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Indian women defeat Nepal, win SAFF title for fifth successive time
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NEARBY
Gambhir begins political innings with team BJP
 NEW DELHI
 Former international cricketer Gautam Gambhir on Friday joined the Bharatiya Janata Party and is expected to be fielded in the Lok Sabha poll from one of the seats in the national capital. Mr. Gambhir said he was impressed by the vision of PM Narendra Modi and will work for the country's welfare as a member of the party.
DELHI METRO ▶ PAGE 1

Amid crisis, Jet pilots hop on to other carriers
 MUMBAI
 As Jet Airways makes an effort to get the cash-strapped airline back on track, its pilots have started to resign and move to other carriers.
NATION ▶ PAGE 5

Let Lokpal probe bribery diary: Congress

Cites payments to BJP leaders found in Yeddyurappa notes

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Friday accused senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders of being “corrupt” after a media report claimed that former Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa had allegedly paid bribes to the tune of ₹1,800 crore to the BJP’s top leadership. BJP national president Amit Shah as well as Karnataka party chief Yeddyurappa accused the Congress of resorting to “fake issues” and “forged documents.”

“All ‘chowkidars’ (watchmen) of the BJP are thieves NoMo Arun Jaitley Rajnath Singh,” Mr. Gandhi tweeted in Hindi and tagged the report by the *Caravan* magazine that detailed alleged pay-offs by Mr. Yeddyurappa to senior leaders and the party’s central election

All ‘chowkidars’ (watchmen) of the BJP are thieves NoMo Arun Jaitley Rajnath Singh -RAHUL GANDHI

All issues raised by Congress about the alleged payment have already been inquired [into] and [it has been] found that [the] documents are fake. The issue is a closed chapter
 B.S. YEDDYURAPPA
 BJP leader

I think this is a fit case to be investigated by the newly appointed Lokpal as the first test case. Now, the ball lies in the PM’s court to prove if the ‘chowkidar’ is a thief or is ready for a probe
 RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA
 Congress spokesperson

committee.

The Congress demanded an investigation into the diary by the newly appointed Lokpal to confirm whether “bribes” were actually paid.

Congress communication chief Randeep Singh Surjewala said Prime Minister Narendra Modi should clarify whether the con-

tents of the diary – listing bribes to the tune of ₹1,800 crore to top BJP leaders – were correct.

Mr. Surjewala said each person named in the diary should submit himself to an investigation.

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SUPREME COURT MAY NOT ADMIT DIARY AS PROOF
 ▶ PAGE 8

Loose sheets of doubtful nature, says I-T Dept.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department has cast doubts over the veracity of the loose sheets that are allegedly copies of a diary kept by former Karnataka Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa recording transfers of large amounts of money to other senior BJP leaders. The originals will be needed for forensic analysis, the I-T Department said, adding the originals have not yet been found.

“For a forensic analysis of the disputed writings to establish its evidentiary value, the originals of the same are required,” the statement said. “All efforts have been made by the Income Tax office concerned to procure the originals... However, the details about the place and

custody of the original writings and, if the original writings exist, are not available.”

“The same loose sheets *prima facie* appear to be of a doubtful nature and were given by the person who was being raided for tax violations,” the statement added.

The I-T Department said it had carried out a search of properties associated with Congress leader D.K. Shivakumar and his companies, during which “a large evidence of incriminating material” against him was found.

Further, during the search, Xerox copies of a diary with “numerical entries against some individual names” were also provided to the raiding party.
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‘Mahagathbandhan’ seals deal in Bihar

RJD gets 20 seats and the Congress 9

AMARNATH TEWARY
 PATNA

After several rounds of consultations and a last-minute marathon meeting, the ‘mahagathbandhan’ (Grand Alliance) in Bihar announced its seat-sharing agreement on Friday.

The RJD is contesting in 20 seats, the Congress 9, the Upendra Kushwaha-led Rashtriya Lok Samata Party 5, and the Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and the Mukesh Sahu-led Vikasheel Insaan Party in 3 each. Bihar has 40 Lok Sabha seats.

One seat for CPI(ML)

“The ‘mahagathbandhan’ is a natural alliance, and this alliance is to save the Constitution... The RJD has spared one seat for the CPI(ML), and Sharad Yadav will contest the election on RJD ticket,” RJD spokesperson Ma-



RJD spokesperson Manoj Jha in Patna on Friday. RANJEET KUMAR

noy Jha told journalists here. “It has also been decided that the first Rajya Sabha seat that would come to the ‘mahagathbandhan’ would go to the Congress,” he said.

The names of ‘mahagathbandhan’ candidates who will contest in the first phase on April 11 for four seats too were announced.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Centre bans JKLF under anti-terror law

VIJAITA SINGH
 NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs on Friday banned separatist Yasin Malik’s Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) under the anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The decision comes days after the Union government banned Jamat-e-Islami under Section 3(1) of the Act. The JKLF was also banned under the same Section.

The Section gives power to the Centre to declare any association as unlawful by notifying it in the Official Gazette.

Home Secretary Rajiv



Yasin Malik

Gauba told the media that murders of Kashmiri Pandits by the JKLF in 1989 triggered their exodus from the Valley.

“Yasin Malik was the mastermind behind the purging of Kashmiri Pandits and is responsible for their genocide,” Mr. Gauba said.

The decision followed a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mr. Gauba said 37 FIRs have been registered by the J&K Police against the JKLF. “Two cases including in the murder of IAF personnel were registered by the CBI. The NIA has also registered a case, which is under investigation. It is evident from these that JKLF continues to be actively engaged in supporting and inciting secessionism and terrorism,” he said.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 8

Minor hostage found dead with militants in J&K

PEERZADA ASHIQ
 SRINAGAR

The body of a 12-year-old boy, held hostage by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) militants, was found at an encounter site in Hajin area of Bandipora, along with the bodies of the two militants on Friday morning. In other security

operations, three militants were killed in two separate incidents in Shopian and Sopore in the Kashmir Valley. Over 10 civilians were injured in clashes during the encounters.

“The [Hajin] operation was started around 9 p.m. on Thursday and we

showed a lot of patience till 6 p.m., for nine hours, before the final assault. We employed all the methods to rescue the minor boy. But LeT’s Ali killed him before we stormed the house,” said Senior Superintendent of Police, Bandipora, Rahul Malik.

The militants had taken Aatif Mir and his uncle Abdul Hameed hostage. Aatif’s charred body was found besides those of the two non-local LeT militants. “Militants known as Ali and Hubaib were killed,” Mr. Malik said.

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Ground Zero

Art in the marketplace
 It took less than a decade for the Kochi-Muziris Biennale to become a top international art destination. An analysis of the inclusive, artist-driven model that is driving interest among art institutions worldwide.
OP-ED PAGE

DELHI METRO ▶ 6 PAGES

The IPL Is Back

Fans are in for a treat as the 12th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) rolls out on Saturday with M.S. Dhoni’s Super Kings taking on Virat Kohli’s Royal Challengers

A LOOK AT SOME STATS

| CHAMPIONS SO FAR | TOP RECORDS |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CSK 2010, 2011, 2018 | Highest run-scorer: Suresh Raina , 4985 (176 matches) |
| MI 2013, 2015, 2017 | Highest wicket-taker: Lasith Malinga , 154 (110 matches) |
| KKR 2012, 2014 | Maximum dismissals (wk): Dinesh Karthik , 124 (94+30) (168 matches) |
| RR 2008 | Maximum catches (non-wk): Suresh Raina , 95 (176 matches) |
| DC 2009 | |
| SRH 2016 | |

LEAGUE PHASE
 8 teams
 44 days (March 23 to May 5)
 56 matches

M.S. Dhoni
 For CSK:
 145 matches
 3,442 runs

Virat Kohli
 For RCB:
 163 matches
 4,948 runs

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Trinamool drops C-tag from its logo

SANDEEP PHUKAN
 NEW DELHI

Two decades after starting out as a splinter group of the Congress party, West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee’s Trinamool Congress has quietly dropped the C-tag from its logo, banners, posters and all communication material.

West Bengal’s ruling party from now on will just be called Trinamool. The move comes just ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha election in which the party is hoping to be a key player in the Opposition camp.

DETAILS ON ▶ PAGE 9

Tribal artists make a splash on online platform

First batch of 17 paintings commissioned by government department all sold out

M.L. MELLY MAITREYI
 HYDERABAD

The paintings of tribal artists from the remote agency areas of Telangana have literally arrived on a global platform, thanks to Amazon, the largest e-commerce market place.

Until a few months ago, the humble artists, Bhim Rao, Navin, Guchaiah and many others from tribal areas did not even foresee a demand for their traditional paintings, reflecting the ethos of different tribal communities.

But things have begun to change for them after the Telangana Tribal Welfare Department, sensing potential patronage for their art, commissioned a few



The artists have completed another 35 paintings, which will be put up for sale soon. NAGARA GOPAL

The first batch of paintings, 17 of them, done by the artists from Gond, Koya and Naikpod communities, when put up for sale through the Amazon online platform a few months ago, were all sold out. The artists, now working in the residential campus of the Tribal Welfare Department in Hyderabad, have completed another 35 paintings. They will be put up for sale online by Amazon soon.

The idea to provide a wider platform to the paintings came when the Tribal Welfare Department and the Tribal Museum Curator D. Satyanarayana, working closely with the tribal communities,

recognised the appeal of their traditional painting practices.

Bright colours

The Gond paintings stand out for use of bright colours and intricate lines. The Gond art mostly represents a tree emerging out of birds (peacocks) and animals (ox, horse, deer, elephant and tiger).

The Koya artists draw on the surface motifs of their sacred ‘Hariveni’ posts, sacred flags and big bottle gourds.

The paintings of Naikpod tribals are reflections of face masks of their kings, Pandavas like Bheema, and traditional village temple deities.