



INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878



Anil Ambani group to withdraw defamation suit against Congress

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CBI gives clean chit to Mulayam Singh, Akhilesh in assets case

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Judge orders Trump's financial records to be handed over to House

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Virat Kohli-led Indian team embarks for the ICC World Cup

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NEARBY



Snag disrupts metro services; many stranded

NEW DELHI
A technical snag disrupted services on the Delhi Metro's Yellow Line leaving thousands of commuters stranded near the Chhatrapur station on Tuesday. The glitch occurred at 9.30 a.m. and lasted for four hours. Over 5,000 passengers were evacuated from two trains and taken to the nearest metro stations at Qutub Minar and Chhatrapur respectively.

CITY ▶ PAGE 3



OPPORTUNITIES ▶ PAGE 17

Tally EVM-VVPAT slips before final counting, Oppn. tells EC

Poll body non-committal, says decision likely today after full panel meeting

SOBHANA K NAIR
NEW DELHI

Twenty-two Opposition parties met the Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday demanding that tallying of the Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips in five polling booths in each Assembly segment with the electronic voting machines (EVMs) be done prior to the counting of votes.

If any discrepancy is found anywhere in the VVPAT verification, hundred per cent counting of paper slips of VVPATs of all polling stations of that Assembly segment should be done, the parties demanded. The EC, however, remained non-committal and told them that there would be a special meeting of the full Commis-



Raising a point: N. Chandrababu Naidu and other Opposition leaders leaving the Election Commission's office. ■ ANUJ ARORA

sion on Wednesday to examine the issue.

Many meetings

The Opposition parties together and individually have met the EC 94 times in the last few months with the

same request. The EC also refused the demand for 100% tallying of VVPAT slips.

The meeting saw a sharp exchange between the Opposition parties and the EC.

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'Charges of EVM swapping are incorrect'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday said the Opposition parties' allegations of EVM swapping and tampering were "absolutely false and factually incorrect".

"Any case of lapse, even in the handling of reserve EVMs, is thoroughly investigated and disciplinary action taken against officers responsible," the EC said.

CONTROL ROOM ▶ PAGE 12

PM decries attempts to 'denigrate' integrity of polls

NDA resolution lauds Modi's work in the last five years

NISTULA HEBBAR
NEW DELHI

On a day when a group of Opposition parties approached the courts and the Election Commission, alleging tampering of electronic voting machines, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told 36 of his 39 NDA partner party leaders that at a time when the sheer size, scale and integrity of Indian elections were becoming a global brand, efforts were on to undermine the exercise.

He was speaking at a dinner hosted by BJP president Amit Shah where, in a show of strength by the NDA, senior leaders like Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thackeray and Lok Janshakti Party chief Ram Vilas Paswan were present.



Pat from allies: PM Modi being felicitated by Nitish Kumar at a meeting of NDA leaders on Tuesday. ■ SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The meeting saw the passing of a resolution by NDA leaders introduced by Mr. Paswan, reposing faith in the leadership of Mr. Modi. Three allies – the Mizo National Front, the Tiwa Jaatiya Oikiya Manch and the United Democratic Party – sent their support for the resolu-

tion in writing. Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh, briefing reporters after the dinner, said the resolution appreciated the work of the government under Mr. Modi in the last five years.

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Pranab raises concern over safety of EVMs

Urges EC to guard against tampering

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Former President Pranab Mukherjee on Tuesday issued a statement expressing concern at media reports of alleged tampering with electronic voting machines (EVMs) and their safety and security.

His statement comes a day after he praised the Election Commission's conduct of the 2019 Lok Sabha election while speaking at a book release function and on a day leaders of the Opposition parties approached the EC for compulsory tallying of all EVM machines with VVPAT of an Assembly segment in case of mis-

match in any one machine. "I am concerned at reports of alleged tampering of voters' verdict. The safety and security of EVMs which are in the custody of the ECI is the responsibility of the Commission," he said.

Adding that there could be no room for speculation that challenged the very basis of Indian democracy, Mr. Mukherjee said the "people's mandate" had to be "above any iota of doubt." "It is the 'workmen' who decide how the institutional 'tools' perform," he said, adding it was the job of the EC to ensure institutional integrity, and it must exert itself to put all speculation to rest.

Hindi heartland likely to spur BJP back to power

Ruling combine faced its strongest challenge in south

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Despite a head-start over other parties in having the most popular leader and in shifting the narrative during the election away from the "economy" question, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance did not have a un-



iform advantage over the Opposition over all regions, the Lokniti post-poll survey finds.

In the Hindi heartland

Vote share projections

Table 1 shows the estimated vote % of major alliances and prominent parties in the 2019 Lok Sabha poll. Table 2 shows the projected vote % of NDA, UPA, and other parties in major States

Party	Vote share (%)
NDA	40-42
UPA	28-30
Others	18-20
BSP+SP	8-9
Left	2-3

YSRCP: YSR Congress Party, AIUDF: All India United Democratic Front, JJP: Jannayak Janata Party, INLD: Indian National Lok Dal, LDF: Left Democratic Front, AMMK: Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam, MGB: Mahagathabandhan BSP+RDL, TMC: Trinamool Congress

Table 2

States	UPA (%)	NDA (%)	Others (Major parties) %
Andhra Pradesh	5	7	YSRCP: 43; TDP: 38
Assam	37	50	AIUDF: 6
Bihar*	36	54	Others: 10
Delhi	26	48	AAP: 19
Gujarat	34	60	Others: 6
Haryana	28	48	JJP+: 10; INLD: 8
Karnataka	49	45	Others: 6
Kerala	42	15	LDF: 35
Madhya Pradesh	41	48	BSP+: 6
Maharashtra	32	53	Others: 15
Odisha	10	42	BJD: 40
Rajasthan	39	49	BSP+: 4
Tamil Nadu	47	35	AMMK: 9
Telangana	23	14	TRS: 47
Uttar Pradesh	9	44	MG: 41
West Bengal	9	37	TMC: 39; Left: 11

the BJP had garnered in the 2014 election.

In south India, this enthusiasm was not shared. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, there

was a distinct anti-incumbency trend against the BJP and its allies.

FULL REPORT ON ▶ PAGE 13

Arunachal MLA, son killed by Naga militants

Gunmen belong to NSCN(I-M); police

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI

Suspected members of a Naga extremist group on Tuesday gunned down 11 people, including a legislator and candidate of the National People's Party (NPP), in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh.

The assailants, allegedly belonging to the Isak-Mui-vah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, targeted a convoy of four vehicles near Bogapani, about 20 km from the district headquarters Khonsa, around 11.30 a.m. Among the dead were Tirong Aboh, the MLA representing the Khonsa West



Tirong Aboh • PTI

constituency, his 20-year-old son Loggem Aboh and party general secretary Wangmoi Hakhun.

The 42-year-old Aboh had won the Khonsa West Assembly seat in 2014 as a candidate of the People's Party of Arunachal. He was seeking re-election as an NPP candidate.

CONTINUED ON ▶ PAGE 12

Plug and pray: Parsi priests go high tech

JYOTI SHELAR
MUMBAI

With a decline in its population, the Parsi community is innovating to save its age-old traditions.

It has digitised its prayers, and Parsis can now plug in their earphones or tap their phone screens to learn them. The range covers advanced ones recited by priests to everyday chants for households.

The exercise aims to not just improve access for the young and the elderly, but to provide a reference for priests.

"What we have created is an audiovisual mode of education," said Ervad Sarosh Aibara, who came up with the idea along with another priest, Ervad Keki Rajvi.

The compilation is available on pen drives, which can be accessed free.

Mr. Aibara said more than 100 prayers, including the shortest one of three lines, to one of the longest that goes on for about seven hours are available. The prayers are recited by Mr. Ravji.

Children can learn
Anahita Desai, chief executive, World Alliance of Parsi Irani Zarthoshtis, called it a great effort. "When a child has to

memorise the Navjote prayers, he or she can now do it with the help of just this audio. The digitised version also has a video of the entire Yasna ritual, one of the most intricate ceremonies," Ms. Desai said.

The World Zoroastrian Organisation (WZO) Trust has sponsored a video version. "We thought it was a great project, given that the number of Parsi

priests has been declining. The compilation has some higher liturgical prayers," WZO chairman Dinshaw Tamboly said.

The Parsi effort

matches other

global projects to digitise

traditions.

The UN Educational,

Scientific and Cultural

Organisation runs the

'Memory of The World

Programme' to preserve

rare archival material.

"There is a lot of recording

taking place to preserve

history and traditions.

Institutions across the

world are taking up

projects," said Shernaz

Cama, director of the

UNESCO Parzor

Foundation, which works

on Parsi Zoroastrian

heritage.

After the inaugural on

May 10, Mr. Aibara got

more than 80 calls about

the pen drive, some from

as far as Australia and

New Zealand.

HEALTHY AGEING

Are you a 40+ man & having any of these symptoms?

Urinary Urgency

Urinary frequency

Getting up frequently at night

Continued dribbling of urine

Incomplete bladder emptying

Hesitancy

You might need



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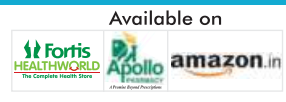
IPSS score in all 140 men improved upon completion of a 12 weeks clinical study carried out by a reputed Govt. Institute

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