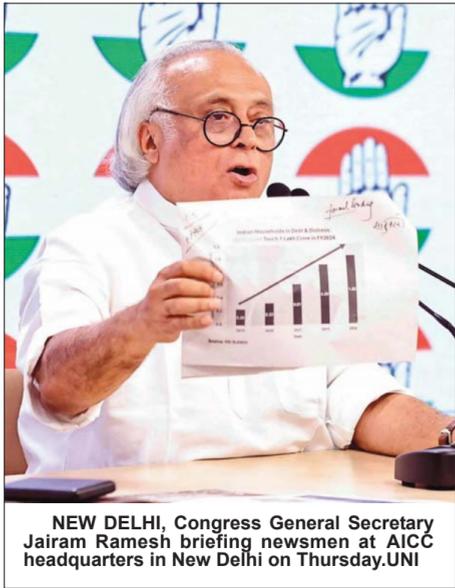


Congress, SP playing divisive politics: PM Modi in Agra



NEW DELHI, Congress General Secretary Jairam Ramesh briefing newsmen at AICC headquarters in New Delhi on Thursday.UNI

Agra, April 25 (IANS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday lashed out at the appeasement politics of the INDIA bloc, saying the Congress and the Samajwadi Party were playing divisive politics to consolidate their vote banks, while the BJP was pursuing politics of development for all.

Addressing a rally at the Kothi Meena Bazar ground here, PM Modi said the Congress manifesto bore the Muslim League stamp, whereas the BJP manifesto aimed at strengthening national unity. "Some forces were opposed to our policy of self-reliance in the defence sector. We are working on the 'Saturation Model' which promotes sabka saath and sabka vikas. Our secularism does not discriminate. All sections are beneficiaries of our welfare schemes. Those who have been left out will be included in the next term," the PM said.

Criticising the Congress' stand on reservations for the Muslims, PM Modi said the fathers of the constitution did not want religion to be the basis of reservation. He said, "On several occasions, our courts stalled the Congress bid for granting reservations to minorities. The INDIA bloc wants to cut the OBC share and give to minorities. In Karnataka overnight they did this. They have the same game plan for UP to extend reservations for the backdoor. The Samajwadi Party too is playing a dangerous game. The two 'UP ke Ladke' have the same thinking, appeasement is the basis of their coming together."

PM Modi warned the people of the Congress party's policy on redistribution of wealth, that the heritage tax was nothing but loot and dacoity. "They want to deprive our women, mothers, and daughters of their 'mangalsutra' and 'stree dhan'. Your wealth and property will be snatched away from you," he warned, asking the audience if they were feeling angry. The response was loud and angry. The Prime Minister hit out at the corrupt elements in the opposition. He said nobody would be spared.

"The country's future depends on the youth and our youth is full of hopes. We are proud of our youth who are aspirational. Our government was doing all that was required to harness the youth's power...The Congress party was only promoting nepotism and family interests." PM Modi said tourism in Agra was set to scale new heights as Kashi and Ayodhya were drawing large numbers of visitors who surely would visit Agra. --IANS

News Brief

Two groups clash in Tihar jail, four inmates injured

New Delhi, April 25 (IANS) In a suspected gang war and fight for supremacy inside the prison, two groups of inmates clashed inside Tihar's jail number 3, an official said on Thursday, adding that four inmates sustained injuries. The incident occurred on Wednesday morning and police have also registered a case under relevant sections of the IPC in connection with the incident. The police said that the injured were from separate groups and the reason for the attack was to establish supremacy inside the prison, as per the initial probe. "The injured were admitted to Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) hospital and later discharged after treatment," said the official.

IAF's remotely piloted aircraft crashes in Jaisalmer, probe ordered

Jaipur, April 25 (IANS) An Indian Air Force aircraft crashed in Jajia village near Jaisalmer in Rajasthan, confirmed officials here. "One Remotely Piloted Aircraft of the Indian Air Force met with an accident near Jaisalmer on Thursday during a routine training sortie. No damage to any personnel or property has been reported. A Court of Inquiry has been constituted to find out the cause of the accident," said Indian Air Force officials on Thursday. The aircraft crashed 30 km from Jaisalmer near Rozaniyon Ki Dhani at around 10 a.m. However, there is no news of any loss in the accident. As soon as the information about the incident was received, the district administration along with the Air Force officials reached the place and the fire brigade also rushed to the spot.

AAP leader Sanjay Singh slams BJP over Surat win

New Delhi, April 25 (IANS) Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) senior leader Sanjay Singh on Thursday attacked the BJP after the latter recently registered an uncontested victory in Gujarat's Surat Lok Sabha constituency. Addressing a press conference here, the AAP's Rajya Sabha member said the victory was a "clear demonstration of the operation lotus strategy" that has been employed by the BJP over the past decade. He said that the victory was just the initial phase, indicating his apprehension about the BJP's political manoeuvres.

Woman kidnapped, gang-raped in Bengaluru, five arrested

Bengaluru, April 25 (IANS) In a shocking case, a 23-year-old woman was kidnapped and gang-raped in Bengaluru, said police on Thursday, adding that five accused have been arrested. The incident happened in the limits of High Grounds police station. According to police, the victim was kidnapped by five men and then gang-raped in an isolated place. The victim was also brutally tortured by the accused. Following the complaint by the family of the victim, the High Grounds police arrested the rapists. The incident came to light a day ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in Bengaluru.

EC sends notice to BJP over PM Modi's speech in Banswara

New Delhi, April 25 (IANS) Taking cognisance of the alleged Model Code of Conduct violation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Election Commission of India (ECI), on Thursday, sought a response from the BJP by April 29, on the complaints raised by Congress, CPI and CPI-M(L). In its complaint to the ECI, the Opposition parties accused PM Modi of committing blatant violations of electoral laws, as well as of the Indian Penal Code, while addressing a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara on April 21. Congress said that the speech delivered by the

Prime Minister, the 'star campaigner' of BJP for the ongoing Lok Sabha Elections, was "highly objectionable, divisive and ex-facie illegal." During the rally, PM Modi had said: "The Congress manifesto says that they will calculate the gold with mothers and sisters, and then distribute that property. They will distribute it to whom... Manmohan Singh's government had said that Muslims have the first right on the country's assets." "When their government was in power earlier, they had said that Muslims have the first right on the country's assets. This

means to whom will this property be distributed? It will be distributed among those who have more children and to the infiltrators. Will your hard-earned money be distributed to the infiltrators and do you really approve of this?" PM Modi had added. Directing BJP president J. P. Nadda to respond to the complaints by 11 a.m. on April 29, the Election Commission asserted that the role of political parties in an electoral democracy, particularly after the notification of the general elections, is pivotal and hence stands clearly recognised in the formal statutory framework of the

Cong accepted country's division on basis of religion: PM Modi

Bhopal, April 25 (IANS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi continued to sharpen his attack on the Congress on Thursday during an election rally, alleging that the grand old party accepted the country's division on the basis of religion. He made this accusation while addressing a public rally in Madhya Pradesh's Morena on Thursday. He said that the BJP was trying to cleanse the "sin" that the Congress

committed years ago. "Instead of opening the chains of 'Ma Bharati', the Congress cut its arms. The Congress accepted the country's division on the basis of religion," PM Modi said while addressing a large gathering. PM Modi said that the Congress divided the country earlier and is not ready to listen even today. "The Congress' agenda is to divide the country for power. Once again, it is desperate to return to power," the PM added.

The BJP has won the Morena Lok Sabha seat for the last seven terms since 1996. Former Union Minister and Madhya Pradesh Assembly Speaker, Narendra Singh Tomar represented this constituency twice. This time the BJP has fielded a new candidate from Morena, Shivmangal Singh Tomar against the Congress' Satyapal Singh Sikarwar, a former BJP MLA. --IANS

Reservation given earlier to Muslim community continued in K'taka: CM

Bidar, April 25 (IANS) Reacting to the charges levelled by the BJP that the Congress is taking away the reservation of SCs-STs and giving it to the Muslims in Karnataka, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah claimed on Thursday that the 4 per cent quota which existed earlier for the Muslims has been continued in the southern state. Speaking to reporters in Bidar, CM Siddaramaiah stated that as per the report of the Chinnappa Reddy Commission, the 4 per cent reservation for the Muslim community was implemented from

1994. It was withdrawn during the tenure of the previous BJP government headed by then CM Basavaraj Bommai. Questioning it, this class went to the Supreme Court. During that time, the BJP government had given an undertaking that the 4 per cent reservation would be continued and that reservation is continuing in the present day as well, the CM stated. On the criticism by the BJP that the Congress is trying to snatch property from the people and redistribute it, CM Siddaramaiah without answering that asked has Prime Minister

Narendra Modi fulfilled all his assurances? Was he able to deposit Rs 15 lakh in everyone's bank account? Union Minister Pralhad Joshi charged on Thursday that the Congress is all set to take away the reservation of Dalits under the Other Backward Communities (OBC) and give it to the Muslims. This had come after PM Narendra Modi denounced the Congress at a rally in Rajasthan on Sunday, claiming that the party will snatch the wealth and ornaments of the public and redistribute them among the 'infiltrators' if voted to power.



HYDERABAD, Telangana CM Revanth Reddy, AICC In-charge Deepadas Munshi, Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka, Ministers Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, Ponnamp Prabhakar, Konda Surekha and others releasing a charge sheet against the BJP government at party headquarters, Gandhi Bhavan in Hyderabad on Thursday. UNI

Cong candidate in Kerala suspects foul play as list of poll officials leaked, one suspended

Pathanamthitta (Kerala), April 25 (IANS) After the Congress candidate in the Pathanamthitta Lok Sabha seat in Kerala alleged foul play in the leaking of a list of election officials, the district collector in Kerala on Thursday suspended one officer. Kerala goes to the polls on Friday to elect 20 new Lok Sabha members. Anto Antony the Congress candidate and

three-time MP from Pathanamthitta Lok Sabha seat alleged that this was the work of the CPI(M) backed organisations after the list was found to have made its way to several people on Wednesday. "This is a serious issue as this list should come out only in the morning when the poll officials arrive at the designated place in the district. The Left organisations are out to create

trouble in the district which will enable their supporters to cast votes at multiple places," said Anto Antony. Antony and his supporters on Thursday morning sat on a protest before the district authorities and said he would move out only after action was taken against the wrongdoers. Based on the complaint, the district collector after a preliminary probe suspended one official, Yadu Krishnan, an Upper

Division clerk. Krishnan is understood to have forwarded this message instead of some other files and was an error. "Things are now clear that a wrong has taken place and this cannot be done by just one official, as there are others too," added Anto. Meanwhile, the CPI(M) led Left candidate Thomas Isaac dismissed all these as baseless as Antony has sensed his defeat and, hence the excuses.

TN Police targeting me in Rs 4 cr cash seizure case, says BJP leader Nainar

Chennai, April 25 (IANS) Senior BJP leader Nainar Nagendran, who is the legislative party leader of the party in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, said on Thursday that police were targeting him. In a press conference at BJP headquarters here, the BJP leader said that the Tamil Nadu Police had summoned him on May 2 in connection to

the seizure of Rs 4 crore from an air-conditioned compartment of a train at Tambaram in Chennai. He said that he would appear before the Tamil Nadu police on May 2. Nagendran said that he had nothing to do with the money seized from the accused and added that Tamil Nadu Police "would have made forced confessions against him

from the accused". He, however, said that he did not know the reason for being summoned by the police. He said that around Rs 200 crore was seized from across Tamil Nadu but was focusing only on Rs 4 crore seizure, which was suspicious. The BJP leader, who was also the party candidate for the Tirunelveli Lok Sabha seat, was accused of transferring money from Chennai to Tirunelveli for distribution among the voters.



VARANASI, Union Home Minister Amit Shah offers prayers at the Kalbhairav temple, in Varanasi on Thursday.UNI

TN: Five district collectors questioned by ED in illegal sand mining case

Chennai, April 25 (IANS) The Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials are questioning five district collectors of Tamil Nadu in a case related to illegal sand mining. The district collectors of Vellore, Tiruchirappalli, Karur, Thanjavur and Ariyalur are being questioned at the ED office in Chennai. It may be recalled that the Supreme Court had on February 28, 2024, directed five district collectors of Tamil Nadu to appear before the ED in connection with the ongoing money laundering probe carried out by the agency.

The division bench of the Supreme Court comprising Justices Bela M. Trivedi and Pankaj Mithal had termed the plea of Tamil Nadu state and its officials as strange and unusual. The Supreme Court bench stayed the Madras High Court order, granting relief to the five district collectors. The state government and five district collectors moved the Madras High Court that stayed the ED summons, asking the collectors to appear before it. ED had earlier informed Madras High Court that the total value of illegal excess

sand mining done from the five districts in one or two years was around Rs 4,760 crore while the revenue shown officially was Rs 36.45 crore. The Central agency had conducted raids at multiple locations during September 2023, including sand mining areas and sand stockyards. ED had then claimed to have unearthed fake bills and counterfeit QR codes. These documents have revealed that this was for subverting payment of GST leading to heavy losses for the state and Central governments.

BJP complains to ECI against Abhishek for 'abusive' remarks

Kolkata, April 25 (IANS) The BJP's West Bengal unit on Thursday filed a complaint with the Election Commission of India against Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee accusing him of making abusive remarks against its candidate Sreerupa Mitra Chaudhury, popularly known as Nirbhaya Didi. The state BJP unit sent an e-mail complaint to the office of the state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO). The state unit of BJP has also released a video where Banerjee was heard calling Mitra Chaudhury, party's candidate from Maladaha-Dakshin in Malda district, as 'behaya' (shameless). "Abhishek Banerjee's disgusting tirade against Sreerupa Mitra Chowdhury, resorting to abusive slurs like 'BEHAYA', epitomises the toxic culture of misogyny and disrespect rampant in Bengal. It's a shameful reflection of his party's values," the state unit of BJP said in a statement. It has also appealed to the poll panel to bar Banerjee from campaigning for the Lok Sabha polls. "We're not taking lectures from degenerates who don't know the first thing about respectful discourse!" the Trinamool Congress said.

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