



IDFC FIRST
Bank

ALWAYS YOU FIRST

A Strong Foundation for a World Class Bank

Customer Deposits



CASA Ratio



Loans & Advances



Profit After Tax



Incremental Credit Deposit Ratio



Asset Quality



'Best Digital Bank'
at FE India's Best Banks
Awards 2023

Golden Peacock
Award for ESG
(National) for 2023

Our Bank is created on three founding principles - **Ethical Banking**, **Digital Banking** and Banking for **Social Good**. We are happy to share that we are living these three principles every day. Our products are designed with a 'Customer First' thinking, our services are digitized for your convenience, and we serve diverse segments of our society.

We are confident that, on this strong foundation that we have built, our Bank can grow in a sustained manner and embrace the amazing opportunities that our wonderful country offers. We thank you for providing us this opportunity and for your trust.

Welcome to Customer-Friendly Banking by IDFC FIRST Bank.



Scan the QR code
to know more

1800 10 888

IDFC FIRST Bank

Loans & Advances includes Credit Substitutes; For a financial year, Incremental credit to deposit ratio = incremental growth in gross advances for that financial year / incremental growth of total deposit for that financial year; The Bank consciously calibrated loan growth to improve the credit deposit ratio; FY'19 PAT includes ₹ 1,691 crore of net losses due to goodwill write-off because of merger between erstwhile IDFC Bank and erstwhile Capital First Limited in December 2018; Excluding this, the net loss for FY'19 would have been ₹ 253 crore; GNPA & NNPA for the Bank excluding legacy infrastructure finance portfolio which is being wound down, is at 1.55% and 0.42% respectively as on 31st March, 2024.



CRY BABIES: Amateur sumo wrestlers hold babies during 'Nakizumo' or a baby-crying sumo contest in Tokyo. REUTERS

Bangladesh faces longest-ever heatwave
DHAKA: The authorities in Bangladesh have issued another heatwave alert for three more days from Sunday as the South Asian country is facing its longest heatwave in 75 years. Bangladesh reported the season's highest temperature at 42.7°C on Friday in the south-western district of Chuadanga. Dhaka's maximum temperature was 38.2 degrees that day. **ANS**

Pope speaks to inmates behind prison show
VENICE: Pope Francis on Sunday travelled to Venice to visit the Holy See's pavilion at the Biennale contemporary art show and meet with the people who created it. Francis "Paradoxically, a stay in prison can mark the beginning of something new," Francis said. **AP**

Dubai plans \$35 bn new airport facility
DUBAI: The Dubai International Airport will move its operations to the city-state's second, sprawling airfield in its southern desert reaches "within the next 10 years" in a project worth nearly \$35 billion, its rulers said on Sunday. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's announcement marks the latest chapter in the rebound of its long-haul carrier Emirates after the Covid-19 pandemic grounded international travel. **AP**

Tornadoes claim two lives in Oklahoma
HOLDENVILLE (US): At least two persons, including a child, died in tornadoes that swept through Oklahoma, the authorities said on Sunday as emergency crews assessed the extensive damage to homes and businesses due to the high-velocity winds, hail and flooding. Since Friday, dozens of tornadoes have reportedly wreaked havoc in the nation's midsection, including Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Texas. **AP**

Iran unveils new 'kamikaze' drone
TEHRAN: The Iranian military on Sunday presented a new attack drone designed to fly into targets and explode, like the kind used by Russia in the war in Ukraine. According to state news agency Tasnim, the new Iranian drone, which has not yet been publicly named, is similar to the Russian Zala Lancet drone, which was first produced in 2020. **IANIS/DPA**

Forbes scribe under house arrest in Russia
MOSCOW: Sergey Mingazov, a journalist working for the Russian edition of the US magazine Forbes, has been placed under house arrest after being detained for allegedly spreading "fake news" about the armed forces, reported CNN. **ANI**

Qatar urges Israel, Hamas to do more to broker ceasefire

TEL AVIV, APRIL 28
A senior Qatari official has urged Israel and Hamas to show "more commitment and more seriousness" in ceasefire negotiations in interviews with Israeli media, as pressure builds to reach a deal that would free some Israeli hostages and bring a cease-fire in the nearly seven-month-long war in Gaza.

Qatar, which hosts Hamas headquarters in Doha, has been a key intermediary and was instrumental, along with the US and Egypt, in helping negotiate a brief halt to the fighting in November that led to the release of dozens of hostages. But in a sign of frustration, Qatar this month said it was reassessing its mediator role.

An Israeli delegation is expected in Egypt in the



Israeli tanks parked near the southern Israel-Gaza border. REUTERS

coming days to discuss the latest proposals in negotiations, and senior Hamas official Basem Naim said in a message to The Associated Press that a delegation from the militant group will also head to Cairo for talks. He did

not elaborate, but Egypt's state-owned al-Qahera TV said the delegation would arrive on Monday.

The interviews with Qatar's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Majed al-Ansari by liberal daily Haaretz and Israeli

HAMAS RELEASES VIDEO OF HOSTAGES

■ Hamas on Saturday released a video of two hostages who were seen pleading Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu to negotiate their release

■ In the video, American-Israeli Keith Siegel urges Netanyahu to negotiate with Hamas for a hostage release deal

■ This is the first video released of Siegel after he was held hostage by Hamas along with his wife from their residence in Kibbutz Kfar Aza on October 7



A student walks past Israeli flags near a protest site in support of Palestinians at Columbia University in New York. REUTERS

Anti-war protests on; US varsities, cops crack whip

NEW YORK, APRIL 28
From New York to California, students protesting the Israel-Hamas war slept in tents at college campuses, as some universities moved to shut down encampments and arrested demonstrators.

With the death toll mounting in the war in Gaza, protesters nationwide are demanding schools cut financial ties to Israel and divest from companies they say enable the conflict. Some Jewish students say the protests have veered into antisemitism and made them afraid to set foot on campus.

At Columbia University in New York City, where early protests sparked pro-Palestinian demonstrations across the country, students and administrators have engaged in negotiations, the university said in a statement Saturday night.

"Dialogue between university officials and student organ-

izers is ongoing. We want to be clear: There is no truth to claims of an impending lockdown or evictions on campus," the Columbia administration's statement said.

Though the university repeatedly set and then pushed back deadlines for the removal of the encampment, the school sent an email to students saying that bringing back police "at this time" would be counterproductive.

Decisions to call in law enforcement, leading to hundreds of arrests nationwide, have prompted school faculty members at universities in California, Georgia and Texas to initiate or pass votes of no confidence in their leadership.

The University of Southern California said on Saturday it had temporarily closed its University Park Campus to non-residents, without providing details of the closure or possible enforcement measures. — **AP**

Dar appointed Pak Deputy PM

ISLAMABAD, APRIL 28
In a surprise move, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was on Sunday appointed the country's Deputy Prime Minister.

Dar, 73, a chartered accountant and a veteran politician, belongs to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party.

According to a notification issued by the Cabinet Division, the appointment was made by PM Sharif "with immediate effect and until further orders".

The announcement was made when both PM Sharif

and Foreign Minister Dar were away in Saudi Arabia to attend a World Economic Forum's moot. Dar is considered close to former premier Nawaz Sharif due to matrimonial links between the two families, as his son is the son-in-law of the elder Sharif. — **PTI**

Sunak doesn't rule out July poll amid defection by MP

LONDON, APRIL 28
British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday refused to categorically rule out a July general election amid a damaging defection by one of his Conservative Party MPs to the Opposition Labour Party, just days before local and mayoral elections in the

country on May 2.

Dan Poulter, a doctor and Central Suffolk and North Ipswich MP said he would switch his allegiance to Opposition benches before standing down as a parliamentarian at the next election because he could no longer defend the Tory government's track

record on the National Health Service (NHS).

Against the backdrop of this latest embarrassment, Sunak was asked during a 'Sky News' interview that his repeated assertion of a general election in the "second half of this year" could also mean July.

"When it comes to a general election, I've been very clear about that multiple times, and again, I'm not going to say anything more than I've already said, I've been very clear about that," said Sunak, who was then pressed five times to rule out an election during what

would be a peak summer month for the UK.

"You're going to try and draw whatever conclusion you want from what I say. I'm going to always try and say the same thing. You should just listen to what I said, [the] same thing I've said all year," he replied. — **PTI**

INFOCUS AGRICULTURE

PADDY FARMING

Direct seeding of rice needs a filip to improve yield

An integrated package of management technologies must be developed to deal with the challenges of the DSR system and enable farmers to obtain yield levels comparable with those of the transplanted rice system. This requires strengthening of the multidisciplinary research system to provide solutions for the factors that reduce DSR rice yield. Participatory linkages need to be developed between farmers and other stakeholders to achieve assured maximisation of productivity.

MS Bajwa

THE prevailing water crisis is posing the biggest threat to agro-economic sustainability and socio-economic stability in India. This problem is being aggravated by global warming and climate change. Saving water and using it judiciously are now recognised as one of the top priorities in the country.

The governments and extension agencies in Punjab, Haryana and other states are motivating farmers to adopt water-efficient crop production approaches, particularly for the cultivation of rice, which is a high-irrigation crop (requiring 3,000-5,000 cubic metres of water per tonne of grain produced). One recommendation is to shift from conventional water-intensive transplanted rice (TPR) cultivation in flooded/saturated soil towards direct seeding of rice (DSR) — sowing/drilling seed in the soil at a workable moisture content, pre-emergence spraying of herbicide, first irrigation 21 days after sowing and thereafter at 5-7 days' interval. The DSR system can save water, eliminate the labour-intensive step of transplanting, reduce costs, increase income and ensure better soil conditions for the following crops. The DSR is eco-friendly as it reduces methane (a potent greenhouse gas) emissions associated with anaerobic conditions in submerged soils (as in the TPR system), and hence can play a pivotal role in mitigating climate change.

All-out efforts are being made by the governments to increase area under the DSR in Punjab and Haryana, with proposed tar-

LESS LABOUR-INTENSIVE, TENDS TO MATURE FASTER THAN TRANSPLANTED CROP

- Direct-seeded crops require less labour and tend to mature faster than transplanted crops.
- In this method, plants are not subjected to stresses such as being pulled from the soil and re-establishing fine rootlets. However, they have more competition from weeds.
- Depending on the land preparation method used, direct seeding can be done in two ways: dry or wet.

DRY DIRECT SEEDING

■ This method is usually practised for rainfed and deepwater ecosystems. Farmers sow onto dry soil surface, then incorporate the seed either by plowing or harrowing.

Broadcasting

- Broadcast 60-80 kg of seeds uniformly by hand or in furrows in one hectare.
- Make shallow furrows by passing a furrower along the prepared field.
- After broadcasting, cover the seeds using a spike-tooth harrow.

Drilling

- Precision equipment, such as the Turbo Happy Seeder, can be used to drill seeds.
- Drill 80-100 kg of seeds per hectare.
- Seeds are placed by the machine into both dry and moist soil, and then irrigated. A smooth, level seedbed is necessary to ensure that seeds are not planted at depths greater than 10-15 mm.

Dibbling

- It is usually practised along mountain slopes or where plowing and harrowing are difficult.
- Use a long wood or bamboo pole with a metal scoop attached for digging holes.

WET SEEDING: Direct seeding can be done in wet fields through broadcasting or drilling seeds into the mud with a drum seeder.

SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE'S RICE KNOWLEDGE BANK

gets to bring 7 and 2-2.5 lakh acres, respectively, under it during 2024. Experiences of farmers in recent years and research reports of PAU, the International Rice Research Institute and others show that compared to the TPR, the DSR approach can reduce water usage by over 70 per cent for land preparation and over 20 per cent during the growth of the rice crop. However, water-saving under the DSR system comes at the cost of up to 30 per cent lower yield than the TPR system. The extent of yield loss varies with soil properties, seeding practices, water management, weed infestation, efficiency in adoption of recommended crop production management practices and agro-ecological conditions. The adoption of the DSR system by the farmers is, therefore, not growing as desired despite incentives

of Rs 1,500 per acre in Punjab and Rs 4,000/acre in Haryana, being offered to them by the governments. During 2023, against the targets of bringing under the DSR about 5 lakh acres in Punjab and 2 lakh acres in Haryana, these states could manage to achieve only about 1.7 (even less than about 2.12 lakh acres achieved during 2022) and 1.78 lakh acres, respectively.

While shifting to the DSR system, the most crucial issue is that the currently cultivated high-yielding rice varieties/hybrids characteristically produce potential (maximum achievable) yields when grown under reduced (i.e. low oxidation reduction potential) anaerobic soil conditions created by keeping the rice root zone soil system submerged or saturated with water. It is well established that electrochemical and chemical properties of the soil under flooded

and saturated conditions remain similar. The DSR yields remain significantly lower than the obtainable potential yield when root zone soil is below the saturation level, i.e. under aerobic conditions. Plant breeders must respond to the challenge of developing aerobic-resilient rice varieties specifically suitable for the aerobic DSR system. These varieties should have high-yield potential, drought tolerance, early seedling vigour, resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses, weed competitiveness, deeper rooting and strong stems to resist lodging at maturity.

In addition to the availability of DSR-specific suitable variety, the key rice-yield reducing factors under the DSR system include: (i) poor seed germination and crop establishment due to inefficient management of soil moisture at sowing, and damage by birds, rats, snails, desiccation

of surface sown seeds; (ii) failure to control weeds and insect pests because of inefficient use of herbicides and pesticides; (iii) iron deficiency at early seedling and later stages of plant growth, particularly in plants grown on light-textured soil; (iv) lodging at maturity due to poor root anchorage; (v) unsuitable soil properties; (vi) inappropriate crop and input management practices. All these issues have to be addressed to enable farmers to enhance crop production efficiency of the DSR system and achieve assured high productivity, profitability and net income comparable to the TPR system.

Soils in large tracts of land in Punjab (about 0.7 million hectares), Haryana and across the country (about 7 million hectares) are salt-affected *kallar/usar*. These soils are not suitable for the DSR system until they are ade-

quately reclaimed. Rice plants are known to be highly sensitive to salinity/alkalinity in the soil during seed germination and early seedling development stage, because of which the yield of the crop grown in salt-affected *kallar/usar* soils gets significantly reduced. The yield losses under the DSR system would be significantly greater (can be even total crop failure) than under the TPR system because of much higher concentration of salts in the surface soil where the seed is directly sown. The TPR system is recommended in these soils because well-grown healthy seedlings get established in a much better way. Moreover, salinity/alkalinity in the root zone soil appreciably decreases (effect of dilution) due to flooding/saturation.

An integrated package of management technologies must be developed and applied to deal with the challenges of the DSR system and enable farmers to obtain yield levels comparable with the TPR system. This requires strengthening of the multidisciplinary research system to provide technological solutions for the DSR rice yield-reducing factors.

Direct seeding of rice is a promising alternative planting system amid water shortage. But participatory linkages need to be developed between farmers, technology generators and disseminators for generating and disseminating synergistic combinations of technologies to achieve assured maximisation of productivity of DSR rice and narrow the gap between the DSR and TPR systems in terms of economic returns to the farmers.

The author is a former Director of Research, PAU, Ludhiana



INDIAN MEN BAG HISTORIC GOLD IN ARCHERY WC **SPORT**



FALSE NARRATIVES OF NC, PDP STAND EXPOSED: BUKHARI **J&K**



PHASE 2 VOTING SEES 5.6% DIP AGAINST 2019 INDIA VOTES

ELON MUSK MAKES SURPRISE VISIT TO BEIJING **BACK PAGE**



f/THETRIBUNECHD @THETRIBUNECHD WWW.TRIBUNEINDIA.COM

MONDAY | 29 APRIL 2024



SC to hear Kejri's petition against ED arrest today

SATYA PRAKASH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
The Supreme Court will on Monday hear Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal's petition challenging the Delhi High Court's verdict upholding his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case linked to the Delhi excise policy scam.

Mann to meet Delhi CM in Tihar tomorrow

Kejriwal's petition is listed before a Bench led by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, which had issued notice to the ED on his petition on April 15. On Saturday, Kejriwal told the Supreme Court that his arrest by the ED in the case was a classic case of a ruling party misusing probe agencies to crush its biggest political opponent — AAP and its leaders. The ED was acting in the most highhanded manner in a gross affront to the due process of law, he alleged.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Pak boat carrying ₹600-cr drugs seized off Gujarat coast, 14 held

Coast Guard, ATS, NCB act after tip-off on vessel entering Indian waters

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
A Pakistani boat with 86 kg narcotics worth Rs 600 crore and 14 crew members, all nationals of that country, was seized at sea west of Porbandar, Gujarat. All crew members were arrested.

The Indian Coast Guard, Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS), Gujarat, and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) carried out the joint operation. The NCB named the operation Sagarmathan-II and said this was the third successful big maritime joint operation in the past 70 days. In February this year, 3,300 kg narcotics were seized and in March, 62 kg narcotics were seized.

The ATS had a tip-off regarding a foreign boat coming to the Indian waters with narcotics and foreign nationals aboard. In the early hours of April 26, the boat was spotted in the Indian waters.

Ships and aircraft of the Indian Coast Guard were deployed on concurrent missions as part of the operation. ICGS Rajratan, a coast



Indian Coast Guard Ship Rajratan (L) with seized Pakistani boat; and (below) its arrested crew in Arabian Sea. P11



SAGARMATHAN-II THIRD BIG JOINT OPERATION IN 70 DAYS

- The Indian Coast Guard, Anti-Terrorism Squad, Gujarat, and the Narcotics Control Bureau carried out the joint operation
- The NCB named the operation Sagarmathan-II and said it was the third successful big maritime joint operation in 70 days
- The drug-laden boat tried to evade the Coast Guard. Along with its crew, it was being brought to Porbandar for investigation

guard vessel, took the lead. Officials of the NCB and the ATS were ferried on board another coast guard vessel to ICGS Rajratan and they identified the suspect boat. The drug-laden boat tried to evade the Coast Guard.

ICGS Rajratan pressed into service the ship's specialist team, which embarked on the suspect boat. After a thorough check, it confirmed the presence of a sizeable amount of narcotics.

The Pakistan boat along

with its crew was confiscated and was being brought to Porbandar for further investigations. The Coast Guard said 11 such successful "law enforcement operations" had been carried out in the past three years.

China talks smooth, India will never bow down, says Rajnath

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today said talks between India and China were going on smoothly and in a good environment. He said India would never "bow down".

Rajnath was referring to the ongoing round of talks to ease tensions along the Line of Actual Control — the de facto boundary with China — since the two sides are locked in a military stand-off since May 2020.

Rajnath, in Ahmedabad to campaign for BJP candidates contesting the Lok Sabha elections, said India had become a powerful country from the military point of view and wanted to maintain good relations with its neighbours. "India is no longer weak," the minister said when asked about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's accusation against the Narendra Modi government over "Chinese aggression".

Talks between India and China are going on smoothly to sort out issues, he said.

"I understand that we should wait for the outcome of the talks. However, I want to assure the countrymen that India has not bowed



WANT GOOD RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURS

India is no longer weak. It has become a powerful country from the military point of view. We want to maintain good ties with our neighbours.

Rajnath Singh, DEFENCE MINISTER

down anywhere, nor will it ever bow down," he said. Rajnath said India's defence exports, which had crossed the Rs 21,000-crore mark in the 2023-24 fiscal, would increase further. "In 2014, we exported Rs 600-crore defence items, but now the figure has crossed Rs 21,000 crore, and I can say that it is going to increase," he said.

The minister said the Modi government was committed to ensuring that defence items were made in India and by Indians.

Canada Study + Spouse Visa Together

Do you know? GLOBIZZ has the highest approval rate of Study + Spouse Visa together.

Call us at **9815519600**

Globizz
OVERSEAS CONSULTANTS (P) LTD.
Government Approved Lic. no. 68D01TANMAB-3
Pvt. Office: 800118, Laxmi Bhawan, Patiala
CHANDIGARH | LUDHIANA | PATIALA

IN BRIEF

In Outer Manipur, repoll ordered in six booths

IMPHAL: Repolling will be held at six places in Outer Manipur on April 30. EVMs were damaged at 4 booths, malfunctioned at another and voting halted at one booth due to a "threat". P11

RSS always supported reservation: Bhagwat

NEW DELHI: In the wake of a clip claiming RSS was against the quota system, its chief Mohan Bhagwat said the Sangh always supported quota as long as "discrimination exists". INSIDE

Delhi Cong chief quits, cites party's AAP pact

NEW DELHI: In a setback to the Congress amid the Lok Sabha elections, its Delhi unit chief Arvinder Singh Lovely resigned on Sunday, criticising the party's alliance with AAP. INSIDE

Prince insulting rajas, silent on nawabs: PM

Targets Rahul for remarks over alleged mass suppression by Indian kings

ADITI TANDON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday intensified his attack on the Congress questioning former party president Rahul Gandhi's remarks that the reign of Indian kings was marked by mass suppression as royals would, at whim, snatch away from people whatever they fancied.

Speaking in Karnataka's Belagavi and Uttara Kannada ahead of the third phase polling on May 7, the PM, without naming Rahul, recalled the charitable acts of erstwhile royals, including Baroda's Gaikwad royalty that spotted and supported BR Ambedkar's talent by financing his education abroad.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



PM Narendra Modi with former Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai and other BJP leaders at a rally in Davanagere. P11

CITES ERSTWHILE ROYALS' CHARITABLE ACTS

- PM Modi recalled charitable acts of erstwhile royals, including Baroda's Gaikwad royalty that financed BR Ambedkar's education abroad
- "The prince has insulted legendary royals like Chhatrapati Shivaji and Kittur Maharani
- Chinnamma whose patriotism still inspires our nation," he said
- He asked if the Congress leader knew anything about the contributions of Mysore royalty or the fact that Rani Ahilyabai Holkar of the Malwa royalty restored several places of worship

Modi's speeches betray sense of worry, says Jairam

ADITI TANDON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
The Congress on Sunday brushed aside allegations that it would give away quotas meant for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs to the Muslims and said PM Narendra Modi's post Phase-I speeches betrayed a sense of nervousness and worry.

FULL INTERVIEW INSIDE

In an exclusive interview with *The Tribune*, Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh said there was no Modi wave in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

SAD fields Valtaha from Khadoor Sahib

AMRITSAR: The Khadoor Sahib LS seat is set to witness an interesting contest with the SAD announcing the candidature of Virsa Singh Valtaha. He will be pitted against Waris Punjab De head Amritpal Singh (Independent), Laljit Bhullar (AAP) and Manjit Singh Manna Miravind (BJP). The Congress is yet to name its nominee. The SAD (A) is supporting Amritpal. **INSIDE**

Khemka in spot for criticising PM, govt

CHANDIGARH: Rohtak Divisional Commissioner Sanjeev Verma has filed a complaint against Additional Chief Secretary Ashok Khemka, alleging he criticised the state government and targeted PM Modi on X even as the model code of conduct was in force. He said Khemka questioned PM's intention citing delay in probe into Robert Vadra-DLF deal. **INSIDE**

Ultras kill village guard in J&K gunfight

Hunt on for 8 Pak terrorists 'on mission to disrupt polling'

ARJUN SHARMA

JAMMU, APRIL 28
A Village Defence Guard (VDG) member was killed in an encounter between terrorists and security forces in the Basantgarh area of Udhampur district in Jammu division early on Sunday.

The incident took place when a team of the J&K Police along with VDG members launched a search operation following a tip-off about



Security personnel pay tribute to the slain guard in Udhampur. P11

the presence of terrorists at Chochru Gala heights around 7.45 am. Terrorists suddenly

opened fire at the security forces, injuring VDG member Mohammad Sharief, a resident of Khaned. He later succumbed to his injuries.

Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Anand Jain said "A faceoff ensued between the police team and a group of hiding terrorists." Following an initial exchange of fire that lasted over half an hour, the terrorists fled deep into the forest area and were being

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Navy checks missile-hit ship; 22 Indians safe

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

Specialist teams of the Indian Navy deployed on board warship INS Kochi have inspected crude oil tanker MV Andromeda Star at sea for any damage and safety of its 30 crew, including 22 Indian nationals.

The Panama-flagged tanker was hit by Yemen-based Houthis rebels as it was

ON WAY TO INDIAN PORT
Crew, including 22 Indians, are safe and vessel is continuing its scheduled transit to next port, Indian Navy

transiting the Red Sea en route to Vadar in India from Russia's Primorsk.

The vessel was intercepted by INS Kochi and an aerial reconnaissance was carried out by a helicopter to assess the situation. An explosive ordnance disposal team was deployed on board Andromeda for residual risk assessment. The crew are safe and the vessel is continuing its

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

JAYPEE EDUSPHERE | IGNITED MINDS INSPIRED SOULS

WE HAVE SET THE BAR HIGH AGAIN HERE IS THE PROOF

JUIT IS NOW A+ UPGRADE ACCREDITED BY NAAC

JAYPEE UNIVERSITY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOLAN, HIMACHAL PRADESH

NAAC ACCREDITED GRADE A+

JUIT is now accredited with the grade A+ by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)

We are thrilled to announce that JUIT has achieved an outstanding A+ grade by National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). We extend our heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to every member of our esteemed institution, the management, students, staff, and non-teaching Staff. This remarkable accomplishment is the result of our collective dedication and commitment to excellence.

- First private university of Himachal Pradesh
- Highest package 50 Lacs (2022) and average package 7.01 Lacs (2023).
- 85% faculty are PhD, mostly from IITs, NITs and abroad.
- World class infrastructure. Amongst 15 most beautiful campuses in India by an Independent Agency.
- 8000+ alumni excelling across the globe.
- Located on Chandigarh Shimla highway, 20 KM short of Shimla.

Join Us
Visit www.juit.ac.in

For all admission related queries:
Mobile number: 7807868400, 7807868600
Landline number: 01792-239360, 239560, 239558
E-mail: admission2024@juitsolan.in

Youth Akali Dal workers clash at Harsimrat's event in Bathinda

Attack each other with chairs | SAD nominee cuts short speech



SUKHMEET BHASIN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BATHINDA, APRIL 28
A scuffle broke out today between Youth Akali Dal workers at an event when SAD candidate from Bathinda Harsimrat Badal was giving speech, forcing her to stop the speech. Party leaders had to make an appeal to workers to listen to her calmly by sitting on chairs. However, amid the chaos, Harsimrat cut short her speech.

A event was organised at Green Palace near the Barnala Bypass in the city, where Harsimrat was to address workers, but tension mounted before her arrival. Two groups were seen tossing chairs in the air over some trivial issue. Party leaders had difficult time in controlling the workers.

Videos and photos of the workers throwing chairs on each other have gone viral on social media. There was chaos at the venue after the incident. Security personnel



Youth Akali Dal workers throw chairs in Bathinda on Sunday. TRIBUNE PHOTO: PAWAN SHARMA

PLOT TO MAR EVENT	GOT BIG-TICKET PROJECTS
“Mischievous elements had tried to spoil the programme and the Youth Akali Dal team had nothing to do with this fight. It was organised as part of a conspiracy.” Hasrat Middukheda, YOUTHAKALI DAL, CHIEF	“Around 15 years ago, Bathinda was nothing. Parkash Singh Badal and SAD brought about drastic changes through big-ticket projects. We got AIIMS and set up an airport . Harsimrat Badal, SAD NOMINEE

took the workers out. The reason behind the scuffle is yet to be known.

District president of the Youth Akali Dal Hasrat Middukheda, speaking on the issue, said mischievous elements had tried to spoil the programme and the Youth

Akali Dal team had nothing to do with this fight. It was organised as part of a conspiracy.

Addressing the youth workers, Harsimrat said, “As many as 10-15 years back, Bathinda was nothing. Parkash Singh Badal and SAD have made drastic changes in the city by

doing development work by bringing big-ticket projects. We got AIIMS, started Shatabdi when there was no direct train to Delhi, we set up an airport and in the coming time, Bathinda will be the capital city of the Malwa region as Chandigarh.”

Governance has come to a standstill: SAD

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MANSA, APRIL 28
SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal today said just like Delhi, governance in Punjab has come to a standstill as Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has not signed any file in last few months.

Sukhbir said the AAP government had promised to set up 16 medical colleges, but failed to construct even one institute. He added that SAD would establish a medical college in Mansa after coming to power in the state.

Party says CM hasn't signed any file in last few months

The SAD chief pointed out that two lakh school students in Delhi had not got uniform and notebooks as Arvind Kejriwal had not resigned from the CM's post even after being arrested in a corruption case.

Urging Punjabis to punish these power hungry politicians, Sukhbir said, “Salaries of employees of several departments, including health and Punjab Police, were not released till April 25.” He said the AAP government had squandered over Rs 1,000 crore on advertisements.

Cong looks to pit Warring against Bittu in Ludhiana

RAJMEET SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28
Amid final discussions in the central election committee last night to finalise the candidates for the remaining five seats in the state, the party is keen on fielding a strong candidate against BJP candidate Ravneet Bittu, the sitting Ludhiana MP, who recently left the Congress to join the BJP.

The party adopted the same strategy by fielding Sukhpal Khaira from Sangrur, the home turf of CM Bhagwant Mann, and former CM Charanjit Channi from Jalandhar. The five seats are Ferozepur, Khadoor Sahib, Ludhiana, Gurdaspur, and Anandpur Sahib.

Even the official announcement of the candidates for the five seats is awaited, sources said Dera Baba Nanak MLA Sukhjinder Randhawa was conveyed that the party was keen to field him from Gurdaspur. It was also pointed out that senior leaders like PPCC chief Amrinder Raja Warring and CLP leader Partap Singh Bajwa should be fielded. The name of the PPCC chief, a Jat Sikh, figured at the meeting and the party is likely to pitch him against Bittu from Ludhiana. Otherwise, former Cabinet Minister Bharat Bhushan Ashu's name was under con-



Raja Warring's name cropped up at top brass meet on Saturday.

PROBABLE NOMINEES			
Gurdaspur	Khadoor Sahib	Anandpur Sahib	Ferozepur
Sukhjinder Randhawa	Rana Inder Partap Singh	Vijay Inder Singla	Sher Singh Ghubaya

sideration for Ludhiana.

The candidature of son of Congress leader Rana Gurjeet Singh and independent Sultanpur Lodhi MLA Rana Inder Partap Singh for the Khadoor Sahib is almost clear. Former Zila MLA Kulbir Zira could be the second choice for Khadoor Sahib.

Rana Gurjeet held a meeting with senior leaders from Anandpur Sahib to push for his candidature from the seat. However, the party high com-

mand was said to be in favour of former Cabinet Minister Vijay Inder Singla, a former MP from Sangrur, for the seat. He is presently holding key post in AICC.

The names under consideration for the Anandpur Sahib seats include Rana KP former Speaker and Vijay Inder Singla, former minister.

For the Ferozepur seat, the name of former MP Sher Singh Ghubaya was under consideration.

Mann to meet Kejri in Tihar tomorrow

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28
Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann will be meeting AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal in Tihar Jail on Tuesday afternoon.

Sources in the AAP office confirmed that the meeting had been arranged for 12.30 pm. The two leaders are expected to discuss the political situation and the party's political strategy for the polls, especially in Punjab and Delhi, where the party is at the helm of affairs.

A ground survey on the party's electoral prospects and the public response to party candidates are also expected to be discussed in the meeting.

This is the second time that Mann will be visiting Tihar Jail to meet Kejriwal. Earlier, he first met him on April 15, after which Mann had alleged that Kejriwal was not being treated well in the jail. It was after this meeting that the party had released its third list of candidates from Punjab.

Sangrur capital of AAP, says CM Mann

SUSHIL GOYAL

SANGRUR, APRIL 28
“Sangrur is a capital of AAP and it will remain the capital of the party”.

This was stated by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann while campaigning for AAP candidate for Sangrur Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer at a function organised today near Barnala.

Earlier, he was received at Badbar toll plaza by party workers who took him to the venue of the function. Mann also met people at Hariarh village on the Sangrur-Barnala road.

During the visit of Mann, members of the Berozgar Sanjha Morcha, Punjab, held a protest on the road when they were stopped by the police from heading towards the function venue to hand over a memorandum to the CM.

Mann said the love that the people had showered at the function had proved that Sangrur was indeed a capital of AAP.

Mann also said he was sure

Campaigns in favour of candidate Meet Hayer



CM Bhagwant Mann and Sangrur candidate Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer in Barnala on Sunday.

that AAP would score 13-0 by defeating all others in the elections. He also said after the second phase of polling in the country, it was clear that out of the 190 seats, the INDIA bloc would win 120-125 seats, so the AAP would be the deciding factor in the next government.

Mann said he had closed 14

toll plazas so far while he would close remaining one or two plazas soon after examining the official papers.

He also criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not initiating dialogue with the agitating farmers who had been sitting for the past more than two months at the Shambhu and Khanauri borders in sup-

port of their demands.

On the occasion among others who were present included Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema, Cabinet Ministers Aman Arora and Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer, MLAs Labh Singh Ugoke, Barinder Goyal, Narinder Kaur Bharaj and Kulwant Singh Pandori.

BJP slams AAP over 'poor' law and order

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

BATHINDA, APRIL 28
While lashing out heavily at the state government over its failure to maintain law and order, BJP candidate from Bathinda Parampal Kaur Sidhu said today that the state used to be entrepreneurs' first choice in terms of business and trade, but today the situation had deteriorated significantly.

“The situation is alarming as the law and order in the state has collapsed entirely. The attacks on businessmen, traders and others are on the rise but the police are not taking any action. Crime against women is also increasing but the Bhagwant Mann government appears to be in slumber,” she added.

Parampal further said law and order in the state had deteriorated to such an extent that now businessmen were fleeing the state, fearing for their safety. Earlier, people considered Punjab as the



Parampal Kaur

safest option for doing business, but today the situation had reversed, she added.

Parampal also took a potshot at Harsimrat Kaur for taking credit for AIIMS in Bathinda. She said Harsimrat pushed Bathinda towards deterioration and now she was trying to take credit for the work which had actually been done by the Modi government.

Later, she along with Gurbpreet Singh Maluka campaigned at Khayaliwala, Model Town, Agarwal Colony, Old Industrial Area, Jassi Chowk, Kot Shamir, Malkana, Mansa and Sardulgarh. She also visited the Vanch NGO centre in Model Town.

CEO launches WhatsApp channel on poll

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28
The office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) has introduced a dedicated WhatsApp Channel, ‘Chief Electoral Officer, Punjab’.

CEO Sibin C said the WhatsApp channel aims to circulate crucial information regarding elections, including election procedures, SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) activities, important dates, different statistics and many more information related with Lok Sabha Election, etc. among the public and stakeholders. Additionally, the channel will showcase significant initiatives undertaken by the CEO's office to enhance voter turnout, aligning with the goal of 'is vaar, 70 paar.'

This initiative is part of the CEO's efforts to leverage technology for enhanced public engagement. Regular podcasts and 'Facebook live' sessions are also being conducted by the office to disseminate information. —TNS

Amritpal may cut into Valtoha's vote share in Khadoor Sahib

SAD (A) withdraws candidate in favour of Waris Punjab De chief

GS PAUL
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

AMRITSAR, APRIL 28
Khadoor Sahib will witness an interesting contest with SAD announcing the candidature of senior leader Virsa Singh Valtoha at a time when Waris Punjab De head Amritpal Singh has already jumped into the fray independently. Both will fight with the 'Panthic agenda'.

The SAD (Amritsar) has withdrawn its candidate Harpal Singh Baler in favour of Amritpal. Valtoha, elected to the Assembly as MLA in 2007 and 2012, will take on AAP's Laljit Bhullar and BJP candidate Manjit Singh Manmianwind. The Congress is yet to announce its candidate.

Khadoor Sahib is spread over Majha, Malwa, and Doaba. The Assembly segments in the Majha region included Taran Taran, Khemkaran, Pati and Khadoor Sahib in Tarn Taran district and Baba Bakala and Jandiala Assembly seats in Amritsar district; Zira of Fer-



Virsa Singh Valtoha

ozepur in Malwa and segments of Sultanpur Lodhi and Kapurthala in Kapurthala district in Doaba region.

In 2019, the SAD was defeated owing to division of votes between its candidate Bibi Jagir Kaur and Independent candidate Paramjit Kaur Khaira, the wife of human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khaira. This had paved the way for Congress candidate Jasbir Singh Dimpa to grab the victory.

When asked about the division of votes when the fight is on common 'Panthic agenda' between him and Amritpal, Valtoha said, “To flag the

Panthic agenda, it required a life-long struggle. Someone born after 1984 and dons the 'Sikhi saroop' just a few years ago could never match the Panthic thoughts and feelings that I have,” he said.

Valtoha, who landed into controversy over his admission of having past 'terror link' remarks in the Vidhan Sabha, said he was also booked under the NSA twice and was jailed for around 10 years for the sake of Panthic cause.

“How long did Amritpal remain behind the bars? Just over a year. The agenda of his family members was to shift him to Punjab. Our fight is for the release of all 'Bandi Singhs' who have been languishing in jails for over three decades,” he said.

On the other hand, Amritpal's mother stated that though he was not willing to contest, yet the atmosphere being created by both state and Centre had compelled him to jump into the fray.

MOHINDER Singh Kaypee, a prominent Dalit leader with a five-decade association with the Congress, has joined the Shiromani Akali Dal, which fielded him from the Jalandhar (reserved) seat. He was a three-time Congress MLA from the Jalandhar South Assembly seat, now West, and held ministerial positions in various capacities. He was elected MP from Jalandhar in 2009 and served as the PPCC chief. Talking to **Avneet Kaur**, he disapproves of Congress' lack of respect for senior leaders like him. The excerpts:

■ **What were your compulsions for leaving the Congress and aligning with SAD?**

For more than a decade, I've felt like an outsider, with the party failing to acknowledge my family's contributions. I was denied a ticket twice, first in the 2019 LS poll and then in the 2022 Assembly poll. It wasn't about not getting the ticket, but the humiliation I faced during the 2022 poll, where a recent turnout was preferred over me. Since then, I'd reassessed my priorities and been waiting for the right moment to act.

■ **Was your switchover to SAD motivated by a desire for revenge**



against Congress for the ticket denial in the 2022 poll?

That incident completely shattered my trust in the Congress. I vividly remember the day when I was awaiting at the office of the Returning Officer, expecting the party ticket, which was turned down to me for a turnout. Is this how senior leaders are treated? If I wasn't their choice, why give false hope and then deny the ticket at the last minute? I felt humiliated even in the presence of my own family, friends and party workers. It's not just me, many senior leaders have faced similar treatment in the Congress. Look at what's happening with Santokh Chaudhary's family now. It's not

“Regardless of any personal relationships we may have, Channi represents an opposition party, whose ideologies I oppose. Therefore, I will uphold the ideologies and priorities of my own party and oppose rival candidates, whether they're from the Congress, BJP or AAP.”

about revenge, it's about taking a stand against injustice. If loyalty of tried and tested leaders isn't valued, why should they remain loyal?

■ **How do you perceive Congress candidate and relative Charanjit Channi?**

Regardless of any personal relationships we may have, he represents an opposition party, whose ideologies I oppose. Therefore, I will uphold the ideologies and priorities of my own party and oppose rival candidates, whether they're from the Congress, BJP or AAP.

■ **Despite facing electoral setbacks, what is your plan?**

In politics, winning isn't always guaranteed, setbacks are part of the journey. Furthermore, when a candidate loses an election, it doesn't necessarily imply that people have issues with the candidate alone, it's also a setback for the party. Despite being a viable candidate, having won the LS elections from Jalandhar in 2009, the Congress moved me to Hoshiarpur in 2014, where I lost by a narrow margin. However, the party failed to assess the reasons behind the loss and placed the blame on me. Despite being out of power, I remain highly respected in my constituency and am determined to stage a strong comeback with the support and trust of the people.

■ **What plans do you have for the development of Jalandhar over the next five years?**

In Jalandhar, numerous issues demand attention, including the misuse of Smart City funds and deteriorating infrastructure, which I will address on priority. Additionally, I am committed to advocating for taxpayers' concerns in Parliament as many feel their hard-earned money is being funneled into private hands, with government assets being handed over to private players.



Aakash

Medical | IIT-JEE | Foundations

Delivering Champions Consistently

JEE (MAIN) 2024

Karnataka
Topper

1st

AIR 34

All India
Female
Topper

100
PERCENTILE
OVERALL

Sanvi Jain
4 Yr. Classroom

Telangana
Topper

AIR **15**

100
PERCENTILE
OVERALL

M. Sai Divya Teja Reddy
2 Yr. Classroom

Telangana
Topper

AIR **19**

100
PERCENTILE
OVERALL

Rishi Shekher Shukla
2 Yr. Classroom

Punjab
Topper

AIR **25**

100
PERCENTILE
OVERALL

100
Percentile in
Phy. & Maths

Rachit Aggarwal
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **65**

100
Percentile in
Phy. & Chem.

99.99
PERCENTILE

Sri Ram A
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **72**

100
Percentile in
Phy. & Maths

99.99
PERCENTILE

Krishna Sai Shishir Vuppala
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **81**

100
Percentile in
Physics

99.99
PERCENTILE

Agrim Bhanot
2 Yr. Classroom

Scan code to check
all the ranks &
watch what the
toppers have to say



13485[#]

(12527 Classroom + 958 Distance & Digital)
*Still Counting

Aakashians Qualified for JEE (Adv.) 2024

1293 99 Percentile & above

9 in Top 100 AIR (All India Rank)

52 in Top 500 AIR (All India Rank)

1 out of 3
Aakashians gets a **Top College**

*As per count of total Aakashians appeared in JEE 2024

Toppers from Chandigarh Region Classroom Programs

PUNJAB TOPPER

AIR **25**

100
Percentile in
Physics & Maths

100
PERCENTILE

Rachit Aggarwal
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **81**

100
Percentile in
Physics

99.99
PERCENTILE

Agrim Bhanot
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **177**

100
Percentile in
Maths

99.99
PERCENTILE

Hardik Aggarwal
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **223**

100
Percentile in
Maths

99.99
PERCENTILE

Ayush Pandey
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **314**

100
Percentile in
Maths

99.98
PERCENTILE

Manuj
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **317**

99.98
PERCENTILE

Raghav Aggarwal
3 Yr. Classroom

AIR **650**

99.96
PERCENTILE

Anshita Batra
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **688**

99.96
PERCENTILE

Mridul Garg
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **703**

100
Percentile in
Chemistry

99.96
PERCENTILE

Himanshu Gupta
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **716**

100
Percentile in
Maths

99.96
PERCENTILE

Jashan Mittal
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **768**

99.96
PERCENTILE

Divyansh Bansal
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **858**

99.95
PERCENTILE

Bhavi Goyal
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **996**

99.94
PERCENTILE

Yashit Verma
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1115**

99.93
PERCENTILE

Aditya Kalra
1 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1228**

100
Percentile in
Maths

99.93
PERCENTILE

Vyom Dwivedi
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1320**

100
Percentile in
Physics

99.92
PERCENTILE

Brahmasees S Makkar
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1370**

100
Percentile in
Physics

99.92
PERCENTILE

Ekamjot Singh S
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1391**

99.92
PERCENTILE

Akshit
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1407**

99.92
PERCENTILE

Jashan Jindal
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1488**

99.91
PERCENTILE

Diya Singh S
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1511**

100
Percentile in
Chemistry

99.91
PERCENTILE

Ayush Singh Rana
3 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1545**

99.91
PERCENTILE

Sarang Gilhotra
2 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1675**

99.90
PERCENTILE

Abhinav Kumar
4 Yr. Classroom

AIR **1897**

99.88
PERCENTILE

Keshav Dharni
2 Yr. Classroom

and many more...

Though every care has been taken to publish the result, yet Aakash Educational Services Ltd. shall not be responsible for inadvertent error, if any.

ADMISSIONS OPEN

CLASSES

8-10 Studying Students
Integrated Courses
for **School Boards /
Olympiads / NTSE**

CLASS

10 Moving to Class 11
2 Years Integrated Courses
for **JEE / NEET**

CLASS

12 Studying Students
1 Year Integrated Courses
for **JEE / NEET**

Hurry! Batches
Filling Fast



Repeater / Dropper Batches

for JEE / NEET 2025 (XII appeared / passed students)

iACST

Instant Admission cum
Scholarship Test

Get up to **90%**
Total Scholarship*

Register now for

FREE

visit: iacst.aakash.ac.in
or scan the code

*Terms & Conditions apply.



SCAN FOR
NEAREST BRANCH



CALL YOUR NEAREST BRANCH: Chandigarh: 8800013079, 9317668400, 8284072183, 8448190654 Panchkula: 8800013039, 7876866442, 9289368821 Ambala: 8800012946, 9354580243
PUNJAB: Amritsar: 8800013076, 9356781127 Bathinda: 8800013078, 9356655856 Hoshiarpur: 8800795238, 9289473265 Jalandhar: 8800013080, 9316479740 Jamalpur: 8800792256, 9317090163 Ludhiana: 8800013081, 9569036026 Pathankot: 8800903754, 9289080528 Patiala: 8A800013082, 9569546942 HIMACHAL PRADESH: Shimla: 8800792158, 9289514363 Hamirpur: 8800839358, 9805003918, 9289274867, 9289490121 JAMMU & KASHMIR: Anantnag: 8899003370, 8899003371, 8899003372 Baramulla: 8899003338, 8899003339 Jammu (Akhnoor Road): 08035241237, 9205557035, 9289663804 (Gandhi Nagar): 8800896574, 9599296514, 9289550245 (Kachi Chawni): 8800879084, 9289663803, 8448788755, 9289550243 Srinagar (Nigeen): 9107926847, (0194) 2410540, 9107926842 (Raj Bagh): 8491047228, (0194) 2454540, 8491047229 (Rawalpora): (0194) 2436550, 6006750448 / 49 Udhampur: 8800878422, 9289550240, 9289550241
Rajouri Information Centre: 8448693759 HARYANA: Ambala: 8800012946, 9354580243 Bahadurgarh: 8800901820, 9540254952 Bhiwani: 8800012950, 9315141659 Faridabad (Sec-16): 8800013022 NIT Faridabad: 8800729482, 8448799013 Gurugram: (Sector-14): 8800840109, 9958064196 Gurugram: (Sector-49): 8800845034, 9289514345 Hisar: 8800013035, 9541421004
Jind: 8800792651, 9289149595, 9289126149 Kaithal: 8800012949, 8448489650 Karnal: 8800012947, 8448489652 Kurukshetra: 8800013036, 9355378720 Narnaul: 8800013042, 9599289824, 9599289826 Palwal: 8800013038 Panchkula: 8800013039, 7876866442, 9289368821 Panipat: 8800013040, 7082000620 Rewari: 9053008274, 9053008275 Rohtak: 8800013037, 9355377057
Sirsa: 8448289956, 9355378249 Sonapat: 8800898137, 9289738918 Yamuna Nagar: 8800012945, 8448489651 DELHI: Janakpuri (Med. Wing): 8800013110, 9289723822, 7428399931 Janakpuri (Engg. & Fdn. Wing): 8800013017, 9319690348, 9350497647 Dwarka: 8800013019, 9205781715, 9205781716 Model Town: 8800522353, 9560197324 Preet Vihar: 8800909325, 011-44469831 / 32
Punjabi Bagh: 8800901554, 9560197322 South Ex (Med. Wing): 8800013111 South Ex (Engg. Wing): 8800015936 South Ex (Fdn. Wing): 8800013018 Greater Noida: 8800013024 Greater Noida West: 8800187908 Noida (Sector-18): 8800013020 Noida (Sector-62): 8800013021 Najafgarh: 8800735460, 9311992032, 8448389729 Pitampura (Med. Wing): 8800473922, 9311272550 Pitampura (Engg. Wing): 8800710382, 9560292026 East Patel Nagar: 8447299285/386, 8383911979 Rohini: 8800945728, 9289647512 Vasant Kunj: 8800185967 Jasola Vihar: 8800189035, 9599187524 UTTARAKHAND: Dehradun (Ballupur Chowk): 8800013108, 9359967826 Dehradun (Rajpur Road): 8800013107, 9319258342 Rishikesh: 8800832406, 8826583219

CALL (TOLL-FREE):
1800-102-2727

VISIT:
aakash.ac.in

For Franchise Enquiry:
Email ID: **franchise@aesl.in**

Aakash
Medical | IIT-JEE | Foundations

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION VACANT

Sant Baba Longpuri Adarsh School Pakho Kalan 25 km from Barnala, required teacher for Commerce classes, qualification must be M.Com., MBA (Finance), minimum 2-3 years experienced. Salary negotiable. Principal: +91 96461-03595. Email: longpuriadarshschool@gmail.com (CL24009881)

H.R.A Lotus School, Gurdaspur, Affiliated to C.I.S.C.E (I.C.S.E) New Delhi vide Affiliation No. PU188 invites applications from eligible candidates for the post of Principal. Co-ordinator and English Teacher (PGT). Email id: hralotusschool@gmail.com 92167-44492, 92167-44496. (CL24010070)

PROPERTY FOR SALE

CHANDIGARH

2 kanal corner/ 2 kanal facing park/ one kanal newly built/ one Kanal with big bed room, Chandigarh. Mob. 96468-09090. (CL24007704)

10 marla B-Road/ 7½ marla triple North East facing, Bayshop/ Booth 34/37/40/21. Mob.: 96468-09090. (CL24007705)

3 Bays showroom 100 ft. front on road top commercial property Chandigarh. Jett Associates: 96468-09090. (CL24007707)

PUBLIC NOTICES

I. Kavita Kumari D/o Jagdish Rai R/o 799, Sector 43-A, Chandigarh have changed my name from Kavita to Kavita Kumari. All concerned please note. (CL24009854)

I. Devender S/o Ishwar Singh residing 462/21, Shastri Nagar, Ladhok Road, Rohak have changed my name to Devender Moudgil. (CL24010069)

COURT NOTICES

In the Court of

Ms. Shammy Chaudhary Additional Civil Judge (Sr. Divn.), Amloh (P) Publication in Recovery Suit U/O 5 Rule 20

1. Amit Kumar s/o Rajinder Kumar, 2. Sonika Goyal w/o Amit Kumar, both residents of House No. 57, Sector 2A, Mandi Gobindgarh, Tehsil Amloh, District Fatehgarh Sahib.

Versus

1. M/s Swami International Behind Bapu Dharan Kanta Jindpur Road Alipur Delhi through its proprietor Om Parkash Batra. 2. Om Parkash Batra Proprietor of M/s Swami International, Behind Bapu Dharan Kanta Jindpur Road, Alipur, Delhi. Suit for Recovery of Rs. 9,25,000/- CNR No.: PBFGA0-000269-2020 Next Date: 27.05.2024

Publication issued to:

1. M/s Swami International Behind Bapu Dharan Kanta Jindpur Road Alipur Delhi through its Proprietor Om Parkash Batra. 2. Om Parkash Batra Proprietor of M/s Swami International, Behind Bapu Dharan Kanta Jindpur Road, Alipur, Delhi. In above titled case, the above named defendants could not be served. It is ordered that defendants appear himself or through counsel on 27.05.2024 at 10:00 a.m.

For details login to https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=fatehgarhsahib

Dated, this day of 21.12.2023.

Sd/- Additional Civil Judge (Sr. Divn.), Amloh (P).

CL22087896

(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC)

In the Court of

Sh. Anish Goyal Addl. Civil Judge (Sr. Division)-1, SAS Nagar

Vs.

M/s Tirupati Balaji Enterprises CNR No. PBSA02-001474-2022 Next Date: 14.05.2024

(Suit for Recovery)

Notice to:

1. M/s Tirupati Balaji Enterprises through its Partners/Authorized Signatories Sh. Sanjay Kumar, Sh. Ravi Kumar, Sh. Nishant Verma, having its office at Reet Killa Nos. 29/11/2, 12/2 Min, 19 Min, 20, 21, 22/1, 22/2 Min, 34/1/2, 2 Min, Bahalgarh, Sonapat, Haryana 131021. 2. Sh. Sanjay Kumar, Partner/Authorized Signatory, M/s Tirupati Balaji Enterprises having its office at Reet Killa Nos. 29/11/2, 12/2 Min, 19 Min, 20, 21, 22/1, 22/2 Min, 34/1/2, 2 Min, Bahalgarh, Sonapat, Haryana 131021. 3. Sh. Ravi Kumar, Partner/Authorized Signatory, M/s Tirupati Balaji Enterprises having its office at Reet Killa Nos. 29/11/2, 12/2 Min, 19 Min, 20, 21, 22/1, 22/2 Min, 34/1/2, 2 Min, Bahalgarh, Sonapat, Haryana 131021. 4. Sh. Nishant Verma, Partner/Authorized Signatory, M/s Tirupati Balaji Enterprises having its office at Reet Killa Nos. 29/11/2, 12/2 Min, 19 Min, 20, 21, 22/1, 22/2 Min, 34/1/2, 2 Min, Bahalgarh, Sonapat, Haryana 131021.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 14.05.2024 at 10:00 a.m.

For details login to https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=mohali

Dated, this day of 26.04.2024.

Sd/- Addl. Civil Judge (Senior Division)-1, SAS Nagar

CL23120047

COURT NOTICES

Criminal Courts, Amloh

In the Court of

Ms Khyati Goyal

Judicial Magistrate-1st Class-1

Amloh (P)

Next Date, Purpose of case, Orders and Judgments as well as other case information is available on <http://ecourts.gov.in>

CNR No. PBFGAI-002181-2020

COMA No. 33/2020

Peshi: 28.05.2024

Umla

Versus

Mukesh Kumar and Others Publication issued to: 1) Mukesh Kumar S/o Makhan Lal R/o 329 Jassran Road Motia Khan Mandi Gobindgarh, Tehsil Amloh, District Fatehgarh Sahib. 2) Laxmi Devi W/o Makhan Lal, 3) Makhan Lal S/o Bihari Lal both R/o Chandni Chowk Munadwar Alwar District Alwar, Rajasthan. 4) Mamta Gupta W/o Hari Om Gupta D/o Makhan Lal C/o Hari Om Store A-15 Mansa Ram Park Itbar Bazar Road Delhi. 5) Preeti Gupta W/o Rakesh Kumar C/o Santosh Garments Main Market Mandawar, District Dosa.

In above titled case, the accused could not be served. It is ordered that accused should appear in person or through counsel on 28.05.2024 at 10:00 a.m.

For details login to https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=fatehgarhsahib

Dated, this day of 19.04.2024.

Sd/- Judicial Magistrate-1st Class-1, CL24009756 Amloh (P)

For Circulation and Advertisement

booking and other related queries please call at following numbers from Monday to Saturday between 10.00 am. and 5.00 p.m.

Circulation:

0172-2670319, 2670250, 2670442

E-mail at

circulation@tribunemail.com

Advertisement:

Classified: 0172-2670257, 2670338

E-mail at

classified@tribunemail.com

Display: 0172-2670256, 2670342

E-mail at advt@tribunemail.com

(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC)

In the Court of

Sh. Sudhir Kumar

Additional Civil Judge

(Senior Division),

Talwandi Sabo.

Punjab National Bank

Vs.

Surinderjit Singh

CNR No.:

PBTA0-000482-2023

Next Date: 01.07.2024

Publication issued to:

Surinderjit Singh

:- Gursharan Singh son of

Gurmel Singh, Village

Ghuman Kalan, Tehsil Maur,

District Bathinda.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 01.07.2024 at 10:00 a.m.

For details login to: https://highcourthd.gov.in/?mod=district_notice&district=bathinda

Sd/- Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division), CL24009946 Talwandi Sabo.

(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC)

In the Court of

Ms. Pavleen Singh

Additional Civil Judge

(Senior Division),

Dera Bassi.

Canara Bank

Vs.

Sharma Fast Food

CNR No: PBSAB0-000420-2022

Next Date: 30.05.2024

Suit for recovery U/O XXXVII

of the Code of Civil Procedure

1908, of Rs. 6,08,38034/- upto

17.03.2022 with future interest

and costs

Publication issued to:

1. Sharma Fast Food thru its

Prop. Karam Chand S/o Krishan

Kumar at Opp. JCBL Ambala

Chandigarh Highway, Village

Alangir, Lalru, SAS Nagar

2. Karam Chand S/o Krishan

Kumar R/o Near Patwar Khana,

Lalru, Derabassi, District SAS

Nagar.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 30.05.2024 at 10:00 a.m.

For details login to: https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=sasagar

Dated, this day of 17.04.2024.

Sd/- Ms. Pavleen Singh Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division),

Dera Bassi.

CL24010046

State's farm fire cases down to half amid rise in fodder price

AMAN SOOD

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

PATIALA, APRIL 28

Punjab recorded 10 farm fires on Sunday in comparison to 22 farm fires it recorded on Saturday, taking the total count to 112 during this wheat harvest season. Last year, the figure was 200 while in 2022, it was 3,000 till date.

Farmers claim that the high price of dry fodder will motivate farmers not to burn wheat stubble.

In 2019, Punjab reported 11,701 farm fires while the number was 13,420 in 2020 as compared with 10,100 reported in 2021 followed by 14,511 incidents in 2022 and 11,353 in 2023. "The window of farm fires is from April 16 to May 20, but this year, due to high price of wheat stubble, we expect a sharp decline in the straw burning incidents and that too from a small area," said PPCB officials.

"A majority of farmers in Malwa and Doaba are taking the wheat straw to Rajasthan, where it is fetching around Rs 2,500 to Rs 3,000 per quintal and with the summer heat up, the cost will increase further. Others will sell it off in state markets and those who can hold onto it, usually wait for the peak summer season to sell it," said a top official.

"With social media and



CASES ANNUALLY

■ 11,701	2019
■ 13,420	2020
■ 10,100	2021
■ 14,511	2022
■ 11,353	2023

STRAW FETCHES ₹3,000 PER QUINTAL

“A majority of farmers in Malwa and Doaba are taking the wheat straw to Rajasthan to sell it where they get around ₹2,500 to ₹3,000 per quintal. Others are planning to sell it in state markets during the peak summer season when its cost will increase.” Govt official

awareness campaigns, farmers are not burning stubble as was being done previously, though a lot needs to be done to ensure that we put a stop to it,” he said.

Farmers also say that they are trying to store leftover stubble to use as fodder for their cattle. Doraha village farmer Jasbir Singh states that the price of dry fodder

has almost doubled if compared with three years back.

This year, the government plans to procure 132 lakh metric tonnes (LMT) of wheat. The area under wheat production is 35 lakh hectares and the government is looking at a wheat production of 161.31 LMT.

Officials say that the farm fires will peak in the coming

days when farmers will prepare their fields for the paddy season in June.

“Also the recent rain spell has left the stubble wet, thus farmers are not resorting to burning. In certain belts, the standing wheat crop is also the reason that they are waiting for the harvest to be over so that they can clear their fields”, he said.

Fazilka man, wife booked for duping people of ₹56.52L

OUR CORRESPONDENT

FAZILKA, APRIL 28

Neeraj Arora and his wife Rubi Arora of Fazilka have been booked for duping gullible persons to the tune of Rs 56.52 lakh through a cooperative society from 2015 to 2017.

A case under Sections 409, 420 and 120-B of the IPC has been registered against the husband-wife duo on the complaint of office of Assistant Registrar Cooperative Societies, Fazilka.

In a letter to Fazilka SSP, office of Assistant Registrar Cooperative Societies stated that nine agents, through whom money was deposited, submitted affidavits on January 10 alleg-

ing that “Indira Thrift and Credit NA Cooperative Society” had opened branches in several villages between March 20, 2015, and November 20, 2017.

The firm opened different types of account and received money from their customers. The cooperative society also issued pass books and made some incomplete credit entries into the accounts of customers, reads the letter.

Later, the cooperative society issued cheques and assured to return the amount in due course of time. However, when customers demand their money, the duo started making lame excuses and shut all branches in December 2017.

Pak national held; 2 drones, drugs seized near border

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28

In separate incidents over the last 24 hours along the International Border in Punjab, security agencies apprehended a Pakistani national who had crossed into the Indian territory, besides seizing two drones and a packet of narcotics.

On April 27, the BSF jawans apprehended a Pakistani national near the border fencing in the Fazilka Sector. On questioning, it turned out that he had crossed over inadvertently as he was not aware of the border alignment. Nothing objectionable was found from his possession.

Later, a flag meeting was convened with Pakistan Rangers and the person was handed over to the other side.

Based on intelligence inputs, the BSF along with the Punjab Police carried out searches at three places in the vicinity of the border on Sunday.

A packet wrapped in yellow adhesive tape and a small LED light attached, that contained 440 grams of heroin was found in the fields near Rajatal village in the Amritsar Sector.

Two Chinese drones were found from the fields near Rajoke and Kalsian villages in the Tarn Taran Sector.

33 kg ganja seized from woman

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

ROPAR, APRIL 28

The police have seized 33 kg ganja from possession of a woman at Bharatgarh today. The accused has been identified as Dalip Kaur. SHO Jatinder Kaur said Dalip was stopped near Radha Soami Satsang Bhawan,

Bharatgarh, and 15 kg ganja was seized from her on the spot.

Another 18 kg of ganja was found concealed at a deserted place near her hut in forest area of Bharatgarh, said the SHO.

Dalip Kaur had been arrested under the NDPS Act, added Kapoor.

60% of targeted wheat reaches Moga mandis

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MOGA, APRIL 28

The wheat procurement season is in full swing. Despite various obstacles at the ground level, the district administration is trying hard to ensure that the procurement process continues smoothly and that the farmers do not face any trouble in the markets.

At present, while the arrival of wheat has increased in the markets of Moga district, there has also been a rapid increase in its purchase, lifting and payment. Against the target of 6.94 lakh MT of wheat arriving in the mandis of the district this rabi season, 4.09

lakh MT has already arrived in the district.

Deputy Commissioner, Moga, Kulwant Singh visited many mandis today and said till now the arrival of 4,09,558 MT of wheat had been recorded in the district mandis, of which 3,74,195 MT had been purchased and 1,61,879 MT lifted.

While clarifying the situation on lifting, he said compared to the previous years, this year a situation of less lifting had arisen in the mandis, but now it was completely under control. Now, more than 30,000 MT are being lifted daily, which is much more than the previous year's record of 27,287 MT daily on an average.



Wheat sacks covered with tarpaulin sheets at a Jalandhar grain market to protect it from possible rain on Sunday. SARABJIT SINGH

Protect close relatives of accused from unnecessary harassment, says HC

SAURABH MALIK

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28

Taking cognisance of a trend to rope in “close relatives” of the accused – particularly woman – for exerting pressure on the entire family, the Punjab and Haryana High Court has called upon the law enforcement agencies to take proactive measures.

In a significant judgment liable to safeguard the rights and dignity of the close relatives, the high court has asked the police to ensure that the innocents are not harassed unnecessarily at the instance of unscrupulous complaints for putting pressure on the

entire family of the accused.

The ruling by Justice Gurnvinder Singh Gill came in a case where a woman claimed that she was roped in simply to pressurise her husband, an accused in a cheating and forgery case. His counsel told the Bench that this was “somehow a trend in the current times”.

The matter was placed before Justice Gill's Bench after the woman filed a petition seeking the quashing of an FIR registered in October last year at the Rama Mandi police station in Jalandhar district under Sections 201, 406, 420, 465, 467, 468, 471 and 120-B of the IPC and Section

13 of the Punjab Travel Professionals (Regulation) Act, 2014.

The Bench, during the course of hearing, was told by the petitioner's counsel that the complainant in the case was defrauded of Rs 23.5 lakh. Out of the total, Rs 50,000 was stated to have been collected by the petitioner.

After hearing the arguments and going through the documents, Justice Gill asserted that the court upon the FIR's perusal found that a “very passive role” had been attributed to the petitioner, the wife of the main accused. The amount was “very small” and that too in cash. It was stated to have

been collected by the petitioner after going to the complainant's house.

“Under these circumstances, Jalandhar CP is directed to ensure that the allegations qua the petitioner are scrutinised minutely before presentation of challan and to ensure that innocent people are not harassed at the instance of unscrupulous complaints, as is somehow observed in several cases wherein close relatives of the main accused, particularly the ladies are nominated in the FIR to pressurise the entire family of accused,” Justice Gill asserted, while disposing of the petition.

Punjab Diary

Horses for courses

Pathankot: A candidate has brought four new pairs of shoes. His contention is that the topography of the Gurdaspur parliamentary constituency is such that he has to visit sub-mountainous regions, river beds and some other places having difficult terrain. His contention is that he uses different shoes for different visits while campaigning. Now, that is a perfect example of horses for courses!



Charanjit Channi plays cards in Nakodar during campaign.

Playing 'common man' card

Jalandhar: As Congress candidate from Jalandhar Lok Sabha seat Charanjit Channi went to campaign, he played cards with locals in Nakodar. After winning the game, Channi asked the electorate to make him win the election too. With almost a month left for voting on June 1, it still remains to be seen which other “common man” cards Channi plays.

Providing piecemeal solution

Gurdaspur: A 25-km stretch between Gurdaspur and Mukerian is full of potholes. On numerous occasions, residents have requested the politicians and bureaucrats to repair the road, but to no avail. On their part, the PWD authorities, who are responsible for its upkeep, provide piecemeal solution only and only when a VIP has to use this stretch. Harried residents now want the CM to drive his own car and see for himself the road's dilapidated condition. This, they claim, was the only option left to them as all their pleas have been falling on deaf ears.

PM's respect for Badal Sahib

Muktsar: Though the BJP and SAD are contesting the Lok Sabha poll separately, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi

still has respect for his former ally and ex-CM Parkash Singh Badal, who passed away on April 25, 2023. On the first death anniversary of the late SAD patriarch, the PM posted on 'X', “Remembering the great Parkash Singh Badal Sahib on his first 'punya tithi'. His indelible spirit and boundless dedication to service of mankind are greatly remembered. Here is an article I wrote last year in which I recalled our close interactions.” (sic)

CM warms cockles of Akalis' hearts

Gurdaspur: When Chief Minister Bhagwant Maan was in Gurdaspur to launch the

Divisional Commissioner files complaint against Khemka for targeting Modi

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28
Divisional Commissioner, Rohtak, Sanjeev Verma, has filed a complaint against Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Printing and Stationery, Ashok Khemka, alleging that he has criticised the state government and targeted PM Narendra Modi on X (formerly Twitter) when the model code of conduct is in operation.

The complaint, dated April 26, to Chief Secretary said that Khemka questioned the intention of the 'ruler' (PM) by tweeting against the Dhirga Commission that probed the Robert Vadra-DLF deal.

On April 6, Khemka had posted on X, "Why is the investigation of the Vadra-DLF deal slow? It has been 10 years. How much more to wait? The Dhirga Commission report is also on the backburner ('thande baste mein'). Sinners have a good time."

He added, "Why is the ruler's intention weak? The promise made by the Prime Minister to the country in



Sanjeev Verma



Ashok Khemka

QUESTIONED PM's INTENTION

The complaint, dated April 26, to Chief Secretary said Khemka questioned the intention of the 'ruler' (PM) by tweeting against the Dhirga Commission that probed the Robert Vadra-DLF deal.

2014 should be considered once." The original tweet was in Hindi.

Verma had marked his complaint to Chief Electoral Officer Anurag Agarwal too.

Verma in his complaint said, "The said message has been posted on X at the time when the Election Commission of India has already announced Lok Sabha elections and the said election in Haryana is scheduled for May 25."

Headed, "So, in view of the

said elections, such a message of a government servant on social media is hateful, controversial and disputed and it not only provokes the electors but also promoted feelings of enmity or hatred, which is a violation of the model code of conduct for which the said officer is liable for punishment under Section 123 and 125 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and also under the Section 153A of the Indian Penal Code."

He further said that the

Supreme Court had also given directions to all authorities in its recent judgment dated January 17 to ensure that there should not be any incitement to violence and hate speeches.

While demanding "strict disciplinary as well as criminal action" against Khemka, Verma said that ACS' action was against service rules and was misuse of his official position as well as the violation of the Government Employees' Conduct Rules.

When Khemka had tweeted on the Vadra-DLF deal on April 6, the same day Verma had taken a dig at him on X. He had posted, "People start counting the sins of others to hide their faults, forgetting that by doing so they do not become pure or innocent." He had added, "There is a saying for such people — 'Auron Ko Budhiya Seekh Veekh De, Apni Khaat Bhitari Le' (The old lady will teach others but will take her cot inside)."

Both Khemka and Verma had got registered cases

against each other over recruitment in Haryana State Warehousing Corporation in 2022 and earlier too, the Rohtak Divisional Commissioner had taken potshots at his posts on X.

The DLF-Vadra deal case was registered against Robert Vadra, the son-in-law of former Congress president Sonia Gandhi, former CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Onkareshwar Properties and Sky Light Hospitality Pvt Ltd for cheating, forgery, criminal conspiracy and under the Prevention of Corruption Act on September 1, 2018, at Kherki Daula police station, Gurugram.

Khemka, then Director of Consolidation of land holdings, had cancelled the mutation of land on October 15, 2012, but the order was never given effect to.

Earlier, the BJP government had constituted Justice SN Dhirga Commission to probe the matter but the high court had quashed the commission's report over procedural flaws.

Not given ticket due to state politics, says Brijendra Singh

DEEPENDER DESWAL
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

HISAR, APRIL 28
Congress leader Brijendra Singh said it was not the central leadership but the factors of state politics which seemed to be the reason behind the ticket being denied to him.

Addressing the mediapersons in Jind after a meeting with his followers, Brijendra — who had joined the Congress after leaving the BJP recently — said he would campaign for the Congress party and was not disheartened on the rejection of his claim for the ticket. "I used to see politics in black and white. But there are gray areas as well. I have learnt a lesson," he said.

Brijendra, who had left the IAS services in 2019 to join the BJP and won the Hisar Lok Sabha seat on BJP ticket in the previous Lok Sabha poll, said he was never comfortable in the BJP. "I was not comfortable in the BJP for a long time. I never met Narendra Modi and Amit Shah in a one-to-



Brijendra Singh and his son Brijendra Singh address a press conference in Jind on Sunday. VUENDER MARATHA

one meeting. Thus, I decided to leave the BJP and join the Congress some time ago," he said.

His father Birender Singh, who has also returned to the Congress after nearly 10 years' stint with the BJP, said he would work to connect the party workers with the electorate not only for the Lok Sabha poll but also for the next Assembly polls in Haryana. "There are around 20-22 Assembly segments in the state's interior areas where the Congress needs to be strengthened. There is a

political vacuum in this area," he said.

He said the Congress would definitely return to power, adding that people were upset with the BJP due to an inefficient government. Moreover, the BJP leadership never worked to appease the party workers, and it had resulted in the workers feeling alienated," he said. Even the regional parties had gradually weakened, he added. The Congress was the only option and people were looking forward to the Congress, he said.

PM working for welfare of farmers, poor, says Saini in Yamunanagar

SHIV KUMAR SHARMA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

YAMUNANAGAR, APRIL 28
Trying to woo farmers for the upcoming Lok Sabha election, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said the Centre and the state government had made a number of policies for the welfare of farmers in the past 10 years.

Addressing a Vijay Sankalp rally in Radaur town of Yamunanagar district on Sunday, he said the Congress government had provided only Rs 1,100 crore compensation for crop damage during its two successive regimes in the state.

However, the BJP government provided a compensation of Rs 12,500 crore in the past nine-and-a-half years, he said.

The rally was organised by former minister Karandeve Kamboj and attended by BJP candidate from Kurukshetra Lok Sabha seat Naveen Jindal, minister of state Subhash Sudha and other party leaders.

On the occasion, senior



Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini at the Vijay Sankalp rally in Radaur on Sunday.

INLD leader Bhopal Singh Bhati also joined along with his supporters. Bhati had contested the Assembly elections unsuccessfully on Congress ticket from Jagadhri Assembly seat in 2014.

"Congress remained in power for more than 55 years in the country, but did nothing for the welfare of the people. On the other hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working for the upliftment of farmers, poor and other sections of society," said Nayab Singh Saini.

The CM said Rs 3 lakh crore were distributed among farmers under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana. He added that on the formation of the Modi government for the third time, every person above 70 would get an Ayushman card for their treatment.

He said many leaders were feeling suffocated in Congress and looking for a way to leave the party. "During the 55 years of Congress' rule, the poor became poorer, whereas the BJP government, under the

leadership of PM Modi, has made welfare policies and implemented them in such a planned manner that 25 crore people of the country came above the poverty line," the CM said.

BJP candidate from Kurukshetra Lok Sabha constituency Naveen Jindal said the PM had dreamed of a developed India, for which work was being done continuously. "Every person will be employed in developed India. Farmers' income will also be higher and women will become self-reliant."

Disgruntled Kuldeep, Bhavya to attend rally with ex-CM Khattar

DEEPENDER DESWAL
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

HISAR, APRIL 28
The BJP's disgruntled leader Kuldeep Bishnoi is expected to turn up in the rally in Adampur tomorrow, along with former CM ML Khattar.

The BJP sources said Khattar will address a political rally in Adampur tomorrow as part of the ongoing campaign for the BJP candidate Ranjit Singh. The party has faced some embarrassment due to absence of Kuldeep Bishnoi and his son Bhavya Bishnoi, Adampur MLA, in the campaign so far. The BJP sources said Kuldeep will attend the rally in Adampur, along with his son Bhavya and other family members, to make an appeal for Ranjit Singh.

After leaving the Congress, Kuldeep Bishnoi joined the BJP in 2022. After his resignation from the Assembly, the BJP fielded his son Bhavya in the by-election from Adampur, who is a sitting MLA now. He also worked for the BJP in the Rajasthan Assembly polls.

The party sources said Bishnoi was upset with some leaders in Haryana, whom he held responsible for denial of ticket to him from the Hisar seat in the Lok Sabha polls. Thus, he stayed out of campaigning till now.

In the meantime, Khattar's indirect dig aimed at Bishnoi's father and former CM Bhajan Lal added fuel to the fire. Khattar had made a remark during a meeting in Nalwa in Hisar recently that a leader used to say to people who visited Chandigarh for recommendation of any work, that instead of coming here, they should have got the work done by greasing the palm of the officials in the field.

Bishnoi's followers were hurt by the comment as they deem it a target on former CM Bhajan Lal. However, to placate them, CM Nayab Singh Saini recently paid a visit to Bishnoi. "They have agreed to join the campaign and will be attending the meeting tomorrow," said an aide of BJP candidate Ranjit Singh.

Upset over ticket denial, Congress leader Dalal to meet supporters

FARIDABAD, APRIL 28

Upset over the denial of ticket by the party from the Faridabad segment, senior Congress leader Karan Singh Dalal, who has been a close associate of former CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda, has convened a meeting of his supporters on Monday to discuss the strategy regarding Lok Sabha elections.

Talking to *The Tribune*, Karan Dalal, who was visibly annoyed, said: "It has been a kind of gross injustice and insult to the people of this constituency as the ticket was not been given to a person who had been working hard for the past two years and had developed a strong bond with the people from various communities." — TNS

DIRECTOR GENERAL OF INCOME TAX (INVESTIGATION), NORTH WEST REGION, भारत सरकार / Govt. of India आयकर भवन / Income Tax Department 1st Floor Income Tax Wing, Central Revenue Building Sector 17, Chandigarh.	
TENDER NOTICE DOMESTIC COMPETITIVE BIDDING (Through call of open tenders)	
F.No: DGIT(Inv.)/CHD/Forensic Services/2024-25	Date: 26-04-2024
PERIOD OF CONTRACT	Three Years from date of signing Agreement, which may be extended by one more year as per the administrative convenience of the Director General of Income Tax (Investigation), NWR, Chandigarh to satisfactory performance of the empaneled service providers.
The tender documents can be obtained from	May be downloaded from e-procurement website i.e., www.incometaxindia.gov.in www.incometaxchandigarh.org
Last Date & Time for receipt of Bid	Date: 24-05-2024 Time: 02:00 PM
Time and Date of opening of Bids	Technical Bid : 11:00 AM on 04.06.2024 Financial Bid : 11:00 AM on 11.06.2024 Declaration of Bid & Meeting with qualified Vendors : 11:00 AM on 18.06.2024
Tenders addressed to	The Director General of Income Tax (Investigation), NWR, Chandigarh
Place of Opening of Bids	Office of the Director General of Income Tax (Investigation), NWR, Chandigarh



Congress candidate Divyanshu Budhiraja in Karnal on Sunday.

Cong Karnal candidate kicks off poll campaign

PARVEEN ARORA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, APRIL 28
The Congress candidate for the Karnal seat, Divyanshu Budhiraja, kicked off his election campaign on Sunday. Embarking on a roadshow on National Highway-44, he was welcomed by the party leaders and workers at various points.

Expressing confidence over his victory by a significant margin, Budhiraja said he would defeat former Chief Minister and BJP candidate Manohar Lal Khattar.

A close associate of Rajya Sabha MP Deepender Hooda, Budhiraja outlined his agenda, focusing on addressing unemployment by promising to generate job opportunities if elected in Karnal. "Unemploy-

ment and inflation remain important issues across the country. Instead of addressing these issues, the BJP has consistently diverted public's attention," he said.

When questioned about the political battle between him 70-year-old former CM Khattar—who held office for nine and a half years, Budhiraja labeled him as a "failed" CM, saying he was unable to meet the expectations of the people during his tenure. "I hold respect for former CM Khattar due to his seniority. His removal from the party leadership signifies his failure," he added.

He said he would reach out to people to highlight Khattar's failures during his tenure.

Voter Helpline App

आपके मतदान संबंधी सभी प्रश्नों का समाधान

मतदाता सूची में अपना नाम जांचें

अपने मतदान केंद्र का पता लगायें

प्रत्याशी का विवरण

डाउनलोड ई-वोटर कार्ड

चुनाव के नतीजे

शिकायतें एवं सुझाव

मुख्य निर्वाचन अधिकारी, हरियाणा

30 बेज बिल्डिंग, सेक्टर 17, चण्डीगढ़

e-Mail: ceo_haryana@eci.gov.in | Website: www.ceoharyana.gov.in

1950 Voter Helpline

मतदान की तिथि **25 मई, 2024**

Voter Helpline app डाउनलोड करने के लिए क्यू आर कोड स्कैन करें

सूचना, लोक सम्पर्क, भाषा तथा संस्कृति विभाग, हरियाणा

www.prharyana.gov.in | Follow us on

@dipharyana

The Tribune

ESTABLISHED IN 1881

Reviewing NOTA

Need to make it a potent option for voters

THE electoral no-show in Surat, where BJP candidate Mukesh Dalal was declared the winner unopposed, has reignited the debate on the NOTA (none of the above) option for the voters. The episode underscores the need for reforms to ensure that the fundamental right of citizens to choose their representatives is not violated or denied. The introduction of NOTA in 2013 on the directions of the Supreme Court was a landmark step aimed at empowering voters and holding political parties accountable.

However, the Surat fiasco highlights the limitations of NOTA in its current form. Lacking teeth, it has repeatedly failed to influence the poll result. The latest outcome has raised questions about the integrity of the electoral process and the centrality of voters in a democratic exercise. Should a candidate be declared victorious without having faced any opposition? Should NOTA necessitate a repoll if it gets more votes than any contestant?

The apex court has issued a notice to the Election Commission of India (ECI) on a plea seeking a repoll in constituencies where NOTA receives the majority of the votes. This calls for a re-evaluation of NOTA's role in the electoral process. While NOTA serves as a symbolic gesture of dissent — a negative vote — its true potential lies in catalysing systemic change and deterring parties from fielding unsuitable candidates. Countries like Indonesia mandate a repoll if NOTA emerges 'victorious', thus ensuring that citizens' dissatisfaction is addressed comprehensively. The ECI must explore ways to enhance NOTA's effectiveness, including considering proposals to annul the elections in constituencies where it bags the highest number of votes. This will compel political parties to nominate candidates with an unblemished reputation. Promoting NOTA — or the right to reject — as a 'fictional' nominee can make it a potent tool of democratic expression.

UK's Rwanda plan

A temporary solution to a festering problem

LAST week, the British House of Lords approved a plan, first proposed by then PM Boris Johnson in 2022, to send refugees to Rwanda. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak reckons that the first flight to Kigali will take off in June. An air bridge is being set up to deport 75,000 refugees who had fled for their lives from war, famine and injustice in their countries. Rwanda has swallowed its pride and accepted £50 million for accommodating the UK's 'undesirables'. Whether all or some of the refugees finally get deported remains to be seen. The Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Act, 2024, however, could be a useful diversionary tactic in the upcoming local polls in Britain, with Sunak battling unemployment and rising inflation.

The British plan is not only presumptuous but also small-minded. In contrast, some Third World countries have been large-hearted. Colombia, Uganda and Pakistan figured among the top refugee-hosting countries in 2022, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Arguably the only Western country that has proved to be compassionate during the ongoing migration crisis is Germany. A bigger question is the safety of the people being sent to Rwanda, which is not exactly a beacon of hope when it comes to the protection of human rights.

The fundamental issue is that 10 crore people worldwide have fled to safer shores due to food insecurity, the climate crisis and wars. People's desperation is making the situation worse — around one lakh Indians trying to enter the US illegally were caught or expelled in 2023 alone. Foreign ministers of European nations have privately expressed concern over the huge influx of undocumented Indians. Instead of a quick fix, the UK should lead the international community in finding a permanent and unbiased solution to the migrant problem.

ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

The Tribune.

LAHORE, TUESDAY, APRIL 29, 1924

Governor's speech in Amritsar

SIR Edward Madagan, who was given a farewell by the District Board, Amritsar, last week, referred to the Sikh problem and the appointment of the Birdwood Committee. In the course of this speech, His Excellency said: "The Government has had at times to enforce the law when this was broken and to secure peace when this was threatened, but it has realised, like the poet, the discomforts of 'being wroth with those we love,' and it has entered with reluctance on repressive measures, however much these may have been necessary in the interests of other communities and the public at large." The reference he made to the "discomforts of being wroth with those we love" is believed to show that the Government is by no means pleased with the infliction of so much suffering on the Sikh community whom it still 'loves'. If this is so, it should naturally follow that the position of this community should be restored to what it was before repression began. His Excellency further said: "Nothing would give me greater pleasure at the end of my term of office than to see things put in place for a complete restoration of the old feelings of confidence between the Government of the Province and the Sikh community." If this is the real object of the Government, the proposed Committee should be asked not only to suggest a satisfactory solution to the Gurdwara problem but also to remedy the subsequent grievances of the community and action should be taken as early as possible to prepare the ground for the "restoration of the old feelings of confidence". We hope that His Excellency will endeavour to give effect to the happy ideal which he has so sincerely expressed in his Amritsar speech.

Maldives moving closer to China

The development threatens to hit New Delhi's interests in the Indian Ocean Region



CUDAY BHASKAR
DIRECTOR, SOCIETY FOR
POLICY STUDIES

THE results of the recent parliamentary elections in the Maldives threw up a big surprise. While President Mohamed Muizzu's People's National Congress (PNC) was expected to win, the scale of the victory was unprecedented. Voters of the tiny island-nation (population of about 500,000) in the Indian Ocean gave an overwhelming majority to Muizzu's party in the 93-member House. The PNC won 66 seats, while its allies bagged another nine, thereby giving Muizzu a super-majority of 75. The electoral mandate gives him the licence to make changes in the Constitution and muzzle the Opposition.

In a complex domestic political churn, Maldivian elections in recent years have seen the emergence of a pro-China faction, thereby posing a challenge to India — which for decades was the principal aid donor and security provider. In a setback for India, then President Abdulla Yameen, who was in office from 2013 to 2018, favoured Beijing over New Delhi. He was accused of embezzlement of funds and corruption and indicted for bribery just before the September 2023 presidential election; the verdict debarred him from contesting.

A last-minute nomination saw then mayor of Male, Muizzu, throwing his hat into the ring against Ibrahim Solih (President from 2018 to 2023) of the Maldivian Democratic Party and winning the election with a slim lead in the second round. Solih was perceived to be empathetic to



ON TOP: Maldives President Muizzu's People's National Congress swept the recent parliamentary polls. REUTERS

India. One of the major foreign policy issues was the tussle between the pro-India and pro-China factions.

It is instructive that Muizzu won the election last year on the back of his 'India out' campaign. Soon after assuming office, he directed that the Indian presence in the Maldives be reduced. As a first step, the new President compelled New Delhi to withdraw the few military personnel who were stationed in the island nation. Muizzu's January visit to Beijing, where Chinese President Xi Jinping welcomed him as an 'old friend', was testimony — if it were required — to the extent to which the Maldives was now looking at China as an alternative to India.

Clearly, despite its long-standing ties with the political leadership in Male, India had dropped the ball in late 2012, when a major infrastructure project awarded to the GMR Group was suddenly cancelled. India was no longer the preferred partner for the Maldives. China, which has long sought a foothold in the Indian Ocean, methodically invested in the strategically located island nation. The latest

Muizzu will have to nudge the two Asian giants to work collectively to address the red lights that are flashing.

development will pose a challenge to Indian security planners and hobble PM Modi's vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All) in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

The docking of Chinese research ship Xiang Yang Hong 3 in Male on April 25 and the disclosure that this vessel had been inside or near Maldivian waters since January would suggest that Chinese naval/maritime presence in this part of the Indi-

an Ocean will animate the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific.

Soon after taking charge as President, when asked if his foreign policy would see a tilt towards China, Muizzu said he would follow a pro-Maldives policy. Major infrastructure projects with Chinese assistance are on the anvil, and the people will be monitoring the tilt towards Beijing to see how this will impact their lives and human security indicators.

The most critical and urgent threat to Maldivian security — nay, its very physical existence as a nation — is the danger of a rise in sea levels. The worst-case scenario is that the Indian Ocean archipelago can disappear when the danger mark is crossed. Experts say that by 2050, as much as 80 per cent of the Maldives will become uninhabitable due to global warming. And the dire warning sounded by the World Bank is that if prevailing regional trendlines of global warming and sea rise are not addressed in an urgent and effective manner, sea levels could increase by 10-100 cm in the future. The net result: by 2100, the entire country could be submerged.

Fortuitously, this issue came into focus amid the declaration of results of the Maldivian parliamentary elections. On April 23, the World Meteorological Organisation released its Climate Asia 2023 Report. The findings are ominous for all forms of life on earth, and the gravity of the threat is stark.

According to the report, the global annual mean near-surface temperature last year was 1.45°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average, and 2023 was the warmest year on record. The global average sea levels have continued to rise at a sustained rate of 3.43 mm/year from 1993 to 2023. But the rate of the rise is not the same everywhere.

The rise in the sea levels in the three sectors of the Indian Ocean (north-west, north-east and south-east) was significantly higher at 4.07, 4.44 and 4.19 mm, respectively, than the global average of 3.43 mm. If ever there are 'pro Maldives' issues screaming for policy attention, they are climate change and global warming.

With their geopolitical aspirations and anxieties playing out in the IOR, this is a survival challenge for a small nation that India and China must respond to in a collective manner. The claim to major power status and leadership of the Global South by New Delhi and Beijing has been reduced to a brittle and arid binary. Even as their policy planners pursue ambitious hi-tech projects that subsume cyber, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and spectrum domination, the health of the ocean will determine the viability of planet earth being able to sustain life in an equitable manner. Perched on top of the complex life pyramid, the human species will fall first.

Muizzu will have to nudge the two Asian giants to work collectively to address the red lights that are flashing. It will be an arduous challenge for Male to yoke Delhi and Beijing together.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

The highest form of warfare is to attack the enemy's strategy itself; the next, to attack his alliances. — Henry Kissinger

A taste of goodness

SUMIT PAUL

HOTELS and restaurants offer a wide array of experiences. More often than not, one enters their premises expecting the unexpected. In 2009, I stayed in Jaipur for about a month at a lodge off Mirza Ismail Road. One day, I went to a nearby restaurant and asked for the menu. It was like a slim magazine with innumerable dishes. 'Chhole bhature hain?' I asked. 'Nahin, sahib,' the waiter replied. 'Matar-paneer?' I enquired. 'Paneer hai par matar nahin,' he said. 'Okay then, aloo ka parantha la deejie,' I said with resignation. 'Paranthe wala cook ghar chala gaya, sahib,' he informed me. Exasperated, I called the manager and asked whether he had a lock. Baffled, he said 'yes'. I told him to lock up the restaurant since it had nothing to offer. However, he did not take offence at my caustic remark. I left in a huff and went to another eatery, where I ate to my heart's content.

I left Jaipur after a few days and came back to Pune. The incident was soon forgotten. A few years later, I visited a restaurant in Gurugram and asked the waiter, 'Huzoor, kya hai?' (what have you got?). 'Taale ke ilawa sab kuchh hai' (except for a lock, we have got everything), said someone. Flabbergasted, I turned back and was surprised to see the manager whom I had met in Jaipur. He had opened his own restaurant in Gurugram. That day, he had everything that was mentioned in the menu, and the food was scrumptious. We recalled the episode and laughed heartily. The cherry on the cake was that it was a free treat from him. I thanked him profusely and am still in touch with him.

Once, I ordered a vegetarian dish at a swanky restaurant in Lucknow. It was full of chillies. I called the waiter and told him, 'Shorba kuchh zyada hi teekha hai' (this dish is too spicy). The manager immediately came and tasted it. He apologised and served another dish in a jiffy. It was perfect and delicious. What's more, he did not charge me anything and again regretted that the restaurant had served a 'below par' item. I was touched and realised that it was not for nothing that Lucknow was called *Shahar-e-tahzeeb* (the city of etiquette).

Alas, these heart-warming gestures are a rarity nowadays. Maybe the times have changed. And so have the people and their values.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Voters seek solutions, not slogans

Refer to 'Infiltrators, inheritance and desperation' (*Nous Indica*); as the election fervour grips the nation, the BJP has returned to divisive tactics and the Opposition is giving a faltering response, evoking a sense of déjà vu. PM Narendra Modi's recent speech in Banswara, replete with references to infiltrators, *mangalsutras* and family size, raises concerns. Is this desperation or a calculated move? The BJP's resort to communal signalling underscores its unease. However, economic woes, not religious rhetoric, dominate the public discourse. While the BJP battles complacency, the Congress' confusion impedes its resurgence. Rahul Gandhi's calls for revolution will ring hollow without concrete action. In this electoral maze, the electorate seeks substance over spectacle and solutions over slogans.

GURDEV SINGH, BY MAIL

Electorate's wish for progress

With reference to 'Infiltrators, inheritance and desperation' (*Nous Indica*); in the throes of an electoral battle, the air is thick with desperation and divisive rhetoric. PM Narendra Modi and the BJP's resort to polarising narratives, notably at the Banswara rally, is a disheartening echo of past tactics. This strategic retreat to the 'safety zone' of communal discourse signals more than just campaign fervour; it hints at an underlying fear of losing its grip. The Opposition's entanglement in its own contradictions only adds to the political drama. Yet, it is the electorate's response that will deliver the final act. If the BJP's communal call fails to resonate, it may well be a reflection of the public's weariness with polarisation and a yearning for unity and progress.

SAHIBPREET SINGH, MOHALI

The poll promise that was not

Refer to 'Anxiety in the saffron camp'; among the election-related issues, the writer mentioned the BJP's reported 'promise' of transferring Rs 15 lakh into every Indian's bank account. But no such promise was made by anyone. What PM Modi had reportedly said was that there was enough black money stashed in foreign

banks to be distributed at the rate of over Rs 15 lakh to individuals in India. Can it be called a poll promise? The black money, if unearthed, should go to the state exchequer, not into the accounts of individuals. Only a naïve person would think otherwise. Though the Opposition keeps raking up the issue, at least an enlightened and well-informed writer must not do so.

WG CDR CL SEHGAL (RETD), JALANDHAR

SC right to junk EVM-VVPAT pleas

With reference to the editorial 'EVMs get SC backing'; the Supreme Court has rightly junked the pleas seeking 100 per cent verification of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) votes with their Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) slips. The apex court also observed that the weakness of the ballot paper system is well known and manual counting is prone to human errors. It could also lead to deliberate mischief. The demand for cross-verification of votes by members of Opposition parties was driven by frustration triggered by a number of electoral losses across the country. Notably, Opposition leaders never question the functioning of EVMs when they register a win. The court did the right thing.

MD SHARMA, SHIMLA

Reposing faith in voting system

Apropos of 'EVMs get SC backing'; all right-thinking people must welcome the apex court's rejection of the petitions seeking 100 per cent verification of EVM votes with their VVPAT slips. The SC has ruled out a return to the paper ballot voting system, which used to witness large-scale attempts by goons with political patronage to capture polling booths. Candidates now have the option to request an inspection of at least 5 per cent of EVMs in each Assembly segment in every parliamentary constituency within seven days of the declaration of the result. It would deter them from questioning the reliability of EVMs without any grounds. Besides, there remains a scope for continual improvement in the efficacy of the machines through the latest technological methodologies and interventions.

KRISHAN KANT SOOD, NANGAL

How Iran took centre stage in Palestinian movement



VAPPALA BALACHANDRAN
FORMER SPECIAL SECRETARY,
CABINET SECRETARIAT

ACCORDING to the Population Reference Bureau (PRB), Washington DC, residents of the West Bank and Gaza are almost totally of Palestinian-Arab origin: 92 per cent West Bankers and 99 per cent Gazans are Sunni Muslims and the rest are Christians. These are 2002 figures. The PRB says that 2,14,000 Jewish settlers also live in these areas. The demographics might have changed due to the presence of large-scale 'illegal' Jewish settlers, as the US calls them, since February 2024, reversing former US President Trump's policy.

However, the religious composition of the Palestinians remains almost the same, according to the CIA's 'World Factbook' (2024). The question is how Iran, with almost 95 per cent Shia population, assumed leadership of the Palestinian struggle against Israel.

The Iran-Israel relations were friendly in 1948, when Israel was born. A 2019 Brookings paper says that historically, Persian-Judaic interactions were friendly as Iran was the

only country which did not join the Muslim-majority states in opposing its creation. Also, Iran fitted into Israel's first Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's 'Periphery Doctrine', which aimed at "a political-security goal of countering Arab hostility through relations with alternative regional powers and potential allies," according to Israeli author Yossi Alpher.

Ben-Gurion forged relationships with non-Arab countries, like Turkey and Iran, whose rulers, like Ismet Inonu and Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (The Shah), had pro-Western orientations. During the Arab-Israeli wars in 1967 and 1973, the Iran-Israel relations assumed strategic depth, with joint projects like Trans-Atlantic Oil, set up in Panama and Switzerland, and a secret Eilat-Ashkelon Oil Pipeline, at a time when Arab oil producers had imposed embargoes on Israel.

Apart from 'Savak', Mossad intelligence cooperation, a secret Israel-Iran project named 'Project Flower' on advanced missile systems was also reportedly going on, according to *The New Arab* of October 23, 2023, quoting *The New York Times* (April 1, 1986).

Around this time, Iranian leftist guerrillas led by the Tudeh Party, and 'Fedaian guerrillas', who were persecuted by Savak, joined the Palestinian pro-left Fatah movement's camps in Jordan and Lebanon for training in guerrilla warfare. They also



HISTORICAL: Iran was the only Muslim-majority country to not oppose Israel's creation. FILE PHOTO

participated with al-Fatah during the armed combat with the Israeli army. However, this leftist revolution petered out.

On the other hand, religious groups led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini started agitating after the failure of Pahlavi's 'White Revolution', which was meant to modernise the Iranian society. The Shah had to leave Iran on January 16, 1979, and Khomeini entered Iran on February 1 to lead a theocratic nation.

The first foreign leader to visit Iran was Yasser Arafat, al-Fatah leader, on February 17, 1979. Arafat, who had suffered a crushing defeat in 1970 while attempting to take over Jordan ('Black September'), was looking for a country to support him, although Lebanon had allowed him to operate from its soil. This was based on the November 2, 1969, Cairo agreement, supported by Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser, through which Lebanon per-

Iran specialists of that era say that the creation of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps was a result of Arafat's suggestions through Lebanese PLO leader Naccache.

mitted Arafat's PLO to administer 16 official refugees' camps under the United Nations Relief & Works Agency, where three lakh Palestinian refugees lived.

Gradually, these camps became the training ground of revolutionaries of all hues, including Iranian religious revolutionaries like the Liberation Movement of Iran, also called the Islamic modernists, Islamic-Marxist Mujahidin-e-Khalq and Islamist followers of Ayatollah Khomeini. Iran specialists of that era say that the creation of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) was a result of Arafat's suggestions through Lebanese PLO leader Anis Naccache, who had led the 1975 Vienna kidnapping of OPEC oil ministers through Carlos the Jackal.

Naccache worked with Jaleddin Farsi, who was then close to Khomeini, to prevent a coup against the latter in the unsettled conditions in Iran.

Naccache later recruited Imad Mughniyeh, who rose to become Hezbollah's top man and organised the Argentinian bombings in 1992 and 1994.

The IRGC is Iran's leading fighting force now, numbering nearly two lakh, with overseas responsibilities through the Quds Force. A Council on Foreign Relations paper, updated on April 17, 2024, says that it has regional allies in Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon (Hezbollah), Palestinian territories (Hamas and Islamic Jihad), Syria and Yemen. The paper quotes a 2020 assessment by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies that "the IRGC has become the most powerful controller of all important economic sectors across Iran" for funding covert activities.

A December 2023 paper by the Combating Terrorism Centre (CTC) at US West Point Military Academy says that the IRGC does the crafting of its overseas activities through umbrella groups and joint operations centres. It enlists al-Fatah splinter groups and leftist and Islamist groups into a more loyal, militarily cohesive and politically responsive network under the IRGC control. The first experiment was in 1991, when it created the Ten Resistance Organisation at the Tehran-sponsored "World Conference in Support of the Islamic Revolution in Palestine".

In September 2023, Hamas and Palestinian Jihad started a

joint operations room (JOR) in Beirut. Another joint operational centre of the Hezbollah and Hamas had been functioning since 2021. As per the CTC, this JOR utilises Lebanese Hezbollah as a coordinator between Iran, other Iranian proxies in Iraq, Syria and Yemen and Palestinian groups.

The CTC paper also quotes Yahya al-Sinwar, Hamas' Gaza lead military commander, proclaiming in November 2018 that the JOR would form the 'nucleus of the Army of Liberation'. Consequently, the JOR undertook joint operations by firing rockets at Israel in November 2018 and in 2019.

Surprisingly, the CTC also reproduces impressive propaganda papers circulated through JOR Telegram Channels communications, dated December 29, 2020, on the types of exercises, including launching rockets, simulating taking IDF hostage from a tank, raiding small structures, deploying an Iranian-made Misagh MANPADS and using Iranian-made AM50 rifles. The paper refers to videos from the drill simulating combat divers raiding coastal targets and JOR fighters interdicting mock Israeli sea-borne forces. It also quotes Joe Truzman writing in *Long Wars Journal* on December 27, 2020, about these exercises.

All these were found utilised by the Hamas during the October 7, 2023, attacks. What, then, was Israeli intelligence doing when such information was publicly available since 2020?

Views are personal

Poll-time focus on aspirations of J&K, Ladakh residents



LUV PURI
JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR

POLLING has been completed in parts of the Jammu region, which has two Lok Sabha seats (Jammu and Udhampur), while the three constituencies primarily in Kashmir (Baramulla, Anantnag-Rajouri and Srinagar) and one in Ladakh will go to the polls in May. One needs to pay attention to the issues that have arisen in this border region during the ongoing elections — the first parliamentary battle in J&K and Ladakh since the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019.

Though the state-tuned-UT has only five seats, J&K's electoral impact on national politics is, at times, disproportionate. It provides an entire mosaic of issues that are leveraged in the Hindi heartland. National security concerns impacted the national elections in 2019 as well as in 1999. The Balakot airstrikes after the Pulwama terror attack gave an edge to the BJP in some states in the 2019 polls, while the victory in the Kargil War helped the party in the

General Election held in September-October 1999. Many soldiers serving in J&K come from electorally significant states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar. While the BJP has repeatedly described the abrogation of Article 370 as its achievement, the narrative on this issue was relatively muted during campaigning for the Udhampur and Jammu seats that went to the polls on April 19 and 26, respectively. The matter has minimal resonance in these areas. The Congress narrative revolved around issues mentioned in its manifesto, including the promise of the restoration of J&K's statehood.

With regard to the Lok Sabha seats primarily in the Kashmir valley, the implications of the Delimitation Commission report, released in 2022, are becoming evident. The panel merged parts of the Anantnag parliamentary seat with the Muslim-majority Rajouri and Poonch districts, which were earlier included in the Hindu-majority Jammu-Poonch parliamentary constituency. De facto, two culturally distinct Muslim-majority areas on either side of the Pir Panjal mountain range were combined to form a parliamentary constituency (Anantnag-Rajouri). Some observers viewed the previous seat, comprising Hindu-majority Jammu district and



BORDER CONTEST: J&K has five Lok Sabha seats, including the post-delimitation Anantnag-Rajouri constituency. PTI

Muslim-majority Rajouri-Poonch belt, as a secularising and stabilising force in a sensitive region.

Moreover, the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency, which goes to the polls in the third phase on May 7, is proving to be a logistical nightmare for the candidates and their parties. For instance, if someone has to travel from Poonch to Anantnag, it takes around 11 hours by road, through the Jammu-Udhampur National Highway 1A or through Reasi district. The only road that connects Jammu's Rajouri-Poonch with the Kashmir valley's Anantnag is the historic Mughal road, but it remains snow-clad for nearly seven months.

The main stakeholders,

Sonam Wangchuk's campaign has brought global attention to environmental concerns of Ladakh.

the National Conference (NC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP), have strongly opposed the demand to defer the May 7 poll in Anantnag-Rajouri, even as some parties, including the BJP — which doesn't even have a candidate for this seat — are keen on a postponement. Within the segment, the contest is between NC candidate Mian Altaf, a scion of an influential Gujar family, and former CM and PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti. Gujar, with at least one-third presence in Rajouri-Poonch, had opposed the granting of ST status to the Paharis, as they feared that it would eat into their reservation pie. The BJP has not fielded any can-

didate on the three Muslim-majority seats in J&K.

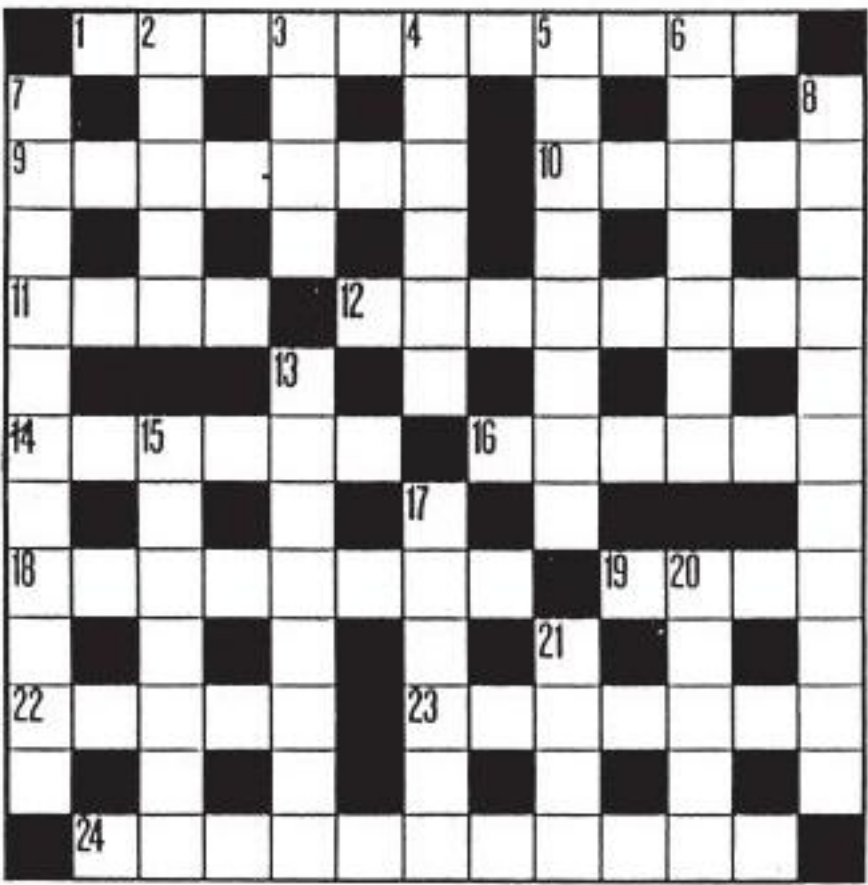
The NC is the favourite for the Baramulla and Srinagar seats. Party president Omar Abdullah, who is contesting from Baramulla, faces People's Conference leader Sajad Lone, who has electoral influence particularly in the Kupwara area of the constituency. He and the Apni Party's Altaf Bukhari have tried to cobble up a coalition on both seats, but the NC as well as the PDP have labelled them as proxies of the BJP. In Srinagar, the NC has fielded Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, a Shia cleric, who faces the PDP's Waheed-ur-Rehman Parra, who was arrested in 2020 and jailed for 19 months under the UAPA (Unlawful Activities Prevention Act). The NC and the PDP are seeking votes to "restore the dignity of Kashmiris" in Parliament. After a long time, Kashmir-centric issues, such as the release of political prisoners, are part of the poll discourse.

Separated from J&K as a consequence of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, the Ladakh parliamentary segment, facing the China-controlled Tibetan plateau and Pakistan-controlled Gilgit-Baltistan, has its own issues. The Ladakhi population includes 46.4 per cent Muslims, 39.7 per cent Buddhists and 12.1 per cent Hindus.

In terms of tangible political goals, the leadership in Leh and Kargil demands the application of a North East-centric Sixth Schedule of the Constitution for Ladakh to protect the fragile ecosystem of the region, as they fear being inundated by outsiders and industrial development. Activist Sonam Wangchuk's campaign, which has given vivid details of the receding glaciers that feed the entire Indus basin and the impact on regional ecology, has brought international attention to the environmental issue. The impact is visible, as the BJP has dropped MP Jamyang Tsering Namgyal and given the ticket to Tashi Gyalson, who is the chairman-cum-chief executive councillor of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council in Leh. Hectic efforts among various stakeholders within the Opposition — Kargil's prominent institutions Islamia School and Khomeni Trust School, and the Congress — are continuing to pick a joint candidate.

A cohesive and participatory relationship between the heartland and the periphery is necessary as an antidote to secessionist demands or ethnic fissures and to ensure sustainable peace. This can only be done by being sensitive to the issues that have been highlighted during the elections and that should inform policymaking in the future.

QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 An unsuccessful venture (4,7)
- 9 Precise moment (7)
- 10 A minor planet (5)
- 11 Change direction (4)
- 12 Return from investment (8)
- 14 Renounce as erroneous (6)
- 16 Defeated (6)
- 18 Rules of diplomatic etiquette (8)
- 19 To loose (4)
- 22 A narcotic drug (5)
- 23 Baffle (7)
- 24 Emergency food supplies (4,7)

DOWN

- 2 Happen afterwards (5)
- 3 Cheerless (4)
- 4 Achieve (6)
- 5 Unevenly balanced (8)
- 6 Ostentatiously rich (7)
- 7 Expectation of inherited wealth (6,5)
- 8 Continuing source of profit (6,5)
- 13 Not often found (8)
- 15 Bishop's staff of office (7)
- 17 Part of the eye (6)
- 20 A synthetic polymer (5)
- 21 Person opposed to a policy (4)

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

Across: 1 Howdah, 4 Stalwart, 9 Bridle, 10 Sidestep, 12 Tutu, 13 Beige, 14 Loaf, 17 Awe-inspiring, 20 For a rainy day, 23 Plum, 24 Leapt, 25 Veto, 28 Euphoric, 29 Genius, 30 Daylight, 31 Unless

Down: 1 Habitual, 2 Whistler, 3 Able, 5 Trigger-happy, 6 Leek, 7 Action, 8 Tip-off, 11 Keep pace with, 15 Enjoy, 16 Inane, 18 Adhesive, 19 Synopsis, 21 Append, 22 Supply, 26 Gobi, 27 Mean.

SU DO KU

6	5		1		4	7
	8	7			9	1
			5	9		
	1		4	3	8	
8						3
	9	2	1		5	
		3	5			
2	4			5	3	
5	7		2		6	9

EASY

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

1	9	6	8	7	4	5	3	2
4	5	7	2	3	6	1	8	9
8	2	3	1	9	5	7	6	4
7	4	2	5	6	9	3	1	8
9	1	8	3	2	7	4	5	6
6	3	5	4	1	8	2	9	7
5	8	9	7	4	3	6	2	1
3	7	1	6	8	2	9	4	5
2	6	4	9	5	1	8	7	3

CALENDAR

APRIL 29, 2024, MONDAY

■ Shaka Samvat	1946
■ Vaishakh Shaka	9
■ Vaishakh Parvishite	17
■ Hijari	1445
■ Krishna Paksha Tithi 5, up to 7.58 am	
■ Siddha Yoga up to 12.26 am	
■ Purnvashadha Nakshatra up to 4.43 am	
■ Moon in Sagittarius sign	

FORECAST

SUNSET:	SUNRISE:	MONDAY	TUESDAY	18:59 HRS	05:40 HRS
CITY		MAX	MIN		
Chandigarh		35	23		
New Delhi		40	24		
Amritsar		33	20		
Bathinda		36	21		
Jalandhar		35	20		
Ludhiana		35	21		
Bhiani		38	24		
Hisar		37	22		
Sirsa		37	23		
Dharamsala		25	14		
Manali		16	05		
Shimla		22	10		
Srinagar		12	08		
Jammu		30	19		
Kargil		16	06		
Leh		12	03		
Dehradun		33	25		
Mussoorie		20	11		

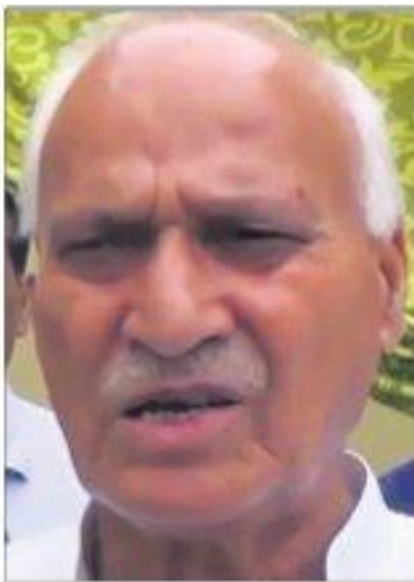
TEMPERATURE IN °C

Minister in soup over clip ‘blaming’ Sukhu for crisis

Cong’s Jawali MLA Chander Kumar downplays chat, terms it ‘casual talk’

LALIT MOHAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

DHARAMSALA, APRIL 28
The video clip of a senior Congress leader and Minister for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Chander Kumar in which he has blamed Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu for the current crisis in government has gone viral. In the video clip, Chander Kumar is saying that the current crisis in the Congress government in which 6 MLAs rebelled could have been averted. He said Congress MLAs had been alleging that they cannot even stop the transfer of a peon from their constituencies. They were openly expressing their resentment but nobody made any effort to redress their grievances. Had the Chief Minister listened to them, the current crisis could have been averted, Chander



Chander Kumar, Congress MLA from Jawali

Kumar has said. As the election campaigning is going on, the video clip has come handy for the BJP. Many BJP leaders from the state have made the clip viral. The state spokesperson of BJP Sanjay Sharma said that the BJP had already been saying that

BJP GETS AMMO
■ As the poll campaign is going on, the video clip has come handy for the BJP. Many BJP leaders from the state have made the clip viral
■ The state spokesperson of BJP Sanjay Sharma said the BJP had already been saying that the CM was responsible for the rebellion in party
■ Now the senior-most Congress minister has endorsed what the BJP has been saying

the Chief Minister was responsible for the rebellion in party. Now the senior-most Congress minister has endorsed what the BJP has been saying. The “dictatorial attitude” of the Chief Minister was responsible for the current crisis in his govern-

ment and BJP had no role to play in it. Chander Kumar, when contacted, said the video clip that had gone viral was a casual talk with some person. Now there was no point in raising the issue as the Congress rebels had already left the party and joined the BJP. They were also contesting the Assembly bypoll on BJP ticket. What Congress rebel MLAs had done by switching over to the BJP was unprecedented. The people of state are ready to teach them a lesson, he said. The BJP has alleged that they have been saying that more Congress leaders were ready to rebel against the party due to the working style of the Chief Minister, who was favouring a chosen few over the elected leaders of party.

In Lahaul-Spiti, CM tells party workers to ensure Ravi’s defeat for his ‘act of betrayal’



MANDI, APRIL 28
Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu today held a meeting with party workers at Keylong in tribal district of Lahaul and Spiti to take their views about the party candidate to contests the Assembly by-election in Lahaul and Spiti against BJP candidate Ravi Thakur. Former Congress MLA Ravi Thakur rebelled against the Congress in the recently held Rajya Sabha election in Himachal by voting in favour of BJP candidate Harsh Mahajan. The CM urged the party workers and people to work hard to ensure that Ravi Thakur forfeited his security deposit in the Assembly byelection, which is scheduled on June 1. He alleged that “Ravi Thakur compromised his honour for money, which he



The CM during campaigning in Lahaul-Spiti on Sunday. TRIBUNE PHOTO

took from the BJP. He took Rs 15 crore and now he will spend this amount among the public to win the election. He will try to buy your vote by money power and it is the right time to teach him a lesson by defeating him with a huge margin of votes.” Targeting the BJP candidate, the Chief Minister said, “Ravi Thakur betrayed the people of Lahaul and Spiti, who had elected him on Congress ticket. He brought shame to the

people of Lahaul and Spiti and the state by his misdeed. So, you all have to unite against him and vote for the Congress candidate on June 1.” “Similarly, voting will be held on June 1 for the Lok Sabha election and Vikramaditya Singh is the Congress candidate from Mandi Lok Sabha seat. The BJP had tried to destabilise the state government by money power, so it is the right time to oust the BJP from power at the Centre,” he added

However, ticket aspirants of Congress in Lahaul and Spiti are in a dilemma because the CM gave no clear indication to whom ticket will be given. The ticket aspirants are apprehensive that the ticket may be given to BJP rebel and former minister Ram Lal Markanda. The aspirants have opposed the entry of Markanda in the Congress. BJP gave ticket to Congress rebel Ravi Thakur in Lahaul and Spiti. When asked, BJP candidate Ravi Thakur said that the comments of the Chief Minister against him were derogatory. “I ask the CM, had he done a deal with Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi to field him for the Rajya Sabha seat from Himachal despite the fact that Singhvi is from Delhi,” Ravi said that for his such remarks, legal notices were already served on Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu and more notices would be served in near future if he did not stop making such remarks. — TNS



Congress candidate Vikramaditya Singh during campaigning in Drang in Mandi on Sunday. JAI KUMAR

Vikramaditya: Will execute Bhuhhu Jot tunnel project

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MANDI, APRIL 28
Congress candidate from Mandi parliamentary constituency, Public Works Department Minister Vikramaditya Singh today held a meeting with party workers at Jogindernagar in Mandi district. He urged the party workers to work hard at the grassroot level to ensure party victory on the Mandi seat. “After becoming MP from the

Mandi seat, I will make efforts to make the Mandi parliamentary constituency number one in the context of development in the country. The issues related to development of this parliamentary constituency will be raised with full force,” he told the party workers. Vikramaditya said that the Bhuhhu Jot tunnel was an important development project, which connects the Jogindernagar of Mandi district with Kullu district via

Lag Valley. Every possible effort would be made to execute this project so that the people of both the districts benefited, he said. “The string of relationship, which my father the late former Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh had tied with the people of Mandi parliamentary constituency, should never be broken. I will not let it break and our relationship with you will remain equally strong,” he said.

Kangana slams Vikramaditya, says ‘a prince can’t feel common man’s pain’



OUR CORRESPONDENT

KINNAUR, APRIL 28
Former Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said that the law and order situation in the state had completely collapsed. Thakur was addressing Panna Pramukh Conference in Kinnaur today. BJP Mandi Lok Sabha candidate Kangana Ranaut, Kinnaur district president of party Yashwant Negi and other officials and workers were present on this occasion. While speaking at Reckong Peo, Kangana Ranaut, dressed in Kinnauri traditional attire, lambasted from Rahul Gandhi to Congress candidate from Mandi Lok Sabha constituency Vikramaditya. She said, “Like the princes we see, one is in Delhi, he is the child of very big parents. Then we see that in Uttar Pradesh there is a spoilt prince and in Himachal too we see such a prince. How can they know the real pain



BJP candidate from Mandi Kangana Ranaut at Reckong Peo during campaigning on Sunday. JEEVAN NEGI

and sufferings of the common people. I come from a poor family and know what it feels like when unheard. That’s why I’ll do everything I can to improve the situation in Himachal Pradesh.” Jai Ram Thakur said that no work had been done in the last 15 months by the government. “It doesn’t matter if they did not run any new

schemes, but the old schemes which were running were stopped. Under the Himcare scheme, lakhs of people of the state were getting free treatment of Rs 5 lakh in case of illness. That has been stopped. The Congress had promised to provide one lakh jobs, but not a single job has been given. Rather, more than 11,000 youth have been fired. The

Congress promised to purchase cow dung, provide 300 units of electricity and Rs 1500 to women, but nothing was given. Without saying anything, without giving any guarantee, we halved bus fare for women and gave a pension of Rs 3,000 every month to 30,000 helpless people. Now it is your turn to teach Congress a lesson,” said Jai Ram.

Minister: Steps being taken to improve edu standards

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SHIMLA, APRIL 28
Education Minister Rohit Thakur today claimed that the standard of education had deteriorated during the reign of the last BJP government and the state slipped to 18th rank in the qualitative education ranking. “The Congress government has started several ambitious schemes in the last one-and-a-half year, which has resulted in some improvement,” the minister said. “Our government is also making efforts to improve vocational education so that the youth can get employment and self-employment opportunities,” he added. Further, Thakur said that the state government was filling more than 7,000 posts of JBT, TGT, PGT and college lecturers in the education department through direct recruitment and batch wise basis so that the education of students was not hampered due to shortage of teachers. Thakur said school cluster scheme had been started for collective use of resources in schools.

SC: Participation of women in workforce a constitutional entitlement, not privilege

Orders HP Govt to form 3-member panel to reconsider entire aspect of child care leave

SATYA PRAKASH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
Noting that the state can’t be oblivious to the special concerns of working women, the Supreme Court has ordered the Himachal Pradesh Government to constitute a three-member committee to reconsider the entire aspect of the grant of child care leave to mothers, including those bringing up children with special needs. “The participation of women in the work force is not a matter of privilege, but a constitutional entitlement protected by Articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution; besides Article 19(1)(g). The state as a model employer cannot be oblivious to the special concerns, which arise in the case of women who are part of the workforce,” a Bench led by CJI DY Chandrachud said. “The provision of child care leave to women subserves the significant constitutional object of ensuring that women are not deprived of their due participation as members of the workforce. Otherwise, in the absence of a provision for the grant of child care leave, a mother may well be constrained to leave the workforce.” Bench led by CJI DY Chandrachud



CCL ENSURES WOMEN TO STAY IN WORK FORCE

“The provision of child care leave to women subserves the significant constitutional object of ensuring that women are not deprived of their due participation as members of the workforce. Otherwise, in the absence of a provision for the grant of child care leave, a mother may well be constrained to leave the workforce,” it said in its April 22 order. Acting on a petition filed by Shalini Dhamani, an Assistant Professor at the Department of Geography in Government College, Nalagarh, who has a 14-year-old son with special needs, the Bench directed the Himachal Pradesh Government to constitute a committee chaired by the Chief Secretary to look into all aspects of the matter and submit a report to it by July 31. The top court directed that “In the meantime, pending further orders, the application by the petitioner for the grant of special leave under Rule 32 of the CCS (Leave) Rules shall be favourably considered by the competent authorities,” and posted the matter for further hearing on August 5. “This consideration applies a fortiori in the case of a mother who has a child with special needs. Such a case is exemplified in the case of the petitioner herself,” the Bench said even as it noted, “We are conscious of the fact that the petition does trench on certain aspects of policy.” The petitioner’s son suffers from a rare genetic disorder i.e. Osteogenesis Imperfecta and has undergone several surgeries since birth. He requires continuous treatment and surgical intervention to survive and lead a normal life. Due to the treatment of her son, the petitioner has exhausted all her sanctioned leave. She had sought additional child care leave under Rule 43-C of the Central Civil Service (Leave) Rules, 1972, which provides for paid leave for a maximum period of two years, i.e., 730 days during the entire service for taking care of up to two children whether for rearing or to look after any of their needs like examination, sickness. On March 3, 2010, the Centre extended the age of the differently abled

child from 18 years to 22 years. On November 16, 2018, her request was rejected on the ground that the Himachal Pradesh Government has not adopted provisions for child care leave, forcing her to move the Himachal Pradesh High Court, which dismissed her petition April 23, 2021, noting that Rule 43-C has been deleted by the state. However, the Supreme Court said “the policies of the state have to be consistent and must be synchronised with constitutional protections and safeguards.” “The committee shall consist of the State Commissioner appointed under the RPWD (Rights of Persons with Disabilities) Act; Secretary in the Women and Child Development Department; and Secretary in the Social Welfare Department,” the Bench said. It asked the committee to engage with the Secretary in the Department of Women and Child Development and Secretary in the Social Welfare Department (Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities) of the Union Government.

All sections benefitted from PM Modi’s schemes: Anurag

Union Minister Anurag Thakur with Panna Pramukhs at Bhoranj.

MANDI, APRIL 28
BJP candidate from Hamirpur, Anurag Thakur, a Union Minister and sitting MP from Hamirpur, today held a meeting with party workers at Dharampur in Mandi district. The Dharampur Assembly segment of Mandi comes under the Hamirpur parliamentary constituency. Addressing the workers, Anurag said the guarantee of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the guarantee of the BJP. He said in the past 10 years, the Union Government led by PM Modi had given the benefits of many schemes to every section of the country, including the poor, farmers, women and youth. In the next five years also, BJP’s resolution letter for all sections had been given before the public. He said every elderly person above 70 years of age, whether poor, middle class or upper middle class, would get the facility of free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh. The Union Minister said by increasing the scope of the Kisan Samman Yojana, the PM would encourage farmers to increase the produc-



FREE RATION FACILITY TO CONTINUE

■ The free ration facility to poor would continue for next five years, said Anurag Thakur while addressing meeting of Panna Pramukhs at Bhoranj near Hamirpur on Sunday
■ He said Modi wave was in ‘high tide’ and NDA alliance would win over 400 seats in the LS, adding that the Congress and its allies had no vision for the development of the county

tion of nutritious vegetables by providing necessary agricultural inputs. Also, new clusters would be established for the production of essential vegetables like onion, tomato, potato etc. Storage and distribution facilities would also be provided in these clusters. “PM Modi has promised to make 3 crore women ‘Lakhpati Didi’ and has empow-

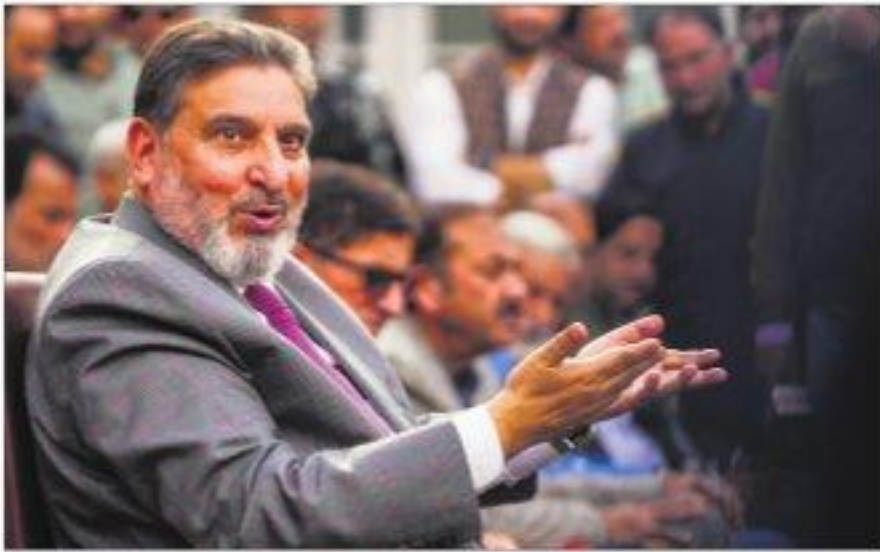
ered one crore rural women by making them ‘Lakhpati Didi’. Now three crore rural women will be made ‘Lakhpati Didi,’” he said. He also said the Congress leaders were not able to hide their anger, who often make insulting comments to PM Modi through the media. But the public knows everything and they would answer to this.

Deceptive narratives of NC, PDP stand exposed, reject them: Bukhari to voters



OUR CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28
Urging people to use their voting right to reject traditional parties, Apni Party chief Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Sunday said the deceptions of these parties and their leaders had now been exposed in front of the people of J&K.
“They have now even lost the deceptive narratives that they once employed to fool the people over the years and decades,” Bukhari said. He was addressing a gathering at Muniwar Khanabal in south Kashmir’s Anantnag district when he made



Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari. FILE

WILL BRING THEM TO JUSTICE

“I promise you that once Apni Party receives public mandate, it will ensure that these ruthless parties and their leaders face the force of justice.” Altaf Bukhari, APNI PARTY CHIEF

these remarks.

Accusing the PDP and NC of misleading the public with false narratives and emotionally charged slogans, Bukhari said their deceit has been laid bare, and their once-potent

narratives had crumbled.

“Nobody is going to trust their slogans like ‘Raishumar’, ‘autonomy’, ‘self-rule’, and others anymore. People know that they have been deceived by these par-

ties and their leaders through these misleading slogans,” the Apni Party chief said.

He added that once the Apni Party gets a public mandate, it would hold these parties accountable for “their role in shedding innocent blood on this land.”

Accusing the NC of killing more than 100 innocent people in 2010, and the PDP of killing 128 persons, Bukhari said the PDP had blinded young boys and girls by using pellet guns in 2016.

“I promise you that once the Apni Party receives a public mandate, it will ensure that these ruthless politicians and so-called leaders face the force of justice,” he said.

Referring to Mehbooba Mufti, he said she was at the helm in 2016 when bullets were rained down even on children and she shamelessly justified these killings by

heartlessly remarking:

“Kya ye bachay chocolates aur doodh lene niklay thay (Had these children come out of their homes to fetch chocolates and milk for themselves). These ruthless words will always haunt the people in Kashmir,” Bukhari said.

He urged people to use the power of their vote to reject traditional parties and their leaders in these elections.

“These so-called public representatives did not even bother to resign in protest of the abrogation of these Article 370. And now, despite their betrayal, the same parties shamelessly seek the people’s votes once again. I urge the people to reject them through the power of their votes,” he said. He appealed to people to vote for Apni Party’s Rajouri-Anantnag candidate Zaffar Iqbal Manhas.

Mehbooba: Vote to tell Parl that Article 370 abrogation was wrong

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28
Former J&K Chief Minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Sunday asked people in South Kashmir to exercise their franchise to make their voices reach the Parliament of the country and convey to the BJP that the decision taken on August 5, 2019 to abrogate Article 370 was wrong and had to be revoked at all costs.
She also warned against any move to postpone the south Kashmir constituency election, saying nowhere in the country polls are rescheduled due to inclement weather. Addressing a gathering in Kulgam’s DK Marg, Mehbooba said people should recognise the significance of their ballots in influencing the country’s Parliament and unequivocally express dissent against the decisions made on August 5, 2019.

QUESTIONS PLOY TO DEFER ANANTNAG POLL

“Where in the country have you heard of polls being delayed due to rain? These are ploys to hinder the electoral process in J&K.” Mehbooba Mufti, PDP CHIEF



“Vote to make your voices reach the Parliament and tell BJP on its face that the decision taken on August 5, 2019 was wrong and has to be revoked at all costs,” she said. “My passport, my daughter’s passport and my mother’s passport were confiscated. My family was hounded and even the graveyard of my father was not spared. I was made homeless in the middle of winter without any notice. My own men who were raised from scratch by my father backstabbed our party but I remained firm on my stand because of the earnest and large-scale support of my people across Jammu and Kashmir,” the PDP chief said. She added: “This election is

to end the years of suffocation. I want to tell these agencies — who are you to confiscate our lands? This is our state, we are its citizens. You cannot choke us.”
The PDP chief said polls for the Anantnag-Rajouri seat must be held as scheduled and should not be postponed. She said she was concerned over underhand tactics employed by certain individuals to postpone the polls but emphasised that the Election Commission must uphold the credibility of the electoral process.
“After a long time, people here have regained trust in the democratic process and are actively participating in it,” she said.

BJP hiding behind its ‘proxies, minions’ in Valley, says Farooq

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28
NC chief Farooq Abdullah today said the BJP had been unable to “win hearts” in Kashmir and now it was hiding behind its proxies in Kashmir: “This tactic will also prove futile,” Abdullah said.
Addressing a workers’ convention at Chanpora, with party candidate’s Srinagar candidate Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi in attendance, Farooq said: “INDIA bloc will secure all six Lok Sabha seats in Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Sensing a defeat at the hands of NC, the BJP has already withdrawn from the race.”
The veteran leader added: “Although the BJP is hiding behind its proxies, this tactic will prove futile. Whether in Lok Sabha elections or in the Assembly polls, your (party workers’) hard work is setting new records.”
“I am pleased to witness your enthusiasm, but it’s clear that other party leaders are intimidated by the NC. The BJP has failed to win over hearts in Kashmir. The decisions made on August 5, 2019 have only served to anger and alienate the people of the Valley,” he added.
Farooq said: “While the BJP may have stepped back, it has not left the playing field.



NC chief Farooq Abdullah campaigns for his party in Srinagar. ANI

Some parties are covertly supported by the BJP. It’s imperative for the people to know who is behind these manoeuvres, plotting against J&K’s interests and aiding the BJP in its agenda.”
“The voters must make their decision. We have been deceived and humiliated. Through our votes, we must raise our voices. This presents a significant opportunity for the voters in Srinagar to fill the political void,” former Chief Minister of J&K said.
He added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had in his recent speech equated Muslims with infiltrators. He said this was an indication of

imminent defeat. Dr Farooq accused the BJP and its leadership of resorting to fear-mongering and communal politics. “People are demanding answers from the BJP on issues of employment, development and progress. Their track record is dismal. Our youth seek employment, our elders demand better healthcare, and our mothers and sisters deserve improved services,” he said.
“Udhampur and Jammu have spoken in unison, rejecting the BJP. Now it’s time for the people of Kashmir to unite against the BJP’s proxies and minions,” Farooq said. — OC

4 killed, 2 missing in Ganderbal road accident

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28
Four persons died while two others were missing after a passenger vehicle rolled down into Nallah Sindh in the Ganderbal district on Sunday, an official said here.
A passenger vehicle with nine persons on board skidded off the road and fell into the fast-moving stream at Gagangir in Sonamarg area of Ganderbal, the official said. He said a rescue operation was launched by the SDRF and police. “Three persons were rescued and shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment,” the official said and added that four bodies have been retrieved. — PTI

NC seeks KPs’ support in Valley

JAMMU, APRIL 28
Accusing the BJP of exploiting Kashmiri Pandits with its “hollow promises”, National Conference leader Rattan Lal Gupta Sunday appealed to the community to vote for his party’s candidates contesting the Lok Sabha election from the three seats in the Valley.
The National Conference has fielded its vice-president and former J-K chief minister Omar Abdullah from the Baramulla parliamentary constituency and former ministers Mian Altaf and Aga Syed Rahullah from the Anantnag-Rajouri and the Srinagar seats respectively.

Voting in the Anantnag-Rajouri seat will be held on May 7, Srinagar on May 13 and Baramulla on May 20.
Interacting with a delegation of Kashmiri migrants headed by the NC’s minority cell chairman and former MLC Bushan Lal Bhat, Gupta urged the community to vote for the party’s candidates.
“The National Conference has always stood for the cause of Kashmiri migrants and shall continue to do the same in times to come... BJP has only exploited them to the hilt by making hollow promises,” he said.
Gupta said the BJP-led government made promises to rehabilitate Kashmiri

migrants in the Valley but these proved to be a “cruel joke” as no step has been taken in this direction since 2014.
Kashmiri Pandits are waiting for the promised special employment package for youths and enhancement of the monthly cash assistance, the National Conference leader said, and challenged the BJP to reveal the steps it has taken for the community. Under the NC-led government, he said, several mini-townships for the Kashmiri migrant community were constructed at Jagti and other areas adjoining the Jammu city. — PTI

CAPF deployment begins for Phase 3 Lok Sabha poll

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28
The Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) arrived today in the south Kashmir district of Anantnag to undertake crucial election duties.
SSP GV Sundeeep Chakravarthy and CAPF Nodal Officer and CO 40 Bn CRPF, RP Meena, welcomed the CAPF contingents at various locations across the district. The police said: “The Anantnag police have assured full cooperation and coordination with the CAPF forces to facilitate their duties and enable peaceful voting.” The Rajouri-Anantnag constituency is slated for polls on May 7. — OC

Ex-Guv Malik started public slandering of Kashmiris: Lone

SRINAGAR, APRIL 28
Jammu and Kashmir People’s Conference (JKPC) chairman Sajad Lone has accused last Governor of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir, Satya Pal Malik, of being the first person to start public slandering of Kashmiris and helping in removal of Article 370 in August 2019.
Lone said his attempt to stake claim to form a government in 2018 after the BJP withdrew support to PDP led



Sajad Lone

by Mehbooba Mufti was “not serious”. Lone acknowledged that he did not have numbers but had reached out to Malik asking him for some time for

government formation.
Malik, while terming Lone as a “blue-eyed boy” of the Centre, had claimed that the Peoples Conference leader wanted to be chief minister just before the dissolution of the Assembly in 2018 with only six MLAs.
However, Lone, who is contesting the Lok Sabha polls from Baramulla against former chief minister Omar Abdullah, alleged that the account given by Malik on

the events of 2018 was exaggerated. “To be very honest, we did not have the numbers. That is a reality. I called him, and I said Sir can you wait, I am in London. He said will do it and asked how much time will you take? That is it. He said send a fax and then the fax machine did not work. That is it. A person who did not have the spine to say no to Article 370 (revocation), and signed on every dotted line, he would have the spine to

say no, I will not swear-in Sajjad? Tell me?” Lone asked.
The People’s Conference leader alleged that Malik was the first person to start the public slandering of Kashmiris. “He demolished Kashmiris by his role in removal of Article 370. The first public slandering, the institutionalised slandering of Kashmiris was done by him. He would say wherever I go, there are carpets,” he said. — PTI

FROM PAGE 1

Modi’s speeches betray...

the elections and the INDIA bloc was poised to secure a convincing majority along the lines of 2004.
He said the dramatic shift in PM’s language and the style of campaigning after the release of the Congress manifesto on April 5 and later the Phase-I polling on April 19 gave INDIA bloc the confidence that they were comfortably ahead of the BJP-led NDA after two phases of elections for 190 of the 543 Lok Sabha seats.
A day after PM Modi termed the Karnataka Muslim reservation model of the Congress as “dangerous”, Ramesh defended the 4 per cent quota the Congress government in Karnataka has given to the Muslims saying “the basis for this decision is a 1994 survey that categorises Muslims as backwards.”
“I can’t think of a single instance where we have gone beyond the Constitution,” Ramesh said when asked to comment on the ruling BJP and PM’s minority appeasement charge.
The senior Congress strategist also ruled out restoration of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir, if elected to power noting that

ON DECLINING RAM TEMPLE INVITE
“We are convinced that we must have clarity about the basics and the basics are that religion is a private matter of faith... don’t forget I have Ram in both my first and last name.” Jai Ram Ramesh, CONGRESS LEADER

“history cannot be redone all the time” and that “one had to move on”.
He vehemently defended Congress’ stand on declining the invitation to attend the Ram Temple consecration in Ayodhya although the issue caused deep divisions in the party and many leaders quit citing it as the cause.
“We are convinced that we must have clarity about the basics and the basics are that religion is a private matter of faith... don’t forget I have Ram in both my first and last name,” Jai Ram Ramesh said, making light of serial defections from the grand old party to the BJP.
Ramesh also hinted at possibilities of Rahul Gandhi contesting from his old seat of Amethi and Priyanka Vadra being fielded from Rae Bareilly.

SC to hear Kejri’s petition against arrest...

in an affidavit filed in the top court. “The mode, manner and timing of the arrest of the petitioner when the schedule of the Lok Sabha elections had been announced and the Model Code of Conduct had come into force, speaks volumes about the arbitrariness of the ED. This timeline establishes the fact that the petitioner has been arrested intentionally with a mala fide intent without any necessity to arrest,” Kejriwal submitted.
Describing Kejriwal as “the kingpin and key conspirator” of the Delhi excise “scam”, the ED has told the top court that his conduct in avoiding



interrogation despite nine summonses led the investigating officer “to form the satisfaction” that he’s guilty of money laundering.
The probe agency alleged AAP was “major beneficiary” of the proceeds of crime generated in the “scam” and the party committed the offence of money laundering through its national conven-

er Kejriwal. However, Kejriwal countered the ED’s allegations, saying, “No specific role or act under Section 3 of the PMLA is established to even hold the petitioner liable vicariously.” He also denied the ED’s allegation that Rs 45 crore was transferred by South Group as an advance kickback which was utilised by AAP in Goa elections. “Not a single rupee was traced back to the AAP and the allegations put forth in this regard are devoid of any tangible evidence, rendering them vague, baseless without any corroboration,” the Delhi CM said.

Navy checks...

scheduled transit to the Indian port. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations security agency said the attack took place southwest of the Yemeni port of Mokha. The second attack on the vessel consisted of what is believed to be two missiles, which resulted in damage, it added.
A news agency reported that Andromeda Star’s current owner is registered in Seychelles and the tanker is engaged in Russia-linked trade. — TNS

Prince insulting rajas, silent on...

The PM alleged the Congress scion, to advance his vote bank politics, was heaping insults on Indian royals, while sealing his lips on the atrocities perpetrated by the “*nawabs, nizams and sultans*”. “Due to the Congress policy of appeasement even our Independence movement was recorded from the prism of vote bank politics. The Congress shehzada now says that Indian kings used to snatch away land from the poor at will. The prince has insulted legendary royals like Chhatrapati Shivaji and Kittur Maharani Chinnamma whose patriotism still inspires our nation... Shehzada’s latest remarks are meant to pander to vote banks. He has criticised our kings, but when it comes to brutalities by *nawabs, nizams and sultans*, his lips are sealed,” the PM said.
Modi asked if the Congress leader knew anything about the contributions of the Mysore royalty or the fact that Rani Ahilyabai Holkar of the Malwa royalty restored several temples and places of worship or that the Banaras Hindu University would not have been possible, but for the patronage of the king of Benaras.
“The Congress does not remember the atrocities of Aurangzeb who destroyed



PM Narendra Modi being felicitated in Uttara Kannada. PTI

‘MANY PEOPLE DON’T LIKE STRONG INDIA’
■ Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday, “There are many people who don’t like a strong India. They want the country and its government to be weak, so that they can make profits easily.”
■ “The Congress too was a clear beneficiary of this corruption. This was the game going on, but the BJP has become a challenge for them,” the PM said while addressing a meeting in Karnataka

countless Hindu temples. The Congress has gone and allied with parties that sing paeans to Aurangzeb. But it has nothing to say about those who destroyed our pilgrimage sites, slaughtered cows. It does not remember those *nawabs* who played a huge role in the Partition of India,” said the PM. He earlier said that those who rejected the invitation to attend the Ram Mandir consecration ceremony in Ayodhya on January 22 would be rejected by the masses on the hustings.

Modi said the Congress’ appeasement politics was reflected in its Lok Sabha poll manifesto and that the party was “planning to conduct an ‘X-ray’ of the people’s properties, possessions, gold, ‘Stree Dhan’, mangal-sutras and what not.”
“The Congress is so engrossed in the welfare of its first family that it has completely distanced from national interest... Many people, many organisations do not want India’s progress,” Modi said.

Phase 2 polling dips; R'sthan, Bihar among 5 laggard states

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28 The second phase of voting for Lok Sabha polls, which concluded on April 26, showed a provisional turnout of 64 per cent, a sharp fall from 2019 elections, when the second phase of polling had seen 69.6 per cent voting.

Though the Election Commission (EC) is yet to release the official polling percentage figures, the dip in percentage from second phase of 2019 is mainly owing to poor turnout in five states.

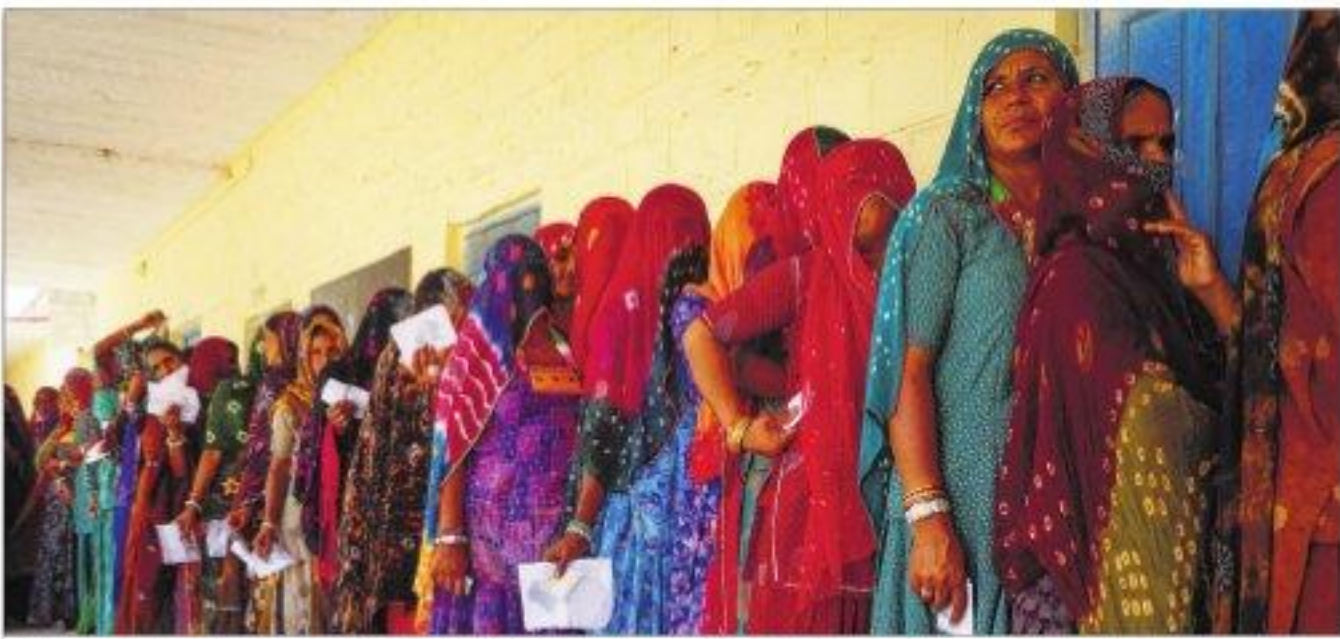
Poor voting was mainly witnessed in Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Voting in the second phase was held across 88 seats in 13 states covering Rajasthan, Kerala, West Bengal, Karnataka and Maharashtra among others.

In 2019, the turnout in 85 of the 88 seats that saw voting on April 26 was 69.6 per cent.

Voting comparison for five seats in Assam has been difficult since seat boundaries have changed since delimitation last year.

As per provisional figures



Women stand in a queue to cast their vote at a polling station in Barmer, Rajasthan. PTI

AT 64%, TURNOUT 5.6% LOWER THAN 2019

- In 2019, the turnout in 85 of the 88 seats, which saw voting on April 26, was 69.6%. The dip in percentage from second phase of 2019 is mainly due to poor turnout in five states
- Maharashtra recorded 59.6% turnout, Bihar 57% and UP 54.8% polling, as against 63%, 63% and 62% polling witnessed, respectively, in 2019.

issued by ECI till late evening of April 26, Maharashtra has recorded a polling turnout of 59.6 per cent, Bihar saw 57 per cent and Uttar Pradesh witnessed 54.8 per cent polling, as against 63 per cent, 63 per cent and 62 per cent recorded, respectively, in all the three states in 2019.

Rajasthan, which saw voting on 12 seats in the first

phase and 13 in the second phase, had a turnout of 64.07 per cent for the second phase at 11 pm on April 26, while the turnout in the same seats in 2019 was 68 per cent.

Kerala, which saw all its 20 seats go for polling in the second phase, had recorded a 67.15 per cent turnout at 11 pm, while in 2019, it was 78 per cent in

the second phase.

Karnataka, which had seen 14 of its 28 seats go to polls on April 26, had registered a 68.38 per cent turnout, while five years back, the turnout on the same 14 seats was 67 per cent in 2019.

The remaining 14 constituencies in the state will vote in the third phase on May 7.

Modify campaign song: EC to AAP

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28 The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Sunday asked the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) to modify the content of its election campaign song as per the Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 and ECI guidelines and resubmit after modification, for the certification.

"The phrase 'jail ke jawaab mein hum vote denge' showing an aggressive mob holding the photo of Arvind Kejriwal showing him behind bars, casts aspersions on the judiciary. Further, the said phrase appears several times in the advertisement which contravenes



Delhi minister Atishi addresses the media. MANAS RANJAN BHUI

the provisions of EC Guidelines and Rule 61(g) of Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994," said ECI.

The action by the poll body came even as AAP

leader and Delhi minister Atishi alleged earlier in the day that the EC was banning the song.

"The same Election Commission ignores the violation of the MCC done everyday by the BJP," she claimed.

"The ECI does not object when the ED, CBI, and other cases on political leaders are shut as soon as they join the BJP, but when we mention that in our campaign song, the ECI objects to it. The ECI says that if you talk about dictatorship, this is a criticism of the ruling party. This means that ECI also believes that the BJP is a dictatorship government," she further alleged. — TNS

Deve Gowda's son, grandson booked

HASSAN (KARNATAKA), APRIL 28 A case of sexual harassment and stalking was registered on Sunday against the son and grandson of former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, former minister HD Revanna and Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, respectively.

The case was registered at the Holenarasipur police station in the district based on a complaint by their cook. The complainant said she was a relative of Revanna's wife Bhavani.

She alleged four months after she started working, Revanna began sexually harassing her, while his son Prajwal used to make video calls to her daughter and have "vulgar conversations" with her. — PTI

The Tribune INTERVIEW: JAIRAM RAMESH, CONG GENERAL SECY (COMMUNICATIONS)

'BJP set to face India Shining drubbing'

At the end of two phases of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh speaks to **Aditi Tandon** on a range of issues dominating the national electoral landscape. Excerpts:

■ Your assessment of INDIA bloc prospects after two phases?

After the first round, it was clear that the momentum was with INDIA. After the second round too, we have the same assessment. Reasons: One, these are traditional strongholds of INDIA – Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Two, our assessment of Rajasthan where we were zero in 2019; Maharashtra where as a party we were 1 of 48 seats; Karnataka where we were 1 of 28 seats. In states where we were wiped out in 2019, this time the trends were encouraging.

And there's a third reason too. The PM's style of campaigning changed dramatically after Phase 1 on April 19. We released our Nyay Patra on April 5 and the BJP made expected comments for some days. But the diabolical manner in which the PM took it up after April 19, talking about Muslim League, *mangal-sutra* being taken away. To me the dramatic reversal in the language and style of PM's campaign betrayed a sense of nervousness and worry. That gives me the confidence that after two phases INDIA is comfortably ahead.

■ How many of these 190 seats could INDIA bloc win?

It would be the kind of mandate Congress and allies got in 2004 when we had pre-poll alliances and UPA was formed after the results came. I think 2024 will be a repeat of India Shining. My sense is there is no Modi wave. The people who have come out and voted for Modi are his hardcore supporters. I've not seen any first-time voters coming out in large numbers. I see urban voting very low.

■ What about low voter enthusiasm?

All I would say is that the Modi wave voter did not come out in the first two phases.

■ But the BJP can say the PM is covering all corners?

That's a justification but the sharpness of the language and the frequency of the utterance of the distortions the PM is indulging in leads me to believe that this is borne out of a carefully crafted strategy but out of a sense of worry. Why has 400 paar gone into the background?

■ PM says you will give SC, ST, OBC quota to Muslims?

In states where we were wiped out in 2019, this time the trends were very encouraging



After Bharat Jodo Yatra and Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, SCs, STs, OBCs and minorities consolidated behind the Congress. We won Karnataka where the JD(S) was wiped out. We won Telangana. The PM is trying to create a split in this social grouping which was coming out to favour the Congress.

■ But the Congress has long faced the minority appeasement charge?

It was LK Advani who first propagated the myth that this is minority appeasement.

■ AK Antony report also flagged minority appeasement for your 2014 loss.

Yes, but insisting that constitutional safeguards for the linguistic and religious minorities should be implemented is not appeasement, recognising the special provisions in the Constitution for minority educational institutions is not appeasement. I can't think of a single instance where we have gone beyond the Constitution.

■ The PM is flagging your Karnataka model of Muslim quota as dangerous?

In Karnataka, there is a 1994 survey that categorises Muslims as backwards. That is the basis for our policy. Why is the BJP raking up the issue now?

■ Congress has historically opposed a caste census, why this change of heart?

From 1951 until 2011, caste as a category did not figure in the Census except for SCs and STs. But times have changed and there are new challenges. Deferring to political consensus in Parliament, the Congress government in 2011 commissioned an SECC. While deprivation data of SECC is being used for government schemes, caste data is yet to be published. We are demanding its publication.

■ Why so many of your leaders quit?

ting for the BJP?

People have ambitions and vulnerabilities. Ideological commitment no longer matters. Many BJP leaders have also joined the Congress.

■ Should the Congress have accepted the Ram Mandir invite?

We are convinced that we must have clarity that religion is a private matter of faith. In 2004, our poll manifesto began with the words "back to the basics". We need that same clarity. Ram Mandir consecration was a political event meant to glorify one person, not Maryada Purushottam Ram who in so many ways defines Indian civilisation. Don't forget I have Ram in my first and last name.

■ Will you restore Art 370 if elected?

You cannot redo history all the time. You cannot be frozen in time. Although it is true that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the Home Minister when Article 370 was incorporated into the Constitution and Syama Prasad Mookerjee was part of the Jawaharlal Nehru cabinet, 2024 is not 1947. We have to move on.

■ Your stand on UCC?

We are for full gender rights and equality not for a dictatorial order from the top. BS Chauhan-led Law Commission which the Modi government appointed said in 2018 that the UCC was neither necessary nor desirable at this stage.

■ BJP says you are proposing to raise the 50% quota cap for Muslims?

This cap for SC, ST and OBC reservation was imposed by the SC in the 1982 Indra Sawhney judgment. Then came a 10% quota for economically weaker sections. We propose a constitutional amendment to raise the 50% reservation cap for SCs, STs, OBCs.

■ PM has attacked INDIA bloc for nepotism, appeasement, corruption?

Ten years ago, Ashok Chavan and Praful Patel were also corrupt. Now in the BJP, they have become paragons of virtue.

■ Will Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi contest Amethi and Rae Bareilly?

Rahul has said he will do what the party says. The CEC has unanimously said Rahul contesting Amethi and Priyanka Rae Bareilly would be good for the party.

■ Overall assessment of 2024 poll?

INDIA will get a clear majority. The Congress will be the single largest party like in 2004. The question of who will be PM was not asked in 2004.

POLL SNIPPETS

TMC worker killed, BJP leader attacked

Kolkata: A TMC worker has been killed, while a local BJP leader has been injured in separate incidents in Kolkata on Sunday. TMC worker Sanjeev Das was killed in a dash. Meanwhile, a woman BJP leader lodged a complaint that she was assaulted by TMC workers in Anandapur area in south Kolkata. PTI

Modi runs govt for billionaires: Rahul

Cuttack: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday alleged that while PM Narendra Modi runs a government for billionaires and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik leads a dispensation that works for "select people" in Odisha. He alleged that the BJP and BJP were helping each other in the elections. PTI

Sangh supports reservation: Bhagwat

HYDERABAD, APRIL 28 RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday asserted the organisation has always been supportive of reservation, and advocated for its implementation as long as "discrimination exists," comments that came in the wake of a viral video claiming the Sangh was against the quota system.

The remarks also assume significance as the Opposition, especially the Congress has mounted an attack against the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and the ruling BJP at the Centre, accusing them of being opposed to reservation.

Speaking at the inauguration of Vidya Bharati Vignana Kendra here, Bhagwat referred to the video in circulation and said it falsely

RAHUL REMINDS RSS OF PREVIOUS STANCE

- Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said the RSS, the ideological mentor of the BJP, may have changed its tone now but it did in the past advocate scrapping the quota system
- He alleged that RSS and BJP were trying to destroy the Constitution to make their leaders "kings" of the country. He said while RSS wanted to do away with the Constitution, Congress was fighting to protect it

claims the RSS was opposed to reservation. The video shows him as holding a meeting, he said but claimed it never happened.

"RSS has been supporting reservations as per the Constitution since the time it came." "The Sangh says that reservation should continue till the time people, to those whom it is given, feel they need it; or, it is given due to social reasons till discrimination exists," he added.

With the help of technology and AI what did not happen

can also be shown (as to have happened), he said.

Bhagwat's pro-reservation statement also comes in the backdrop of the Congress alleging that BJP and RSS are against the quota system.

In his response to Bhagwat's remarks on the matter, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi claimed though the RSS is now saying it was not against reservation, it had earlier spoken about opposing the quota system.

Addressing a campaign rally at Daman and Diu on

Sunday, Rahul said the Bhagwat "makes a statement that RSS is not against reservation."

"It was he (Mohan Bhagwat) who had made a statement that he was opposed to reservation. Those who are against the reservation (policy) are joining their party (BJP). They welcome all those who are against reservation, and then he (Bhagwat) says he is not against reservation," Gandhi alleged.

Incidentally, in a sharp attack on the RSS, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had earlier said that when the organisation was founded in 1925, it had decided to announce the nation as a "Hindu country" and to scrap the reservations in 100 years, i.e by 2025. — PTI

Mamata wants Centre to be soft on terrorism, says Nadda

BAHARAMPUR, APRIL 28

BJP president J P Nadda on Sunday alleged that Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee desires a central government that is "soft on terrorism" and believes in appeasement.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Baharampur in Murshidabad district and Ranaghat in Nadia district of West Bengal, Nadda claimed that the TMC government in the state helmed by Banerjee is known for corruption, extortion, appeasement, and discrimination.

"We want a 'Majboot Sarkar' (strong government), but Mamata Banerjee desires a 'Majboor Sarkar' (weak govern-

ment). She aims for a government in Delhi that condones appeasement, corruption, discrimination, and sympathises with terrorists," he alleged.

"On the contrary, Modi ji's 'Majboot Sarkar' believes in development, prosperity, national security, and responds to terrorism with surgical strikes," Nadda asserted.

Further criticising the TMC government, Nadda said, "Mamata Banerjee's administration fosters appeasement, discrimination, and a lenient approach toward terrorists, extending sympathy to them."

He slammed the TMC for allegedly spreading misinformation about the Citizen-

ship (Amendment) Act (CAA), emphasising that the Act aims to grant citizenship, not revoke it.

"The TMC, for the sake of vote-bank politics, opposes the CAA. Why do they oppose granting citizenship to Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist refugees? What links do infiltrators have with the TMC that they oppose the CAA? We condemn her politics of appeasement, which favours infiltrators and opposes the CAA," Nadda alleged. Referring to the recent school job scam that caused nearly 26,000 job losses, Nadda accused the TMC government of indulging in rampant corruption and malpractice. — PTI

BJP seeking 400+ seats to change Constitution: Pawar

PUNE, APRIL 28 Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Sunday said the BJP wants to win 400-plus seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls in order to make changes in the Constitution. Addressing a campaign rally in Pune's Saswad tehsil, which is part of Baramati Lok Sabha constituency, Pawar said this year's general election is different from earlier ones since it will decide "by which method the country will work".

"The chief minister of Delhi (Arvind Kejriwal) is put behind bars. They (BJP) are walking on the path of dicta-

torship and are destroying democracy. Therefore, to save our nation we need to defeat them," he said.

"This Lok Sabha poll is different from earlier ones as it will decide by which method our country will work. The nation should run as a democracy but we are worried. The BJP want more than 400 seats to make changes in the Constitution," Pawar said. The NCP (SP) has fielded sitting MP and Sharad Pawar's daughter Supriya Sule from Baramati. She is up against Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar. — PTI

Lovely's resignation exposes cracks in Cong-AAP alliance

SHUBHADEEP CHOUDHURY
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28 The resignation of Delhi Congress president Arvinder Lovely has put the spotlight on the Congress-AAP coalition worked out by the two parties to contest the seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi.

Lovely's exit has come on the heels of the resignation of another senior leader, Rajkumar Chauhan, from the Congress. While the Congress and AAP failed to arrive at an electoral understanding in Punjab, the seat agreement reached by the two parties in Delhi was projected as the success story



of the INDIA bloc, the Opposition alliance cobbled up to take on the BJP in the general elections.

But the two back-to-back resignations by two senior leaders of Congress have given an opportunity to the two parties' political opponents to claim that the alliance is doing the parties more harm

EXIT FOLLOWS CHAUHAN'S DEPARTURE

■ Delhi Congress president Arvinder Lovely's exit comes close on the heels of the resignation of another senior leader, Rajkumar Chauhan, from the Congress

■ While the Congress and AAP failed to arrive at an electoral understanding in Punjab, the seat agreement reached by the two parties in Delhi was projected as the success story of the INDIA bloc, the Oppon alliance cobbled up to take on the BJP in the LS polls

than good. The political adversaries claim that more resignations by Delhi Congress leaders will follow.

In his resignation letter, Lovely has cited the alliance with the AAP as the primary reason for his quitting the Congress.

Lovely, sources said, wanted to contest from the north-

east Delhi seat. Congress, however, gave the ticket for the seat to former Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union president Kanhaiya Kumar.

Chauhan, a four-time MLA from Mangolpuri who served in the Delhi Cabinet under Sheila Dikshit three times, left Congress after the

ticket for the Delhi North West constituency seat was given to Udit Raj.

Chauhan's resignation on April 25 came two days after a group of Congress workers staged a protest at the Delhi Congress office against Udit Raj's candidature, calling him a "turncoat" and an "outsider" when Raj and the two other candidates were addressing the media.

Udit Raj alleged that the protest was mobilised by Chauhan. He previously quit the Congress in 2019 when the party did not give him a ticket to contest the Lok Sabha polls, but rejoined the

party for the 2020 Delhi assembly polls.

Congress has already accepted the resignation letter given by Lovely. Lovely had earlier also resigned from the Congress, joined the BJP, and then again returned to the Congress.

The Congress is contesting three of the seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi in alliance with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is contesting four seats. Congress has fielded youth leader Kanhaiya Kumar from the north east, former MP JP Agrawal from Chandni Chowk, and former MP Udit Raj from north west.

Recurve team shocks Olympics champs Korea to bag gold

ARCHERY WORLD CUP

SHANGHAI, APRIL 28
The Indian men's recurve team comprising Dhiraj Bommadevara, Tarundeep Rai and Pravin Jadhav shocked reigning Olympics champions South Korea in a historic win to land an Archery World Cup gold medal after 14 years.
This triumph over the archery powerhouse in well over a decade also comes as a boost to their chances of securing a berth in the upcoming Paris Olympics.
The 40-year-old Army man Tarundeep was also a part of the gold medal winning team in the Shanghai World Cup Stage 4 in 2010, when India defeated Japan. In a battle between the top two seeds of the competition, India won 5-1 (57-57, 57-55, 55-53).



Tarundeep Rai, Dhiraj Bommadevara and Pravin Jadhav won 5-1; Deepika Kumari with her silver medal. SAI

The recurve mixed team of Ankita Bhakat and Dhiraj trounced Alejandra Valencia and Matias Grande of Mexico 6-0 (35-31, 38-35, 39-37) to win bronze. On a comeback trail after missing the whole 2023, Deepika Kumari faltered in the final hurdle to settle for

the silver medal in the women's recurve individual section. The former world No. 1, who started from the bottom after qualifying as the 30th seed, eliminated Koreans in the quarterfinals and semifinals. But in the final, Deepika lost to Hangzhou Asian Games champion Lim



Sihyeon in straight sets 6-0 (26-27, 27-29, 27-28).

Keeping calm
In the men's team final, India were up against their nemesis South Korea, who featured two members of the Tokyo Olympics gold medal winning team in Kim Woojin and

8

India returned with eight medals — five gold, two silver, one bronze — from the event

Kim Je Deok. Lee Woo Seok was the third member.
But the Indian trio drilled in three 10s that included two Xs (closer to the centre) and three 9s to match their rivals in the opening set.
The Koreans slipped twice into the 8-ring, while the Indians shot four perfect 10s, including three Xs, to take the second set. In the next set, the Koreans managed just 53 as the Indians held their nerves to close out the game.
“The nerves always kick in when Korea is in the final. But now, no one can doubt our ability to defeat them,”

Maheshwari misses skeet gold but seals Olympics berth



Maheshwari Chauhan won silver after losing a shoot-off. REUTERS

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
Maheshwari Chauhan today sealed India's 21st quota place in shooting for the Paris Olympics by winning the silver medal in the women's skeet event on the concluding day of the final Olympics qualification championship for shotgun in Doha.
Maheshwari, competing in her maiden ISSF final, lost 3-4 to Chile's Francisca Crovetto Chadid in a shoot-off for gold after both were tied at 54 hits in the 60-shot final. It is India's second Paris quota place in women's skeet. “I am thrilled. There has been a lot of hard work over the years to get here. I am a bit bummed about the shoot-off, but overall, it has been very satisfying.”
Maheshwari Chauhan secured a quota place in earlier competitions and China's Jiang Yiting, the sixth qualifier, was ineligible as her nation had already exhausted their quotas in the event, Maheshwari's fight was with three others — Kazakhstan's Assem Orybay, Azerbaijan's Rigina Meftakhetdinova and Sweden's top qualifier Victoria Larsson.
At the first elimination stage (after 20 shots), the Indian was in second place behind Chadid, having missed two targets.
Orybay was the first to bow out, and the Indian's quota was confirmed after Rigina exited next. Victoria claimed the other available quota.
That probably calmed the nerves as Maheshwari got stronger as the final progressed, catching up with the leader after 50 shots. Maheshwari then had three chances to win gold, but it was not to be and she missed her double entirely in the third shoot-off round to hand Chadid the gold. — PTI

BRIEFLY

NEW DELHI
Senthilkumar enters Batch Open squash final
National champion Velavan Senthilkumar brushed aside Hong Kong's Andes Ling to enter the final of the Batch Open squash tournament in Paris. Senthilkumar, who is ranked 58 in the world, won his semifinal match 11-2, 11-1, 11-6 in 22 minutes. The Indian will face Frenchman Melvil Scianimanico for the title.

LAHORE
Pak appoint Kirsten as ODI, T20I coach, Gillespie in Tests
The Pakistan Cricket Board today appointed South African Gary Kirsten as their head coach for ODIs and T20Is, while former Australian pacer Jason Gillespie will take over that role in Test cricket. Former Pakistan all-rounder Azhar Mahmood was appointed as the assistant coach across the formats.

CHENNAI
AICF exploring options to host chess World C'ship
The All India Chess Federation is exploring all options before taking a call on bidding for the World Championship match between India's D Gukesh and China's Ding Liren. On Saturday, the international federation (FIDE) invited prospective bidders for the 25-day event, with July 1 as the last date for the bid submission.

NEW DELHI
Hima to return to action after NADA panel's go-ahead
Star India sprinter Hima Das will return to action at the Indian Grand Prix 1 in Bengaluru on Tuesday after a disciplinary panel of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) gave the green signal to her following a hearing last month. The 24-year-old Hima was last year provisionally suspended by the NADA for three whereabouts failures in 12 months.

MADRID
Alcaraz earns another comfortable win in Madrid
Two-time defending champions Carlos Alcaraz cruised past Thiago Seyboth Wild in the third round of the Madrid Open, earning another comfortable victory in his return from injury. Alcaraz won 6-3 6-3.

MIAMI
Messi scores twice as Inter Miami beat New England
Lionel Messi's brace led Inter Miami to a 4-1 victory over the New England Revolution. Benjamin Cremaschi and Luis Suarez scored the other goals for Miami. With nine goals, Messi is one goal up on Cristian Arango for the MLS league lead. AGENCIES

TODAY ON TV

IPL

KOLKATA VS DELHI

STAR SPORTS 7:30PM

ISL

MUMBAI VS GOA

SPORTS18 7:30PM

LAUGA

BARCELONA VS VALENCIA

SPORTS18 12:30AM (TUE)

RCB show Will to win

Jacks, Kohli power Bengaluru to comfortable victory against Titans

AHMEDABAD, APRIL 28
Will Jacks slammed a sensational hundred while Virat Kohli upped his game in the middle overs as Royal Challengers Bengaluru outplayed Gujarat Titans by nine wickets in the IPL here today.
Kohli (70 not out of 44), whose approach in the middle overs was questioned in the previous game, employed the sweep shot against the spinners to make a statement before Jacks (100 not out off 41) cut loose to gun down the 201-run target with as many 24 balls to spare.
Jacks went berserk in what turned out to be the final over of the game, hammering as many as four sixes and a four off Rashid Khan to close out the game much sooner than expected. The Englishman plundered as many as 10 sixes in his breathtaking effort.
Put in to bat, Shahrulkh Khan (58 off 30) had made full use of his promotion in the batting order while Sai Sudharsan (84 not out off 49) stayed till the end to guide Titans to 200/3. Batting at No. 4, Shahrulkh teamed up with Sudharsan to give Gujarat a much needed push after a tepid start. The duo shared an 86-run stand off 45 balls.



Will Jacks and Virat Kohli chased down the 201-run target with four overs to spare. PTI

RCB came out to bat in the scorching Ahmedabad heat with Glenn Maxwell returning to their playing XI from a “mental and physical health” break. Titans introduced spin very early and Kohli was up to the task. Thereafter, Kohli did not need to do much as Jacks put the Titans bowlers

12

Balls needed by Will Jacks to go from 44 to 100. He scored 17 off his first 17 balls before cutting loose to smash 83 off 24, including four fours and nine sixes in his last 17 balls

to sword. RCB, who are enduring another tough season, picked up their third win in 10 games while Titans suffered their sixth loss in 10 matches. The Faf du Plessis-led team seemed to have finally found some momentum, having picked up back-to-back wins. — PTI

Gaikwad, Deshpande guide CSK to 78-run win over SRH

CHENNAI: Skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad's belligerent 98 was complemented by a clinical bowling display, led by pacer Tushar Deshpande, as Chennai Super Kings defeated Sunrisers Hyderabad by 78 runs in the IPL.
Invited to bat, Gaikwad's valiant 54-ball knock was the driving force that propelled CSK to an imposing 212/3. He was ably supported by Daryl Mitchell, who returned to form with a crucial 32-ball 52 before Shivam Dube's 20-ball 39 not out took CSK past the 200 mark.
In response, SRH's ultra-cautious batting approach backfired again as they couldn't recover from Deshpande's three-wicket burst with the new ball and the middle-overs squeeze to be all out for 134 in 18.5 overs as CSK snapped their two-game losing streak.
Following the win, CSK moved to the third

spot with 10 points. SRH, who are also on 10 points, slipped to fourth.
Chasing 213 to win, Travis Head (13) and Abhishek Sharma (15) made rapid starts but Deshpande got rid of the Australian with a slower wide ball and then removed impact sub Anmolpreet Singh with an outswinger as the batter went for a golden duck. Abhishek was caught at deep point as Deshpande broke their back, leaving SRH at 40/3.
Earlier, Gaikwad missed out on a successive hundred by a whisker but his 107-run stand with Mitchell was the cornerstone of CSK's innings. It is CSK's 35th 200-plus total, the most by any side in T20 cricket. Gaikwad was the star of the CSK batting as he hit 10 fours and three sixes in his innings. The 27-year-old Gaikwad brought up his 17th IPL half-century off just 27 deliveries. PTI

Indian women ease to victory

SYLHET, APRIL 28
Pacers Renuka Singh and Pooja Vastrakar shared five wickets as India produced a clinical bowling display to outclass Bangladesh by 44 runs in the opening women's T20I here today.
Opting to bat, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Yastika Bhatia provided solidity in the middle order but India missed the late flourish to manage 145/7. The hosts must have fancied their chances of chasing down the total but the Indian bowlers led by Renuka delivered the goods to limit Bangladesh to 101/8.
Brief scores: India: 145/7 (Yastika 36, Shafali 31, Harmanpreet 30; Rabeya 3/23); Bangladesh: 101/8 (Sultana 51; Renuka 3/18, Vastrakar 2/25). — PTI

Arsenal hang on to beat Spurs

LONDON, APRIL 28
Arsenal held on to beat battling local rivals Tottenham Hotspur 3-2 away and remain a point clear at the top of the Premier League after an emphatic first-half display and a nervous second period in an electric derby atmosphere. An own goal by Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg and efforts from Bukayo Saka and Kai Havertz put the Gunners in control at halftime and although Spurs fought back through Cristian Romero's strike and a Son Heung-min penalty, the visitors claimed the three points.
Victory kept Mikel Arteta's Gunners ahead of second-placed champions Manchester City, whose 2-0 victory over Nottingham Forest put them within a point with a game in hand.



Erling Haaland celebrates scoring Man City's second goal. REUTERS

“I think the most important thing is to not think (about the title race), especially these moments, but take it day by day,” said Erling Haaland, who doubled City's lead after Josko Gvardiol opened the scoring.

Liverpool are four points behind City in third spot, but like Arsenal having played 35 matches. Tottenham's defeat hit their hopes of playing Champions League football next season. — Reuters

Mohun Bagan turn tables on Odisha, enter ISL final

KOLKATA, APRIL 28
Mohun Bagan kept themselves in the hunt for an unprecedented double in the ISL by storming into the final with a 3-2 aggregate win over Odisha FC.
Having lost the first leg of the semifinal 1-2 at Bhubaneswar, Mohun Bagan began on a dominant note and struck through Jason Cummings in the 22nd minute to bring it level for the Mariners on aggregate.
After a flurry of attacks went begging thanks to a resolute display by Amrinder Singh under the bar, Mohun Bagan finally struck the winning goal through comeback man Sahal Abdul Samad who came off the bench to strike from Manvir Singh's



Mohun Bagan beat Odisha FC 3-2 on aggregate. PTI

assist in the 90+3rd minute. The victory came two weeks after Mohun Bagan won their maiden League Winners Shield. — PTI

Diksha fires 71, finishes T-24

CAPE TOWN, APRIL 28
Diksha Dagar played a steady final round of 1-under 71 and finished tied-24th at the South African Women's Open. The 23-year-old southpaw has missed just one cut in six starts, finishing in the top-25 in the remaining six events.
Aditi lies T-50th
Los Angeles: Aditi Ashok closed with a double bogey and a bogey on the final two holes of her third round and slipped to T-50 at the LPGA Tour's LA Championship.
Lahiri T-14 in Liv Golf Adelaide: Anirban Lahiri shot a 5-under 67 and finished T-14 in the Liv Golf Adelaide. — PTI



CDS eyes high-tech arms, systems from France to boost military power

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan during his recent visit to France sought enhanced exchange of high-end dual-use — military and civilian — technologies. This came up during the deliberations at France's Directorate General of Armament, the Ministry of Defence said today, adding that the visit of the CDS has culminated. The CDS also had interactions with the top leadership of the French defence industry, including Dassault, Safran and Naval Groups and Thales Alenia Space, towards futuristic capacity building of the Indian armed forces. Dassault is the maker of Rafale fighter jets, Safran is already making helicopter



engines in collaboration with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Naval Group is making the Scorpene class of submarines in collaboration with

MEETS TOP EXECUTIVES OF DEFENCE MAJORS

■ With a view to building futuristic capabilities of the Indian armed forces, CDS Gen Anil Chauhan interacted with top executives of several French defence majors, including Dassault Aviation, Safran and Naval Group, during his recent visit to France. ■ Gen Chauhan also held wide-ranging talks with senior civil and military leadership of France on ways to bolster the military cooperation between the armed forces of the two countries

<< CDS Gen Anil Chauhan with French counterpart Gen Thierry Burkhardt. FILE

has enabled exchange of views on areas of common interests and mutual security concerns. The CDS met Director of Civil and Military Cabinet of the

Minister of the French Armed Forces Patrick Pailoux; Chief of Military Cabinet of the Minister of the Armed Forces Lt Gen Vincent Giraud and his French counterpart General Thierry Burkhardt. General Chauhan also met the French Land Forces Command, the French Space Command, and the School of Military Studies (Ecole Militaire). These interactions provided opportunities for enhancing defence collaboration in space, modernisation initiatives and also augmenting bilateral training between both nations. The CDS also paid tributes at the War Memorials of Neuve-Chapelle and Villers-Guislain, to the bravery of soldiers of the British Indian Army that fought on the Western Front during the First World War (1914-18).

After cancelling India trip, Musk lands in China for biz

BEIJING, APRIL 28

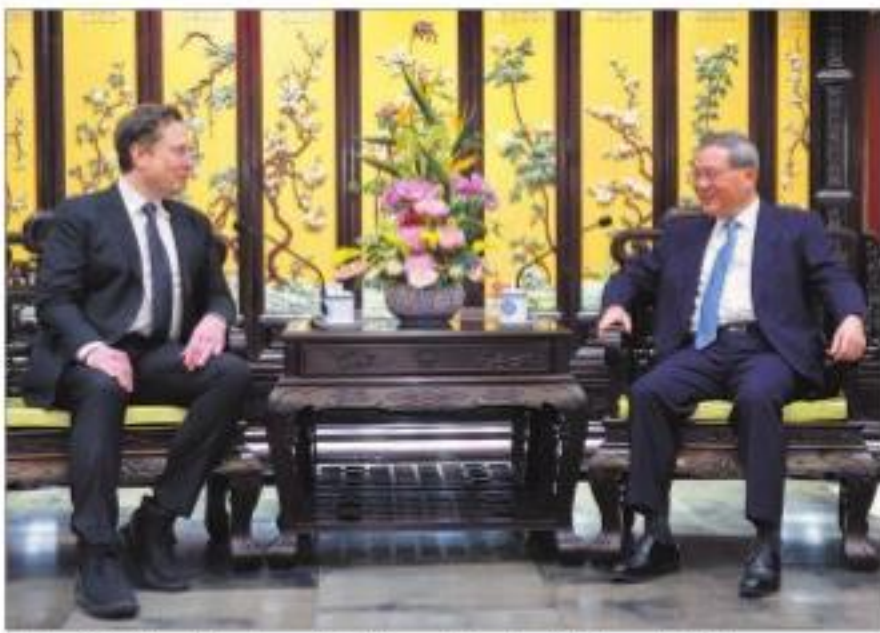
Days after he cancelled his planned trip to India and meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tesla CEO Elon Musk on Sunday landed in Beijing to discuss future expansion plans for his automobile business.

Musk met Chinese Premier Li Qiang and other officials to discuss lifting all restrictions on moving and parking of Tesla vehicles in some sensitive areas in the country over fears of breach of sensitive and strategic data, official media reported.

A recent report said Tesla car drivers in China are reportedly facing entry bans in government-affiliated buildings as security concerns with the US increase.

An increasing number of meeting halls and exhibition centres across the country are refusing entry to Tesla vehicles, according to a report published by Nikkei Asia. The report stated that previous restrictions for the vehicles were generally limited just to military bases, but now a growing number of highway operators, local authority agencies, and cultural centres are reportedly enforcing them.

Musk arrived in Beijing on Sunday at the invitation of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade Automobile company as Tesla has been in negotiation with the Chinese authorities about the lifting of all restrictions, the state-run China Daily reported. The restrictions included moving and parking in some



Tesla CEO Elon Musk meets Chinese Premier Li Qiang in Beijing. REUTERS

RAISES BAN ON TESLA IN SENSITIVE AREAS WITH LI

■ Tesla CEO Elon Musk met Chinese Premier Li Qiang in Beijing on Sunday to discuss lifting all restrictions on Tesla vehicles in some sensitive areas in the country over fears of breach of sensitive and strategic data, media reported

■ Musk, who had recently skipped a scheduled visit to India to firm up plans to open a Tesla factory in the country, is visiting Beijing when his Tesla market in China is threatened by the increasing sales of local EVs

sensitive areas in the country, as Tesla's electric vehicles, or EVs, passed an authoritative national data inspection in China, the daily quoted official sources as saying.

Musk visited to discuss topics including removing restrictions on Tesla EVs in some sensitive areas, such as government agencies, as well as launching the vehicles' full self-driving functions in the country, it said.

Musk made the visit mainly because of the data issue and not there for the ongoing Auto China show in Beijing, as has been reported, it said.

In his meeting with Musk, Li said China's huge market would always be open to for-

eign-funded enterprises.

China will work hard on expanding market access and improving services to provide foreign-funded enterprises with a better business environment and stronger support so that companies from all countries can invest in China with peace of mind, he said.

Musk said Tesla's Shanghai Gigafactory is Tesla's best-performing factory and expressed his willingness to deepen cooperation with China to achieve more win-win results, official media reported. Musk is expected to meet senior Chinese officials at the State Council and "old friends" in Beijing. — PTI

SC puts Centre, Punjab, Haryana, PAU on notice over MSP petition

SATYA PRAKASH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28
The Supreme Court has issued notices to the Central, Punjab and Haryana governments on a petition seeking minimum support price (MSP) and procurement by the government, including periodic increases in MSP for every crop grown by farmers. A Bench led by Justice Abhay S Oka on April 26 asked the Centre, governments of Punjab and Haryana, Central Pollution Control Board, Punjab Agriculture University, Central Ground Water Board, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI) to respond to the petition filed by advocate Charnanpal Singh Bagri and posted the matter for hearing on July 12. In his petition filed in 2019, Bagri has also sought a direction to the authorities "to provide new alternative crops as per the quality of soil, land or geographical location to replace paddy by fixing MSP of new crops higher than that of paddy because it depletes underground water which may lead to 'land subsidence' and pollution at the time of burning of paddy residue." He said farmers of Punjab and Haryana were forced to grow wheat and paddy as these two crops have MSP and are procured by the gov-



PETITIONER SEEKS MSP FOR ALL CROPS

■ The petitioner has sought a direction to the authorities "to provide new alternative crops to replace paddy by fixing MSP of new crops higher than that of paddy" ■ The petition also seeks guidance, financial assistance to farmers, locally-wise for producing crops according to settled principles by fixing MSP of each crop

ernment, despite the fact that this farming pattern has created threefold problems — fast depletion of underground water; pollution due to stubble burning and financial burden on the state on account of storing excess paddy. The petitioner demanded crop diversification by providing alternative crops to replace paddy by providing higher MSP to new crops as a solution to the current agricultural problems in Punjab and Haryana. Agricultural universities should introduce new varieties of seed for pulses and other crops, imported from foreign countries, he said, adding that the government should promote organic farming.

Bagri wanted the top court to direct the government and its agencies to assess the requirement of agricultural produces i.e. wheat, millets, pulses, rice, maize, sugarcane, vegetables, groundnuts, sunflower, mustard seeds, turmeric, legume, cotton, jute etc., for consumption of citizens of our country, including export and notify specific areas district or block wise as per geographical indication, natural resources like water, soil, etc. It would lead to reduction in import storage cost, he submitted. The petition also sought guidance, financial assistance to the farmers, locally-wise for producing crops according to settled principles by fixing MSP of each crop.

SC to hear Bengal's plea against CBI probe today

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Monday the plea filed by the West Bengal Government challenging the court-monitored CBI probe into land grabbing and extortion cases in Sandeshkhali.

In an order passed in the second week of April, the Calcutta High Court directed the CBI to commence its probe in the matter after creating a special investigation

SANDESHKHALI CASES

team (SIT) for that purpose. A Division Bench asked the investigative agency to submit a detailed report to the HC following which the latter would decide on the next course of action. It directed the CBI to open a separate portal and email through which the victims in Sandeshkhali can register their complaints. — IANS

8 fresh forest fires in U'khand, IAF assists in firefighting ops

DEHRADUN, APRIL 28

The firefighting operation in Uttarakhand's forests with the help of an Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopter continued for the second day on Sunday with the blaze being brought under control in several areas, officials said.

The state reported eight fresh forest fires in the last 24 hours, gutting 11.75 hectares, compared to the 23 such incidents damaging 34.175 hectares from Friday evening to Saturday evening, the forest department said in its daily bulletin.

Since November 1, 2023, Uttarakhand has so far recorded 606 forest fires in which 735.815 hectares of forest land were gutted, the bulletin said.



A firefighter attempts to control the fire in a forest in Nainital. ANI

No major fire broke out in the forests over the past 24 hours, Kumaon's Chief Conservator of Forest Prasanna Kumar Patro said. In the Kumaon region, fires are raging at two to three places in Nainital district and at one place each in Cham-

pawat, Almora, Pithoragarh and Bageshwar, Patro said. The forest blaze in Nainital and adjoining areas is gradually being brought under control after the deployment of the IAF helicopter; CM Pushkar Singh Dhami said. — PTI

Actor held in Mahadev app case, sent to police custody

MUMBAI, APRIL 28

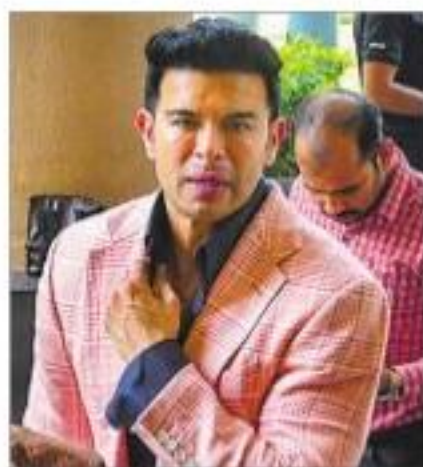
A Mumbai court on Sunday remanded actor Sahil Khan, who has been arrested in connection with the Mahadev betting app case, in the police custody till May 1.

Khan was apprehended from Jagdalpur in Chhattisgarh on Saturday after the Bombay High Court rejected his pre-arrest bail plea. Khan was brought to Mumbai, placed under arrest and produced in a magistrate court in Dadar.

The Mumbai cyber cell's SIT sought his remand saying he was not cooperating in the investigation. The police said it had recovered more than 2000 SIM cards and had details of 1,700 bank accounts, all of which needed verification.

His advocate Mujahid Ansari told the court Khan was cooperating with the investigation and had submitted documents as well bank statements.

The actor, known for films like 'Style' and 'Excuse Me' and



Actor Sahil Khan after his arrest in Mumbai on Sunday. PTI

who has now become a fitness expert, is the second person to be arrested by Mumbai police in the betting app case.

The Mumbai cyber cell's SIT has been probing alleged illegal transactions between some financial and real estate firms in Maharashtra and the promoters of the Mahadev betting app. The size of the scam is about Rs 15,000 crore, as per the first information report (FIR) registered at Matunga police station in Mumbai. — PTI

Govt panel visits B'desh to strengthen relations

NEW DELHI, APRIL 28

A Central Government delegation has embarked on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, beginning Sunday, to further enhance the bilateral ties. The visit, initiated at the invitation of the Bangladesh Ministry of Public Administration, will primarily focus on mid-career capacity-building programmes in the field administration for Bangladesh civil servants, stated the Personnel

Ministry on Sunday.

"V Srinivas, Secretary of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, will lead a four-member delegation to Bangladesh from April 28-30, for bilateral discussions regarding the renewal of the MoU between the National Centre for Good Governance India and Bangladesh Ministry of Public Administration for the period 2024-2029," the statement said. — TNS

AI-enabled drones to inspect IAF jet engines

VIJAY MOHAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, APRIL 28

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is developing an artificial intelligence-based drone system to carry out inspection of aircraft engines that would replace the conventional manual methods of carrying out such checks.

The system would consist of high-resolution cameras mounted on a mini- or micro-drone, imaging software and machine learning algorithms to detect, identify



MAKING USE OF TECH

Apart from combat, surveillance and intelligence gathering, the IAF is introducing various types of drones for automating other routine tasks

and classify defects like cracks, corrosion, dents, distortion and damage on external and, to some extent, internal components.

According to IAF officers, the present procedures of aero-engine inspection is labour intensive, time con-

suming and prone to error.

The new system, being developed under the aegis of the Maintenance Command, seeks to overcome the drawbacks of the existing methods. The drone will be used for fixed-wing aircraft as well as helicopters. Air

intake ducts, exhaust nozzles, engine hubs, turbine blades, propellers and rotors are among components that can be inspected by the drone.

Inspection of aero engines is a critical aspect of flight safety and reliability of an aircraft. Besides engines being routinely checked both before and after a flight, the IAF has a structured programme for carrying out inspection and overhaul depending upon the periodicity, flight hours or complaints of malfunction.

Change of heart — India gives Karachi teen new lease of life



KARACHI/CHENNAI, APRIL 28

The heartwarming story of a 19-year-old Pakistani girl getting a new lease of life after a successful heart transplant in India highlights how borders can be eased for humanitarian purposes and the challenges faced by heart patients in the neighbouring country.

Ayesha Rashan from Karachi underwent a heart transplant surgery at MGM Healthcare, Chennai. After a suitable brain-dead donor was available, she underwent cardiac transplan-

TRUST, GENEROUS PATIENTS PITCH IN

“The biggest challenge was there was no money. The condition required ₹30-40 lakh for treatment... we had to raise the money through a trust, our own resources and generous patients. Dr KR Balakrishnan

tation on January 31, 2024. Following procedures, she was discharged this month.

Dr KR Balakrishnan, Chairman, Cardiac Sciences Director, Institute of Heart and Lung Transplant and Mechanical Circulatory Sup-

port, said Ayesha first came to them in 2019 when she was 14 years old with severe heart failure and a very poorly functioning heart.

“She became very sick and had a cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated with CPR and

put on a machine called ECMO to sustain circulation then we put in an artificial heart pump that time and eventually she recovered and went back to her country,” he said.

“Over the next couple of years, she became sick again because one of her valves started leaking... and she developed severe failure on the right side of the heart and developed an infection and it became very difficult to treat her in that country,” he added.

Balakrishnan said getting a visa for her was very difficult. “Her mother is a single mother; they had no money or resources. We had to take care of the entire expenses including repeated hospitalisation,” Dr Balakrishnan said. Ayesha underwent surgery with the support of Aishwarya Trust, a Chennai-based NGO, and other transplant patients' contributions. The transplant was done after getting a donor organ from a brain-dead elderly man from Delhi. — PTI

Printed and Published by Rajesh Ramachandran for The Tribune Trust
Printed at The Tribune Press, Sector 29-C, Chandigarh.
Published at The Tribune, Sector 29-C, Chandigarh.
RNI No. 15/57.
Copyright © The Tribune Trust. All rights reserved.
Telephones: 0172-2655066-72
Circulation: 0172-2670419, Advertisement: 0172-2670256, 257
Editor-in-Chief: Rajesh Ramachandran*
*Editor for purpose of PRB Act, 1867

The perfect balance
of taste and nutrition.

30g
PROTEIN

Amul
Taaza

To Get All The Popular Newspapers.
Type in Search Box of Telegram

@sharewithpride

If You Want to get these Newspapers Daily at earliest

English Newspapers»»»

Indian Express, Financial Express, The Hindu, Business Line, The Times of India, The Economic Times, Hindustan Times, ET wealth, Business Standard, First India, Mint, Greater Kashmir, Greater Jammu, The Himalayan, The Tribune, Brill Express, The Sikh Times, Avenue Mail, Western Times, Millennium Post, The Statesman, State Times, The Pioneer, Hans India, Free Press, Orissa Post, Mumbai Mirror, Mid-Day, Deccan Chronicle, Deccan Herald, Telangana Today, Financial Times, The Asian Age, The Telegraph, Oheraldo, Gulf of Times, The New York Times, The Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, The Times

Hindi Newspapers»»»

दैनिक जागरण, राजस्थान पत्रिका, दैनिक भास्कर, दिव्यभास्कर, हिंदुस्तान, नवभारत टाइम्स, बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड, अमर उजाला, जनसत्ता, द पायोनीर, राष्ट्रीय सहारा, प्रभातखबर, लोकसत्ता

Others»»»

Hindi & English Editorial, Employment News, Malayalam Newspapers, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Gujarati

Type in Search box of Telegram https://t.me/Magazines_8890050582 And you will find a Channel named @Lalit712 join it and receive daily editions of all popular epapers at the earliest

Or

you can click on this link

<https://t.me/sharewithpride>