

After the infamous Arnab Goswami interview

Rahul Gandhi, MP-elect from Wayanad and Rae Bareli, has been a figure of great political heft since the year 2004. His rise to political fame from Amethi, a constituency that his father, Rajiv Gandhi, used to represent, to finally being ousted by the BJP's Smriti Irani in 2019, is a saga of a man trying hard not to fumble on his way up. However, another very troublesome facet of Rahul Gandhi's political personality has been exposed - his rude and dismissive behavior with journalists during the press conference and media interactions. Rahul Gandhi began his political career in 2004 when the Congress-led UPA formed the government. In a surprise move, Sonia Gandhi handed over the prime ministerialship to Dr. Manmohan Singh, a seasoned economist and former governor of the Reserve Bank of India. Under Dr. Singh's stewardship, India underwent a transformative change in the subsequent decade - some of it good, most of it catastrophic. But as the 2014 elections neared, Sonia Gandhi made up her mind to let her son have a chance. The decision was taken against the backdrop of a relative greenhorn like Rahul Gandhi, who had only about a decade of experience in politics vis-a-vis Narendra Modi, who had already carved out a legacy as the three-term Chief Minister of Gujarat.

Pranab Mukherjee's son Abhijit eyes Congress return: 'Young friend Rahul told me to.'



Abhijit Mukherjee, the son of the late former President Pranab Mukherjee, has expressed his desire to rejoin the Congress party after a brief stint with the Trinamool Congress (TMC). Mukherjee, who had joined TMC in 2021, cited a mismatch in work culture and lack of assignments as his primary reasons for seeking a return to his former party. "Their (TMC's) work culture didn't match with that of the Congress at all...I thought enough is enough," Abhijit Mukherjee told ANI. The former Congress MP opened up about his 2019 election loss, attributing it to undisclosed reasons, which he said the party high command was aware of. He also shared his frustration over being allegedly marginalised within Congress before his departure. "For 2.5 years I carried out whatever assignment was given to me by the Congress. But they didn't give me enough assignments, whatever may be the reason. I was gradually marginalised by a particular person, a particular group...In the meantime, Mamata Didi called me back as I had sought time from her...I met them and they offered me to join them," he said. Despite his initial hopes with TMC, Mukherjee lamented that his experience did not meet his expectations. "After joining the party, I got no such assignments. Their work culture didn't match with that of the Congress at all...I thought enough is enough...So, after coming back to Delhi...senior leaders (from Congress) asked me indirectly why am I lying low...give it a thought...Then young friend, future of Congress, Rahul (Gandhi), told me to get active," he said. "I sought time from senior high command (of Congress), maybe I would be able to meet them in a day or two...If they ask me to join immediately, I would do it. I am absolutely free and ready to contribute...Definitely, if Congress accepts me..." Abhijit Mukherjee has been a two-term MP in the Lok Sabha from Jangipur Lok Sabha seat.

Ex-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, other US delegation meet Dalai Lama in Himachal's McLeod Ganj

Former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, house foreign affairs committee chairman Michael McCaul, and other members of the congressional delegation arrived at the Dalai Lama's residence on Wednesday to meet with the Tibetan spiritual leader. The delegation visited the Dalai Lama's residence in Himachal Pradesh's McLeod Ganj, with the head of the delegation, Michael McCaul, saying President Joe Biden would soon sign a bill that aims to press China to resolve the Tibet dispute. The Resolve Tibet Act calls on Beijing to resume talks with Tibetan leaders, which have been halted since 2010, to resolve their governance disagreement with China peacefully. The bill aims for the two countries to reach a negotiated settlement regarding Tibet. It also urges China to address the desires of the Tibetan people concerning their historical, cultural, religious, and language identity. Ahead of the meeting of the American delegation with the Dalai Lama, deputy Speaker of Tibetan Parliament-in-exile, Dolma Tsiring Teykhang said the visit of the US lawmakers show "Tibet is not alone." On Tuesday, a group of US representatives, including Nancy Pelosi, arrived at Kangra airport in Dharamshala. It also includes Rep Mariannette Miller-Meeks, Speaker Emerita, Rep Gregory Meeks, Rep

Nicole Malliotakis, Rep Jim McGovern, and Rep Ami Bera. Officials from the Central Tibetan Administration welcomed the American delegation upon their arrival. Speaking to reporters on Tuesday, McCaul said, "We are very excited to see His Holiness tomorrow to talk about many things, including the Bill we passed out of Congress, which basically says that the United States stands with the people of Tibet." On being asked if Biden would sign the bill, she added, "Yes, he will." The US House of Representatives passed the Resolve Tibet Act, which is now awaiting Biden's signature to become law. This bill challenges Beijing's claim that Tibet has always been part of China and calls on China to stop spreading false information about Tibet's history, people, and institutions, including the Dalai Lama. Additionally, it urges China to initiate discussions with the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan leaders regarding Tibet's governance. US politicians have frequently visited Dharamshala to support the Dalai Lama's efforts to gain international support for preserving the language and culture of Tibet, his homeland nestled in the mountains. The Dalai Lama escaped to India in 1959 following an unsuccessful rebellion against Chinese control in Tibet. Chi-



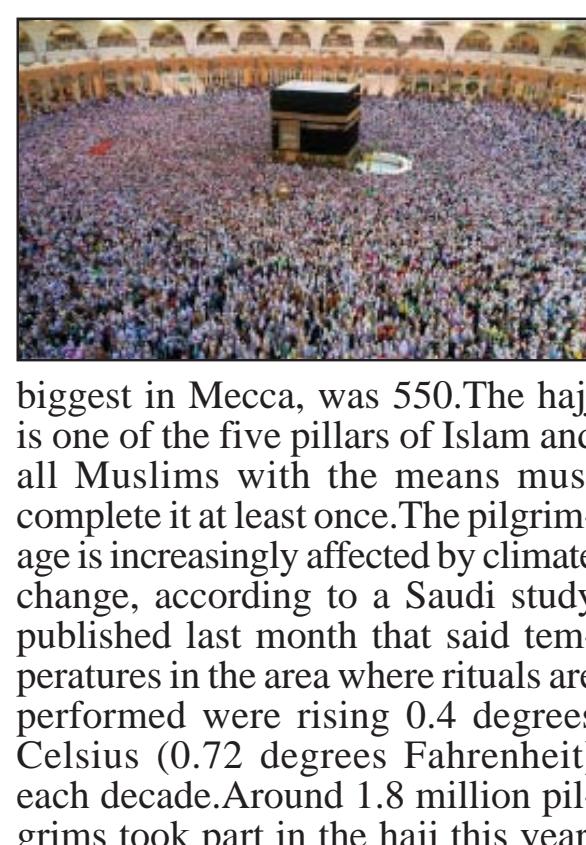
nese authorities oppose any meetings he holds with officials from other nations.

China's response

Beijing, which views the Nobel peace laureate the Dalai Lama as a dangerous "splittist" or separatist, on Tuesday expressed strong concern about the visit and the bill anticipated to be signed by Biden. Foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said, "We ... urge the US to fully recognise the anti-China and separatist nature of the Dalai clique, abide by its commitments on Tibet-related issues, refrain from any form of contact with it, and stop sending erroneous messages. We urge the US side to honour its commitment of recognising Tibet as part of China and not supporting Tibetan independence, and not to sign the above-mentioned bill." Beijing stated that it would take strong actions to protect its sovereignty, security, and development interests.

More than 300 Egyptian pilgrims die in hajj, most from heat: Diplomats

At least 323 Egyptian pilgrims died during the hajj pilgrimage in western Saudi Arabia, most of them succumbing to heat-related illnesses, two Arab diplomats coordinating their countries' responses told AFP on Tuesday. "All of them died because of heat" except for one who sustained fatal injuries during a minor crowd crush, one of the diplomats said, adding that the total figure came from the hospital morgue in the Al-Muaisem neighbourhood of Mecca. At least 60 Jordanians also died, the diplomats said, up from an official tally of 41 given earlier on Tuesday by Amman. The new deaths bring the total reported so far by various countries to 577, according to an AFP tally. The diplomats said the total at the morgue in Al-Muaisem, one of the



biggest in Mecca, was 550. The hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam and all Muslims with the means must complete it at least once. The pilgrimage is increasingly affected by climate change, according to a Saudi study published last month that said temperatures in the area where rituals are performed were rising 0.4 degrees Celsius (0.72 degrees Fahrenheit) each decade. Around 1.8 million pilgrims took part in the hajj this year,

1.6 million of them from abroad, according to Saudi authorities. Each year tens of thousands of pilgrims attempt to perform the hajj without securing official hajj visas in order to save money, a more dangerous undertaking because these off-the-books pilgrims cannot access air-conditioned facilities provided by Saudi authorities along the hajj route. One of the diplomats who spoke to AFP on Tuesday said that the Egyptian death toll was "absolutely" boosted by a large number of unregistered Egyptian pilgrims. Earlier this month, Saudi officials said they had cleared hundreds of thousands of unregistered pilgrims from Mecca ahead of the hajj. Other countries to report deaths during the hajj this year include Indonesia, Iran and Senegal.

PM Modi's prediction of a post poll market rally comes true as Sensex, Nifty hit record highs

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's prediction of a stock market rally after Lok Sabha elections is coming true with Sensex surging more than 5,000 points since June 4, when the results were declared. In the last nine trading sessions, Sensex and Nifty have hit all-time record highs. This has resulted in investor wealth rising by ₹42.4 lakh crore to ₹437.24 lakh crore. While campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections, Modi had said that the stock market would hit record highs after election results were declared. "You will see that within one week after June 4, the day election results are to be declared, market participants will get tired." "I can say with confidence that on June 4, as BJP hits record numbers, the stock market will

also hit new record highs," he had said. Home Minister Amit Shah also said that investors must buy before June 4 as the stock market will shoot up after the results. Following the elections, the statements by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah became a political issue as Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that the June 4 crash in which investors lost ₹31 lakh crore in notional wealth was owing to manipulation in the markets. The Congress demanded a probe by a joint parliamentary committee (JPC) as the Sensex hit record high on June 3 after exit polls but fell the next day. Meanwhile, Morgan Stanley has predicted that the Sensex will hit 82,000 in the next 12 months. It said, "The main benefit to the mar-



ket of the NDA's re-election is policy predictability, which will influence how growth and equity returns pan out in the coming five years. We believe the government is likely to continue focusing on macro stability (i.e., inflation hawkishness) to inform policy."

Is BJP Leadership Changing In Maharashtra? Here's What Piyush Goyal Said

Union Minister Piyush Goyal has unequivocally ruled out any changes in Maharashtra's leadership despite the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) subpar performance in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. It has been firmly asserted that the party is focused on developing a strategic plan to secure a victory for the Shiv Sena-BJP-Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) coalition in the upcoming assembly elections, which are slated for later this year. The announcement was made after a critical core group meeting of the Maharashtra BJP, which included significant figures such as party president JP Nadda and Union Home Minister Amit Shah. This meeting, held in New Delhi on Tuesday, was essential for reviewing the party's current stance and future strategies following the disappointing election results, as reported by Hindustan Times. During this meeting, Piyush Goyal reiterated, "No changes in leadership will be made in Maharashtra." This statement came amid swirling rumours and speculations that Rao Saheb Patil might be appointed

India Supersedes Pakistan In Nuclear Weapons Race, China Far Ahead: SIPRI Report



A recent report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) highlights the ongoing modernisation and expansion of nuclear arsenals among nine nuclear-armed nations, including India, Pakistan, and China. The report reveals that China has increased its nuclear warheads from 410 in January 2023 to 500 in January 2024, marking a major boost in its arsenal. Meanwhile, India now possesses 172 nuclear warheads, surpassing Pakistan by two warheads, with both countries continuing to develop new nuclear delivery systems. The SIPRI report reveals that Russia and the United States hold the vast majority of the world's nuclear weapons, accounting for 90% of the total. Both nations, along with several others, have deployed new nuclear-capable weapon systems in 2023. Additionally, around 2,100 nuclear warheads, mainly from the US and Russia, remain in a state of high operational alert, with China also likely maintaining some of its warheads on high alert for the first time. The report also notes that India, Pakistan, and North Korea are beginning to follow the US and Russia's example by deploying multiple warheads on ballistic missiles. Hans Kristensen of SIPRI said that China is expanding its nuclear arsenal at a faster rate than any other country. "But in nearly all the nuclear-armed states there are either plans or a significant push to increase nuclear forces," Kristensen told PTI.

as the new state president. The meeting also aimed to address widespread speculation about the continuation of the Ajit Pawar-led NCP in the existing ruling alliance. The strategic discussions among BJP leaders centred on ensuring the re-election of the Maha Yuti alliance, comprising Shiv Sena, BJP, and NCP, in the upcoming state assembly elections. According to a report by PTI, the meeting included prominent BJP figures such as BL Santosh, Bhupender Yadav, Ashwini Vaishnaw, state BJP leader Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Sudhir Mungantiwar, Chandrakant Patil, Pankaja Munde, Raosaheb Danve, and Vinod Tawde, among others. In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP managed to secure only nine seats in Maharashtra, a significant decline from its previous tally of 23 seats in the 2019 elections. In 2019, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance had won 41 out of the 48 Lok Sabha seats in the state. However, this figure drastically reduced to just 17 seats for the current National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in 2024, with seven seats won



by the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and one seat by the NCP, as reported by Hindustan Times. Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had offered to resign from his position within the Maha Yuti government, which is composed of Shiv Sena, BJP, and NCP, to devote his efforts to organizing and preparing for the September-October assembly elections. After the meeting, Devendra Fadnavis stated, "A comprehensive blueprint for the upcoming assembly elections has been prepared. This plan outlines how we, along with our Maha Yuti alliance partners, will secure a win." The discussions also

focused on the BJP's performance in the recent Lok Sabha elections. Fadnavis emphasized that the vote share difference between the ruling Maha Yuti and the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) was a slender 0.3 per cent, as per media reports. He noted that the party leaders engaged in an in-depth analysis of the BJP's strengths and weaknesses in the just-concluded elections, aiming to improve their strategies and rectify the shortcomings in future electoral contests. The leadership's commitment to maintaining stability in Maharashtra's political landscape and ensuring a coordinated effort for the forthcoming assembly elections was made clear. The focus is on leveraging the strengths of the alliance while addressing any internal issues that may have contributed to the less-than-expected performance in the Lok Sabha elections. This approach underscores the BJP's dedication to strengthening its political position in Maharashtra through cohesive and strategic planning.

Video Of Motivational Speech Given By ACP Chandan Who Arrested Darshan In Murder Case Goes Viral

Girish, DCP (West Division), and Assistant Commissioner of Police Chandan are largely credited for discovering the 'Darshan connection' in Renuka Swamy. After three aides of the actor had surrendered, they would have closed the matter, but their honesty and dedication towards their work led to the arrest of Darshan along with 16 others. While the public applauds their efforts, a video of ACP Chandan has gained traction among viewers. In the video, he delivers a motivational speech to KPSC students. The speech touches upon the challenges faced by Kannada medium students and how he overcame similar hurdles in his own journey. He shares his struggles with English dur-

ing his engineering days and offers advice to aspiring UPSC and KAS students, encouraging them not to be discouraged by language barriers. Chandan began his career with a diploma, followed by an engineering degree. After serving as a lecturer, he transitioned to the IT industry at Infosys before joining product companies. In 2011, he attempted the KAS exam but fell short of success. Undeterred, he made two attempts at the UPSC and eventually realized his dream of becoming a Deputy Superintendent of Police in 2014. Kannada superstar Darshan, his friend Pavithra Gowda and 15 others have been arrested in connection with the murder case of Renuka Swamy. On the in-



structions of Darshan, Renuka Swamy was kidnapped by the actor's aides from Chitradurga on June 8. He was then taken to a shed owned by the actor's uncle where he was brutally assaulted, leading to his murder. Renuka Swamy had sent obscene messages to Pavithra Gowda which angered Darshan.

Indians challenge Elon Musk over voting machines

The Tesla CEO's suggestion that devices used for casting ballots can be "hacked" has come under scrutiny in the world's largest democracy. Tesla CEO Elon Musk has triggered backlash in India over his take on electronic voting machines (EVMs). The country of 1.4 billion people recently wrapped up its general election, in which 640 million Indians voted, primarily using EVMs. Musk claimed on Saturday that electronic voting machines should be 'eliminated.' "The risk of being hacked by humans or AI, while small, is still too high," he posted on X (formerly Twitter). He was responding to a post by US presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who had pointed to an Associated Press report suggesting that Puerto Rico's primary elections had experienced voting irregularities related to electronic voting machines. However, Musk's post reignited an old debate in India. This is a huge sweeping generalization statement that implies no one can build secure digital hardware, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who served as minister of state at India's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in the last Modi-led government. Chandrasekhar, who is a prominent member of



India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), suggested that devices used in the US may be connected to the internet and would therefore be vulnerable. However, EVMs used in India are 'custom-designed to do a simple job.' These devices are 'isolated' from any network and 'factory programmed controllers that cannot be reprogrammed,' claimed the former minister. Prominent Indian author and retired government officer Sanjay Dixit also joined in the debate, offering \$1 million to Musk to prove that the country's voting machines could be hacked. 'If you hack it successfully, give you a million dollars, if you fail, you pay,' Dixit wrote on X. Indian EVMs, which replaced paper ballots in 2004, have triggered intense debate on many occasions,

particularly during general elections, when they were blamed for unfavorable results by losing parties. Rahul Gandhi, the leader of the Indian National Congress, the country's largest opposition party, backed Musk's statement, claiming that EVMs in India are a 'black box' that nobody is allowed to scrutinize. India's Election Commission must either ensure complete transparency in relation to the machines and processes, or abolish them, Gandhi said. Akhilesh Yadav, the leader of the Samajwadi Party, a key ally of the Congress, also questioned the credibility of EVMs, and demanded that all future elections should be conducted using ballot papers. Notably, when the BJP lost an election to the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) in the past, it also attributed the loss to 'EVM fraud.' In April, India's Supreme Court cautioned against doubting the efficiency of India's voting system, including the reliability of EVMs. The court heard a number of petitions that suggested using paper ballots, citing examples from European countries. In response, Sanjiv Khanna, one of the justices presiding over the case, said: 'We have our own system. It's working well.'

