

Hope making comeback, says Michelle Obama for Kamala's presidency

CHICAGO, Aug 21 (PTI)

HOPE is making a comeback in America, former First Lady Michelle Obama has said as she made an impassioned case for Kamala Harris and described her as the most qualified person ever to seek the office of the US President.

Michelle, in her speech to the Democratic National Convention described Vice President Harris as a candidate who worked her way up from a middle-class background. "America, Hope is making a comeback," Michelle, the wife of former President Barack Obama, said as she was given a rousing welcome by thousands of Democratic party leaders and workers from across the country for the national convention.

Harris, 59, is scheduled to formally accept the Democratic Party's presidential nomination on Thursday to take on Republican rival Donald



Former President Barack Obama with former First Lady Michelle Obama as he is introduced during the Democratic National Convention on Tuesday in Chicago. (AP/PTI)

Trump, 78, in the November 5 election. Recollecting the death of her mother recently, Michelle, 60, said she was an inspiration for her and so was

the mother of Harris. "Her mother moved from India at 19," she said, as she spoke about Harris' mother Shyamala Gopalan.

RBI Governor Das ranked as top central banker for second year

MUMBAI, Aug 21 (PTI)

RESERVE Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das has been ranked as the top central banker globally for the second consecutive year by US-based Global Finance magazine.

"Happy to announce that for the 2nd consecutive year, RBI Governor @DasShaktikanta has been rated 'A+', in the Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2024," the RBI said.

Das has been placed at the top of the list of three central bank Governors, who have been rated A+. Grades are based on a scale from A to F for success in inflation control, economic growth goals, currency stability and interest rate man-



Shaktikanta Das

agement, according to a statement by Global Finance magazine. An 'A' represents excellent performance, while an 'F' for outright failure.

Denmark's Christian Kettel Thomsen, India's Shaktikanta Das and Switzerland's Thomas Jordan have been ranked under the 'A+' category of central bankers. Global Finance's

annual Central Banker Report Cards honour those bank leaders whose strategies outperformed their peers through originality, creativity and tenacity, it added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday congratulated RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on receiving top rating in a global ranking of central bankers, lauding it as a recognition of his leadership. He said on X, "Congratulations to RBI Governor Shri Shaktikanta Das for this feat, and that too for the second time. This is a recognition of his leadership at the RBI and his work towards ensuring economic growth and stability."

90,000 new voters added in J&K

SRINAGAR, Aug 21 (PTI)

OVER 90,000 new voters have been added in Jammu and Kashmir after a special summary revision of photo electoral rolls, taking the number of electorate to 88.03 lakh, officials said on Tuesday.

The Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls with qualifying date July 1, 2024 was completed in all 20 districts of Jammu and Kashmir, the officials said.

They said women electors and first-time voters have registered a significant increase.

With the stage all set for the elections to the Legislative Assembly of J&K, the region has witnessed a significant increase of over 93,000 new voters, courtesy the corresponding rise in the number of young and women voters, they said.

The officials said the number of polling stations across the Union Territory has also gone up by 209.

"With focus on ensuring

Apni Party releases manifesto

SRINAGAR, Aug 21 (PTI)

THE Apni Party on Wednesday released its manifesto for the Assembly elections, promising to press the Centre for constitutional guarantees to preserve culture and special identity of Jammu and Kashmir, and to work for the restoration of statehood of the Union Territory. The manifesto was released at a press conference here by the party's general secretary Rafi Mir along with other senior leaders.

"The Apni Party will press for constitutional guarantees to preserve the culture and special identity of Jammu and Kashmir, similar to the provisions of Article 371 in some north-eastern states. This includes land and job protection, addressing the people's sense of loss," the manifesto read.

The party said it will work tirelessly to restore statehood as promised by the Union Home Minister on August 5, 2019.

It also promised the restoration of repealed and amended laws.

"The Apni Party will revisit and restore all the laws that were withdrawn or amended over time. Our party will secure constitutional guarantees for the protection of land and job security for local youth," the manifesto said.

The Apni Party, led by former minister in the erstwhile state of J&K Altaf Bukhari, said upon restoration of J&K's statehood, "we will vigorously seek the reinstatement of a bicameral legislature, comprising both a Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, as existed before August 5, 2019".

On the issue of the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri Pandits, the party said it believes in their dignified return and if elected to power, will form an apex committee to address the issue. "We will consult with their representatives to facilitate their return. An apex committee, chaired by the chief minister and comprising representatives of all registered Kashmiri Pandit organisations, will be constituted. This committee will meet every six months to address migrant issues."

accuracy, inclusivity, and purity of electoral rolls, the mammoth Special Summary Revision exercise has been completed successfully in J&K," UT's Chief Electoral Officer Pandurang K Pole said.

"We have been able to include all the eligible citizens who have turned 18 or those who have registered for the first time, as well as to identify and remove ineligible voters, besides correcting errors and discrepancies, in order to improve the health and accuracy of electoral rolls," he said.

"As per the Special Summary Revision -2024 completed with publication of the final electoral roll, the total number of electors (voters) stand at 88.03 Lakh. These include 44.89 lakh males, 43.13 lakh females and 168 third gender electors," the CEO said.

A total of 93,284 voters have been added in this Special Summary Revision across Jammu and Kashmir, while the elector population ratio has improved from 0.59 to 0.60.

PM MODI ARRIVES IN POLAND'S WARSAW

'Visit will add momentum to bilateral relationship'

WARSAW, Aug 21 (PTI)

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said his maiden visit to Poland will add momentum to the bilateral friendship and benefit the people of the two countries as he arrived here on the first leg of his two-nation visit during which he will also travel to the Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

Modi, who will meet Poland's President Andrzej Sebastian Duda and hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, said he was looking forward to the various programmes in the Polish capital



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed upon his arrival at the airport, in Warsaw, Poland on Wednesday. (PTI)

here. "Landed in Poland. Looking forward to the various programmes here. This visit will add momentum to the India-Poland friendship and benefit the people of our nations," Modi said in a post on X soon after his arrival at the Warsaw military airport here. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Poland is the first trip by an Indian Prime Minister to the country in the past 45 years.

The Indian community members in Poland gave a warm welcome to Prime Minister Modi when he arrived at the hotel where Polish and

(Contd on page 5)

Heavy rains lash Kerala uprooting trees, causing traffic snarls, power cuts

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, Aug 21 (PTI)

HEAVY rains and gusty winds lashed several districts of Kerala in the wee hours of Wednesday, uprooting trees that caused property damage, traffic snarls and power cuts in various parts of the State.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted moderate to intense rainfall with winds gusting to 50 kmph in Idukki, Ernakulam and Thrissur districts during the morning hours.

Trees uprooted by the heavy winds disrupted train services via Kottayam and Alappuzha,

Man drowns, another missing after heavy rain floods rivers in U'khand

DEHRADUN, Aug 21 (PTI)

A MAN died after being swept away in a swollen stream while another went missing in a separate incident as heavy rains flooded water bodies in parts of Uttarakhand.

Manish Sati, a 29-year-old motorcyclist, was swept away in a swollen stream in Kotabagh area of Nainital district late on Tuesday evening,

the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) here said.

An SDRF team recovered his body after much effort.

In another incident on Tuesday evening, strong currents of a river in Purukul village of Dehradun district swept away two men, police said.

While locals managed to rescue one, a search is on for the other man, they said.

the respective district administrations said.

Fire force personnel were sent to various parts of Kottayam district to restore traffic that was blocked due to falling of trees, the local administration said.

The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) said there was a possibility of waterlogging on major roads and poor visibility that may lead to traffic congestion.

Besides that, flooding in many parts of low-lying areas and river banks, damages to the power supply, partial damages to houses and landslides were also possible, KSDMA said.

Putin visits Chechnya amid Ukraine's incursion

MOSCOW, Aug 21 (AP)

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday made an unscheduled trip to Chechnya, a mainly Muslim republic within the Russian Federation, his first visit in nearly 13 years, as Ukraine's stunning cross-border incursion into western Russia entered its third week.

Putin was greeted by Chechnya's self-styled strongman leader, Ramzan Kadyrov, before visiting a special forces academy bearing his own name and speaking with volunteer fighters who train there prior to being deployed in Ukraine.

Putin praised the volunteers and said that as long as Russia has men like them, it will be

Putin's slow response to the Kursk attack could cost him supporters

MOSCOW, Aug 21 (AP)

A YEAR ago this week, President Vladimir Putin strode onto a stage in the Kursk region to commemorate the 80th anniversary of one of the Soviet army's proudest moments in World War II.

Addressing a rapt audience that included soldiers fresh from fighting in Ukraine, Putin called the decisive victory in the Battle of Kursk "one of the great feats of our

people." Now, as Russia prepares to celebrate the 81st anniversary of that 1943 battle, Kursk is again in the news - but for a very different reason.

On August 6, Ukrainian forces made a lightning push into the region, seizing villages, taking hundreds of prisoners and forcing the evacuation of tens of thousands of civilians. Russia was caught unprepared by the offensive and reportedly is drafting conscripts.

"invincible," according to reports by Russian state agencies. Kadyrov said in a post on his official Telegram channels that more than 47,000 fighters, including volunteers, have trained at the facility since Moscow began what it terms its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

Fighters from Chechnya, whose bid for independence after the Soviet Union's collapse led to years of war with Russian Government forces, are participating in both sides of the conflict in Ukraine.

Pro-Kyiv volunteers loyal to Dzhokhar Dudayev, the late Chechen pro-independence leader, are the sworn enemies of Chechen forces who back

Putin and Kadyrov. The latter joined Russia in the months-long siege of Ukraine's key port of Mariupol and other flash-points in the country's south and east.

Also on Tuesday, Putin visited the grave of Kadyrov's father, former Chechen leader Akhmat Kadyrov, a command post and a mosque in the local capital, Grozny. The Kremlin has relied on Kadyrov to keep the North Caucasus stable following years of turmoil. International rights groups have accused Kadyrov's security forces of extrajudicial killings, torture and abductions of dissenters, but Russian authorities have stonewalled repeated demands for investigations.