

**NEARBY**



**Bangladesh actor asked to leave India**

**KOLKATA**  
A controversy has erupted over popular Bangladeshi actor Ferdous Ahmed allegedly campaigning for a Trinamool Congress candidate in West Bengal. Upon receiving a report about visa violations by the actor, the Ministry of Home Affairs cancelled his visa and issued him a notice to leave the country, an MHA official said on Tuesday.

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# After SC rap, EC 'wakes up to its powers'

Poll body acted against communal speeches after top court pulled it up and gave it 24 hours to act

**KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday took note of the Election Commission of India quickly changing tack on April 15 to pass a flurry of restraining orders against leading politicians for their communally provocative and divisive speeches.

The EC orders came shortly after the poll body invited the court's wrath for describing itself as "toothless" in the face of hate.

"Seems you have got your powers now," Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi said, addressing the commission on Tuesday.

## Tackling hate speech

Some laws that can be used in speeches that are communally sensitive or incite religious feelings:

**(i) Indian Penal Code, 1860**

- Section 124A IPC penalises sedition
- Section 153A IPC penalises 'promotion of enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony'

**(ii) Representation of The People Act, 1951**

- Section 123(3A) and Section 125 prohibits promotion of enmity on grounds of religion, race, caste, community or language in connection with election as a corrupt electoral practice and prohibits it

**(iii) Cable Television Network Regulation Act, 1995**

- Sections 5 and 6 of the Act prohibit transmission or re-transmission of a programme through cable network in contravention to the prescribed programme code or advertisement code

**(vi) Cinematograph Act, 1952**

- Sections 4, 5B and 7 empower the Board of Film Certification to prohibit and regulate the screening of a film

The CJJ was referring to the action taken against Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati, Samajwadi Party leader

Azam Khan and BJP leader Maneka Gandhi.

All four leaders were variously restrained from election campaigning for 48 to 72 hours.

"We found we have several powers..." senior advocate C.A. Sundaram, who represented the EC, acknowledged in court.

"So, EC has woken up to

its powers," Chief Justice Gogoi pointedly said again.

On Monday, the EC had claimed it was mostly helpless if candidates engaged in communal diatribe during their campaign speeches. This riled Chief Justice Gogoi, who initially threatened to have Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora in court in the next half-hour.

The court then decided to delve deep into the poll panel's claims that its powers were "circumscribed". It gave the Commission exactly 24 hours to be ready with a response.

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# Campaigning ends for second phase

Voting in 97 constituencies tomorrow



**Over to the booth:** A BJP worker carries a boy wearing a Modi mask at a rally in Bengaluru on Tuesday. • V. SREENIVASA MURTHY

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

Campaigning ended on Tuesday evening for the second phase of the 17th Lok Sabha election in 97 constituencies, spread over 12 States and a Union Territory that will vote on Thursday. Counting of votes will take place on May 23, after all seven phases of voting are completed.

In the second phase, all 39 constituencies of Tamil Nadu, 14 in Karnataka, 10 in Maharashtra, eight in Uttar Pradesh, five each in Assam, Bihar and Odisha, 3 each in Chhattisgarh and West Bengal, two in Jammu and Kashmir and one each in Manipur, Tripura and Puducherry will be voting.

Decisive victories in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are critical to the Congress-led alliance's chances of unseating Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Karnataka is the only south Indian State where the BJP has a significant presence, and the party had won 17 of its 28 seats in 2014.

As campaigning continues in other regions that vote on later dates, there is no real break in the political combat that is increasingly bitter.

## EC restrictions

The Election Commission restrictions on campaigning by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BSP leader Mayawati, SP leader Azam Khan and Union Minister Maneka Gandhi came into effect from Tuesday. All are charged with violating the model code of conduct.

Several cases of violations of the code continue to emerge even as campaigning gains momentum for the third phase in 115 constituencies across 12 States and two Union Territories on April 23.

Mr. Modi's speeches continue to focus on national security and nationalism while the Congress has tried to build momentum around its manifesto promise of minimum income guarantee.

**MORE REPORTS** ▶ PAGES 10, 11

# SC to decide on entry of women into mosques

Muslim couple had filed a petition

**LEGAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday admitted for consideration a plea by a Muslim couple to lift the ban on Muslim women's entry into all mosques across the country.

## Echoes of Sabarimala

"The only reason we may hear you is because of our judgment on the Sabarimala temple issue," a Bench of Justices S.A. Bobde and S. Abdul Nazeer observed orally.

The court issued notice to the government and various bodies, including the National Commission for

Women.

Justice Bobde asked whether a petition seeking right to equality can be filed against individuals and non-state actors like people who pray in and manage mosques. The Pune-based couple, Yasmeen Zuber Ahmad and Zuber Ahmad, told the court that the ban was illegal, unconstitutional and a violation of their dignity.

The fundamental right to equality under Article 14 of the Constitution was available only against the state, Justice Bobde observed.

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# Jet Airways seeks ₹400 crore infusion to avert shutdown

Needs at least ₹1,000 crore for immediate needs

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI

The Jet Airways board, at an emergency meeting held on Tuesday, authorised its management, headed by chief executive officer Vinay Dube, to engage with lenders to secure at least a few hundred crore rupees of interim funding to continue operations till a new owner comes on board.

The board also authorised the CEO to take the final call on the airline's operations, people familiar with the development said.

Armed with this, the CEO approached the lenders to



The airline's operations have been severely impacted. • AP

release ₹400 crore for the sake of the employees and to prevent a shutdown. Jet requires at least ₹1,000 crore to meet its immediate needs.

In a filing with the stock exchange, the airline said, "In view of the critical li-

quidity position of the company, its operations have been severely impacted. It is awaiting emergency liquidity support from the consortium of domestic lenders led by the State Bank of India."

"The company's leadership, in consultation with its Board of Directors, is engaged with lenders in connection with the funding request to arrest a further deterioration of its services, and minimise inconvenience to its guests," it said.

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**AIRFARES SKYROCKET** ▶ PAGE 7

# Sensex, Nifty touch a new high

Positive trends in global markets and strong foreign fund inflows combined to drive investor sentiment in the Indian market on Tuesday.

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
MUMBAI

The BSE Sensex gained 369.80 points to close at a new high of 39,275.64 points. This is only the second time that the benchmark has closed above the psychological 39,000-mark – the first instance was on April 2, when it closed at 39,056.65. The broader Nifty too ended at a new high of 11,787.15 while gaining 96.80 points.

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# Kerala Minister makes a heart-to-heart offer to save 15-day-old infant

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

It was a medical drama that had entire Kerala on edge on Tuesday.

A 15-day-old infant boy, with a congenital heart disease and multiple cardiac problems, was being rushed from a hospital in Mangaluru to Thiruvananthapuram by road – a distance of about 600 km – through a green channel. His parents had apparently been persuaded to seek treatment in the State capital despite the risk of transporting the seriously ill baby.

It took the personal intervention of Kerala's Health Minister K.K. Shylaja to convince the parents to accept the offer of free treatment by the State government.

Senior officials told *The Hindu* that the District Early Intervention Centre of the Health Department at Kasaragod had contacted the person coordinating the green channel arrangements at 10 a.m. to say that the government's Hridayam programme could treat the infant for free in Kozhikode or Kochi, considerably reducing the travel time.

However, the family did not respond to the offer. "Around 2 p.m., after the child had been on the road for almost five hours in a



The ambulance carrying the child after reaching the AIMS in Kochi on Tuesday. • SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ventilated condition, following a call from Ms. Shylaja, we again contacted the family... But till the Health Minister herself got in touch with the parents, they were not willing to change their plans," an official said.

Following the Minister's call, the baby was rushed to the paediatric cardiology division at Amrita Institute of Medical Sciences (AIMS) in Kochi.

The Health Department is coordinating all arrangements at the hospital under Kerala's unique and comprehensive programme Hridayam, which takes care of all congenital paediatric cardiac surgeries, including emergencies, through a public-private partnership network of hospitals.

Dr. R. Krishna Kumar, head of the paediatric cardiology department at AIMS, said the baby's condition was critical and he would be in observation in the NICU for 24-48 hours to stabilise his condition.

# N.D. Tiwari's son passes away, investigation on

**STAFF REPORTER**  
NEW DELHI

Rohit Shekhar Tiwari, son of late Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand Chief Minister N.D. Tiwari, was brought dead to Max Hospital in south Del-

hi's Saket on Tuesday.

"Max Hospital received an emergency call from the residence of Rohit at 4.41 p.m. on Tuesday. An ambulance brought him to the hospital where he was declared

brought dead," read a statement by the hospital.

Joint Commissioner Divesh Shrivastava said Rohit suffered a nose bleed.

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