

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

UK ex-PM Boris Johnson showers praise on 'change-maker' Modi's 'astral energy'

WASHINGTON, OCT 12: Former British prime minister Boris Johnson is all praise for "change-maker" Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a new memoir that reflects upon his eventful political career and recalls a "curious astral energy" that he felt on his very first meeting with the Indian leader.

"Unleashed", which hit the shelves in the UK this week, devotes a whole chapter to Britain's relationship with India as "a relationship as good as it has ever been". Repeatedly stressing the strong India-UK friendship in the context of the Indo-Pacific, the former prime minister credits himself for setting the course for a "proper free-trade deal" with India thanks to finding "exactly the partner and friend" needed with Modi.

"For some reason, we went down to stand in the dark in the plaza by Tower Bridge, in front of a crowd of his supporters," shares Johnson in the chapter entitled 'Britain and India', referencing his first meeting with Modi during a visit to his City Hall office by the river Thames when he was Mayor of London.

"He raised my arm and chanted something or other in Hindi, and though I couldn't follow it I felt his curi-



ous astral energy. I have enjoyed his company ever since – because I reckon he is the change-maker our relationship needs. With Modi, I felt sure, we could not only do a great free-trade deal but also build a long-term partnership, as friends and equals," he writes.

Johnson reveals how a "distinctly sniffy" UK Foreign Office had warned him off meeting the "Hindu nationalist" leader during an earlier mayoral trade delegation to India in 2012, a problem "soon dropped" to pave the way for a re-

lationship that "hit an all-time high".

The 60-year-old politician-author asserts how much he loves India, being a "veteran" of many Indian weddings because his children with Sikh heritage ex-wife Marina Wheeler trace their roots to the country.

While he writes with pride of a similar "Anglo-Indian syncretism" in politics with his diverse Cabinet as PM including many British Indians such as Rishi Sunak and Priti Patel, Johnson laments the slow-paced growth of bilateral trade due to unnecessary trade barriers that leave UK visitors "clinking in with duty-free booze" for Indians starved of Scotch whisky at decent prices.

The "tremendous success" of his visit to India as PM in January 2022 he recalls as a much-needed "morale boost" and "balm for the soul" away from an increasingly belligerent domestic politics that would eventually end in his unceremonious exit from 10 Downing Street just a few months later.

He claims he had also wanted to use the visit to make a "gentle point to Narendra" on the issue of relations with Russia at a "global inflection point" with its conflict with Ukraine.

Pankaja Munde promises to take cognisance if Dalits, OBCs are 'troubled'

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR,

OCT 12: Ahead of Maharashtra assembly polls, BJP leader Pankaja Munde on Saturday reached out to Dalits and Other Backward Classes (OBC), vowing to take cognisance if they are "troubled".

Munde, who lost the Lok Sabha polls on her home turf Beed district, the epicentre of Maratha protests led by activist Manoj Jarange, was addressing her annual Dussehra rally at Sawargaon Ghat, the birthplace of Sant Bhagwanbaba, a saint of her Vanjari community.

State agriculture minister and her cousin Dhananjay Munde and Laxman Hake, who had protested opposing any potential dilution of the OBC reservation, were among those who spoke at the rally.

Munde expressed her concerns over the growing caste schism within society.

"If a vehicle hits someone, people ask the caste of the driver. People want to know the caste of a person who has committed brutality against a small child and killed her. We don't want such a soci-



ety," she said.

The BJP national secretary warned that they would take cognisance if the poor, Dalits, OBCs and others are "troubled" in the state.

Munde said she inherited the legacy of her father and late BJP stalwart Gopinath Munde and thanked people for giving her respect despite her electoral setback.

"To reciprocate for the respect I received, I will tour the state. The poor are waiting for good days by keeping their faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership. Now, we must play our cards," she said.

She also appealed to

labourers from her area involved in the sugar industry not to leave for work before casting their votes. Sugarcane cutting season starts in October in Maharashtra.

Elections to the 288-member state assembly will likely be held in November. BJP is a partner in the ruling Mahayuti coalition, also comprising Ajit Pawar-led NCP and Shiv Sena headed by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

"I never discriminated between the villages that voted for me and those that didn't during fund allocation. A mistake happened this time (in Lok Sabha polls), but we

want to overcome that failure," said the former state minister.

Referring to the Lok Sabha polls in Beed, where she lost to Congress' Bajrang Sonawane by about 6,500 votes, Munde said, "I'm not desperate for a post. Five persons lost their lives (by suicide) before I became an MLC. Even though I don't hold any post, I will not abandon those who have supported me." NCP leader Dhananjay Munde said Gopinath Munde and Pankaja Munde struggled for the people, not for themselves. "Today, people from all communities are here. The crowd here today shows that we are all united," he said.

Without taking the name of Jarange, who incidentally held a Dussehra rally at Narayangad in Beed district, he appealed to people to stay united.

"If we unite, no one can organise another such event in this area and undermine Pankaja Munde's annual Dussehra rally. This is the time for struggle and we need to stand with each other," he added.

Flagstaff Road bungalow row continues to rage day after its allotment to CM Atishi

NEW DELHI, OCT 12:

The AAP dispensation indulged in "the most devious and diabolic" exercise to "mislead" people over allotment of 6, Flagstaff Road bungalow by "subverting" norms and procedures and "hiding facts", a statement from the LG office charged on Saturday.

A day after the bungalow was allotted to Chief Minister Atishi, the LG office blamed her also of being part of the exercise.

The bungalow where Arvind Kejriwal lived as the Delhi chief minister for nine years came into a full blown tussle involving the AAP, BJP and the LG office over its vacation and fresh allotment.

"Within a span of just about 48 hours, when the house was handed over by Kejriwal and allotted to Atishi, the AAP, ministers and even the chief minister, resorted to the most devious and diabolic exercise of misleading the people of Delhi and the entire country by way of subverting norms and procedures, hiding facts to this effect and abusing the LG incessantly," alleged the statement.

Sources at the Delhi Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said it was "sad to see the statement by the LG office which is full of abuses and allegations



on the elected government.

"The AAP government is busy working on a war footing to revive and fix all the works stopped by the LG in the last few months. These comments by the LG are really not worth responding to," they said.

The Secretariat said that the LG was "abused" and political motives were attributed to him.

The AAP dispensation, government ministers and party leaders have alleged that Atishi was forced to vacate the bungalow by Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena at the behest of the BJP.

Atishi, who claimed that she would work from the streets after she was made to vacate the Flagstaff Road bungalow, "conveniently forgot" to tell the people of Delhi that she already has a bungalow, 17-AB on Mathura Road, the LG secretariat

said.

A "seven star office renovated at a cost of hundreds of crores" in the Delhi Secretariat was also available to her to work from and she was not needed to indulge into "theatrics", charged the statement.

The LG office also said the building plan of the Flagstaff Road bungalow has not been sanctioned till now by the MCD and a completion certificate was not issued because of this.

"The house, therefore, till now is a patently illegal structure," it claimed.

The BJP dubbed the bungalow as "Sheeshmahal" and ran a campaign against Kejriwal alleging "irregularities" in its construction during the COVID pandemic and stuffing it with costly interiors and household items.

In the wake of the controversy, the LG office alleged

that Delhi suffers from "the worst of civic infrastructure and services" due to "mis-governance" of the AAP government for the past 10 years.

"If they had governed and worked for what they have been elected for, even for two years out of the 10 years, Delhi would have been in a much better shape and they would not have been blaming all and sundry and abusing the Lt Governor for their abject failures," the LG office said.

The statement said that the 6, Flagstaff bungalow, which was now allotted to Atishi after Kejriwal, has a built up area of 1,905 square metres as the residential complex and 500 square metres as the camp office.

"In comparison, the highest categories of Type-8 bungalows, which are allotted to the PM, Chief Justice of India, judges, ministers and others, have a built up area of 460 square metres only with an additional 100 square metres for other utilities," it said.

The LG office alleged that the keys of the Flagstaff Road bungalow were "handed over surreptitiously, directly by Kejriwal or his wife to Atishi (through their personal staff), as if it was a private property being handed over by one owner to another".

Uttar Pradesh: Woman hires contract killer to murder her daughter, gets killed herself

ETAH (UP), OCT 12: In

a shocking revelation in the case of a woman's murder here six days ago, police have found that she fell victim to a plot she had allegedly hatched to kill her daughter. The daughter, in collusion with her lover, allegedly killed her mother Alka (36), police added.

The daughter allegedly eloped with her lover a few days ago, which led Alka to plot her murder. She allegedly hired a contract killer, who was recently released from jail after serving a 10-year sentence for rape, for

Rs 50,000, according to police.

"The investigation revealed that Alka was furious with her daughter for her misconduct and elopement, leading her to plot her daughter's murder through a hired killer. The hired killer, unknown to Alka, was another lover of her daughter. Together, they strangled Alka to death and disposed of her body in a millet field," Station House Officer (SHO) of the Jasrathpur police station Om Prakash Singh said.

About eight months ago, Alka's daughter eloped with

her lover Akhilesh, following which the mother filed a police complaint, resulting in his imprisonment. Akhilesh was released from jail two months ago, after which Alka sent her daughter to her maternal home in Farrukhabad, as per police.

There, the daughter entered in relationship with Subhash, who was released from jail after serving a 10-year sentence for rape, police said. Alka, unaware that Subhash was her daughter's second lover, allegedly hired him to kill her daughter. As part of this conspiracy, Alka

brought her daughter back from her maternal home on September 27 and handed her over to Subhash, police added. Subhash took her to his friend's place in Agra and sent fake photographs of her 'murder' to Alka. When Alka didn't believe him, he called her to Agra, where all three reunited.

The daughter allegedly convinced her lover to kill Alka and promised to marry him. Subhash agreed, and together, they allegedly strangled Alka, said the SHO.

Subhash has been arrested, police said.

BJP divides people on caste, its claims of development false, says Akhilesh Yadav

LUCKNOW, OCT 12:

Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday accused the BJP of using caste to drive a wedge between people and painting a rosy picture of the country while countless go hungry.

Akhilesh Yadav made the remarks while addressing the public at Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Park in Gomti Nagar on the 57th death anniversary of the eponymous socialist thinker.

"BJP's policies are destructive. They want to overturn everything ensured in the Constitution. These are the people who do politics of hate. They discriminate. These are the people who want to do politics by making religions and castes fight,"



Yadav said.

Yadav said Lohia opposed discrimination at every level and claimed that it is the ideology of socialism championed by him that can eradicate poverty.

"Inflation and poverty will

be eradicated only by Dr Ram Manohar Lohia's price fixation policy. Lohia ji had shown the path of prosperity in the society through Sapt Kranti," he said.

Tributes were paid to Dr Ram Manohar Lohia at

Samajwadi Party offices across districts of Uttar Pradesh and other states.

"The fall of a country's currency is a symbol of the fall of the economy. No matter how thick the veneer of false data is, the truth has been revealed to the world," the former UP chief minister said.

"When the government is saying that there is a five trillion dollar economy, if our economy is moving forward, then where do we stand on the 'Hunger Index'." At 105th place," he added.

Yadav also claimed the number of train accidents were rising under the current Union government helmed by the BJP, despite claims made of improvements in the railways.

Result of larger cultural decay: Mohan Bhagwat on Calcutta doctor's rape and murder

NAGPUR, OCT 12: Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat on Saturday slammed "attempts to cover up" the rape and murder of a junior doctor at the state-run R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

Such incidents are the result of a larger cultural decay and corruption in society, Bhagwat said, addressing RSS workers at the annual Vijaydashmi Utsav in Nagpur.

Citing old traditions of India, Bhagwat said, "When Droupadi's clothes



were touched, Mahabharata happened, and when Sita was abducted, Ramayana happened," "What happened in Calcutta in the R G Kar Hospital was a shameful incident, which is an insult to all of us," Bhagwat said.

There was an attempt to cover up the incident and protect the criminals, the RSS chief said, targeting the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC) government in West Bengal.

"The nexus of crime, politics and poisonous culture is ruining us," Bhagwat said.

16-year-old girl gang-raped by boyfriend, juvenile friends in Ghaziabad; 3 held

GHAZIABAD, OCT 12: A 16-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by her boyfriend and three of his juvenile friends here, police said on Saturday.

The girl's boyfriend Chand and two of the juveniles have been arrested, they said.

On October 7, Chand lured the girl to his friend's office and raped her with the three juveniles. The accused then threatened to harm her if she told anyone about the incident, Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Surya Bali Maurya said.

According to the victim, she was in a relationship with Chand, a resident of Pavi Sadiqpur, for over a year.

Chand had promised to marry her but allegedly forced her into a sexual relationship, he said.

She finally mustered the courage on October 10 and lodged a complaint at the Tronica city police station, he said.

The ACP said an FIR has been registered against the accused under Section 70(2) (gang rape of a woman under the age of 18 years) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Section 5 C/6 (aggravated penetrative sexual assault) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Chand was arrested and two of the juveniles appre-

Woman, daughter-in-law gangraped in Andhra Pradesh's Sathya Sai district

AMRAVATI, OCT 12: Two women of a family were gangraped by four unidentified persons during early on Saturday in Sathya Sai district of Andhra Pradesh, police said.

According to a senior police official, a woman and her daughter-in-law, along with their other family members were staying at an under construction paper mill in Chilamathur mandal in the district.

The motorcycle-borne miscreants raped the women after beating up their husbands-father and son who confronted them.

"We have formed special teams to nab the criminals," the official said.

Meanwhile, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu directed the district police to nab the perpetrators as early as possible and arrest them.

hended on Saturday, police said, adding that the third minor accused remains at large.

Online fraud: 10 held by Mumbai police's cyber cell for duping people of Rs 1.47 cr

MUMBAI, OCT 12: Mumbai

police's regional cyber cell has arrested 10 persons from different parts of the country for alleged involvement in five cases in which victims cumulatively lost Rs 1.47 crore, an official said on Saturday.

The victims were lured into investing in share markets through a fintech company, after which the money was laundered through hawala channels and a web of fraudulently created bank accounts, the official said.



Those held include Jayesh Unni (34), Arbaz Samir Khan (26) and Shailesh Purshottamdas Patel (53) from Navi Mumbai, Ajay Kumar Sukhdev Karche (51) from Malad, Amit Ram Singh (43) from Delhi, Hitesh Surat Singh (29) from Haryana, Nitin Chendwankar (47), Rajesh Sonawane (51) and Uday Salvi (47) from Mumbai, the official said.

They were remanded in police custody and further probe into this online racket is underway, he added.