











# Himanta Sarma's big claim on BJP's next move if it wins 400 seats in Lok Sabha

Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday said that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would build Krishna Janmabhoomi temple in Mathura and Kashi Vishwanath temple in place of Gyanvapi Mosque in Varanasi after it wins 400 seats in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. While addressing a poll-bound gathering in Delhi's Laxmi Nagar, Sarma said that the BJP built a grand Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya after it got 300 seats in Lok Sabha, now Krishna Janmabhoomi and Baba Vishwanath Mandir would be built if BJP wins 400 seats. "When Congress asks us why do you need 400 seats? When we

got 300 seats we built the Ram Mandir & now when we get 400 seats Krishna Janmabhoomi will be built and Baba Vishwanath Mandir will also be built in place of Gyanvapi Mosque," he said. The Assam CM hit out at the Congress party, saying that no discussions took place in the Parliament over the issue of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under the grand old party's regime. Sarma asserted that under PM Modi's leadership, PoK would become a part of India. "During Congress' rule, no discussions were held in the Parliament regarding PoK... Soon Pak-occupied Kashmir will become part of our country under the leadership of PM

Modi..." he added. While addressing another rally in Odisha's Bhubaneswar earlier today, CM Sarma emphasised that there is a need for a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in the country. The BJP leader said all should be equal in the country. "If a Hindu is allowed to have one wife, why people of other religions can have more than one wife," Sarma said, adding that a Uniform Civil Code is needed in the country. "Congress has been trying to give reservation to Muslims...", the Assam CM said, accusing the grand old party of promoting religion-based reservations. He further claimed that Congress has diluted the Constitution, not the BJP. "Congress



frequently speaks about secularism, but there was no mention of the word secularism in the original draft of the Constitution," Sarma said.

## United Nations apologises to India for death of ex-Army officer in Gaza

The United Nations condoled and expressed apologies to India over the killing of a former Indian Army officer, who died in war-torn Rafah in Gaza when the vehicle he was travelling in was attacked by shots fired from what it believes was an Israeli tank. Colonel Waibhav Anil Kale, 46, who retired prematurely from the Indian Army in 2022, joined the world body as a Security Coordination Officer in the UN Department of Safety and Security (DSS) two months ago. He was killed, and another DSS staffer from Jordan was injured when their UN-marked vehicle was struck when they were travelling to the European Hospital in war-torn Rafah in Gaza on Monday morning. Kale, who had commanded the 11 Jammu and Kashmir Rifles in Kashmir, is the "first international casualty" for the world body since the Israel-Hamas conflict started last year. "We also express our apologies and our condolences to the Government and people of India," Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said at the daily press briefing on Tuesday in response to a question by PTL. "We appreciate the contribution that India has made," he said. Haq said the UN has established a fact-finding panel to look into the deadly attack. "It's very early in the investigation, and details of the incident are still being verified with the Israeli Defence Force (IDF)," Haq said. The fact-finding mission is being set up by the Department of Safety and Security. Haq said that a weapon appears to have impacted the back of the white UN vehicle that was carrying the two UN staff members, killing Kale and injuring the other DSS female staff member who is receiving medical attention and "we believe that she will make it through." "The deceased staff member has been identified. He is Waibhav Anil Kale of India, and we send our condolences to his family," he said. Haq confirmed that this was the "first international casualty" for the UN in Gaza and added that currently, the world body has 71 international staff in Gaza. When asked if the UN is in contact with Israeli officials regarding the attack, Haq replied in the affirmative and said, "I think the point is we are in discussion with Israel to determine exactly how this incident happened and the nature of what happened." "I don't think at this stage we are in doubt about where the shots came from as much as what the circumstances were," he added. Haq said the UN believes the shots came from a tank in the area. When asked that only the IDF have tanks in the region, Haq said, "I think that's a safe assumption to make, yes." He said the convoy was going to the European hospital as "there's regular work that's going on in terms of bringing people to different sites and this was part of that." When asked if Israel apologised to the UN and if the world body sees this as a deliberate attack, Haq said the case is "still under review." "We'll see what the review results in," he said, adding that "as the review proceeds, we'll need to see what the precise nature of the circumstances were." The Permanent Mission of India to the UN had said in a post on X that it is "deeply saddened" by the loss of Col Waibhav Kale. "Our deepest condolences are with the family during this difficult time," it said. UN chief Guterres expressed sadness to learn of Kale's death and injury to the other DSS staffer and condemned all attacks on UN personnel, calling for a full investigation. Guterres sent his condolences to the family of the fallen staff member.

## 'People Are Ready To Put Money In Market Now'

Market stability cannot be achieved without stable policies and taxation, according to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's remarks on Tuesday. The Union Minister added that the government has faith that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is currently contesting the Lok Sabha elections, is trying to win and take the helm for the third time in a row. She stated at a BSE stock exchange event that stability at the center is necessary for a healthy financial market and that PM Modi's impending return will provide it. Her comments come at a time when the headline Nifty50 index has returned roughly 21% (up 3,903.1 points since May 12, 2023) over the previous year due to favorable growth projections, low inflation, and the trend of foreign investors choosing India as a place to invest. The Indian market is utilizing technology very effectively these days. Sitharaman added. Air India Fiasco Continues: Staff Being Marked



Sick Despite Rejoining Duties Due To A Software Glitch The minister cited several instances of improved technology bolstering market efficiency, such as Dalal Street's successful implementation of the "T+0" system, which stands in stark contrast to a number of overseas markets. FM also highlighted mutual fund participation. 10 years ago, mutual funds had assets under management worth Rs. 6 lakh crore, which has increased to a whopping 54 lakh crore. Mutual fund assets have seen over a 10-fold increase in their assets under management (AUM).

### Demat Account Opening

## Mamata Banerjee offers to cook for Narendra Modi after fish furore, BJP says 'ploy to trap PM'

Taking a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's outrage over video footage of RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav enjoying fish, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday offered to cook for the BJP leader. At an election rally in Kolkata, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) supremo said she was ready to "cook something for him (Modi)" if he wanted, but added that she was not sure whether he would consume the meal prepared by her. Mamata Banerjee was targeting the rival BJP for allegedly interfering with food choices of people following the furore over the video of Tejashwi Yadav posted during Navratri. Last month, Prime Minister Modi accused opposition leaders of demonstrating a 'Mughal mindset' and "teasing" the people of the country by consuming non-vegetarian food in the holy month of Sawan and posting a video of it online. Modi said eating non-vegetarian food during Navratri and Sawan hurt the feelings of people. Seizing upon Modi's remarks, the TMC, the ruling party in West Bengal where consumption of non-vegetarian food during festivals is prevalent in Hindu households, has been alleging that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has no knowledge about the

culture and eating habits of the people of the country. Following this line of attack, Mamata Banerjee said, "I have been cooking since my childhood days. People have praised my cooking. But will Modi ji accept my food? Will he trust me? I will cook whatever he loves." The TMC supremo added, "I love both vegetarian foods like Dhokla and non-veg foods like macher jhol (fish curry). Different communities, and different sects among Hindus have their own unique rituals and eating habits. Who is BJP to impose a diktat on an individual's dietary habits? It shows the BJP leadership has little idea and concern about the diversity and inclusivity of India and its people." The BJP, however, claimed that Mamata Banerjee deliberately made the offer knowing well that the prime minister is a strict vegetarian. "This is nothing but her ploy to trap the PM. She knows on the one hand the PM will never eat fish or any non-veg item. If she believes everyone should be allowed to eat what he/she loves to eat, then why is she twisting Modiji's comments about one's dietary habits? She is insulting devout Sanatani Hindus," BJP leader Sankudeb Panda said. Former BJP state president and ex-Tripura Governor Tathagata Roy posted on X,



"Mamata Banerjee wants to feed Modi ji with fish and rice cooked by her. Good proposal. But before that, why doesn't she first offer pork chop to her lieutenant Firhad Hakim? It will serve three purposes, secularism will be asserted, it will show charity begins at home and the fritters will also be praised." CPI(M) leader Bikash Bhattacharya suggested it could be an attempt to appease Modi amid their public political sparring. "Being Dada-Bon (brother and sister), Mamata didi can certainly offer to cook meals for the prime minister, do not know if it is to placate him." Bhattacharya was referring to the jibe - "Didibhai-Modibhai" that the Left and the Bengal Congress unit use to refer to the alleged tacit understanding between the BJP and the TMC.

## Supreme Court pulls up IMA chief as it refuses to accept apology



Patanjali Ayurved misleading ads case: The Supreme Court on Tuesday, May 14, reserved its order on the contempt notice issued to yoga guru Ramdev, his aide Balkrishna and Patanjali Ayurved Ltd in the misleading advertisements case. It also expressed dissatisfaction with the apology submitted by the president of the Indian Medical Association, Dr RV Asokan, for his remarks in a media interview over certain observations made by the court. A bench of justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah also dispensed with the personal appearance of Ramdev and Balkrishna. Ramdev and Balkrishna were present before the apex court pursuant to its earlier direction. The bench also granted Patanjali three weeks to file affidavits indicating the steps taken to recall misleading ads for Patanjali products, for which licences have been suspended. "Public is cognisant, if they have choices they make well informed choices... Baba Ramdev has a lot of influence, use it in the right way," the bench said after reserving orders in the contempt case. "What has been done for yoga is good, but Patanjali products is another matter," Justice Kohli replied when solicitor general Tushar Mehta said Ramdev has done a lot of good for yoga.

### Supreme Court on IMA chief

The Supreme Court was hearing a case filed by the IMA against an alleged smear campaign carried out by Patanjali Ayurved Ltd. and its founders against the Covid-19 vaccination drive and modern medicine. Pulling up IMA president Dr RV Asokan for giving an interview to the press on the Supreme Court's orders in the case, the top court said that it was not convinced with the affidavit he filed tendering unconditional apology. "You do exactly the same thing Patanjali did. You are not a layman, don't you know the consequences of such things? You can't sit on your couch lamenting the court's order," the bench told Asokan, who was present in the court. "We are the first ones to uphold the freedom of free speech. But there are times when there should be self-restraint. As IMA President, you should have had self-restraint. That's the point. We didn't see that in your interviews," said the bench. It added, "Dr. Asokan, you are also a citizen of this country. The amount of criticism judges face, why don't they react? Because personally, we don't have much of an ego, we are magnanimous. We are entitled to take action, but very rarely we do. We do that seldom... We use our discretion with some sense of responsibility. But that does not mean you go to town with these kinds of comments." In an interview, Asokan said it was unfortunate that the Supreme Court criticised the practice of IMA and private doctors. Patanjali had filed an application against the IMA president asking the bench to take judicial notice of "wanton and unwarranted comments" made by Asokan. While hearing the matter on May 7, the top court had termed as "very, very unacceptable" the statements made by Asokan.

## Kamala Harris drops 'F' bomb, urges Asian-Americans to break barriers

US Vice-President Kamala Harris made headlines recently during a conversation with actor and comedian Jimmy O Yang, where she dropped the 'F' bomb as she urged Asian Americans to break down barriers in America. The conversation was live-streamed on the White House website. Addressing an event organised by the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies Legislative Leadership Summit, Harris, who has broken several glass ceilings, in her journey to becoming the vice-president of the US -- the first Indian-American, the first African-American and the first woman to do so -- on Monday used the F-word during a conversation with actor and comedian Jimmy O Yang, reported PTI. During the event, 59-year-old Yang asked Harris what it was like to be the first vice-president of Asian descent and how her heritage influenced her perspective and leadership role. Harris's mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, was from Chennai, India, and her father, Donald Harris, was from Jamaica. "My mother would say to me, 'Don't you ever let any-



body tell you who you are. You tell them who you are.' And I learnt from her that breaking barriers is worth it every time," said Harris, reflecting on her mother's advice and her own journey. "We have to know that sometimes people will open the door for you and leave it open. Sometimes they won't. And then you need to kick that f\*\*\*\*\* door down. Excuse my language," she said amid laughter and applause from the audience, reported PTI. "We got to make T-shirts with that saying, 'Kick the f\*\*\*\*\* door down'," Yang said amid laughter. Harris recounted her

mother's determination to pursue her dreams, including her secret application and acceptance to UC Berkeley to study cancer research. She also highlighted her grandfather's influence, who passionately debated democracy and equality during their morning walks in India. "My mother, when she arrived in the United States, she automatically took to the streets to march for civil rights in her saree. That's how she met my father. And all of that has had a profound influence," shared Harris. In her message to Asian Americans facing obstacles, Harris emphasised resilience and the importance of mentorship and community support. "Breaking barriers does not mean you start on one side and end up on the other side. There's breaking involved. And it is worth it every time. Every time," she asserted. According to the White House website, Harris always fights for the people - from her barrier-breaking time as District Attorney of San Francisco and Attorney General of California to proudly serving as a United States Senator and Vice President.

## Madhavi Latha Doubles Down On Her Defence Of Checking Voter IDs Of Burqa-Clad Women

A day after she was booked over a video wherein she can be seen checking the voter IDs of burqa-clad women and asking them to reveal their faces at a polling station, the BJP's Hyderabad Lok Sabha candidate, Madhavi Latha, on Tuesday claimed that the presiding officer of the said booth caught a minor girl partaking in voting. "We got the information that the presiding officer caught a minor girl casting her vote... They are not registering an FIR. They are free to register an FIR on me but not on others... My FIR started from 'Ram Baan'... I am getting the medal like FIRs for telling the truth," she was quoted. Following a row over the aforementioned video, Madhavi had defended herself saying that her actions were aimed at ensuring transparency in the electoral process. She also asserted that her action was motivated by the police's unwillingness to verify the identity of the women voters at the polling station. Latha further alleged that 90 per cent of the booths were

compromised. She stated, "90 per cent of booths are compromised. Police do not want to instruct female constables to check the face with the voter ID. When I asked the police officer, he said it's not his responsibility. I said at least inform the female constable, he says it is not my responsibility, I will not inform female constable." The BJP leader had also said that she used a polite tone while requesting the women to uncover their faces. "I am a candidate. As per law candidate has the right to check the ID cards without the facemasks. I am not a man, I am a woman and with a lot of humbleness, I have only requested them - can I please see and verify with the ID cards? If somebody wants to make a big issue out of it, that means they are scared," she said. Madhavi Latha contested the Hyderabad Lok Sabha constituency in the fourth phase of the ongoing parliamentary election on Monday. She was pitted against four-time Lok Sabha MP and AIMIM chief, Asaduddin Owaisi, and BRS' Gaddam



Srinivas Yadav. This was the first time that the BJP fielded a female candidate from the Hyderabad constituency. The FIR registered against her on Monday was the second one since the announcement of her Lok Sabha candidature by the BJP. Last month, a case was registered against her after a video surfaced showing the BJP leader purportedly gesturing to shoot an arrow in the direction of a mosque during a Ram Navami procession on April 17. Denying that she was aiming for the mosque, Latha claimed that her gesture was pointing towards the sky.

## Jaishankar's swipe at Western media: 'Countries that go to court after polls...'

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday slammed the western media for their 'negative coverage' of Indian elections and told them not to give 'gyan' to India (lecture India) on how to conduct polls. "They would reputationally damage you, somebody will bring out an index and put you down in that. Countries which have to go to court to decide the result of their election are giving us gyan about how to conduct the election," Jaishankar was quoted. Jaishankar also brushed aside the criticism by certain western media platforms that raised questions about the Lok Sabha elections 2024, calling it a 'mind game' going on in the world at present. "They western countries do want to influence us because many of these countries feel that these countries have influenced this world for the last 70-80 years. Western countries feel that they have influenced



this world for the last 200 years. How do you expect for someone, who has been in that position to give up those old habits so easily", Jaishankar said on Tuesday while speaking at the launch of the Bangla edition of his book 'Why Bharat Matters' in Kolkata. S Jaishankar went on to add that the western countries want a certain 'class of people' at the helm of affairs in India and feel 'disturbed' when the people of the country think differently. "Why are these people

so negative on India?" Jaishankar rued. He added that it was actually because they (western countries) are getting to see an India which is not in compliance with their image of how India should be. "Western media, in some cases, have openly endorsed candidates and political parties; they don't hide their preference. They are very smart," the External Affairs Minister said. Acknowledging the voter turnout during the first four phases of polls, Jaishankar said "Even in this election, I am looking at the commentary. Even in this country, even in the hottest summer, look at the percentage of people who come to vote." India is voting for the Lok Sabha elections from April 19 to June 1, 2024. So far, four of the seven phases of the general election have been completed, with the remaining three to be held on May 20, 25 and June 1, respectively.

