



CHAI PE CHARCHA: Shiv Sena UBT Airoli candidate MK Madhavi takes a tea break during his campaign in Rabale, Navi Mumbai, on Wednesday. Narendra Vaskar

'Unfortunate that Congress failed to rein in its rebel candidates...effect could be felt in seven to eight seats'

IN THE run up to the elections, former minister and Maharashtra chief of NCP (Shard Pawar) faction JAYANT PATIL feels issues such as the price of soybean and cotton would influence voting in many assembly constituencies.



Patil, who spoke to PARTHA SARATHI BISWAS, spoke about about how the MVA might suffer because of what he said was BJP's play to field a large number of independent candidates to eat into the votes of MVA. Excerpts

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

WITH JAYANT PATIL MAHARASHTRA NCP (SP) CHIEF

castes who are being played against each other know that the BJP just makes use of them. At first, they used the Marathas and now they are trying to use the OBCs but people would not fall prey to the BJP's games this time.

Prices of soybean and cotton are below the government declared Minimum Support Price (MSP). Do you think this election can become a cotton and soybean election given the negative sentiments among the farmers about the prices?

Soybean prices have fallen below their MSP and there is no government intervention on ground to help the farmers. Farmers in the state know that the price of their produce has fallen due to the policies of the central government.

The fate of the sugarcane crushing season of 2024-25 seems to be uncertain as the sugar commissionerate is yet to issue licenses to mills.

Should the cane crushing season be delayed? The ministerial committee headed by the Chief minister had decided to start the season on November 15.

What is your reaction to Congress leaders rebelling against the party's candidates and standing as independents? In your home district of Sangli, Jayashri Patil has defied the party line and is being helped by Vishal Patil the co-opted MP of Congress. Will it affect the performance of MVA?

Going back to the question of division among castes, what is your ground observation? Are there places where such a divide is very evident? The BJP is playing up the castes against each other and in some places the divide is very evident.

SHIV SENA LEADER CLAIMS HE RECEIVED THREAT CALL FROM BISHNOI GANG Gurugram: Shiv Sena's Haryana in-charge Vikram Singh has filed an online complaint with cyber police that he received a threatening call from a person who claimed to be from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

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EXTRACT OF STATEMENT OF CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND SIX MONTHS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

EXTRACT OF THE STATEMENT OF STANDALONE FINANCIAL RESULTS

Note: The above is an extract of the detailed financial results for the quarter and six months ended September 30, 2024 filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015.

HC upholds man's conviction for raping mother-in-law

as the convict's mother and he had "defiled her womanhood". The woman would have never imagined that her son-in-law would commit such a deplorable act, and she would carry this stigma all through her life, the court said.

of the prosecutrix," it said. "The appellant took advantage of his relations with the prosecutrix. The prosecutrix would not have imagined in the wildest of dreams that her son-in-law would commit such a deplorable act with her," the court said.

A single bench of Justice G A Sanap in its judgment on Tuesday noted the victim was of the same age

The convict had challenged the March 2022 judgment of a sessions court convicting and sentencing him to 14 years in jail for the rape of his 55-year-old mother-in-law in December 2018.

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SHIV SENA LEADER CLAIMS HE RECEIVED THREAT CALL FROM BISHNOI GANG Gurugram: Shiv Sena's Haryana in-charge Vikram Singh has filed an online complaint with cyber police that he received a threatening call from a person who claimed to be from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

Karnataka HC grants bail to 98, suspends life term in 2014 Dalit atrocity case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BENGALURU, NOVEMBER 13

THE DHARWAD bench of the Karnataka High Court on Wednesday suspended the life imprisonment sentences awarded to 98 people by a district and sessions court and granted them bail in connection with the 2014 caste violence targeting Dalits in Koppal district.

On October 24, a trial court in Koppal district convicted 101 people under the Karnataka Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 in connection with the caste violence against Dalits in Marukumbi on August 29, 2014, in which Dalit houses were set on fire, leaving over 30 injured.

The HC Dharwad bench suspended the sentences after appeals were filed by Hanumesh Basanagouda and 97 others, and ruled that sentences would be suspended subject to the accused persons posting a security of Rs 1 lakh each. "It is seen that all the accused were on bail during the trial. No material is placed that they misused the discretionary bail. The injuries sustained by some of the victims are all simple in nature. The photographs pertaining to the burnt houses are also placed on record. The accused have undertaken to abide by any condition," a division bench said.

"We are of the opinion that the finding recorded by the trial court requires thorough examination. Therefore accused have made ground for grant of bail and case for suspension of sentence," it said.

NEW DEPT OF GOVT EFFICIENCY

Donald Trump picks Musk: Five key areas where their bond will be tested

ANIL SASI NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 13

US PRESIDENT-ELECT Donald Trump has picked Elon Musk, the world's richest man and a key backer, to lead a newly created Department of Government Efficiency (Doge) for his incoming administration. The acronym, incidentally, refers to Musk's favourite cryptocurrency Dogecoin.

Trump also announced that Vivek Ramaswamy, an investor and his rival in the Republican primaries, will work with the SpaceX and Tesla founder on the project to "dismantle" bureaucracy and provide "external advice" to the White House on executing "large scale structural reform".

He likened the initiative, an idea mooted by Musk himself, to the "Manhattan Project" (the World War II project led by the US to produce the first nuclear weapon) saying "this will send shockwaves through the system, and anyone involved in Government waste, which is a lot of people!"

While Musk was the single largest contributor and a fervent Trump proponent, there are five contradictions in this developing symbiotic relationship which both sides will have to work with — or around. Indeed, one can reinforce the other.

China: Trump is increasingly filling his incoming administration with China trade and security hawks while Musk has a cordial working relationship with high-ranking officials in



Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy.

China where he established Tesla as the country's first fully foreign-owned automaker in 2018. Chinese state media has often cited Tesla as an example of successful trade cooperation between Beijing and Washington.

China is Tesla's second-largest market only after the US and the Tesla Gigafactory in Shanghai, which started production in 2020, is the carmaker's largest production centre in the world. Tesla sold some 600,000 EVs in China last year. If the world's two biggest economies were to run into rough weather, how Musk firewalls his interests could set the template for others.

Trumponomics: Musk has expressed doubts over the basic tenets of Trump's economic plans, including his call for mass deportations of undocumented immigrants, a range of tax tweaks, including a fresh dose of his 2017 tax cuts, and higher tariffs on practically all imports. Barely a week before the elections, in a response to a pseudon-

ymous X account that alluded to an "initial severe over-reaction in the economy" and the "market tumbling" if Trump were to be elected and roll out his plan, Musk had a three-word response: "Sounds about right".

On tax cuts, Musk has acknowledged at a "telephone town hall" that cutting government spending, given the tax cut promises, could be painful. On the other issue of illegal immigration, the Washington Post reported how Musk himself "worked illegally" in the US while building Zip2, his company which sold for about \$300 million in 1999 and bankrolled most of his other ventures.

Climate change: Trump's climate change denial and consistent ridicule of EV manufacturing flies in the face of Tesla's main business. Trump has vociferously supported internal combustion engine car makers, batted for the Detroit Big Three (GM, Ford and Chrysler) and has repeatedly promised to end federal support

for EVs. For Musk, all of this presents a challenge. His personal wealth is tied largely in Tesla stock and his EV hard sell is fundamentally rooted in the environmentally-friendly pitch of battery electric cars that Tesla makes. The Detroit three are among Tesla's competitors. Any pairing down of federal subsidy could be a serious headwind for Tesla especially when EV sales are seeing a temporary slowdown.

Starlink, SpaceX: Musk's Starlink satellite internet service has provided a clear frontline advantage to Ukraine since the 2022 Russian invasion, permitting Kyiv to share real-time drone feeds between battlefield units and keep communication lines open where war has disrupted cell phone services. Given Trump's perceived rethink on Russian president Vladimir Putin, Starlink's support to Ukraine has already seen some recalibration.

SpaceX, which operates Starlink, has a lot of business rid-

ing on US government contracts. It won a \$1.8-billion contract with US military and intelligence agencies in 2021 and is now the major rocket launcher for NASA and Pentagon. Clearly, Musk will have to straddle a diplomatic tightrope and face conflict-of-interest scrutiny.

Cutting jobs: For all the talk of streamlining government, Musk's impulsive firings in his companies may not square with Trump's employee-friendly pitch. Indeed, during his campaign, Trump championed the cause of American workers, eliciting support from prominent union leaders ostensibly campaigning against mass lay-offs at American companies. He has also drummed up support among steel worker groups and projected himself as a protector of American jobs.

The impulsive firings by Musk across all his companies run counter to this. In January this year, SpaceX was accused by a US labour agency of illegally firing eight employees for circulating a letter calling Musk a "distraction and embarrassment". A regional official with the Washington-based National Labor Relations Board issued a complaint claiming SpaceX violated the workers' rights under federal labour law to band together and advocate for better working conditions. Then in April, Musk fired practically all of Tesla's electric-vehicle charging division as part of much wider layoffs. Earlier, there was a massive purge at Twitter too when Musk took over.

Naidu govt goes after Opp social media posts: 680 notices, 147 cases, 49 arrests

SREENIVAS JANAYALA HYDERABAD, NOVEMBER 13

THE TELUGU Desam Party-led NDA government in Andhra Pradesh has launched a crackdown against social media activists and sympathisers of the Opposition YSR Congress Party, claiming that they "crossed a line" by posting derogatory content about "wives and daughters" of TDP leaders. Between November 6 and 12, the state police issued 680 notices, registered 147 cases and arrested 49 people, The Indian Express has learnt.

Most of them have been booked under BNS sections related to promoting enmity, defamation, public mischief, criminal conspiracy as well as IT Act sections related to morphing images and posting derogatory content.

Sources say the police in various districts mined social media posts by YSRCP activists and sympathisers that allegedly targeted influential women — Home Minister V Anitha, TDP MLA and actor N Balakrishna's wife Vasundhara, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's wife Deputy CM and Jana Sena Party chief K Pawan Kalyan daughters, Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president Y S Sharmila, and her mother Y S Vijayamma.

Prominent YSRCP social media activists who have been booked include Varra Ravinder Reddy, Inturi Ravi Kiran, Kallam Harikrishna Reddy, Peddireddy Sudha Rani, and Meka Venkat

Rami Reddy. "Ravinder Reddy is Kadapa district YSRCP co-convenor and handles their social media. He has been spreading defamatory content online and causing unrest among communities," said Kurnool Range DIG Koya Praveen on the arrest. "He morphed images of political leaders, and has been posting content that incites unrest among various communities. His actions promote division and disturb social harmony. He manages dozens of YouTube channels which target women leaders with vulgar content against them."

TDP spokesperson Anam Venkata Ramana Reddy told The Indian Express, "Posting jokes or caricatures of opposition political leaders is fine but targeting the women of their families and posting vulgar and sexually explicit content is crossing the line. When the TDP came to power five months ago, the senior leadership had decided not to do vendetta politics and had ignored these social media activists and their derogatory posts. However, instead of learning a lesson, they have become belligerent."

YSRCP chief and former CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy condemned the arrests and said the TDP-led coalition government was indulging in vendetta politics. "The government is targeting social media activists with harassment, illegal detentions and threats... This misuse of power shows a focus on political vendetta rather than upholding democratic values," he said.

Oncologist stabbed by patient's son at Chennai hospital; doctors' body highlight staff shortage

ARUN JANARDHANAN CHENNAI, NOVEMBER 13

AN ONCOLOGIST was injured after he was stabbed multiple times, allegedly by a patient's relative, at a government hospital in Guindy, Chennai, on Wednesday.

The attack at the Kalaignar Centenary Super Speciality Hospital (KCSSH) triggered strong reactions and protests from medical professionals over safety and staffing conditions in government hospitals.

Police said Dr Balaji Jagannath, who is in his late 40s, was on duty in the hospital's oncology department when he was approached by the accused,

Vignesh, 26, a resident of Perungalathur. According to police, Vignesh entered the hospital at around 10.30 am to meet his mother, a cancer patient undergoing treatment there. He was accompanied by three friends. Once inside, the group allegedly engaged in a heated dispute with Dr Jagannath over the woman's deteriorating condition, with Vignesh accusing the doctor of negligence.

According to the police, Vignesh attacked the doctor with a kitchen knife, stabbing him in the neck and also inflicting injuries on his head and upper body. Onlookers quickly intervened and escorted the doctor to the ICU. Hospital sources said the doctor, a cardiac patient who underwent a major surgery sometime ago, is stable and

under observation. Hospital staff, along with by-standers, apprehended the accused, who is now in police custody along with four others detained for further inquiry, authorities said.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin called the attack "shocking" and assured that "necessary treatment" would be provided to the injured doctor. He also ordered a "detailed inquiry" into the circumstances surrounding the incident and emphasised the government's duty to protect medical professionals.

Meanwhile, doctors' bodies demanded immediate action from the state government to address critical staffing shortages.

Sporadic violence mars Bengal, turnout 70%; Opp accuses TMC of rigging

RAVIK BHATTACHARYA & ATRI MITRA KOLKATA, NOVEMBER 13

AMID DEPLOYMENT of 108 companies of CAPF, sporadic violence marred by-polls to six Assembly seats in West Bengal Wednesday with Opposition parties accusing TMC of rigging the polls.

Until 5 pm, turnout across the six constituencies stood at 69.29%, according to Election Commission. The highest voter turnout of 75.20% was recorded in Taldangra in Bankura district, while the lowest was in Naihati in North 24 Parganas at 62.10%.

In Jagaddal, adjoining the Naihati constituency where polling was underway, a TMC worker was shot dead. While police said the TMC worker's murder was not linked to the by-elections, the EC has sought a report from the district administration.

Meanwhile, several complaints were lodged to the EC, mainly by the Opposition parties. The EC said that it has received 80 complaints.

Citing the incident in Madarich where the car of party candidate Rahul Lohar was allegedly vandalised while

he was visiting a polling booth, the BJP alleged that their candidates and polling agents were being harassed and intimidated by the ruling TMC workers.

At a booth in Gosainmari area of Sitai Assembly seat, local TMC leader Motiur Rehman allegedly threatened a polling agent. The video has gone viral. "I give you 30 minutes to leave. Or I will kill you," Rehman could be heard saying in presence of Jagdish Prasad Basunia, Lok Sabha MP from Cooch Behar in the purported video.

Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari, shared videos on X, alleging that bike-borne miscreants were seen threatening BJP workers in Sitai on Tuesday night. "This is the illustration of 'Real Democracy' under Mamata's Rule. TMC lumpens are visiting BJP workers' homes in Sitai Assembly constituency and threatening them before the by-election," Adhikari said on X.

"Mamata's police are adopting desperate measures to influence the voting process..." he said. TMC minister Rathin Ghosh said, "The Central forces are working as BJP agents. The Opposition has no connection with the people. That is why they failed to deploy polling agents in all booths."

Rajasthan bypolls: Independent candidate 'slaps' Malpura SDM

Jaipur: Congress rebel Naresh Meena, who is contesting the assembly bypolls as an independent candidate, purportedly slapped Malpura SDM Amit Choudhary at a polling station in Deoli Wednesday. The incident was captured on camera and has since gone viral.

The viral video shows Meena, who is contesting from Deoli-Uniara, purportedly entering a polling booth in Samravata village despite resistance from the police. When he comes out, he pur-

portedly slapped the SDM. The purported video shows policemen taking the leader away from the spot.

Later, Meena said, "The public got agitated when they saw those three workers under the SDM cast their votes but I handled the situation." Tonk district collector Saumya Jha said, "SDM Amit Choudhary is filing a report on what happened. Based on the report and police investigation, a FIR will be registered against the candidate."

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE BHOPAL, NOVEMBER 13

THE MADHYA Pradesh bypolls saw the BJP and the Congress trade charges of voter fraud and violence as the police shifted candidates to guest houses and barring state presidents of both parties from entering a constituency.

In Budhni, voter turnout stood at 75.05% and 77.42% in Vijaypur until 5 pm, according to the Election Commission.

Budhni is seeing a contest between BJP's Ramakant Bhargava and Congress's Rajkumar Patel. In Vijaypur, state Forest and Environment Minister Ramniwas Rawat, a powerful OBC leader from Chambal region and a former Congress leader, is up against Mukesh Malhotra from his former party.

After the Sheopur Police shifted Rawat and Malhotra to guest houses and allowed them to vote, Additional SP Satyendra Singh Tomar told The Indian Express this was a precautionary move "because tension was visible among the workers of the two parties."

In Dorda village, Magistrate Yatendra Chhari was reportedly attacked when he arrived to investigate allegations of bogus voting. ASP Tomar said, "There was no large-scale violence. There were allegations made by both sides and we will investigate. We have not yet registered an FIR in connection with Chhari's case."

Patel alleged that votes were cast without ID verification and that BJP workers "attacked his supporters, damaged three vehicles, and were deliberately causing disturbances in Shahganj."

Following the allegation, state Congress unit chief Jitu Patwari and his BJP counterpart V D Sharma rushed towards Sheopur but were stopped by the local police.

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