The country is in the midst of elections to state assembly in five important states: Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Mizoram. Together they account for 73 Seats in the Lok Sabha and therefore they are politically significant. The Congress has Governments in three states and is aspiring to increase the tally in these elections. The Congress has fulfilled the commitments made to the people in the last election and hopes to repeat the success in these states for its Good work. The optimism in the Congress for a better result is due to the efforts put in by the party in all the states and the introduction of pro people’s policies which benefit the aam aadmi across the country. Never before has there been a Government, like the Congress led UPA, so focused on the needs of the aam aadmi and never before so many schemes have been introduced for the betterment of the lives of the poorest of the poor. This is because of the concentrated thrust and dedication, following on the road map set by Indira ji and Rajiv ji, of Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi ably assisted by the Vice President Rahul Gandhi. After having brought about transparency in Governance through the Right to Information Bill the Government set about targeting specific needs of the people. The MGNAREGA assured right to employment for 100 days to everyone at the village level. The Right to Education gave an opportunity to every individual to compulsorily join schools to get primary education thereby acquiring knowledge and setting the road map to stop people from getting exploited by unscrupulous elements. The Food Security Bill which ensures that no one would go hungry in the country by supplying staple food at very low prices. The Forest Land Bill which gives the right to the land and its use to Tribal’s. The Land Acquisition Bill which ensures that no land is taken away from the land owners (farmers) without ensuring adequate compensation, consent and scope for future employment. These are but a few of the schemes which cover all aspects of the lives of the aam aadmi. The opposition did its very best to block the implementation of these schemes over stalled sessions of the Parliament. It is only the dedication of the Congress President and the support from the Congress Vice President which brought about these measures for the aam aadmi. The 15 Point Program of the Prime Minister is being upgraded for the welfare of the minorities. With all the pro people policies and hard work by Congress people in every state the Congress has the right to be optimistic about retaining the states it is ruling and improving its tally. The party machinery is active in the field and fighting a united battle to give the opposition a befitting reply.

The country celebrated on 2nd October the 144th Birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi. Faced with the fascist and divisive policies of the main opposition party in the country has only increased the relevance of the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi in contemporary times. The Mahatma gave his life struggling for communal harmony and togetherness within diverse communities in the country. His far sightedness for keeping at bay communal strife was an example of his wisdom.

The country also celebrated the 109th Birth anniversary of a true Gandhian, former Prime Minister Sh. Lal Bahadur Shastri. Even though he had a long and illustrious career in politics in which he joined at a very young age he could lead the country for a very short span of about two years

31st October is the 30th Martyrdom day of Smt. Indira Gandhi. We lost an charismatic leader who waged a war against poverty at the hands of misguided communal elements. Indira ji brought about several far sighted reforms which made our economy stronger and gave an opportunity to entrepreneurs. The Bank Nationalization and abolition of Privy Purses were steps which exhibited her concern for the poor and for equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities. The country fought a war with Pakistan which led to the formation of a new country, Bangladesh. Her skill in managing a very strong and useful agreement with Pakistan’s rulers, ‘The Shimla Agreement,’ forms the basis of all our dialogues with our neighbors. She displayed exemplary courage and did not change her principled stand even when faced with the threat of aggression from a world power. She was a leader who gave India an identity in the international world. The Pokhran Nuclear Test was a display of India’s commitment to growth and individuality. Her wisdom continues to guide us in our thinking for improvement of the lives of the poorest of the poor. 

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The anguish of Congress Vice President Rahul Gandhi over the communalization of politics by the major opposition party especially its Prime Ministerial aspirant is not without reason. Creating rift within communities for petty electoral gains is eating away at the roots of our nation’s social fabric. A country which has always held its head high in pride over the spirit of coexistence is today facing the threat of the destruction of its social fabric by playing communities against each other through acts of falsehood and deception. Great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Smt. Indira Gandhi and Sh. Rajiv Gandhi have been sacrificed over the promotion of communal hatred by vested interests. The country has survived this attack on its basic tenet of Sarva Dharma Sambhav due to its cultural heritage and the character that it has imbibed from the wise men of history of this great nation.

The continuous assault on our cultural heritage will weaken the country so much that it will hamper the growth that it is capable of achieving. The younger generation shares the anguish of the Congress leader and will not permit such hatred to stand in the way of the progress of the country. It is only the inclusive policies introduced under the leadership of the Congress party which can take the country on the road to success and become a World leader.
CP’s VISIT
• On her visit to Mandya, Karnataka, the Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi said that I have come to thank the people of Mandya who rejected the opportunistic alliances of non-Congress parties.

• On her visit to Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala, the Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi complimented the Kerala government for launching the ‘zero land less project’.

• On the inauguration of Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development studies, the Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi said that UPA Government has lifted millions out of poverty through our social welfare schemes.

• On laying the foundation stone for the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology at Akkulam in Kerala, Smt. Sonia Gandhi said that it will be a world-class institution.

• The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi laid the foundation stone for the rail wheel plant in Raebareli.

• The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi laid foundation stone for UP’s first AIIMS complex in Raebareli.

PM’s SPEECH
The Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh while addressing the National Integration Council meeting asked the people to make the national integration strong.

RAHUL GANDHI’S VISITS
• While addressing the people in Bastar (Chhattisgarh) the Congress Vice-President, Shri Rahul Gandhi said that we want the common people to know that they run the country.

• Shri Rahul Gandhi lays foundation stone for the Food Park project in Amethi in UP.

DALIT ADHIKAR DIWAS
• Addressing the rally, the Congress Vice-President, Shri Rahul Gandhi said that leaders from the community will be identified, nurtured and involved in every stage of decision-making.

• While addressing the people in Aligarh and Rampur, the Congress Vice-President, Shri Rahul Gandhi said that Congress will fight for the rights of the poor, the youth and women.

• Addressing the people in Sangrur (Punjab), Shri Rahul Gandhi said that UPA is empowering the people.

• Addressing the people in Shahdol in Madhya Pradesh, the Congress Vice-President, Shri Rahul Gandhi said that the youth have to transform Madhya Pradesh to achieve development.

PM ADDRESS IN UN
Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said while addressing the UN General Assembly that the UN agenda should not be merely about reprioritizing domestic spending but also about fostering genuine international partnership.

PM’s MEETING WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA
Prime Minister met President Obama of US and sought to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS 2013
Chhattisgarh
Delhi
Madhya Pradesh
Mizoram
Rajasthan

TRIBUTES
Tributes to Mahatma Gandhi by Dr. Shashi Kumar Singh
Tributes to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shashtri by Prof. K.L. Kamal
Tributes to Indira Gandhi

FROM ARCHIVES
The period of Shri Rajiv Gandhi

STATESWATCH
Poverty increasing in Chhattisgarh
Senior citizens honoured
More than crore to benefit in Haryana

EX-SERVICEMEN REPORT

AICC DIARY
The last time I was here in Karnataka, just before the Assembly elections in May, I requested the people to give the Congress a chance. You placed your trust in our Party and gave us a clear and overwhelming mandate. I thank the people of Karnataka and congratulate all of you, Congress men and women, for your hard work.

I am very happy to be here in Mandya, a land of hard working farmers and people, blessed by (1) the mighty Kaveri river, (2) the life-giving Krishnaraja Sagar Dam and (3) home to a rich heritage and ancient monuments.

This is also the land of renowned Kannada literary giants, artistes, historical figures, freedom fighters and distinguished political personalities. I pay tribute to all these remarkable figures who have inspired us and left their imprint on our history, culture and democracy.

I have come today to thank the people of Mandya for supporting the Congress Party and electing Kumari Ramya and Shri DK Suresh. I congratulate both of them and the Party on their success. These two victories by huge margins, reconfirm the resolve of the people of the State to return to the Congress fold.

The enlightened people of Karnataka have rejected the opportunistic alliances of non-Congress parties. They have seen through their games, their false promises, their corruption, the needless violence, they unleashed against the minorities and on our young girls and boys. I assure our young people throughout this forward-looking State that the Congress will respond to their rising aspirations for education, skills and gainful employment, for a better future.

I am confident that the government led by Chief Minister Siddharamiah and the Party led by Dr. Parameshwara will strive to give you clean, transparent and efficient governance. There is a new atmosphere in the State, an atmosphere that gives confidence to one and all that ours is a government that will deliver on the promises it has made.

‘Anna Bhagya’ promised in our Congress Manifesto for the Assembly elections to provide food-grains to the needy is already bringing relief to lakhs of people. The waiver of loans to SC/ST, OBC and minorities is being implemented. Further proof of our sincerity in fulfilling our promise, lies in the subsidy given to milk producers and the interest free loans provided to two lakh farmers, the Rs.10,000/- crore funds that have been earmarked to complete the irrigation schemes in the State. I compliment the Chief Minister and his government on making this determined and positive beginning.

I want to assure the people of the state that the Congress Party and the UPA government are committed to the welfare of the poor as well as to stimulating economic growth. Even though India, along with the rest of the world, is passing through a difficult economic phase, I am confident that, we will overcome these challenges and continue to create conditions for faster growth and development.

The whole country is proud of what Karnataka and especially Bengaluru had achieved especially when SM Krishna ji was Chief Minister. Bengaluru had become a centre of excellence and accomplishment in cutting edge technologies, a magnet for young talented people. Sadly it has suffered many years of neglect. We must work hard to rebuild the city’s infrastructure and restore it to its glory.

To ensure that the people of Karnataka benefit from the Centre’s schemes, both our State and UPA governments are working closely together to give new impetus to the long neglected UPA flagship programmes.
At the national level, the Congress-led UPA government under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh ji has recently taken two major decisions. We all know that in spite of impressive progress there are still millions who suffer from hunger and malnutrition. The historic National Food Security Bill passed by the Parliament a few weeks ago seeks to bring and end to such chronic deprivation. It will benefit 76% of the people living in rural Karnataka and almost 50% of those living in urban Karnataka. In order to eradicate corruption in the PDS system, a number of reforms in its functioning have been included in the Bill. Ration shops will be managed by panchayats and Women's Self-Help Groups and will be fully accountable to their communities.

The BJP sought to deflect the importance of the Food Security Bill by spreading stories that it will impact negatively on our farmers. We are proud of their contribution. They have transformed agriculture, giving us self-sufficiency in food production making it possible for us today to implement this historic Bill. They will always be at the heart of our policies.

The landmark Land Acquisition Law passed in the Parliament reflects this very principle. The progressive new law ensures that land acquisition will take place only with the written consent of farmers. No longer will land be taken away from our farmers for a paltry sum. Compensation to farmers will hugely increased both in rural areas and urban areas.

Friends, No other Government has achieved so much, no other government has empowered millions of people RTI - MG NREGA, Right to Education, Right to Tribals, laws to protect our women from violence, to protect their inheritance rights. The opposition shouts, attacks us, prevents Parliament from functioning that is basically the work they do. The Congress stands by certain values - social justice - inclusiveness - equal respect to all faiths. We bind people together. The BJP divides people.

They belittle our Prime Minister. I want to tell them that we stand firmly by his side - his work. We are not going to be Swayed by their attacks. We shall continue on our path, that of sincerely working for our people that of ensuring a brighter happier future for them. Thank you & Jai Hind! 

Mandya: The UPA Chairperson and Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi addressed a massive Congress rally in Karnataka’s Mandya region on 30th September, 2013 where she thanked all the people and the Congress workers for giving a huge mandate to the Congress party in the assembly and the recently concluded Lok Sabha bi-election.

Smt. Sonia Gandhi also expressed her support for the Prime Minister and said that the entire Congress party stands behind him as it was under his leadership the UPA Government at the Centre implemented all the welfare policies. Slamming the opposition, the Congress President quipped, “They may make fun of the prime minister but I want them to know that the whole party is behind him”. Taking a dig at the opposition – mainly the Bharatiya Janata Party, Smt. Sonia Gandhi reiterated that Congress is not afraid of any party. “We are not afraid of the BJP or any other opposition party she asserted.

Accusing BJP of playing divisive politics, Smt. Sonia Gandhi said the Congress unites people, but the BJP divides them.

“The Congress stands by principles inherited from leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, who professed peace, social justice, inclusiveness and equal respect to all religions,” she added.

She also trained her guns on BJP for trying to come in the way of the Congress-led UPA government’s efforts to pass the Food Security Bill and going to the extent of spreading false rumours, saying the bill is not beneficial to farmers.

At the rally, the UPA chairperson said no other government has achieved so much and passed “historic bills” as the ruling alliance had done, asking the BJP why it could not do so when it was in power heading the NDA.

“...No other government has lifted millions of people out of poverty”, she said.

“The Opposition shouts, attacks us, and prevents us from passing laws in Parliament. I want to ask them. They were in power for six years at the Centre and Karnataka. Why didn't they pass such laws? Why didn't they lift millions out of poverty? Because they don't care for you. They do not care for the farmers,” she added.

Congress President remembered and said that “Last time I was here during assembly elections with a request to give Congress a chance. The people of Karnataka put the trust on the Congress party once again, gave a huge mandate to us and I thank all of you for that and also the Congress workers – the men and women - for their hard work”.

Praising the Congress Government in the state, Smt. Sonia Gandhi spoke about Karnataka government’s Anna bhagya scheme (food security to BPL). The “Anna Bhagya” scheme for BPL families to provide rice at Re 1 a kg and interest free loans up to Rs two lakh for farmers and announcement about Rs 10,000 crore allocation for irrigation schemes by the Siddaramaiah government, she said: “We do what we say; we keep our promise”.

More than two lakh people had attended the public meeting. Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Former Chief Minister Shri S.M. Krishna, and KPCC President Dr. G Parameshwar, Union Railway Minister Shri Mallikarjun Kharge and other senior leaders were also present.
LANDLESS FAMILIES TO OWN THEIR OWN HOMES
GOVERNMENT MUST BE COMPLIMENTED FOR HELPING LESS-FORTUNATE CITIZENS

Congress President’s speech at launch of ‘Zero Landless Project’ at Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala on 20th September, 2013

I am happy to be present here to speak about Kerala’s unique programme which will make it a ‘Zero Landless State’ by the year 2015. This is a wonderful project which will give an opportunity to all those families who are homeless to fulfill a lifelong dream of owning a piece of land on which they can build a house. Having one’s own house is something each one of us has a right to aspire for. Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and this Government must be complimented for the courageous vision to help less fortunate citizens realize this dream.

Kerala is a state where land is scarce. A growing population and increasing urbanisation both build-up the pressure on the land. This has led to a rise in urban poverty as well as to the growth of slums in many parts of India. And so, the Government of Kerala has devised this programme where it will assign Government land to landless families to build their homes, giving them the opportunity to be a part of the larger, mainstream society. In this phase, the landless programme focused on one lakh people belonging to the weakest sections of society, from the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, as well as, on families with widows, destitute, handicapped and members suffering from chronic diseases.

Friends, inclusive growth, is the bedrock of the policies of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). We want everyone to march ahead towards a new India. No one should be left behind on account of religion, caste, creed and region. The UPA Government and the UDF Government are carrying forward the vision of Jawaharlal Nehru, Shastri ji, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi of making India a modern nation based on social justice, allowing the country to transform itself with the times but providing basic facilities to people everywhere. Our government, under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singh is committed to this principle of development. To ensure this, it has introduced a wide range of welfare schemes, and passes laws such as the Food Security Bill, the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill, the Right to Education, the Right to Information, Tribal Rights, the Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act, the Indira Awas Yojana, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, the Prime Minister’s Gram Sadak Yojana, the Mid-day meal scheme, to name just a few. The UDF-Government of Kerala is doing a stellar job in implementing our national vision and is building it further through imaginative yojanas such as, the ‘Zero Landless State’. This initiative amongst many taken by the Government will ensure a socially just society.

Kerala is already blessed with very high human development indicators and with an educated society; schemes such as this will lift the homeless out of their difficult conditions and enable them to strive for objectives beyond simple survival.

A citizen owning his own house will be a happier citizen, and a happier citizen is better equipped to meet the challenges of everyday life. The Government of Kerala is committed to the principles of inclusiveness and that can be seen in the initiation of the first phase of this project.

The state of Kerala has immense potential. We assure you that the UPA will work together with the UDF-Government to ensure we deliver on the promises made to you. The success of the ‘Zero Landless State’ programme demonstrates yet again that the Government is responsive, compassionate and heeds the aspirations of the people.

I congratulate Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and his Government for having devised a programme which will allow landless families to own their own homes. I am confident that by 2015, it will fulfill the goal of making Kerala a ‘Zero Landless State’, creating another successful model for other States to implement. It will then become the first State in India where everyone has a house, a remarkable achievement. I also felicitate the one lakh families who received land to build their homes in the first phase. I hope this is a new beginning towards improving their lives. Thank you, and Jai Hind!
I am delighted to be present here at the Inauguration of the “Training cum Research Complex of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies.” The Indian National Congress has always valued having a solid scholarly foundation for its policies. I congratulate the management of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies for having taken the necessary steps to increase the infrastructure within the campus, and for aspiring to give its students the very best in the course of their education here. This is an important addition to the institution and will most certainly benefit the students academically.

The training of our young leaders who will lead India into the 21st century, is particularly important for our party. I understand that the institute is committed to teaching its students an inter-disciplinary program based on the Social Sciences from a distinguished faculty. The graduates who will emerge are sure to have a keen sense about the social structure of the country and of other developing societies around it. The Training Centre will help students gain practical knowledge, helping them translate theoretical knowledge learnt in classes into practical efforts which will help the country and its people.

Our country is in need of leaders who understand society not merely as it is but as it can be. Our party must ask every day not only where India is today but where it is likely to be going in the future. The prime concern of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) has always been to develop the nation while being socially inclusive. This will allow for every section of society to progress. I hope the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies will teach its students to be leaders of tomorrow, who understand Indian society and the problems it faces and who work towards making a difference. I also hope they will give solutions which can be implemented and bring results.

The marginalization of the poor and socially backward on the basis of gender, class, caste, and religion remains a big issue in our society. It is also hampering our growth because their circumstances do not allow them to become contributors to our society. While they do not have access to the basic facilities, they also face discrimination at every level. Over the last nine years, the UPA Government under the leadership of Dr Manmohan Singh has lifted millions out of poverty through our social welfare schemes. But we need to do more.

We need experts who will devise solutions to empower the marginalized. They must be given a good education, basic facilities of life and an opportunity to be contributing members of society. We need policy makers of the next generation who can identify and understand the particular problems of today and the opportunities of tomorrow and help construct policies which can bring effective and long term change. Research is an important aspect of development studies. As an upcoming think-tank, this Institute should work towards creating various research opportunities and enhancing the quality of research in the Social Sciences space.

As India develops, it brings with it newer challenges. These are challenges as yet unseen and on a scale unprecedented in human history. Natural disasters, environmental issues, and human development concerns have begun to encircle us simultaneously. This requires institutions like the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies to design an ever evolving curriculum which will keep abreast of these challenges and the possible solutions to them. The fast pace of development does not give us much time to react to them and this can only be countered with effective and relevant education.

Kerala has immense potential. The talent pool here is brimming with enthusiasm and I can see that you will all make a mark in your respective fields and make us proud with your achievements. I assure you that the UPA and the UDF are committed to developing the State based on the Gandhian principles of inclusiveness and secularism, where everyone is given an opportunity to grow. Your education will help us achieve this goal. You are the decision makers of tomorrow. We stand here beside you and together, we will work hard to ensure that we create the best future for the State and the country.

I thank the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee for inviting me here today. I once again congratulate the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies on the inauguration of the Training cum Research Complex. I hope that the institution and its students strengthen both research and the study of social sciences in our country, thereby enhancing our understanding of our society and nourishing its intellectual life. Thank you and Jai Hind.
THE UPA-GOVERNMENT TOOK UP THE TASK OF TRANSFORMING THE RAJIV GANDHI CENTRE FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY INTO A WORLD-CLASS INSTITUTION: SONIA GANDHI

Laying of the foundation stone of Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology Second Campus (Bio-Innovation Centre) Akkulam, Kerala, on 30th September 2013

Kerala is a picturesque State, where nature has been generous with its bounties. These lush green plains between the long coastline and the majestic mountain ranges are endowed with among the richest biodiversity in the world, a national treasure for all of us to cherish and nurture.

It is with this sentiment that I feel great pride in laying the Foundation Stone of the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology. More than 25 years ago, Rajivji spoke of his dream to take India into the 21st century—by reaping the benefits of science and technology. This occasion marks another important step in realising that dream.

Kerala is truly a State with vision, where Chief Minister Oommen Chandy and the UDF-Government have understood the importance of science and technology. This is evident from the various research centres established with generous support from the UPA-Government in fields ranging from forest, land and water resource management, transport management and alternate energy. Kerala was the first State in India to build a Techno park. It is no wonder then that it is among the first States in the country to have established a centre dedicated solely to biotechnology.

Information technology and bio-technology have been earmarked by the Government as engines that will fuel future growth and prosperity. This State may lack the heavy industry of some of its neighbours, but it is rich in educated, trained manpower that is highly conducive for emerging industries that depend on biotechnology. The high levels of value addition in this industry is suitable for Kerala, where land may be limited, but all other resources, including a highly educated and talented population, exist in abundance. Kerala also has a long tradition of systems of medicine. A combination of modern biotechnology and traditional knowledge might well provide better understanding of ailments and disease.

The UPA-Government took up the task of transforming the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology into a world-class institution in 2007. Today, it plays an extremely crucial role in developing biotechnology to better understand human, animal and plant diseases, as well as performing molecular diagnostics for infectious diseases and DNA fingerprinting for the judicial and law enforcement agencies. In 2009, I visited this institute and understanding its urgent need to develop its infrastructure, I had promised to look into the matter of additional funding. Subsequently, the Prime Minister provided Rs. 100 crore to build this second campus and create a specialised Bio-Innovation Centre. This will, among other things, be a hub for research and development in cutting-edge medical technologies such as molecular diagnostics and biomarkers, and nanobiotechnology. I am delighted to learn that the UDF-Government has responded generously by allotting 20 acres of land at no cost, in the heart of Thiruvananthapuram City, to build this new venture, and play its part in laying the seeds of growth and innovation.

I am also extremely happy to hear that the Rajiv Gandhi Centre will now manage the Kerala Government’s Biotechnology Park in Kochi, which was built with the support of the Department of Biotechnology. This is perhaps the only research institution that will have such a biotech park to promote the development of the industry, by catering to entrepreneurs through their research expertise, infrastructure and incubation facilities.

Research & Development strategies must always be accompanied by such programs that impart education and training to graduates and postgraduates in science, engineering and medicine. I am very glad that the ministry for Science & Technology has begun the process to make the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology an Institute of National Importance.

It is with great pride that I have laid the foundation stone for the “Bio-Innovation Center of the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology.” I wish all scientists, staff and students the very best as they embark upon this new and exciting phase of development, and hope to come back soon to see their progress. I assure you of our continued support in all your future endeavours. Thank you, and Jai Hind.
CONGRESS PRESIDENT’S VISIT TO KERALA

The Congress President and UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi launched the ambitious ‘Zero landless project’ of the Congress-led UDF government in Kerala on 30th September, 2013 which aims at providing land to all the landless people by 2015.

Smt. Sonia Gandhi arrived at the Thiruvananthapuram airport on 29th September, and took a helicopter some distance, before driving to Neyyar on the outskirts of the city, where she inaugurated the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Development Studies, a state-of-the-art research and training centre.

The centre would be run by the Kerala unit of the Congress party.

Speaking on the occasion, the Congress President said Rajiv Gandhi would be proud of the institute, and also of the workers of the party who had made the institute a reality.

"This institute should see that it creates young leaders who will take the country forward in the 21st century. Apart from the research activities that this institute would take up, the centre should see that training is given to students to gain practical knowledge which will help the country," she said.

"This institute should teach students to be leaders of tomorrow who provide solutions to be implemented. We need experts to improve the condition of the marginalised, and institutes like this one will help face the challenges of the future," Smt. Gandhi said.

The research centre would be housed in a 40,000 sq ft building, with a library and a convention centre. "This is a historic moment when we inaugurate this wonderful project which will give an opportunity to all those families who are homeless to fulfil a life-long dream of owning a piece of land on which they can build their home", said Smt. Sonia Gandhi while addressing the gathering after launching this historical project. She also congratulated the government of Kerala and Chief Minister Shri Oommen Chandi for ‘taking this courageous step and brought out such a fantastic programme in which the citizens of Kerala who do not own land can finally realise their dreams.’

Inclusive growth is the backdrop of the policies of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA). We want everyone to march ahead together towards a new India. No one should be left behind or sidelined on account of caste, creed, religion or region and the UPA Government and UDF Government (in Kerala) are carrying forward the vision of Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi of making India a modern nation based on social justice and allowed the country to transform itself by providing basic facilities to people everywhere, added the Congress President.

"A citizen owning his own piece of land and house will be a happier citizen and a happier citizen is better equipped to meet the challenges of everyday’s life," she added. Smt. Sonia Gandhi also enlisted some of the flagship policies and schemes of the Congress-led UPA Government and also praised the Congress-led UDF government in Kerala for its pro-poor initiatives. "The Government of Kerala is doing a stellar job in implementing our national vision and is building on it further through imaginative yojanas such as Zero landless scheme. Kerala is already blessed with very high Human Development Indicators and with an educated society. Schemes such as this will lift the homeless out of their difficult conditions and enable them to strive for objectives beyond simple survival”, said the UPA Chairperson and continued "The success of this zero landless programme demonstrates yet again that the government is responsive, compassionate and heeds the aspirations of the people”.

“So on 2015, the state of Kerala will become the first state in India where everyone has a home which, I believe, is the most remarkable achievement”, said Smt. Sonia Gandhi once again praising the Congress-led state government in the state.

State Congress president Shri Ramesh Chennithala said that the institute was a dream come true. “This is a tribute to Rajiv Gandhi and the entire expense for building this institute has come from our party workers and the people of Kerala. We now wish that the AICC gives us the necessary direction to take this institute to the national level,” said Shri Chennithala. Chief Minister Shri Oommen Chandy said the institute will make every Congress worker happy, as it represented the fulfillment of Rajiv Gandhi’s dream.

The government has identified around one lakh plots to be distributed among the beneficiaries in the first phase of the project. The landless in six districts- Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Kottayam, Alappuzha and Ernakulam- would be provided three cents of land each in the first phase. 77,319 plots had been earmarked in 14 districts for allotment. Around 2.4 lakh beneficiaries were selected in the first phase of the project. The remaining plots would be earmarked at the earliest. Destitutes, people suffering from serious diseases, people with more than 50 per cent disability, widows and those from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities are given special priority.
Raebareli: Congress President and UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi accompanied by her daughter Smt. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, laid the foundation stone of an ambitious rail wheel manufacturing unit in Lalganj at Raebareli. This factory will be the biggest of its kind in the country. The unit will come up within the coach manufacturing unit already functioning in the region.

“We know that employment generation is possible only if there is progress. Development takes the country forward and brings positive changes in our life. I hope that this factory also will play a big role towards development of this region” said Smt. Sonia Gandhi while addressing the gathering.

“You have watched closely the efforts of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi for the development of this region. Welfare of the people and development of the country were supreme for them. Their vision was to build up a bright future while improving the present situation. We also must follow their footsteps. I want to tell this, mainly to the youth here, because they have a bigger role in nation building” reminded the Congress President.

Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi said that the ambitious Food Security and Land Acquisition Acts brought in by the Centre would give a new deal to the people, especially the farmers and the poor.

"For the benefit of farmers, the historic Land Acquisition Act was passed by the Centre. Now, nobody can forcibly grab land from poor farmers. Further, it is now mandatory that land can only be acquired with the consent of farmers and after paying the adequate prices," Smt. Sonia Gandhi said during a day-long visit to her parliamentary constituency of Rae Bareli.

While listing out some of the important legislations of the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre, Smt. Sonia Gandhi said, “We had promised Food Security Bill and despite all the obstacles, troubles and hindrances, we could get the

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I welcome you all to the 16th meeting of the National Integration Council. Even though every meeting of this council is important but because this meeting is being held just after the communal clashes in Muzaffarnagar and neighbouring districts its importance has increased.

These incidents indicate such communal hatred which is against the social fabric of our country and for which we all should be concerned. A small matter resulted in a minor incident which resulted in the loss of 50 lives. More than hundred were injured and property worth crores was lost.

In the recent past more such communal clashes have also taken place. In August this year there were communal clashes in Kishtawar district of Jammu and Kashmir. Last October there were three communal clashes in Nawada district of Bihar over a trifle matter. Similarly, in the past two years there were intermittent communal tension in Hyderabad. Particularly in the recent month such incidents were witnessed in large number in Uttar Pradesh.

During the past year once again tension has brewed between communities and communal groups in North East region. Many efforts were made to bring down such tension. In Assam, efforts have been made to provide relief and to rehabilitate the people who became the victims of clashes which took place last year. But still incidents and clashes are taking place among various communal groups. In this new development it becomes necessary for all of us to take all possible steps to maintain this structure of peace and cordial relation between various social groups.

It seems that anti-national forces sometimes reap benefit by creating rift among various communities by enlarging trifle matters. These forces are a big challenge for our democratic set-up. It is the firm resolve of our government to boldly confront them.

It is the responsibility of the states to confront communal incidents firmly and impartially without losing any time. It should be decided that the local administration not only stops small incidents from taking a big shape in quick time, but also to find and take proper legal recourse against those responsible for the communal clashes at the earliest. All the strength of the government has to be used against the people who start these clashes and those who inflame them regardless of howsoever strong they may be or have affiliation with any political party. The actions of the government should happen in accordance to law so that a trust is developed among the people of all religions that they too are equal to others and can live a respectful life. As far as the government officers are concerned, they should be directed that no lapse in the matter of communal tension will be tolerated and they will be held responsible in case of any communal clashes.

This discussion that because of communal clashes which political party wins on lose, is really unfortunate. In reality, nobody gains out of such communal enmity. By this the very existence of a civilized country like ours falls in danger. I would like to appeal this to all political parties and the media that they should neither give political colour to communal incidents nor they should try to derive political mileage out of it. I am confident that from today’s meeting many useful suggestions to promote communal harmony will eminate.

No lesser concern is the matter of atrocities against our brothers and sisters from Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and the weaker sections. It is a matter of regret that even after 60 years of independence crimes are being perpetrated against these classes which is disturbing us and such incidents are on the rise in various parts of the country. It the last three years more than 10,000 cases of atrocities have been registered against the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people. Besides strict action against people who perpetuate such vilolence it is also necessary that by making continuous efforts we improve the social and economic status of these classes and they should be joined with the mainstream of the society.

Our economic progress will only be said to be complete and satisfactory when the benefit of this reaches down to the common man and to the weaker sections. To give equal chances to the weaker and poor sections in the country is a major obstacle in its progress. We cannot let any class feel that they are separated from the main society. We have taken many steps for the weaker sections so that they get the maximum
benefit of country’s progress. Only recently the manual Scavenging and Rehabilitation Bill was passed in Parliament which will help in eliminating this inhuman system.

But the social and economic differences are still a big challenge for us. I feel that we have to give more attention to reduce this difference and the gap in the society. In this direction I would welcome suggestion from all of you.

It is matter of shame for us that incidents of misbehavior, rape and various types of crimes with women are increasing. Country in real sense can call itself progressive only when the women can move about in public places without fear and select social and economic path of progress on their own choice. We have made changes in the laws which have been made more stringent and strong to deal with the crimes against women. Now, the agencies implementing laws can act in a more effective way. But this problem cannot just be removed by police action alone. For this it is necessary that we change our mindset. I hope that good suggestions would come so that we can bring change in the attitude of the society against our women.

Today we are living in a world where in most cases there is no relevance of our national boundaries. Here I would like to mention about social media. In the recent communal clashes in some of the cases it was found that false video circulation was behind the cause that generated hatred against another community. Earlier to this in 2012 the social media was misused in creating fear in the minds of North-Eastern people living in other parts of the country. Due to this many people left their jobs and had to return to North-East area.

Through social media the youth get new information and come to know about new things. This can be used in developing new mutual relation and brotherhood. We have to keep alive the opportunity which the social media gives us to express freely our suggestions and our thoughts. But alongwith this it also becomes necessary to stop mischievous and problem-creating people from misusing social media. I hope that attention will be paid on the misuse of the social media in this meeting.

In the process of national development industry, non-government organizations and the civil society all play an important role. National Integration Council is one such forum which helps in creating opinion in the society on various important issues. I firmly believe that this meeting will help in creating national consensus on important issues which are related in making our national integration strong.”

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SONIA GANDHI LAYS FOUNDATION STONE OF RAIL WHEEL PLANT AT LALGANJ IN RAEBARELI

bill passed in the Parliament. This will benefit 75% of the rural and 50% of the urban population” and added “At present Centre gives about 66 lac tonnes of foodgrains to Uttar Pradesh; after the implementation of this Food bill state’s share will be increased to 96 lac tonnes. 80% of the rural and 60% of the rural poor will thus be able to avail food grains at subsidized rates in this state. This shows that Uttar Pradesh will get the maximum benefits from this law, compared to other states”.

“We have always made it a point to give priority to the issues related to the farmers” asserted Smt. Sonia Gandhi and continued “The UPA Govt, for the first time, increased the MSP of other food-grains also, apart from wheat and rice. The most important measure, for the benefit of the farmers, is the historic Land Acquisition Bill, passed by the Centre. Now, nobody can forcibly grab the lands of poor farmers. Further, it is now mandatory that the lands can be acquired only with the consent of the farmers and after paying the adequate prices”.

But there were still many issues left to be solved, she added. “I want to tell you that we are doing whatever possible for the people here with honesty and sincerity,” she said.

RINL and Indian Railways have entered into an agreement for setting up a forged wheel plant at Lalganj with an investment of Rs.1,100 crore in the first phase. The project promises about 600 jobs while 2,000 others would benefit indirectly. The railways will lease 40 acres to the RINL for 30 years to set up the factory. The factory will produce one lakh forged wheels each year to cater to the demand of LHB coaches and high-speed locos.

Once set up in 42 months, it would curtail imports of forged wheels, besides enhancing the safety aspects of locos, coaches and wagons. The railways have assured an off take of 1 lakh wheels from the RINL for 26 years.”
RAHUL GANDHI

“OUR FIGHT IS FOR THE COMMON PEOPLE, FOR THE were empowered with their rights.

Shri Rahul Gandhi added. “One who fights for the people for their larger interests while others are who fight for themselves.

“Striking an emotional chord with aam aadmi, the young Congress Vice President added

poor, for the weaker sections. We want them to be empowered,” Vice President said.

“We need to give the common man power. We need to empower the common man with rights,” Shri Rahul Gandhi said. “We want that the common man should not go hungry, children should get education,” he added.

The Congress Vice President also took a jibe at the BJP-led Chattisgarh government on grounds of health and education, and questioned Chief Minister Raman Singh’s method of governance in the state.

“In a village of 2000 people only one person is a 12th pass. What kind of a Government is running this state (Chhattisgarh)?” He asked.

“Are doctors seen in Chhattisgarh’s hospitals? How many have died from Gastroenteritis?” Shri Rahul Gandhi asked.

The Congress Vice President began his speech making a direct reference to the May 25 Maoist attack in Bastar and recalling how the then PCC President Shri Nandkumar Patel, who was among those killed, had apprised him that the people in Chhattisgarh were eagerly waiting for Congress to come to power. “Once during a meeting I had asked former PCC President Shri Nandkumar Patel about the Congress’ chances in the coming assembly polls. He told me that Congress cannot lose this election. I asked him why, he says so. “When I told you that Congress can’t lose this election, not Nandkumar Patel is saying so; the entire Chhattisgarh says so. I am just a soldier of the people of my state and I am just sharing the people’s voice with you”, said Shri Rahul Gandhi.

Striking an emotional chord with aam aadmi, Shri Rahul Gandhi also exhorted the tribal youth of Bastar to come forward in mainstream politics and fight for the issues of poor and their tribal brethren and assured that he would remain firmly with them in all such efforts. “, I request my Adivasi youth to stand up and join politics to work for your people as well as for the country. I am here to support you; I am here to fight for you”, assured the Congress leader.

Shri Rahul Gandhi’s presence at the rally and tribal convention witnessed the presence of all state party leaders. The function was also attended by AICC Treasurer, Shri Motilal Vora, CWC member Smt. Mohsina Kidwai, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and PCC President Shri Charan Das Mahant and others senior leaders.

RAHUL GANDHI

Bastar: Congress Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi, for the first time after May 25 Maoist attack that killed frontline party leaders in Chhattisgarh addressed a mammoth Congress rally – Adhikar Sammelanat Jagdalpur on 26th September, 2013, in tribal dominated Bastar region in the poll-bound state. He launched a blistering attack on the opposition for blocking the pro-poor schemes and policies of the Congress-led UPA Government at the Centre and reiterated that his party’s aim is to empower tribals and aam aadmi.

Adivasis gathered in huge numbers and they cheered, clapped and climbed atop chairs to catch a glimpse of Shri Rahul Gandhi, for the locals and tribals of Bastar.

Congress Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi addressed his first rally at Bastar, and said that contrary to the ideology of his party and I am just sharing the people’s voice with you” , said Shri Rahul Gandhi.

Shri Rahul Gandhi said: “My firm belief is that he would remain firmly with them in all such efforts. “, I request my Adivasi youth to stand up and join politics to work for your people as well as for the country. I am here to support you; I am here to fight for you”, assured the Congress leader.

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A REPORT

“WE WANT THE COMMON PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT THEY RUN THE COUNTRY”: RAHUL GANDHI

Rahul Gandhi in Bastar (Chhattisgarh) says only Congress believes in empowering aam aadmi

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A REPORT
RAHUL GANDHI LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR THE FOOD PARK PROJECT IN AMETHI

Amethi: Congress Vice President, Rahul Gandhi on 7th October, 2013 laid the foundation stone of Shaktiman Food Processing plant - the first mega food park in Uttar Pradesh in Jagdishpur of Amethi district.

Addressing a rally in Amethi after laying the foundation stone for a mega food park, Congress Vice-President, Shri Rahul Gandhi said that the initiative would provide large scale employment to residents of the area and ensure proper payments to farmers exporting agricultural items.

While speaking on the occasion, Shri Rahul Gandhi, struck an emotional chord with farmers lauding their hard work for the country but expressed concern that the farmers are not getting adequate benefits.

“The farmers are the most hard-working people, but they get the least benefits” said the Congress Vice President.

“We get our strength from these people in front of me. Without their help, we cannot achieve anything. These people are my family. Today is a historic day and I am happy that you also have joined this huge family. Now, we will together fight for the rights of the farmers in Amethi and I am confident that we will win this battle too and the farmers and aam aadmi here will reap more benefits”, said the Congress MP amid cheers from the huge gathering.

“While a farmer sells potato between Rs 6 to Rs 10 per kilogram, those who make potato chips sell it at Rs 400 per kg,” Rahul said. He further said that while Uttar Pradesh produces some famous varieties of mango, which are even exported to countries like US and Britain, the farmers who grow it get paltry returns. AICC Vice President saw immense possibility in development of Amethi as an agricultural hub.

“The thought is that whether its mango, mentha or aonla, whatever is produced in UP, maximum processing is done in Amethi. It should become an agricultural hub,” he said.

This park would have 35 processing units and would employ around 25000 people of the state. The mega food park would be developed by Aditya Birla Group through Indo-Gulf fertilizer, one of its business arms and Shri Rahul Gandhi said the group will be investing Rs 200 crore in it.

The plant would be constructed on about 72 acres of land. This land is planned to be developed on housing, educational and commercial standards.

He said that 50 units will be set up at the park, that will provide direct jobs to some 2,500 people, besides giving indirect opportunities to 25,000 others and benefiting as many as 40,000 farmers. It is estimated that the park would earn revenue of Rs 450 crore every year. It would be a lucrative job opportunity for all the local residents of Jagdishpur and nearby areas.

Shaktiman Mega Food Park will offer essential services like dry warehousing, cold storage, a farmer friendly bank and fully equipped education and business centres. Farmers, food processors and the local economy will benefit most from this initiative.

This food park, spread over 72 acres, will have world class infrastructure for food processing, coupled with backward and forward linkages for the entire food processing value chain. It will implement best practices in post-harvest management.

Shri Rahul said a cargo terminal can be set up at Fursatganj air strip in Rae Bareli, from where the processed food items can be sent to other parts of the country.

The Vice President said he fought for re-operating the Hindustan Paper Mill at Amethi and once inaugurated soon, it will provide employment to some 10,000 people.

Citing Bengalore’s example, Shri Rahul said the way it became a hub of science-based industry after setting up of HAL unit some 60-70 years ago, he hopes a similar future for Amethi with this food park coming up.

Dr Charan Das Mahant, Union minister of state for agriculture and food processing and Shri Kumar Mangalam Birla also attended the foundation ceremony.
New Delhi: The Congress hopes to usher in a third wave of Dalit empowerment, party vice-president Rahul Gandhi said while speaking at a Rally in Delhi on 8th October, 2013: leaders from the community will be identified, nurtured and involved in every stage of decision-making.

If Babasaheb Ambedkar had provided the constitutional framework for political equality, Kanshiram in the second stage, Mr. Gandhi continued, channelled “the energy created due to reservation,” using political mobilisation for social equality. AICC Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi criticised Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Ms. Mayawati. “In the second stage of the Dalit movement, the production of leaders stopped, Mayawati-ji has captured the leadership and she does not let people come up, she provided the Congress with an opportunity to fill that vacuum “Shri Rahul Gandhi said while addressing a national awareness camp on Scheduled Caste empowerment here.

Shri Rahul Gandhi also said that the Congress party, in a systematic manner, will have Dalit leaders at the panchayat, legislative and even the policy level.

“I told Shri K. Raju (Chairman of the SC Department ) and Shri P.L. Punia (Chairperson of the National Commission for SCs) to create a Dalit leadership at every level — from the panchayats, to the MLAs and MPs to the policy-making level,” Mr. Gandhi said, inaugurating a two-day National Awareness Camp on Empowerment of theScheduled Castes, organised by the National Commission for the SCs, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi also on 8th October, 2013.

As he outlined his plans to bring Dalits back into the Congress fold, Shri Rahul Gandhi also sought to inject an emotional dimension into the subject. Acknowledging the overwhelming odds Dalits still needed to surmount, to accomplish something, more than six decades after Independence, he borrowed a phrase from aeronautics: A Dalit, he said, must achieve the “escape velocity” of Jupiter to attain any success.

The Congress vice-president’s remarks came at a function here where he sought to argue that due to their social disadvantages, dalits needed to work much harder to improve their circumstance just as the velocity needed to escape Jupiter's gravitational pull is much higher compared to Earth.

With an attendee answering his question about Earth’s escape velocity, Rahul explained, “Aeronautics mein ek escape velocity ka concept hota hai. Escape velocity matlab agar aap ne dharti se space mein jana hai... agar aap hamari dharti pe hai to 11.2 km per second aap ki velocity honi padegi. (There is a concept of escape velocity if you want to go into space from Earth... your velocity has to be 11.2 km/sec).”

Any speed below escape velocity, the Congress leader said, won’t do. “Agar use kam hogi to aap kitna bhi karenge aap space mein nahin ja sakte aur agar jyada ho gayi to aap nikal jayenge. (If it is less then you can’t go into space, if it is more then you will get away),” he said.

Coming to his point, Rahul explained, “To Jupiter ki escape velocity kya hoti hai? Agar koi Jupiter pe khada hai aur Jupiter ki kheech se nikalna ho to use 60 km/sec ki acceleration chahiye. (If you are standing on Jupiter you need to go at 60 km/sec).”

Then the Congress vice-president made the political connect with dalit aspirations, saying, “Yahan Hindustan mein hamara jaat ka concept hai. Is mein bhi escape velocity hoti hai. Dalit community ko is dharti pe Jupiter ki escape velocity chahiye. (In India we have caste. Dalits need Jupiter’s escape velocity on Earth).

Paying tribute to his grandmother, Indira Gandhi, he said a story she told him as a child lingered in his memory. Indira Gandhi, as a child, travelled to Germany when Hitler was in power, and while there, she went to watch an ice-hockey match between Germany and another team. As Germany overwhelmed its opponent, the home crowd cheered. Finally, the opposing team scored a goal and young Indira stood up to cheer, only to find herself being jeered by the rest of the spectators. Scared, she swiftly sat down but later she told herself that she would never be cowed down again — she would always stand up for the underdog.

This story, Shri Rahul Gandhi said, made such a powerful impact on him that he remained determined to stand up for the weak and powerless. Exhorting the Dalit representatives in the audience, he said, to loud cheers: “You, too, must not just sit, you must stand up and fight for your rights.”

He told the gathering that one or two dalit leaders would not be enough to take their movement forward and that lakhs of them are needed.
Dalit Adhikar Diwas organised by All India Valmiki Federation at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi on 8th October, 2013. The conference discussed among other things, the abolition of manual scavenging and new proposals for the welfare of Dalits.

He explained about, among other things, the abolition of manual scavenging and new proposals for the welfare of Dalits.

"Congress party is the voice of India... I want people from every section of the society to join Congress" said the Congress Vice President and added "I know this will take time; but we have started our work in this direction".

"The more representation you give them in the Congress party, it is not enough. These people are the spine of the Congress party and we must do more for them," said Shri Rahul Gandhi.

"There is a big difference between Congress party and the opposition. Congress is the party of the poor. The opposition parties never care to bother about the issues of the poor. They talk a lot but do not come to you; talk to you or hold your hands in support. They do not realise your pains," charged the Congress leader aggressively.

Slamming the BJP for its anti-poor attitude, Shri Rahul Gandhi said “They brought India Shining slogan; they blindly thought that India was shining but they lost the polls... they lost in 2004 as well as in 2009; and they will lose in 2014 too”. “If you want to win the elections, go to the people; listen to their issues; hold their hands to support them” AICC Vice President Rahul Gandhi advised the opposition.

He attacked the opposition, saying it had never bothered to “hold the hands of the poor or interact with them”. “Congress is the party for the poor, our opposition does not understand the problems of the poor. They don’t go to their homes and hold their hands or discuss their problems,” he said.

“We gave Right to Food, Right to Job and now are ready with Manual Scavenger Bill. This bill aims at giving you honour” he said. “I dream for a day the Dalits in our country occupy high places in Parliament and Assemblies. We are ready to offer you all the help and support for training or for education” assured the Congress Vice President to the cheering crowd.

He said earlier the slogan of the Congress was that “we shall sleep on half empty stomachs but vote for the Congress” and now it will be “Bhar pet kayenge aur Congress ko vote deyenge (Will sleep on full stomachs and vote for Congress)” due to the food security act brought recently.

“I am the Vice President of the Congress Party... I want people from every section of the society join Congress. Once we achieve this, to include everyone’s voice to the Congress party, when we are successful to take everyone along with us, I assure that Congress will again secure a landslide victory in the Lok Sabha polls” declared Shri Rahul Gandhi and the huge crowd welcomed it with loud cheers. Underlining the need for building more leadership in the party, Shri Rahul Gandhi commented “Under Gandhi Ji there was a big line of leadership in the party. We must bring back similar situation now also. We need to build more leadership in our party across the country”.

New Delhi: The Congress Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi addressed a National Conference on Dalit Adhikar Diwas organised by All India Valmiki Federation at Talkatora Stadium in New Delhi on 8th October, 2013. The conference discussed among other things, the abolition of manual scavenging and new proposals for the welfare of Dalits.
SONIA GANDHI PUT FOOD BILL OVER HER HEALTH: RAHUL GANDHI

Shahdol: Congress Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi started his party’s campaign for the upcoming Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh by addressing a huge election rally in Shahdol on 17th October, 2013. While speaking on the occasion he slammed the ruling BJP government in the state by saying that hunger in Madhya Pradesh is the same as in Africa. “Recent UNICEF report says there are more hungry people in Madhya Pradesh like in Africa”, said Shri Rahul Gandhi and added “These people (in BJP) do not know that when there is hunger, there can be no development”.

Continuing his attack on BJP government in the state, the Congress Vice President assured, “They talk about building roads, swanky cars travel on those roads and that is what they call development. When Congress comes to power in this state, no matter who the Chief Minister is, tribal and the women will be respected and if someone disrespects them, we will deal with them”. Shri Rahul Gandhi alleged that the BJP government in Madhya Pradesh does not respect its people.

Referring the food Security Bill, the Congress leader said “No one in the country will go hungry after the food security bill is implemented. Everyone, immaterial which caste or religion they belong to, is guaranteed food grains at Rs. 1 - and Congress Party gives you that guarantee. We do it as we understand your hunger and your difficulties”.

He also narrated a personal experience to prove how committed Smt. Sonia Gandhi was to get the Food Security Bill passed in the Parliament. “During the debate of this historic Bill, I noticed that my mother is unwell. She refused to leave Parliament. I asked her why. She told me that she put in lots of efforts to pass this historic Food Security Bill and she would never leave the House till she votes in Parliament in favour of the Bill,” he said. “... during the voting, I noticed that she was feeling more uncomfortable... I dragged her to a hospital... When we were taking her to hospital, my mother was unable to breathe properly and she had tears in her eyes. I asked her what happened. She said that she had fought for the bill and wanted to vote on it; but she couldn’t” continued Shri Rahul Gandhi and asserted “This is called respecting the feelings”.

Shri Rahul Gandhi countered the claims of the development with records. “When we talk about building roads, let us just examine the records. 2650 km roads were built by NDA in 5 years; but please note that 9570 km was built by the UPA in its 5 years... it is clear that Congress performed better. Shivraj Singh Chouhan had come to us and talked about power plants at four places here. But how much electricity did you get? Zero watts: state government has not even started the projects”. “One side they (BJP) talk about development, but people get nothing. When we talk about right to food, Land Acquisition Bill and Right to Information, they (the BJP) allege that we waste the money”, added the Congress Vice President.

Reaching out to the youth Shri Rahul Gandhi assured that the Congress will give a government of youth in Madhya Pradesh. “We have to transform Madhya Pradesh. The development in the state is stuck now. I see one problem with the people here. We want your government. Only Congress party can do it” he argued. "I just want to tell you one thing. You see the women and the youth here. I see that there is no adequate representation for women, youth and adivasis in assemblies and parliament. The country will not achieve development until we achieve success in this. I assure you that I am with you in this battle... we have familial relation - it isn’t a political connection, these are ties of respect and love and will remain forever”, assured Shri Rahul Gandhi while concluding his address and the huge crowd acknowledged it with loud applauds.

BJP has opened a university of corruption in Madhya Pradesh: Rahul Gandhi

Gwalior: Congress Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi attended yet another mammoth election rally ‘Satta Parivartan Maharallies’ (Regime Change Mega Rallies) at Gwalior as part of his campaign in Madhya Pradesh on 17th October 2013. He launched a blistering attack
on the ruling BJP government in the state and said that BJP has opened a university of corruption in Madhya Pradesh.

”BJP leaders roam around the country and talk loud about corruption. But what is happening in Madhya Pradesh? Madhya Pradesh is a university of corruption. BJP has started a university of corruption in this state and it is still running”, said the Congress Vice President.

Striking an emotional chord with the huge crowd, Shri Rahul Gandhi said ”I value respect more than development. Respecting the people, the poor, the downtrodden is more important for me. But the BJP government here does not respect its people. We cannot achieve development without respecting the people”.

Shri Rahul Gandhi cited the example of recent stampede tragedy at Datia to prove his allegation. “You know the stampede tragedy took place recently in your state at Datia. I will be going there... Your Chief Minister did not go there. That is not the case. Such an incident had happened in 2006 also, at the same place. I was told that a similar incident occurred earlier, in 2006, at the same place. It means the government did not respect the people who died in 2006, and they do not respect the people who died here Sunday”; said the Congress Vice President.

The Congress vice-president drew loud cheers from almost 2.5 lakh supporters, which included a surprisingly large number of women. Claiming that the BJP was preventing the entry of youth into politics, Mr. Gandhi said: “If youth and women enter Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabhas and Panchayats; if clean people enter politics, they will clean politics. When youth enter politics, we won’t have to talk of development. Development will happen on its own.”

Continuing his attack on the BJP government in the state, Shri Rahul Gandhi said, “MoUs worth about one lakh crore of rupees were signed by the BJP here and the amount of materialisation is Zero. It has been the habit of BJP to sign agreements but do nothing thereafter. No one here got any benefit out of these MoUs. Further, the factories which were running good here also were shut down”. ”BJP talks about development but does not talk about the people who put in their hard work for development. It does not talk about their hunger and the jobs for the youth” he charged.

Lauding the UPA policies, the Congress leader asserted “We changed the concept of development in the past ten years. We have initiated a process of granting rights to the people. It is because the Congress ensured right to jobs and as a result crores of rural poor are now able to get jobs”. ”Who enacted Food Security Law?” he asked and continued “It is the Congress who gave you right to food. For the first time of our history, we ensure that no one will live hungry in our country”. “But BJP tried to block it. Whenever we initiate any pro-poor measure, BJP raises one question. It asks from where we will have money for it or they allege that we are wasting the money. For BJP, working for the benefits of the poor is waste of funds” argued Shri Rahul Gandhi.

“I want to tell you that Congress is going to form a government here, whoever the Chief Minister would be. That government will respect the people. I guarantee that. We will fight for your rights and to make your dreams come true. We will again bring the state into the track of development,” assured the Congress leader while concluding his address.

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**RAHUL GANDHI VISIT’S THE DATIA STAMPEDE VICTIMS**

**Bhopal:** The Congress Vice-President Shri Rahul Gandhi was stunned on 17th October, 2013 after a victim of the October 13 Ratangarh temple stampede in Datia, narrated her ordeal and alleged how police threw her into the river during the tragedy.

Some of the victims claimed that the doctors and officers of district administration were trying to discharge them forcefully. Shri Gandhi expressed his unhappiness over the complaints and asked the doctors to take steps for better arrangement.

He reached Datia District Hospital and met victims and their relatives who were injured in the stampede, which claimed the lives of 120 people from the state and neighbouring UP.

During his visit to district hospital, Shri Rahul Gandhi, Union Minister, Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia and other Congress leaders, inquired about the condition of those undergoing treatment in the general and emergency wards from their families and doctors. He promised the victims and their families all possible help.

After spending around some times in the general ward, he went to the emergency room where he spoke to patients and their relatives. A few victims told him that they haven’t received the promised treatment yet.

"I was pushed into the river by the police, and I suffered injuries in my back and shoulders," Sirku Bai, 60 resident of Datia District told Shri Rahul Gandhi. He asked doctors to refer her to Gwalior for further treatment.

Another survivor, Bhagwan Singh, complained of inadequate medical facilities at the hospital. Shri Rahul Gandhi directed doctors to ensure that none of the victims faced any problems during medical treatment.

46 of those injured in the tragedy have been admitted in the hospital at Datia while others are undergoing treatment in Gwalior.
NO ONE CAN SUPPRESS PEOPLE'S VOICE
CONGRESS WILL FIGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR, THE YOUTH, WOMEN: RAHUL GANDHI

The Congress Vice-President Shri Rahul Gandhi said a government of the “aam aadmi” and the youth will be formed in 2014. “The government of the youth will ring in changes in the country,” he said.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Aligarh and Rampur on 9th October, 2013, he described women as India’s strength, adding that women and youth would change the country. “The Congress will fight for the rights of the poor, the youth and women.”

Shri Rahul Gandhi was critical of the fact that the voice of the “aam aadmi” was not heard in the corridors of power. “The closed doors of the bureaucrats and politicians should be opened in order to ensure that the common man is given his rights,” Shri Gandhi said in Rampur, where he also read out the mantra for electoral success — “for winning elections, help the poor.”

He ridiculed the political parties for not going to the poor and using the media for sheer publicity.

He attacked the “political parties,” who instigated the recent communal violence in Muzaffarnagar. Though the “political parties” were not named by the Congress Vice President, but the reference to some political parties in the specific context of the Muzaffarnagar communal clashes was quite obvious.

“Political leaders don’t die in riots, only the poor are killed, no leader was killed in Muzaffarnagar, poor people and a journalist died in the violence,” Shri Rahul Gandhi said as he tried to strike an emotional chord with the people in the rallies addressed by him.

His rallies have been dubbed as “dhanyavad rallies”- thanksgiving to UPA government for introducing people-oriented measures.

Shri Rahul Gandhi referred to his visit to the communal violence affected Muzaffarnagar in September stating that “I want to tell you something about Muzaffarnagar. Hindus and Muslims died in the riots. I spoke to both communities; they told me that there is no anger between them. Politicians have created this rift. They told me that the riots were orchestrated by the people who want to divide people”, said the Congress Vice President.

“Common people do not want to fight, they want to live peacefully, and earn a living. There are some people who believe that they cannot win polls without creating riots. They, therefore, want to create Hindu-Muslim divide. I want to tell these people that Hindustan has a rich tradition of unity in diversity. We want everyone – whether Hindu, Muslim, Sikhs or whatever- to live in harmony. We will never allow anyone to incite violence. This is the history of Congress,” asserted Shri Rahul Gandhi.

Shri Rahul Gandhi also talked about some of the policies of the UPA Government at the Centre. “We gave the people their right to job. This benefitted crores of people in our country. Now we have implemented the right to food. We are going to provide the entire poor in the country with food grains at Rs. 1 per kg... Now, not only tomorrow, but your kids will get food every day. This is the guarantee of the Congress Party”.

Rahul Ji then took on the ruling Samajwadi Party government in Uttar Pradesh for not implementing the Food Security law in the state. “When we - the Congress Government - guarantee 35 kg of food grains every month to the poor, across the country, the state government in Uttar Pradesh says that it would not implement this important scheme here in UP till 2014 elections. They are afraid that if it implements food security law brought in by the Congress in UP, the people in large numbers will vote for the Congress party and the ruling party here will face a huge defeat,” mocked the Congress vice President.

On the Land Acquisition Bill, he said the move would not only benefit farmers but also farm labourers. He recalled the agitation in Aligarh (Tappal) and Bhatta Parsaul in 2011 in which several farmers died. He said the Congress fought for the farmers in Aligarh and Bhatta Parsaul.

Politicians must be accountable to the people: Rahul Gandhi

Strikes chord with aam aadmi in Rampur says no one can suppress voice of the people

In his second 'Dhanyavaad Rally' in Rampur Shri Rahul Gandhi said both the SP and Bahujan Samaj Party governments had been failures. “Only the Congress can bring changes in Uttar Pradesh.”

Shri Rahul Gandhi started his address by striking an emotional chord with the common people by saying “I want to tell you that no one can suppress people’s voice”. While reiterating that only Congress talks about development and growth he said, “Only the
women and the youth in Uttar Pradesh can bring in positive changes in the state. You have witnessed both SP and BSP regimes. Could you experience any development? There has been zero development in Uttar Pradesh - whether it was the SP or the BSP. This state can surge ahead only if we talk about growth and brotherhood and only Congress party can do so. If UP has to be truly transformed, you need to vote and bring the Congress to power.

Shri Gandhi criticised Samajwadi Party’s “Muslim face” and influential Minister, in his political backyard, Rampur. The Congress leader assailed the closure of factories in Rampur, allegedly at the behest of the State Minister, and said the move not only harmed people's interests but also development.

Speaking about RTI, the Congress Vice President commented, “Politicians must be accountable to the people. People should keep on asking questions to the government and government must answer them and if anyone fails to give proper answer to the people, he should be put behind bars. This is the concept behind RTI and Congress gave that power to you”.

While focussing the women and the youth in the crowd, the Congress Vice President Shri Rahul Gandhi continued, “Only the women and the youth in Uttar Pradesh can bring in positive changes in the state. You have witnessed both SP and BSP regimes. Could you experience any development? There has been zero development in Uttar Pradesh - whether it was the SP or the BSP. This state can surge ahead only if we talk about growth and brotherhood and only Congress party can do so. If UP has to be truly transformed, you need to vote and bring the Congress to power”.

“Please note that in 2014 also Congress is going to win. We will again form a government that works for youth, women and aam aadmi. We will again transform the country with the help of the people and by empowering the underprivileged” said Shri Rahul Gandhi while concluding his speech and the big crowd greeted it with loud cheers.
PM’s statement in the General Debate of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly on September 28, 2013 at New York

AGENDA SHOULD NOT BE MERELY ABOUT REPRIORITIZING DOMESTIC SPENDING, BUT ALSO ABOUT FOSTERING GENUINE INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: PRIME MINISTER DR. MANMOHAN SINGH

Let me first of all congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to the presidency of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. We wish you every success and we assure you of our fullest cooperation.

At a time when the world is facing multiple challenges, there is renewed attention on the role of the United Nations in advancing international peace, security and prosperity. However, never has scepticism about the UN’s capacity to do so been higher, or the external environment less propitious for multilateralism.

Nearly seven decades of the work of the United Nations hold one simple lesson and that is this: we are most successful when we adhere to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, basing our decisions on the widest possible consent and balancing equitably the needs and responsibilities of nations at different stages of development.

In these seven decades, the world has changed in fundamental ways. Asia and Africa are independent and resurgent. Countries are now not only more interdependent, but also face new and increasingly complex challenges. For multilateralism to remain relevant and effective in the future, multilateral institutions need to be reformed urgently.

The place to begin is right here.

The UN Security Council must be reformed and restructured to reflect current political realities. More developing countries should be included as both permanent and non-permanent members.

Multilateral Financial Institutions should also enable an enhanced voice for developing countries in their decision making structures.

Multilateral efforts must guide our quest for peace and security, wherever they are threatened. And the centrality and contribution of the UN system to development must be restored.

These objectives require the building of a new international consensus, suited to our time and rooted in today’s realities. It is only such a plan of action that will enable the UN to meet the twin tests of legitimacy and effectiveness and efficiency.

We commend your choice for the theme of this session. Setting the stage for the post-2015 Development Agenda is especially important as we deal with a lingering global economic slowdown and continuing volatility in financial markets. These have imposed disproportionately heavy costs on developing countries and vulnerable groups within them.

Growth and inclusive development are naturally important for all our countries. They require a supportive international economic environment, enhanced investment flows, including from multilateral development banks, transfer of technology, and an open multilateral trading regime.

But the problems of over a billion people living in abject poverty around the world need to be attacked more directly. Poverty remains a major political and economic challenge and its eradication requires special attention and a new collective thrust. This priority should anchor the post-2015 Development Agenda, which should be shaped by the member states so that it enjoys the broadest possible support and acceptance.

Issues of peace, security, human rights and governance are important and need to be addressed. But we will fall short of realizing an ambitious post-2015 development agenda if we focus merely on governance issues at the cost of robust economic growth.

This agenda should not be merely about reprioritizing domestic spending, but also about fostering genuine international partnership between the developing and developed countries to bring about change. All of us need the policy space necessary to set our own domestic priorities. No one knows the condition of developing countries better than the developing countries themselves.

It is, therefore, important that the UN set clear and concise goals and provide practical
and well-defined means of implementation, including adequate flow of resources and transfer of technology, taking the views of developing countries fully into account.

A meaningful post-2015 agenda must place equally high priority on food and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, water, sanitation, energy and discrimination against women. Especially critical is women’s equal access to economic opportunities, and that they do not become victims of violence or targets of prejudice.

In India, we have sought to promote inclusive development in multiple ways. Legislation has broadened access to education and secured rural livelihoods. We are now building the world’s largest programme for food security. Digital technology is being harnessed to improve the delivery of public services and benefits to the people.

India is proud of its partnerships with developing countries. Using modest resources, we have built strong ties with Africa and the Least Developed Countries. We are committed to building 100 institutions in Africa, have offered capacity building support including thousands of scholarships, and made available concessional assistance of over 9.5 billion US dollars. India and Africa are engaging through the India-Africa Forum Summit process. We also look forward to participating actively in the 3rd Conference on the Small Island Developing States in Samoa in 2014 and contributing to its outcome.

Climate change is one of the defining challenges of our times. We must summon the necessary political will for crafting a robust global response to climate change on the basis of equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

We are deeply concerned about the future of West Asia, a region with which India shares deep bonds of history, and one that is critical for our energy security as well as the livelihoods of nearly seven million Indians who work and live in the region.

The increasingly lethal conflict in Syria is not only a tragedy for the people of Syria, but also threatens stability and security in the region and beyond. It has been made worse by the use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons, whosoever may have deployed them, must be condemned in the strongest terms. India supports strongly the elimination of chemical weapons material and equipment in Syria.

There is no military solution to this conflict. We must intensify efforts to end the conflict and seek a political settlement. It is essential that the Geneva-2 conference be convened at the earliest.

We are encouraged that direct talks have resumed between Israel and Palestine. India supports an early realisation of a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognised borders side-by-side and at peace with Israel. We also remain committed to the Palestinian quest for full membership of the UN.

In our own region, Afghanistan prepares for a historic political, security and economic transition. The international community must support the people of Afghanistan through this transition and beyond in combating terrorism, preserving the progress of the past decade and creating a stable, united and prosperous Afghanistan.

Terrorism remains a grave threat to security and stability everywhere and extracts a heavy toll of innocent lives around the world. From Africa to Asia, we have seen several manifestations of this menace in the last few days alone. State-sponsored cross-border terrorism is of particular concern to India, also on account of the fact that the epicentre of terrorism in our region is located in our neighbourhood in Pakistan.

Speaking from this podium yesterday, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan spoke of making a new beginning. I reciprocate his sentiments and am looking forward to meeting him tomorrow. India is committed sincerely to resolving all issues with Pakistan, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, through bilateral dialogue on the basis of the Shimla Agreement. However, for progress to be made, it is imperative that the territory of Pakistan and the areas under its control are not utilized for aiding and abetting terrorism directed against India. It is equally important that the terrorist machinery that draws its sustenance from Pakistan be shut down. There must be a clear understanding of the fact that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and that there can never, ever, be a compromise with the unity and territorial integrity of India.

We need to renew our commitment, especially here at the UN, for concerted, cohesive and continuing global action against terrorism. There can be no tolerance for states sheltering, arming, training or financing terrorists. Nor can they absolve themselves of the responsibility to prevent their territories from being used to launch acts of terrorism.

The increasingly complex challenges to international peace and security require a new international consensus to be built, whether it is in cyber security, non-proliferation or terrorism. This year, 25 years after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi put forward a comprehensive Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon-free and Non-violent World Order, we must strengthen efforts against nuclear proliferation and pursue phased and verifiable nuclear disarmament.

We must also guard against terrorists and non-state actors gaining access to sensitive materials and technologies. Two years from now, the United Nations will be seventy years old. Every new state that was born during this period took its place in this Assembly not just with pride but also with hope. 2015 will be a moment to celebrate our successes and to ensure that the UN is ready for this century by completing the much needed reforms of the United Nations and its Security Council, by developing an ambitious and balanced post-2015 Development Agenda and by demonstrating our capacity to cooperate effectively for durable peace and security in this world.
T
he Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh and the President of the United States of America Barack Obama met this morning followed by a working luncheon at the White House. Marking their third bilateral summit, the two leaders reflected proudly on the transformation of United States-India relations during the last decade, affirming that the partnership between the two democratic nations is stronger today than at any point in their 67-year history.

Rooted in common democratic values and strong people to people ties, the United States and India have developed a comprehensive global strategic partnership, both in name and in substance that has made their citizens safer and more prosperous.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh pledged to make the next decade equally as transformative, challenging their governments to reach the full potential of this partnership, particularly in the areas of security cooperation, bilateral trade and investment, energy and environment, higher education, and global architecture.

The Leaders called for expanding security cooperation between the United States and India to address 21st century challenges in the areas of counter-terrorism, cyber, space, and global health security.

Appraising bilateral defense cooperation, including trade and military exercises, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved to date in defence relations. They emphasized the need for more intensive defense cooperation on both sides. The Leaders reaffirmed their desire to further strengthen defence trade cooperation endorsing a Joint Declaration on Defence Cooperation as a means of enhancing their partnership in defence technology transfer, joint research, co-development and co-production.

President Obama encouraged the further participation of US firms in partnering India’s efforts to enhance its defence capacities. President Obama also welcomed India’s decision to participate in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) naval exercise hosted by U.S. Pacific Command in 2014.

Affirming their deep concern over the continuing threat posed by terrorism, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh stressed the need for joint and concerted effort, including dismantling of terrorist safe havens, and disrupting all financial and tactical support for terrorism. The Leaders decided to significantly expand information sharing and intelligence cooperation to address threats to their respective nations including strengthening the bilateral relationship to exchange information on known and suspected terrorists. The Leaders emphasized the importance of expanding homeland security cooperation to enhance exchanges on megacity policing strategies, securing the global supply chain and anti-counterfeiting efforts. India welcomed the U.S. offer of membership in the US ‘Global Entry’ Trusted Traveler Network Program, to facilitate expedited entry of Indian travelers to the United States.

Noting that two-way trade has increased fivefold since 2001 to nearly $100 billion, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh agreed that there are no insurmountable impediments to bilateral trade increasing an additional fivefold.

President Obama expressed confidence that the ongoing Indian economic reforms and policy measures to liberalize India’s economy would accelerate economic growth, opening greater avenues for trade and creating jobs in both countries. In this respect, the Leaders recognized in particular the role and contribution of the Indian and U.S. Information Technology industry and the IT enabled service industry in strengthening India-US trade and investment relations.

The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to concluding a high-standard Bilateral Investment Treaty that will foster openness to investment, transparency, and predictability, and thereby support economic growth and job creation in both countries. The Leaders welcomed progress towards increased engagement by experts from both governments, underlining the need for expeditious progress to address all trade and investment policy issues of bilateral concern so as to remove obstacles and improve the business environment in both countries. In this respect, both sides agreed to consider establishing a Joint Committee on Investment in Manufacturing.

The Leaders also committed their officials to work toward a successful outcome at the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in Bali.

The Leaders welcomed the robust cooperation in cutting-edge scientific research and joint collaboration in science, innovation, and entrepreneurship, for the benefit of citizens in both countries. The United States welcomed the invitation by India for the United States to be Partner Country in India’s Science and Technology Summit in 2014.

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh discussed ways to strengthen bilateral efforts to promote energy efficiency, clean energy, and address climate change.

In the civil nuclear power sector, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh noted that, with government-to-government procedures agreed, commercial negotiations between U.S. companies and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) are proceeding. They welcomed the announcement that NPCIL and U.S. nuclear company Westinghouse have concluded a Preliminary Contract to develop a nuclear power plant in Gujarat in India. Building on this, the Leaders urged NPCIL and U.S. companies
President Obama and Prime Minister Singh emphasized the dangers that high oil prices can pose to the global economy and the need to increase oil market transparency and emergency response collaboration, through closer coordination and bilateral dialogue. President Obama and Prime Minister Singh believe that the United States and India should look to each other as partners of first resort in addressing global challenges.

The Leaders reflected on the important strategic partnerships the United States and India have formed with Afghanistan, reaffirming their commitment to supporting a smooth security and political transition. The Leaders recognized that violent extremists continue to pose challenges to Afghanistan’s security and stability and, in this context, emphasized the need for coordinated international support to help build the capacity of Afghan National Defense and Security Forces. They noted that both India and the United States will remain committed to contribute to peace, stability and development in Afghanistan during the critical transformation decade (2015-2024).

President Obama and Prime Minister Singh strongly condemned the September 26 terrorist attack in Samba in Jammu and Kashmir. They reiterated their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms, and reaffirmed their commitment to eliminating terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, and disrupting terrorist networks including Al-Qa’ida and the Lashkar-e-Taiba. The Leaders called for Pakistan to work toward bringing the perpetrators of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks to justice.

In the spirit of their continuing non-proliferation cooperation, the Leaders reviewed the close cooperation of the United States and India to realize India’s intention of joining the multilateral export control regimes. The President reaffirmed the United States support for India’s early membership in these groups. Looking ahead to the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, India and the United States also will deepen their cooperation, including through the 2010 Memorandum of Understanding with India’s Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership, to strengthen global nuclear security.

The Leaders stressed the need for diplomacy to resolve outstanding issues relating to Iran’s nuclear program, and called on Iran to comply with its IAEA and UN Security Council obligations.

The two Leaders also deplored the use of chemical weapons in Syria, stressing that the global norm against the use of chemical weapons by anyone and anywhere must be maintained. Consistent with the U.S. rebalance to Asia and India’s Look East policy, the Leaders expressed a desire to partner more closely with other Asia-Pacific countries, including greater coordination with Japan, China and ASEAN, among others, including through the evolving institutional architecture of the region. The Leaders share a commitment to support regional multilateral institutions as they continue to develop into effective bodies built on international rules and norms that can address shared challenges.

Noting the contributions of Indian peacekeepers to global peace and stability for sixty years, the Leaders decided to expand their United Nations peacekeeping cooperation, including capacity-building efforts with third countries. Reaffirming that in the years ahead, the United States looks forward to a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh agreed that both their nations bear a responsibility to ensure that the Security Council continues to effectively play the role in maintaining international peace and security envisioned in the United Nations Charter.

Building on ongoing consultations between India and the United States on East Asia, Central Asia and West Asia, and the trilateral dialogue mechanisms with Afghanistan and Japan respectively, the Leaders agreed to expand their consultations to include a dialogue on the Indian Ocean Region, to deepen coordination on cross-cutting issues including maritime security and conservation of natural resources.

The Leaders resolved to work together to end extreme poverty, including through expanding efforts to end preventable child deaths through the Child Survival Call to Action. Fifty years after the launch of India’s own agricultural “Green Revolution,” the Leaders applauded their countries’ work together with African partners Kenya, Malawi, and Liberia, to provide capacity building and exchange best practices for food security.

Looking forward, President Obama and Prime Minister Singh recognized that increased cooperation in these areas will strengthen the United States-India strategic partnership, highlighting shared democratic values and the capabilities the United States and India have to work together across Asia and around the globe. The two countries have crossed a threshold in their relations where both recognize that successes at home and abroad are further advanced by their cooperation.

Today’s meeting demonstrates that the interests of the United States and India continue to converge, and this partnership will indeed be a defining one for the 21st Century.
ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS-2013

In last phase of 2013, the country will be going for the Assembly Elections in five states. Assembly Elections-2013 for Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Mizoram assemblies will be held in a phased manner.

While polls to elect the 70-member Delhi assembly will be held on December 4, polls for 200- member Rajasthan assembly will be held on December 1 while elections for 40-member Mizoram assembly are scheduled to be held on November 25. Delhi, Mizoram and Rajasthan have been in the control of the Congress Party. The Congress ruled states have fulfilled the commitments made to the people in the last elections and hope to repeat the success in these states by its good work.

Chhattisgarh has to elect a new 90-member state assembly for which polls will be held in two phases, November 11 and November 19, while Madhya Pradesh will vote on November 25 to elect 230-member state assembly. Both the states are under BJP party. The Congress Party is actively in the field of fighting a united battle to give the opposition a befitting reply against mis-goverence in the states. Following are the brief reports about the election-going states:

CHHATTISGARH

MIS-GOVERNANCE GALORE IN CHHATTISGARH

Chhattisgarh has become a victim of 'Raman Disaster'. Chhattisgarh has to rise above this. Chhattisgarh has to be rescued from this problem. If ministers of five ministry come together in a government they can create big scandals. The ministries are: general administration, finance, minerals, power and public relation. It is strange that the Minister for all these five departments is the Chief Minister Shri Raman Singh himself. This is the reason that there is no restriction of any kind. All these departments under him are working under the supervision of contractual officers. Behind all this there is a well-planned conspiracy. There is loot going on at every level.

The people of the state are the victims of Naxal violence and loot by the officers. The BJP's Raman government of Chhattisgarh has created a situation of confusion in the state. Everywhere is raining scandals.

The Central government has given the state a fund of more than Rupees one lakh crores during the past five years for various welfare projects like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana, BGRF, NRHM, ICDS, IYA, NCD, JNNURM and NSAP but the state government is looting this money. The BJP has given the biggest jolt to the aspiration of the youth. They have appointed on contract and have made a gang of retired officers, corrupt officers. The BJP government will never remove corrupt officers for their entire life. The age limit of retirement has been increased to seventy years, so when and how will the youth get a job. The youth have the enthusiasm to work, they should get an opportunity. The BJP has given the biggest jolt to the aspiration of the youth.

No job opportunities are being created in the departments that are under the control of Chief Minister. To get the most corrupt work implemented, retired workers are being re-employed. The favourite departments of the Chief Minister like power and minerals departments are the most affected. If we look into the employment during the past ten years in the departments under the control of the Chief Minister, the results are as such:-

Minerals Department: This is one of the favourite departments of the Chief Minister and appointments to the sanctioned posts and interest of the Chief Minister raises doubts. At important posts only retired officers, corrupt officers. The BJP government will never remove the youth. They have appointed on contract and have made a gang of corrupt officers for their entire life. The age limit of retirement has been increased to seventy years, so when and how will the youth get a job.

Energy Department: This department has become the hunting sound of corruption and Chief Minister himself in incharge of this department for the past ten years. The electricity board under this department has been divided into five divisions. All the departments have no coordination and have become centres of corruption. That is why, the state which had surplus energy at one time has to buy crores worth of electricity now. Despite this they are not able to meet the demand. The ministry has approved 382 posts of high-paid officials but the appointment has been made for just two posts.

General Administration and Public Grievance Department: In this department there was approval of 1028 posts of officers, assistants and Grade I, II and III assistants and steno typists but only 555 posts have been filled. This is the plight of department which are under the charge of the Chief Minister for the past ten years, one can imagine the working of other departments.

Aviation Department: There is approval of 49 posts of deputy directors and steno typists but instead only four officials/workers have been appointed. Some retained people have come on deputation and this department also is with the Chief Minister for the past ten years.
Finance, Planning, Economic, Statistics and 20 point Programme Implementation Department: This department under the Chief Minister is also in a pitiable state. There were approved 804 posts in the Chief Minister’s office and other offices under his charge but appointment have been made to just 364 posts. The post of Deputy Administrator who play a special role in the district, only three of them have been filled whereas 27 posts for all the districts have to be filled. 46 posts for officers and workers in all the four classes could not be filled. Apart from this, of the 356 posts in the local Law Enforcement offices, 107 posts are still lying vacant. This government seems to be not interested in giving employment to the youth.

Mining Department is the money-minting shop of the CM:

Coal Block Scandal: How will the Chhattisgarh government save its face from the coal block scandal? The Central government had allotted the Bhatgaon coal mines to the Mining Development Corporation and to the Power generating companies but the Raman Singh government conspired to form a joint-venture company and handed it over to Adani Enterprises, a company of close relations of BJP leaders. Similarly, the husband of a BJP leader who is close to Shri Nitin Gadkari was allotted the mines. The CAG has calculated a loss of Rs. 1549 crores in this deal. The responsibility of this falls on Dr. Raman Singh who is the minister for mining.

The process of giving PL to Ma Bamleshwari Minerals makes it clear that how the Chief Minister is seen in the role as the main accused. A total of 18 people had applied for the PL, this company was at the 18th position. Bamleshwari Minerals was ultimately given the PL. By looking at the documents it shows that a childhood friend of the Chief Minister was given the PL and even the notings of the officers indicate that the officers were more concerned about allotting this mine ratter.

In Energy Department, the figures of corruption has crossed over 40 thousand crores. The department is well-known for many corruption in the Energy Department as follows: Purchasing and sale of energy; open access scandal; production of electricity scam; domestic metre scam; Transformer scam; Power MOU scam; purchase of power from illegal plants; power purchase agreement scam; Bio-fuel development programme scam; Repeatedly failing of power generation scam etc.

Corruption in the departments under the CM and Suspicious appointments scam: The most shameful act has been the appointment of Shri Aman Singh (IRS). The post of the secretary which is given to the IAS cadre, all rules were broken by the state government and Shri Aman Singh was given the equivalent post of the Secretary after making him resign from the IAS by the Council of ministers. The intention behind this is to loot the Pradesh.

Appointment of officers incharge: In the whole state incompetent officers are being appointed, ignoring the senior officers on responsible posts which has only one purpose behind it which is corruption. The concerned departments are: environment, protection Board, Energy Department, Water resources department.

Bio-technology Scam: Ratan-jot scam is the most glaring example.

PAC Examinatin Scam: Not even one examination has been successful.

PMT Exam Scam: The PMT Examination has also been defamed by the paper leakage scam.

NUT Road Scam: People form a public- private partnership and are looting the Chhattisgarh government which has resulted in more than Rs. 18,000 crores loss and which the alertness of the Congress saved in time by the help of RTI Act. Congress had made charges against the Chief Minister Raman Singh on Public Works Minister, Shri Rajesh Moonat in the public commission. The government had to dissolve the company and Pradesh has saved around Rs. 10,000 crores in the process.

Industries on the verge of closure

The condition of industries in the state is not proper. All industrialists have become fed-up with the corrupt officialdom. This is also the reason that the industrialists did not show interest during the state foundation day. Those who had signed the MOU forcefully did not implement it.

Chhattisgarh Govt. failed in implementing the People’s welfare schemes of the Centre

MGNREGA: The Central Government had provided the state with Rs. 4800 crores for providing employment of minimum 100 days to people in living in rural areas under this scheme but the state could provide jobs for 100 days to just nine percent people. In Adivasi (Anchal) area only two percent people were given employment.

National Rural Health Mission: The Centre had given the state a fund of Rs. 1200 crores to implement all kinds of health services but it was found that most of the people treated for cataract operation have become blind. Women who were treated for women-related problems found that their wombs had been removed.

Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojana: Under this scheme the Centre had give Rs. 5,000 crores to join all villages having a population of 500 people with the main road. But the state government could not provide roads to many villages. Not even in the areas of the Chief Minister and Panchayati Raj Minister constituencies.

Rajiv Gandhi Rural Electrification Project: Rs. 550 crores was given to the state by the Centre to provide power in every village but their claims have proved false. Power cuts for hours together in the state is a normal routine.

Mid-day Meals Programme: Education becomes the basis of progress in any country and the Centre started the Mid-day Meals programme to attract the children towards education. For this the state was given Rs. 5100 crores. Leave aside nutritious food, the state could not provide even normal meals to the children and many fell ill by giving then unhygienic food.

Jawaharlal Nehru Urban Reformation Mission: The Centre had provided Rs. 450 crores to provide pucca houses to Jhuggi-Jhonpari dwellers. The govt. of the state though brought down the jhuggis but did not build proper houses in their place.

Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana: The Centre gave Rs. 450 crores to the state for the development of farmers and their implements so that there is increase in the farm yield but the BJP government in the state did not let the benefit of this reach the farmers. Today, there is more than one and a half lakh acres of land reduced in farming.

National Rural Drinking Water Supply Project: To provide clean and uninterrupted drinking water to the rural areas, the Centre gave Rs. 7,500 crores but the state government has failed in doing so, because of which most of the people are suffering from water-borne diseases.

Unified Child Development-Project: To save the poor children from malnutrition the Centre gave fund of Rs. 750 crores to the Chhattisgarh government so that children get the benefit of it but it has been observed that the representatives of the government are deriving most of the benefit from it. Pregnant and breast-feeding mothers too are not getting the benefit from this scheme.

Sarv-Shiksha Abhiyan Yojana: The Centre has provided a fund of Rs. 2400 crores so that poor children can get good education in public schools. Here too the state has failed in providing this facility to the poor children.

Dr. Charandas Mahant,
DELI S ECONOMIC GROWTH PHENOMENAL

The 15 years of the Sheila Dikshit-led Congress government in the city have really changed the face of Delhi. While the problems of the city have also grown up in size due to migration of people in search of employment here, it has been able to keep pace with development. It has made progress in almost every sector, be it social, economic, transport etc.

While some may argue that it's just a jugglery of figures, the facts certainly prove otherwise. Here are a few samples. In the education sector, the budgetary allocation has gone up from Rs 899 crore in 1998 to Rs 5900 crore in 2013. And it has also reflected in the pass percentage going up. It went up from 32 per cent 99.45 per cent for class Xth and from 63 per cent to 88.65 per cent for class XIIth respectively during the said period. In the environment sector, green cover of the city is up from 1.75 per cent in 1997 to 20.2 per cent in 2013. And to cap it all, a long pending promise was fulfilled with regularization of 895 unauthorized colonies and rest are in the process of being regularized.

It has made commendable achievements in the field of social security sector, something which is the core of Congress philosophy in ensuring that the Aam Admi or common man gets what is minimum due to him. Here too, figures speak for themselves. Minimum wages in Delhi are highest in the country with an unskilled labour getting Rs 7722, semi-skilled labour getting Rs 8528 and skilled one getting wages of Rs 9386 per month. Some six lakh girls are registered under Ladli scheme while about 1.20 lakh families benefit under Annashree Yojana. Some four lakh senior citizens receive pension- a whopping 400 per cent growth in number in number of beneficiaries. Keeping in mind the need to help women in distress a dedicated Helpline no. 181 has been launched.

An amount of Rs 600 a month is directly transferred to bank account of eldest female member of family to make Delhi hunger free and over 1.2 lakh families have been sanctioned benefits under this scheme. Put it simply, 65 per cent of Delhi's planned budget for 2012-13 is allocated for social sector as compared to 52 per cent in 1998-99. And with Delhi launching the Congress flagship Food Security Programme, it became among the first states to launch this historic programme, thus ensuring food and nutritional security.

As compared to other states, Delhi's economic growth has been higher on an average. Its average growth rate over the last five years is constantly well ahead of the national growth rate and higher than many other states, including Gujarat. It has been 10.33 per cent compared with 9.51 per cent of Gujarat, 8.18 per cent of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, 7.23 per cent of Karnataka, 7.11 per cent of UP and 6.73 per cent of Punjab. And the state backs its citizens by investing heavily in the future, for improving the quality of tomorrow, today. Its per capita expenditure on health is Rs 2216 and that on education, it is Rs 3735. Delhiite also enjoys the highest per capita income in the country. While national average is Rs 68747, Delhi's own stands at Rs 2.10 lakh. This has grown from Rs 35000 some 15 years ago. Registrations in employment exchange have reduced from 11.25 lakh in 1998 to 8.91 lakh last year.

What is even more remarkable is that per capita plan allocation is the HIGHEST at Rs 9195 for 2013-14, ahead of even a state like Gujarat that spent Rs 8446 for the year 2012-13 and this, considering the fact that Delhi receives the LOWEST fiscal support from the Centre in comparison to other states, both in terms of percentage as well as absolute numbers. Tax collection is up from Rs 2941 crore in 1997-98 at a staggering 935 per cent to Rs 30454 crore in 2013-14.

In the health, education and transport sectors, there has been considerable hike in budgetary allocations during this 15 year period. It has gone up from Rs 311 crore to Rs 3857 crore in health, Rs 866 crore to Rs 6500 crore in education and from Rs 551 crore to Rs 4910 crore in transport sector, respectively. The city has 5526 cooperative societies with 13, 96,000 people as members in 2012-13. Also, Delhi is among the first states to adopt Aadhaar based direct cash transfer. In the health area, infant mortality rate has dropped from 35 to 28.

There has been a 53 per cent increase in water supply which has gone up from 544 MGD in 2000 to 835 MGD at present whereas sewage treatment capacity is up from 334 MGD to 590 MGD now. Piped water supply is now available in more than 800 unauthorized colonies. The capacity of seating in public transport is up from 25, 00,000 in 1997 to 70,00,000 in the current year. In the power sector, in spite of the capital city having no dams, it has been able to provide its citizens with electricity at one of the lowest rates in the country. While number of connections has risen from 22 lakh in 1997 to 45 lakh now, the units per capita consumption has too gone up from 1170 at that time to 1651 now. But efficient and better managed power distribution network has brought losses down drastically from 49 per cent in 1997 to 15 per cent now. And savings thus generated from distribution losses to the tune of Rs 30000 crore has further contributed to the development of the capital state. All this has added to comfort of Delhiites who some 15 years ago were used to long power cuts and irregular supply, something which has become a thing of the past now.

In the transport sector, the metro rail has really changed the very face of Delhi as its network today covers an area of 186 km with an additional 102 km under construction. The iconic public infrastructure project is today used by 25 lakh commuters on daily basis. In fact, for someone coming from outside Delhi for the first time here, it has become kind of a tourist spot with people preferring a joyride just to get the feel of it.

All this has made Delhi today closer to becoming a world-class city. From infrastructure to key citizen services, the capital has made great strides, though it can easily be argued that there is still much more to be done in continuing the ongoing developmental process and empowering the citizens of this historic city.

Little wonder than that in the Economist’ Best City To Live In’ report of 2012, Delhi ranks above every other city in the country.

MADHYA PRADESH

PEOPLES’ CHARGE SHEET

The ten-year rule of the BJP in Madhya Pradesh can only be called a cesspool of corruption and plunder in which they all mired with joy. The party which talked about its clean image (chaal, charitraa and chehra) and based on the principles of duty, culture and holy traditions has shamelessly looted the state and made it hollow by its crimes without feeling any guilt. The people of the state wonder whether it is a rule of a political party or a gang of dacoits! Though there are endless series of incidents, I will give a few-examples for your knowledge:-

Rameshwar Nikhra
Mining Mafia: The Vidisha Lok Sabha constituency of the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Smt. Sushma Swaraj and Budni, the Vidhan Sabha constituency of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan has become a heaven for the mining mafia. Here, apart from mining of various mines, the sand of Narmada river has been scooped out in such a way that only large pits of slush and dirt remain at the base. There has been loss of environment and of crores of rupees worth of royalty to the mining department.

Thirteen ministers of the MP government are facing probe of the Lokayukta. They have serious charges of corruption against them but the chief minister has neither submitted the requisite papers asked by the Lokayukta or given the permission to file criminal cases against them. On feeling frustrated, the Lokayukta issued a statement that the government has tied its hands and they cannot start legal action against the corrupt ministers.

Fraud of Rs. 6500 crores: The Chairman of the Apex Cooperative Banks has defrauded the money of the farmers to the tune of Rs. 6500 crores. The government is busy protecting him.

Bungling in admission: Admission to Medical and Engineering Colleges are done through the Professional Examination Board. Similarly, examinations are held for selection to various sections of the state-level services. In the recent past bungling was found in the admission process. By changing the answer sheets of the students thousands of students were admitted to medical colleges as other people were made to write the examination for them. A premium of Rs. 20 lakhs was charged for each seat. Those indulging in this racket are said to be close to the wife of the chief minister.

Pension Fraud: Shri Kailash Vijayvargya, a minister from Indore has been accused that the distribution of pension to elders and widows is in the hands of a non-governmental agency which has the patronization of Shri Kailash. And the agency defrauded crores of rupees in the distribution of pension. The case against him in the court is pending.

Land-Grabbing: The same above-mentioned minister had fraudulently got the premium land of the Sugnidevi College transferred in his name and thereafter sold the same on much higher premium and pocketed crore of rupees. This case against him is also pending in the court.

Currency-counting machines with the wife of the CM: It has been accused that Smt. Sadhna Singh, wife of the chief minister, has purchased various kind of currency-counting machines which are used for counting black money. She has been accused of hoarding large amounts of money collected through illegal and corrupt means.

The people of MP call the chief minister and his ministers as ‘Alibaba and 40 thieves.’ There is lot of anger among the people against the working of the state government.

Ratangarh: An accident happened at the Ratangarh temple in the district of Datia in which 115 devotees lost their lives in a stampede. A similar incident happened in the year 2006 but no lessons were learnt from it. An enquiry was held by Justice S.K. Pandya but his report was not actioned upon. The officers who were found guilty by Justice Pandya were instead promoted. Some people have been suspended as the polls are near but all this is only an eye wash.

It is a fact that if administrative facilities would have been proper, 115 lives would have been saved. Therefore, whatever Shri Rahul Gandhi says is correct that the BJP government in MP though claims of doing big-big things has no value or respect for the people of the state.

Corruption in MNREGA: The Congress-led UPA Government put in place the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act so that employment is provided to the rural people and during the same time two to three years ago there was recession in world economy but the Indian economy continued to be strong. The hundreds days of employment and the 250 days of farming has increased the spending capacity of rural people. But the BJP government in the state did not appreciate this and it gave its officers a free hand to destroy its benefits and affects. The result being that 18 district panchayats C.E.O; 123 Janpad panchayat C.E.O and thousand of other lesser-known workers are in the list of corrupt workers.

Arrest of 11/2 lakh farmers: The BJP state Government claims providing electricity to farmers for 24 hours. It also makes propaganda about it and prints advertisements in the media to prove its claim. But the fact is just opposite as villages are enveloped in darkness. The BJP government is handing over the ‘the bill of darkness’ to the farmers. These bills are ranging between 40 to 50 thousand to rupees one lakh. How can the farmers be capable to pay such enormous amounts for fraud bills raised against them. They are then arrested and sent to jails. Around lakh and a half farmers have committed suicides because of loss of their self-respect.

NGOs of Venkaya Naidu and Corruption: The NGO of former BJP National President, Shri Venkya Naidu has been given the responsibility to manage the mid-day meal programme in Madhya Pradesh and thousand of reports have come for providing rotten, old and insects infected meals to the school children. In this way in just one project, crores of rupees are being embezzled. The other firms of Shri Venkya Naidu have been given other contracts which are implemented only on papers. The name of Shri Naidu has become very popular in the state where Nai-du means (do not work but still earn money).

Record rapes in MP: By the statement given by the chief minister of MP, Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, in the Vidhan Sabha regarding rapes, the people of the state bow their heads in shame:-

- In 2012, ten women were raped every day;
- In 2012 again, six women were gang-raped every day;
- In 2012-13, five farm labourers committed suicides every day;
- In 2012-13, on an average six state employees were thrashed every day;
- From January, 2012 till 15 June, 2013 there were a total of 5,241 rapes committed;
- The number of rapes with underage girls and children were 2934.

MP Govt. in debt of Rs. 92,000 crores: The present BJP government in the state has lavishly played with the money of the state and this can be seen with the fact that crores of rupees of the budget has been spent on their own selfish need and above it a debt burden of rupees 92,000 crores has been put on the heads of the people. The government treasury has been looted and now the pockets of the people of the state are being picked.

- During the 47 years from 1956 to 2003 there was a debt of Rs. 23,000 crores on the state;
- Between 2004 till 2013 the debt on the state stood at Rs. 92,000 crores;
- The debt on the head of every person of state stands at Rs. 12,000.

Record report of missing children: Till the date of election were announced, the BJP government of the state had spent cores of rupees on advertisements and propagated about its development in various departments through different charts and graphs. But they have failed in covering up their dark spots and shortcomings which the Congress Party has exposed and brought out before the people:-

- The number of missing children in the state from 2004 till 2012 was 76,608;
- Till date the number of missing children is 13200;
- The number of missing girl child is 8541;
The missing Adivasi girls;
Children with whom crimes were committed was 41,633;
The number of crimes committed against children in the year 2012 according to the National Crime Bureau archive was 5168;
The average of crimes committed every day is 14.

The loop-hole in ‘Save the Girl Child’: The BJP Government is running the ‘save the girl child’ in the state but the reality of this campaign was exposed by the figures of the population survey:-

In 2001, for 1000 boys there were 932 girls;
In 2011, for 1000 boys there were just 918 girls;
The mortality rate of children below one year is 1,25,000;
The mortality rate was 94,941.

Government web site shows that during the 5 year term of Shivraj Singh Chauhan the mortality rate was 94,941.

Details of property of Ministers and MLAs

There is no law in the state where a minister or the MLA or their relatives have to place the details of their properties on the floor of the Vidhan Sabha. This issue till date depends on their values and conscious.

Prior to 2004, the members of the state cabinet had placed the details of their properties on the floor of Vidhan Sabha on their own, after 2004 the details of the properties of the Cabinet members were not placed on the floor of the Vidhan Sabha but the chief minister gave the details.

A law should be made to make it mandatory for members of the state cabinet, all members of the Vidhan Sabha, all the members of the Rajya Sabha selected by the Vidhan Sabha, members of the Corporation, office-bearers of Commissions to give yearly description and details of their earnings and properties.

Mining Loot: The present BJP government has given the rights to its leaders for making profit out of the sand which is used in construction of houses by all class of people.

The state administration has allotted all mines in 18 districts to the MP Mining Corporation and in the name of and in the business interest of the Corporation, mining within the 10 KM radius has been banned under the Rule-3 of the MP unexplored (gaun) minerals mining rules 1997 to issue temporary permit.

The state government has banned the excavation of sand from the fields of the farmers which got deposited due to floods and put restriction on the sand that may be used in development work by the weaker sections of the society and Panchayati Raj institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number of Mines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gwalior</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Datia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bhind</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dewas</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Harda</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hoshangabad</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sihor</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Badwani</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Umaria</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Raisen</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Tikamgarh</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Jabalpur</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Narsinghpur</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Khargaun</td>
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<td>16</td>
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The government in cooperation with the mining Corporation has appointed contractors for these mines and authorized them to collect revenue arbitrarily, as a result the contractors are charging Rs. 1000/- per cubic meter of sand.

In these districts in which the state government has auctioned the sand mines, the contractors were allowed to collect the revenue at the rate of Rs. 1000/- per cubic meter.

The relatives of the chief ministers and the BJP leaders are involved in this state-wide loot of sand. The chief minister has maintained silence on this issue.

(The Author is a former MP and Vice President, MPCC)

In fact any developmental initiative in Mizoram needs to address the problems of Jhum practices on priority. After assuming the office in December, 2008 the Hon’ble Chief Minister, Lal Thanhawla realised the need to address the inherent causes and problems of underdevelopment and poverty of his people due to Jhum cultivation. He designed New Land Use Policy (NLUP) as a solution. The Chief Minister was the man behind and the brainchild of NLUP.

Under the UPA Government, the Cabinet Committee on Economics Affairs approved an outlay of Rs 2873.13 crores for five years to be used under Mizoram's New Land Use Policy. The NLUP, in its final shape and structure, is a versatile and encompassing mechanism for a stable State economy, environment protection and land reforms and reclamation.

For the Congress Government, the implementation of NLUP became the first and foremost priority, which it had promised to the people before the elections. The NLUP was designed to transform the State economy focussing on inclusive growth and poverty alleviation. This project envisaged a wholesome socio-economic advancement of the State interwoven with environment protection to be achieved through NLUP funds as well as funds coming to the State through Central Government normal and other schemes.

SOME MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The Congress party under the leadership of Chief Minister and the PCC President Mr Lal Thanhawla, would be going back to the people of Mizoram once again to seek vote for the Congress party with his commendable achievements. The following are the major achievements of his government.

Department-wise achievements

The policies and programmes under NLUP are implemented in eight departments which are called line-departments. These Departments are – Agriculture, Horticulture, Industry, Forests & Environment, Soil & Water Conservation, Sericulture, Animal Husbandary & Vet and Fisheries. The achievements made by these eight Departments are mostly, through the implementation of NLUP which directly benefited by beneficiaries which will come to a total of 1,20,000 households after the completion of NLUP.
Phase I, II and III. Financial assistance ranging from Rs 50,000 to more than Rs 1,00,000 is received by each beneficiary according to the trade of their choice. An additional 15,000 households will be given assistance again during the 4th Phase. The Chief Minister’s Special NLUP Scheme was also introduced in August, 2013 through which families living not only in abject poverty, but are unable to work because of illness or old age will be given assistance of up to an amount of Rs 20,000 as and when they need assistance.

**Agriculture Department**

- A total area of 13,056 hectares has been covered for the cultivation of Oil Palm. Of the total area covered by Oil Palm cultivation, 12,097 hectares was covered by the present Congress Government during 2009 – 2013 under the NLUP programme.
- Under Farm Mechanization scheme, the Department has generated 1,20,290 manpower through distribution of various subsidized farming implements such as tractor and power tillers during 2009–2013.
- Under NLUP, 6,025 households have been given assistance to wean them away from the destructive shifting cultivation practice. While the shifting cultivation has decreased, the Government has intervened in such a way that 1,840 hectares of land has been reclaimed for rice production through settled farming system which has resulted in a significant increase in rice production.

**Horticulture Department**

- A total of 17,916 households have opted assistance under this Department under NLUP Phase I & II who have elected to pursue farming in such crops as orange, passion fruit, grape, papaya, banana, tea etc. It is envisaged that by the time NLUP Phase III are completed, a total number of 27,000 households would have been given assistance by this Department.
- Utilizing high tech green houses and open areas, vegetables such as cabbage, broccoli, tomatoes, capsicum etc have been grown in an area of 90,325 acres. The total sum production of vegetables during 2011-12 was 21,03,310 quintals.

**Industries Department**

- The Department has a total of 64 trades from which the NLUP beneficiaries can make their choice. The Department has now fully completed the first phase of NLUP assistance in which 10,723 households have been provided financial/material assistance. There are 8856 NLUP beneficiaries under NLUP Phase II while it is envisaged that another 8000 beneficiaries would be assisted under Phase III, bringing the total number of NLUP beneficiaries under this Department to 27,579 households.
- The Prime Minister’s Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) has taken up with enthusiasm. A total of 365 projects were taken up with a cost of Rs 357.45 lakhs during this period.

**Soil & Water Conservation Department**

- The New Land Use Policy : With the I, II and III phase of NLUP the total number of beneficiaries that would benefit from this Department comes to 10,444 households. This number could again increase when the 4th and final Phase of NLUP is implemented.

**Environment & Forests Department**

- Bamboo plantation: The Department has given assistance to 2596 households under NLUP from which 5092 hectare of land is expected to be covered by bamboo plantation. A further 600 to 700 beneficiary households are expected to be covered by this Department under bamboo plantation scheme from NLUP.
- Under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, Mizoram is acclaimed to be of the best performing States in the country, more than 27 ICDS projects have been taken up in the State with 1980 Anganwadi Centres established with an average enrolment of 1,37,548 children below the age of six years.
- A Centrally Government Sponsored Scheme, the National Bamboo Mission alongside NLUP is successfully being implemented.
- a financial scheme under ”Ensuring People's Participation in Forestry/Incentive for Conservation of Forests Scheme” was introduced for which Rs 100 lakhs was earmarked for the maintenance of 54 community forest reserves.

**Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Department**

- Under NLUP, the AH & Veterinary Department has provided assistance and benefited to 23,022 households. The main trades are poultry farming, piggery, cattle rearing etc having the objective of creating sustainable livelihoods through introduction of improved technology and improved breed of livestock and poultry.

**Sericulture Department**

- The Sericulture Department : The new inflow of funds saw a marked increase in achievements for the Department in terms of (1) increased Cocoon production from (2) increased Production of silkworm eggs (DFL) (3) increased Raw silk (yarn) production.

**Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation Department**

- Under Swarna Jayanti Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY), four and half years, skill training in various trades has been imparted to 6247 urban poor. As many as 1248 BPL families have also been upgraded to APL status during the last two and a half years.
- JNNURM has been a welcome and supportive funding system that has enabled the Department to contribute towards development in various sectors especially by PWD, PHED and Transport Department.
- Under the Integrated Housing & Slum Development Programme, 1950 dwelling units have been constructed in six District Headquarters., A total of Rs 5606.83 lakhs has been spent in this project.

**Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs**

- This Department’s main concern is to provide rice and other essential commodities through the Public Distribution System for families under AAY, BPL and APL.
- The Congress Government has been able to provide sugar through PDS without any interruption during the last five years.

**Public Health Engineering Department**

- This Department has mainly been taking up water supply by laying pipelines and constructing reservoir tanks to bring drinking water to people living in villages on hill sides where water is not readily available as in the plains. During the last five years, it has covered 451 rural habitations with a cost of Rs 179.65 crore.
- The notable achievement in urban areas during the last five years, Champhai Greater Water Supply Scheme was completed fully in 2009 with an expenditure of Rs 2790.13 lakhs.

**Tourism Department**

- The total expenditure for implementing various projects is Rs 4232.05 lakhs. Tremendous efforts are given to introduce Adventure and Rural Tourism by the Department.

**Social Welfare Department**

- Under the Integrated Child Development Scheme, Mizoram is acclaimed
The Department has made a notable achievement under the IAY. Under the Indira Gandhi Mantriya Sahyog Yojana, a Conditional Mizoram once again for the consequent term. which would place Congress government the choice of the people of and corruption-free government would be another important factor the Congress Government has gone off track. In fact, the transparency area of good governance and transparency, the opposition parties are completed, providing all weather road connectivity to 44 villages. In the new roads covering 782 km and pavement covering 92 km has been the Congress Government during the last five years has constructed through their votes. However, NLUP is not the only reason that that Assembly Elections and that the people would show their appreciation positive impact would have a ripple effect on the outcome of the 2013 criteria as drawn up by the NLUP Implementing Board. Government has assisted families not on party-lines, but from the Congress sandesh | October 2013

RAJASTHAN

RAJASTHAN IS POISED TO BECOME THE COUNTRY’S LEADING STATE

Rajasthan Chief Minister Mr. Ashok Gehlot have to do restless and hard work to make Rajasthan a prosperous and happy state of the country. As the result of Mr. Gehlot’s efforts that the annual plan of Rajasthan has steadily increased and has also increased the size of 12th five year plan.

The state capital Jaipur have a gift Metro Rail, whereas – oil refinery in Barmer. The foundation-stone laid of tribal area Dungarpur-Banswara-Ratlam Rail Line by UPA Chairperson Mrs. Sonia Gandhi to realize the dream of tribal region of southern Rajasthan, Banswara. Deal with the problem of saltwater in Barmer, Jaisalmer and Nagaur districts have been initiated to provide fresh water of Himalayan rivers. Similarly, Rajasthan has become the first state in the country to provide social security almost every family of the state.

The ambitious refinery project is being established in Panchpadra Barmer at an investment of Rs.37,299 crore would be largest investment in the state after Indira Gandhi Cannel which will change the face of western Rajasthan. Simultaneously, with the auxiliary industries the refinery will create nearly a million of direct and indirect employment opportunities to the people of state as well as develop the infrastructure in the region. According to a report by the National Council of Applied Economic Research, the project will increase one percent of the state’s gross domestic product

The establishment of this refinery-cum- petrochemical complex with an annual capacity of 90 lakh tons is the result of farsightness and tireless effort of the Chief Minister Mr. Ashok Gehlot. This project will added a golden page in the history of the economic development of Rajasthan. Now the day is not far when the Rajasthan would be recognize to the Industrial and tourist choice state. No so long it will refer to a desert state.

Similarly, the National Advisory Council and the UPA& NAC Chairperson Mrs. Sonia Gandhi laid the foundation stone of Memu coach Factory in Bhilwara and vice –President of Congress and MP Rahul Gandhi, inaugurated thermal electric power plant, Kalisind. The state Govt. has been taken in its hand the Parvan Irrigation Project in Hadoti Region of the state. This project will be ever largest after Rana Pratap Sager and Mahi Bajaj Sager project in the state. Such projects will give new feathers to the development of the state.

Last days Prime Minister Manmohan Singh inaugurate the Jaipur metro rail’s first phase project this will make Jaipur a world class city. Dr. Singh also dedicated to nation the solar energy projects which has been connected to the national grid under the first phase of Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission. Both projects in the state reduce dependence on coal, petrol, diesel and to as well as will help reducing carbon emissions.

Recently, the foundation stone of the airport in Kishangarh near Ajmer laid by the Prime Minister, this was a historic step towards made more
accessible for foreign tourists The Holy Pushkar and Ajmer dargah of famous Sufi saint.

Rajasthan is on the path of progress through with commitment towards being self-reliant in the field of energy. Energy sector has always placed the highest priority in state annual plans. Chief minister Ashok Gehlot did head work to develop the energy sector in the state through public partnership during his last and current tenure. The state’s Energy Minister Jitendra Singh constantly tried to allotted and taken environmental clearance for “long-term coal linkage” and “Coal Blocks” from Central Ministry for coal and Environmental Ministry.

A proposal to set up of Nuclear power plant in the tribal -dominated district Banswara is in progress. Rajasthan is going on toward “Solar Energy Hub” because of it’s of the enormous potential in the region. Union Govt. has allotted targets on priority bases to the Rajasthan under the Rajeev Gandhi Solar Mission. After the world’s largest integrated solar energy park in Jodhpur the Power being generated from wind and sunlight in western Rajasthan such as Jaisalmer and Bikaner.

Rajasthan is on the way to achieve self-sufficiency in power soon. It unprecedented 7223 MW new installed capacity added in last 58 month, this includes 2026 MW capacity in private sector. Private sector contributed to the power infra for the first time. Rajasthan is the future of India, in terms of renewable solar energy potential. Again for first time power from solar panels actually flowed into the Grid. Investment exceeding Rs. 10,000 crore for 1,293MW of installed capacity sanctioned and generation of 610 MW has commenced. Govt is setting up of a 1000 MW solar park at Bhadla in Jodhpur presently underway. State Govt, encouraging use of solar energy at homes, the state has decided to give 20% additional subsidy for solar energy systems.

Govt has set up an ambitious target of generate 20 thousand MW solar power by 2020 under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission. In the evening of independent the industrial development of the state was very minimal but today state has established itself in the map of the industrial development of the country. 40 per cent Delhi - Mumbai Industrial Freight Corridor (DMIC) passing through Rajasthan. Now the state has largest industrial hub, state has cotton, woolen garments and Synthetic, sugar , cement , zinc , chemicals , fertilizers , railway wagons, mica bricks , tubes and tires , petroleum , gas , electronics , automobiles, stone etc industries. Now the state industry are growing rapidly and emerging on the world map.

The corridor along the rail route being developed under the Rail Freight Corridors Delhi- Mumbai carrying goods will become much easier under the project. Under the National Capital Region plan the bullet train will run between Delhi to Alwar. That decisions of state Govt. to boost the development and will facilitate movement of people. The efforts of government of Rajasthan state's Historical Place like Jantar Mantar & another Seven Durgas have been included in the World Heritage List of UNICEF & Ghana Bird Century of Bharatpur also included in World Heritage List. Government has done a appreciated work to provide the water from Chambal river to Ghana Bird Century.

This is the result of the state Govt. tireless effort that the drinking water of Himalayan Rivers has been reached at the Barmer and Jaisalmer districts. This ambitious project of drinking water have been launched by Mrs. Sonia Gandhi. The State Govt. has launched water policy in 2010 to availed water for all geographical sectors of state.

First time in the state by the Govt. efforts the ‘cold waves’ and ‘Frost’ have been included in the natural disaster list, this issue strongly raised in the meeting of National Development Council by the Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. As a result of progressive policies of the Government of Rajasthan and UPA Govt. at the centre Rajasthan is becoming the hub of education sector also. AIIMS, NIFT & IIT established at Jodhpur, IIM at Udaipur, and Central University at Ajmer being established.

Central and State Government’s flagship schemes being implemented in the state is being praised all around of the country. The scheme to provide free medicines to all patients has attained faster success and greater praise in the state. The Chief Minister’s Free Medicine Scheme for Livestock was launched on August 15, 2012 at all Govt. veterinary hospitals. The first phase of Chief Minister’s Free Diagnostic Test Scheme was launched on April 7, 2013 on the occasion of World Health Day. Under this scheme, ECG, X-RAY, Sonography, and other essential tests are available free of cost at Govt. hospitals and affiliated hospitals. More than 1 crore people have been benefited since April 1, 2013. With above all the welfare schemes, Rajasthan has become the first state of the country that implemented the Food Security Bill. Under food security scheme more than 90 million households will get subsidized grains and other cereals of the state. State Govt. has taken 3400 crore credit from HUDCO to build cemented houses and provided Right to Shelter to BPL categories of the state. Rajasthan, the country’s leading state which made the law to enforcement of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA and Right to Information also.

This is the first time the Rajasthan government has taken inclusive and empowered decisions for each region and each class. Women and children, youth and students, farmers and cattlemen, industries - and business entrepreneurs and businessmen, minorities, special backward classes, scheduled castes and tribes have given their contribution in the development of the region. The state Govt. empowered all sections of the region such as former soldiers, workers, players, employees of state. Now we can see that each family of the state have right to social security.

Rajasthan Govt. has been issued Youth Policy, 2013. A massive skill development programme initiated. Rs 150 crore for skill training of 2.70 lakh youths under Chief Minister’s skill development Scheme’ 168 skill development centres have been established with the help of 37 private vocational training providers. This is the first time in the state that all girls students admitted in class 9th. Of Govt. schools are eligible to get free cycles. Cheques for 5 lakh girls students have been distributed.1.1 lakh students have got 14 inch laptop under ‘Rajeev Gandhi Vidhyarthi Digital Scheme’. Similarly one lakh scholarships (each 500 per month) have been offered annually for economically backward meritorious students under Chief Minister’s Higher Education Scholarship scheme. Social justice and empowerment department also has provided 25,13,503 post metric scholarship.

Social Justice and Empowerment Department has provided 25,13,503 post matric scholarships. 80 hotels constructed and 69 are being constructed for girls in 186 educationally backward blocks of the state. 68 model schools, out of the 160 model schools sanctioned by Government of India, have been established and 69 more are under construction. 1,66,625 posts have been filled by fresh recruitment. Recruitment for 80,000 posts are under process and arrangements have been made for 1,67,771 posts in the budget.
11 new universities, 2 new medical colleges and IIT are being established.

New cadre of Educational Assistants created in primary education. Simultaneously 40,000 posts of Educational Assistant have been created this year 2013-14 and recruitment is under process. Under social welfare pension scheme 2.86 lakh widows/destitute/ single women have got the benefit of lifelong pension mainly due to simplification of the procedure.

In all categories of roadways buses 30% concession in the fare is now available for all women. More than 24.5 lakh women and 4.73 lakh new born babies have been benefited from the Rajasthan Janni Shishu Surksha Yojna. Cash Assistance of Rs.7,300 9 up to 5 year of age) on birth of girl child under Mukhya Mantri Shubh Lakshmi Yojana. In urban local bodies and police recruitment, 50% and 30% reservation respectively are now available for women.

Through RKCL provision for free basic computer education for women has been made.

B.Ed/BSTC courses conducted free of cost for widow and deserted women, under Mukhyamantri Sambal Yojana. Aanganbadi Kalyan Kosh has came into existence with Rs. 100 croe grant from the state exchequer.

For the first time in the state, 348 NTT trained persons recruited for per-school education in Tribal Sub Plan areas. Child Rights Protection Commission has been set up for the first time in the state for the welfare and protection of young people.

Chief Minister’s Interest Free Loan scheme in its first year benefited 26.53 lakh farmers as they paid no interest on clearing the loan amount in time. First time in the state has happened that 5689 solar pumps have been installed with 86% subsidy to the farmers. This project of Largest number of solar pumps is in Rajasthan is recorded in the Limca Book of Record.

Rajasthan Enterprises Single Window Enabling and Clearance Act, introduced in year 2011 which has been widely appreciated throughout the country, has become a great success with an approval of investment worth Rs. 57,390 crore. 

Schedule for General Election to the Legislative Assemblies of Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Rajasthan

CHHATTISGHARH

Phase – 1 (For elections to 18 Assembly Constituencies listed in Annexure I)

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<th>Date of Issue of Gazette Notification</th>
<th>Last Date for Nominations</th>
<th>Date for Scrutiny of Nominations</th>
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Phase – 2 (For elections to 72 Assembly Constituencies listed in Annexure II)

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Counting for both the phases shall be held on: 08.12.2013 (Sunday)

Date before which the election shall be completed: 11.12.2013 (Wednesday)

DELHI

(All ACs)

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Counting shall be held on: 08.12.2013 (Sunday)

Date before which the election shall be completed: 11.12.2013 (Wednesday)

MADHYA PRADESH

(All ACs)

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Counting shall be held on:08.12.2013 (Sunday)

Date before which the election shall be completed: 11.12.2013 (Wednesday)

RAJASTHAN

(All ACs)

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Counting shall be held on: 08.12.2013 (Sunday)

Date before which the election shall be completed: 11.12.2013 (Wednesday)

MIZORAM

(All ACs)

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<td>09.11.2013, Saturday</td>
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Counting shall be held on: 09.12.2013 (Monday)

Date before which the election shall be completed: 13.12.2013 (Friday)
GANDHIJI: A DEMOCRATIC & HUMANITARIAN SOCIALIST

Marx has no faith in democracy. He believed in ruthless suppression of bourgeoisie through the dictatorship of the proletariat. But he did appeal to Gandhiji. He was out and out a democrat. He could never appreciate the suppression of individual through the state machinery. In Bolshevism, he found suppression, violence and force that negated his own philosophy of non-violence. He had firm conviction that a government run on violence, as it was in Russia, could not last for long.

Moreover, he viewed an increase in the power of the state with greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.”

He also criticized the Western democracy, for it was either in the garb of Nazism, Fascism or imperialism and did not provide protection to the weakest. “Western democracy”, he wrote, “as it functions today, is diluted Nazism or Fascism. At best it is merely a cloak to hide the Nazi and the Fascist tendencies of imperialism.”

Gandhiji’s socialism was not “to rise on the ashes of the blind, the deaf and the dumb. He wanted full freedom for the development of human personality, which Western democracies lacked in practice. There was no place to authoritarianism in the envisioned socialism of Gandhiji.

Gandhiji had perfect faith in democratic socialism. The spirit of democratic socialism is evidently clear from his following two statements that he made while explaining the term swaraj.

By Swaraj, I mean “the government of India by the consent of the people as ascertained by the largest number to the adult population. Real Swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused.” And explaining the economic aspect of Swaraj, he said:

The Swaraj of my dream is the poor men’s swaraj. The necessities of life should be enjoyed by you in common with those enjoyed by the princes and the moneyed men... You ought to get all-the-ordinary amenities of life that a rich man enjoys have not the slightest doubt that Swaraj is not poorna Swarja until these amenities are guaranteed to you under it.

He wanted Swaraj for all, men and women, rich and poor, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian and "emphatically including the maimed, the blind, 'the starving, toiling millions." So, he declared, "I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country in whose making they have an effective voice.

continued on page 37

THE GREAT SON OF INDIA

Some one has rightly said that only that person deserves to be revered who turned the face of adversity, Hon’ble Lal Bahadur Shastri was one such person who faced torments, utmost poverty, adversity and with hard work, commitment, resolve and competence achieved the highest position in Indian Politics. Cruel hands of destiny tested him. He lost his father at a tender age of one year. His childhood and youth was spent under great hardship. But his firm resolve, honesty, sincerity and belief kept on showing him the path. Poverty was not able to shake his ideals. An example of his ideals is that at his marriage he accepted only a charkha as dowry. His simplicity, honesty and resolve was without equal. Even while holding the biggest positions he did not become proud. Success came to him completely but even till his end he remained a simple, villager and Gandhi vadi. To become the successor of a towering personality and a great leader like Jawaharlal Nehru was no mean task. With the passing away of a charasmatic personality, close associate of Gandhiji, a great freedom fighter and a recognized world leader created a vacuum and every one was asking, who can be the successor to this great personality. The Western Media even went to the extent of saying that Democracy was at stake in India with the demise of Nehru. It was also true that the death of Nehru marked the end of an era. But the courage, wisdom and political sagacity and administrative competence displayed by Shastri ji set an example.

It was because of his public appeal and acceptance that he was elected unanimously as Prime Minister.

He was a true Nationalist and a Gandhian. When Gandhi ji gave a call for non cooperation he left his school and joined the movement. He was only Seventeen years old at that time. He went to jail and when he was released he joined the Kashi Vidyapeth. He studied Philosophy there. At that time he also joined the Servants of India Society started by Lala Lajpat Rai. In 1930 he again participated in Civil Disobedience movement and was arrested. He was also jailed in agitation during the Second World War and later during the Quit India Movement.

He also had the best administrative experience. To begin he become the secretary to the then chief minister of Uttar Pradesh Shri Gobind Ballabh Pant. He left his personal mark on the national politics and administration. He was also the Minister for UP Police and Transport. He handled several portfolios in the Central government. In 1961 he became the Home Minister of India. He adroitly managed with sagacity the internal situation of the country. But he is remembered even today for a historic step taken by him. This was an incident in 1956 when he was Minister for Rail. On being disturbed by a Rail accident he tendered his resignation. This was his principle and lack of love for holding a post. Such examples are rare today. One more incident which is talked about even today was the Indo-Pak war. He gave the country an able leadership and led the country to victory. His words during the Tashkent agreement are even today remembered with interest. He said that when he speaks to President Ayub Khan he would speak with his head held high whereas President Ayub would have to bow his head as he speaks to me. The Food situation in the country at that time was poor. He suggested to his countrymen to keep a one time fast. He gave the slogan 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan.' Cruel hands of destiny stole a great personality from us. That even after holding in public life such a high position a person can remain clean like the Kamal in the midst of dint gives us an example of inspiration. He was a true Gandhian. Who lived his life to his values. He has become a source of inspiration to the future Prime Ministers and people in Public life.

The author is a former Vice-Chancellor, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.
REMEMBERING
INDIRA JI

The brutal assassination of India’s great leader and beloved Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, on October 31, 1984 had plunged the entire nation into deep anguish and profound sorrow. Indira Gandhi, like her illustrious father, Jawaharlal Nehru belonged not only to the people of India but to all humankind. The world has lost an outstanding statesman.

Born at Allahabad on November 19, 1917, Indira Gandhi was influenced in her childhood by Mahatma Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and other great leaders of the Indian freedom movement. From her early years she was active in the national liberation struggle. During the 1930 movement, she formed the ‘Vanar Sena’, a children’s brigade to help freedom fighters.

In the late twenties, she had her schooling in Europe, where her mother Kamla Nehru spent some time for medical treatment and later in Pune and Bombay. In 1934, she enrolled in Rabindranath Tagore’s Visva Bharati, but had to leave after a few months to accompany her ailing mother to Europe. Kamla Nehru passed away at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1936. The following year Indira Gandhi went up to Somerville College, Oxford University.

Jawaharlal Nehru’s correspondence with her from jail was the formative intellectual influence in her life. His letters, later published as “Letters from a Father to a Daughter” and “Glimpses of World History”, stimulated her curiosity and helped mould a questioning and questing spirit, heir to the riches of world civilisation, but firmly rooted in Indian culture.

She became a member of the Indian National Congress in 1938. Soon after her return to India in March 1941, she plunged into political activity. On March 26, 1942, she married Feroze Gandhi, who was himself a valiant freedom fighter and known to the family for many years. She attended the session of the All-India Congress Committee in August 1942 which adopted the famous ‘Quit India’ resolution. Soon thereafter she was arrested and imprisoned until her release in May 1943. In August 1944, her first son Rajiv was born. Her second son Sanjay was born in December 1946.

Her public activity entered a new phase with India’s independence in 1947. She took over the responsibility of running the Prime Minister’s House. Besides, she was deeply involved in social and child welfare work. The Congress, which had been her political home ever since her childhood, soon drew her into leading political roles, first as member of the Congress Working Committee in 1955 and later as member of the Central Parliamentary Board in 1958.

In September 1960, Feroze Gandhi passed away.

When Jawaharlal Nehru died in May 1964, Indira Gandhi was persuaded by Lal Bahadur Shastri to join his Cabinet as Minister of Information and Broadcasting. On the outbreak of widespread language riots in Tamil Nadu in 1965, Indira Gandhi rushed, to ‘the State and by her tact,’ understanding and statesmanship assuaged the feelings of the people and brought the situation under control.

On January 19, 1966, after the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri, she was elected leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party and sworn in as Prime Minister on January 24, 1966. She led the nation in that capacity until March 1977. Having steered her party to success in the General Election of 1967, she undertook a series of moves in the Congress in the direction of radical social and economic policies. Her fight against the status-quo and vested interests produced sharp ideological conflicts leading to the Congress split of 1969. The overwhelming majority of Congressmen and women rallied round her. In the general election of 1971 she returned to power with a decisive majority a clear vindication of people’s approval of her decisions.

In June 1975 she was compelled to declare an internal emergency to meet the threat of subversion of constituted authority. Early in 1977 she called for elections to the Lok Sabha in which the Congress Party was defeated. During 1977–1980 when she was out of power, people witnessed her indomitable courage in the face of a systematic campaign of persecution and vilification. No effort was spared to defame her and her family. Numerous cases were launched against her on the flimsiest of grounds. She was arrested and kept in jail on charges that did not stand up to judicial scrutiny. Although elected to the Lok Sabha in a by-election she was deprived of her seat in utter disregard of the popular verdict. She faced all this with stoic heroism and continued to champion the “cause of the downtrodden and the oppressed. Wherever she went during this period, hundreds of thousands of people gathered to demonstrate their respect and affection for her and her confidence; in her leadership. In the General Election held in January 1980, the people recalled her to power with a landslide majority.

Earlier in 1978 she had to face another split in her party because of her steadfast adherence to the basic principles and pro-people ideology of the Congress.

In the eventful years of Indira Gandhi’s leadership, Indian society underwent profound changes. While maintaining continuity of the basic strategies and policies of the Nehru period, she transformed the structure of politics by placing the issue of poverty in the forefront of national debate. Her commitment to a just social order was manifested in a series of historic measures beginning with the nationalisation of banks and the abolition of privy purses. This process culminated in the formulation and implementation of the 20-Point Programme with focus, on ameliorating the condition of the poor masses.

She was unremitting in her endeavour for the unity and solidarity of the nation. A staunch defender of the secular ideals of the Constitution, she worked tirelessly for the social and economic advancement of the minorities. Her abiding concern for their welfare was reflected in the special measures taken by Government for guarding their religious, cultural and educational rights and for expanding their employment opportunities. She worked indefatigably for eradicating communal violence which she called ‘a slur on the fair name of India.

Her vision of a modern, self-reliant and dynamic economy found concrete expression in the rapid strides made by Indian agriculture, ‘industry and science. The technological transformation of our agriculture has made the country self-sufficient in foodgrains, an achievement few thought was in the realm of possibility. The wide base of our industrial structure and the strength and resilience of the infrastructure, especially of the energy section, are in no small measure due to the strong impulse of modernisation she transmitted to the planning process.

In her scheme of things the welfare of kisans and workers had high
priority. Far-reaching reforms were adopted to give land to the tiller and to improve the lot of agricultural labour. Programmes for small and marginal farmers have yielded substantial benefits in terms of higher productivity and incomes. Under her leadership, the farming community received credit and the inputs of modern agriculture and assured remunerative prices, which have provided real incentives for higher production.

The working class has developed as a major social force, thanks to her strategy of vigorous industrialisation. Under her inspiration the public sector has come to occupy the commanding heights of the economy, and the workers have been a major beneficiary of her socially progressive approach to their problems. India is among the few developing countries with a corpus of labour legislation that protects the rights of workers and enables them to improve their skills and incomes.

In a crisis-ridden international economic environment, the Indian economy has exhibited stability and strength to develop on the basis of its own resources. That India has come through the severest global crisis since the Great Depression with an impressive record of growth and without the disruptions imposed by the worldwide process of adjustment is the measure of her leadership. She gave substance to our striving for self-reliance and created a strong base for rapid advance.

Her unflinching commitment to the cause of India's science and technology has been responsible for the remarkable spurt of creativity shown by our scientists and technologists. In every sphere of modern science and specially in the sophisticated areas of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and space. India has emerged as a force capable of closing the technological gap. Her constant encouragement to scientists to reach new frontiers made possible a number of advances. The growth of ocean development within a short time and the expedition to Antarctica mark the distance we have travelled since Indira Gandhi assumed leadership. For her, science and technology were the means for the betterment of the masses.

Sensitive to the harm that thoughtless and unimaginative economic development can do, she was among the few international figures to have emphasised the supreme importance of environment in our thinking for the future of humanity. Like a seer she drew on the wisdom and insight of our ancient culture to point out, in her moving address at the U.N. Conference on the Human Environment at Stockholm in 1972, the danger posed by the plunder of nature to the future of humanity and pleaded for a pattern of development in which man will live in harmony with nature. We owe to her the consciousness of the need to protect our forests, rivers, lakes, air and wild life for a truly human existence.

Indeed it can be said that there was no creative activity, political, economic, scientific or cultural in which she did not take interest and which she did not enrich. Her commitment to the heritage of this country and its cultural values was profound. With it came support to all aspects of art, craft, theatre, dance and music. During 1965-74 she was Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi. She took special interest in the work of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha as its President. For her enduring contribution in the intellectual sphere she received doctoral degrees and awards from a large number of universities and scientific academies in this country and abroad. For her outstanding work in the field of family planning she was given the U.N. Population Award in 1983.

Among her many sided pursuits, the one to which she gave touching personal care was the welfare of the handicapped. She instituted several programmes for the blind and the physically disabled. A nationwide campaign for treatment of leprosy was launched. Her personal concern for the handicapped has brought a new ray of hope for them.

She was a tireless crusader for the uplift of the underprivileged. She initiated concrete and lasting programmes for the economic and social betterment of the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, the backward classes and other weaker sections. These are now an integral part of the national anti-poverty programmes. She aroused the conscience of the community for upholding the rights of women and their social and economic advancement.

A lover of mountains, Indira Gandhi's sympathy with the hill people and their distinctive pattern of life lay behind the special programmes devised for hill development. She travelled to the remotest parts of India, including our outlying islands, to integrate these isolated communities into national life. The people of these areas claimed her as their own, out of their boundless affection and gratitude for her sincere devotion to their cause.

Herself a product of the national freedom movement, Indira Gandhi accorded concrete recognition to the sterling services rendered to the country by the freedom fighters.

She devoted a great deal of time and energy to youth welfare. She was keen that India's youth should excel in sports. Honouring her commitment to hold the Asian Games in India, she gave to Delhi the most modern stadia and other facilities which are the envy of many a capital city. The constant encouragement and guidance given by her to the development of sports was fittingly recognised by the conferment on her of the Gold Order of the International Olympic Council in 1983.

Never making any compromise where national security was concerned, she was acutely conscious of the need for modernisation of our defence forces to deal with the new challenges posed by the deterioration in our security environment. She provided a vigorous thrust to the indigenous effort to make India self-reliant in this sensitive and vital sphere. Thanks to her unstinted support to policies for technological upgradation of our defence, the Indian armed forces today are fully capable of safeguarding the nation's integrity. She went beyond the machines to the men who use them. For the defence forces she initiated wide-ranging policies to improve their service condition! and morale. Her personal concern for the problems of ex-servicemen is reflected in a series of measures taken by government to improve their employment terms.

In a stewardship of many achievements, particularly memorable was the courage and outstanding statesmanship which she showed in dealing with the Bangladesh crisis in 1971.

Indira Gandhi epitomised the aspirations of the entire human race. She was dedicated to the ideals to the United Nations and principles of its Charter. She was one of the world's foremost champions of peace and total disarmament. She stood for an international order in which power was tempered by compassion, and knowledge and capability were at the service of humanity. She was unstinting in her support for the liberation of dependent countries. Like her illustrious father, she was against all forms of exploitation and considered political and military blocs as impediments to world peace. She was also the foremost voice advocating a lessening of economic disparities among nations. She was in the front rank of the Non-Aligned Movement, to which she provided content, dynamism and cohesion. She was elected the Chairperson of that movement at the Seventh Non-Aligned Summit which met in New Delhi in March 1983.
Indira Gandhi never flinched in the face of dangers and challenges. In times of extreme crises personal or national, she showed indomitable courage and fortitude. She moved among the millions giving them courage and drawing sustenance from them.

As a mark of esteem in which she was held by hundreds of millions of her countrymen and woman the nation conferred its highest award 'Bharat Ratna' on her in 1972.

In spite of her total involvement in the cause of the nation at home and peace and progress for the entire human family, Indira Priyadarshini was always full of vibrant vitality and joy, taking interest in all that was beautiful in nature. But this magnificent life of radiance and charm was brutally and heinously cut short on October 31, 1984 by a dastardly and treacherous act perpetrated in her own residence by two of those who were charged with her security.

To Indira Gandhi the preservation of the unity and integrity of the country was a sacred mission to which everything 'else had to be subordinated. For defending the unity of the country she fought boldly-and vigorously against communalism, obscurantism, revivalism and religious fundamentalism of all types. She repeatedly warned the nation that communalism and obscurantism were the tools- employed by the forces of destabilisation.

She laid down her life in defence of the ideals on which the unity and integrity of the Republic are founded. The martyrdom of Mahatma Gandhi and Indira Gandhi for upholding the unity of India will reverberate across the centuries.

Rarely in history has one single individual come to be identified so totally with the fortunes of a country. She became the indomitable symbol of India's self-respect and self-confidence Death came to her when she was at her peak, when her statute and influence were acclaimed the world over.

In the tragic death of Indira Gandhi, India has lost a leader of unwavering dedication and consistent brilliance at a crucial moment of political and economic development. The nation owes a great debt of gratitude to this decisive, crucial moment of political and economic development.

The nation grieves the untimely passing of this great leader, who served them till her last breath.

The upland of India will reverberate across the centuries.

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The socialism of Gandhiji was humanitarian in its approach and not mechanical. To him, socialism stood for love, mutual trust and good-will. He wanted to build a new social order but not through coercive power of the state machinery but by changing the heart of the rich. He was conscious that "grinding pauperism can lead to anything else than moral degradation. Every human has a right to live and therefore, to find the wherewithal to feed himself and where necessary, to clothe and hence himself. Hence economic equality was necessary which (means the leveling down of the, few rich in whose hands is concentrated the bulk of the nation's wealth, on the one hand, and a leveling up of the semi-starved naked millions on the other. He appealed to upper classes on the ground of humanity to give up their superfluous property for the common good of the society."

He wanted to bring socialism by preaching the gospel of love. According to Gandhiji love was non-possession, and therefore, love and possession could not co-exist.

According to Gandhiji the real meaning of socialism was services to the people, addressing a conference on July 2, 1947 he said: "Nearly fifty years ago, when I was practicing law in south Africa, many used to call themselves socialists. But they were less of socialists than I was. I used to work among the labourers. I have made this part of my life's work. This is true socialism. I have always considered myself a true servant of the peasant and the workers." In his socialistic pattern of society, his ideal was equal wages for all… doctor, engineer, lawyer, teacher and even bhangi, but for the present' he had "to see that every labourer get enough to feed and clothe himself and his family. A government that does not ensure this much is no government. Besides, he had also realized that the concept of high and low had done harm to society, hence, he visualized to bring about an equalization to status. "The working classes", he said, "have all these centuries been isolated and relegated to a lower status. They have been shooedras, and the word has been interpreted to mean an inferior status, I want to allow no differentiation between the son of a weaver, of an agriculturist and of a schoolmaster."
The choice of a successor to Indira Gandhi did not prove difficult. The Congress Parliamentary Board members formally presented their recommendation to the President and Rajiv Gandhi was sworn in as the Prime Minister on 31 October 1984. He had already entered politics in June 1981, after the death of Sanjay Gandhi in June 1980, by getting elected to the Lok Sabha from Amethi. In 1983 he had become one of the seven new General Secretaries of the Congress.

Challenge of Terrorism and Fissiparous Tendencies
When Rajiv Gandhi took the reins of Government, the situation was grave. In reaction to Indira Gandhi’s assassination by her two Sikh guards, there were nationwide riots against the members of the Sikh community. Nearly 2,800 people were killed in Delhi alone. The first task of Rajiv Gandhi was to quell the riots and restore confidence among the Sikh community. Another crisis that had to be handled was the Bhopal Gas Leak tragedy in which 2,000 people lost their lives and thousands were affected. The next task was to secure a mandate from the electorate.

The general elections to the Lok Sabha were anyhow due in a few months in the normal course. He considered it necessary to hold the elections on schedule as that would help him get the people’s mandate also. The elections demonstrated the people’s sympathy and love for Indira Gandhi. The party under her son’s leadership was returned with an unprecedented majority. Of the 543 seats, 415 had been secured by the Congress Party, a record not achieved ever before in its history. This was attributed not only to the ‘sympathy wave’ but also to the desire on the part of the electorate to ensure unity and integrity of the country.

However, more complex than these was the problem of terrorism in Punjab and Assam on the one hand, and the ethnic issue concerning people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. Soon after assuming office, he had ordered the release of key Akali leaders in January 1985 who had been detained since the days of Operation Blue Star and lifted the ban on the All India Sikh Students Federation. He ordered an enquiry into the anti-Sikh riots in Delhi and elsewhere in November 1984, and soon talks began with Akali leaders in order to find a settlement to the Punjab problem. In August 1985, he announced a settlement with Shromoni Akali Dal led by Sant H.S. Longowal according to which the major Akali demands were conceded and others were to be reviewed. The elections were fixed for September 1985. However, Longowal was assassinated on 20 August, the very day he announced that Akalis would take part in the elections. Not long thereafter, the Akali Dal Government led by Barnala got destabilized and had to quit. The State was back under the Central rule. Along with this, lawlessness and killings of innocent people escalated. The Punjab problem called for fresh initiatives and Rajiv came out with an action plan. This included “Operation Black Thunder”, a smoothly carried out operation to clear the Golden Temple of arms and gunmen. A number of incentives were offered to the state to tackle the problem of terrorists. While all this was a setback to the terrorists the final solution to the problem was to take a few more years.

In the case of Assam too, Rajiv Gandhi succeeded initially in defusing the crisis by reaching an accord with the main warring group on 15 August 1985. Apart from the general grievance of underdevelopment, their agitation was against the influx of illegal Bengali-speaking immigrants who had reduced the Assamese to a minority in their own region. According to this accord, foreigners who had come between 1951 and 1961 were to be given full citizenship.
including the right to vote, and those who came between 1961 and 1971 would not have voting rights for 10 years. Those coming after 1971 would be deported. This put an end to the agitation by the students and cleared the way for elections to the state assembly. The student agitators, under the banner of Assam Gana Parishad, formed the government.

However, a series of agitations began in different parts of the country including one in the North-East for Bodoland. The Gorkhas of West Bengal were also agitating for greater degree of independence. In Bihar, the Jharkhand agitation started. In Mizoram, there had been insurgency for a number of years under Laldenga and Rajiv Gandhi arrived at an accord to put an end to it. Meanwhile, the unrest in Jammu and Kashmir was assuming serious proportions. In July 1986, the government of G.M. Shah was dismissed and President’s rule imposed. Rajiv Gandhi entered into an alliance with Farooq Abdullah for the assembly elections in 1987. However, Abdullah proved to be ineffective and after that, the secessionist movement became active in the state.

Initiatives in Foreign Policy

The Sri Lankan Tamils issue was another major concern of the Rajiv Gandhi government. In 1983, thousands of Sri Lankan Tamils took refuge in Tamil Nadu when the Tamil areas in the north-east of Sri Lanka became the site for heavy repression by the government. The government had ordered the blockade of these areas and when India sent relief supplies, these were turned back by the Sri Lankan navy. This area was the base for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), an organization fighting for Tamil independence from Sri Lanka.

After discussions with the Sri Lankan government, an Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement to establish peace and normalcy was signed on 27 July 1987. According to this agreement, the Tamil areas would get substantial autonomy, the LTTE would be dissolved and the Indian army would come to the help of Sri Lanka if necessary. The accord was not popular among certain sections of the Sinhalese and the Tamils. The Sinhalese resented the intervention of a foreign army and the Tamils were unhappy with the forced disarming of the LTTE. After signing the accord, Rajiv Gandhi was even attacked with a rifle by one of the sailors at the guard of honour ceremony. The whole world condemned this heinous attack on him and admired his cool and fortitude amidst grave provocation. The Indian Army agreed to a phased withdrawal from Sri Lanka which began in 1989.

On the Western border, Pakistan was not quiet. When Rajiv Gandhi became the Prime Minister the relations between the two countries were marked by a high degree of mutual suspicion. Before he could do anything to repair the strained relations, new fissures developed. These arose from a routine military exercise carried out by the Indian army in the deserts of Rajasthan after due notice to Pakistan. Pakistan retaliated by stepping up the troop movements on her side of the border not only across Rajasthan but also Punjab. The tension was soon relieved following official level talks and the pull-back of the troops on both the sides. It was a few months later that Rajiv Gandhi undertook a visit to Islamabad at the invitation of Pakistan and signed accords with his counterpart Ms. Benazir Bhutto, which envisaged both countries abiding by the Simla Agreement. However, this did not stop Pakistani support to terrorism in Punjab and Kashmir.

He visited China in 1988, being the first PM since Nehru in 1954 to do so. The aim of the visit was to improve trade, extend consular contacts and set up mechanisms to solve long-standing problems. To build good relations with China, India did not condemn the massacre at Tiananmen Square in June 1989. He also visited the US in 1985 where the US agreed to give India a super-computer for processing weather data. Rajiv developed a very close relationship with the Soviet leader, Gorbachev. He was very keen on foreign affairs and expended a lot of time on it. Apart from visiting foreign countries, the two main issues which he took up were nuclear disarmament and struggle against apartheid.

As far as disarmament is concerned, he followed in his mother’s footsteps by getting governments in different parts of the world to put pressure on the nuclear super-powers to disarm. He shared this passion with Gorbachev. In November 1986, on Gorbachev’s visit to Delhi, a plan for disarmament was spelt out known as the Delhi Declaration. The Action Plan for Nuclear Disarmament was presented by Rajiv in June 1988 at the UN General Assembly. According to this plan, all nuclear weapons were to be eliminated by 2010. Rajiv got most of the Commonwealth countries, except the UK, to support him in his struggle against apartheid. He set up the AFRICA (Action for Resisting Invasion, Colonialism and Apartheid) Fund at the Non-Aligned Summit meeting at Harare in 1986. In support of the independence of Namibia, Rajiv Gandhi gave diplomatic recognition to SW APO, the main nationalist organization and popularized the cause at all international gatherings which he attended.

Rajiv’s Vision for the 21st Century

Unconventional and dynamic in his approach, Rajiv Gandhi created quite a stir when he questioned the “vested interests” within the party and called them “power brokers”. The occasion for this was the Centenary Celebrations of the Congress Party in Bombay in 1985. He was keen to democratize the party and bring in the youth. Similarly, he was frank to admit that the funds earmarked for development schemes did not reach the targeted groups but gone into the hands of middlemen. He found many shortcomings in the way the state governments implemented the centrally-funded schemes at the grassroots level.

The strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions was a very important objective that Rajiv Gandhi took up on a war footing in order to meet some of the above deficiencies. A National Perspective Plan for Women drafted in 1988 was meant to provide reservation of 30 per cent of seats for women in panchayati raj bodies. He decided to amend the Constitution to provide for direct funding to the local bodies by the Centre instead of having to go through the state governments. This provoked a lot of criticism and opposition from vested interests. He ultimately failed to get the necessary legislation passed, as in the Rajya Sabha all the opposition parties combined to defeat the relevant Constitutional Amendment Bill. He also initiated the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana to provide employment to at least one member of every poor family in a village for 50-100 days in a year. This concept was to later evolve into the National Employment Guarantee Scheme. His new education policy was to focus on the rural areas and envisaged model schools in each district under the name of Navodaya Vidyalaya.

Like Indira Gandhi before him, Rajiv Gandhi was also acutely aware of the issue of environmental sustainability. A new ministry of environment was created in his
time and environmental clearance was made mandatory for all big projects. He proposed that a Planet Protection Fund be created.

Rajiv Gandhi found it difficult to carry on with some of the members of the old guard. They also found his style of running the party with meticulous professionalism not in tune with their approach. Some senior leaders were removed from the party and a few were replaced by younger persons. In his anxiety to make quick changes, he shuffled and reshuffled his team both in the Party and the Government frequently. Even some of his colleagues who acted as his main advisers in the early years of his Prime Ministership deserted him, when he refused to toe their dictated line. The promises of reform in the party, which he made in his famous Bombay speech as a corollary to his attack on the "power brokers" in the party, could not be fulfilled. Party elections, long overdue, were put off again and again. But he introduced other measures to deal with the tendency of politicians to cross the floor. The Anti-Defection Act was passed in 1985. He also favoured greater freedom for government media.

Rajiv Gandhi repeatedly reminded the country of the necessity of preparing for the 21st century and took some dramatic steps in that direction. He spearheaded India's computerization programme. He reduced import duties on components and foreign competition was allowed in this sector. He wanted India to participate in the information and communication revolution. Every district was to be connected with the Central Government through a computer network. He set up six 'technology missions' which aimed at applying science and technology to six areas which were grossly underdeveloped. These were drinking water, literacy, health of pregnant women and children, milk production, edible oil production and telephonic communication.

Besides stressing the use of modern technology like computers and decentralization of decision-making at the community level, Rajiv Gandhi's government initiated moves for removing controls over industries and demystifying the budgetary process. The process of economic reform which had started with Indira Gandhi's return to power in 1980 was taken forward considerably by Rajiv Gandhi, preparing the ground for the big shift that was to occur in 1991. The report of the Economic Administration Reforms Commission, headed by L.K. Jha, came in handy for him to take steps towards liberalization in the industrial sector. During his tenure from 1984-1989, the economic growth rate was 5.5 per cent, breaking the barrier of the 3 to 3.5 per cent growth rate which the Indian economy was hovering around for quite some time.

The Political Challenge and the Resurgence of Opportunistic Anti-Congressism
Rajiv Gandhi also made efforts for strengthening the capability of Indian Defence Forces and arming them with the latest weapons. Among the many deals towards this end was the one involving the purchase of howitzer guns from the Swedish firm, Bofors. This turned out to be the root cause of one of the biggest crisis ever faced by any Government in the past. The Swedish Radio reported that millions of dollars had been paid as bribes to Indian officials by the Bofors to get the contract. This triggered nationwide agitation for enquiry and action against those found guilty. This came on top of a few other allegations over the purchase of submarines from West Germany and appointment of an American detective agency Fiji to investigate into the dealings of some industrialists. The opposition mounted an agitation demanding Rajiv's resignation.

Added to these, Rajiv Gandhi faced innumerable problems from within the party. The electoral debacle in Haryana, Kerala and West Bengal also damaged the image of the Party. V.P. Singh, Arun Nehru and others, who were very close to him in earlier years, left the Party and joined the opposition parties.

By then, the five-year term of Rajiv Gandhi's Government was coming to an end. The first year and a half of his tenure was quite smooth sailing for him. He was projected as a leader with a clean image and as a man of vision, keen to prepare the country technologically for meeting the challenges of the 21st century. This euphoria heightened the people's expectations which could not be fulfilled. The second half of his term was not that smooth. His problems were aggravated by a severe drought in many states following the failure of the southwest monsoon. However, the worst drought situation of 1987-88 was handled most efficiently.

But, by far the most serious problem was the one created by the Bofors deal. On this issue, all the opposition parties were united. They demanded his resignation on the basis of a report of CAG, and the Opposition members of the Lok Sabha resigned en masse in mid-1989. It paved the way for electoral adjustment among the non-Congress parties reviving the practice of opportunistic anti-Congressism as a central mode of political mobilization rather than substantive ideological issues. It was against the backdrop of a series of unfavourable factors that Rajiv Gandhi ordered the general elections to the Lok Sabha in November 1989.

The National Front
The right-wing opposition parties that had earlier combined and broken up, started moving closer once more to give a united fight to the Congress. They combined under the banner of a National Front, keeping intact their separate identities. The National Front had electoral adjustments with the Left Front and the BJP. By then, V.P. Singh had left the Congress Party and aligned himself with the Janata Dal, a constituent of the National Front.

A disturbing feature of this period was the coming together of many otherwise diverse anti-Congress groups like the Left and the BJP, ensuring their support to V.P. Singh. This association lent political legitimacy and credibility to BJP and also blurred the mark of communalism from its image to some extent. This political collusion also led to the coming together of regional and national secular non-Congress parties with the Left parties and the BJP. By October 1988, the Janata Dal came into being with the merger of Jan Morcha, Janata Dal, Lok Dal and Congress (S).

The Bofors deal and the Nehruvian concept of secularism became the main issues at the polls. The latter had come to the fore with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad's claims over the site at which Babri Masjid had been erected and its moves to build a temple for Lord Rama there. This had led to communal clashes. The VHP went ahead with the laying of the foundation stone a few days prior to the Lok Sabha elections. The BJP secured electoral advantage from this move.

The 1989 elections were marked by unprecedented violence and the results went against the Congress Party. In fact, no party could get the majority to form the government. The Congress emerged as the single largest party with 197 seats and 39.5
per cent of the vote share and as such was invited to form the government with the help of its allies. But, Rajiv Gandhi chose to stay in the Opposition. The National Front took the reins of government with V.P. Singh as the Prime Minister. The Congress Party reposed its faith in the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi undeterred by the election reverses. In the Southern states, the party’s performance was quite impressive. Both Andhra and Karnataka had been recaptured by the Congress. Soon after the Lok Sabha elections, the Assembly elections were held in eight states. In most of these, Congress suffered heavy losses. Only in Maharashtra and Arunachal Pradesh could it form the government.

However, the scenario did not remain static. The National Front government soon got into trouble, some inherent in the very composition of the Front and Some others made by itself. In the latter category, fell the now famous Mandal Agitation. In his zeal to project himself and his Front as the champion of the downtrodden, V.P. Singh sought to implement the recommendations of the Mandal Commission set up during the Janata rule in 1977-1979 in respect of reservation quota for backward classes in educational institutions and employment. The recommendations reserved 27 per cent of the jobs in government and public sector undertakings for the backward classes. This increased the total reservations to 49.5 per cent since SCs and STs already had a reservation of 22.5 per cent. Reservations in educational institutions and promotions were also to be implemented in the future.

This announcement was criticized by many: even people in support of reservation as a policy thought that the suddenness of the decision was unacceptable. Political allies of the government opposed it as a unilateral move on the part of V.P. Singh. Others pointed out that the method of identifying backward classes was faulty and that no consensus had even been attempted before the announcement. The worst impact was on society: it divided people into castes and engendered caste politics and resentment among the youth. It was also argued that this policy benefited only the elites among the backward classes without helping the really underprivileged sections. Students led the agitation and were supported by teachers, government officials and housewives. Anti-Mandal protestors attacked public property, burnt buses, organized demonstrations and meetings and discussions in the press. The agitation was widespread in urban North India and in many cities like Delhi, Kanpur, Varanasi, protestors were fired upon by the police and some students attempted self-immolation. The main theme in this anti-Mandal agitation was against caste as an organizing principle of society and as a criterion for securing jobs. Caste identities were consolidated in the process and caste consciousness rose sharply among students.

During the 1980s, a new party called the Bahujan Samaj Party emerged in North India under the leadership of Kanshi Ram and later, Mayawati. This party declared that winning elections and entering the government was its primary aim. Initially, it sought to mobilize the backward castes and the minorities. In recent years, it has, become a party of Dalits which forms alliances with any other major political party in order to gain political office.

Apart from this, the problem of terrorism in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir continued. The V.P. Singh government withdrew the Indian Peace Keeping Force from Sri Lanka and following this, there was infiltration of LTTE into Tamil Nadu creating a serious law and order problem. The V.P. Singh government did not last long. The BJP withdrew its support from the government on the Ram Mandir issue. One of the constituent parties of the Front, headed by Chandra Shekhar, broke away and with the backing of the Congress, formed the government. This government lasted only a few months.

Rajiv Gandhi Lost His Life for the Nation

Elections to the Lok Sabha were ordered in May 1991. The Congress Party went to the polls well prepared. Being in the Opposition, the party leaders devoted greater attention to the strengthening of the organization at the grass roots level. For two decades, organizational elections had not taken place in the party. Periodically, attempts were made towards this but they did not materialize. The PCCs were set up with nominated members and the Central leaders decided PCC presidents. However, in order to promote a more effective interaction between the grass roots level party workers and the leadership, training camps, workshops, etc., were organized. This helped the Central leadership to get a first hand idea of the needs and aspirations in each constituency and take suitable steps to fulfill those. Rajiv. Gandhi planned the election strategy on the basis of scientific assessment of the party’s prospects in each state and chose the party nominees with great care. He himself undertook extensive tours to campaign for the party candidates. This took him to Sriperumbudur in Tamil Nadu to campaign for the Congress candidate. On the evening of 21 May 1991 he reached the venue of the election meeting. All of a sudden, there was a loud bomb explosion close to him. Within seconds, his body was found blown to pieces.

Like Mahatma Gandhi, and his mother, Rajiv sacrificed his life in the cause of the country. His mother paid the price for trying to bring peace in Punjab and he became the victim of his efforts to settle the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka. The LTTE, which had harboured a grievance against him, was suspected to have masterminded the killing of Rajiv Gandhi. He was the youngest among the three martyrs all of whom significantly died in the cause of maintaining secularism, unity and harmony between communities.

Rajiv Gandhi was no more but the electoral campaign he built up paid rich dividends. In the elections, the Congress was returned to the Lok Sabha with enough strength to form a government. But, the question of leadership remained. Sonia Gandhi made it clear that she would not like to be considered for it. Senior leaders agreed to elect P.V. Narasimha Rao as Congress President. In the first election in two decades on February 27, 1992, Rao was formally elected as President. Fifty-seven nomination papers, each signed by 10 PCC members from different states, were submitted in support of Rao’s candidature. After the election results were published, again through the process of consultation and consensus, P.V. Narasimha Rao was unanimously chosen the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party. This marked the beginning of a new phase in Congress history.

(Extracts from the book “The Congress and the making of Indian Nation”–Chapter 12)
ORGANISATIONAL APPOINTMENTS

The following appointments have been announced by the AICC General Secretary, Shri Janardan Dwivedi in the month of October.

COORDINATION COMMITTEES

The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi has on 9th October, 2013, approved the Coordination Committees for Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu as follows:

1. General Secretary Incharge
2. PCC President - Convener
3. CLP Leader
4. AICC Secretary Incharge
5. Shri Chiranjib Biswal
6. Shri Damodar Raja Narsimha

Coordination Committee for Tamil Nadu:
1. General Secretary Incharge
2. PCC President - Convener
3. CLP Leader
4. AICC Secretary Incharge
5. Shri Kumari Anandhan
6. Shri N.R. Rangarajan

Election and Coordination Committees for Puducherry:

The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi has on 9th October, 2013, approved the proposal for constituting the Pradesh Election Committee and Coordination Committee for Puducherry as follows:

Pradesh Election Committee, Puducherry:
1. Shri A.V. Subramaniam - Chairman
2. Shri V. Vaithilingam
3. Shri V. Narayanasamy
4. Shri P. Kannan
5. Shri Malladi Krishna Rao
6. Shri A. Namachivayam
7. Shri Theni C. Jayakumar
8. Shri Mohd. Shajahan
9. Shri M. Kandasamy
10. Shri R. Kamalakannan
11. Shri L. Jayakumar
12. Shri V. Jaydeepan
13. Shri S. Gulasegaran

Coordination Committee for Puducherry:
1. General Secretary Incharge
2. PCC President - Convener
3. CLP Leader
4. AICC Secretary Incharge
5. Shri Prakash Mishra
6. Shri Bhupindra Singh
7. Shri Chiranjib Biswal
8. Shri Bhadrak Ali
9. Shri Kailashnath Choudhury
10. Shri Alok Mishra
11. Shri Srimanta Sanyal
12. Shri Santosh Nanda
13. Shri Santosh Das (Mandela)
14. Shri Anwar Bharat
15. Smt. Binapani Samal
16. Shri Anil Kumar
17. Shri P. Kannan
18. Shri Janmejaya Lenka
19. Shri Pratap Routray
20. Shri Joginath Babubalanendra
21. Shri Jagadishwar Pratap
22. Shri Pradip Patnaik
23. Shri Subir Mohanty
24. Shri Subhendu Mohapatra
25. Shri Gobind Patra
26. Shri Siva Prakash Mohapatra
27. Shri Siba Patra
28. Shri Alok Mishra
29. Shri Pratap Routray
30. Shri Devendra Mohapatra
31. Shri Siva Pratap
32. Shri Siva Pratap
33. Shri Siva Pratap
34. Shri Siva Pratap
35. Shri Siva Pratap
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45. Shri Siva Pratap

Odisha PCC reconstituted:

The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi has on 10th October, 2013, approved the list of Office-bearers, Executive Committee and Pradesh Election Committee of Odisha PCC and also names of 33 District Congress Committee Presidents of Odisha as enclosed.

President Shri Jayadev Jena

Vice Presidents:
1. Shri Sk. Matlub Ali
2. Shri Kishore Chandra Patel
3. Shri Amarnath Pradhan
4. Shri Kailash Acharya
5. Shri Shibananda Ray
6. Shri Sarat Rout

Secretary:
1. Smt. Sriya Nayak
2. Shri Sujit Padhi
3. Shri Bibekananda Panigrahi
4. Shri Ayaka Kumar Mohapatra
5. Shri Satyendra Bahidar
6. Shri Dipil Mohanty
7. Shri Sanghadipa Munda
8. Shri Sujitghosh Dastirdar
9. Shri Prasad Harichandan
10. Smt. Kumuduni Patnaik
11. Shri Pradep Majhi
12. Shri Kailash Chandra Panda
13. Shri Gurupad Nanda
14. Shri Sk. Matlub Ali
15. Shri E. Valsraj
16. Shri Kailash Acharya
17. Shri Amarnath Pradhan
18. Shri Kishore Chandra Patel
19. Shri sk. Matlub Ali
20. Smt. Sonia Gandhi
21. Shri Jayadev Jena
22. Shri Jayadev Jena
23. Shri Jayadev Jena
24. Shri Jayadev Jena
25. Shri Jayadev Jena
26. Shri Jayadev Jena
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42. Shri Jayadev Jena
43. Shri Jayadev Jena
44. Shri Jayadev Jena
45. Shri Jayadev Jena

DISTRICT PRESIDENTS

1. Anugul
2. Balasore
3. Baragarh
4. Bhubaneswar
5. Bolangir
6. Boudh
7. Cuttack
8. Dhenkanal
9. Gajapati
10. Ganjam
11. Jagatsinghpur
12. Jayapur
13. Khurda
14. Kendrapara
15. Jajpur
16. Jharsuguda
17. Jharsuguda
18. Kalahandi
19. Jharsuguda
20. Kendrapara
21. Jharsuguda
22. Kendrapara
23. Jharsuguda
24. Kendrapara
25. Jharsuguda
26. Kendrapara
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37. Jharsuguda
38. Kendrapara
39. Jharsuguda
40. Kendrapara
41. Jharsuguda
42. Kendrapara
43. Jharsuguda
44. Kendrapara
45. Jharsuguda

APPPOINTMENTS

The following appointments have been announced by the AICC General Secretary, Shri Janardan Dwivedi in the month of October.

1. Shri Sk. Matlub Ali
2. Shri Kailash Acharya
3. Shri Amarnath Pradhan
4. Shri Kailash Acharya
5. Shri Shibananda Ray
6. Shri Sarat Rout

COORDINATION COMMITTEES

The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi has on 9th October, 2013, approved the Coordination Committees for Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu as follows:

1. General Secretary Incharge
2. PCC President - Convener
3. CLP Leader
4. AICC Secretary Incharge
5. Shri Chiranjib Biswal
6. Shri Damodar Raja Narsimha

Coordination Committee for Tamil Nadu:
1. General Secretary Incharge
2. PCC President - Convener
3. CLP Leader
4. AICC Secretary Incharge
5. Shri Kumari Anandhan
6. Shri N.R. Rangarajan

Election and Coordination Committees for Puducherry:

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Pradesh Election Committee, Puducherry:
1. Shri A.V. Subramaniam - Chairman
2. Shri V. Vaithilingam
3. Shri V. Narayanasamy
4. Shri P. Kannan
5. Shri Malladi Krishna Rao
6. Shri A. Namachivayam
7. Shri Theni C. Jayakumar
8. Shri Mohd. Shajahan
9. Shri M. Kandasamy
10. Shri R. Kamalakannan
11. Shri L. Jayakumar
12. Shri V. Jaydeepan
13. Shri S. Gulasegaran

Coordination Committee for Puducherry:
1. General Secretary Incharge
2. PCC President - Convener
3. CLP Leader
4. AICC Secretary Incharge
5. Shri Prakash Mishra
6. Shri Bhupindra Singh
7. Shri Chiranjib Biswal
8. Shri Bhadrak Ali
9. Shri Kailashnath Choudhury
10. Shri Alok Mishra
11. Shri Srimanta Sanyal
12. Shri Santosh Nanda
13. Shri Santosh Das (Mandela)
14. Shri Anwar Bharat
15. Smt. Binapani Samal
16. Shri Anil Kumar
17. Shri P. Kannan
18. Shri Janmejaya Lenka
19. Shri Pratap Routray
20. Shri Joginath Babubalanendra
21. Shri Jagadishwar Pratap
22. Shri Pradip Patnaik
23. Shri Bibekananda Panigrahi
24. Shri Ayaka Kumar Mohapatra
25. Shri Satyendra Bahidar
26. Shri Dipil Mohanty
27. Shri Sanghadipa Munda
28. Shri Sujit Padhi
29. Shri Bibekananda Panigrahi
30. Shri Ayaka Kumar Mohapatra
31. Shri Satyendra Bahidar
32. Shri Dipil Mohanty
33. Shri Sanghadipa Munda
APPOINTMENTS

The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi has admitted in Congress in J&K on 14th October, 2013, accepted the suggestion to admit the following persons belonging to Jammu and Kashmir to the party with immediate effect:

1. Thakur Balbir Singh
2. Smt. Gurparsad Kaur
3. Shri Gulam Hassan Geelani
4. Shri Syeed Tassaduq Hussain
5. Shri Shafeeq Mir
6. Smt. Zahida Khan
7. Shri Farooq A. Renzu
8. Shri Bashir Ahmad Shah
9. Shri Gulam Hassan Rather
10. Shri Guriya Ahmad
11. Shri Talatul Hussain
12. Shri Murtaza Khan
13. Shri Wali Mohammad
14. Shri Mohd. Aslam Goni
15. Shri Mujeeb Ali Sheikh

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15. Shri Mujeeb Ali Sheikh

Tamilsnadu Congress Election Committee

The Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi has on 15th October, 2013, accorded her approval for constituting the Pradesh Congress Election Committee for Tamilnadu as given below:

1. Shri B.S. Gnanadesikan - Chairman
2. Shri P. Chidambaram
3. Shri G.K. Vasan
4. Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan
5. Dr. Sudarsana Nachiappan
6. Shri E.V.K.S. Elangovan
7. Shri K.V. Thangabalu
8. Shri Kumari Anandan
9. Shri M. Krishnaswamy
10. Shri R. Gopinath
11. Shri K. Jayakumar
12. Shri Su. Thirunavukkarasar
13. Dr. A. Chella Kumar
14. Shri S.R. Balasubramaniam
15. Shri R. Prabhu
16. Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar
17. Shri Danushkodi Adithan
18. Shri J.M. Haroon
19. Shri S. Peter Alphonse
20. Smt. D. Yasoda
21. Shri K. Paramalai
22. Smt. Salakshmi
23. Shri K. Selvaraj
24. Shri Sunil Raja
25. President, Pradesh Youth Congress
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR

 Tributes to Gandhiji and Lal Bahadurji

Andaman: Andaman and Nicobar Congress Committee President, Shri Kuldeep Rai alongwith other leaders paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries at the Gandhi Bhawan here on 2nd October, 2013.

The Congressmen garlanded the statue of Gandhiji at the Gandhi Market and Shri Kuldeep Rai then recalled the services of Gandhiji and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri.

The Congress workers also launched a cleanliness drive in memory of Gandhiji who taught self-service and broomed the streets and locality. Both men and women participated in this drive.

Demands for Neil Island

Neil Island: Mahila and Youth Conference of Congress Party were held under the leadership of PCC President Kuldeep Rai Sharma here on 29th September, 2013. In his inaugural speech Kuldeep has requested the women folk and youths to strengthen the hands of the Congress party whom their parents and grandparents were also supporting as the Party is pro-people and poor friendly. Congress plans and programmes are always for the benefits of the people of India, especially or the upliftment of rural populace. Whatever developments are found in India and also in these islands, are the contribution of this Party only. On the local issues, Shri Kuldeep has demanded that more sea connectivity be provided to this island as it is the bowl of vegetables and for lack of boats, the perishable vegetables and also milk go waste. Shri Kuldeep has also demanded for English medium school in Science and a Hindi medium school. Kuldeep has also demanded for air connectivity, more passenger boats and well developed telecom services for Neil so that inflow of tourists may increase, which will not only earn for the exchequer but local unemployed youths will also get scope of employment.

BIHAR

Poor will benefit from Food Security Bill

Meenapur: The District Congress Committee staged a protest dharna in front of the District headquarters here on 27th August, 2013.

The Congress Party was demanding action against 13 demands and the protest was led by District President of the Backward Class Cell, Shri Jayananden Prasad, Sewa Dal Chief, Shri Sanjay Kumar and Shri Prem Kumar Sinha.

Later, a memorandum addressed to the state Governor was handed over to the Commissioner Secretariat office. Those who addressed the gathering said that people, particularly the poor, will benefit out of the Food Security Bill.

Sewa Dal Workshop

Muzaffarpur: The District Congress Sewa Dal conducted a workshop for the party workers here on 6th September, 2013.

The workshop was presided over by District Congress President, Shri Sanjay Kumar who explained about the Food Security Bill, the Land Acquisition Bill, Pension Bill and about other people welfare programmes of the Central UPA government.

Shri Sanjay Kumar said that it is the duty of the party workers to educate the people of the area about these welfare schemes of the Congress Party. Also present were Om Prakash Jha, Shyam Kumar Tiwari, Jayananden Kumar Kushwaha, Baby Kumari, Narendra Kumar, Dilip Kumar, Ravishankar Jha, Upendra Mishra, Rajiv Kumar Rathod, Farid Alam, Ramesh Bharti and Mustafa Alam.

CHHATTISGARH

Poverty increasing in Chhattisgarh

Raipur: AICC General Secretary and incharge of Chhattisgarh, Shri B.K. Hariprasad said that the BJP government of Chhattisgarh was lootng the poor people of the state. This he stated while addressing a huge farmers conference in Ambikapur in Sarguja district on 3rd October, 2013.

Shri Hariprasad said that the percentage of the poor has been continuously rising during the past ten years rule of the BJP. He added that there was four percent reduction in the farm land and the reason behind this was, the government is selling the farm land to the industrialists to get more revenue.

Shri Hariprasad said that there was lot of difference between the Congress leaders and that of the BJP leaders. While the Congress leadership relinquished the chair of the Prime Minister, the BJP leader is dreaming of becoming PM and had even given speech from a replica of the Red Fort. He said that Narendra Modi, who boasts of development in Gujarat, had jailed more than a lakh farmers for not paying the electricity bills. Shri Hariprasad said that now with the Land Acquisition Bill in place, nobody can take the land of the farmers forcefully.

Shri Hariprasad said that the Congress talks of progress and development while the BJP talks of constructing mandir. The crime rate too was increasing in the state due to poor law and order situation.

Dr. Mahant Charan Das, a Minister in the Cabinet from Chhattisgarh, also addressed the conference and said that the time has come to uproot this government and to bring Congress government to power in the state. He said that more than two thousand office-bearers from various political parties, including the BJP, joined the Congress Party and District President, Shri Ajay Aggarwal welcomed them by garlanding them with flowers and Congress colours.

Tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur

Raipur: The City Congress Committee paid tributes to father of the nation, Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries here on 2nd October, 2013.

Led by City Congress President, Shri Vikas Upadhyaya, the Congressmen garlanded the photos of Gandhiji and Lal Bahadur Shastri. The speakers recalled the services of the great leaders.

Also present were former President, Shri Satyanarain Sharma, Raipur Corporation Mayor, Kiranmayi Nayak, Shri Kuldeep Juneja, MLA, Shri Ramesh Valyoni, Majority Deptt. Chairman, Haji Sheik Nizamuddin, Corporator, Pramod Dubey, Shri Pankaj Sharma, Shri Hassan Khan, Shri Sanjay Pathak, Mamta Rai, Smt. Chhaya Verma, Shri Iqbal, Shukeemor Menon, Sunita Sharma, Shri
GUJARAT

Protesting Congress leaders detained in Gujarat

Ahmedabad: Over 200 Congressmen including prominent state leaders were detained on 1st October, 2013 for allegedly violating a notification which abstained them from taking out a rally towards the Gujarat Assembly here.

The Congress had organized a youth gathering in the city here after which they started marching toward the assembly. Police tried to stop them saying that they were just given permission for a public meeting and not for a rally.

Amid skirmish, police resorted to mild lathi charge, which led to commotion at the venue after which Congress leaders including state unit Chief Arjun Modhwadia, leader of opposition Shankarsinh Vaghela and former CLP Chief, Siddarth Patel were detained alongwith 14 MLAs.

The Congress workers were detained under Section 68 of the Gujarat Police Act. The Congress Party had the permission for a public meeting. After the public meeting here, they started marching towards state assembly, police officer said.

On Monday, all the Congress MLAs were suspended for two days from state assembly following unruly scenes, after which they decided to boycott rest of the session.

Section 68 of Gujarat Police Act sates that all people shall be bound to conform to reasonable directions of a police officer given in fulfillment of any of his duties under the Act.

The public gathering, organized by Youth Congress and National Students Union of India (NSUI), party's youth wing, was to highlight the extensive corruption, commercialization of education and large-scale unemployment among youth in the last two decades, during the time in which BJP was in power.

"Despite being convicted for three years in Rs. 54 crore illegal limestone mining case by a court in Porbandar, Babu Bokhiria continues to be a cabinet minister in Narendra Modi's government," a Congress worker said, adding that corruption has touched new heights during BJP regime.

"Instead of spending on building infrastructure in education, health and employment sectors, the state government is giving concession of Rs. 77,000 crore to Tata Motors, Rs. 20,000 crore to Ford Motors and Rs. 20,000 crore to Maruti Suzuki," a party worker alleged.

Government employees are not paid full salaries. Instead of giving free treatment in hospitals and free education, both these sectors have been commercialized, he said.

More than 10 lakh educated youths are unemployed in Gujarat while close to 20 lakh with basic education are jobless.

"Instead of spending on generating employment, the Chief Minister is spending crores of rupees on publicity campaigns," he alleged.

Congress attacks Gujarat Govt. over farmers’ issue

Rajkot: Calling Narendra Modi-led state government a ‘chief’, senior Congressmen and leader of opposition in state assembly, Shri Shankersinh Vaghela has held it squarely to be a cabinet minister in Narendra Modi’s government, “a Congress worker said, adding that corruption has touched new heights during BJP regime.

"Congress-led UPA government has already deposited Rs. 700 crore to state government’s account, but the latter is not disbursing the insurance money to farmers,” said Shri Vaghela while addressing a well attended farmers meet.

It was the first mega farmer Mahasammelan in which more than 34,000 farmers attended from Saurashtra region participated in the rally organized by Congress.
Rajkot Congress MP, Kunvarji Bavalia, said farmers are concerned about their interests and therefore they came in large numbers from across the region. “The farmers know who is working for their interest,” he said.

The main issues highlighted during the Kisan Mahasammelan were Non-implementation of the Crop Insurance policy for the farmers in the State; 4% Interest waiver was assured by the State government on Bank Loans taken by farmers during the drought. However, no positive steps have been taken in this concern; More than 6000 farmers have committed suicide in Gujarat over the last decade; however the official figures do not reflect this reality; State Government had promised 16 hours of uninterrupted electricity supply to the farmers; instead only 8 hours is being provided; 7 lakh proposals for new electricity connections by farmers are yet pending.

“Modi is in a hurry to go to Delhi. His government gave away Rs. 51,000 to each farmer invited from outside Gujarat to attend the recent Vibrant Gujarat Global Agriculture Summit. This was a part of the political game aimed to becoming the Prime Minister. But this daydreamer did not bother to pay insurance money to the farmers in his own state,” President of Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) Shri Arjun Modhvadia said.

Union Minister Shri Tushar Chaudhary alleged that state government is seeped in corruption. “You can’t do anything without paying a bribe. Modi Government claims to implement thecrop insurance money to the farmers in his own government gave away Rs. 51,000 to each farmer invited from outside Gujarat to attend the recent Vibrant Gujarat Global Agriculture Summit. This was a part of the political game aimed to becoming the Prime Minister. But this daydreamer did not bother to pay insurance money to the farmers in his own state,” President of Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) Shri Arjun Modhvadia said.

Union Minister Shri Tushar Chaudhary alleged that state government is seeped in corruption. “You can’t do anything without paying a bribe. Modi Government claims to implement the crop insurance money to the farmers in his own state,” President of Gujarat Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) Shri Arjun Modhvadia said.

HARYANA

More than crore to benefit in Haryana

Chandigarh: With the implementation of the Food Security Bill, around one crore and 26 lakh poor families will derive benefit out of this scheme of the Congress-led UPA government in Haryana.

Haryana Food and Civil supplies Minister, Shri Mahender Pratap Singh revealed this fact and asked the BPL families to come forward and claim their right. They will get wheat at Rs. 2 per kg; rice at Rs. 3 per kg and millets and other grains at Re. 1 per kg and dal at Rs. 20 per kg.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Tributes to Gandhihi and Lal Bahadurji

Bishnath: A special function in connection with the “Gandhi Jayanti” and the birth anniversaries of Late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri former Prime Minister of India and Late Sher-e-Duggar Late Lala Hans Raj Mahajan founder of the Dogra Sadar Sabha was organized by the Block Congress Committee Bishnath at Arnia Town on 2nd October, 2013 in which apart from office bearers, large number of party leaders, Sarpanches, Panches, Numberdars, Chowkidars and various prominent people of the area were also present on the occasion.

Shri Gulchain Singh Charak, former Minister, former Member-CWC, President Dogra Sadar Sabha, J&K who was the Chief Guest on the occasion paid Rich tributes to the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi, Late Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and Late Lala Hans Raj Mahajan.

On this occasion Shri Charak appealed to the people in general and Congress workers in particular to work for the upliftment of the down trodden people of the Society to realize the dream of Mahatma Gandhi. He appreciated the role of BCC Bishnath which is working tirelessly to solve the problems of the people and strengthening the base of the party at the grass root level.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Capt. Harshvardhan Sharma President BCC Bishnath, Shri Gambhir Dev Singh Charak Member PCC, Shri Waryam Chand, Dr. O.P. Saini, Shri Balwant Saini, Shri Suraj Pakash, Shri Ganga Ram Sharma, Shri Surjit Singh Sarpanch, Shri Ramesh Dogra, Dr. Raghubeer Singh and Madan Bhagat.

NC, PDP workers join Congress; Mir welcomes

Dooru: In a significant development, dozens of the People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and National Conference activists on 29th September, 2013 joined Congress at Dooru in south Kashmir in presence of Congress Minister Shri Ghulam Ahmed Mir. Shri Mir while addressing the new entrants into the party fold said that party has always stood for the people and would continue to represent the aspirations of all the sections of the society. “I welcome the decision of several NC and PDP workers regarding joining the Congress. It is a right decision at the right time,” Mir said. “This would help the people of Dooru in all spheres of devolvement. Congress will give due honour to each worker.”

Mir exuded hope that with the joining of workers, the Congress would strengthen its base at the grassroots level in the area. “Congress Party is determined to change destiny of the people of JK,” he said. “Joining of NC and PDP leaders in the party was a clear indication that there was realization among the people that only Congress has the agenda to address their wishes and aspirations.”

The new entrants in the party, while speaking on the occasion, assured the party leadership that they would spread the visionary and pro-people agenda of the party in every nook and corner of South Kashmir. They expressed full faith in the leadership of Congress Party.

The local leaders from People’s Democratic Party (PDP) and National Conference (NC) including Syed Abass of Kapran, Shri Ghulam Rasool Banday of Chowgund, Shri Khursheed Ahmad Wani of Rain Chowgund, Shri Masood Sahib, Rahat Hussain of Kapran, Abdul Gandhi of Lissar, Mohd. Hussain Mir, of watter hall, Shri Bilal Ahmad Sheik, Shri Ahmad Shah, Shri Ghulam Rasool Nael of Yakerbro and Shri Ghulam Ahmad Khandy of Yakerbro.

“New Entrants attributed their Joining into Congress to the miserable attitude of NC, PDP towards public concerns adding that the parties are only in search of occasions to ignite tension between various sections of the society by exploiting their sentiments on one or the other pretext”, they said and added that the lucidity and truthfulness in the politics of Congress and the dynamism of Senior Congress Leader and MLA Dooru, G.A. Mir to seek equitable development, peace and prosperity for the area, has made them to join Congress and work for the welfare of people of South Kashmir.

MADHYA PRADESH

Jal Satyagrahis demands turned down

Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Congress Committee President, Shri Kantilal Bhuria, MP in a statement issued on 9th September, 2013, said that demands of the agitators by standing in water in the districts of Dewas and Harda has been turned down.

The local administration has turned down the
demands saying that they were unjustified. Shri Bhuria said that the “Jal Satyagrahis” were making genuine demands by the administration was taking a rigid stand. The agitators were also suffering from skin and other diseases because of their protest in the water method but the administration is not willing to accede to their demands.

**Misguiding SC/ST Students**

**Bhopal:** Pradesh Congress Committee, Shri Kantilal Bhuria, MP, said on 9th September, 2013 that the BJP and the Chief Minister was misguiding the SC/ST students and depriving them of their scholarships.

Shri Bhuria said that the Chief Minister had called a group of college going SC/ST students at his house and explained that the changes have been made in the law and they would get their scholarships from September, 2013 onwards. But the fact is, that the Central Government had already made changes in the law in 2010 and it was effective since then and he also revealed that the necessary aid was given to the state for the benefit of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe students who did not get the scholarships for the past three years.

This was being done only to garner the votes of these students in the coming elections.

**Hijacking Mid-day Meals Scheme**

**Bhopal:** The Madhya Pradesh Congress has objected to the advertisement released recently by the state Chief Minister Shivraj Singh which is a negative propaganda and intimidating children against the Mid-day Meal programme of the Centre.

Pradesh Congress President, Shri Kantilal Bhuria, MP said that the poor maladministration of the state government was behind the inefficient working of the Mid-day meal programme which is given to primary and middle school children.

The advertisement said that serious reports are received every month; insects and lizards are found in the cooked meals; the food is cooked in an unhygienic manner; because of this many children are falling sick and many are seriously ill.

Shri Bhuria said the contractors of this project is in the hands of favourites of the BJP and their own middle men and self-help groups, so the responsibility falls on them. Shri Bhuria questioned that if the children are avoiding mid-day meals then where is the money of this scheme going?

**Social Media Workshop**

**Jabalpur:** The Madhya Pradesh Congress Committee Media Communication Department organized a workshop for the Congress workers of the Jabalpur division here on 14th September, 2013 to expose the true face of the BJP.

The workshop was inaugurated by Communication Department Chairman, Shri Sanjay Pathak, MLA who was also the Chief Guest.

The workshop was conducted by experts from the AICC like Shri Abhi Shah, Pranay Shukla, Tanim Dutta, Himanshu Rai, Rohit Nayak, Bhpendra Gupta, Ram Pandey and Roshan Pandey who taught the workers on how to work on Facebook, Twitter, Whats App and You Tube.

Shri Sanjay Pathak showed how they can communicate with more and more people through the social media and expose the true face of the BJP and to also propagate about the people welfare schemes of the Congress Party.

More than hundred people attended the workshop.

**Protesting Congressmen arrested**

**Jabalpur:** The City Congress Committee Scheduled Department workers were sent to jail for protesting against the partiality being shown in giving relief to flood-affected people here on 15th September, 2013.

The Congressmen were, led by MP Congress Committee joint secretary, Shri Sachin Yadav, agitating in a peaceful manner. Those arrested included Vivek Awasthi, Tarun Rohitas, Atul Bajpayee, Ashis Yadav, Satish Tiwari, Kameshwar Sharma, Mossod Navi, Smt. Rekha, Indira Pathak, Vinod Jain, Sayeed Alvi with others.

**PUNJAB**

**SAD-BJP Government has put direct burden on urban people by way of various taxes:** Bajwa

**Bathinda:** Pratap Singh Bajwa, MP and President of Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PPCC), on 25th September, 2013 described the BJP, a lame duck party which has lost self esteem and its political wisdom. Bajwa said that change in portfolios of BJP ministers would not change their integrity.

While addressing a series of meetings at Veer Colony, Ganpati Enclave, Lal Basti and

**MAHARASHTRA**

**Seva Dal organize Swagat Manch**

**Mumbai:** North Mumbai District Congress Sevadal district chief organizer, Shri Kamla Prasad Yadav organized a Swagat Manch to welcome the Ganpati devotees during the Ganpati visharjan on 18th September, 2013 at Shivaji Chowk, Daftery Road, Malad-East, Mumbai.

Vada Pav, water bottles, ice cream and biscuits were distributed to thousands of devotees who were on their way for Ganpati visharjan. Help and support was offered to devotees by the volunteers of the Congress Sevadal. From the Congress Sevadal Swagat Manch, the heads of the Ganpati Mandal and the distinguished people of the locality were facilitated.

During the occasion, Shri Kamla Prasad Yadav welcomed and facilitated Smt. Vijay Salvi (Mahila organizer, Mumbai Pradesh Congress Sevadal), Dr. Nagendra Prasad Pandey (state organizer and office secretary Mumbai Pradesh Congress Sevadal), District organizers – Shri Pradeep Rajawada, Shri L.C. Pal, Shri Ratti Lal Oja, Shri Digamber Waghmode and Shr Panchanan Fadikar (Dadu), Shri Santosh Yadav ( Taluka chief organizer – Kandiivali, East), Shri Ketan Shan (chief organizer – block 59), Smt. Sunita Vishwakarma (Mahila Organizer – Kandiivali, East Taluka), Shri Anup Pradhan and other distinguished member of Congress Sevadal.

In the end, Shri Kamla Prasad Yadav thanked all the members of the organizing committee for the success of the Congress Sevadal Swagat Manch.
Antique Place in Bathinda City. Bajwa said that BJP had failed to watch the interests of urban people and has no courage to resist imposition of taxes on citizens by its political ally Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).

He said that SAD-BJP government has put a direct burden of Rs. 5,000 crore per annum on urban people which included Rs. 800 crore from irrational fee on regularization of illegal colonies, Rs. 2,000 crore by way of property tax, another Rs. 1,000 crore through extra VAT in Petrol and Diesel and more than Rs. 1,200 crore annually by way of hike in power tariff for urban domestic consumers. He said that only yesterday an announced hike in the electricity tariff by nine paisa per unit was made by POWERCOM but not a word of protest came from BJP. Bajwa said that during last six years of SAD-BJP regime the cumulative increase in the power tariff during this time has been 80 percent against 22 percent hike during Congress rule from 2002 to 2007.

Bajwa said that people in the big and small cities were paying highest taxes and living in poorest civic conditions. He said that even though the local bodies department remained with BJP, the control of issuing grants for development works was in the hands of Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal. He said that Amritsar MP Navjot Singh Sidhu and his MLA wife had exposed the anti-urban stance of SAD. He said that SAD and BJP hatched a conspiracy against Sidhu to vacate seat for father of Revenue Minister Bikram Singh Majithia.

Provide good basic facilities

Ludhiana: UPA Flagship Programme Monitoring Committee convener Shri Sushil Malhotra said that more than two dozen factories on the Ashok Dying Road are close to closure because of the unsatisfactory working of the contractor of the Punjab Small Industry and Export Corporation.

Shri Malhotra had toured the Focal point Phase-5 and was presiding a meeting of Industrialists who gave details of their problems. The meeting was attended by Shri Bhushan Jindal, Shri Vishal Bansal, Shri Pankaj Garg, Shri R.K. Tyagi, Shri Mewa Singh Khuller, Shri Harinder Singh Kanda and Shri Brijesh Maurya.

Shri Malhotra has reported to the Punjab government against the working condition of the Punjab Small Industry and Export Corporation. The industrialists had asked for providing basic facilities for the better working of their factories.

Tamilnadu

Tributes to Moopanar ji

Trichy: The Congressmen paid tributes to former AICC General Secretary, Shri G.K. Moopanar on his death anniversary here on 30th August, 2013.

The memorial service was led by TNCC State General Council Member, Shri B. Balasubramanian who garlanded the photo of Shri Moopanar and later distributed free food among the people.

Rajiv Jyoti Sadbhavana Yatra

Perambur: In the 22nd year the “Rajiv Jyoti Sadbhavana Yatra” was flagged-off on 9th August at Rajiv Ji Memorial place “Sri Perambur” under the incharge of Shri S.S. Prakasham, General Secretary, Karnataka PCC in the presence of TNCC President, Shri B.N. Ganadiksan, Shri J.D. Seelam, Union Minister, Shri Thirunavakkarsu Secretary, AICC and Shri Murganandam along with TNCC other leaders and workers of frontal organization. The Yatra consists of 275 members including 150 women, mostly from Karnataka. Few members also represented from AP, TN, Gujarat, J&K, Delhi etc. in the programme, aimed against terrorism, communalism and to spread the ideals and visions of our beloved leader Late Shri Rajiv Gandhiji. The Yatra covered 9 states and 2 UTs i.e. Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Dadar & Nagar Haveli, Diu-Daman, Gujarut, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi.

On 19th August the Rajiv Jyoti Sadbhavana Yatra reached Rajiv Gandhi statue near Parliament and was received by Shri Oscar Fernandes, Union Minister along with Delhi PCC/DCC leaders. Later the Yatra reached the AICC Office, where Shri Digvijaya Singh, General Secretary, AICC received the Jyoti along with other senior AICC functionaries.

In the evening, our beloved leader Smt. Sonia Gandhi Ji received the Rajiv Jyoti at 10, Janpath. Our participants were in jubilant mood for the blessings of Smt. Gandhi. Shri Rahul Gandhi Ji also greeted the participants of Rajiv Jyoti Sadbhavana Yatra at 10, Janpath.

Uttar Pradesh

Rashtrpita Mahatma Gandhi and Ex. Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri remembered on 2nd October

Lucknow: In a simple function organized at the Congress headquarters at Nehru
Bhavan; UPCC President, Dr. Nirmal Khatri remembered the great soul of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on 2nd October, 2013, international day of non violence. Dr. Khatri narrated a brief sketch of the historic work done by Mahatma Gandhi for the welfare of the marginalized and oppressed section of society and ultimately devising the tool of Ahimsa for complete freedom.

Today, India celebrated October 2 as Gandhi Jayanti, the birthday of Father of the Nation, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. But the day reminds not only about Gandhi but also about another legend, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, the second Prime Minister of India. Several leaders were present on the historic party including AICC GS & Incharge UP Shri Madhusudan Mistry, AICC Secretary and Incharge UP, Shri Zubair Khan, AICC Secretary and Incharge UP, Shri Naseeb Singh, AICC Secretary and Incharge UP, Shri Rana Goswami, AICC Secretary and Incharge UP, Shri Prakash Joshi, CLP Leader Vidhan Mandal Dal, Shri Pradeep Mathur, CLP Leader Vidhan Prarishad, Shri Naseeb Pathan, Ex. President, UPCC Dr. Rita Bahuguna Joshi, 8 Zonal Incharge and coordinators.

**All – faith prayer meeting**

Meerut: Looking at the recent communal clashes in Uttar Pradesh, the District Congress Committee organized on All-faith prayer meeting here on 8th September, 2013.

DCC General Secretary, Md. Imran appealed to the people to maintain peace and to live in cordiality with his neighbour. He said that Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christians were the four soldiers of Mother India and therefore they should not encourage the flame of hatred and stay away from communal clashes.

Prominently present were Maulana Ilahi, Rohtash, Pt. Dukharan Sharma, Ch. Shamshudin, Narendra Aggarwal, Monindra, Md. Aluddin, Md. Shahjad, Manjeet Singh, Arun Singhal with others.

**Tributes to Mahatma and Lal Bahadur**

Unnao: The Congressmen, led by Smt. Annu Tandon, MP and District Congress President, Shri Vir Pratap Singh paid tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri on their birth anniversaries here on 2nd October, 2013.

Smt. Tandon garlanded the statue of Gandhiji and spoke about the contributions made by these great leaders who will always remain a symbol of inspiration for us.

Earlier, the Congressmen resolved to follow on the path shown by Gandhiji and Lal Bahadur Shastri.

The function was attended by City Congress President, Dinesh Shukla, Kamal Tiwari, Rakesh Divedi, Yatendra Singh, Suresh Verma, Vishwas Nigam, Annu Kushwaha, Rakesh Tiwari, Anwar Khursheed, Kishore Srivastava, Ashutosh Sharma, Ajay Srivastav, Amit Shukla, Anoop Kumar and Sanjay Nigam.

**Solar Lights for Villages**

Unnao: Congress MP, Smt. Annu Tandon, when she came to learn that the villages of Bichhiya Block were without electricity, installed solar lights for each family of the village.

Smt. Tandon financed this project from her own fund and personally supervised the work in the Ganga Kheda village. Smt. Tandon said that I had made available more than three crore to the state government from the Centre under the Rajiv Gandhi Electrification Project but the state did not take any initiative in electrification of these villages.

The people of the village thanked Smt. Tandon for providing solar lights.
EX-SERVICEMEN RIDICULE RSS

During the month the AICC Ex-Servicemen Department organized four meetings—one each in M.P. and Assam and two in Rajasthan.

An impressive meeting of Ex-Servicemen was held in Chittorgarh, Rajasthan on September 23, 2013. The meeting was organized by Sh. Ghanshyam Singh Ranawat, Vice Chairman, Rajasthan PCC Ex-Servicemen Dept. and Vice President, Hindustan Zinc Ltd. Labour Union. Before the meeting commenced Capt. Praveen Davar, Secretary AICC Ex-Servicemen Dept., who was the Chief Guest, garlanded the statue of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru near the venue of the meeting. Capt. Davar devoted a major portion of his speech to the unparalleled contribution of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru in the freedom struggle and in the building of modern India. He also recalled the sacrifices of Pt. Motilal Nehru, Smt. Indira Gandhi and Sh. Rajiv Gandhi, besides mentioning the historic contribution of stalwarts of freedom struggle like Netaji, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The Ex-Servicemen and labour leaders present in the meeting took pledge to support the Congress. A resolution was passed demanding atleast one Rajput candidate to be fielded from Chittorgarh.

The Speakers highlighted the contribution of UPA 1 and UPA 2 and steps taken for the welfare of Ex-Servicemen. Amongst those who participated in the meeting were Sh. Shiv Dayal Sharma, President Chittorgarh, DCC and senior leaders of the labour union.

On September 28, 2013 a meeting of Ex-Servicemen was held in Rewa which was the first ever such meeting in this interior district of Madhya Pradesh. As on the previous day BJP President, Rajnath Singh had unveiled a statue of Vivekananda, Capt. Davar ridiculed the Sangh Parivar that they had no moral right to invoke the name of a secular Swami whose life philosophy was at total variance with their saffron ideology. Following the meeting Capt. Praveen Davar addressed a press conference in the neighbouring District of Satna in which he focused on the achievements of UPA 1 & UPA 2 and their unprecedented steps for the welfare of Ex-Servicemen, especially steep hike in pensions. Amongst those who spoke were Capt. V.P. Singh and Capt. N.K. Pande, Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively of MPCC Ex-Servicemen Dept. The Rewa meeting was followed by another meeting of Ex-Servicemen in Didwana on 4th October, 2013. Didwana was chosen for the meeting as it has largest population of Ex-Servicemen in Nagaur District. Besides Ex-Servicemen, workers of Block Congress also participated in the meeting. The function received very wide coverage in the local and electronic media. The local MLA, Ruparam Dudy extended full support for the success of the function alongwith the BCC.

In the above meetings, Capt. Praveen Davar launched a frontal attack on the RSS for imposing Sh. Narender Modi as BJP’s Prime Ministerial candidate despite the fact that the Gujaraj CM presided over the worst communal genocide in post independence India. Capt. Davar also ridiculed the Army Generals who attended Modi’s so called Ex-Servicemen in Rewari. There were not more than 2% Ex-Servicemen in the Rewari meeting and therefore it could not be called an Ex-Servicemen rally. The Secretary AICC Ex-Servicemen Department stated that BJP has no right to adopt Swami Vivekananda and Sardar Patel as their party icons. Capt. Davar reminded the audience that it was Sardar Patel who had put RSS leaders behind bars for their conspiracy in the assassination of the father of the nation in January 1948. Besides explaining in detail the steps taken by the UPA 1 and UPA 2 for the welfare of Ex-Servicemen, especially substantial hike in the pensions of Ex-Servicemen since 2004, Capt. Praveen Davar also highlighted the five rights given to Aam Admi by Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi – Employment, Information, Education, Land and Food.

Major Ved Prakash, Chairman, AICC Ex-Servicemen Department addressed a meeting of Ex-Servicemen at Guwahati organized jointly by the APCC Ex-Servicemen Department and Rajya Sainik Board on 5th October, 2013. Sh. Tarun Gogoi, Chief Minister of Assam was the Chief Guest in the function in which nearly 300 Ex-Servicemen and their families participated in the meeting. Amongst those who addressed the gathering were Commodore K C Chaudhary, VSM, Director of Sainik Welfare Board and Capt. Robin Bardoloi, Chairman, APCC Ex-Servicemen Department and Chairman, GMDA. Sh. Tarun Gogoi, in his address, highlighted the number of steps taken by the Assam govt. for the welfare of ex-servicemen. These include land allotment, extending medical and canteen facilities, opening of sainik rest houses, etc.

The Ex-Servicemen Dept. will be organizing three/four more meetings in election going states by the end of November, 2013.
MODI MUST RESIGN
Spokesperson: Shri Sandeep Dikshit. He said that I would first of all like your attention on the press briefing of Shri Ajay Maken that was held today morning. It was about what happened in Gujarat and a CD was also shown to the press. Shri Dikshit said that the allegations made are of serious nature and an enquiry should be held into it. Shri Ajay Maken had said that a high-level enquiry should be held against the Chief Minister as his name was involved in the case. The allegations were made by none other than a senior BJP leader, Shri Javedkar. And if an enquiry takes place then it will not be impartial as long as Narendra Modi stays Chief Minister of Gujarat because people have witnessed how the anti-terrorist law was turned against the judgment and the police. All kind of questions arise in the mind after watching the CD and our demand still persists that the Chief Minister should resign before any judgment is given on the case. Tuesday, 3rd September, 2013

LETTER OF VANZARA AND CD
Spokesperson: Shri Meem Afzal. He said that there was lot of talks on the resignation yesterday and also today. It is a long letter and you all must have gone through it. Lot of people have commented in the letter. We feel that the CD which was released yesterday and day-before-yesterday and one of my friends asked me as to what has Congress to do with it? They had shown the contents of the CD in their office. A CD which contains some significant facts showed interference in an important case and that it was being done by some senior BJP leaders. Thus, we felt the need to raise this issue. By this letter it also proves that there is great amount of discontent in the state and the government. The Congress Party on the basis of the CD and the changes leveled by Vanzara had asked for the resignation of the Chief Minister. The BJP which asks for resignation by Congress Ministers, Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister on small issues would not like to ask resignation from their own Chief Minister. Only yesterday, Shri Ajay Maken had asked for his resignation and our demand too stands today. There are many issues written in the letter but I would just show one paragraph of the letter written by Shri Vanzara and it says: “With the passage of time, I realized that this government was not only not interested in protecting us but it also has been clandestinely making all efforts to keep me and my officers in the jail so that so as to save its own skin from CBI on one hand and gain political benefits on the other. It is everybody’s knowledge that this government has been reaping rich political dividends since last 12 years by keeping the glow of encounters and encounter cases alive in the sky of Gujarat while otherwise remaining the low profile and indifferent to the fact of jailed police officers”. This shows that something is happening in the state of Gujarat. The contents are a direct allegations on the Chief Minister. Wednesday, 4th September, 2013.

REAPING POLITICAL DIVIDENDS
Spokesperson: Shri Bhakta Charan Das. He said today the matter of the concern is that the National Commission for Scheduled Caste, which is looking after the grievances of OBCs, has written to CBI Director and to the Chief Secretary of Gujarat, the Director Generals of Police, Gujarat and Rajasthan. The Commission has asked the Director, CBI to furnish an urgent report indicating details of the case. The National Commission for Scheduled Caste wrote a letter to CBI on 3rd Sept 2013 and mandated to investigate that proceedings related to the cases committed against a person who belonged to Scheduled Caste and the OBC. It has taken serious cognizance of the case as the victim Shri Krishan Kumar Prajapati, deceased, belonged to OBC category of Rajasthan State and in this context, copy of the sting operation CD has also been sent for taking cognizance in which there was evidence about manipulations of the judicial process and interference in the administration of justice. All of you must have seen the CD - around 32 police officers are lodged in different jails in Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Nadiad and Palanpur, out of which 6 are IPS officers. The names of 6 more IPS officers are figuring in the charge sheets in Tulsi Ram Prajapati and Ishrat Jahan encounter case. On the basis of the contents of the letter of Vanzara who has written it from the jail, the important issue which has been raised by Vanzara is that the officers stood beside the government like a bulwark whenever it faced existential crisis in the past. It further mentions that the government was not only not interested in protecting us but it also has been clandestinely making all efforts to keep me and my officers in the jail so as to save its own skin from CBI on one hand and gain political benefits on the other. It is everybody’s knowledge that this government has been reaping very rich political dividends since last 12 years by keeping the glow of encounter cases alive in the sky of Gujarat. A question has been raised as to why the person who is responsible for all this and on whose directions the police officers were acting, are also not in jail. In this democratic India, there is no other state except Gujarat where such a large number of police officers are in jail.

The OBC community has demanded that the contents of the CD should be thoroughly probed and the facts placed before the Hon’ble Supreme Court. At the same time National Commission for Scheduled Caste has asked the Chief Secretary, Gujarat government, the Directors General of Police of Rajasthan and Gujarat to lay complete facts before the Commission. Thursday, 5th September, 2013

COMMUNAL RIOTS CONDEMNED
Spokesperson: Shri Bhakta Charan Das. He said we strongly condemn the communal riots going on in Uttar Pradesh. Since election is nearing, some vested interested political groups are indulging in creating communal conflict. Any group or individual responsible for the on-going communal riots needs to be arrested immediately. We demand strong action against them. Shri Das said on 6th September 2012 an advisory was issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and again on 7th Sept 2013 the Cabinet Secretary took a meeting of the State and central officials and in another ten minutes around 4.30 pm today, another meeting is going to be there on this incident. Home Secretary of the government of India is in constant touch with the state government. Today also the Home Ministry had issued two advisories. Further Home Minister has spoken to the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh on last Saturday. Hon’ble Prime Minister has also spoken to the CM of UP today. Hon’ble Prime Minister has condemned the violence in Uttar Pradesh and expressed shock over the incident and assured all help to the state government to restore peace. Monday, 9th September, 2013

LANDMARK BILLS PASSED
Spokesperson: Smt. Renuka Chowdhary. She said the rains have not yet receded, it has given us a bounty wonderful monsoon this season and along with it the green shoots of paddy, wheat and the crops that are growing all over the country. Thanks to the monsoon bounty. We also have the economy growing as all of you are aware. The index of industrial production has grown at 2.6% in Delhi after two months of decline. The turnaround is
round the corner. Globally if you look at it, the economic recession, the down turn is over and economies are growing. Japan like never before has shown an increase and India will turnaround. So for all those prophets of doom who said this is happening and that is not happening, it is only good happening. Our deposits have gone up, retail inflation has shown marginal dip in August and this was reflected also in the many steps that the government took as well as Parliament which has passed land mark Bills such as Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Bill which has helped us to deepen and widen our pension system which will benefit our thousands of employees and people across the country. Companies Bill which was also brought up in Parliament, the SEBI Bill which will give us capital market regulator a lot of teeth. These are all systems which are being put in place in order to ensure that we have the methods by which we can carry the country forward. The RBI has brought in reforms. We are bringing in stringent measures over there. New banking licenses are coming up to expand business of this country. You have the measures for expat deposits to be coming to India. You have increased borrowing limits which have been enhanced and is going to be a win-win situation for everyone and the limits which have been enhanced and is going to be a win-win situation for everyone and the debt management is also being streamlined. All of these metrics which have been let in by the UPA-II government is going to carry the nation forward. So for all those prophets of doom who were very upset? If they want, I can give additional details, the kind of canards and misinformation that they were giving the country at large. Friday, 13th September, 2013.

MOST DEPLORABLE ACT
Spokesperson: Shri P.C. Chacko. He said the communal riots in Muzaffarnagar and adjoining areas on the 27th August is one of the most deplorable acts in modern India during the recent times. It is almost revisiting 2002 Gujarat riots once again. At a time when the country is in need of communal harmony and religious tolerance, the state government has failed miserably to take prompt preventive action. Congress party strongly condemns this incident. The incident on the 27th in Muzaffarnagar and adjoining areas reveals the total failure of the government of Uttar Pradesh. The state government has no right to continue in the light of these incidents which claimed 43 lives, injured scores of people, destroyed properties worth crores of rupees and left more than 50,000 people in different camps. Also the people in the relief camps, were witness to heart rendering stories of the people in the relief camps. The Congress party is of the opinion that the government of Uttar Pradesh should immediately create an atmosphere where these people can go back to their villages and live in their own native places. Even though there were sparks of communal tensions in Uttar Pradesh, UP had never visited a communal clash of this magnitude in the past. Also there was the history of communal unity between the jats and the muslim communities in that area. So, people who are responsible, whichever party they belong to, the government should not delay taking stern action against the perpetrators of this crime. Those who are supposed to be responsible or challenging the government and they are in the open, so they should be arrested and action should be taken immediately by the UP government. Friday, 20th September, 2013.

BJP PROPAGATING WRONG FACTS
Spokesperson: Shri P.C. Chacko. He said mixing facts with fiction is the favourite pastime of the BJP is being continued and the latest in this series is the televised speech of Mr. Narendra Modi to the Indian diaspora in United States where he has claimed that the growth rate of the Vajpayee government was 8.4% and now it is 4.8% under UPA government. Also he wanted the Congress party and the nation to accept this contentious statement. The Finance Minister today has refuted the statement with correct figures during the UPA and NDA period and a comparative statement was issued. Another interesting aspect is that Mr. Yashwant Sinha who was the Finance Minister during the NDA regime and who has got all these figures in his finger tips, instead of admonishing his colleague for his wrong statement, he is authenticating the statement made by Mr. Modi. As stated by the Finance Minister today in his statement, if there was a golden period of growth, it was the Five year period under the UPA-I when 8.4% was the average growth rate for the UPA-I and here it needs some explanation because it was a televised statement of the BJP Prime Ministerial candidate and that too patently incorrect figures. Here I want to say that the GDP growth rate for the 6 years of the Vajpayee government, undisputable figures are before all of us. In 1998-99 it was 6.7%, 1999-2000 it was 7.6%, in 2000-01 it was 4.3%, 2001-02 it was 5.5%, in 2002-03 it was an all time low of 4% and in 2003-04 it was 8%. So the average for the 6 year period was 6% and the average for the 5 year period was 5.9%. This was the rate of growth during Vajpayee period. The figures are undisputed figures. Mr. Yashwant Sinha came in defence of Mr. Modi who made a wrong statement but from 1998-99 to 2003-04 the rate of growth, the rate of growth of any regime is taken as the average of the 5 year period and Mr. Yashwant Sinha has some reservation in calculating the average also. The reason is known only to him but by contrast the average for the UPA-I was 8.4%. For the first four years of UPA-II, the average has been 7.3%. Comparing UPA’s and the NDA’s period, the fact remains that the worst two years since the turn of the century were 2000-01 and 2002-03 when the growth rate was 4.3% and 4% which was the period of the NDA government. We can understand any other vague claim may be for propaganda sake but these are the hard facts. Monday, 23rd September, 2013.

Tom Vadakkan, Media Secretary, AICC