

Day 24 Of CJP Protest

Wangchuk Loses 8.2 Kg As Fast Enters 16th Day; 'Lives At Stake', Says Dipke

NEW DELHI, JUL 13: Educator and climate activist Sonam Wangchuk has lost 8.2 kg since his indefinite hunger strike at the Jantar Mantar began, and his blood glucose level has dropped to 67 mg/dL, the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) said on Monday, with its founder Abhijeet Dipke urging the Centre to address the protesters' demands as "lives are at stake".

With Wangchuk's indefinite fast entering Day 16, his health has deteriorated further. According to a health update shared by CJP, Wangchuk's blood pressure was recorded at 107/70 mm Hg. His total weight loss since the beginning of the hunger strike has reached 8.2 kg.

The CJP protest at Jantar Mantar over alleged examination irregularities entered Day 24 on Monday.

CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke appealed to the Centre not to turn the issue into "a battle of egos" and urged it to address the protesters' demands.

"Day 16 of Wangchuk's hunger strike. I request the



government not to turn this into a battle of egos as human lives are at stake here," Dipke said in a post on X.

"Acknowledging a mistake is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign of maturity, accountability, and the willingness to correct course. All we are asking for is accountability," he added.

On the day, an AAP delegation led by former Delhi chief minister Atishi visited the protest site and expressed solidarity with the agitation, according to the CJP.

CPI(M) MP Amra Ram, along with senior CPI(M) leaders from Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, also

visited the protest site and backed the demands. The visiting leaders also extended support to the proposed peaceful march from Jantar Mantar to Parliament on July 20.

According to the CJP, the AAP delegation reiterated its support for the movement, demanded a transparent, fair and credible examination system and backed the demand for Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation.

Members of the CPI(ML) Liberation-affiliated All India Students' Association (AISA) -- Neha, Manish, Deepak and Aameen -- continued their indefinite

hunger strike on a separate stage at the protest site.

In a statement, the AISA said Atishi met the students on hunger strike and expressed concern over what it described as the state of democracy, where students had remained on an indefinite fast for weeks without any positive response from the government.

It also said the health of the students on hunger striker has deteriorated further, but asserted that the protest would continue.

The CJP has been demanding Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation and Rs 1 crore compensation for the families of students who allegedly died by suicide over alleged examination irregularities. The outfit has also announced a peaceful march to Parliament on July 20, the opening day of the Monsoon Session.

The CJP protest began June 20, while Wangchuk joined the agitation on June 28 and has been on indefinite hunger strike since. (Agencies)

Modi Govt Silent On Corruption In Education; Time For Revolution In This Sector: RG

NEW DELHI, JUL 13: Ahead of his second interaction with students under the 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' initiative, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday said India's education system has now become a "dishonest extortion mechanism" and asserted that now it is time for a revolution in this sector.

The Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha also alleged that in the face of corruption in the election system, the Modi government and Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan have chosen silence, turning their face away from accountability.

In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "Corrupt, unjust, biased, dishonest – these four words are not mine, these are what the country's students are using today for India's education system. And the truth is – India's education system has now become a dishonest extortion mechanism."



The system that was meant to prepare children for their future is today pushing them and their families into debt, stress and despair, the former Congress chief said.

"It is this corruption that has given birth to the paper leak mafia, which robs years of hard work from millions of preparing students in one fell swoop. Here, guilty vendors and officials get tenders and promotions. And who gets the punishment? The stu-

dents, who are left alone with their shattered dreams," Gandhi said.

"The Modi government and the education minister are watching all this. But they have chosen silence – turning their face away from accountability. And the media? Just a long silence. Enough is enough – now is the time for a revolution in education," Gandhi said.

Gandhi addressed the first 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' rally in Kota, Rajasthan, on June 17.

He would be addressing similar rallies in other cities as well.

At the Kota event, Gandhi described India's education system as a "rejection system" rather than a selection process, alleging that it places excessive financial burden and stress on students and middle-class families.

Gandhi also termed the current education structure "extremely stressful and unfair".

"India's education system is an extortion machine. We want a system that allows you to dream big," he had said, adding that young people in the country are being subjected to "too much pain, stress and unhappiness".

Interacting with students on the issues of paper leaks and unemployment, Gandhi also said that India's education system puts pressure on children, stresses them and crushes them. (Agencies)

Kerala: Cong leader Khera accuses BJP, RSS of turning temples into 'collection centres'

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JUL 13: Senior Congress leader Pawan Khera on Monday accused the BJP and the RSS of turning temples into "collection centres" for the Sangh.

Referring to the reported theft of devotees' offerings at the Ayodhya Ram temple, he alleged that it reflected a "business model of theft" built around faith.

Addressing a press conference at the KPCC headquarters here, Khera said the Congress was raising the issue on behalf of millions of devotees who had donated their hard-earned money, jewellery and valuables for the construction of the Ram temple and as offerings to the deity.

Calling the alleged theft a "daylight dacoity", he said it was not merely the theft of devotees' offerings but also "a robbery of people's faith, trust and confidence" in the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust.

The Congress leader said the trust, constituted following the Supreme Court's directive, had been entrusted with maintaining the temple, regulating pilgrims and safeguarding devotees' offerings,

but alleged that it had failed in its responsibility and betrayed the faith of devotees.

He accused the BJP and the RSS of taking political credit for the construction of the Ram temple, saying it was built after the Supreme Court's verdict paved the way for its construction.

He further alleged that they had now been "caught red-handed" over the reported theft of devotees' offerings.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi is silent. The RSS is silent. Amit Shah is absent. Who will take responsibility for this daylight robbery?" he asked. Executive Branch

Khera alleged there was an attempt to shield those at the top while only junior officials and employees were being proceeded against.

"There is someone or a group of senior people who are being protected. Whether that protection comes from Delhi or Nagpur, we do not know," he alleged.

Claiming that the BJP and the RSS had no right to "backstab" the faith of Hindus, Khera referred to media reports of alleged irregularities relating to temples in Badrinath and the

Baglamukhi shrine in Madhya Pradesh.

He alleged that despite infrastructure major L&T offering to construct the Ayodhya Ram Temple virtually free of cost and a stone supplier offering to provide stones at a token price, the trust spent around Rs 2,100 crore on the project and purchased stones at Rs 500 per square foot. Khera questioned the trust's purchase of nearby land worth Rs 86 crore, alleging it was being used to grow cattle fodder despite there being no goshala (shelter for cows) attached to the shrine.

Demanding that the present trust be dissolved, he said a new body comprising religious leaders, social activists and persons of integrity should be constituted to manage the temple. Politics Khera demanded a digital forensic investigation and a comprehensive forensic audit of the trust's accounts, donations, offerings and land transactions. "We have demanded a time-bound inquiry under the supervision of a sitting Supreme Court judge. If the government has nothing to hide, why is it running away from this de-

mand?" he asked, adding that people had little faith in the present SIT.

Alleging that the BJP, the RSS and the VHP had collected funds in the name of Lord Ram for three decades, Khera claimed, "This is a business model of theft."

He alleged that temples had been turned into "collection centres" for the RSS and questioned whether devotees' money was being used to build luxurious party offices.

"Why should Amit Shah and Mohan Bhagwat be custodians of our faith? The custodians of our faith should be the Shankaracharyas," he claimed, alleging that the trust had been filled with RSS nominees.

Khera said the Congress was holding press conferences across the country to "expose" the BJP, the RSS and the VHP over the issue.

The leader's remarks came a day after the RSS expressed "grief" over the alleged irregularities in the counting of donation box offerings at the Shri Ram temple in Ayodhya and voiced confidence that the ongoing SIT probe and police action would reach a "decisive turn".

Gadkari, Adityanath review highway projects in UP, stress faster execution and road safety

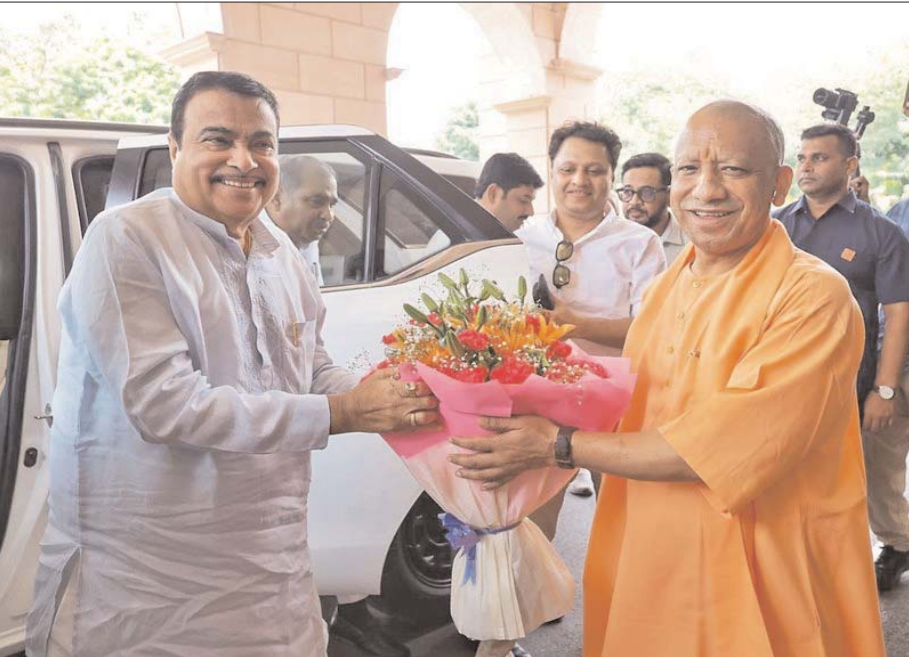
LUCKNOW, JUL 13: Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said developing world-class road connectivity in Uttar Pradesh was among the Centre's top priorities, while Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asserted that the state's expanding highway network would accelerate investment, industry, tourism and employment.

The remarks came during a review meeting of major national highway and road infrastructure projects in the state.

The meeting was attended by senior officials of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the Uttar Pradesh government, according to an official statement.

"Developing world-class road connectivity in Uttar Pradesh is our priority. The state has emerged as a major engine of the country's economic growth," Gadkari said, directing officials to expedite land acquisition, forest clearances, utility shifting and other statutory approvals to ensure timely completion of projects.

Emphasising road safety, the Union minister said, "Equal attention should be paid to reducing accidents along with road construction. Every national highway project should incorporate safe design, scientific improvement of black spots,



modern signage and strict adherence to road safety standards."

Gadkari also advocated transplanting trees using modern technology instead of felling them for highway construction, saying development and environmental protection should go hand in hand.

Adityanath said, "A modern road infrastructure is the foundation of a developed Uttar Pradesh. Better road connectivity will give fresh momentum to investment, industry, agriculture, tourism, trade and employment."

The chief minister said the rapid expansion of road infrastructure would help the state achieve its goal of becoming a USD 1 trillion econ-

omy and expressed confidence that coordinated efforts by the Centre and the state would ensure timely completion of all national highway projects.

According to the statement, officials informed the meeting that since 2014, about 10,204 km of national highway projects have been awarded in Uttar Pradesh, while construction of 9,329 km has been completed.

Between April 2025 and May 2026, projects covering 606 km were sanctioned and 1,010 km of highways completed. Officials said investments of around Rs 1.94 lakh crore had been made in national highway projects in the state, including Rs 23,445 crore during the 2025-26 financial year.

Gadkari appreciated measures taken by the Uttar Pradesh government to speed up project implementation, saying the Centre-state coordination had yielded positive results.

The meeting reviewed several ongoing and proposed projects, including the Mathura-Bareilly-Sitarganj four-lane highway, Agra-Ali-garh four-lane project, Agra-Gwalior-Jhansi-Nagpur Economic Corridor, Kanpur Ring Road, the six-lane connectivity project to Noida International Airport at Jewar, Moradabad-Kashipur highway, Ayodhya Ring Road, Ram Van Gaman Marg, Ram Janaki Marg and the proposed 742-km Shamli-Gorakhpur access-controlled corridor. (Agencies)

VP Radhakrishnan calls for greater participation of states to strengthen NCC

NEW DELHI, JUL 13: Vice President C P Radhakrishnan on Monday called for greater participation of states to strengthen NCC and expand Sainik Schools.

He was briefed on the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and Sainik Schools by Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth, along with senior officers of the Ministry of Defence here.

Appreciating the NCC's contribution to nation-building, the vice president described the Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Camps as an excellent initiative for strengthening national integration.

He also lauded the NCC's community service initiatives, including the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, and welcomed the establishment of the NCC Alumni Association. Geographic Refer-



ence

Emphasising that strengthening the NCC is a shared national responsibility, Radhakrishnan called for greater infrastructure development, enhanced coordination with state governments on issues such as land and training infrastructure,

and assured all possible support in engaging with the states.

Radhakrishnan was also briefed on the functioning and expansion of Sainik Schools, including the existing and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models.

Suggesting that the grow-

ing demand among students and parents be addressed, the vice president observed that each state could aim to have three to five Sainik Schools. He also proposed exploring the possibility of increasing the intake capacity of existing Sainik Schools. (Agencies)

'Khaunga, khane doonga aur khilaunga': Cong slams PM Modi's anti-graft pitch

NEW DELHI, July 13: Launching a blistering attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress on Monday said his 'na khaunga na khane doonga' statement was a "hoax" as he has delivered "minimum governance, maximum cover-ups".

The opposition party alleged that under the prime minister's leadership, it has always been a case of "khaunga, khane doonga, aur khilaunga."

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh emphasised that Modi became prime minister in May 2014, boasting of his "na khaunga na khane doonga" promise.

"That this was a hoax became evident soon thereafter when Dr Manmohan Singh described the November 8, 2016, demonetisation as 'organised loot and legalised plunder'," Ramesh said in a post on X.

He claimed that the Gujarat State Petroleum Corpo-

ration was forcibly merged with the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation to cover up a Rs 20,000 crore "scam" that occurred during Modi's tenure as chief minister of Gujarat.

Ramesh argued that the introduction of electoral bonds was a part of a massive Rs 4 lakh crore "chanda do, dhanda lo" scam.

"The explosive growth of the Modani empire revealed the true nature of the Modi regime, as was proved by the 100 questions asked of the prime minister in the Congress' Hum Adani Ke Hain Kaun' series," Ramesh said.

He pointed out that serious questions regarding the Rafale deal have never been satisfactorily answered.

"A wholly non-transparent and non-accountable PM CARES Fund was created. The CAG has been weakened, but even so, there have been reports detailing very significant fraudulent expenditures in the Modi Govern-

ment's flagship schemes like Ayushman Bharat and PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana," Ramesh claimed.

"In recent weeks, further evidence of the hollowness of the 'na khaunga na khane doonga' bombast has emerged, the massive 'Chanda Chori Aastha Dhoka' at the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya executed by members of the RSS-BJP ecosystem has shocked the nation's conscience," he added.

The Congress general secretary in-charge of communications highlighted that Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu remains in his position despite the Supreme Court calling for a CBI investigation into his decisions over a ten-year period that have allegedly benefited his family members. Additionally, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav continues to hold office despite revelations that he has enriched his relatives

through dubious land deals and transactions, according to Ramesh.

He also alleged that opposition parties are being splintered by offers of various financial incentives.

"A Minister of State in the Modi Government continues in office even though it is proven beyond doubt that he has taken a subsidy through a scheme run by his own Ministry," he alleged.

Ramesh stated that four close aides of Union Minister of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav have been sacked overnight, raising legitimate concerns of whether there can be so much smoke without any fire in the first place.

"Decisions on E20 are being taken to ensure that huge benefits will flow to the family of the Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways," he claimed, referring to Nitin Gadkari.