

## New BJP Manipur Pradesh president likely after Karnataka Assembly Election

IT News  
Imphal, Apr 16:

Following the resignation of MLA Thokchom Radheshyam from the post of the Advisor to Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, simmering raise of voice of dissent against the BJP legislature leadership started becoming the talk of the town. Some says, Changes in the BJP organisation's leadership is likely to happen after the Karnataka State Assembly Election which is scheduled on May 10 this year to elect 224

MLAs. Result will be declared on May 13.

Speculations are high among the political circle, about the possible change in the organization leaders of the BJP Manipur Pradesh. A Sharda Devi, who has been appointed as the President of the BJP Manipur Pradesh after the untimely demise of Prof. S. Tikendra. Sharda Devi who was appointed as President BJP Manipur Pradesh on June, 2021 ended her tenure in September last year, however due to hectic political activism in North India, the BJP

extended her President post till date.

There are also rumours going around about some of the BJP MLAs preparing to raise their voice against the present BJP Legislature leader, MLA Radheshyam's resignation from the Advisor to CM post by expressing some displeasure to the government has ignited a political conundrum in Manipur's political theatre.

A close source told Imphal Times said that Center is not discussing any issue about the legislature's leadership, however they are serious in

the BJP organisation's set up. The replacement of BJYM leader some months back is the beginning, a BJP insider told Imphal Times.

After Karnataka Election, a new President of the BJP Manipur Pradesh will soon be appointed, the BJP insider source told Imphal Times. He added that four persons are name for the BJP Manipur President post. From among the four the centre will appoint one whom they consider fit for popularizing the BJP in the state in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha Election.

## Resurrection day of Panthou observed as "Anganba Numit"



IT News  
Imphal, Apr 16:

Resurrection of Meitei God man popularly known as "Panthou", after a bizarre incident that happened in 2016 is being observed as "Anganba Numit" - which literally means bright day at Longmaiching, Nongpok Chingu Thong in Imphal East by the followers of Panthou today.

Over hundreds of believers clad in black suit offer prayer to the almighty through the God-man.

In April 2016, many unwanted incidents that took place at Wangkhei where Panthou Performed rituals as per traditional belief. 1000s and 1000s of devotee visited Panthou and Panthou's name

and popularity spread across the state. Number of Panthou believers increased day after another and many believers donated and constructed the temples of three Meitei Gods which which people believe to have been possessed to Panthou. May be differences in belief locals of the Wangkhei area all of a sudden objected the rituals performed by Panthou at his temple. The matter even reached to the court and since then Panthou left the place and remained silent for almost a year.

Later, Panthou - the God-man resurrect again and established his temple at Longmaiching, Nongpok Chingu Thong in Imphal East.

"That incident happened as desire by the God and it is God's desire that I have to stay

at this place", Panthou told his follower saying that those who set ablaze my temple, were innocent and we should forgive them.

"I consider the day as bright day and not a black day as it is God's desire", Panthou told his believer.

At the Panthou Masaikol at Longmaiching, Meitei traditions is well maintained and mixing up with other culture with Meitei traditions by Meitei has been advised not to repeat it as preserving our culture and tradition is the only way to protect Meitei people. Ima Leisheim Enat Loisang, the organizer of the Panthou's rituals and other activities said that at Panthou Masaikol, all women and men strictly follow Meitei Traditional culture and dress.

## BJP is pinning high hopes on its agenda of Nationalism and Hindutva

Opposition parties have to agree on a common narrative, appealing to people

By: Harihar Swarup  
New Delhi, Apr 16:

With day-long protests by Congress across the country recently, the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi from Parliament has given shape to political chessboard, setting up the opening pieces for the 2024 election battle. How events pan out depends on subsequent moves of various protagonists. We can, however, make preliminary observations.

One, the next national election may not depart substantially from the previous two in their broad framing as "Modi vs Congress" and "Modi vs Gandhi" elections. After Bharat Jodo Yatra campaign, Congress has occupied increasing opposition space. Meanwhile, the brief spurt of regional parties such as TMC and AAP on the national stage last year got cut off through election reverses and corruption investigations. Political headlines, well after Bharat Jodo Yatra, all belong to Rahul Gandhi.

Disqualification of Gandhi section which prompted cross party walkouts in state assembly

of Maharashtra and Bihar, has only appeared to boost his political status within the opposition space. Even traditional Congress baiters such as BRS, TMC and AAP came out strongly in condemnation — Arvind Kejriwal termed BJP government as a more "oppressive" than British rule — all repeating the narrative of "corrosion" of democratic institutions, which was the centrepiece of Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY). Congress, of course, pressed its charge that the "dictatorial" move validated Gandhi's attack and showed the government was increasingly "afraid" of Rahul.

BJP perhaps does not mind fuelling a "Modi vs Gandhi" narrative ahead of state contests such as Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh, where it faces considerable anti-incumbency. It does have some electoral logic as Narendra Modi is still much more popular than Gandhi — in recent India Today Mood of the national survey, 53% preferred Modi for PM as the opposed to 43% respondents for Gandhi.

Two, the neta narratives for next year's election is increasingly coalescing around a contest between what the governing party pitches as a "nationalist" vision and opposition parties pitch as a "democratic" vision.

The PM is leading BJP's political campaign on the plank of national pride, showing the G20 summit as the crowning jewel of India's "dazzling" rise to "great power" status. With post-pandemic economic recovery encountering heavy headwinds, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is keeping a low profile while foreign minister Jaishankar leads the government's charge. Meanwhile, the opposition is portrayed not just as "corrupt" but often accused of colluding with "anti national" forces opposed to this national progress. The political storm over Gandhi's comments in the UK was one instance of this emerging narrative.

The problem the opposition faces is that unlike BJP's clear articulation of a singular vision, the opposition's vision is an ambiguous, disjointed formulation. This is not necessarily its fault—democracy is inherently a multi-valued concept that lends itself multiple meanings, articulations. For example, BJP presents its own democratic vision as one of empowerment say the celebration of a tribal President, and national pride India as "the mother democracy".

That is not to say a democratic narrative is politically fruitless, particularly in front of the governing party trumpeting hard nationalism. Electoral decimating of the Congress in 1977 and 1989 prove it. In 1977, Congress defended Emergency claiming anarchist in opposition ranks threatened in the national security. Before 1989 elections, Congress celebrated the emergence of a modern India with an aggressive foreign policy under Rajiv Gandhi, while squabbling opportunists unfit to deal with the "serious challenges" to national integrity in Kashmir and Punjab. In a characteristic campaign attack, a full page Congress advertisement showed a broken doll with the caption: "My heart beats for India! And I won't let anyone break it to pieces." (IPA Service)

and popularity spread across the state. Number of Panthou believers increased day after another and many believers donated and constructed the temples of three Meitei Gods which which people believe to have been possessed to Panthou. May be differences in belief locals of the Wangkhei area all of a sudden objected the rituals performed by Panthou at his temple. The matter even reached to the court and since then Panthou left the place and remained silent for almost a year.

## Three KKL activists arrested

IT News  
Imphal, Apr 16:

Three members of the kangleipak Kanba Lup (KKL) were arrested by the Imphal West police team for conducting press conference that may escalation of any communal tension between different communities.

The KKL activists were conducting a press conference objecting the inclusion of Chin Kuki and Meitei

Pangal as indigenous people by the Govt notification.

The press were requested not to carry the news conference in view of the volatile law and order situation in the State and to avoid further escalation of any communal tension between different communities. Many newspapers didn't report the news conference as it violates the journalistic code of ethics.

The three KKL activists

arrested have been identified as Longiam Munindro (52 years) s/o L. Khelen Singh of Thangmeiband Sinam Leikai, Executive Member, Uritkhinbam Manadeva Singh (40 years) s/o U. Mani Singh of Wangkhei Konsam Leikai, General Secretary, Sougrakpam Sushilkumar Singh (45 years) s/o S. Ibmocha Singh of Singamei Sorokhaibam Leikai.

They were produce to the Court.

## 2018 Manipuri film Who Said Boys Can't Wear Makeup is no less than a revolution

By: David Whiso  
Imphal, Apr 16:

**Who Said Boys Can't Wear Make-Up (2018)** - An educational film, written and directed by the very resilient Priyakanta Laishram was nothing short of a revolution. The film had broken glass ceilings and raised many eyebrows since it was the first-ever film from the entire North East India to highlight the topic of gender-neutral fashion, make-up, and clothing and Laishram won the Best Multimedia Influencer Award 2018 for it in Mumbai. The film also featured many other boys and men who wear gender-neutral clothes and make-up in day-to-day life alongside popular names like Priyakanta Laishram himself, Inder Bajwa (Former India's Top

Model), Nimrit Kaur Ahluwalia (Indian Television Actress), Thounaojam Strela Luwang (Femina Miss India Manipur 2023), Peden Ongmu Namgyal (Miss Diva Supranational 2017), Bala Hijam (Manipuri Actress), John Oinam (Singer) and others.

No one bats an eye when a girl/woman walks out of the house with makeup. On the other hand, if a boy/man does the same, everyone stares, as if makeup on a man is a sin. People have denied the fact that makeup has its origins thousands of years ago and has historically been used for both men and women. In today's society, makeup on men is taken as taboo, and men are discouraged from doing it. The fact that this behavior is viewed as socially unacceptable lies equally in homopho-



bia, toxic masculinity, and misogyny. Men with make-up are painted as effeminate and assumed to be homosexual, their masculinity is either questioned or attacked, and their sexuality/gender identity is falsely branded.

Through the film Who Said Boys Can't Wear Makeup,

Priyakanta Laishram raised numerous valid points against the existing stereotypical thoughts, practices, and beliefs of society.

"Various civilizations across different eras in human history have documented men using different forms of makeup or their equivalent at the time.

So, how did men's makeup become so stigmatized in the first place? The lack of representation eventually led the majority of men to think that makeup makes you look more feminine—a view that has been ingrained in modern society, albeit diminishing, until today." Priyakanta addressed.

When asked about how he decided on making a film on men's make-up and gender-neutral fashion, Priyakanta said it all started from his personal experiences as a boy who wears makeup and gender-neutral clothes in real life.

"Everyone around me got offended when I first started wearing make-up, including my friends, family, relatives, and neighbors. Wherever I go, I used to get a lot of derogatory remarks from people. People called me all sorts of

names. During high school, one of my teachers even dragged me out of the classroom and forced me to wash the makeup off my face with contaminated water from the toilet. It traumatized me for a long time. I didn't even tell my family because I was afraid of getting judged again for my choices. I cried and spent many sleepless nights. But eventually, all those criticisms and hardships that I had faced made me braver and more confident. I started caring less about others' opinions and started following my own choice of fashion and style. That was when I decided to make an educational film on gender-neutral fashion and make-up titled 'Who Said Boys Can't Wear Makeup' in 2018, to raise my voice against stereotypical societal norms

and expectations. "Priyakanta added.

Today, the world has reached a new level of acceptance where in many circles (at least in Westernized societies) anyone is welcome to use makeup. Men use makeup in both natural and stand-out ways to day-to-day looks and enhance their natural features, and skin care in particular has seen a huge rise in popularity. Like most things in our society, makeup has been assigned a gender, when in reality, it doesn't have one. If a man chooses to, we need to stop thinking that it's a commentary on his masculinity or sexuality.

Beauty products are for everyone regardless of one's gender identity, and it's time we normalize wearing makeup for those who have been instructed not to.

## Restricting a brand in a state is suicidal

### Talking Points

Narvijay Yadav



In the midst of poll preparations in Karnataka, the controversy of Amul and Nandini milk brands created a stir raising the temperature of the campaigning. As soon as Amul announced the online delivery of its milk in Bangalore, opposition parties including the Congress and Janata Dal (S) accused the ruling BJP in the state that the Gujarat-based Amul was challenging Karnataka's very own Nandini brand. Opposition parties also feared that the Rs 21,000-crore Nandini brand could be merged with Amul. An announcement made on social media heated up the politics of Karnataka. Actually, Union Home Minister Amit Shah in December observed that co-operation between the umbrella brands of Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation and Karnataka Milk Federation could do wonders.

The truth is that Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation's Amul brand has been supplying pouch milk and fresh products in two districts of Karnataka - Hubballi and Belgaum since 2015. Even the Amul ice cream is prepared with Nandini milk. Its intention was to make Amul milk and curd available only through e-commerce in Bangalore. Moreover, Amul milk is costlier than Karnataka's homegrown Nandini brand, so the question of competition between the two does not arise. The Government of Karnataka provides subsidies to dairy farmers for Nandini milk, hence the rate of Nandini milk is Rs 39 per liter in the state, while Amul milk is sold at Rs 54 per liter. The milk controversy forced Amul managing director Jayen Mehta to clarify that 'there is no question of competition' between Amul and Nandini. However, this kind of controversy can be detrimental to many other desi brands that have pan-India aspirations. Every brand and company should be free to market and distribute its products anywhere in the country.

India is the largest milk producer in the world with a production of 220.78 million tonnes in 2021-22. The country is contributing a quarter of global milk production. It is a 51% growth when compared to 2014-15. The source of the data is the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India. But recently there has been a slight decrease in milk production. The share of milk cooperatives and private players in the milk market is expected to reach 54% by 2026. Dairying is often the primary source of income for many landless families and marginal farmers. Therefore, it is in their interest that successful brands like Amul and Nandini buy and sell in the markets. Dragging milk into politics will only harm the farmers.

The Indian dairy industry is facing several challenges. The average milk production per animal in India is relatively low as compared to other countries. Inadequate nutrition, deficiencies in breeding practices, and lack of modern techniques can be some of the primary reasons behind this. The lack of proper infrastructure for milk collection, processing, and distribution affects the quality of milk. This often results in milk spoilage, weakened supply chains, and increased costs for farmers and consumers. The Indian dairy industry is predominantly unorganized, consisting mostly of small-scale farmers. This makes marketing and branding of dairy products difficult. Climate change is a new concern, which can affect the health and productivity of livestock. The lumpy disease in cows also impacted milk production to a great extent in the northern states of India during the second half of the previous year.

## Social Media for Small Businesses in 2023



By: Vijay GarG

Social media is a powerful tool for businesses of all sizes, and it's no secret that having a strong presence on social media platforms can help drive traffic and boost sales. As we move into 2023, there are a few key social media strategies that businesses should be aware of to stay ahead of the curve.

Prioritize visual content. In the coming year, we expect to see a continued trend towards visual content, such as videos and images. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok have already seen a surge in popularity, and businesses should take advantage of these platforms to create engaging visual content that will help them stand out.

Leverage user-generated content. Encourage customers to share their own experiences with your brand on social media. Not only is this a great way to build trust and credibility, but it's also a powerful way to get your brand in front of new audiences.

Make use of social commerce. Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook are increasingly allowing businesses to sell products directly through their apps. By leveraging social commerce, businesses can reach new audiences and make it easy for customers to make purchases.

Invest in influencer marketing. Influencer marketing can be a cost-effective way to reach new audiences and boost sales. By partnering with influencers who have a large following in your industry, you can tap into their audience and gain exposure for your brand.

Use social media to drive real-world engagement. Finally, businesses should look for ways to use social media to drive real-world engagement. For example, they can use social media platforms to promote in-person events or to offer special deals to customers who check in at their physical location.

Overall, social media is a constantly evolving landscape and to stay ahead, businesses should be aware of the latest trends and strategies. By leveraging visual content, user-generated content, social commerce, influencer marketing and driving real-world engagement, businesses can maximize the impact of their social media efforts.

Letters, Feedback and Suggestions to 'Imphal Times'

can be sent to our e-mail: [imphaltimes@gmail.com](mailto:imphaltimes@gmail.com).

For advertisement kindly contact: - 0385-3590330 (O). For time being readers can reach the office at Cell Phone No. 9862860745 for any purpose.

## Attacks against Churches anger Christians in North Eastern States

### Congress and Regional Parties blame BJP led State Governments

By: Ashis Biswas

In northeast Indian states, upset Christians feel they must protest more vigorously against the recent demolition of a few churches in Manipur and Assam, for which they hold the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) accountable. Intriguingly, Nagaland-based Christians have reacted more sharply than their fellow religionists in the region.

The Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) according to local regional media reports a few days ago, went beyond merely criticising the ruling parties of the region for what it felt was an attack against the Church. In a statement it simultaneously deplored the apparent indifference on part of Christian legislators in the region over such sensitive matters affecting the community. It appealed to Christian politicians not to be overwhelmed by political power or money.

Reports from some areas suggested that local government authorities had launched strict action against illegal constructions/encroachments built without permission, violating existing rules. Churches were not spared. Accord-

ing to one Dimapur-based account, the churches destroyed were the Evangelical Baptist Convention Church, the Evangelical Lutheran church in Manipur and the Catholic Holy Spirit Church, in addition to another in Assam. The demolitions were carried out a few days ago by local authorities accompanied by security forces.

The NPCC statement flayed Christian lawmakers in the NE states as well as those elected to the Indian Parliament for their failure to raise the issue at any level. The ruling BJP, it was alleged had correctly assessed the numerical and other weaknesses that Christians suffered from, exploiting them to its own advantage. Not too many churches in the tribal areas had proper construction permits, it was explained.

Clearly this was a time for Christians to come together to protect their faith and identity. In India, the North and West regions generally voted for 'Hindu nationalism' while in other areas people voted for their identity and pride. The community, according to the NPCC must not ignore the present threat to their iden-

tity, it was stressed.

Expressing its surprise over the lack of reaction among Chief Ministers of Christian dominated states of Mizoram, Nagaland and Meghalaya, the NPCC felt the leaders were more interested in getting closer to the ruling BJP than anything else. Even in Manipur, Christians accounted for some 40% of the population.

Going by experience, observers said, it was a question of time before US/EU-based NGOs and Christian organizations would register their protest over what had happened in the Northeast, given their close ties with various Christian bodies and organisations in the region.

Over the years, there have been regular complaints about the increasing harassment, assaults, etc against Christians and Muslims in India especially after 2014 when the BJP was first elected to power. Churches and missionaries have often come under grievous attacks by enraged mobs in the past, but those guilty have usually been punished.

Also, by the standards of a largely populated country like India, such incidents have been few and far between. Among conservative Hindus and Muslims in the sub continent, there has remained an undercurrent of hostility against religious Conversion and other activities on part of certain Christian organisations, which have led to tension/violence in India and Pakistan.

In India, over 50% of Christians live in South India. Among Christians in India 37% are Catholics, followed by Baptists and communities led by the Churches of North and South India. Christians account for only 2.4% of the population composed mostly of former Hindus. Among younger people embracing the faith, 37% are from scheduled castes, followed by about 34% from the scheduled tribes.

Interestingly, many Indian Christians have been known to share some of the beliefs and value systems of their fellow citizens in different areas, without compromising their religious identity in any way.

(IPA Service)

## High Courts cannot conduct 'Mini Trial' at the stage of discharge or while quashing criminal proceedings U/S 482 CrPC : SC

By: Sanjeev Sirohi, Advocate

While setting aside a judgment passed by the High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh which quashed the criminal proceedings in a case investigated by the CBI, the Supreme Court in a most learned, laudable, landmark and latest judgment titled Central Bureau of Investigation vs Aryan Singh Etc. in Criminal Appeal Nos. 1025-1026 of 2023 (at SLP (CRL.) Nos. 12794-12795 of 2022) in the exercise of its criminal appellate jurisdiction that was pronounced as recently as on April 10, 2023 has reiterated that a High Court cannot conduct a "mini trial" at the stage of discharge or quashing of the criminal proceedings while exercising limited powers under Section 482 of the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (CrPC). The Apex Court also rightly reaffirmed that whether the proceedings were malicious or not was to be considered at the conclusion of trial and not at the stage of discharging or quashing the criminal proceedings. Of course, we must certainly note here that it was also made crystal clear by the Apex Court that what was required to be considered was whether there were sufficient materials collected during the course of the investigation, which warranted the accused to be tried.

At the very outset, this remarkable, robust, rational and recent judgment authored by Hon'ble Mr Justice MR Shah for a Bench of the Apex Court comprising of himself and Hon'ble Mr Justice CT Ravikumar sets the ball in motion by first and foremost putting forth in para 1 that, "Feeling aggrieved and dissatisfied with the impugned common judgment and order passed by the High Court of Punjab and Haryana at Chandigarh in Criminal Misc. Application Nos. 54107 of 2021 and 8233 of 2022 by which the High Court, in exercise of the powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C., has quashed the criminal proceedings of the FIR No. RC0512020S0001 dated 29.04.2020 registered at Police Station State

Grime Branch, Chandigarh under Sections 452, 323, 365, 342, 186, 225, 506 and 120-B IPC (earlier registered as FIR No.195 dated 30.08.2014 under Sections 452, 323, 365, 342, 225, 186, 506, 120-B IPC at Police Station Phase-1, Mohali) as well as all the subsequent proceedings arising out of the same, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has preferred the present appeals."

Simply put, the Bench mentions in para 2 that, "Shri K.M. Nataraj, learned ASG appearing on behalf of the CBI has vehemently submitted that pursuant to the directions issued by the Hon'ble High Court, investigation of the aforesaid was handed over to the CBI, pursuant to which the FIR in question was registered on 29.04.2020 at Police Station, Crime Branch, Chandigarh for the aforesaid offences."

As it turned out, the Bench discloses in para 2.1 that, "It is submitted that initially, the accused Aryan Singh was not named in the fresh FIR. However, thereafter, after conclusion of the investigation, the chargesheet came to be filed against the said Aryan Singh also and he has been included as one of the accused."

Further, the Bench points out in para 2.2 that, "It is submitted that thereafter both the accused Aryan Singh and Gautam Cheema filed discharge applications before the learned Trial Court, which came to be dismissed on merits. It is submitted that thereafter by the impugned judgment and order, in exercise of the powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C., the High Court has quashed the entire criminal proceedings, as if, the High Court was conducting a mini trial."

To put things in perspective, the Bench envisages in para 2.3 that, "It is vehemently submitted that in the facts and circumstances of the case, the High Court has exceeded in its jurisdiction while quashing the entire criminal proceedings against the accused Aryan Singh and Gautam Cheema.

It is vehemently submitted that while quashing the criminal proceedings, the High Court has observed that the allegations/charges against the accused have not been proved and that the prosecution is malicious. It is submitted that at the stage of deciding the quashing petitions against the order passed by the learned Trial Court, refusing to discharge the accused, the High Court ought not to have considered and/or observed that the charges are not proved. It is submitted that the charges are required to be proved during the trial and on the basis of the evidence led. It is further submitted that even the High Court has materially erred in observing that the prosecution is malicious. It is submitted that the investigation was handed over to the CBI, pursuant to the directions issued by the High Court and, thereafter, after conclusion of the investigation, the accused came to be chargesheeted and therefore, the initiation of the criminal proceedings/proceedings cannot be said to be malicious. It is submitted that whether any criminal proceedings is malicious, is also required to be considered at the conclusion of the trial and not at this stage, namely, at the stage of exercise of powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C."

For sake of clarity, the Bench observes in para 2.4 that, "Number of submissions have been made on merits also by Shri Nataraj, learned ASG however, for the reasons stated hereinabove, we are inclined to set aside the impugned common judgment and order passed by the High Court by relegating the accused to face the trial and thereafter the trial is to proceed against the accused, we are not considering the submissions made on behalf of the CBI as well as on behalf of the accused on merits."

Quite frankly, the Bench then propounds in para 4 stating that, "Having gone through the impugned common judgment and or-

der passed by the High Court quashing the criminal proceedings and discharging the accused, we are of the opinion that the High Court has exceeded in its jurisdiction in quashing the entire criminal proceedings in exercise of the limited powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C. and/or in exercise of the powers under Article 226 of the Constitution of India."

Most significantly, the Bench then mandates absolutely no words to inquire in para 4.1 holding that, "From the impugned common judgment and order passed by the High Court, it appears that the High Court has dealt with the proceedings before it, as if, the High Court was conducting a mini trial and/or the High Court was considering the applications against the judgment and order passed by the learned Trial Court on conclusion of trial. As per the cardinal principle of law, at the stage of discharge and/or quashing of the criminal proceedings, while exercising the powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C., the Court is not required to conduct the mini trial. The High Court in the common impugned judgment and order has observed that the charges against the accused are not proved. This is not the stage where the prosecution/investigating agency is/are required to prove the charges. The charges are required to be proved during the trial on the basis of the evidence led by the prosecution/investigating agency. Therefore, the High Court has materially erred in going in detail in the allegations and the material collected during the course of the investigation against the accused, at this stage. At the stage of discharge and/or while exercising the powers under Section 482 Cr.P.C., the Court has a very limited jurisdiction and is required to consider "whether any sufficient material is available to proceed further against the accused for which the accused is required to be tried or not."

contd. on page 3



# Former MP Atiq Ahmed, his brother shot dead in Prayagraj in presence of police

Agency  
New Delhi, Apr 16:

Former MP Atiq Ahmed and his brother Ashraf were shot dead in presence of police officials as they were being taken to a hospital in Prayagraj on Saturday, reported The Indian Express.

The two brothers were shot as they were talking to the media surrounded by policemen and journalists.

Ahmed, his wife Sahista Parveen, their two sons, Ashraf and others have been booked by the Uttar Pradesh Police in the murder of lawyer Umesh Pal, who was a witness in the killing of Bahujan Samaj Party MLA Raju Pal in 2005. Umesh Pal was shot dead in Prayagraj on February 24.

On Saturday, the man who shot Ahmed and Ashraf and two of this associate surrendered to the police immediately after the firing. They have been identified as Lovlesh, Sunny and Arun Maurya, reported NDTV.

"They are being interrogated and we will know details later," said Prayagraj Police Commissioner Ramit Sharma. The police said that the shooters were disguised as reporters, adding that a journalist and a police constable have been injured, reported NDTV.



Gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed (right) and his brother Ashraf being escorted to a hospital by police for a medical checkup in Prayagraj on Saturday.

Chief Minister Adityanath has ordered a high-level investigation into the shooting and has formed a three-member judicial commission. Large gatherings have been banned in all districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Four others, including Atiq Ahmed's son Asad Ahmed, have been killed by the Uttar Pradesh Police so far in "gun-fights". Extrajudicial executions, popularly known as "encounters", have risen since the Bhartiya Janata Party government came to power in Uttar Pradesh in 2017.

### Who was Atiq Ahmed?

He had a long stint both in politics and with the criminal world. He was first accused in

a murder case in 1979. In the next 10 years, he emerged as a person who had strong influence in the western part of Allahabad city.

He won his first election as an independent candidate and became a state lawmaker in 1989. He went on to win the seat for two consecutive terms and his fourth win came as a lawmaker from the regional Samajwadi party (SP).

In 2004, he won a seat in the federal election as an SP candidate and became an MP. Meanwhile, cases continued to be filed against him in Allahabad and other parts of the state.

Ahmed contested a few

more elections in the next decade but lost all of them. In 2019, India's top court ordered that he should be moved to a jail in Gujarat state after it emerged that he planned attacks on a businessman from a prison in Uttar Pradesh where he was being held awaiting trial in another case.

He was brought back to Prayagraj in March from Gujarat to appear in a local court as it announced his sentencing in a kidnapping case.

Ahmed was also brought to the city to be questioned in other cases. His brother Ashraf, who was in a jail in Bareilly district, was also brought to the city to be questioned.

# With 10,093 new Covid-19 cases, India sees slight decline in daily tally; Active count over 57.5K

Agency  
New Delhi, Apr 16:

India's daily tally of Covid-19 cases witnessed a slight decline on Sunday after 10,093 new coronavirus infections were reported in the past 24 hours, according to Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry's latest bulletin. A total of 10,753 cases were reported on Sunday. On Friday, the daily tally stood at 11,109 cases.

With the addition of new cases, India's active caseload reached 57,542 which is 0.13 per cent of the total cases.

The country's total Covid tally currently stands at 4.48 crore (4,48,18,115).

As per the Ministry's latest data, the death toll has also climbed to 5,31,114 with 23 deaths recorded in the last 24 hours, taking the fatality rate to 1.19 per cent.

While five deaths were reported from Delhi, three each were from Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, two each from Karnataka and Maharashtra, one each from Haryana, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand and four reconciled by Kerala, the data updated at 8 am stated.

India also recorded 6,248 recoveries in the last 24 hours, taking the overall discharges to 4,42,29,459.

The recovery rate of the country currently stands at 98.68 per cent.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,42,29,459, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent. According to the ministry's website, 220.66 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive.

# Assam Rifles apprehended NSCN (IM) cadres in Mokokchung



PRO (Defence)  
Kohima, Apr 16:

Assam Rifles apprehended two active NSCN (IM) cadres from general area New Camp, Mokokchung District, Nagaland on April 14, 2023.

Based on confirmed input regarding movement of active cadres of NSCN (IM) astride Mokokchung - Mariani Road, threatening local civilians and carrying out out extortion ac-

tivities, an operation was launched and Mobile Vehicle Check Post was established to apprehend these cadres.

The team intercepted a Maruti Alto Vehicle registration number AS01 X 6465 and on being challenged the occupants fled towards the ungravelled track and entered into a wooden temporary hut. The location was surrounded and on thorough search of the wooden house was done,

two cadres of NSCN (IM) namely Self Styled Sergeant Major Imkongtiba and Self Styled Sergeant Major Phamching along with two weapons and live ammunition were apprehended.

The apprehended NSCN (IM) cadres along with recovered war like stores have been handed over to Mokokchung Police Station-I, Mokokchung District for further investigations.

# BJP has 'instructed' CBI to arrest me, will honestly answer questions posed by agency: CM Kejriwal

Agency  
New Delhi, Apr 16:

Ahead of his appearance before the CBI, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday alleged that the BJP might have ordered the probe agency to arrest him and said they are "very powerful and can send anyone to jail".

In a five-minute video message on Twitter, Kejriwal said he would truthfully and honestly answer questions posed by the CBI in the excise case as he has nothing to hide.

"I have been summoned by CBI today and I will give all the answers with honesty. These people are very power-

ful. They can send anyone to jail, it does not matter if that person has committed any crime or not," the AAP leader said.

"Since yesterday, all of their leaders are screaming at top of their voices that Kejriwal will be arrested and I think BJP has instructed CBI also that Kejriwal should be arrested.

If BJP has given an order, then who is CBI? CBI is going to arrest me," he said.

He also asserted that he can sacrifice his life for the country "I love the country and Bharat Mata, can sacrifice my life for the country," he added.

Kejriwal is set to appear

before the CBI on Sunday in connection with the excise policy case and will be accompanied to the agency's office by his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann and cabinet colleagues.

He is being summoned as a witness and is not an accused in the excise policy case in which his former deputy Manish Sisodia was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on February 26.

Sisodia was last month arrested by the ED.

It is alleged that the Delhi government's excise policy for 2021-22 to grant licences to liquor traders favoured certain

dealers who had allegedly paid bribes for it, a charge strongly refuted by the AAP.

The policy was later scrapped.

Officials said the CBI may also quiz Kejriwal on the statements of other accused where they have indicated the manner in which policy was allegedly influenced to favour some liquor businessmen and the "South liquor lobby".

In addition, the agency may also seek his role in the formulation of the excise policy and his knowledge about alleged influence being cast by the traders and 'South lobby' members, the officials said.

Contd. from Page 2

# High Courts cannot conduct 'Mini Trial'.....

Of course, it cannot be just glossed over that the Bench then expounds in para 4.2 mentioning that, "One another reason pointed by the High Court is that the initiation of the criminal proceedings/proceedings is malicious. At this stage, it is required to be noted that the investigation was handed over to the CBI pursuant to the directions issued by the High Court. That thereafter, on conclusion of the investigation, the accused persons have been chargesheeted. Therefore, the High Court has erred in observing at this stage that the initiation of the criminal proceedings/proceedings is malicious. Whether the criminal proceedings was/were malicious or not, is not required to be considered at this stage. The same is required to be considered at the conclusion of the trial. In any case, at this stage, what is required to be considered is a prima facie case

and the material collected during the course of the investigation, which warranted the accused to be tried."

As a corollary, the Bench then hastens to add in para 5 holding that, "In view of the above and for the reasons stated above, when the High Court has exceeded in its jurisdiction in quashing the entire criminal proceedings and applying the law laid down by this Court in catena of decisions on exercise of the powers at the stage of discharge and/or quashing the criminal proceedings, the impugned common judgment and order passed by the High Court quashing the criminal proceedings against the accused is unsustainable and the same deserves to be quashed and set aside."

Finally, the Bench then concludes by holding in para 5.1 that, "In view of the above and for the reasons stated

above, present appeals succeed. The impugned common judgment and order passed by the High Court quashing and setting aside the criminal proceedings against the accused Aryan Singh and Gautam Cheema is/are quashed and set aside. The accused to face the trial for which they are chargesheeted. However, it is observed that all the contentions and defences, which are available to the respective parties are kept open, to be considered by the learned Trial Court during the trial. Considering the fact that the allegations in the FIR relates back to the year 2014 and as more than eight years have passed, we direct the learned Trial Court to conclude the trial at the earliest, but not later than 12 months from the date of the receipt of the present order. CBI to produce the present order before the concerned Magistrate at the earliest. All

concerned are directed to cooperate with the learned Trial Court in concluding the trial within the time prescribed mentioned hereinabove. Present appeals are allowed accordingly."

In sum, we thus see that the Apex Court has inter alia made it indubitably clear and has brought home the key point which must definitely be adhered to also in totality that the High Courts cannot conduct 'mini trial' at the stage of discharge or while quashing criminal proceedings under Section 482 of the CrPC. It thus definitely merits no reiteration of any kind that all the High Courts must definitely without fail pay heed to what the Apex Court has held so very clearly, cogently, composedly and convincingly in this leading case as pointed hereinabove. No doubt, there can certainly be just no denying or disputing it!

IT Correspondent  
Bathinda (Punjab), Apr 16:

Dr. Rajinder Kumar Uppal, a prolific writer, a Man of Letters, an acclaimed academician, a research stalwart, and the more ingenious guide has won accolades not only in the academic field but also in the genre of research. Presently, he is serving in the most exalted institution, Baba Farid College of Management and Technology (Punjab), as a Professor-cum-Principal. He is also visiting Professor in Indus International University, Himachal Pradesh. Professor (Dr.) R.K. Uppal nominated President of the International Goodwill Society of India (Punjab Chapter). Dr. Uppal thanked the president and secretary of IGSI. He also thanked Prof (Dr.) A.K. Tomer former Principal of D.S. College Aligarh, (UP) and chief conference coordinator of the Indian Economic Association.

This nomination is made on the basis of Dr. R.K. Uppal's academic achievements and huge contribution to qualita-



is also a frequent reviewer, discussant, and on-session chair for several professional organizations. Truly, he is a visionary in the field of banking and finance, with exceptional theoretical and applied contributions to the subject. Dr. Uppal's contributions to the societal benefits of mankind are beyond speculations. His zeal to bring about change is an inspiration to every young student and researcher to work in a way that helps the world and brings us closer to the idea of global peace. He is an embodiment of passion, perseverance, excellence, critical thinking, and professionalism.

Today, the echelon he has attained academically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually is even beyond the dreams of the majority of achievers. This erudite scholar's research work and academic excellence promoted various national and international organizations to honor such an inclusive academician. Many organizations, researchers, and academicians welcome this decision of IGSI.

Dr. Uppal is an accomplished academician, a distinguished author, a collaborative researcher, and an effective mentor to young scholars. He

## Delhi Excise policy scam case: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal appears before CBI for questioning

Courtesy: Financial Express  
New Delhi, Apr 16:

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal appeared before the CBI on Sunday for questioning in the excise policy scam case, officials said. The agency had summoned him on Friday last seeking his appearance as a witness before the investigation team to answer their queries on the inputs generated during the probe in which his former deputy Manish Sisodia was also arrested on February 26, they said.

Kejriwal arrived in his car at the heavily fortified CBI headquarters, where the Delhi Police has put in place four rings of barricading to prevent any possible protests by the Aam Admi Party leaders and supporters. The CBI has kept Sunday for questioning as the neighbourhood, which consists of complexes having government offices, remains closed, thus causing the least



inconvenience to the officials coming here.

After his arrival at the agency headquarters at 11:10 AM, Kejriwal was taken to the first floor office of the Anti-Corruption Branch of the CBI, which is probing the matter. Senior officials of the agency remained present in the office on Sunday to keep an eye on the development, a normal course whenever a VIP comes to the agency, they said.

During the day, which will also include a lunch break, the CBI may ask the chief minister about the policy formula-

tion process, especially the "untraceable" file, which was earlier slated to be put before the Council of Ministers, they said. They said the file containing opinions of the expert committee and public and legal opinions on it was not kept before the council and remains untraceable.

The agency may also quiz Kejriwal on the statements of other accused, where they have indicated the manner in which policy was allegedly influenced to favour some liquor businessmen and the South liquor lobby, they said. In addition, the officials said

the agency might also seek his role in formulating the excise policy and his knowledge about the alleged influence being cast by the traders and South lobby members.

Kejriwal may also be asked if he was involved in the formulation of the policy before it was given approval, they said. Sisodia was later taken into custody by the Enforcement Directorate last month and remains in judicial custody with his bail plea rejected by the special court on March 31, they said.

While dismissing the bail plea, the court said he played the "most important and vital role in the criminal conspiracy" and had been "deeply involved" in formulating and implementing the said policy to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the said conspiracy. The court termed Sisodia "prima facie" as "the architect" of the criminal conspiracy.

## Nandini Gupta crowned Femina Miss India 2023, Thounaojam Strela Luwang second runners-up



Nandini Gupta (Centre), Shreya Punja (Right) and Thounaojam Strela Luwang (Left)

IT News  
Imphal, Apr 16:

Nandini Gupta from Rajasthan has been crowned Femina Miss India World 2023.

She won the beauty pageant in a grand ceremony on Saturday held in Imphal, Manipur.

Delhi's Shreya Punja won the title of the first runner-up while Thounaojam Strela Luwang from Manipur received the title of the second runner-up.

19-year-old Nandini hails from Rajasthan's Kota, which is one of the biggest hubs of India for engineering and medical aspirants.

The winner holds a degree in Business Management and is dedicated towards taking up

challenges and succeeding them in life.

The 59th edition of the country's prestigious beauty pageant was successfully organized in a historic ceremony at the Indoor Stadium, Khuman Lampak in Imphal, Manipur.

Taking it to Instagram the official Miss India handle posted a picture of Nandini's winning moment with the caption, "WORLD - here she comes! Nandini Gupta has conquered our stage and taken over our hearts with her magnetism, charm, endurance and beauty! We're so proud and can't wait to see her on the Miss World stage! We're so proud of your journey and all the hard work you've undertaken to earn the crown to

your full credit. May you shine always! Ladies and gentlemen, welcome your new reigning queen, Nandini Gupta, Femina Miss India World 2023."

Meanwhile, the extravaganza celebrated the prestigious beauty pageant featuring memorable performances by the Bollywood celebrities Kartik Aryan and Ananya Pandey.

The emcees for the show were Manish Paul and Bhumi Pednaker, who kept the people engaged with impromptu antics.

Moreover, the grand event showcased the stunning collections of Namrata Joshipura for Trends, Rocky Star and Robert Naorem that helped the contestants to exhibit their traditional costumes.

## 2nd G20 Health Working Group Meeting to Commence in Goa from 17 April

PIB  
Panaji, Apr 16:

The 2nd Health Working Group meeting under G20 India Presidency will be held during 17th - 19th April, 2023 in Goa. More than 180 delegates from 19 G20 member countries, 10 invited states and 22 International Organizations will be participating.

The 2nd HWG meeting will have thematic discussions on the following three priorities identified under the G20 Health Track:

Priority I: Health Emergencies Prevention, Preparedness and Response (with Focus on One Health & AMR);

Priority II: Strengthening Cooperation in Pharmaceutical Sector with focus on Access and Availability to safe,

effective, quality and Affordable Medical Countermeasures (Vaccines, Therapeutics and Diagnostics)

Priority III: Digital Health Innovations and Solutions to Aid Universal Health Coverage and Improve Healthcare Service Delivery"

Several cultural programmes infused with flavours of Goan culture have been planned for the event to showcase India's rich diversity and culture based on Indian philosophy of 'Atithi Devo Bhava'. Delegates will also be able to experience Goa's culinary culture, besides enjoying its scenic beauty and generous hospitality.

The Health Track of G20 India Presidency will comprise four Health Working Group (HWG) Meetings and

one Health Ministerial Meeting (HMM). India plans to host four side events along with HWG meetings to enrich, supplement and support G20 discussions. A side event on Digital Health will be held on the sidelines of the 2nd meeting of HWG at Goa, 18th - 19th April 2023. The meetings will be held in different locations across the country. This aims to showcase India's rich and diverse cultures.

India assumed the presidency of the G20 on 1 December, 2023, marking a significant milestone. India is currently part of the G20 Troika comprising Indonesia, India and Brazil marking the first time that the troika is consisting of three developing and emerging economies.

Prime Minister Narendra

Modi reiterated that G20 India Presidency will be inclusive, action-oriented and decisive. The theme unveiled by Prime Minister: 'One Earth, One Family, One Future', based on India's philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', is a catchphrase for people across the world to collectively work towards building a healthier post-pandemic world.

As chair of the G20 Presidency, India aims to continue and consolidate health priorities and key takeaways from previous presidencies while highlighting critical areas that require strengthening. India also aims to achieve convergence in discussions across various multilateral fora engaged in health cooperation and work towards integrated action.

## Sports

## IPL 2023: Sensible Raza, powerful Shahrugh pelp Punjab Kings claim thrilling win over Lucknow Super Giants

Agency  
Lucknow, Apr 16:

Sensible Sikandar Raza and powerful Shahrugh Khan powered Punjab Kings to a thrilling 2-wicket win over Lucknow Super Giants at Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium, Lucknow. Punjab chased down the 160-run target with three balls to spare. Ravi Bishnoi brought Lucknow Super Giants back in the game by dismissing Sikandar Raza in the 18th over as the Zimbabwean all-rounder went for a big shot but was caught near the boundary rope for 57. However, Shahrugh stood his ground strong and hit the winning runs for his team. He played a crucial cameo knock

of 23 runs off 10 balls.

Chasing the tricky 160-run target, Punjab Kings did miss their regular captain Shikhar Dhawan as debutant Atharva Taide was dismissed for a duck in the first over by Yuvvir Singh Charak. While other opener Prabhsimran Singh was also dismissed cheaply for four as Yuvvir got his second wicket in no time. Matthew Short and Harpreet Singh Bhatia looked to rebuild the chase but Krishnappa Gotham struck on the last ball of the powerplay to dismiss Short for 34.

Raza fought a lone battle for Punjab Kings in the middle over as Harpreet was also dismissed by Krunal Pandya for 22.

Stand-in skipper Sam Curran and wicketkeeper bat-

ter Jitesh Sharma also failed to put up a fight with the bat and were dismissed cheaply for 6 and 2 respectively.

Raza's wicket did put Punjab Kings on the backfoot but Shahrugh took them over the line. Raza's 41-ball stay was laced with 4 fours and three sixes.

Shahrugh started his cameo with a six to give hope to Punjab Kings fans as the Tamil Nadu cricketer finally lived up to the expectations of the franchise. He scored crucial two sixes and the match-winning four to seal the deal for PBKS.

Earlier, sent to bat first Lucknow Super Giants were off to a solid start with a 53-run stand between skipper KL Rahul and Kyle Mayers. The

duo played sensibly and set up the foundation of a formidable score. While Mayers failed to convert the start into a big score and was dismissed for 29 by Harpreet Brar. While Deepak Hooda once again failed to impress and was dismissed for just 2 by Raza.

Rahul rebuilt the innings once again with Krunal Pandya with the 48-run stand but when things were looking bright Kagiso Rabada got the better of the southpaw.

Lucknow middle-order batters failed to capitalise as Nicholas Pooran (0), Marcus Stoinis (15) and Krishnappa Gotham (1) failed to give a finishing touch to LSG innings

Rahul was also dismissed for 74 as his 56-ball was laced with 8 fours and a six.

## AIFF bars overseas players from playing in state leagues

Agency  
New Delhi, Apr 16:

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has taken a definite decision to restrict the number of foreign players taking part in different competitions across the country, which, it believes, is a hindrance to the development of local players.

The AIFF reached a decision to this effect during its executive committee meeting at its headquarters, Football House, in the national capital on Friday.

Later, speaking to the IANS, AIFF President Kalyan Chaubey said that till now, the AIFF allowed a 3+1 (three foreigners and one player of Asian origin) formula in each team.

Over the years, the Federation had observed that most clubs have the tendency to hire foreign footballers in two

key positions - central defender and striker. Even the big clubs in the Indian Super League (ISL) and the I-League follow the pattern, which, the AIFF feels, is one of the reasons why there is an apparent dearth of good Indian footballers in these positions.

"So, we have decided to not allow any foreigners in the state football leagues all over India and also in the Second Division League I-League, the third tier of Indian football after ISL and I-League," said Chaubey.

"The reason being, these are the competitions from where Indian players come up in their formative years. If we allow foreigners, who are physically much superior, they will occupy the key positions, thus further diminishing the chances of the local footballers," Chaubey pointed out.

"The rule is not applicable

to ISL or I-League, as we feel these are competitive leagues. But in other competitions, if our players receive proper guidance in their formative years, while they play for their states and age-group events, they can be in a good position to compete for their places in the ISL and I-League against overseas players," Chaubey said.

Apart from Sunil Chhetri, who is 38 now, there is hardly any Indian player in the national scene who can match the calibre of the charismatic striker. But as our national coach Igor Stimac rightly said in a recent interview that Sunil maybe into his last season, the big question is who will step into his shoes.

Against this backdrop, AIFF's decision to bar overseas players from playing in the lower leagues is likely to augur well for Indian football in the long run.