

# BJP will suffer Cong fate in Bihar for supporting CM despite questions on his mental fitness: Prashant

**NEW DELHI:** Political strategist-turned-activist Prashant Kishor said on Tuesday the BJP will suffer the same fate in Bihar for propping up Nitish Kumar despite the chief minister being not "physically and mentally" fit as the Congress did for helping RJD president Lalu Prasad impose his "jungle raj".

In an interview to PTI, Kishor also asserted that Bihar is ready for a change in the assembly elections expected later next year.

Brushing aside questions about the fate of his new party in the state's crowded political space, he claimed that people will shake off the two rival alliances, which have kept the state most poor and backward for over 30 years, to hand over his party an absolute majority in the 243-member assembly.

His Jan Suraj Abhiyan will take the shape of a political party on October 2.

Asked if he will contest the election or be the chief ministerial face of the party, Kishor said it is for its leaders to decide.

"If they think it will be good if he contests, he will," Kishor said.

Hitting out at the BJP, he said the ruling party has made Bihar suffer for its political benefits as it needed the support of JD(U) MPs for power at the Centre.



He claimed that everyone knows that Kumar is in last phase of his politics and that polls cannot be won in his name.

"Even his supporters know that in his current physical, mental and political state, he is in no way in a condition to run a state like Bihar."

"Results will reflect it. The BJP will be punished for its doings. The Congress helped Lalu Prasad run a 'jungle raj' for 15 years. People of Bihar completely uprooted the Congress. The BJP will suffer the same fate," he said.

It is the BJP's compulsion that it has to retain Kumar in power in Bihar for running its government in Delhi, Kishor said. "It knows that its alliance will lose if he remains at

the helm, but it is the political compulsion of the BJP," he added.

Asked to explain his contention that Bihar's longest-serving chief minister is not in a physically and mentally fit condition, Kishor cited Kumar's silence on a host of burning issues facing the state, be it floods or the rows over land survey and installation of smart meter.

Kishor said his assessment of Kumar is based on the chief minister's relative absence from public life. "A big section in Bihar is wondering if Nitish Kumar is mentally and physically fit to provide leadership to Bihar." The JD(U) has often insisted that its leader (Nitish Kumar) remains the face of good governance in Bihar and will con-

tinue to lead the state as the face of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

Asked if he sees Kumar leading the NDA in the next assembly polls, Kishor claimed that the JD(U) leader's career in coming to an end and that people had given a similar message in the 2020 elections when the JD(U) could win only 42 seats, falling way behind the BJP's 74 and the main opposition party RJD's 75.

Taking a swipe at the BJP, he said it breaks up other parties across the country by hook or by crook but has chosen to "impose" Kumar on Bihar despite having many more seats in the assembly due to its need for JD(U) MPs.

Expressing confidence about the prospect of his party, he said people voted for either of the two main alliances in Bihar due to a lack of alternative, asserting that his two years of padyatra has been aimed at ushering in a helpful atmosphere for change.

"People will rise above caste, religion and mandir-masjid issue to vote solely for the future of their children's education and employment, and Jan Suraj will be that instrument of change," he claimed.

It will get an absolute majority, he said, claiming that his party will not join hands with any other formation.

# MHA releases Rs 5858.60 cr to 14 flood-affected states

**NEW DELHI:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Tuesday released Rs 5858.60 crore to 14 flood-affected states as a central share from the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) and an advance from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF).

According to an official statement, the funds include Rs 1492 crore to Maharashtra, Rs 1036 crore to Andhra Pradesh, Rs 716 crore to Assam, Rs 655.60 crore to Bihar, Rs 600 crore to Gujarat, Rs 189.20 crore to Himachal Pradesh, Rs 145.60 crore to Kerala, Rs 50 crore to Manipur, Rs 21.60 crore to Mizoram, Rs 19.20 crore to Nagaland, Rs 23.60 crore to Sikkim, Rs 416.80 crore to Telangana,

Rs 25 crore to Tripura and Rs 468 crore to West Bengal.

These states have been affected due to extremely heavy rainfall, floods and landslides during the south-west monsoon this year.

Inter-Ministerial Central Teams (IMCTs) were sent to flood-affected states of Assam, Mizoram, Kerala, Tripura, Nagaland, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Manipur for an on-the-spot assessment of the damages.

Moreover, IMCTs will be sent shortly for making an on-the-spot assessment of damage in Bihar and West Bengal, which have also recently been affected by floods.

After the assessment

reports of IMCTs are received, additional financial assistance from NDRF, will be approved to the disaster affected states, as per the established procedure.

More than Rs 14,958 crore has already been released to 21 states during this year. This include Rs 9044.80 crore from SDRF to 21 states, Rs 4528.66 crore from NDRF to 15 states and Rs 1385.45 crore from State Disaster Mitigation Fund (SDMF) to 11 states.

Besides financial assistance, the Centre has also provided all logistic assistance, including deployment of requisite NDRF teams, Army teams and Air Force support to all the flood affected states.

# BJP wants to turn every state into UTs, alleges AAP

**NEW DELHI:** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday alleged that the BJP wants to turn every state in the country into a Union Territory, stating that both the party and the entire country stand with environmental activist Sonam Wangchuk and the people of Ladakh.

Sharing a video message on social media post on X, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Senior leader Manish Sisodia claimed, "First, the state status of Ladakh was taken away from the people and it was made a Union Territory (UT) and now when some people from Ladakh are walking towards Rajghat in Delhi to raise their demands, they are detained at the border and locked up in the police station."

"BJP is slowly working on a formula to convert every state of the country into a UT. And those who raise their voice against this dic-



tatorship are being arrested and put in jail," he alleged stating that the voice that Sonam Wangchuk is raising today is the voice of the country.

"Sonam Wangchuk has brought glory to the country in the field of invention and education. When he was coming to Delhi on foot with eminent people from Ladakh, the Delhi Police arrested him," Sisodia

said. "He was arrested because he wanted to discuss the current situation in Ladakh. Ladakh was earlier a full state but BJP made it a UT. BJP wants to make every state of the country a UT. It cannot suppress the voice of the people of Ladakh. Aam Aadmi Party and the entire country stand with Sonam Wangchuk and the people of Ladakh," he said.

# Woman arrested at Delhi airport for smuggling 26 iPhone 16 Pro Max

**NEW DELHI:** Customs officials at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport arrested a woman passenger for attempting to smuggle 26 iPhone 16 Pro Max devices into India from Hong Kong. The phones, with an estimated market value exceeding Rs 37 lakh, were found concealed inside the passenger's vanity bag, wrapped in tissue paper.

Acting on specific intelligence inputs, customs authorities intercepted the woman upon her arrival in Delhi.

"Based on intelligence, Delhi Airport Customs intercepted a lady passenger travelling from Hong Kong to Delhi carrying 26 iPhone 16 Pro Max concealed inside her vanity bag," an official spokesperson told ANI.

The iPhone 16 series, launched earlier this month, includes Apple's most premium flagship phone, the Pro Max model. In India, prices for the iPhone 16 Pro Max start at Rs 1,44,900 for the 256GB variant.

Meanwhile, in the Hong Kong the same 256GB storage variant costs HK\$

1,099, which converts to around Rs 1,09,913. So, there's a difference of Rs 34,987 between the price of iPhone 16 Pro Max in the two countries.

The arrested woman has been booked under the Customs Act, 1962. Authorities continue their probe to identify any accomplices and dismantle the smuggling racket.

Customs officials have indicated that further investigations are underway to uncover any potential networks involved in the smuggling operation.

# Manipur RS MP writes to aviation minister, seeks concessional airfare

**IMPHAL:** Manipur Rajya Sabha MP Maharaja Sana-jaoba Leishemba on Tuesday said he has written to Union Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister K Ram-mohon Naidu, requesting him to review the fare policy of airlines flying in the Imphal sector so that the travel cost might be "concessional and affordable".

Due to the unprecedented law and order situation, travelling by the people belonging to the Meitei community outside Manipur has been "stopped because NH 37 (Imphal-Silchar) and NH 39 (Imphal-Dima-

pur) and other highways connecting with Indian states pass through Kuki dominated hill areas of the state", he said.

"Because of involvement on risk of lives, all travellers, mostly students, patients for medical treatments, have to travel at least up to Guwahati or Kolkata by air," the MP said.

This has become an additional burden for the people, Leishemba said.

"Sensing this predicament all airlines are also increasing the airfare outbound for Imphal," he claimed.

# Gaushala with bio CNG plant set up in Gwalior



**BHOPAL:** A gaushala with a bio CNG plant that can produce three tonnes of gas per day using 100 tonnes of cow dung has been set up in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior, an official said on Tuesday.

Established in collaboration with the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), this is India's first modern and self-reliant gaushala (cow shelter), the official from the public relations department said.

The plant will utilise 100 tonnes of cow dung to produce up to three tonnes of CNG per day and 20 tons of high-quality organic manure, he said, adding that the IOC will assist in the operation and maintenance of the plant.

The gaushala has been developed with a cost of Rs 32 crore from the corporate social responsibility fund of the IOC, and considering its future expansion, an additional one hectare of land has been reserved for the purpose, the official said.

To construct a modern cow shelter for 2,000 bovines, Rs 2 crore was provided from the local area development fund of the Member of Parliament.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for realising his vision of "Waste to Wealth" for the nation and thanked the community of seers and devotees for taking care of

cows. "The state government will extend fullest possible support for the expansion of this initiative. It is worth recalling here that the largest bio CNG plant in Asia is operational at Indore, the prime minister inaugurated," he said.

According to officials, 10,000 cows are being cared for with the support of the local municipal corporation at Lal Tipara Gaushala in Gwalior. An incubation centre will also be launched soon.

The plant will produce approximately two to three tonnes of bio CNG and 20 tonnes of high-quality organic manure daily. This will generate an income of around Rs. 7 crore for the Gwalior Municipal Corporation.

The plant will economically sustain the gaushala by utilising cow dung. Farmers from surrounding districts will be encouraged to practice organic farming as they will be easily getting bio-manure at very reasonable prices, the official said.

According to a recent report from the Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Madhya Pradesh ranks third in establishing biogas plants in villages.

The state has 104 biogas plants in various villages, with the highest 24 in Betul, 13 in Balaghat, and 12 in Singrauli.

# Cardiologists felicitated at function to mark World Heart Day

**NEW DELHI:** Several prominent cardiologists of Delhi NCR were felicitated on Monday for their outstanding contribution to heart health at a special function to mark World Heart Day. The event, organised by Kalra Super Speciality Hospital, lauded the efforts of cardiologists in increasing awareness about cardiovascular diseases.

Speaking at the event, the doctors stressed the importance of lifestyle changes, such as regular exercise, healthy diet and managing stress as essential strategies for preventing heart disease.

They also advised regular health check-ups and monitoring of blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Dr R N Kalra, managing director of Kalra hospital, emphasised the significance

of heart health and preventive measures, pointing out that cardiovascular diseases are among the leading causes of death worldwide.

Dr Viveka Kumar of Max Hospital, who was awarded during the event for his valuable contributions, expressed concern over the increasing prevalence of heart disease due to modern lifestyle habits. He reiterated the importance of adopting healthy eating habits, regular exercise, and stress management to prevent heart ailments.

The ceremony, which was attended by singer Daler Mehndi, journalist Barkha Dutt and social worker Bhavesh Saluja, also featured cultural performances and a special presentation by sign language performers.

# Muda agrees to take back plots allotted to Siddaramaiah's wife

**NEW DELHI:** The Mysuru Urban Development Authority (Muda) on Tuesday decided to take back the 14 plots allotted to Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi B M. The Muda has also ordered to cancel the sale deed of these plots.

"Smt. Parvathi's son Dr Yathindra, a MLC, had submitted a letter...we have gone through the provisions in our act. There are provisions in our act to take it when given (back) voluntarily," Muda commissioner A N Raghunandan said.

"After consulting panel advocates and the legal officer, and after determining that everything is correct, we arrived at a conclusion.

So, we have ordered to

take it back. We have ordered to cancel the sale deed and handed it over to the sub-registrar," he said to the reporters.

Parvathi B M had earlier announced to return the plots allotted to her after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) booked Siddaramaiah in a money laundering case, stating that no site, home, asset and wealth is bigger for her than her husband's respect, dignity, honour and peace of mind.

On Monday, the central probe agency registered an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR), equivalent to an FIR by police, against the chief minister over the alleged irregularities in allotment of 14 sites to his wife by the Muda.

Earlier, the Lokayukta police on September 27 registered an FIR against Siddaramaiah, his wife, brother-in-law Mallikarjuna Swamy, Devaraju -- from whom Mallikarjuna Swamy purchased land and gifted it to Parvathi -- and others, following a Special Court order.

A Special Court Judge, Santhosh Gajanan Bhat, issued an order just one day following the High Court's decision to uphold the Governor's sanction for conducting an investigation against Siddaramaiah.

The Muda site allotment case involves allegations that Siddaramaiah's wife received 14 compensatory sites in a high-end area of Mysuru (Vijayanagar Layout 3rd and 4th

stages). These sites reportedly had a significantly higher property value compared to the location of her land that Muda had "acquired."

"Under the controversial scheme, Muda allotted 50 per cent of developed land to the land losers in lieu of undeveloped land acquired from them for forming residential layouts."

Parvathi was allotted plots by Muda under a 50:50 ratio scheme in exchange for 3.16 acres of her land, which was used by Muda to develop a residential layout. However, there are allegations that Parvathi did not possess legal title to this 3.16-acre parcel of land, located at survey number 464 of Kasare village, Kasaba hobli, Mysuru taluk.

# IMD forecasts above-normal rainfall over many parts of India from Oct to Dec

**NEW DELHI:** India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Tuesday said that normal to above-normal rainfall is expected over many parts of central and southern peninsular India, as well as some areas of northeast India, from October to December.

The IMD also forecast above-normal temperatures across most parts of the country during October.

"In October, above normal maximum temperatures are likely over many parts of India except some parts of central India and adjoining south peninsula where normal to below normal maximum temperatures are likely," the IMD said.

Addressing a virtual press conference on the 2024 Southwest Monsoon season, IMD Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said, "The rainfall averaged over South Peninsular India during the post-monsoon (northeast monsoon) season from October to December is most likely to be above normal, covering five meteorolog-

ical subdivisions -- Tamil Nadu, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Kerala, and south interior Karnataka.

"Above normal rainfall is also likely in several parts of central India and some areas in north-east India. However, most parts of northwest India and some parts of northeast India and southernmost parts of India are likely to receive below normal rainfall," the IMD added.

As per the IMD forecast, the overall rainfall in the country during the 2024 Southwest Monsoon season (June-September) was 108% of its long-period average (LPA), indicating that seasonal rainfall was above normal (>104% of LPA).

"Seasonal rainfalls over northwest India, central India, the south peninsula, and northeast India were recorded at 107%, 119%, 114%, and 86% of their respective LPA. The southwest monsoon season rainfall over the monsoon core zone, which includes most of the rain-fed agricultural regions



in the country, received 122% of LPA," the IMD said.

"Out of a total of 36 meteorological subdivisions, 2 subdivisions received large excess rainfall (9% of the total area), 10 subdivisions constituting 26%

of the total area received excess rainfall, 21 subdivisions received normal rainfall (54% of the total area), and 3 subdivisions (11% of the total area) received deficient seasonal rainfall," the IMD said, adding that the subdivisions with

deficient rainfall were Arunachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

"The most notable feature of rainfall distribution during September was the large excess rainfall over west Uttar Pradesh, west Madhya Pradesh, the Gujarat region, and Telangana, whereas there was large deficient rainfall over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and the Karikal region. Regionally, northwest India (129% of LPA) and central India (132% of LPA) experienced excess rainfall, while east and northeast India (102% of LPA) received deficient rainfall, and the south peninsula (97% of LPA) received normal rainfall," the IMD added.

In August, Saurashtra & Kutch, East & West Rajasthan, and Lakshadweep received large excess rainfall. Northwest India (130% of LPA) and central India (116% of LPA) experienced excess rainfall, while east and northeast India (102% of LPA) and the south peninsula (107% of LPA) received normal rainfall, it noted.