



on Sunday



Air India server glitch affects flights across the carrier's network

page 9



Election Commission hesitant to act against PM, says Chidambaram

page 10



Pakistan suspends anti-polio drive after threats to workers

page 12

Samson, Livingstone and Unadkat keep Royals' hopes alive

page 17



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NEARBY



BJP moves EC against Kejriwal's radio ads

NEW DELHI
The BJP on Saturday filed a complaint with the Election Commission against a radio advertisement featuring CM Arvind Kejriwal in which he is "falsely claiming" that the Centre collects "huge revenue" from Delhi but "gives only ₹325 crore" to it.

CITY PAGE 2

15 dead after gun battle with bombing suspects in Sri Lanka

Three die in gunfire, while three others blow themselves up in Ampara

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The bodies of 15 people, including six children, were found at a building in Sri Lanka's eastern Ampara district after an "explosion" early on Saturday, according to a military spokesman.

The explosion, Brigadier Sumith Atapattu said, followed an overnight gun battle between security forces and suspects linked to the Easter Day bombings at the building. "We believe they set off the explosives following the gunfight," he told *The Hindu*.

Three suspected jihadists died in the gunfire, while three others are believed to have blown themselves up,



Fight at night: Police and Army officers display bomb-making materials recovered from a hideout in Kalmunai. •AP

also killing six children and three women in the process, according to the police.

One civilian was killed in the firing, and five others

who were injured were taken to hospital, Brigadier Atapattu said, confirming that no one from the security forces was killed.

The operation, which began around 7 p.m. on Friday, and continued till early morning on Saturday, was carried out around the Samanthurai, Sainthamaruthu and Nintavur areas, all located within a 10-km-radius in Ampara, a Muslim-majority district.

Based on a tip-off, troops surrounded "a safe house" used by suspected terrorists on Friday evening. The suspects opened fire, the Army spokesman said, and the troops "retaliated and raided the safe house."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

INDIA ISSUES TRAVEL ADVISORY

ON SRI LANKA PAGE 10

REFUSES TO QUIT PAGE 12

Curtains on campaigning for phase four, voting tomorrow

71 constituencies in nine States will go to the polls

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Campaigning for the fourth phase of the 17th Lok Sabha election ended on Saturday in 71 constituencies across nine States.

With Monday's voting, the election will begin in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, and end in Maharashtra and Odisha. The counting of votes will take place on May 23.

In the fourth phase, five constituencies in Bihar, three in Jharkhand, six each in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, eight in West Bengal, 17 in Maharashtra, and 13 each in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh will vote. In Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, the Congress and the BJP are face to face, while the con-



Poll push: Students in Mumbai hold placards to encourage voting ahead of the fourth phase of the election. •PTI

tests in other States are more complex with the presence of regional parties.

Congress president Rahul Gandhi and his sister and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra campaigned in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday. The siblings released a video of a banter

between them at the Kanpur airport where they met by chance.

Mr. Gandhi is seen teasing his sister for getting to use a big helicopter for campaigning, while he is crammed in a smaller one.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Two workers engaged in 'manual scavenging' die

Police file case against employer

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

Two persons were asphyxiated in a contaminated well here on Saturday. Gafoor Pasha, 40, and Aftab Pasha, 38, died when they descended into the well behind a tea stall at K.G. Halli.

The police have booked three persons under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, and on the charge of culpable homicide.

According to a police complaint from Gafoor's wife Haseena Banu, tea stall owner Naveed had been asking her husband, who worked there, to clean the

well where 'sewage water' had collected. On Saturday, he had insisted that the employee and his friend, Aftab, clean it, Ms. Banu alleged.

The men had descended into the narrow well, with the help of ropes. "They were sent into the well, where toxic gases had been emanating, without any safety equipment," Ms. Banu said. "Immediately on descending, they were asphyxiated to death," she added.

Alerted by the stall owner and his neighbours, fire and emergency services personnel reached the spot and recovered the bodies.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Gambhir booked for code violation

Held rally without permission; complaint by East Delhi RO

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

Cricketer-turned-politician and BJP's East Delhi candidate Gautam Gambhir was booked on Saturday under the Delhi Police Act for violating the model code of conduct (MCC), by holding a public meeting in Jangpura without permission.

East Delhi Returning Officer K. Mahesh had given the complaint.

"The photographs and videos of the event were also given after which he was booked under 28/110 Delhi Police Act," Joint Commissioner of Police (Southern Range) Devesh Srivastava said.

Mr. Mahesh said that on April 25, he wrote to the



Gautam Gambhir

police over the model code of conduct violation by Mr. Gambhir. He said that he had recommended imposition of IPC Section 188, which deals with disobedience to an order promulgated by a civil servant and carries imprisonment

which may extend to 6 months or a fine of ₹1,000, but the police imposed Sections of the Delhi Police Act which only carry a fine of ₹200. He said checking violations of the MCC require legal teeth. However it's also important to consider delays due to the length of the process involved.

'Why play the game?'

Reacting to the direction, Aam Aadmi Party candidate Atishi tweeted, "First, Discrepancies in nomination papers. Then, Criminal offence of having 2 voter IDs. Now, FIR for illegal rally. My question to @GautamGambhir: When you don't know the rules, why play the game? (sic)".

Not backward, but most backward caste: Modi

PM responds to Mayawati taunt

OMAR RASHID
LUCKNOW

Responding to BSP chief Mayawati's taunt that he was a "fake OBC," Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday aggressively pitched his backward caste identity in Uttar Pradesh, declaring he was not merely an OBC, but had been born into a "most-backward caste."

"You are distributing certificates of caste... a game I have never played," he said, at a rally in Kannauj. "But I want to tell you, my caste is a most backward caste."

Though he did not name any particular caste, he said only one or two households in a village would be found

belonging to his caste. Wrapping up his campaign for the fourth phase with three rallies in the State, Mr. Modi also raised the pitch on national security.

Asking the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party combine to spell out its policy to tackle terrorism, he wondered if their silence on the issue reflected their fear of terrorists or was aimed at "protecting terrorists."

Mr. Modi claimed that when the Opposition "realised that they were losing the election after the first few phases", they resorted to abusing him.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Parties take EVM woes to poll panel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties on Saturday approached the Election Commission alleging the display of party name only under the BJP symbol on EVMs during a mock poll in West Bengal's Barrackpore constituency.

However the poll panel has maintained that the same insignia was used for the party in the 2014 Lok Sabha poll. A delegation of Congress and TMC leaders met the CEC and demanded that either all such EVMs be removed from the remaining phases of elections or the names of other parties be added too.

DETAILS ON PAGE 10

Sibling show



Runway rendezvous: Congress president Rahul Gandhi and sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra when they met at the Kanpur airport. "Was nice meeting Priyanka at Kanpur Airport! We're headed to different meetings in U.P.," Mr. Gandhi wrote on Facebook. •PTI

Ram Madhav softens tone on Article 370

PEERZADA ASHIQ
SRINAGAR

Toning down party rhetoric on Article 370, BJP national general secretary Ram Madhav on Saturday said the decision on the subject would be taken in Parliament and "development remains the party's main agenda" in the election in Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking at a party meeting in volatile Anantnag in south Kashmir, Mr. Madhav, also the BJP's Kashmir in-charge, said, "For this election, development remains our sole agenda. The BJP's stand on Article 370 is clear but any final decision on it will be arrived at collectively in Parliament. We should wait for that."

DETAILS ON PAGE 10

In Maharashtra's Nandurbar, barges carry the vote

Some villages in the State lie across the Narmada, remote and inaccessible; makeshift polling booths set up

TANVIN ARVIND DESHPANDE
NANDURBAR

Nine polling centres in Maharashtra's Nandurbar district are gearing up for elections on April 29, although differently. These centres are located in the most inaccessible parts of the district, across the Narmada river waters in the Satpura mountain range.

The district administration will be transporting electronic voting machines to the nine centres on barges, on the



The nine polling centres that can only be reached by barges. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

night before the polls.

The absence of government buildings in some hamlets of the region also pose a problem for the district administration, which has responded by

setting up three makeshift polling booths in Dhankhedi, Mukhadi and Zapi villages of Akkalkuva taluka.

The square sheds fifteen metres long have been put up using tarpaulin sheets and bamboo, with tables and chairs for election officials, and a makeshift toilet. The EVM machines will be kept on the tables for voters to exercise their franchise. Nandurbar district is at the northernmost tip of

Maharashtra. The Lok Sabha constituency, which consists of six Assembly segments, is the first district on the State's electoral rolls, and is reserved for Scheduled Tribe (ST) candidates.

The polling centres that can only be reached by barges are Manibhili, Chimalkhedi, Dhankhedi, Mukhadi, Dhaneri, Gaman, Bhadal, Potdya and Bhabri, in the Akkalkuva and Akrani talukas. They are located beyond the Narmada's backwaters. Manibhili is the

first village on Maharashtra's voter rolls.

Some villages were submerged by the Sardar Sarovar dam project, forcing tribals to migrate higher up. It takes up to two days to reach the villages on foot. The barges are the only convenient transport. But even in a barge, the journey may take 3-4 hours.

The polling teams must submit the EVMs at the district office, no matter how late it gets on voting day.