opportunity for the Congress to come back to power in the state which it has ruled for the maximum time since Independence, the former union minister said, "Well best or not, it is now or never. Full stop. When I say now or never that says it all." "Therefore, I wanted to put all my energy into campaign for the Congress party. As the campaign committee chief that is my direct responsibility," he said. To a question if he would be the chief ministerial candidate if his party wins the polls, the 47-year-old scion of the royal family of Gwalior said he will abide by whatever the party decides for him. Prodded further on the subject and asked if he will contest polls to hold the chief minister's position if his party wins, Scindia had a brief comment: "We will see at that point of time." "My only aspiration is to serve the people. I am not myself running for any post. What I would want to see is that my party comes into government so that people get served in the right manner," he said. Asked if it was part of some strategy that the Congress was not projecting a CM face, Scindia said it was a conscious decision on his part and by the party. "I don't think there is any strategy around it but I think it is an individual choice. As far as I am concerned, I wanted to cover as much ground as I could," he said.

Besides Scindia, Congress has a number of other influential leaders from Madhya Pradesh including another former union minister Kamal Nath and former chief minister Digvijay Singh. There have been several reports about a long-running rivalry between Scindia and Nath for the chief ministerial post.

Congress more of a family enterprise than political party: Shah

NEW DELHI, NOV 18 /- / BJP president Amit Shah Sunday said the Congress had become more of a family enterprise aimed at dynastic service than a political party aimed at public service, taking aim at the opposition party after Prime Minister Narendra Modi dared it to appoint a head from outside the Gandhi family. In a dig at Congress leaders, including P Chidambaram who had named several party presidents hailing from outside the Gandhi family, Shah said in tweets that Modi's challenge had ruffled several feathers with "many courtiers going out of the way to prove their loyalty".

Evidently, the prime minister's point had struck a raw nerve, he added. At a poll rally in Chhattisgarh Friday, Modi had said if the Congress appointed someone who was not from the (Gandhi) family as its president, he would, in five years, then he would believe that Jawaharlal Nehru had indeed put in place a truly democratic Gandhi family. In the opposition party.

"The Prime Minister is right. The Congress (India) since its inception in 1978 has been run by a family of members of one family for most of the years, thus making it more of a family enterprise aimed at dynastic service rather than a political party aimed at public service," Shah tweeted. He was referring to the split in the Congress in 1978 following its loss in the 1977 parliamentary polls, with the Indira Gandhi-led faction recognised as Congress(I).

As he returned to power in 1980, her faction was later recognised by the Election Commission (EC) as the real Congress. Two Congress chiefs, who were not from the Nehru-Gandhi family, were treated in the "most shabby" manner possible in the recent past, Shah alleged. While P V Narasimha Rao's body, after his demise, was never allowed inside the Congress office, Sitararam Kesri, a towering leader, was "roughed up by goons loyal to we know who", he added. Modi, at a rally in Chhattisgarh Sunday, also alleged that Kesri was not allowed to complete his term as the Congress chief and was forced to make way for Sonia Gandhi.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president cited the examples of several "non-family" Congress presidents to back his claim. "Going further back in time, the likes of Babu Jagjivan Ram, S Nijalingappa, K Kamaraj were humiliated by the family. N. Taram Sankar Reddy, though senior, was not allowed to be president by one family. U N Dhebar was asked to step aside and Congress president for Mrs. Indira Gandhi," he said.

Cyclone Gaja toll rises to 45, Tamil Nadu CM asks all leaders to join relief ops

SALEM (TN), NOV 18 /- / The toll in cyclone Gaja has touched 45, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K Palaniswami said on Sunday and appealed to leaders of all political parties to take part in the relief activities. He said the relief operations were going on a war footing in the districts affected by the cyclonic storm and state ministers have been deployed in Nagapattinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvallur, and Pudukottai to monitor it. The state government is collecting details about areas which have been badly affected by the cyclone, Palaniswami told reporters here. "In villages, lots of trees and standing crops have been damaged, affecting the livelihood of farmers.

The extent of damage is being evaluated. Till now, 45 people have lost their lives due to cyclone," the chief minister said. The Tamil Nadu government has announced a solatium of Rs 10 lakh to family of each of the deceased from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund (CMPRF). Those with severe injuries would be provided with Rs one lakh each while those whose injuries are not grievous in nature would get Rs 25,000 compensation. Palaniswami said 1.7 lakh trees have been uprooted, 735 cattle died, 1.17 lakh houses damaged and 88,102 hectare agricultural land has been affected in coastal districts. Nearly 2.50 lakh people were provided accommodation in 483 relief camps. Besides, 1,014 mobile

medical vans have been set up and so far one lakh people in affected areas have benefited from it, the chief minister said. Noting that 39,938 electric poles and 347 transformers were damaged in the affected districts, he said 12,532 men of the state electricity board have been despatched to take up the repair work. Responding to a question, Palaniswami urged all political leaders and people to extend a helping hand in this time of need. "It is a natural calamity. There should not be any differences like opposition, ruling party in taking up relief operations. I appeal to everyone to help the affected people," he said.

KIDS CORNER

IT HAS BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME — TELL US WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO!

WELL—SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED SINCE WE LAST SAW YOU...

They have lots of catching up to do—

We have lots of exploring to do!

WordWheel No.2

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| | O | R | A | C | |
| | | | | | |
| | N | I | ? | A | |

Insert the missing letter to complete an eight-letter word reading clockwise or anticlockwise. Solution No.1: NEUROSI

5x5

Insert the missing letters to complete ten words - five across the grid and five down.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| | C | | L | E | |
| P | | R | | E | |
| | B | | V | | |
| T | | M | | D | |
| | C | | R | | |

OUR SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No.2 (Other combinations may occasionally be possible.)

WORD-BUILDER No.2

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|
| | I | T | D | |
| | L | E | | |

How many words of three or more letters, including plurals, can you make from the five letters, using each letter only once? No foreign words or words beginning with a capital are allowed. There's at least one five-letter word.

TODAY'S GOALS: Good - 11 Excellent - 15 Amazing - 20

SOLUTION 1: ace, acas, ape, apes, aspe, asp, cap, cape, capes, caps, case, cep, cepts, pace, paces, pea, peas, sac, spac, scape, sea, sec, spa, space, spae, spac