

Why crime rate against Dalits increasing in Madhya Pradesh: Congress jabs PM Modi

NEW DELHI, APR 19: The Congress accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday of protecting those responsible for the paper-leak and recruitment "scams" in Madhya Pradesh and asked him why the crime rate against Dalits is "increasing" in the state.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre ahead of Modi's rally in Damoh in Madhya Pradesh.

"Today's questions for PM Modi as he heads to MP: Who is the PM protecting in MP's paper leak and recruitment scams? Why has the BJP let down Adivasis in Forest Rights Act implementation? MP has the highest crime rate against Dalits. Why is it increasing?" Ramesh asked in a post on X.

Elaborating on what he said were details of "jumlas" (rhetoric), the Congress leader said the government might have changed the name of the Employees Selection Board in Madhya Pradesh but nobody has forgotten the notorious Vyapam "scam" that rocked the state 10 years ago.

Since then, allegations of rigging have cropped up in the recruitment of nursing staff, school teachers, con-



stables and agriculture development officers, but all that the BJP government has done is deny and subvert, he alleged.

"Just last year, allegations broke out of a scam in the patwari recruitment examination. Seven of ten toppers in the examination came from the same exam centre in Gwalior which is owned by a BJP MLA. A few years earlier, in 2021, three tests -- for agriculture extension officers, senior agriculture officers and nursing staff -- were cancelled when the evidence of foul play became too obvious to ignore," Ramesh said.

He said a probe subsequently found out that the papers for the exams were leaked by a private company that was already implicated in the Vyapam "scam".

"Who is the PM protecting in these scams? What is PM Modi doing to ensure that our youth never face such injustice again?" the former Union minister asked.

In 2006, the Congress passed the revolutionary Forest Rights Act (FRA) that granted the Adivasi and forest-dwelling communities legal rights to manage their forests, and economically benefit from the forest produce they collect, he pointed out.

"The BJP government, however, has obstructed the implementation of the FRA, depriving millions of Adivasis of its benefits. Only 47 per cent (2,94,877 claims) of the 6,27,513 individual claims filed have been granted, and land titles distributed cover only 10 per cent (5,931 sq. km) of

the 57,948 sq. km eligible for community rights," Ramesh alleged.

Why have the successive BJP governments in Madhya Pradesh failed to provide the Adivasi communities their rights, he asked.

Citing data compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the Congress leader pointed out that Madhya Pradesh has the highest crime rate against Dalits in the country.

"In 2021 (the latest year for which data is available), the crime rate against SCs was 63.6 as compared to the national average of 25.3. The state also recorded high crime rates against Dalits in 2019 and 2020 -- 46.7 and 60.8 against the national averages of 22.8 and 25 respectively. It is disgusting and shameful that the rate of crimes against Dalits has actually increased year-on-year," he said.

"The BJP has been in power in MP for more than two decades now. Why is it that Dalits have to increasingly fear for their safety? Does PM Modi feel no shame for the countless atrocities that Dalits have endured under his watch?" Ramesh asked and said the prime minister should break his silence on the issue.

Arvind Kejriwal accuses Enforcement Directorate of being 'petty', 'politicising' his food before court

NEW DELHI, APR 19: Accusing the Enforcement Directorate of being "petty" and "politicising" what he ate in jail, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday asserted before a court that the food he consumed was in conformity with the diet chart prepared by his doctor.

The ED had on Thursday claimed before the court that Kejriwal was eating food high in sugar like mangoes and sweets every day, despite having type 2 diabetes, to create grounds for medical bail.

Kejriwal's counsel launched a spirited assault on the federal anti-money agency over its claim that the AAP national convenor was eating food laden with sugar so he can fall ill and seek bail on medical grounds. "ED claimed that I want to increase my blood sugar levels to get bail. Am I going to risk paralysis to get bail? Whatever food I have is as per the diet chart prepared by my doctor prior to arrest," Senior Advocate Abhishek Singhvi told the court.

Referring to the ED's



claim about the politician eating mangoes, sweets, aalo-poori etc regularly, he said these were provided to him only a few times.

"The allegation is that I have been consuming mangoes... Out of 48 meals sent from home, only three times mangoes were there. No mangoes have been sent after April 8. Mangoes have been made to look like sugar bullets. Their sugar level (glycemic index) is much less than brown rice or white rice," Singhvi told the court.

Kejriwal has been allowed to have food cooked at home in jail.

"I only use sugar free (an artificial sugar brand) in my tea. How petty, political

and ridiculous ED can be? Their statements are completely false and malicious. Just because you have a lot of influence in the media you are able to publish that I am having aalo puri even though this meal was sent only once during pooja," he told the court.

Kejriwal, who had on Thursday withdrawn a petition for consulting his doctor thrice a week about his fluctuating sugar levels, moved a fresh plea on Friday seeking consultations with his physician for 15 minutes every day.

"Just because I am a prisoner do I have no right to a dignified life and good health? Am I a gangster that I cannot even be al-

lowed to have 15 minutes VC (video conference) consultation with my doctor? We have had democracy for 75 years but I am seeing such an approach for the first time. Never seen such kind of pettiness," Singhvi said, reproachfully.

The ED opposed Singhvi's submissions, claiming the food Kejriwal was eating did not match the diet chart prescribed by his doctor. It said Tihar jail had sufficient medical facilities to take care of Kejriwal's diabetes.

The ED's contentions were opposed by senior advocate Ramesh Gupta, who also appeared for Kejriwal. "What has ED got to do with this hearing? He (ED) is not a party. It is between me and jail and court? They are having a media trial and press is publishing anything it wants," the counsel told the court.

The court reserved its order on Kejriwal's application seeking daily consultation with his doctor for Monday and directed Tihar jail authorities to file a reply, if required, by Saturday.

Conspiracy being hatched against Arvind Kejriwal, anything can happen with him in jail: Sanjay Singh

NEW DELHI, APR 19: AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh Friday reiterated his party's allegation that a deep conspiracy is being hatched against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and anything can happen with him in prison.

At a press conference here, Singh charged that the BJP's "modus operandi" can stoop to the level of even killing someone.

No immediate reaction was available from the BJP over Singh's accusations.

The MP also slammed BJP leaders for "making fun" of an ailment suffered by Kejriwal and added that "misleading" news about



the Delhi chief minister was being spread through the media.

"If the rules of jail do not allow health-related information of an inmate to be shared with anyone, then

why did the ED publicise a fake diet chart of Kejriwal in the media on Thursday," he asked.

There was no reaction from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to the AAP

Rajya Sabha MP's allegation.

Singh, however, asserted that Kejriwal will not break or bow down.

Delhi Cabinet minister Atishi Thursday alleged that there was a plot to kill Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, arrested by the ED in the excise policy case, by denying him home-cooked food and insulin in jail, a charge rejected by the prison authorities.

Her allegations came hours after the ED claimed before a court that Kejriwal is eating high-sugar foods like mangoes, bananas and sweets every day despite having type 2 diabetes to create grounds for medical bail or shift to a hospital.

AMROHA (UTTAR PRADESH), APR 19: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath invoked Pakistan at a political rally on Friday and said while those in the neighbouring country are fighting hunger, "80 crore people in India are getting free ration".

Addressing a poll rally in Amroha in western Uttar Pradesh, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader also said the "phir ek baar Modi sarkar" slogan of the saffron party is reverberating across the country.

Adityanath spoke before Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the rally that was organised in support of Kanwar Singh Tanwar, the BJP candidate from the



Amroha constituency in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls. "Pakistan, which has a population of hardly 23-24 crore, was formed after the partition in 1947 and is suffering from hunger today.

This is also an example -- on one side, there is Pakistan, and on the other side,

there is the promise of free ration to more than 80 crore people," the chief minister said.

The BJP, in its Lok Sabha poll manifesto, has promised to continue to provide free ration to more than 80 crore people in the country for the next five

years.

Adityanath said "only one slogan is being heard from every direction -- phir ek baar Modi sarkar".

Welcoming Modi to Amroha, he hailed him for bringing transformative changes in the country.

Adityanath addressed the rally as polling was underway in eight western Uttar Pradesh constituencies in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls. Amroha will go to polls in the second phase on April 26.

Tanwar won the Amroha seat in 2014, but was defeated in 2019 by Danish Ali, who was with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) then. Ali is again in the fray from Amroha on a Congress ticket.

Uttarakhand: In Nainital-Udham Singh Nagar, Congress conducts door-to-door campaign

NAINITAL, APR 19: Congress cadres in Nainital-Udham Singh Nagar, which votes in the first phase, have taken the campaign to the doorstep of the voters.

Dozens of party workers and supporters have fanned across the constituency with the objective of meeting every voter at least once to convince them to vote for the Congress candidate, Prakash Joshi.

Radha Arya is leading one such team in the Haldwani area. "We tell the people about all the promises the BJP made, such as creating job opportunities to stop the migration of youths. But not a single job has been created here in the last 10 years," Arya said. "We allow the people to discuss with us. There are many who resist and say that the government has done many



things. We ask them if those things have changed their lives. And here the direction of the debate changes because nothing has happened to improve the quality of life of the people

here." The teams working from village to village are in dozens, and comprise five to six persons each. Arya said they were "getting very good response". "This kind of campaigning can change

the people's perception towards us. Our party candidate, Prakash Joshi, is very strong but we believe that our effort will make it more comfortable for him," she added.

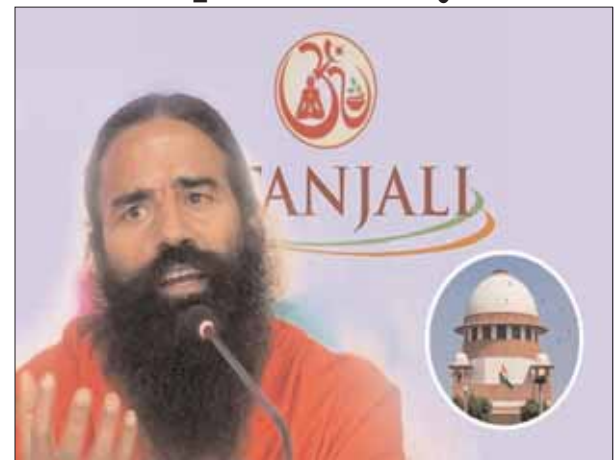
Remarks on Allopathy: SC asks Ramdev to implead complainants in his plea for stay of criminal probes

NEW DELHI, APR 19: The Supreme Court on Friday asked yoga guru Ramdev to implead the complainants, who have lodged cases against him over his alleged remarks against the use of allopathic medicines during the Covid pandemic, as party in his plea seeking stay of criminal proceedings.

The Patna and Raipur chapters of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) have lodged complaints in 2021 alleging Ramdev's remarks were likely to cause prejudice to Covid control mechanism and may dissuade people from availing proper treatment.

A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and PB Varale, which was hearing Ramdev's plea seeking stay on criminal proceedings, said he needs to implead the complainants for securing relief in the matter.

The bench granted liberty to Ramdev to implead the complainants and



posted the matter for hearing after the summer vacations of the apex court, which are starting from May 20.

The counsel appearing for the Bihar government said he needed time to file reply in the matter.

In his plea, Ramdev has impleaded the Centre, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and IMA as parties. The top court had issued notice to them on October 9, last year.

Earlier, senior advocate Siddharth Dave, appearing

for Ramdev, had said the yoga guru had made a statement in 2021 that he does not believe in allopathic medicines to which some doctors took offence and lodged multiple cases against him.

As an interim relief, Ramdev has sought a stay on investigation on the criminal complaints.

The IMA has lodged complaints in Bihar and Chhattisgarh over Ramdev's remarks against the use of allopathic medi-

cines during the pandemic. The yoga guru has been booked under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

Ramdev, whose statements stirred a nationwide debate on Allopathy versus Ayurveda had, however, withdrawn them after receiving a letter from then Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, who had called his remarks "inappropriate".

The Delhi Medical Association (DMA), meanwhile, has sought permission to become a party to the case, alleging that Ramdev insulted Allopathy and "instigated" people to disregard vaccines and treatment protocols.

The DMA, having 15,000 doctors as members, has claimed that Ramdev's Patanjali earned over Rs 1,000 crore by selling Coronil kits which were not approved by the competent authority.

Parties gear up for INDIA bloc rally in Ranchi on April 21

JAMSHEDPUR, APR 19: The ruling coalition in Jharkhand JMM-Congress-RJD along with the Left parties are gearing up to make the Ulgulan (revolution) Nyay Maharally scheduled on April 21 at Ranchi a historic one.

The coalition expects over 5 lakh people at the rally which will set the tone for the INDIA bloc campaign for the Lok Sabha seats in the state.

Jharkhand will witness its first voting on May 13 at Singbhum, Khunti, Lohardaga and Palamu parliamen-

tary seats. Chief minister Champai Soren on Thursday evening chaired a meeting of the INDIA bloc parties at Ranchi for the success of the "Maharally" which is expected to have the participation of national-level leaders of the INDIA bloc, similar to the rally held at Delhi last month.

"The Ulgulan Nyay Maharally would expose BJP-ruled Centre conspiracy of keeping tribals away from their land, water and forest resources and the atrocities piled up on tribals,

Dalits," Soren told reporters in Ranchi.

"The rally would also expose the conspiracy of the Centre in misusing federal agencies against Opposition-ruled states and maligning their state government leaders on fabricated and false charges. The masses of the country have understood the Centre ploy and in the coming Lok Sabha poll the BJP would get a befitting reply," he said.

JMM central general secretary cum-spokesperson Vinod Pandey

who attended the meeting at the chief minister's residence later in a joint press conference claimed that over 5



lakh crowd would turn up at the Prabhat Tara Ground in Ranchi on April 21.

"It would be over 5 lakh crowds gathering at the Prabhat Tara Ground to listen to national level leaders of INDIA bloc. It would set the tone for the campaign of the INDIA bloc in all the 14 Lok Sabha seats in Jharkhand. This time BJP will not be able to open its account in the state," said Pandey.

The Congress has announced candidates in six seats and is yet to announce its candidate for the Ranchi

Lok Sabha seat while the JMM has announced candidates for four Lok Sabha seats and is yet to announce the candidate for the Jamshedpur Lok Sabha seat. The RJD has announced its candidate for Palamu while the CPI-ML candidate has been announced for the Koderma seat.

The JMM is leading in organising the rally aimed in the lines of the Delhi rally to protest against the arrest of former chief minister Hemant Soren on alleged money laundering charges on a land scam.