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20th April, 2024.

:: THE HEADLINES ::

- Campaigning intensifies for second phase of Lok Sabha elections.
- Scrutiny of nomination papers for third phase of Lok Sabha elections held today.
- Polled EVMs being securely sealed at strong rooms across Nagaland.
- First BioPlastic manufacturing unit in Northeast inaugurated in Mokokchung district.

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Campaigning has intensified for the second phase of Lok Sabha polls. In the second phase, polling will be held in 88 Parliamentary seats in 12 States and Union Territories along with the remaining part of the Outer Manipur Lok Sabha constituency on 26th of this month. Twenty seats of Kerala, 14 seats of Karnataka, 13 seats of Rajasthan, eight seats each of Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, seven seats of Madhya Pradesh, five seats each in Assam and Bihar, three seats each of West Bengal and Chhattisgarh and one seat each in Tripura and Jammu and Kashmir will go to polls in this second phase. Senior leaders of various political parties are addressing rallies across the country in their bid to woo the voters. Prime Minister and Senior BJP leader Narendra Modi addressed election rallies in Nanded and Parbhani in Maharashtra. Modi expressed happiness over high voter turnout in the first phase of Lok Sabha polls yesterday. He said, maximum voting must be ensured during this ongoing festival of democracy in the country. Modi said, next 25 years will be years of India's greatness in the world. He said, his Government is actively tackling poverty and ensuring fair distribution of ration. He also pledged to continue and complete pending projects if re-elected for a third term. On the other hand, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addressed election rally at Bhagalpur in Bihar. He said, if the INDIA bloc government comes into power, they will end the Agniveer scheme. Gandhi said, they will work for the welfare of poor and tribal community.

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Scrutiny of nomination papers for the third phase of Lok Sabha elections was held today. The filing of papers for the phase ended yesterday. 94 Parliamentary seats in 10 States and two Union Territories will go to polls in third phase on the 7th of May. Monday is the last day for the withdrawal of candidature. Meanwhile, filing of

nominations for the fourth phase of Lok Sabha polls is underway. 96 Parliamentary seats spread over nine States and a Union Territory will go to polls in this phase on the 13th of May. 25th of this month is the last date for filing of nominations.

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With the conclusion of the Lok Sabha electoral process in Nagaland yesterday, the strong room at the respective district Deputy Commissioners Offices containing the polled EVMs has been securely sealed. Authorities have taken meticulous measures to safeguard the strong room, employing stringent security protocols and surveillance to prevent any unauthorized access or tampering. The sealed strong rooms will remain under constant monitoring until the scheduled counting day on June 4. The strong rooms were sealed in the presence of the concerned General Observers, Deputy Commissioners & District Election Officers, Returning Officers and representatives of contesting political parties.

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Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi has alleged that uniformity of culture, religion and language is being imposed and diversity stamped out for political gains in the country today. Addressing a public meeting to support the UDF candidate in the Chalakkudy constituency, she observed that policies are made to favour certain monopolist individuals while pushing several others into unemployment and poverty. The Congress leader observed that the country's growth rate has fallen from 7.5 percent to 5.9 percent, while the national debt has risen from 55 lakh crore to 205 lakh crore rupees. She said India needs unity to survive, love to hold its diverse culture and real progress permeating down to fulfill the dreams of its citizens.

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The first Eco starch BioPlastic manufacturing unit in the Northeast was inaugurated today at Changtongya Yimsen village under Mokokchung district. The unit is sponsored by North East Centre for Technological Application and Reach (NECTAR). Speaking on the occasion, Director General of NECTAR, Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma said, the main initiative is to assess possibilities related to technology in the country and take it to remote places of the Northeast region. He said, the most important aspect of NECTAR is disseminating technology, using the available raw material in the community and empowering the society using technology. The Director General highlighted the various schemes initiated by NECTAR in the Northeast and urged the youths in the region to take advantage of the scheme, assuring that NECTAR will extend all possible help in establishing units and plants through the available raw materials in the region. Sarma also informed that a number of initiatives will be undertaken for the region like banana fiber extraction, areca nut plate making, pineapple canning and tea, adding that there is huge potential from

this area. He expressed hope about bringing investors in these sectors, saying that the region have tremendous resources and huge potential. Sarma said, community development, job opportunity for the local populace will be some of the major factors if these huge potentials are tapped.

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Nagaland Government continued its War Against Drugs with the State Police at the forefront, to combat the menace of widespread availability and usage of synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances. Intensive checking and raids of vehicles, hotels, restaurants and other places has been launched to prevent such illegal activities. A press release from the Nagaland Police informed that the State Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) has been equipped with facilities for quick analysis of samples of seized drugs. It further stated that the FSL and the state Police department have acquired state-of-the-art 4K Spectral Camera which can help develop and capture fingerprints even on porous surfaces and latent or hidden fingerprints. The release added that in another major success for the Nagaland Police, a notorious drug trafficker, Md. Hassan Uddin who was running a medical shop in Dimapur has been arrested from Arunachal Pradesh. The accused was caught in a joint operation launched by the Nagaland Police along with the Arunachal and West Bengal Police. Asserting that drug traffickers have been creating havoc in families across Nagaland with large number of youths falling victims to drug abuse, the Nagaland Police has urged people to report drug sellers and traffickers to the police and to desist from providing support of any kind to these elements spreading toxin in the society.

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Chief Justice of India, Dr Justice D Y Chandrachud, has said that the enactment of new criminal laws clearly indicates that the country is changing and moving forward. Addressing a conference in New Delhi today, Dr Chandrachud said that with the enactment of three criminal laws—the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam—the country is set for a significant overhaul of its criminal justice system. He said these laws have transitioned India’s legal framework on criminal justice into a new age. Stressing the use of artificial intelligence, Dr. Chandrachud said AI will enable the judiciary to track progress in criminal trials. He said AI should be deployed for the purpose of detecting aberrations in processes. Dr. Chandrachud added that these new laws would be successful if every citizen of the country adopted them.

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