

WORLD'S BIGGEST POLL KICKS OFF AS INDIA VOTES



# FIRST INDIA

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Rajasthan's Own English Newspaper



PHASE 1 VOTING OF THE LOK SABHA ELECTIONS HELD

SIX WEEKS, 969 MILLION VOTERS AND 2,600 PARTIES

- Narendra Modi-led BJP seeking a 3rd term in LS polls
- ECI puts ban on exit poll from Friday till June 1 – 6.30 pm

## PHASE 1 LOCKED AND LOADED!

Moni Sharma  
New Delhi/Jaipur

Millions of Indians have voted in the first phase of world's largest elections as PM Modi seeks a third term on the back of issues such as growth, welfare and Hindu nationalism. The vote pits Modi's BJP against an alliance of two dozen Opposition parties that promise greater affirmative action and more handouts while stressing what they call the need to save democratic institutions. After polls closed on Friday, an aggregate 62.37% voter turnout was recorded in phase one of Lok Sabha polls on Friday, EC said.

FULL REPORT ON PAGES 2, 3, 5, 8, 10, 11

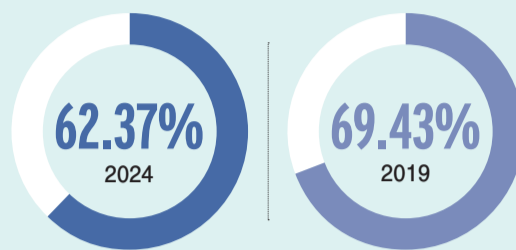


Jaipur's first-time voter casts her vote on Friday. World's shortest woman Jyoti Amge from Nagpur votes. Raj's oldest 114 years old Amree Bai from Pratapgarh votes.

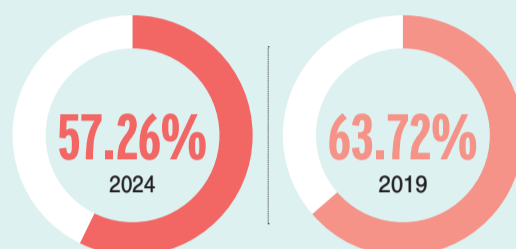
KEY HAPPENINGS

- Firing, EVMs destruction & boycott call — violence mars Lok Sabha elections in conflict-hit Manipur killing 3 voters as miscreants open fire at the polling booths
- Two voters die in polling booths in Tamil Nadu
- Sporadic incidents of violence marred the first phase in Bengal's three parliamentary constituencies, with a 77% voter turnout till 5 pm and several injuries reported as TMC and BJP workers clashed in violence-hit Cooch Behar
- Udhampur sees 65% voter turnout till 5 pm as J&K votes for first time after the Article 370 repeal
- Voter turnout in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls, which sealed the fate of candidates in 102 constituencies across 21 States, was 62.37%
- Most states see dip from in total voter turnout in Lok Sabha polls from 2019

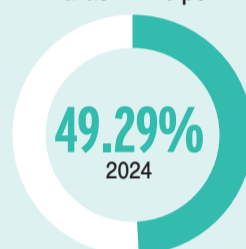
NATION POLL TURNOUT



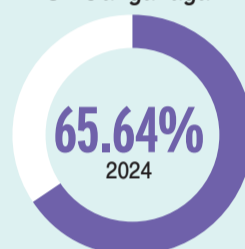
RAJASTHAN POLL TURNOUT



MINIMUM IN RAJ



MAXIMUM IN RAJ



First phase, great response! Thank you to all those who have voted today. Getting EXCELLENT feedback from today's voting. It's clear that people across India are voting for NDA in record numbers. Narendra Modi @narendramodi

MARK OF DEMOCRACY



RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat shows his ink-marked finger after casting his vote for the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections, at a polling station, in Nagpur on Friday.

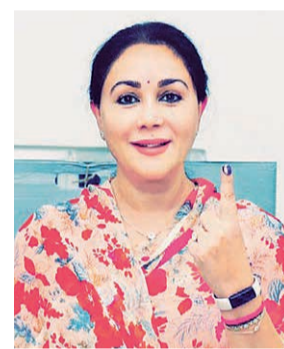
PEOPLE WANT MODI TO BE PM FOR 3<sup>RD</sup> TIME: CM

CM Bhajan Lal Sharma said on Friday that "Rajasthan will make a hatrick" of winning all 25 LS seats in state as the people want Modi to be the PM for a third time. Raj will make a hatrick likewise it did in 2014 and 2019 elections of winning all 25 seats.



WE WILL WIN ALL 25 SEATS, SAYS DIYA

Dy CM Diya Kumari after casting her vote hit back at Congress leader Sachin Pilot by saying that let him speak whatever he wants. "We will win all 25 seats," she said. Diya Kumari cast her vote at Chini Ki Burj pensioner office in Jaipur on Friday.



IN BRIEF

Vice Admiral Tripathi to be new Naval chief

New Delhi: Vice-Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi has been appointed the next Chief of Naval Staff. He is currently the Vice-Chief of the Navy, and will take over on superannuation of the current chief, Admiral R. Hari Kumar on April 30, a govt statement issued on late Thursday said. P6

Yes Bank co-founder gets bail in fraud case

New Delhi: Yes Bank founder Rana Kapoor was released from a prison here on Friday evening, hours after being granted bail by a court in an alleged loan fraud case. Kapoor was first arrested in March 2020 in a money laundering case by the Enforcement Directorate.

AMBANI CELEBRATES 67<sup>TH</sup> B'DAY



RIL Chairman and MD Mukesh Ambani offers prayers with his son and Reliance Jio Chairman Akash Ambani on his 67th birthday, at Siddhivinayak Temple, in Mumbai.

## Records of 2014, 2019 will be broken in UP under leadership of Yogi: Modi

First India Bureau  
Amroha

In a blistering attack on the Samajwadi Party and the RJD, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that how can the people in UP and Bihar who claim to be 'Yaduvanshi', the leaders who reap the benefits of Yaduvansh, align themselves with those who insult Lord Shri Krishna. Addressing a huge public rally in Amroha, highlighting 7-year tenure of Yogi's government, PM Modi expressed confidence that under Yogi's leadership, both the electoral records of 2014 and 2019 would be surpassed, heralding a new chapter in the UP's history.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with a 'Dhol' during a public meeting for the Lok Sabha elections, at Gajraula in Amroha on Friday.

PM MODI TAKES 'AATA' JIBE AT PAKISTAN

PM Narendra Modi on Friday took a dig at Pakistan, saying a country that used to export 'aatank' has now been struggling for 'aata'. PM made remark while addressing rally in Damoh. He said India, which used to buy weapons from abroad, is exporting high-tech weapons to other countries. P6

YOGI TO HOLD RALLY FOR GS SHEKHAWAT TODAY

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will hold a road show in Jodhpur in support of Gajendra Singh Shekhawat today. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will also address an election rally in Jodhpur on April 23.

First India Bureau  
Tawang/Gangtok

Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim recorded a voter turnout of 67.95 and 65.85 percent, respectively for the assembly elections. Polling for 60 assembly seats in Arunachal Pradesh and 32 seats in Sikkim commenced at 7 am on Friday, continued till 5 pm. CMs Pema Khandu of AP and Prem Singh Tamang of Sikkim were among the early voters.



PROUD TO CONTEST FROM LS SEAT HELD BY VAJPAYEE, ADVANI



AMIT SHAH FILES NOMINATION IN GANDHINAGAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah formally entered the electoral arena by filing his nomination papers for the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency on Friday, representing the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Amit Shah expressed his pride in contesting from a seat previously held by the BJP stalwarts such as LK Advani and Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Also present here is Shah's wife Sonal Shah.

## Shah lauds CM Sharma's paper leak handling

Rajiv Gaur  
Jodhpur

Union HM Amit Shah held a public meeting in Bhopalgarh of Jodhpur in support of Pali LS seat candidate PP Chaudhary on Friday during which UHM Shah fiercely attacked Congress. While addressing the rally Shah said that Congress Party President says what do the people of Rajasthan have to do with Kashmir. "Kharge ji, look at the history. Irrespective of the state, when the coun-



Union Home Minister Amit Shah being felicitated by CM Bhajan Lal Sharma & other supporters during public meeting in support of Pali LS seat candidate PP Chaudhary in Bhopalgarh of Jodhpur on Friday.

try's borders were attacked, the soldiers of my Rajasthan have given martyrdom," he said.

Shah started his address with chants of Bharat Mata ki Jai and Jaishree Ram. In his address, HM

Shah described CM Bhajan Lal Sharma as CM who set the wrong people straight in the paper leak

case. "Despite the strong wind and storm, public is desperate to bring Modi. The people of Bhopalgarh understand gesture, there is no need to explain much here," he said and remembered all the deities of Marwar while also remembering the textiles of Pali. "By making Modi the PM for 3rd time, nation will become 3rd largest economic power in the world," he said. Praising CM Bhajan Lal Sharma, he said that he has worked to curb appeasement, starting from the paper leak issue. P8

**FIRST INDIA**

# Ballot Beat

**INDIAN  
GENERAL ELECTIONS  
2024**

02

## BJP candidates winning all 12 LS seats that went to polls in Phase I: CP Joshi

BJP is going to score a hat-trick of victory again in the state: State Prez

First India Bureau  
Chittorgarh

BJP state President CP Joshi visited Chittorgarh assembly constituency and engaged in public relations in Rolla Heda, Baraudia, Narela, Pandoli, Kashmore, Odund, Tumbadia, Netawal Maharaj, Satpura, Ghosunda, Dhanet, Deori, Sahawa, Chikisi, Samri, Sava, Kannauj, Sukhara, Nahargarh and other villages on Friday.



CP Joshi with party officials, public representatives and workers in Chittorgarh on Friday.

He took blessings of victory from voters during the election tour. During this, in a special conversation with First India News, CP Joshi said,

“BJP candidates are winning all 12 Lok Sabha seats in today’s voting. BJP is going to score a hat-trick of victory again in the state.”

## Atmosphere in BJP’s favour after first phase of polling: Sahasrabudde

First India Bureau  
Jhalawar

BJP’s Lok Sabha election in-charge for Rajasthan Vinay Sahasrabudde on Friday exuded confidence that the party will win all 25 Lok Sabha seats in Rajasthan.

He said that the atmosphere during the first phase of voting that was held on Friday has been seen in favor of BJP.

The BJP leader said that the party formed the state government in Rajasthan three months back and the government

and workers have played a good role due to which party will get benefit in LS elections. Sahasrabudde was on a visit to Jhalawar.

On the issue of holding meeting of big leader in Jhalawar for LS polls, he said that former CM Vasundhara Raje and MP Dushyant Singh has been contesting the elections for a long time, hence there is no need for any celebrity to hold a meeting.

However, if local workers demand, the party will consider it.



Vasundhara Raje takes meeting of party workers

First India Bureau  
Baran

Former Chief Minister and BJP’s national vice president Vasundhara Raje on Friday addressed a party workers meeting in Baran. District President Nandlal Suman, MLA Kanwarlal Meena and others were present in the meeting. The workers of Mahila Morcha welcomed Raje

While addressing the workers, Raje said, “All the workers of Mangrol are our family. Our victory is certain but with the immense support of the workers, it seems that for the fifth time, with everyone’s cooperation, our target of crossing the margin of 5 lakh votes will definitely be achieved.”



Ashok Gehlot addressing a meeting in Pindwara in support of Congress candidate from Jalore-Sirohi Vaibhav Gehlot.

## Gehlot rallies for Cong, promises continued support in Jalore-Sirohi

First India Bureau  
Sirohi

Former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot addressed a public meeting at Jawal on Friday in support of the Congress candidate from Jalore-Sirohi - Vaibhav Gehlot. He appealed to make the Congress candidate win from the constituency and said, “Congress made manifesto based on Ra-

hul Gandhi’s BJY. In the manifesto, Rs 1 lakh will be given to every woman of the family.”

Gehlot also spoke on the Kanhaiya Lal murder case of Udaipur and said, “We gave jobs to 2 children of the deceased. The accused were caught soon and the case was given to NIA. If Vaibhav Gehlot wins from the Sirohi region, we will work hard in Jalore-Sirohi.”

## Dy CM PC Bairwa campaigns for Om Birla in Ramganjmandi

First India Bureau  
Kota

Dr Premchand Bairwa on Friday said that Congress used the Dalit community as a vote bank in the last 70 years, but never made efforts for their upliftment. He said that PM Narendra Modi, who himself comes from a backward class, has worked to



Om Birla campaigning in a village in his constituency on Friday.

bring the backward people into the mainstream by running welfare schemes for Dalits, Backwards,

SCs, and STs. Bairwa was on a visit to Ramganjmandi and Kota on Friday in support of Om Birla.



BJP’s Lok Sabha election in-charge for Rajasthan Vinay Sahasrabudde being welcomed in Jhalawar.

## BJP polarising in the name of religion, says Jairam Ramesh

Rajeev Gaur &  
Shiv Prakash Purohit  
Jodhpur

Congress national spokesperson and former cabinet minister Jairam Ramesh said that BJP wants to gain power by polarizing in the name of religion. He accused the BJP of playing with the faith of the common people by exploiting the personality of Shri Ram, who is adored by the people.

He said that this time 28 parties in the INDIA alliance have fielded their candidates across the country, the results of which will be shocking. “Even in Rajasthan, during the Lok Sabha elections, despite having a double engine government, the candidates of Congress and its alliance were indicated to be victorious. This time, Congress will win at least half of the 25 seats,” he said.



Jairam Ramesh addressing the media in Jodhpur on Friday.

## INDIA bloc will cross majority mark of 272 seats: Sachin Pilot

Cong will perform in those seats where it is in a direct contest with the BJP: Pilot

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Friday said that the opposition’s INDIA bloc will cross the majority mark of 272 seats in the LS polls adding that Congress will win more seats than BJP in Rajasthan. “There is an atmosphere of change in the entire country and state and based on what I am seeing, I think that the performance of Congress will be much better than before and INDIA alli-



Sachin Pilot and Congress candidate from Tonk-Sawai Madhopur Harish Chandra Meena share a lighter moment.

ance will get a majority on June 4. It makes no sense to give a guarantee to cross 200,300,500 seats, all I can say is that in Rajasthan, we will get more seats than the BJP and INDIA alliance will

cross the majority mark of 272 seats in the country,” said Sachin Pilot.

He said that Congress will especially perform in those seats where it is in a direct contest with the BJP.

## Close shave for Union Minister Arjun Meghwal

First India Bureau  
Bikaner

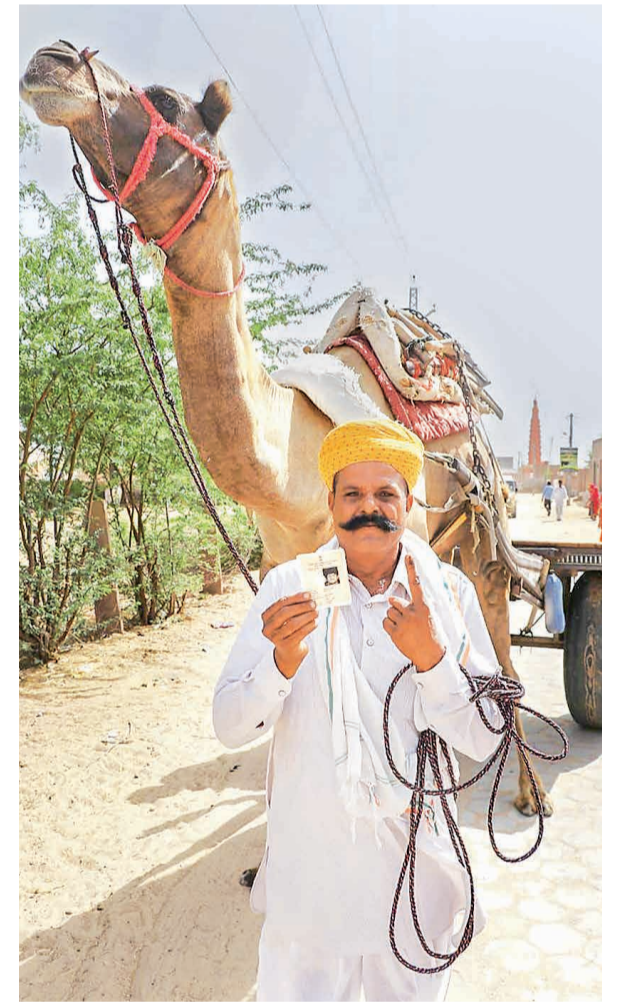
Union minister Arjun Ram Meghwal’s car met with a minor accident. The car was hit by a vehicle carrying a water camper on Friday.

However, there was no casualty in the accident.

The accident took place at Botra Chowk in Gangashahar where Meghwal’s parked car was hit from behind by a water camper vehicle. Meghwal was present in the car. The rear part of Meghwal’s car was slightly damaged.



## Every vote matters



A voter Shaitan Singh Raika with his camel shows ID card and ink-marked finger after casting vote for Lok Sabha elections, in Bikaner on Friday.

PTI

## IN FOCUS BARMER-JAISALMER LS SEAT

## CM Sharma, Manvendra discuss LS strategy

Shiv Prakash Purohit  
Jodhpur

Under the leadership of former MP Manvendra Singh Jasol, who recently left Congress and re-joined the BJP, the ‘prabuddhjan’ from Barmer-Jaisalmer held a closed-door consultation with Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma for several hours.

However, there was no official response from the party, regarding this meeting between Sharma and Jasol. While



Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma and former MP Manvendra Singh Jasol along with Rajput leaders held a meeting to chalk out strategy for Barmer-Jaisalmer LS seat which goes to polls on April 26.

talking to journalists, Jasol said that in this meeting, winning the upcoming elections was discussed and efforts were made to sort out whatever shortcomings

or differences existed in the past. He said that, the Chief Minister and we all are members of the same family and we all held talks together in a good environment.

Regarding the stand of Rajput community in the elections, Jasol said that there is a need to take not only the Rajput community but every section along. Regarding Bar-

mer-Jaisalmer Lok Sabha seat, Jasol said that for some reason there is a lot of focus on this Lok Sabha seat and discussions and questions are being raised on it.

Manvendra Singh @Manvendrajisol

## 6 IAS officers go for election duty, others get their charge

First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Six IAS officers will leave on election duty this weekend and thus the additional charge of the post of these six IAS officers has been given to 5 IAS and 1 Rajasthan Administrative Service (RAS) officers. Additional charge of the post of IAS Poonam has been handed to IAS Dr. Mohan Lal Yadav. Similarly, additional charge of the post of Mine Secretary Anandi has been handed to IAS



Ajitabh Sharma. Furthermore, additional charge of the post of IAS Anil Aggarwal has been handed to IAS Dr. Ghanshyam, additional charge IAS Bachanesh Aggarwal to RAS Praveen Kumar Lekhara and additional charge of the post of IAS Saurabh Swami has been given to IAS Ramavtar Meena.

## Kirodi slams Pilot on ERCP issue

First India Bureau  
Dausa

After casting his vote in the Dausa Lok Sabha constituency, state Cabinet minister Kirodi Lal Meena took on the Congress party and Sachin Pilot on the East Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP).

He said, “Their job is to mislead. Approval has been received. By connecting PKC and ERCP, both Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh will get water. If Pilot had any doubts, he would have questioned me in the House. I have answered all the questions in the Assembly.”

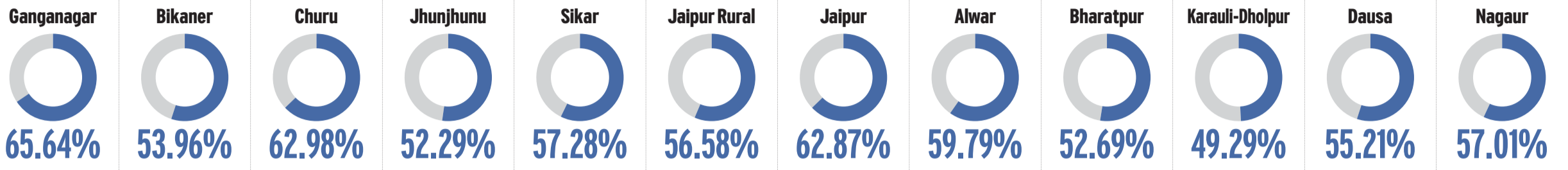
# FIRST INDIA Ballot Beat



## INDIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS 2024

### VOTERS TURNOUT ON 12 LOK SABHA CONSTITUENCIES OF PHASE I IN RAJASTHAN

\* last updated at 11:20pm



Arjun Meghwal casted his vote in Bikaner with his wife.



Pratap S Khachariyawas and his wife after casting their votes.



Govind Singh Dotasra cast his vote in Sikar on Friday.



BJP leader Rajendra Rathore exercising his franchise.



LOP Tikaram Jully, his wife posing with inked finger in Alwar.



BJP Jaipur candidate Manju Sharma posing at selfie booth.



JMGC Mayor Dr Somya after casting her vote on Friday.

In the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, there was complete boycott of voting in villages Haminpur & Gadoli of Jhunjhunu district. Not a single vote was cast in these two villages as villagers protested demanding Yamuna water

# GANGANAGAR RECORDS HIGHEST TURNOUT IN RAJ 65.64%



A Rajasthani woman embraces tradition and democracy, casting her vote in Akera Doonger Village in Jaipur. **SANTOSH SHARMA**



DGP UR Sahoo and his wife posing with inked finger in Jpr on Friday.



UDH Minister Jahbar S Kharra posing after vote in Sikar.



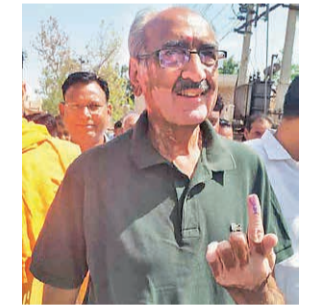
Union Min Bhupender S Yadav at selfie booth in Alwar on Friday.



Rajyavardhan S Rathore, Gayatri Rathore in Jaipur on Friday.



Jaipur Collector & District Election Officer Prakash Rajpurohit.



BJP Jaipur (R) candidate Rao Rajendra posing inked finger.



MLA Gopal Sharma posing with inked finger after casting his vote at Little Wings School at DCM in Jaipur on Friday.



Sachin Pilot posing for selfie after casting his vote on Friday.



ACS Shubhra Singh casts vote with family in Jaipur on Friday.

#### Vijendar Singh Jaipur

Under the first phase of Lok Sabha General Election-2024, peaceful and fair voting took place on Friday in Ganganagar, Bikaner, Churu, Jhunjhunu, Sikar, Jaipur Rural, Jaipur, Alwar, Bharatpur, Karauli-Dholpur, Dausa and Nagaour Lok Sabha seats of the state. All voters including newly married couples, disabled, third gender, tribals, old individuals and youth participated enthusiastically in voting at 24,370 polling stations.

CEO Praveen Gupta said that 57.87% estimated voting (including 0.61% postal ballot) has been recorded in these areas and final poll data percentage will be available only by April 20.

#### FATE OF 114 CANDIDATES SEALED AS EVMS BROUGHT TO COUNTING CENTRES

Voting for first phase of LS polls ended on Friday evening after which EVMs were brought to all division level counting centres. Tight security arrangements have been made at all counting centres. Collection of EVMs of Jaipur & Jaipur (R) seats are done in Rajasthan & Commerce College where EVMs were kept in the strong room. EVMs of Phulera, Shahpura, Jhotwara, Amer, Kotputli, are collected in Commerce College. Counting will be held on June 4. **Sunil S Chouhan**

DGP UR Sahoo said tight security arrangements were made for free, fair and peaceful voting. The Rajasthan Police, along with companies of the CAPF are deployed to maintain law and order.



#### SUPPORTERS OF MIRDHA, BENIWAL CLASH IN NAGAUR

Supporters of BJP candidate Jyoti Mirdha and RLP candidate Hanuman Beniwal clashed in Kuchera of Nagaour during the polling. Kuchera Municipality Chairman Tejpal Mirdha suffered head injuries. Richpal Mirdha reached the spot after the clash. The police officers were chased away. Mirdha said that earlier the police remained a mute spectator and later got into action.

#### JHUNJHUNU IRS OFFICER RUNS 21 KM TO POLLING BOOTH

Jhunjhunu's IRS officer Sushil Kulhari ran a 21-km (half marathon) from the District Collectorate office to the polling booth of his village Tiloka Ka Bas. His son, UB, arrived there on a bicycle. Kulhari was flagged off from the Collectorate by ADM Ramratan Soukaria and RAS Hawaii Singh. Kulhari is a Joint Income Tax Commissioner level officer and is currently posted as Joint Secy, Planning Dept, Govt of Rajasthan.

#### CEO PRAVEEN GUPTA, HIS DAUGHTER CAST VOTES DURING HAPPY HOURS IN JAIPUR

Chief Electoral Officer Praveen Gupta voted in Happy Hours after 7.30 am. He reached the polling station with his daughter Anshika, who also voted for the first time and looked excited. Gupta said that scratch cards, certificates, and other surprise elements for voting in Happy Hours have been kept at the booth. The youths are especially excited about these innovations and are voting during this time. After reaching polling station number 53, Gupta appealed to the voters that they should leave their homes and realize the slogan of first voting, then eating.

# HALFWAY THROUGH IPL ARE INDIA'S T20 WORLD CUP SLOTS FILLED?



**Siddhaarth Mahan**

The writer is a specialist on Sports and Cinema who works as an actor in the Hindi film industry



**IN-DEPTH**

## ISRAEL HITS BACK, CALL FOR RESTRAINT FROM U.S. FOLLOWS

Israel has retaliated to Iran's missile and drone attack on its soil. Iran claimed to have drowned Israeli drones, while American officials said that a missile hit Iran in the early hours of Friday. The missile is said to have hit a place near Iran's nuclear facility. Just as Israel had downplayed the Iranian attack, Iran also claimed no damage from the attack near an army base in Isfahan after which "air defence systems were activated".

The targeted Israeli attack marks a gradual escalation of the regional conflict. The US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has not only spoken against escalation and denied any role in the Israeli offensive but also opposed any Israeli military operation in Rafah. Iran has also ruled out further retaliatory strike against Israel.

This holds promise of peace in the region provided Israel does not launch another attack on Iran and also in Rafah where a civilian population will be like sitting ducks. Israel must heed US advice.

## AFTER MAGGI, CONTROVERSY DOGS NESTLE AGAIN



What is good for the goose is good for the gander, goes the saying. Simply put it means that what is good for one must be good for all. Not for Nestle, the world's largest food and beverages company, which has been accused of selling sugar and honey added infant milk and cereal products in Asia (including India), Africa and Latin America.

The reason why this has been flagged as discriminatory is that the same products are sold in Europe and the UK but without being sweetened. It is also unethical because the World Health Organisation advises against giving sugary milk or cereal to infants until they are two years of age.

Nestle India reportedly said that "over the past five years it has reduced added sugars by 30 percent... Compliance is an essential characteristic of Nestle India" and that it does not compromise on nutritional quality of its products. Nestle India's clarification is reasonable as Indian regulators do not prescribe any upper limit for added sugars. Added sugars, as per the WHO, may lead to additive preference for sweets and obesity.

India's Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) began examining the claim after the revelation by the Swiss investigative agency Public Eye and International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN).

In 2015 Nestle was embroiled in another controversy when it had to destroy 38,000 tonnes of Maggi noodles after they were found to contain monosodium glutamate (MSG) and lead. The packing claimed absence of MSG and the lead content was found to be 1000 times more than mentioned on the packing.

## EMERGING STARS

Moreover, the search for reliable finishers continues. So far, players like Shivam Dube, Rinku Singh and Rahul Tewatia have performed brilliantly in the IPL. But Dube and Tewatia in particular have been given limited opportunities to showcase their abilities with the ball.

Some selectors have hinted that the team will not be tinkered with from the previous international series that India played.

This gives an edge to Rinku Singh since he was exceptional in India's series victory against Afghanistan earlier this year! The bowling department is mostly sorted for now.

With Jasprit Bumrah hitting top form, he will lead the pacers pack of Siraj, Arshdeep and Avesh Khan. The only position up for grabs would be the third spinner's spot alongside Kuldeep Yadav and Jadeja. Currently, it's a race between Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravi Bishnoi and Axar Patel. There is an added advantage with Axar's batting abilities which might put him ahead for selection.

With IPL 2024 reaching its halfway mark, cricket enthusiasts are buzzing with a keen sense of anticipation for the T20 World Cup which is now barely a month away. As the IPL progresses, the spotlight has inevitably shifted towards the formation of Team India's squad for the upcoming World Cup. The proximity of the T20 World Cup, beginning just a week after the IPL final, adds a layer of urgency to the selection process. With India's first match scheduled against Ireland on June 5th, pressure is intensifying for the selectors to assemble a formidable squad capable of bringing home the coveted title.

One of the primary concerns dominating the minds of selectors and fans alike is the finalization of key positions within the squad. While everyone appreciates the great depth of talent in Indian cricket, evident in the ongoing IPL, it also creates confusion on whom to select for the national team which leads to a pertinent question - have all the slots for the World Cup squad been clinched or is there a reason to worry for Team India?

At the moment it seems the openers' slots are almost fixed with Rohit Sharma, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill ready for the roles. But a section of cricket experts feel that Virat Kohli might just be a great opening partner to Rohit since he is already opening the batting for his franchise for a long time. This will also help India to slot in



With IPL 2024 reaching its halfway mark, cricket enthusiasts are buzzing with a keen sense of anticipation for the T20 World Cup which is now barely a month away. As the IPL progresses, the spotlight has inevitably shifted towards the formation of Team India's squad for the upcoming World Cup. The proximity of the T20 World Cup, beginning just a week after the IPL final, adds a layer of urgency to the selection process. With India's first match scheduled against Ireland on June 5th, pressure is intensifying for the selectors to assemble a formidable squad capable of bringing home the coveted title

power hitters and finishers in their line up as the pitches in USA and the Caribbean are expected to be on the slower side. Both Rohit and Kohli have been in terrific form, with Kohli leading the run scorers list in the IPL and Rohit at number 3 after the first seven matches.

The next spot in the batting order is occupied firmly by Suryakumar Yadav. He was out in the first few matches due to an injury but since his comeback, Surya has hit 2 fifties in just 4 innings, making a strong impact for his IPL franchise, Mumbai Indians. Moreover, Surya has been the most consistent batsman in the shortest format for India which has put him at the top of the ICC T20 rankings.

The conundrum with the selection starts thereafter as the next 4-5 spots are up for grabs but the competition is strong. Thanks to the consistent performances of established players in the IPL, the middle-order remains a point of contention. Hardik

Pandya, Rishabh Pant, KL Rahul, Sanju Samson, Ravindra Jadeja, Shivam Dube and Rinku Singh are competing for those slots. They will make the middle order and the lower middle order for India.

Unfortunately, Hardik has not been in the best of bowling form since his comeback from injury but he remains a vital member of the squad. Even Jadeja is delivering mixed performances in the season so far and hasn't been at his best which has left selectors grappling with tough decisions.

There's also a problem of plenty with the wicket keeping options. Apart from the comeback man Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson and Rahul, Ishan Kishan is back in contention due to his recent aggressive performances. But he will have to do something extraordinary to force himself in the team since his departure from the South Africa Test series midway citing "personal reasons"

has not won him too many friends in the BCCI or in the team management.

Moreover, the search for reliable finishers continues. So far, players like Shivam Dube, Rinku Singh and Rahul Tewatia have performed brilliantly in the IPL. But Dube and Tewatia in particular have been given limited opportunities to showcase their abilities with the ball. Some selectors have hinted that the team will not be tinkered with from the previous international series that India played. This gives an edge to Rinku Singh since he was exceptional in India's series victory against Afghanistan earlier this year!

The bowling department is mostly sorted for now. With Jasprit Bumrah hitting top form, he will lead the pacers pack of Siraj, Arshdeep and Avesh Khan. The only position up for grabs would be the third spinner's spot alongside Kuldeep Yadav and Jadeja. Currently, it's a race between Yuzvendra Chahal, Ravi Bishnoi and Axar Patel. There is an added advantage with Axar's batting abilities which might put him ahead for selection.

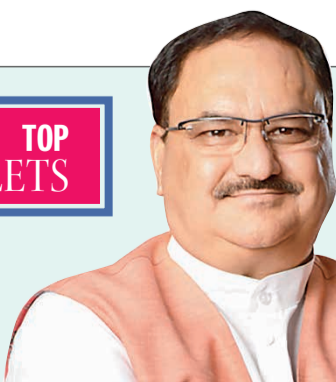
As the T20 World Cup draws nearer, it becomes imperative for Team India to finalize its squad and commence preparations in earnest. With just a few weeks left before the marquee event, India must navigate through the complexities of team selection to stand a chance at lifting the trophy and living up to the expectations of millions of passionate fans.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE AUTHOR ARE PERSONAL



India's Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) began examining the claim after the revelation by the Swiss investigative agency Public Eye and International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)

**TOP TWEETS**



10 years back, India's economy was considered as fragile and unstable. Today, under the visionary leadership of the Hon. PM Shri @narendramodi ji, India has taken a giant leap and became the 5th largest economy in the world.

Jagat Prakash Nadda (Modi Ka Parivar) @JPNadda



I express my gratitude to the Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodi ji for bringing mobile connectivity to the village of Giu, Spiti in Himachal Pradesh for the first time. It not only bridges the digital divide but also empowers rural communities, opening doors to a world of opportunities. Listen to the interesting interaction between the Hon'ble PM and the villagers.

Anurag Thakur (मोदी का परिवार) @ianuragthakur

**SPIRITUAL SPEAK**

Like someone pointing to treasure is the wise person who sees your faults and points them out. Associate with such a sage.

**BUDDHA**



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# LS POLL BUZZ

**1st phase of Lok Sabha polls** Barring some violence in Bengal and a tragic incident in Chhattisgarh, polling concludes smoothly

# POLLING BY AND LARGE PEACEFUL



**VOTING TILL 5 PM**

Uttarakhand	<b>53%</b>
J&K's Udhampur	<b>65%</b>
Andaman & Nicobar	<b>57%</b>
Uttar Pradesh (8 LS seats)	<b>57%</b>
Bihar (4 LS seats)	<b>46%</b>
West Bengal (3 LS seats)	<b>77%</b>

A security personnel stands guard as people wait in queues to cast their votes for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Sonitpur district of Assam, on Friday. **PTI**



**First India Bureau**  
New Delhi

In the first phase of Lok Sabha polls, covering 102 seats across 21 states and Union territories, almost 60 per cent polling was reported by 5 pm. Despite sporadic violence in West Bengal and a tragic incident in Chhattisgarh where a CRPF jawan lost his life due to an accidental explosion of a grenade launcher shell, Election Commission authorities noted that polling proceeded smoothly and peacefully overall. The voting, starting at 7 am,

An elderly voter shows her finger marked with indelible ink after casting her vote for the first phase of LS polls, in Chamoli dist, on Friday. **PTI**

## CLOSE TO TWO-THIRDS OF WB ELECTORATE VOTE ACROSS 3 LS SEATS

**→** Kolkata: Notwithstanding reports of stray violence, close to two-thirds of the 5.6 million electorate voted till 3 p.m. on Friday across the three Lok Sabha constituencies of northern West Bengal. Polling was brisk and long queues were seen outside the booths in the first phase election comprising the Cooch Behar, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri constituents. According to the Election Commission, the overall polling figure was 66.34 percent after eight hours of polling. Cooch Behar recorded 65.54 percent polling, Alipurduar 66.23 percent and Jalpaiguri 67.28 percent.

## TMC & BJP WORKERS CLASH IN COOCH BEHAR OF BENGL

**→** Kolkata: The polling in the first two hours for three Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal on Friday was marred by incidents of violence in the Cooch Behar Lok Sabha constituency. Some cases of violence were reported from Jalpaiguri Lok Sabha seat as well. Alipurduar, however, was an exception, with no report of poll-related violence in the first two hours.

concluded at 6 pm in most constituencies. Concurrently, assembly elections took place in Arunachal Pradesh

and Sikkim. The National Democratic Alliance (NDA), led by Prime Minister Modi, aims for a robust

majority, while the opposition INDIA bloc seeks a resurgence. Voters from diverse backgrounds, including first-timers, new-

lyweds, and physically challenged individuals, participated. Despite minor glitches in Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) in various states, turnout remained significant.

Instances of violence and technical issues were reported in several regions, such as clashes between TMC and BJP workers in West Bengal and EVM malfunctions in Assam. However, authorities addressed these issues promptly. Overall, voter turnout varied across states, with notable participation seen in Manipur, Tamil Nadu, and Arunachal Pradesh.

## POLLING ENDS IN ALL LS CONSTITUENCIES IN TN

**→** Chennai: Polling for Lok Sabha polls ended at 6 pm on Friday in all 39 Lok Sabha constituencies in Tamil Nadu with the state recording a provisional voter turnout of 63.20 per cent. Election authorities citing data at 5 PM said Dharmapuri LS segment witnessed the highest voter turnout of 67.52 per cent, while South Chennai recorded the lowest of 57.04 per cent. The bypoll to Vilavancode Assembly seat in Kanyakumari recorded a polling of 56.68 per cent. The final data on polling recorded in the state from 7 am till 6 pm is expected to be updated by officials soon.

## PEOPLE OF TN ARE WITH PM MODI: ANNAMALAI

**→** Chennai: Tamil Nadu BJP chief K Annamalai said on Friday that the BJP will register a historic victory in the state in Lok Sabha polls. He said that the people of Tamil Nadu are with PM Narendra Modi and will give BJP a thumping success.



TN BJP chief K Annamalai shows his ink-marked finger. **PTI**



BJP candidate from Nagpur Nitin Gadkari with his family shows his finger marked with indelible ink after casting his vote in Nagpur, on Friday. **PTI**

## Showing the finger!



Yoga guru Ramdev & Patanjali MD Acharya Balkrishna.



Congress' Kamal Nath shows his finger marked with indelible ink.



Congress candidate Gaurav Gogoi in Jorhat dist, on Friday.



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and his family members show their ink-marked finger after casting votes for Lok Sabha elections, in Khatima, on Friday. **PTI**

## Casting vote after nuptial knot

### Newlyweds queue up to cast votes in first phase of polling

**PTI**  
Udhampur

**S**everal newlywed couples turned up at polling stations in wedding attire to cast their votes in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur constituency which went to polls in the first phase of Lok Sabha polls on Friday.



A newly-wedded couple after casting their votes for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Kathua district, on Friday. **PTI**

Accompanied by his friends dressed in traditional attire, a groom in sherwani and colourful headgear was among the first to cast his vote at a polling booth in Udhampur as the first phase of the LS polls began Friday.



A newly-wedded couple arrives at a polling station to cast their votes for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Pauri Garhwal district, on Friday. **PTI**

A newlywed Kapil Gupta exercised his franchise in Udhampur on Friday morning. "Voting is our right and must be done on priority," he said. Polling in the Udhampur constituency spread over five districts of Udhampur, Kathua, Ramban, Doda and Kishtwar, started at 7 am. An estimated 57.09 per cent of the 16.23 lakh electorate have exercised their franchise in the constituency till 3 pm.

## 80.40% voting recorded in Tripura West, Oppn cry foul

**PTI**  
Agartala

The Tripura West Lok Sabha seat registered a voter turnout of 80.40 per cent on Friday, while Opposition Congress and CPI(M) accused the ruling party of rigging.

An official said 82.42 per cent polling was recorded in the 2019 Lok Sabha election in Tripura West Parliamentary constituency. This year's figure may also go up since polling continued in several booths beyond the scheduled voting hours.



First time voters take selfie after casting votes for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, in Nagpur, on Friday. **PTI**

The by-election to the Ramnagar assembly seat, which was also held during the day, recorded a turnout of 68.64 per cent. Opposition alleged intimidation of voters by BJP workers, a charge denied by the BJP. Returning Officer (RO), Tripura West Lok Sabha seat, Vishal Kumar, however, said the voting was largely free, fair and peaceful as no untoward incidents took place during the day.

## Sikkim & Arunachal Pradesh Assembly polls

### Voting concludes peacefully in Sikkim for state assembly

**PTI**  
Gangtok



Arunachal Chief Minister Pema Khandu gets his finger ink-marked before casting his vote, on Friday. **PTI**

## "IS BAAR KAMAL KA PHOOL KHILNA TAY HAI": ARUNACHAL CHIEF MINISTER PEMA KHANDU



Arunachal Chief Minister Pema Khandu gets his finger ink-marked before casting his vote, on Friday. **PTI**

**→** Tawang: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu, after casting his vote in the first phase of the Lok Sabha elections, said that this time "Kamal ka Phool" is sure to bloom in Arunachal Pradesh and the BJP will win both Lok Sabha seats. CM Khandu cast his vote for the Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections at a polling station in Tawang. Polling for assembly elections in the north-eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim also started with voting for the first phase of Lok Sabha elections on Friday morning.

**PM IN MADHYA PRADESH** PM addresses poll rally in Damoh

## Country needs a strong govt for growth: PM Modi

First India Bureau  
Damoh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said that India needs to have a strong government, especially at a time when the world has been facing a war-like situation.

Speaking at a rally in the Damoh constituency in Madhya Pradesh, PM Modi said a strong government can take the country towards growth, and the development in the last 10 years is an indicator of that.

The polling in the Damoh Lok Sabha seat in the Bundelkhand region will be held in second phase of polling on April 26.

“During the Covid pandemic, lakhs of Indian citizens were stuck in different parts of the world, and they were all brought to their homes safely,” PM Modi said.

“Wherever Indian citizens face problems, be it during Covid pandemic, or in war-struck countries, I have made it sure that every citizen of the country returns home safely. It could happen because you (people) had elected a strong government. India needs a strong government in such a scenario,” PM Modi said.



PM Narendra Modi being felicitated by MP BJP chief VD Sharma at Vijay Sankalp rally in Damoh district, on Friday. Madhya Pradesh Minister Prahlad Singh Patel is also seen. **PTI**

### Flowers all the way!



BJP leader and former Madhya Pradesh CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan with others during his nomination rally for the Lok Sabha elections, in Raisen district on Friday. **PTI**

Asaram fails to get admitted to hosp due to polls

First India Bureau  
Jodhpur

Self-styled godman Asaram, who has been granted 10 days for his treatment by the High Court after a hearing on Tuesday, could not be admitted to the hospital on Friday morning due to Lok Sabha elections.

Asaram got permission for treatment at a private Ayurvedic hospital in Jodhpur on March 21. He was sent there on March 25 but the presence of four policemen outside Asaram's room was affecting his privacy and treatment. Asaram returned to Central Jail on April 2 and filed a petition in the High Court.



## Congress, Left ideologically bankrupt, says JP Nadda

PTI

Wayanad (Kerala)

BJP chief JP Nadda said on Friday that parties within the I.N.D.I. Alliance, such as the Congress and the Left, have become 'ideologically bankrupt.' He highlighted their fierce electoral battles with each other outside of Delhi while maintaining cordial relationships within the national capital to oppose the BJP.

Speaking to PTI on the sidelines of a roadshow organised by the BJP-led NDA in Sulthan Bathery for its candidate K Surendran, Nadda cited the electoral battle between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and LDF's Annie Raja of the CPI in the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat.



BJP National President JP Nadda waves at supporters during a roadshow, in Wayanad, Kerala, on Friday. **PTI**

### BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT TAKES DIG AT CONGRESS MP RAHUL GANDHI IN WAYANAD

Wayanad: BJP National President JP Nadda on Friday took a dig at Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, claiming that he is contesting from Wayanad because he knows that he will lose if he contests from Amethi in Uttar Pradesh in this Lok Sabha polls. Addressing a roadshow in Sulthan Bathery as part of electioneering for BJP state president and NDA candidate K Surendran, he alleged that Rahul Gandhi's politics is without a proper stance.

## IMD predicts severe heatwave till April 23

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

India Meteorological Department on Friday predicted severe heatwave over East India till April 23 and heat over parts of South Peninsular India.

As per IMD, "Heatwave conditions will prevail in isolated to some pockets of Odisha from April 19 to 21; Jharkhand and Gangetic West Bengal from April 19-23; Bihar from April 20-23; Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam,



Mirage (optical phenomenon) is seen on the Kartavya Path on a hot summer afternoon, in New Delhi. **ANI**

Rayalaseema, Telangana and interior Tamil Nadu."

Severe heatwave conditions are also likely in isolated pockets of Odisha on

April 19 & 20 and Gangetic West Bengal during April 19-22, the IMD said.

The IMD has also forecast heavy rainfall with

thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds at isolated places over North-east India till April 23.

"Scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied by thunderstorm, lightning and winds gusting upto 40 kmph is likely to prevail over Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh, Gilgit, Baltistan, Muzaffarabad, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Rajasthan and West Uttar Pradesh from April 19 to 25," the IMD said.

## 2 dead, 3 hurt as wall collapses in Ahmedabad



The fire brigade staff and rescue workers at the scene.

Agencies  
Ahmedabad

The collapse of a wall near the historic site of the Dada Hari Ni Vav (stepwell) in Asarwa, Ahmedabad, has resulted in two fatalities and three injuries. The fire brigade, upon receiving the distress call in the afternoon, dispatched two teams to the scene.

Despite early interven-

tion by locals, the fire brigade continued the search operation, assessing the site for any additional victims and examining the structural integrity of the surrounding area to prevent further mishaps, sources said.

The residents of the area who were the first responders pulled five victims from the rubble before professional aid arrived.

## 'Ram Rajya' being established in country, says Rajnath Singh

First India Bureau  
Secunderabad

Union minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said that there is an indication that 'Ram Rajya' will be established in the country.

At a rally here, he said he firmly believes that following the construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya, "we got an indication that Ram Rajya is going to be established in this country".

Union Minister and Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy filed his nomination from Secunderabad Lok Sabha seat.

Rajnath Singh recalled that in 2014, the BJP had promised that if it came to power, no force on earth could stop the construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.



Rajnath Singh with Telangana BJP chief G Kishan Reddy and others at a rally, at Secunderabad, in Hyderabad district. **PTI**

### RAJNATH ASSERTS BJP GOVERNMENT FREE FROM CORRUPTION OVER THE LAST DECADE

Hyderabad: Union Minister Rajnath Singh proclaimed that the BJP government has remained untainted by corruption for the past ten years, emphasizing the party's commitment to integrity and transparency in governance. At a rally in Secunderabad, Rajnath underscored the BJP's reputation as a corruption-free administration. He highlighted the contrast between the BJP's clean governance and the alleged malfeasance of the erstwhile administration.

## AAP accuses ED; claims Delhi CM Kejriwal is not being given insulin in jail

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh on Friday accused the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Jail administration of hatching a conspiracy to take Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's life.

Addressing a press conference, Singh expressed concern over the CM's life, alleging the BJP is hatching a conspiracy to jeopardize his life.

He said, "I had earlier stated that a deep conspiracy is going on against Kejriwal. At that time, many people objected to my statement as to what was I talking about. But I know the working style of BJP, the way BJP leaders work, they stoop to the ex-



AAP MP Sanjay Singh addresses a presser, in New Delhi. **ANI**

tent of taking someone's life, and hatch conspiracies to the extent of taking someone's life," he said.

"And now with the kind of proceedings which are continuously going on against Kejriwal, I want to say that a deep conspiracy is being hatched against him and any kind of accident can happen with him inside the jail," he said.

## SC adjourns till July Ramdev's plea against FIRs

ANI  
New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday adjourned for July the hearing of a plea filed by Yog guru **Baba Ramdev** to club FIRs lodged against him in different States over his alleged remarks that allopathy cannot cure Covid-19.

A bench of Justices MM Sundresh and SVN Bhatti granted two weeks' time to the states of Bihar and Chhattisgarh to inform it about the status regarding the FIRs and the chargesheet filed.

It also asked Ramdev's counsel to implement the complainants in the case before the top court and posted the matter in July.



### TO MEET DEMAND...

## Railways to run 9111 trips summer season

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

To ensure the convenience of passengers and manage the anticipated surge in travel demand during summer, Indian Railways is operating a record-breaking 9111 trips during the summer season, Railways said on Friday.

This marks a substantial rise compared to the summer of 2023 when a total of 6369 trips were offered. This translates to an increase of 2742 trips, demonstrating Indian



This summer season additional 2742 train trips have been added.

Railways' commitment to meeting passenger demands effectively. The additional trains have been meticulously planned to

connect key destinations across the country, ensuring seamless travel on major railway routes. All zonal railways have

During summers, Zonal Railways have been instructed to ensure availability of drinking water at Railway stations. Elaborate crowd control arrangements are made at all important railway stations

geared up to operate these additional trips, catering to the summer travel rush from states like Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Guja-

rat, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Delhi.

Planning and running of additional trains is a continuous process for which inputs are taken from all the communication channels 24x 7 like media reports, Social media platforms, and Railway Integrated helpline number 139, apart from details of waitlist passengers in the PRS system, to assess demand of trains on a particular route.

## DK Tripathi appointed as the next Chief of the Naval Staff

First India Bureau  
New Delhi

Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, who currently serves as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, will be taking over as the next Chief of the Naval Staff on April 30, as per an official announcement on Friday.

The current Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar, will be retiring from service on the same day.

"The Government has appointed Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, PVSM, AVSM, NM,



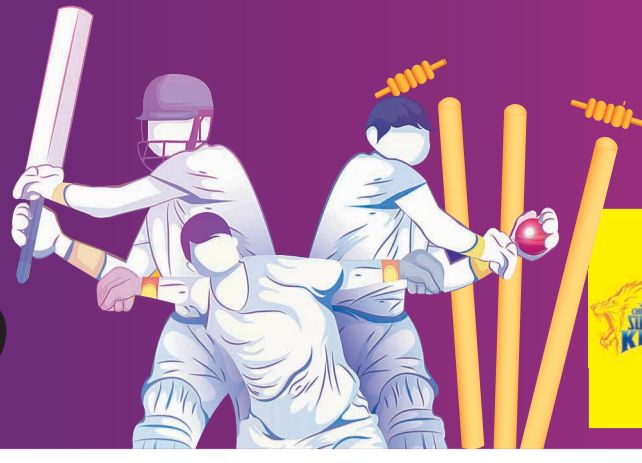
Dinesh Kumar Tripathi

presently serving as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, as the next Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from the afternoon of April 30, 2024. The present Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral R Hari Kumar, PVSM, AVSM, VSM retires from service

on April 30," Ministry of Defence stated in a press release on Friday.

Born on May 15, 1964, Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi was commissioned into the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy on July 01, 1985. A Communication and Electronic Warfare specialist, he has had a long and distinguished service spanning nearly 39 years. Prior to taking over as the Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, he had served as the Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.

# INDIA KA TYOHAR



**Match 34** Jadeja's 50; cameo from Dhoni power CSK to 176-6

## LSG chase down target with 8 wickets & 1 over to spare



Lucknow Super Giants' captain KL Rahul and Krunal Pandya celebrate with teammates after dismissing Chennai Super Kings' Sameer Rizvi during an IPL 2024 match, in Lucknow, Friday. **PTI**

**Agencies**  
Lucknow

Fifties by skipper KL Rahul and Quinton de Kock helped Lucknow Super Giants to beat Chennai Super Kings by eight wickets in their Indian Premier League match here on Friday.

Rahul (82, 53b, 9x4, 3x6) and De Kock (54, 43b, 5x4, 1x6), who added 134 runs for the opening wicket, played pivotal roles as LSG raced past the target of 177 in 19



Chennai Super Kings' MS Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja run between the wickets during the match against Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL 2024, at Atal Bihari Vajpayee Stadium, in Lucknow on Friday.

overs. Earlier, CSK rode on a controlled fifty by Ravindra Jadeja to reach 176 for six. For LSG, Pandya was the most successful bowler (2/16).

### RAVINDRA JADEJA COMPLETES 3,500 RUNS IN T20S

New Delhi: Chennai Super Kings all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has attained a milestone of 3,500 runs in T20 cricket. The veteran Indian cricketer achieved the mark in his 317th match (227 innings). Jadeja needed 34 runs to reach the landmark. He did so against the Lucknow Super Giants in Match 34 of the IPL 2024 season. Jadeja hit an unbeaten 57 from 40 balls.

### MAHI SLAMS 9-BALL 28\* VERSUS LSG

New Delhi: Chennai Super Kings batter Mahendra Singh Dhoni entertained fans after a superb cameo against the Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL 2024 on Friday. Dhoni came to bat when CSK were 141/6 after 17.5 overs. He starred for the Super Kings and helped them finish on 176/6 in 20 overs.

**G7 urges all parties to work to de-escalate Iran-Israel tension**

## Iran shoots down many drones, US suspect Israel



Foreign ministers from the G7, comprising the United States, Italy, Canada, France, Germany, Japan and Britain, wrapped up three days of talks on the island of Capri in Italy on Friday.

**Agencies**  
Tehran

Israel launched an attack on Iranian soil on Friday, US officials said, in the latest tit-for-tat exchange between the two arch foes, whose decades of shadow war has broken out into the open and threatened to drag the region deeper into conflict.

Israel launched a strike against Iran in retaliation for its weekend attack, said US officials, though media from both countries appeared to downplay the severity of the incident. Iran activated its air defence system



Military personnel stand guard at a nuclear facility in Zardanj area of Isfahan in Iran on Friday.

over several cities, state media reported, after the country's official broadcaster said explosions were heard near Isfahan, Iran's third-biggest city.

Several Iranian nuclear sites are located in Isfahan province, includ-

ing Natanz, centerpiece of Iran's uranium enrichment program. Nuclear facilities in Isfahan were reported to be "completely secure", Iran's Tasnim news agency said.

Though some media reports said that missiles had been fired, Iran said that they have shot down several drones but there had been "no missile attack for now".

Several drones "have been successfully shot down by the country's air defence, there are no reports of a missile attack for now," Iran's space agency spokesman Hossein Dalirian said on X.

### LEADERS REACT

• The European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said that the attacks overnight "confirm the need to avoid an escalation."

• U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said the US was not involved in any "offensive operations" in the apparent Israeli drone attack in Iran, but declined to respond to claims that Israel gave the U.S. advance notice of the action.

• German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock says everyone in the Middle East must "act prudently and responsibly" to avoid a further escalation in the region.

• Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that statements put forward both by Iran and Israel after an apparent drone attack on Friday in Iran are "illogical."

• Russian authorities have informed Israel that Iran isn't seeking to escalate the conflict, Russia's top diplomat said on Friday.

• German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is calling on all in the Middle East to ensure that there is no further escalation in the region, but he & his government are saying little about events in Iran.

### IN BRIEF

#### Barmer: Two bikes collide head-on, 2 die

Two youths riding a bike died after a fierce head-on collision with another bike near Harsani Fanta in the rural police station area of Barmer. Meanwhile, two other bike riders were seriously injured and are undergoing treatment at Barmer District Hospital.



#### 2 Indian students die in accident in Scotland

New Delhi: Two Indian students studying at Dundee University in Scotland have lost their lives in an accident at a Scottish waterfall. They were identified as Jitendranath 'Jitu' Karuturi and Chanhakya Boliseti, as per UK news.

#### Nigerian army kills 192 suspected terrorists

Abuja: At least 192 suspected terrorists, including three key figures, were killed in anti-terror operations in Nigeria over the past week, the military said. Some 341 others were nabbed in raids by troops, with 62 hostages freed from their captors during the period, Edward Buba, a spokesman for military said.

#### 7 killed in fire in Indonesia's Jakarta

Jakarta: Seven people were killed in a fire at a frame shop house on Mampang Prapatan Raya Street in Indonesia's capital city Jakarta, according to police. "There are five adults and two children who were found in a warehouse on the second floor," said an official.

## Ukraine shoots down Russian strategic bomber after airstrike kills eight: Kyiv

**Agencies**  
Kyiv

Ukraine shot down a Russian strategic bomber 300 km (185 miles) from its border on Friday after the warplane took part in an airstrike that killed at least eight people, including two children, in the central Dnipropetrovsk region, Kyiv said.

Missiles rained down on the city of Dnipro and the surrounding region in the early hours, damaging residential buildings, the main train station and wounding at least 28 civilians, regional officials said.

Russia has stepped up its long-range aerial assaults on Ukraine's energy system and other targets in recent weeks, ratcheting up the pressure on Kyiv far behind



Firefighters work at a site of an apartment building hit by a Russian missile strike in Dnipro, Ukraine on Friday.

the front lines where Russian forces have been slowly advancing in the east.



## Four dead in UAE, Dubai airport still disrupted after rain & storm

**Agencies**  
Dubai

Deaths from heavy rains earlier this week in the United Arab Emirates rose to four, authorities said on Friday, as well as flooding roads and jamming Dubai's international airport.

The storm first hit Oman, killing at least 20 people. Two Philippine women and one man died in their vehicles during flooding, the government in Manila said.

An Emirati man in his 70s had also died when his vehicle was swept away by floods in the northern Ras Al Khaimah emirate. Scientists blame increasingly common extreme weather events, such as the rains in UAE and Oman, on human-led global warming.



A drone view of cars and trucks lying partially submerged following heavy rainfall in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on Friday.

### IMPORTANT ADVISORY HELPLINE NUMBERS FOR INDIANS TRAVELLING THROUGH DUBAI AIRPORT

New Delhi: The Indian consulate in Dubai issued helpline numbers for Indian passengers travelling or transiting through Dubai International Airport. The numbers are: +971501205172, +971569950590, +971507347676, +971585754213. The Indian embassy in UAE advised "inbound Indian passengers travelling to or transiting through Dubai International Airport to reschedule non-essential travel till operations normalise." Air India has cancelled its Dubai flights and is offering passengers booked on AI flights with valid tickets for travel till April 21, a one-time waiver on rescheduling and full refunds for cancellation.

### FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION IN ENERGY

## Award-winning Indian-origin prof honoured

**PTI**  
Houston

An award-winning Indian-origin distinguished professor at the University of Houston's Cullen College of Engineering has been elected as an International Fellow of the Engineering Academy of Japan, the university said in a statement.

Originally from a small village in Karnataka, Professor Kaushik Rajashekara has been recognised for his contributions to power conver-

sion and electrification of transportation, the statement said on Thursday.

As per academy, Rajashekara's election as an international fellow specifically honours his "outstanding scientific research and scientific-technical developments in the field of energy which promote greater efficiency and environmental security for energy sources on the Earth in the interests of all mankind".

Rajashekara, 73, stands among an elite group of fewer than 10 fellows from the US, out of a dis-



Kaushik Rajashekara

tinguished group comprising 800 fellows and 15 international fellows.

"I am deeply honoured to have been chosen as an International Fellow of

the Engineering Academy of Japan, a distinction that I hold in high regard. This recognition reflects the longstanding relationships I've cultivated with several esteemed Japanese universities and industries throughout my career," said Mr Rajashekara, the director of the University of Houston's power programme PEMSEC (Power Electronics, Microgrids and Subsea Electrical Systems Centre).

For over three decades Mr Rajashekara has worked with Japanese

students, engineers and the faculty of several Japanese universities.

As the former lead propulsion system engineer for General Motors' IMPACT electric vehicle and as chief technologist at Rolls-Royce Corporation, he visited Japan often to give seminars at Meiji University among others.

In 2022, Rajashekara received the most coveted prize in the field of international energy -- the Global Energy Prize -- bestowed by the Global Energy Association.

## India delivers 1st batch of BrahMos to Philippines

**Agencies**  
New Delhi

India delivered the BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines on Friday, as part of the \$375 million deal between the two sides signed in 2022.

The Indian Air Force sent its American-origin C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft with the missiles to the Philippines to deliver the weapon system to the Philippines' Marine Corps.

Indian officials offered sweets to the Philippines Marine Corps officers on



The batch was transported on an Indian Air Force aircraft that landed in Philippines on Friday afternoon.

the delivery of the BrahMos missile. The export of ground systems for the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile system along with the missiles started last month.



# FIRST INDIA 2ND FRONT

## THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Once we accept that the divine is in all of us, we will learn to accept and love all, that is the way forward for peace within and outside.

Dr Jagdeesh Chandra, CMD & Editor-in-Chief



### UNION HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH'S MASSIVE ROADSHOW IN UDAIPUR

# 'Every vote cast on 'Kamal' will end terrorism & Naxalism'

Ravi Sharma  
Udaipur

Union Home Minister Amit Shah held a road show in Udaipur in support of BJP candidate, Mannalal Rawat. The roadshow started from Delhi Gate at 8:11 pm and concluded at Surajpole Chauraha, after covering a distance of around 1 km.

Addressing a public gathering at Surajpole Chauraha, Shah attacked Congress party over its decision to not attend the consecration ceremony of Ram temple in Ayodhya saying that the Congress was afraid of its Muslim vote bank therefore it decided not to attend the ceremony despite invitation.

"We built Ram temple and also made Mahakal Corridor. The gold of Somnath temple was looted, the work of re-inlaying it with gold will go ahead," he said.

He also said that the Modi government abrogated article 370 from Kashmir and not a single stone was pelted. He also appealed to people to vote for BJP candidate. "Every vote given to Mannalal ji will make Modi ji PM for the third time. Every vote cast on 'Kamal' will end terrorism & Naxalism," he said.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses the huge crowd during the roadshow in support of BJP candidate, Mannalal Rawat in Udaipur on Friday. CM Bhajan Lal Sharma is also seen.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah addresses during the roadshow. CM BL Sharma & Mannalal Rawat are also seen.

### SHAH TO ADDRESS RALLY IN KOTA TO SUPPORT BIRLA TODAY

Kota : Home Minister Amit Shah will hold a public meeting in support of the party candidate from Kota-Bundi LS seat Om Birla today. The meeting will be held at 12 noon in the CAD ground, BJP City President, Rakesh Jain said.



Amit Shah addresses a huge crowd during the 'Vijay Shankhnaad Rally' in support of BJP candidate, PP Chaudhary in Bopalgarh in Pali LS constituency on Friday.



Enthusiastic crowd comprising hundreds of women during the Vijay Shankhnaad Rally.

### EXERCISING THEIR FRANCHISE...

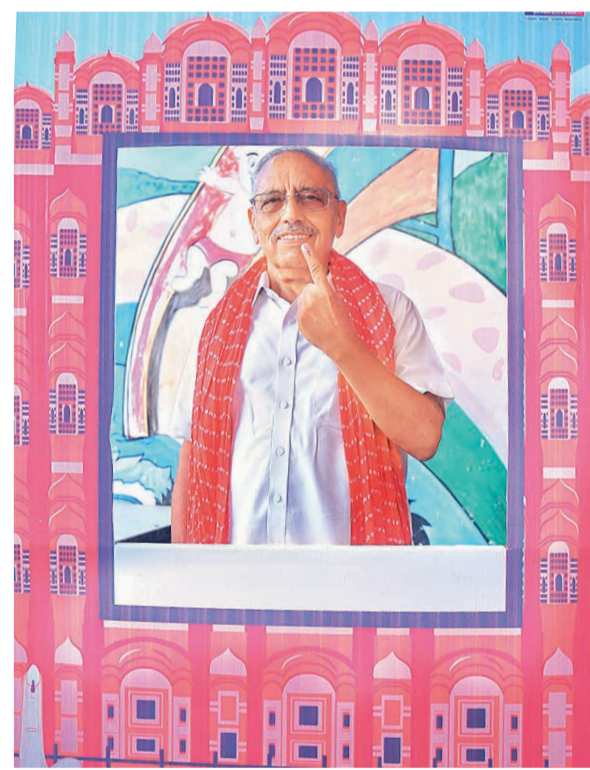


Governor Kalraj Mishra and his wife, Satyawati Mishra pose for a picture showing their inked finger after casting their vote at Mahatma Gandhi Govt School, Residency, located at Sardar Patel Marg, C-Scheme in Jaipur on Friday.



CS Sudhansh Pant along with wife Chhavi Pant, poses for a picture after casting his vote at Govt. Seth Anandilal Poddar Deaf Senior Secondary School located at JLN Marg in Jaipur on Friday.

MUKESH KIRADOO



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra shows his inked finger after casting his vote at Seedling Public School at Jawahar Nagar in Jaipur on Friday.

SUNIL SHARMA

CM visits mother at SMS Hospital before Jodh tour



First India Bureau  
Jaipur

Chief Minister **Bhajan Lal Sharma**, who is busy campaigning for BJP candidates, is maintaining balance between politics and family life. On Friday morning, before leaving for Jodhpur, Chief Minister Sharma enquired about the well-being of his mother admitted at the SMS Hospital. Notably, Sharma's mother is undergoing treatment in the Medical ICU.

### IN SUPPORT OF MAHIMA SINGH

## UP CM Yogi Adityanath to address public meeting in Rajsamand today

Ashish Choudhary  
Rajsamand

The Chief Minister of UP Yogi Adityanath will visit Bhim in Rajsamand today and address a public meeting for BJP's Rajsamand candidate Mahima Singh. Before the meeting, he will visit Nimbahera in Chittorgarh LS constituency for a road show. He will then reach Bhim.

In Bhim, he will address a public meeting at



Yogi Adityanath

Patiya Ground in support of BJP candidate from Rajsamand LS seat. Police have reviewed security

arrangements ahead of his visit. Bhim MLA Harisingh Rawat along with BJP leaders took

stock of preps for the event. Rawat remarked that Adityanath's election tour will be historic.

Bhim MLA Harisingh Rawat along with BJP leaders took stock of arrangements for the event. Rawat said that Adityanath's poll tour will be historic and a large number of people will gather to listen to him

### Shekhawat energises Jodh on campaign trail



Gajendra Singh Shekhawat pays obeisance to folk deity, Baingati Hadbuji Sankhla at Baingati Hadbu Ki Stthali in Phalodi district on Friday. He also assured people to set up a separate panorama for the revered folk deity at the place.



Gajendra Singh Shekhawat greets people as he arrives to address a public meeting along with Phalodi MLA Pabba Ram Bishnoi at Khara village in Phalodi district on Friday.



# City First

JAIPUR, SATURDAY | APRIL 20, 2024



## NETWORKING & EMPOWERMENT

In today's fast-paced world, establishing one's identity amidst the whirlwind of faces and names can be daunting. However, at FBS, a beacon of mutual support shines bright.

P12



# Luxurious Mul Kurtas

Discover the allure of Mul Kurtas with City First- a blend of comfort and sophistication, perfect for every occasion.



**Mohit Choudhary**

cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

In the world of fashion, where trends come and go, there's something inherently captivating about garments that stand the test of time. Mul kurtas, with their timeless elegance and effortless charm, exemplify this enduring appeal. Crafted from lightweight and breathable muslin fabric, these kurtas have been a wardrobe staple for generations, cherished for their versatility and comfort.

The allure of mul kurtas lies in their exquisite craftsmanship and understated sophistication. Renowned for its soft texture and delicate drape, mul fabric lends itself beautifully to a variety of silhouettes, from traditional to contemporary. Whether adorned with intricate hand embroidery or simple embellishments, each mul kurta exudes a sense of refinement and grace.

One of the most striking features of mul kurtas is their versatility. Perfect for both casual and formal wear, they effortlessly transition from day to night, offering unparalleled comfort without compromising on style. Pair a pristine white mul kurta with vibrant leggings for a casual day out, or accessorize with statement jewellery and heels for a more formal affair.

The beauty of mul kurtas lies in their ability to accentuate the wearer's natural beauty. The soft, breathable fabric drapes elegantly, flattering every body type and enhancing the wearer's confidence. Whether worn loosely or tailored to perfection, mul kurtas evoke a sense of effortless chic, making them a favourite among fashion enthusiasts of all ages.

From the bustling streets of Mumbai to the serene landscapes of Jaipur, mul kurtas have become a ubiquitous presence in every fashion-forward wardrobe. Embraced by designers and fashionistas alike, these timeless classics continue to captivate hearts with their understated glamour and timeless appeal.

In a world where fashion trends come and go, mul kurtas stand as a testament to the enduring allure of classic elegance. With their luxurious feel, impeccable craftsmanship, and timeless charm, they remain a wardrobe essential for the modern woman, adding a touch of sophistication to every ensemble.



SANTOSH SHARMA, MUKESH KIRADOO, SUNIL SHARMA & NAIM KHAN



Anil Pareek with his family



Deepak Sharma & Shweta Sharma



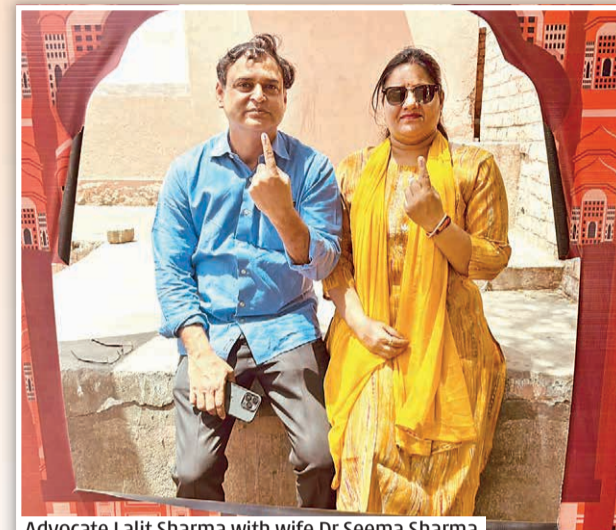
Meeta & Mahendra Soni



Atul Jain 'Ahsas' and Vidhi Jain voted for better future in Jhotwara



Chandra Joshi



Advocate Lalit Sharma with wife Dr Seema Sharma



Manali Choudhary, First Time Voter



Usha Sharma & Ravi Sharma



Newlywed brides cast their vote



Nidhi Bagra with Archit Bagra First Time Voter



Rural men took a step towards maintaining democracy



Newlyweds cast vote with family



Sudhir Mathur



Gagan Patni, Veena Patni & Dr Nilima Jain for a wise step towards democratic India



Gyanprakash Gupta and wife, TP Gupta & Navrekha Gupta and Aditya Gupta



Voters at Ghat Gate polling booth



Dinesh Mathur with Dr Vijay Laxmi & Praroop



106 yrs old Dhanabai cast her vote in Kherli

# Voted

## A BADGE OF HONOUR FOR EVERY CITIZEN!

Mitali Dusad  
 cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

**A**midst the vibrant colours of Rajasthan's cultural tapestry, the Lok Sabha elections unfolded, casting a spotlight on the democratic spirit that pulses through every corner of the state. From the sun-kissed streets of Gangangar to the majestic forts of Jaipur, citizens of all ages

and backgrounds converged at polling stations, their hearts beating in unison with the rhythm of democracy. Elderly hands marked ballots with wisdom earned through the ages, while the laughter of newlyweds echoed alongside the determined steps of first-time voters. Transcending barriers, physically challenged individuals and transgenders joined the democratic chorus, their presence a tes-

tament to the inclusivity of our electoral process. As families stood united in civic duty, City First captured these poignant moments, painting a portrait of Rajasthan's unwavering commitment to shaping its destiny. The first phase of elections, spanning 12 constituencies, marked the beginning of a journey towards a brighter tomorrow, where every vote cast is a brushstroke in the masterpiece of our nation's future!



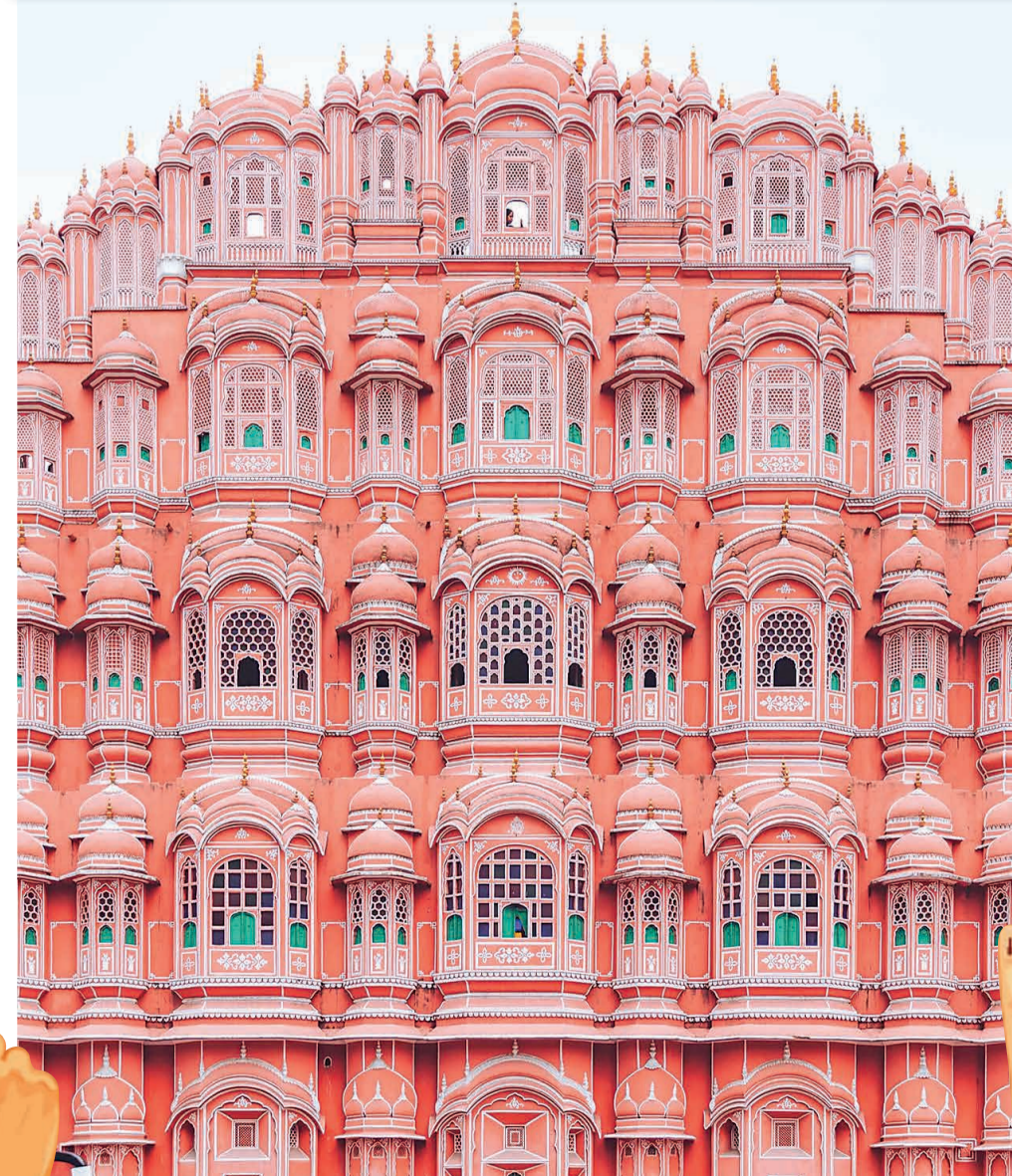
Pawan Arora with his wife Ritu Arora



Justice SS Kothari with wife Dr Anita Kothari



(L-R) Aparna Arora, Megha Arora, Riya Arora, Arti Dogra, Shweta Goyal, Gaurav Goyal & Akhil Arora



Virendra Choudhary shows his inked finger in Nagaur



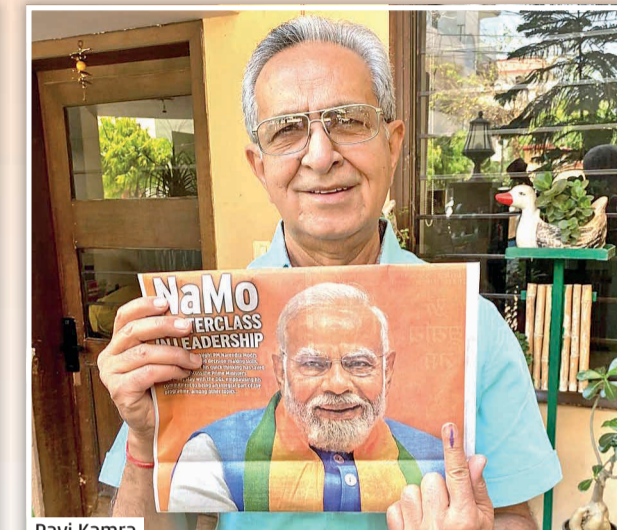
Dinesh Jain & Kusum Jain



Dr Devendra Pathak



Arpita with her twins after voting



Ravi Kamra



Couple cast their first vote after wedding



Manohar Kanwar



Tripti Singh



Transgenders cast vote



Maj Trivinish Bhati and Dr Megha Singh



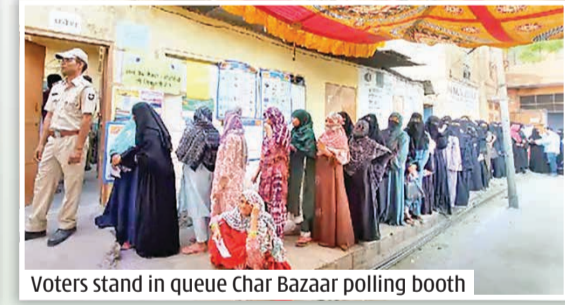
Swati and Suresh Singhal



Nidhi Achora, First Time Voter



Mahesh & Suneeta, Ramkishore & Sunita, Amit & Ankita along with Neha



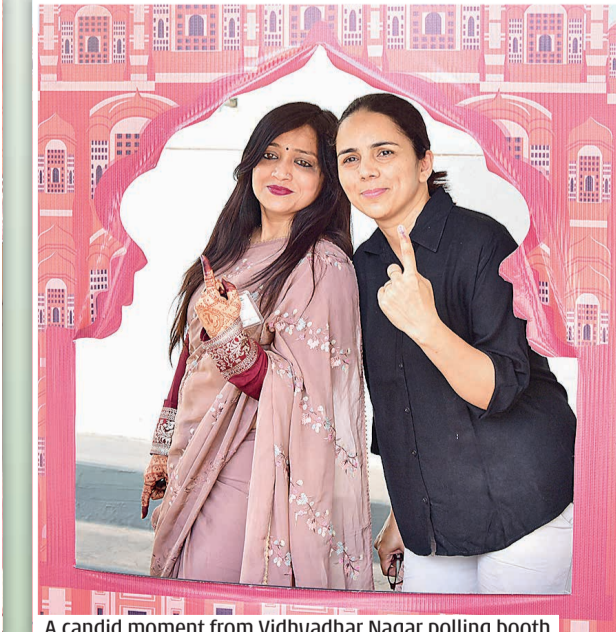
Voters stand in queue Char Bazaar polling booth



Dr Rituraj Sharma



Meenakshi



A candid moment from Vidhyadhar Nagar polling booth





Preeti Nair, Gunjan & Saloni Dhandharia



Rakhi Khandelwal, Megha Gupta, Prachi Khandelwal & Dr Richa Sharma

# NETWORKING AND EMPOWERMENT

City First  
cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

In today's fast-paced world, establishing one's identity amidst the whirlwind of faces and names can be daunting. However, at FBS, a beacon of mutual support shines bright. Recently, the organization hosted a gathering at Swaraj Singh's C-Scheme Masala Ministry, bringing together around 80 individuals eager to share expertise and build meaningful connections on Friday.

Founder Megha Gupta underscored the joy of networking that permeated the event, emphasizing the camaraderie among members. Attendees engaged in discussions led by Prachi Khandelwal, Tarang Agrawal, and Dr Richa Sharma, focusing on strategies to empower female entrepreneurs and set the stage for future collaboration.

A highlight of the



During the event

event was the generosity displayed by Preeti Nayar from All-Time Fashion Company, who graciously gifted summer bags to attendees, adding a touch of warmth to the gathering.

Among the notable participants were Deeksha Gupta, Niharika Nopany, Richa Khandelwal, Juhi Ahluwalia, Meenakshi Pabuwal, Sakshi Taluka, Rakhi Khandelwal, Jyoti Jain, Keerti Jain, Jyoti Singhal, and



Sakshi Mehta & Sakshi Sethi

many more, each contributing their unique perspectives and experiences to the enriching exchange of ideas.

Through this event, FBS continues to foster an environment where individuals can not only network but also find support and inspiration as they navigate the challenges of entrepreneurship in today's dynamic landscape.

## GREETINGS!



Dr Jagdeesh Chandra was greeted by Shikha Sharma of the First India family, as she reached the former's residence to seek blessings on the occasion of her birthday on Friday.

## DURING THE DAY!



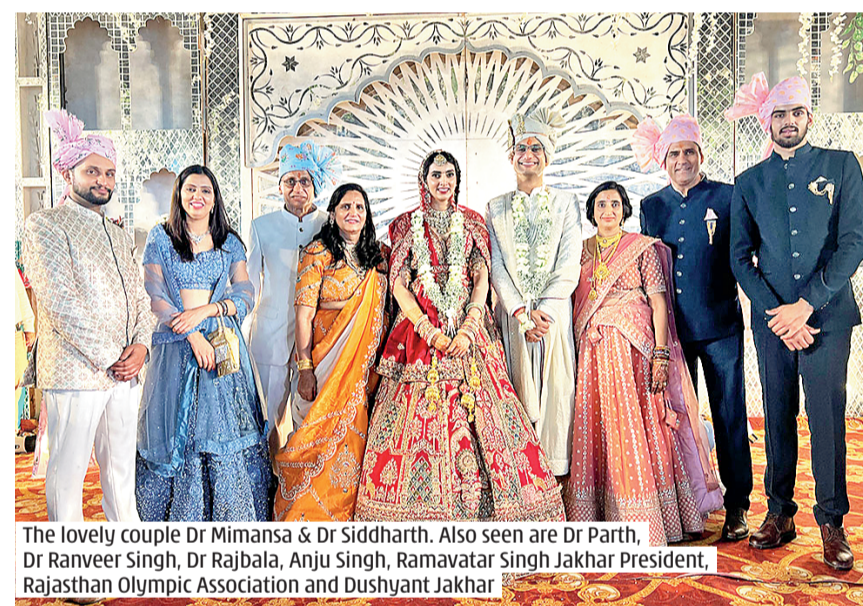
Tarun Singh Solanki and Jaya Solanki, Jodhpur's renowned singer couple, accomplished a remarkable feat by singing continuously for 24 hours on Wednesday at Abha Gensets near Nehru Park. The beginning starts with devotional hymns, they serenaded listeners with Bollywood classics and audience requests. City residents, including Lions Club members, lauded their endurance with garlands and applause. The event, garnered support from local dignitaries and fellow musicians, marking a harmonious celebration of musical dedication.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING!



In a resounding display of support for Prime Minister Modi, non-resident Indians in Hong Kong launched a mass campaign, rallying behind the slogan 'Teesri Baar Modi Sarkar, Ab Ki Baar 400 Paar'. The fervent gathering echoed the sentiment of millions of Indians, advocating for a Modi government once more. Overseas Friends of BJP orchestrated the event, emphasizing their commitment to India's progress. With attendees from various countries, including China and America, the campaign showcased widespread international endorsement of Modi's leadership.

## EVENTS!



The lovely couple Dr Mimansa & Dr Siddharth. Also seen are Dr Parth, Dr Ranveer Singh, Dr Rajbala, Anju Singh, Ramavtar Singh Jakhar President, Rajasthan Olympic Association and Dushyant Jakhar

In a joyous union witnessed by family and friends Dr Mimansa, daughter of Anju Singh & Ramavtar Singh Jakhar with Dr Siddharth, son of Dr Rajbala & Dr Ranveer Singh, exchanged vows and celebrated their love in a breathtaking wedding ceremony held at Hotel Apano Rajasthan & Holiday Resort Harmada Ghati, Jaipur-Chomu Road, Jaipur on Thursday. The event, a harmonious blend of tradition and modern elegance, marked the beginning of a beautiful journey for the newlyweds.

📷 MUKESH KIRADOO

Young musician Ankit Bhatt released the devotional song 'Jai Ram Bhaj Le' on major audio channels, marking Ram Navami on Thursday. The song, penned by Pt Alok Bhatt and sung by vocalist Brijesh Vyas, received widespread acclaim for its melodious rendition. Featuring a fusion of musical instruments including clarinet, tabla, and guitar, the song created a serene ambience. The recording, managed by Satish Sharma at Rajan Studio, garnered significant attention across various channels.



Indian Institute of Culture Charitable Trust celebrated Ram Navami by distributing food and essentials to underprivileged children under the programme 'Ek Kadam Samaj' on Wednesday. Additionally, school bags, water bottles, lunch boxes, and geometry sets were provided, bringing smiles to their faces. Rajesh, Vishnu, and Arpit from the institute extended support. Director Seema Sharma emphasized the institute's commitment to aiding the needy through education and employment opportunities.

📷 MUKESH KIRADOO



Daarshwana Singh Rathore, aged 15, spearheaded environmental initiatives, organising tree planting drives, and eco-friendly product development under her mother's guidance. Her endeavours are aimed at addressing pressing environmental issues and nurturing future leaders. She invited youth to join her club for holistic development and environmental awareness. Additionally, she arranged food distribution for 400 underprivileged children on Navami. Her efforts reflect a deep commitment to environmental conservation and youth empowerment. Daarshwana's impactful actions inspire peers and communities, fostering a sustainable future.



Ashish Kumar Singhal



Vinayak Kumar

In a notable display of academic prowess, students from Jaipur's Jayshree Periwal High School have excelled in the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2023. Ashish Kumar Singhal secured the 8 rank, while Vinayak Kumar claimed the 180 position. Both alumni of the school, Ashish, from the class of 2011, and Vinayak, from the class of 2018, attributed their success to the support of their parents, school, and teachers. Dr Jayshree Periwal, Chairperson of Jayshree Periwal Group of Schools, expressed immense pride in their achievement, highlighting their dedication and hard work on Thursday. This accomplishment underscores the school's commitment to academic excellence and holistic development.

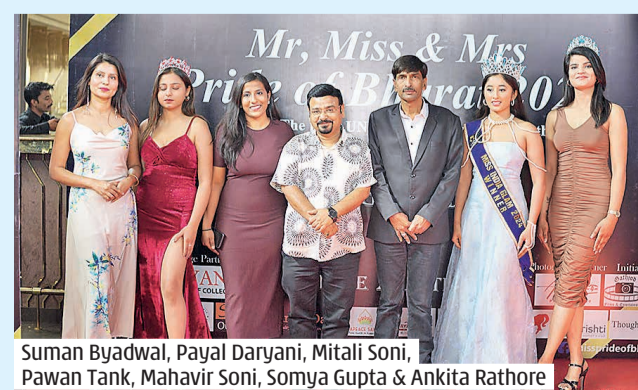


During the event

# GLAMOUR TALENT EXTRAVAGANZA!

City First  
cityfirst@firstindia.co.in

The Rosado Luxury Lounge Club in Jaipur, was abuzz with talent as auditions for Mr, Miss, and Mrs Pride of India 2024 Rajasthan unfolded recently. Show founder-director Mitali Soni, known for her impactful films on global issues



Suman Byadwal, Payal Daryani, Mitali Soni, Pawan Tank, Mahavir Soni, Somya Gupta & Ankita Rathore

like 'Mujhe Bachalo' and patriotic anthems like 'Garv Mera Bharat,' lauded the participants for their spirited performances. The pageant aims to nurture new talents, offering a unique platform for growth. With auditions nationwide, the final event promises grandeur in the city. Judges, including renowned models and influencers, evaluated contestants.