

From Page 1

# Rooted in...

that sets JSP apart. Kishor's party plans to introduce proportional representation and the right to recall, two reforms that could transform Indian democracy at its core.

Proportional representation ensures that underrepresented communities get their due share in the party's organizational structure, reflecting the true demographics of the country. The right to recall is a tool that could empower voters to hold their representatives accountable—something Indian politics sorely needs. How often have we seen elected representatives who forget their promises the moment they assume office? By embedding this right into the party's constitution, Kishor is sending a message that JSP will hold itself accountable to the very people it seeks to serve.

Perhaps one of the most unique aspects of JSP is its plan to allow the public to select candidates, rather than leaving these decisions to party leadership. This could go a long way in breaking the cycle of nepotism and dynastic politics that plagues many Indian parties. Leaders will no longer be chosen based on their connections or caste base but on their ability to convince both the public and the party of their merit and vision. Kishor's commitment to democratizing the selection process is a bold step toward deepening grassroots participation and ensuring that candidates are chosen based on the people's will.

Education and employment are at the heart of JSP's five-point agenda, and Kishor's proposals to achieve these goals are rooted in practicality. One of the boldest policy propositions is to lift the liquor ban in Bihar, a move that could potentially generate Rs 20,000 crores annually in excise taxes.

These funds would then be channelled toward the state's education system, which has been neglected for far too long. This is a pragmatic approach to governance that prioritizes outcomes over optics. For too long, politicians have focused on moralizing issues like liquor consumption, without offering real solutions for economic growth and education. Kishor's willingness to make difficult decisions for the greater good demonstrates his understanding of governance that goes beyond populism.

Another aspect of Kishor's vision that resonates is his focus on land reforms and the credit-to-deposit ratio in Bihar. Kishor highlights how banks in Bihar have long been funneling local deposits to other states, depriving Bihar of the capital it needs to grow. If Kishor's policies can compel banks to invest a larger share of Bihar's deposits back into the state, it could lead to an economic revival, especially for small businesses and farmers. His emphasis on soft loans for women entrepreneurs at low interest rates also underscores his commitment to social and economic equity.

However, perhaps the most significant thing that Prashant Kishor brings to the table is his experience and pragmatism. He is not an outsider to Indian politics. He knows the intricacies of political strategies and has played a pivotal role in the successes of some of the country's top leaders, including Narendra Modi, Mamata Banerjee, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, and Arvind Kejriwal. Kishor's deep understanding of political ecosystems, combined with his fresh ideas, gives him an edge as he embarks on this new journey. Unlike many who enter politics on the wings of idealism alone, Kishor has already proven that he understands the realpolitik of India.

But here lies the challenge. Will Kishor be able to stay true to his vision? Politics is a long, winding road, full of compromises and unexpected obstacles. The danger for JSP, as for any new political party, is that it could be co-opted by the very forces it seeks to challenge. However, Kishor's vision—rooted in meritocracy, accountability, and human-centric governance—offers hope for something different. If he can navigate the pitfalls of power and stay committed to his core principles, JSP could be the fresh alternative that Indian politics so desperately needs.

In a country where voter disenchantment with traditional political parties is growing, Kishor's entry into the political fray as a leader, rather than just a strategist, offers a glimmer of hope. As India grapples with unemployment, poor education standards, caste conflicts, and an increasingly fractured society, JSP's promise of inclusivity, meritocracy, and progressive policy reforms could offer a way forward. While it's still early days, and there's a long road ahead, one thing is clear: Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party is worth watching. Here's hoping that Kishor remains true to his ideals and that JSP can catalyse the kind of political revolution that India so urgently needs.

# 9 years ....

to Pakistan only to attend the SCO summit. In August, Pakistan invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the SCO's summit.

Jaishankar's visit to Pakistan assumes significance as it is seen as a major decision on New Delhi's part.

The decision to send the senior minister is seen as a display of India's commitment to the SCO which has been playing a key role in boosting regional security cooperation.

The ties between India and Pakistan came under severe strain after India's warplanes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp in Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack.

The relations further deteriorated after India on August 5, 2019 announced the withdrawal of special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and the bifurcation of the state into two union territories.

Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties with India after New Delhi abrogated Article 370.

India has been maintaining that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan while insisting that the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment free of terror and hostility for such engagement.

Pakistan's then foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited India in May 2023 to attend an in-person meeting of the foreign ministers of SCO nations in Goa.

It was the first visit of a Pakistani foreign minister to India in almost 12 years.

The SCO council of heads of government conclave is the second-highest platform in the grouping.

The SCO heads of state summit is the top most forum in the grouping that is generally attended by the Indian prime minister.

The SCO, comprising India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is an influential economic and security bloc that has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations.

India was the chair of the SCO last year. It hosted the SCO summit in the virtual format in July last year.

India's association with the SCO began in 2005 as an observer country. It became a full member state of SCO at the Astana summit in 2017.

India has shown a keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS), which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.

The SCO was founded at a summit in Shanghai in 2001 by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Pakistan became its permanent member along with India in 2017.

# BASELESS: NC ...

Meanwhile, National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah Friday asked bureaucrats in Jammu and Kashmir to resist any pressure to "further disempower" the incoming elected government.

"The BJP has clearly accepted defeat in J-K. Why else would the chief secretary be assigned the duty to change transaction of business rules of the government to curtail the powers of the chief minister/elected government and assign the same to the LG?" Abdullah said in a post on X.

The former chief minister of the erstwhile state of J-K said he has received information internal from the civil secretariat about the LG administration's move.

"Officers would be well advised to resist any pressure to further disempower the incoming elected government," Abdullah added.

# BJP summons...

and Dr Nirmal Singh, as well as Darakhshan Andrabi and Devender Rana, have also been asked to attend.

The meeting will gather feedback on the Assembly elections and develop strategies for forming a government in J&K following the election results, sources said, adding that discussions will also focus on potential alliances with independent candidates who may be likely winners in certain constituencies.

Sources added that Ram Madhav has been assigned to a 'Kashmir Mission', where he is in contact with various parties to explore options for the BJP to establish the next government in J&K. Madhav previously played a key role in the formation of the BJP-PDP government in the region and helping to develop the 'agenda of alliance'.

# No clarity...

members of the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance were present at the press conference.

Wangchuk said they have requested the authorities to provide them space in Jantar Mantar for holding the fast. He said they have not received any confirmation yet and appealed to all political parties and organisations to provide them with a venue for the protest.

Wangchuk and 150 people from Ladakh were detained from Delhi's Singhu border on Monday night. They were taken to Mahatma Gandhi's memorial at Rajghat on Wednesday and were released after that.

Meanwhile, the Delhi High Court on Friday closed the proceedings by a lawyer in connection with Sonam Wangchuk's detention by the city police earlier this week and said the climate activist, who has now been released, can agitate his grievances himself.

"He does not need (another person) to agitate his rights. He can agitate his rights if he wants to... There cannot be a PIL in this matter... He will agitate in his own way. They (Wangchuk and his associates) will do whatever they want to," a bench headed by Chief Justice Manmohan said.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the petitioner, argued that Wangchuk was kept in detention for almost three days by the Delhi Police in an unlawful manner without producing him before the magistrate.

Bhushan, who had on Thursday claimed that Wangchuk was not "totally free" despite Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's claim that he had been released, told the bench that there was "no restriction" on his movement "as of this morning".

Mehta said there was "never any hindrance" and factually incorrect statements were being made.

Bhushan, however, argued that issues arising from the Delhi Police's order prohibiting assembly and protests were still alive as it was passed in a cavalier manner and later withdrawn before the court hearing

with the intent to prevent the activist and his group from entering the city.

"In case he is free, leave it at that then. Today, in the morning on YouTube I saw his interview with a TV journalist last night," Justice Manmohan told the petitioner's lawyer.

The bench, also comprising Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, added that it would look into the issue of passing of prohibitory orders "in a better case" and took on record Bhushan's statement that he wished to withdraw the petition.

Tushar Mehta on Thursday told the court that Wangchuk and his associates had been released from detention and the Delhi Police order prohibiting assembly and protests in various parts of Delhi has also been withdrawn.

According to the September 30 order issued from the Delhi Police headquarters, the police commissioner had instructed that Section 163 (earlier Section 144 of CrPc) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) be imposed in New Delhi, North and Central districts and jurisdictions of all police stations sharing borders with other states from September 30 to October 5.

# NC-Cong-PDP ...

highlight the BJP's desperation to manipulate numbers, despite lacking the means to form the government.

"Under the constitutional framework, the lieutenant governor must act upon the aid and advice of the council of ministers. Misusing the provision of nomination to alter majority or minority status post-election would be detrimental," Sharma said.

He said according to the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, the LG has the power to nominate five MLAs, including representation from Kashmiri Pandits (KPs) and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) refugees.

"However, under the constitutional framework, he must act upon the aid and advice of the council of ministers. Nominating MLAs before the formation of the government would be a misuse of this provision and could unfairly shift the balance of power in the assembly," he said.

He asserted that the Congress-NC alliance is expected to secure a comfortable majority and any premature nomination would be undemocratic and a betrayal of the people's vote.

Sharma emphasised that the nomination process should only begin after the new government takes office and recommends candidates for the positions. He also criticised the BJP for promising adequate representation in the assembly for PoJK refugees, KPs and other minorities but failing to deliver.

The National Conference also said such powers lie solely with an elected government and cannot be exercised by the lieutenant governor in the absence of an elected body.

"We have raised strong objections against the nomination of five MLAs to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly by the LG. Any such move is unconstitutional and undemocratic," NC provincial president Rattan Lal Gupta said here.

Dr. Mehboob Beg, senior PDP leader and former Parliamentarian also expressed serious concerns over the decision, stating that replacing elected representatives with nominated members is an assault on the already disenfranchised people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Beg remarked, "Elected members represent the will of the people, and they cannot be substituted by nominees chosen by the Lieutenant Governor. This move is not just unhealthy, but it's also an insult to the democratic institution in the region. It appears the BJP is playing a dangerous game with national interests by undermining the essence of elections."

# Dialogue, not ...

matters," the Mirwaiz said.

The Hurriyat Conference chairman said, "We believe that civic elections for governance are no means to resolve this matter (Kashmir issue) and do not represent people's aspirations and sentiments with regard to the conflict."

He said it was "unfortunate" that at this crucial juncture, the regional political organisations and individuals could not jointly fight the great challenges before the people of the region.

"I hope that after the election results, these political parties and individuals will rise to the occasion and collectively prioritise peoples' interest and safeguard their rights, rather than personal and party interests," he added.

The separatist leader stressed that seeking peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue "is not our weakness, but our strength".

Commenting on the Israel-Palestine conflict, the Mirwaiz said the conflict is consuming the region and putting the entire world at great risk.

"The military domination of Israel and its refusal to resolve the conflict in a just and peaceful manner by accepting the natural rights of Palestinians over their land, and instead choosing force and military might, has made the whole region vulnerable leading to deaths of thousands of civilians including children which is deeply distressing," he said.

While the US is arming Israel with bombs and missiles and promoting its own arms industry, it is calling for a ceasefire, the Hurriyat leader said.

"These military powers just want an arms market, so conflicts are a great opportunity for them. We don't want such a situation in this region. That is why we repeatedly advocate peaceful means of outreach and dia-

logue.

"We already have the previous framework of dialogue from Vajpayee ji's and Manmohan Singh ji's time to begin with and work around," the Hurriyat chairman added.

# SF's kill ...

Nendur villages in Abhujmaad on the Narayanpur-Dantewada inter-district border, when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P told PTI over the phone.

Personnel belonging to the state police's District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Special Task Force (STF) were involved in the operation, he said.

Sundarraj said that 28 Naxalites were gunned down in the encounter.

Along with the 28 bodies, a cache of weapons, including an AK-47 rifle and one SLR (self-loading rifle), were recovered from the encounter spot, he said.

Earlier, Dantewada Superintendent of Police Gaurav Rai had said around 30 Naxalites were killed in the gun battle.

In a post on X, CM Sai said, "There is news of 28 Naxalites gunned down in an encounter with security forces in the border area of Narayanpur-Dantewada districts. The great success achieved by the soldiers is commendable. I salute their courage and valour."

"Our fight to eliminate Naxalism will end only after reaching its conclusion. Our double engine government is determined for this. Eliminating Naxalism from the state is our aim," he added.

With this latest encounter, 185 Maoists have been gunned down by the security forces in separate gun battles in the Bastar region comprising seven districts, including Dantewada and Narayanpur, so far this year, police said.

On April 16, as many as 29 Naxalites, including some higher-ranking cadres, were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Kanker district.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, during his visit to Chhattisgarh in August had said India will be free from Left Wing Extremism (LWE) by March 2026, and a strong and ruthless strategy was required to launch the final assault against the menace.

# ME, R-U ...

Economic Conclave here, Modi on the domestic front committed to continuing structural reforms to help India become a developed nation by 2047.

"This conclave is happening at a time when the two big regions of the world are close to war-like situations. These two big regions are crucial for the global economy as well as energy security," he said without naming any country.

India is more than 85 per cent dependent on the import of crude oil, which is converted into fuels like petrol and diesel, and about half of its gas needs. A bulk of these come from the Middle East, and in scenarios of Israel-Iran getting into prolonged conflict, the supplies could be impacted.

"In the midst of these big global uncertainties, we are all here witnessing the Indian era, we are discussing India. This shows the confidence in India... Whether it is science, technology or innovation, India clearly is at a sweet spot. Reform, perform and transform motto we are taking decision to take India forward," Modi said.

He said India today is the fastest-growing major economy, and in terms of GDP, India is the fifth largest economy.

The NDA government, in its third term in office, has taken "bold policy changes" and measures to boost jobs and skilling, and focus on sustainable growth and innovation to help India continue to move on the high-growth path.

In the first three months of the government, it has taken decisions on schemes, involving Rs 15 lakh crore investment, he said.

"Today, the Indian economy is passing through a very big transformational change. On the basis of strong economic fundamentals, the Indian economy is on the path of sustained high growth. Today, India is not preparing only to reach the top but to remain at the top. Every sector offers immense opportunities," Modi noted.

He said the global leaders and financial experts are optimistic about India's growth. Investors believe that it is the right time to invest in India.

"It is not a coincidence. Rather, it is the result of the reforms that have happened in India in the past decade," Modi said.

The Prime Minister said 111 companies have registered on the portal for the PM Internship scheme. This scheme, announced in the Budget, is aimed at helping the youth to get internships in companies.

India is setting up semiconductor plants, and soon, the 'Made in India' chips will be accessible to the world, he said.

To boost manufacturing, India brought a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, which attracted investments worth Rs 1.25 lakh crore.

'Inclusive spirit' is yet another notable factor of India's growth story, Modi said, adding that the growth is accompanied by inclusion.

As a result, he added that 25 crore people have moved out of poverty over the last 10 years.

Listing his government's achievements, Modi said the government has strengthened the banking system, rolled out GST, introduced the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, opened up mining and defence sector for private investment, further liberalised FDI and reduced compliance burden.