



Rahul Gandhi gets EC notice for speech in M.P.

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Assange sentenced to 50 weeks in British jail for skipping bail

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Jet Airways pilots press PM for an investigation into airline's collapse

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Dhoni, Raina and spinners take Super Kings to the top again

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NEARBY



SC reserves verdict on changes to SC/ST law

NEW DELHI  
The Supreme Court on Wednesday reserved for judgment a batch of petitions challenging the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Amendment Act of 2018 which nullified a controversial March 20 Supreme Court judgment diluting the stringent provisions of the Dalit protection law.

NATION ► PAGE 10

Curbs on civilian traffic in J&K lifted

SRINAGAR  
Under immense pressure from various quarters, the Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday announced complete withdrawal of restrictions on civilian traffic movement between Srinagar and Baramulla.

NATION ► PAGE 6

Woman doctor found dead in Delhi home

NEW DELHI  
A 25-year-old woman doctor was found dead with her throat slit in her rented accommodation in the Ranjit Nagar area of Central Delhi, police said on Wednesday.

DELHI METRO ► PAGE 1

## Sacked BSF jawan's papers rejected

SP nominated Tej Bahadur in Varanasi

OMAR RASHID

LUCKNOW

Sacked BSF constable Tej Bahadur Yadav's nomination as a Samajwadi Party candidate in Varanasi, where he would have faced PM Narendra Modi, was on Wednesday rejected on grounds that he did not submit proper documents explaining his dismissal.

Varanasi District Magistrate Surendra Singh said Mr. Yadav had failed to submit the necessary certificate issued by the Election Commission that he had not been dismissed for corruption or disloyalty to the state. Mr. Yadav was given "a chance" till 11 a.m. on May 1 but he did not submit the certificate within the stipulated time, Mr. Singh said.

The DM, also the Returning Officer of the Varanasi

Lok Sabha constituency, said Mr. Yadav's nomination was rejected as it failed to meet Section 9 and 33(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

Mr. Yadav's nomination from Varanasi was deferred after a discrepancy over his dismissal was found in the two nominations he filed, first as an Independent and then as the SP candidate. A notice was then issued to him to submit the EC certificate by 11 a.m. on May 1.

Conspiracy, says Yadav

In his reply to the notice, Mr. Yadav said he had not been dismissed for disloyalty or corruption and that Sections 9 and 33(3) did not apply to him. His lawyer Rajesh Gupta said they would approach the Supreme Court.

have told us," he said.

"I want to tell the BJP, [party president] Amit Shah and [Prime Minister Narendra] Modi ji, don't try to buy AAP MLAs and fight election; if you have courage, fight election on issues. You will try to buy them and they will tell us [about it]. You can't buy AAP MLAs," he asserted. Mr. Sisodia said Mr. Modi should be "ashamed", referring to the latter's earlier comment that 40 Trinamool Congress MLAs in West Bengal were in touch with him.

"Is it right for the Prime Minister to say that? He is saying it openly that to weaken democracy he is going to

## White walker



A vehicle stuck on a road due to heavy snowfall at Rohtang Pass in Kullu district on Wednesday. • ANI

## BJP offered ₹10 crore each to 7 MLAs to quit party: AAP

Sisodia claims party offering money to more AAP legislators, but won't be successful

STAFF REPORTER

NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday alleged that seven of its MLAs were approached with an offer of ₹10 crore each by the BJP to leave the party before the Lok Sabha election.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia claimed that the BJP was talking to more AAP MLAs, but insisted that its mission would not be successful. "People from the BJP contacted seven AAP MLAs and said that if they leave the party before the [Lok Sabha] election, they will give them ₹10 crore each. They are talking to more, but the seven

but people taught the BJP a

lesson. If you have any agenda to change the country, then fight the election on it," Mr. Sisodia said. "Modi ji, if you have done anything for the people in the last five years, then fight the election on it," he added.

AAP leader Gopal Rai said the alleged attempt to buy legislators showed that the BJP's seven candidates in Delhi are going to lose. "The BJP's actions show that it does not believe in democracy. Delhites will reply like they did in Bawana [bypoll which AAP won by a huge margin]," he said.

Chief Minister Arvind Kej-



Manish Sisodia

buy 40 MLAs. He should be ashamed. There [West Bengal] he wants to buy TMC MLAs, in Delhi, the BJP wants to buy AAP MLAs," the AAP leader said.

He said the BJP has no issues to fight the election in Delhi. "They were able to get one of our MLAs from Bawana before the MCD elections,

## EC places bar on Pragma's campaign

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Wednesday put a 72-hour bar on the campaigning by BJP candidate for Bhopal Pragma Singh Thakur for her comments against late IPS officer Hemant Karkare and on her role in the demolition of the Babri Masjid.

It cautioned her against such misconduct in future.

TAX BASE INCREASING ► PAGE 10

## Odisha, A.P. brace for 'Fani' landfall

8 lakh people being evacuated as storm heads towards coast

STAFF REPORTER

BHUBANESWAR/VIJAYAWADA/HYDERABAD

Defence forces are on high alert, educational institutions ordered shut and over 8 lakh people in coastal districts are being evacuated as Odisha braces for cyclone 'Fani', the extremely severe cyclonic storm likely to make landfall near Puri on Friday, officials said.

It is expected to cross the holy town of Puri in the afternoon of May 3, packing



Heavy winds and dark clouds signalling the approaching Fani at Jalaripeta in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday. • K.R. DEEPAK

winds up to 175 kmph before landfall. The storm over the Bay of Bengal that lay

centred about 610 km south-south west of Puri was ominously rolling towards the Odisha coast at a speed of 6 kmph, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said in a bulletin.

'Fani' has also kept Andhra Pradesh officials on edge as it is expected to move close to Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and Visakhapatnam districts

(With inputs from PTI)

FISHERMEN WARNED ► PAGE 5

## Local KBC version a fillip for DD Kashir

Highlights unsung heroes, says official

PEERZADA ASHIQ

SRINAGAR

Cash-strapped DD Kashir, a J&K-specific television channel of Prasar Bharati launched by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in 2000, has received a shot in the arm with the launch of the local language version of the 'Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC)' to win the "hearts and minds" in the conflict-ridden State.

The inaugural episode of 'Kus Bani Koshur Crorepati', a vernacular name of the show produced by Sony Entertainment Television, was aired on Monday evening at the local Doordarshan centre in Srinagar. In a major revamp in over a decade, Prasar Bharati has allocated ₹40 crore for DD Kashir, a quantum leap from ₹1 to ₹1.5 crore annually. "Of the amount allocated, ₹20 crore will be spent on the local KBC," said an official on the condition of anonymity.

"The show gives us the opportunity to highlight the local unsung heroes and bring their untold stories to the rest of the country," said Director General, Doordarshan, Supriya Sahu.

The show is hosted by Kashmiri actor Rayees Mohiuddin. "A diverse set of contestants have been drawn from all corners of the State. It is about the people of Kashmir and its identity. It will bring out tear-jerking people's stories," said Mr. Mohiuddin.

Runaway hit

The programme evoked immense response on the social media platforms from the locals. The DD had stopped producing Kashmiri language serials or songs nearly for a decade now.

## Chief Justice appears before Bobde panel

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi has appeared before the Justice S.A. Bobde in-house inquiry panel examining sexual harassment charges made against him by a former court employee.

A letter of request was issued to the Chief Justice.

FULL REPORT ON ► PAGE 7



A screen grab from the show on DD Kashir. •

It would be the first such entertainment programme on DD Kashir, where fund allocation was slashed in 2012 following the CBI raids on local producers in an alleged embezzlement case.

In its wake, Prasar Bharati changed rules, "which made it difficult for local private producers to compete for producing any entertainment programme in J&K", a producer told *The Hindu*.

Studio Next, a production house of Sony Pictures Networks which holds the licence of the format, has produced more than 1,800 episodes of the show in eight languages so far.

"We are extremely happy to bring the show to the people of J&K. We have maintained the same ethos of the show as in other languages, followed strict and transparent process for contestant selection. The show will celebrate our society via knowledge," said Indranil Chakraborty, head of Studio Next.

DD Kashir has been the only official station in J&K to promote local languages through serials, short movies and documentaries. The platform was also used to wean away the alienated population by focusing on a counter narrative.