

TOPOF THE WORLD



Donald Trump. Reuters

HUSH MONEY TRIAL
Judge warns Trump of jail over gag order breach

New York: The judge in Donald Trump’s criminal trial fined him \$1,000 and held him in contempt of court for a 10th time on Monday for violating a gag order and warned that further violations could land the former president in jail. Justice Juan Merchan said the nine \$1,000 fines he had imposed so far did not seem to be deterring the wealthy business mogul from violating the order, which bars him from speaking publicly about jurors and witnesses in the first criminal trial of a former US president. “I do not want to impose a jail sanction and have done everything I can to avoid doing so. But I will if necessary,” Merchan said. **REUTERS**

PAKISTAN
SChalts verdict denying PTI ally’s reserved seats

Islamabad: In a relief to jailed former premier Imran Khan’s party, Pakistan’s Supreme Court on Monday suspended a high court verdict denying the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) reserved seats for women and minorities in the national and provincial assemblies. The Peshawar High Court (PHC) had rejected a petition of the SIC, which came to the fore after Khan’s Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) backed independently elected lawmakers joined it, regarding its claim on reserved seats. **PTI**

POLAND
EU ends dispute over democracy concerns

Brussels: The European Union Commission is to end six years of rule of law proceedings against Poland, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said on Monday, marking the opening of a “new chapter” for the country. The proceedings were launched when far-right populist party PiS ruled the country. Donald Tusk, a pro-EU liberal, became prime minister last year, putting Poland on a more pro-EU course. The EU said in a statement that Poland had launched a series of legislative and non-legislative measures to address concerns about the independence of the justice system. **REUTERS**

THE PHILIPPINES
Won’t raise SCS tensions, says Marcos Jr

Manila: President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said on Monday the Philippines would not use water cannons or any offensive weapons in the South China Sea, and the last thing it wanted was to raise tensions in the strategic waterway. “We will not follow the Chinese coast guard and Chinese vessels down that road,” Marcos told reporters, adding the mission of the Philippine navy and coast guard was to lower tensions, and there no plans to install water cannons on vessels. **REUTERS**

BIDEN SPEAKS WITH NETANYAHU, CONVEYS CONCERNS OVER RAFAH OPS

Hours after Israel strikes Rafah, Hamas accepts Egyptian-Qatari truce proposal

Israeli official says no deal reached yet, says it is a Hamas ruse

AP & REUTERS

CAIRO, MAY 6

HAMAS ANNOUNCED Monday it has accepted an Egyptian-Qatari proposal for a cease-fire to halt the war with Israel in Gaza, hours after Israel carried out an airstrike and ordered over 100,000 Palestinians to begin evacuating from the south city of Rafah, signaling that a ground invasion there could be imminent.

Meanwhile, an Israeli official said on Monday no ceasefire had been agreed in Gaza, after Hamas said it had accepted a proposal from Egyptian and Qatari mediators. The official said the proposal that Hamas had accepted was a “softened” version of an Egyptian proposal, which included “far-reaching” conclusions that Israel could not accept. “This would appear to be a ruse intended to make Israel look like the side refusing a deal,” said the Israeli official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The proposal is a three-phased agreement, and each is 42 days long, the group’s deputy chief in Gaza told *Al Jazeera* Monday. Khalil Al-Hayya also said the second stage stipulates a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Hamas said in a statement its top leader, Ismail Haniyeh, had delivered the news in a phone call with Qatar’s prime minister and Egypt’s intelligence minister.

US President Joe Biden spoke Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and reiterated US concerns about an invasion of Rafah. Biden said that a truce with Hamas is the best way to protect the lives of Israeli hostages held in Gaza, a National Security Council spokesperson said on condition of anonymity.

Hamas and Qatar said that invading Rafah will derail efforts to broker a truce. Aid agencies have warned that an offensive will worsen Gaza’s humanitarian catastrophe and bring a surge of civilian deaths.



Smoke rises amid Israeli strikes on south Gaza’s Rafah on Monday. Fears are growing of a full-blown assault in the city. Reuters

If Israel is forced to stand alone, Israel will stand alone: Netanyahu

THE NEW YORK TIMES

MAY 6

PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel on Sunday rejected international pressure to rein in its military campaign in Gaza and, speaking at a Holocaust memorial, asserted Israel’s right to fight its “genocidal enemies.”

On Sunday, he spoke at Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, to mark the national Holocaust remembrance day. He invoked the Holocaust in asserting Israel’s right to defend itself, with or without international support.

“If Israel is forced to stand alone, Israel will stand alone,” he said. “But we know we are not alone because countless decent people around the world support



Benjamin Netanyahu at the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Jerusalem on Monday. AP

our just cause. And I say to you, we will defeat our genocidal enemies. Never again is now!”

On Monday morning after his speech, the Israeli military gave the strongest signal yet that it was going to invade Rafah as it asked tens of thousands of Gazans to evacuate from the city.

Columbia cancels main graduation ceremony after pro-Gaza protests

REUTERS

MAY 6

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY on Monday canceled its university-wide commencement ceremony scheduled for May 15 in favor of smaller, school-based events after weeks of pro-Palestinian protests roiled the Ivy League School.

“We have decided to make the centerpiece of our commencement activities our Class Days and school-level ceremonies, where students are honored individually alongside their peers, rather than the University-wide ceremony that is scheduled for May 15,” Columbia said in a statement.

The school said on Monday it had consulted with student leaders in deciding how to han-



A Palestinian woman with the body of a child in Rafah’s Abu Yusef Al-Najjar hospital on Monday. Reuters

dle graduation.

The majority of the ceremonies, which had been set to take place on the Morningside Heights campus where most of the protests have taken place, will be moved to the university’s main athletic complex, the statement said.

‘IN RESPONSE TO STATEMENTS FROM WEST’

Putin orders tactical nuclear weapon drills to deter the West

REUTERS

MOSCOW, MAY 6

RUSSIA SAID on Monday it would practise the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons as part of a military exercise after what the Moscow said were threats from France, Britain and the United States.

Russia’s defence ministry said it would hold military drills including practice for the preparation and deployment for use of non-strategic nuclear weapons. It said the exercises were ordered by President Vladimir Putin.

“During the exercise, a set of measures will be carried out to practise the issues of preparation and use of non-strategic nuclear weapons,” the ministry said.

Missile forces in the Southern Military District, aviation and the navy will take part, the defence ministry said. The exercise is aimed at ensuring Russia’s territorial integrity and sovereignty “in response to provocative statements and threats by certain Western officials against the Russian Federation”, it said.

Macron has in public raised the idea of sending European troops to fight Russia in Ukraine while British Foreign Secretary David Cameron said that



Russia’s intercontinental ballistic missile system unit at the Red Square in Moscow on Sunday. Reuters

Ukraine had a right to use the weapons provided by London to strike targets inside Russia.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Western statements about sending NATO soldiers to Ukraine amounted to “a completely new round of escalation of tension... it requires special attention and special measures”.

Russia and the United States are by far the world’s biggest nuclear powers, holding more than 10,600 of the world’s 12,100 nuclear warheads. China has the third-largest nuclear arsenal, followed by France and Britain.

Russia has about 1,558 non-strategic nuclear warheads, according to the Federation of American Scientists, though there is uncertainty about exact figures for such weapons due to a lack of transparency.

CHINESE PRESIDENT IN PARIS

Macron, EU chief executive press Xi on ‘more balanced’ trade



Emmanuel Macron with Xi Jinping in Paris on Monday. Reuters

REUTERS

PARIS, MAY 6

FRENCH PRESIDENT Emmanuel Macron and EU Commission chief Ursula von der Leyen urged China to ensure more balanced trade at the start of President Xi Jinping’s visit to Paris, during which Macron was also set to press him on Ukraine.

Xi was in Europe for the first time in five years, at a time of growing business tensions that include the European Union investigating Chinese industries such as electric vehicle exports, while Beijing probes mostly French-made brandy imports.

Macron said Europe and China needed to resolve structural difficulties, in particular on trade.

“The future of our continent

will also very clearly depend on our capacity to further develop in a balanced way our relationship with China,” he said as the three sat at a round table under the gilded ceilings of the Elysee Palace.

Von der Leyen was more blunt, saying the relationship was hurt by unequal market access and Chinese state subsidies.

After the meeting, she told reporters that the EU “cannot absorb massive over-production of Chinese industrial goods flooding its market”.

“Europe will not waver from making tough decisions needed to protect its market,” she said.

In brief public comments ahead of the talks, Xi said he viewed relations with Europe as a priority of China’s foreign policy and that both should stay committed to the partnership.

ACKNOWLEDGES VOTERS’ FRUSTRATION

Britain facing disaster of hung Parliament: Sunak after poll loss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

LONDON, MAY 6

PRIME MINISTER Rishi Sunak warned on Monday that an analysis of the local election results shows the country is headed for a hung Parliament led by the Opposition Labour Party, which “would be a disaster for Britain”.

The 43-year-old British Indian leader told *The Times* in the wake of a debacle for the governing Conservative Party, who lost hundreds of local council seats and key mayoralties across England in results over the weekend, that he was bitterly disappointed but determined to fight back.

He sought to paint a less bleak picture for party rebels, demanding a change of political course to



‘We are the only party with a plan,’ says PM Rishi Sunak. File

win back voters in time for a general election, expected later this year. “These results suggest we are heading for a hung parliament with Labour as the largest party,” Sunak told the newspaper.

“Keir Starmer propped up in Downing Street by the SNP, Liberal Democrats and the Greens would be a disaster for Britain. The coun-

LIB DEMS TO SUBMIT NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION

London: Britain’s Liberal Democrat party said Monday it would submit a motion of no confidence in Rishi Sunak’s government to try force a June general election after their big loss in local polls. **REUTERS**

try doesn’t need more political horse-trading, but action. We are the only party with a plan to deliver on the priorities of the people,” he insisted.

He went on to acknowledge the frustration of the voters because of a tough few years due to a cost-of-living crisis and soaring household bills.

NUMBER OF COFFEE SHOPS IN KYIV GROWS EVEN AFTER RUSSIAN INVASION, REACHING SOME 2,500 NOW

War or no war, Ukrainians are not giving up their love for coffee

CONSTANT MÉHEUT & DARIA MITIUK

KYIV, MAY 6

WHEN RUSSIAN tanks first rolled into Ukraine more than two years ago, Artem Vradii was sure his business was bound to suffer. “Who would think about coffee in this situation?” thought Vradii, the co-founder of a Kyiv coffee roastery named Mad Heads. “Nobody would care.”

But over the next few days after the invasion began, he started receiving messages from Ukrainian soldiers. One asked for bags of ground coffee because he could not stand the energy drinks

supplied by the army. Another simply requested beans: He had taken his own grinder to the front.

“I was really shocked,” Vradii said in a recent interview at his roastery, a 40-foot-high brick building buzzing with the sound of grinding coffee and filled with the smell of freshly ground beans. “Despite the war, people were still thinking about coffee. They could leave their homes, their habits. But they could not live without coffee.”

The soldiers’ requests are just one facet of a little-known cornerstone of the Ukrainian lifestyle today: its vibrant coffee culture.

Over the past decade, coffee



In Kyiv, coffee kiosks staffed by trained baristas serving mochas for less than \$2 have become a fixture of the streetscape. NYT

shops have proliferated across Ukraine, in cities large and small. That is particularly true in Kyiv where small coffee kiosks staffed by trained baristas serving tasty mochas for less than \$2 have become a fixture of the streetscape.

Walk into one of Kyiv’s hidden courtyards and there’s a good chance you’ll find a coffee shop with baristas busy perfecting their latte art behind the counter. Coffee culture has flourished globally — even in tea-obsessed Britain — but in Ukraine over the past two years, it has taken on a special meaning as a sign of resilience and defiance.

“Everything will be fine,” said Maria Yevstafieva, an 18-year-old

barista who was preparing a latte on a recent morning in a Kyiv coffee shop that had just been damaged by a missile attack.

“How can they break us?” she is heard saying in a video, referring to the Russian army. “We have a strike; we make coffee.”

Before the war, Ukraine was one of the fastest-growing coffee markets in Europe, according to the Allegra World Coffee Portal, a research group. In Kyiv, the number of coffee shops continued to grow even after the Russian invasion, reaching about 2,500 shops today, according to Pro-Consulting, a Ukrainian marketing research group.

Volodymyr Efremov, a coffee

roaster at Idealist, a major Ukrainian coffee brand, said his goal was now to “popularize” specialty coffee all over the country.

In today’s Ukraine, there is perhaps no better way to achieve that goal than with the army. Every month, Idealist and other coffee producers give the military tens of thousands of drip coffee bags — single-serve, pour-over sachets filled with ground coffee. These are some of the finest products on the Ukrainian coffee market.

On social networks, soldiers have posted videos of themselves pouring hot water into drip coffee bags placed on iron cups before savoring the steaming drink in a log trench. **NYT**



ALL OF GUJARAT VOTES TODAY;
Karnataka, Chhattisgarh end polling

283 LS CONSTITUENCIES
will have voted at end of Phase 3

ALLEYES ON TURNOUT
after dip in first two phases

Phase 3: 93 seats vote today



A local train with voter awareness messages in Vadodara on Monday, a day before the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections. Bhupendra Rana

— **AN EXPRESS SERIES PART-5** —

A little reversal: Where labharthis cite Didi, challenge is Modi — and anti-incumbency

Opp's INDIA is interrupted: Cong-Left accuse TMC of splitting anti-BJP vote

VANDITA MISHRA & SWEETY KUMARI
MURSHIDABAD, KOLKATA, MAY 6



COME TO West Bengal to see how roles have been rejigged. Here, Mamata Banerjee, once the face of “poriborton”, is the long-playing and entrenched establishment. The ruler with a designated successor, she shares election posters with a fresh-faced nephew, or “bhaipo” as he is known here, Abhishek Banerjee. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, campaigning to retain his dominance elsewhere after two terms at the Centre, is casting himself in the role of challenger, who is trying to capture the space for change Mamata was once credited with. If the BJP pitch in states like neighbouring Bihar is “there is

no alternative (to Modi)”, here it is saying the alternative is Modi. That the BJP drive needs to recast itself in West Bengal, is illustrated by the fact that “schemes” here mean Mamata, not Modi. “Lakshmir Bhandar”, a cash transfer to women is the undisputed centrepiece. Under this scheme, all women of age 25-60, if they apply, get Rs 1200 a month if they are SC/ST and Rs 1000 if they are from the General category. TMC's opponents also have to promise that they will not discontinue it. At the CPM office in Ranaghat, stacked with stained

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Poll panel likely to ask X to take down Karnataka BJP's video post

Cong replies on notice to Rahul, BJP seeks more time to respond

DAMINI NATH & RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

THE ELECTION Commission (EC) is likely to ask X (formerly Twitter) to take down an animation video posted by the BJP's Karnataka unit on May 4, that seeks to underline the party's allegation of Muslim appeasement by the Congress, *The Indian*

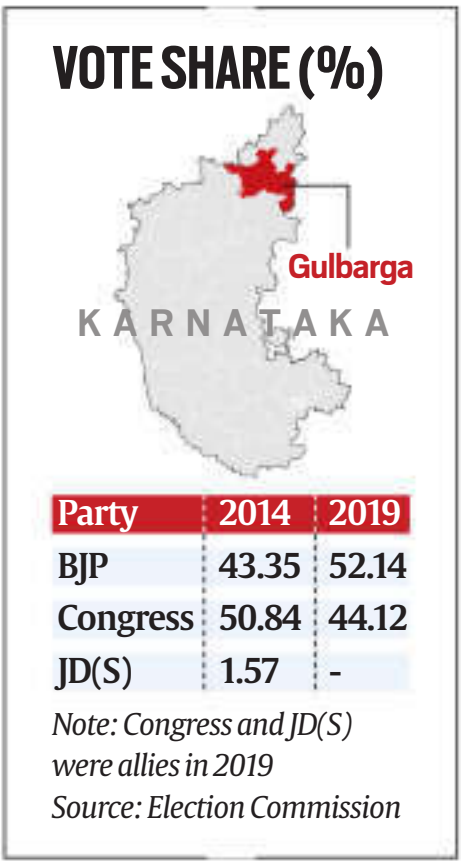
Express has learnt. The Congress had filed a complaint with the state chief electoral officer on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Congress is learnt to have submitted its response to the EC's notice sent to party chief Mallikarjun Kharge on April 25, for alleged violations of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) by star campaigner Rahul Gandhi. While

a similar notice was sent to BJP chief J P Nadda for MCC violations by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the party is learnt to have sought a second deadline extension.

Departing from its practice of issuing notices directly to the leaders concerned, the EC had asked the party chiefs to respond instead. Both Nadda

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



In the last lap of prestige battle, caste tension threatens to trip Kharge

JOHNSON T A
KALABURAGI, MAY 6

TWO RECENT incidents of caste violence over successive days, leaving voters in the Gulbarga Lok Sabha constituency polarised, could hit Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's efforts to wrest back the seat, from where he lost to the BJP in 2019. The stakes are even higher as the

Congress candidate this time from the Scheduled Caste-reserved constituency, won by Kharge in 2009 and 2014, is Radhakrishna Doddamani, who is both Kharge's brother-in-law (his wife's brother) and son-in-law (his daughter's husband).

The contest marks the electoral debut of 60-year-old Doddamani, who used to manage Kharge's erstwhile Assembly

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

FORMER BJP MP DINU SOLANKI AMONG 7 ACQUITTED

Truth buried forever: Gujarat HC slams RTI activist's murder probe

SOHINI GHOSH
AHMEDABAD, MAY 6



Amit Jethwa was shot dead on July 20, 2010

UNDERLINING THAT the investigation into the July 2010 murder of RTI activist Amit Jethwa appeared to be an “eyewash” and “all efforts” were made to ensure that the “truth is buried forever”, the Gujarat High Court Monday acquitted former BJP

MP Dinu Solanki and six others who had been sentenced to life imprisonment in July 2019. Jethwa was shot dead by

two persons outside the Bar Council building, opposite the Gujarat High Court, in Ahmedabad on July 20, 2010. The assailants fled the spot, leaving behind a motorcycle and a country-made revolver.

Reading out the verdict in open court Monday, the division bench of Justices AS Supheia and Vimal K Vyas said the case “will

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

ED seizes Rs 34.5 cr from domestic help of Jharkhand minister's secy

ABHISHEK ANGAD
RANCHI, MAY 6

THE ENFORCEMENT Directorate has seized around Rs 34.50 crore cash and “incriminating” documents from the Ranchi premises of a person who worked as the domestic help of Sanjiv Lal, the personal secretary to Jharkhand Rural Development Minister Alamgir Alam, sources said Monday.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Cash found at the premises of a domestic help linked to personal secretary of Jharkhand minister Alamgir Alam. PTI



RECOMMENDATION TO HOME MINISTRY

Kejriwal bail in SC; LG seeks NIA probe, AAP says 'BJP agent' plot

Saxena flags complaint that alleges funding of AAP by the banned SFJ

MALLICA JOSHI & JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

DELHI LIEUTENANT Governor V K Saxena Monday recommended a probe by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for allegedly receiving political funding for the AAP from the banned extremist organisation Sikhs for Justice (SFJ).

The AAP hit back, calling it a “conspiracy” and Saxena an “agent” of the BJP “which is in panic” because “it is losing all seven seats in Delhi”.

Acting on a complaint from Ashoo Mongia of the World Hindu Federation, Saxena wrote to the Union Home Secretary, seeking an NIA probe, a day before the Supreme Court is scheduled to consider granting interim bail to Kejriwal in view of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.

The Chief Minister is currently in judicial custody following his arrest by the Enforcement

Arrested by the ED on March 21 in the excise policy case

EXPLAINED
Deepening divide in Delhi

THE AAP and the Raj Niwas have had tense relations, more so after the arrest of the Chief Minister. The AAP has voiced apprehension that its elected government may be dismissed. The L-G has repeatedly said that the government cannot function from jail.

Directorate on March 21 in connection with the Delhi excise policy case. Reacting to the Lt Governor's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

INSIDE

THE TWO MEN IN LG'S COMPLAINT AGAINST KEJRIWAL
PAGE 4

WHAT IS SIKHS FOR JUSTICE, THE OUTFIT BANNED IN INDIA
PAGE 13

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

MOHAMED THAYER
MUMBAI, MAY 6

DURING THEIR interrogation of Sagar Pal (21) and Vicky Gupta (24), the two men linked to the Lawrence Bishnoi gang who were arrested for allegedly firing outside actor Salman Khan's Mumbai residence on April 14, police were struck by a key detail: the accused were given Rs 1 lakh to rent a house in Mumbai and get a bike to carry out the attack, but were not promised a supari or a contract fee for doing the 'job'.

Police say the two were simply told, “Achcha kaam karo toh tumhara achcha karengi (Do a good job and we'll take care of you).” That was enough for Pal and Gupta — labourers from Bihar who worked in Haryana — to come to Mumbai and open fire outside the residence of the actor who enjoys Y+ security. For the Mumbai Police, used to the ways of the city's underworld gangs who are not known to carry out any such acts without the promised amount in hand, the Bishnoi gang's approach was markedly different.

Several officers from central agencies and the state police told *The Indian Express* that for the city police, the Bishnoi gang was a “new headache”, a “new beast”. Lawrence Bishnoi, a prime accused in the 2022 murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, is currently lodged in Gujarat's Sabarmati prison.

With Mumbai's underworld gangs led by Dawood Ibrahim, Chhota Rajan and Ravi Pujari, among others, largely neutralised over the past decade and a half, police suspect the Bishnoi gang, which has so far been active



Lawrence Bishnoi (right) with an alleged member of his gang in Chandigarh. File

mainly in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan and UP, is attempting to step into this vacuum. Joint Commissioner of Police (Crime), Mumbai, Lakshmi Gautam told *The Indian Express*, “Mumbai Police Crime Branch is investigating the Salman Khan threat case in a professional manner which will ensure that Bishnoi does not gain any ground in the city and the potential problem is nipped in the bud.” Gangster networks are known to pick high-profile targets for wider publicity. The Bishnoi gang, police suspect,

were attempting to get their foot in the door in Mumbai and the opportunity came knocking in the form of Salman, who is in the dock for allegedly shooting a blackbuck — an antelope species revered by the Bishnoi community — in Rajasthan during the shooting of *Hum Saath Saath Hain* in 1998. An IPS officer of Mumbai Police said, “While Bishnoi claims that he is upset with the actor for shooting a blackbuck, we think he is trying to make a name for himself by targeting Salman Khan. So the instruction

to the two men who fired outside the actor's house was only to create a scare, not to kill.” An officer said that over the past two years, apart from a case in which Congress MLA Aslam Shaikh allegedly received a threat call from a person claiming to be from the Bishnoi gang, there have been no reported cases of threats from the gang members in Mumbai. The IPS officer said, “It is possible that some threat calls made by the gang have not been reported to us due to fear. Hence,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

NEAR MUNIRKA FLYOVER IN RK PURAM

SSB constable killed by auto driver after argument over fare

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

AN AUTO-DRIVER allegedly stabbed a passenger to death following an argument over fare, in RK Puram in the late hours of Sunday night, said police.

According to police, Mukesh Kumar Ranwa (35), a constable in the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) where he worked as a driver, was on his way home from Munirka to Sector-4 in RK Puram when he allegedly got into a heated argument with Vinod Kumar (39) over the auto fare. As the argument escalated, Vinod stopped at the foot of the Munirka flyover where Ranwa allegedly punched him in the face. Enraged by this, Vinod pulled out a knife and stabbed Ranwa in the neck, police added.

Neeraj (35), one of the witnesses, said he saw the auto-

HOW THE CRIME UNFOLDED

■ Mukesh boards the auto from Munirka to Sector-4 RK Puram

■ An altercation between the driver and Mukesh breaks out over fare

■ As the spat continues, Vinod punches the driver in the face



■ Enraged, Vinod pulls out a knife and stabs Mukesh in the neck and flees

■ Witnesses nearby rush to Mukesh's help and call the police

■ Mukesh is taken to AIIMS where he's declared dead on arrival

driver stab the man and called the police to report the incident. Ranwa was then taken to AIIMS Trauma Centre where he was declared dead on arrival due to excessive bleeding.

Kumar was arrested Monday evening.

According to the police, Kumar had allegedly been under the influence of alcohol. "More than a 100 CCTV footage

of cameras were collected and meticulously analysed. Local sources were deployed and intelligence was collected...during analysis of the backtracking of CCTV footage, the team members noticed one person near the place of the incident in a suspicious condition...clear photos of the person was developed through technical apparatus and circulated among local

informers to get the suspect's identity," said DCP Southwest Rohit Meena. He was finally tracked down near Ambience Mall in Vasant Kunj, where a raid was conducted by the police to arrest him.

Kumar had earlier had a run-in with the police in 2018 where he was accused of forcibly entering a woman's house, verbally abusing her and physically assaulting her. The woman, in her complaint, had noted that prior to the incident, Kumar had been harassing her, had verbally abused her and even followed her on her way back home from work. He had even threatened her with acid attack.

He was then booked for trespassing, voluntarily causing hurt, wrongful restraint, using criminal force or assaulting a woman with the intention of outraging her modesty, stalking, insulting a woman's modesty, and criminal intimidation.

HC: Photos of Laden, ISIS flags in phone not enough to brand one a member of terrorist organisation

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

GRANTING BAIL to a man accused in a UAPA case, the Delhi High Court said Monday that merely because the mobile device of the man was "found carrying incriminating material, including photographs of terrorist Osama bin Laden, ISIS flags etc.," would not be sufficient to brand him a member of a terrorist organisation.

A division bench of Justice Suresh Kumar Kait and Justice Manoj Jain, in its order, said, "Merely because the mobile device of the appellant was found carrying incriminating material, including photographs of terrorist Osama bin Laden, Jihad Promotion, ISIS flags etc., and he was also accessing lectures of hard-liner/Muslim preachers, would not be enough to brand him as a member of such terrorist organization, much less his being acting in furtherance of its cause."

The court further said, "Such type of incriminating material, in today's electronic era, is freely available on World Wide Web (www) and mere accessing the same and even downloading the

Any curious mind can access, download such content, says HC, adding the act, by itself, appears to be no crime

same would not be sufficient to hold that he had associated himself with ISIS. Any curious mind can access and even download such content. That act by itself, to us, appears to be no crime."

The court said that though such an act may give an "insight" about the man's mindset but when a penal provision which, "in essence, takes away the liberty of anyone and where even grant of bail becomes a sort of exception", the prosecution needs to have some "extra ammunition" in the shape of "decipherable and tangible material".

It further said that merely because the man was following "news items related to Middle-East and Israel-Palestine conflict" or had been "accessing hate speeches of hard-line Muslim preachers" would not be sufficient to hold that he was acting in "furtherance" of a banned terrorist or-

ganisation.

The bench said that the invocation of Sections 38 and 39 of UAPA seemed to be "erroneous and misplaced". Section 38 UAPA is an offence relating to membership of a terrorist organisation and Section 39 Offence relating to support given to a terrorist organisation.

The court made the observations while granting bail to Ammar Abdul Rahiman who was arrested by NIA in August 2021 and was booked under various provisions of the UAPA. He had filed an appeal against a trial court's December 2023 order denying him bail.

The HC, however, said that the observations were "tentative in nature" and were purely for the purpose of "deciding the bail", adding that it was not a final expression about the merits of the case. The HC said that "at best", Rahiman can be said to be a "highly radicalised person" who "believed" in the ideology of ISIS — a banned terror organisation.

"However, his such fascination with ISIS cannot be dubbed as if he was associated with ISIS and was furthering its cause," the bench underscored.

Bomb threats to schools: HC calls for report from Delhi govt, police

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

TAKING NOTE of "bomb threats" received by over 100 schools in the national capital last week, the Delhi High Court on Monday directed the government and the police to file a status report on the nodal officers appointed to take action in such cases as well as the number of mock drills conducted in the city schools.

The court was hearing a 2023 petition seeking directions to the Delhi government and the police to prepare an action plan to deal with bomb threats in city schools.

A single-judge bench of Justice Subramonium Prasad called for a status report in 10 days on the following points:

- the number of schools in each zone
- the nodal authority in each zone responsible for taking action
- the time for taking action on receipt of a bomb threat
- the number of mock drills conducted under the supervision of Delhi Police and other departments, in the schools
- various other circulars issued from time to time

Fecal contamination found in 8 of 15 water samples collected from high-rise in Ghaziabad

DHEERAJ MISHRA
GHAZIABAD, MAY 6

FOLLOWING COMPLAINTS of diarrhoea, vomiting, stomach pain and fever by scores of residents last week, the UP health department has found fecal contamination in eight water samples out of 15 collected from Saya Gold Avenue society in Indirapuram.

Officials from the Ghaziabad office of the health department said the samples were taken from underground and overhead tanks, adding a total of 762 persons had diarrhoea-like symptoms while 17 people were admitted in the hospital.

Officials, meanwhile, said it was not clear how the water got contaminated.

"The maintenance staff has been instructed to clean the tanks again, do effective and regular chlorination of the tanks, and provide clean drinking water," said Rakesh Kumar Gupta, District Surveillance officer, Ghaziabad.

Meanwhile, the residents of the complex have been asked to boil water and use chlorine tablets. Officials said that a total of 35 patients were provided health care in the health camp organised



Residents of Saya Gold Avenue society, Indirapuram, during a protest. Express

on Monday; out of these, 16 patients were suffering from stomach ache and diarrhoea while 19 had complained of vomiting and other issues.

"Out of the 17 patients admitted, 13 are still receiving treatment in various private hospitals. Nobody is in a serious condition. Water samples and stool samples are being collected for further testing. They will be sent to KGMU, Lucknow, to find out the exact cause of the incident. It is not clear how the water got contaminated. Regular cleaning of the tank must be done according to the rules," said Gupta.

He said the department will

collect around 20 samples on Tuesday from other housing societies in the area. When contacted by *The Indian Express*, the CEO of Saya builders did not respond to requests for a comment.

Ghaziabad Chief Medical Officer Bhavtosh Shakhdhra said that the department will run a campaign soon and ask the residents to get tested if they have any symptoms.

"As far as action is concerned, we will forward the report to the Lucknow office. From there, it will be sent to the Ghaziabad Development Authority, which is the appropriate body to fix accountability," said Shakhdhra.

3 days after he threatened them with pistol, man 'killed by minors'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

A 35-YEAR-OLD man was stabbed multiple times and shot at by four minor boys, leading to his death, in Northeast Delhi, officers said on Monday.

A senior police officer identified the deceased as Nazir alias Nanhe, 35. Nazir has 11 previous heinous cases lodged against him in the region.

A senior police officer said that Nazir had threatened one of the boys with a pistol on the streets three days ago, adding this had infuriated the teenager.

"All four minor boys have been apprehended in the case and they are being interrogated. The exact sequence of events is being ascertained," said the DCP.

In a video pertaining to the incident, the accused can be reportedly seen stabbing the victim in the middle of the road as a few others look on.

Noida: Following the death of a 15-year-old boy, whose body was recovered from Bulandshahr on Sunday after his abduction on May 1, Noida Police have removed the Station House Officer (SHO) of the Beta-2 police station in Greater Noida for negligence in duty. Family members of the boy have alleged that police inaction led to the death of their child.

Officials said that the SHO has been sent to the Police Lines after the complaint, adding departmental enquiry has been ordered in the case.

"We have questioned more than 25 people but have not found anything conclusive. There was no demand for ransom. Prima facie it seems that there was some personal enmity," said Sushil Kumar Ganga Prasad, ACP-1, Greater Noida.

The victim, Kunal Sharma, was a resident of Mayana Village in Rabupura.

CCTV footage from the day of the incident shows a white car

stopping in front of his father's *dhaba*, and the boy boarding the vehicle followed by a woman and a man who had his face covered with a *gamchha*.


Shivhari Meena, Additional police commissioner (law and order), said that a missing com-

plaint was registered and teams were deployed to search the boy.

"The Principal Secretary of UP Home Department has been informed. Officers who behave carelessly will not go scot free," said Dharendra Singh, MLA Jewar. **ENS**

OBITUARY

Col Anil Kalra (Retd)
(04 Sep 1944 – 04 May 2024)



The 9th Gorkha Rifles fraternity expresses deep sorrow on the sad demise of Col Anil Kalra (Retd), 2/9 GR on 04th May 2024. He was commissioned into 2/9 GR on 15 Jun 1966 and commanded the battalion from Aug 1985 to May 1988. The officer superannuated in Sep 1996. We stand together with the family in this hour of grief and pray for eternal peace to the departed soul.

Lt Gen Zubin A Minwalla, AVSM, YSM, Col 9 GR and All Members of 9th Gorkha Rifles Family

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

NAV RATNA COMPANY
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Website: www.ircon.org, CH - L453030, 197650085171

e-Procurement Notice

e-Tender No.: IRCON/2046/NFR-SRRP-Tender/PMS Rangpo Station Building/256 Dated 07.05.2024

Appointment of Authority Engineer for providing project management services for Development of Main Station building (T1) for Rangpo station (i.e. all facilities related to train operation, passenger handling, goods/parcel handling areas including station approach road, landscaping, sewage treatment plant etc.) in connection with construction of Sivok – Rangpo New BG Rail Line Project, Northeast Frontier Railway.

Estimated cost of the Work Rs. 240.44 Lakhs

Last Date & Time of e-Bid Submission 30.05.2024 upto 5:00 PM

For further details, visit website <https://etenders.gov.in/e procure/app>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website. Project Director/SRRP, Block-C, PC Mittal Bus Terminus, Siliguri-734001

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

NAV RATNA COMPANY
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Website: www.ircon.org, CH - L453030, 197650085171

e-Procurement Notice (National Competitive Bidding)

e-Tender No.: IRCON/ELECT/5037-5038/NCRT/C/SCRAPI/07120 dated 03.05.2024


e-Tenders are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirements for the following works:-

"Sale of scrap available at Murad Nagar RSS, Noida & Greater Noida for Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS Corridor of NCRTC (Package-19, Stage 1 & 2, Lot 1 & 2)";

Estimated cost of the work Rs. 50.41,89/-


Last Date & Time of e-Bid Submission 24.05.2024 upto 15:00 Hrs.

For further details, visit website <https://etenders.gov.in/e procure/app>. Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website. Chief General Manager/Electrical, C-4, District Centre, Saket, New Delhi-110017



Sri Kartik Swami Temple

Abode of Lord Murugan in the Uttarakhand Himalayas



Sri Kartik Swami temple at Kraunch Parvat, mentioned in Skanda Purana is believed to be the place where Lord Kartik meditated.

Join us for

108 VALAMPURI SHANKH POOJA, KALASH STHAPNA & VASTRA AADAN PRADAN

on


Date: 15th May, 2024 | Time: 09:00 am - 12:00 pm

Venue: Sri Kartik Swami Temple, Rudraprayag

Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board

uttarakhandtourism.gov.in

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PM SHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA PAURI

District-Pauri Garhwal 246001, Uttarakhand

Website- <https://pauri.kvs.ac.in/>


Email- kvpaauri@gmail.com



ADMISSION NOTICE

The offline registration process for admission is being restarted for the academic session 2024-25 against some vacant seats in Class I (only RTE, ST, OBC-NCL); II, III, VI, VII, VIII in PM Shri Kendriya Vidyalaya Pauri. Registration form can be obtained free of cost from the school from 08.05.2024 to 15.05.2024, and for Classes II, III, VI, VII, VIII from 08.05.2024 to 25.05.2024 on all working days from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Admission will be as per the admission guidelines 2024-25 of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan. Mere registration does not guarantee admission.

PRINCIPAL



OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER

NORTH WEST PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY (NWPC-05)

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, NORTH WEST DISTRICT

DC OFFICE COMPLEX, KANJHAWALA, DELHI -110081

PUBLIC NOTICE

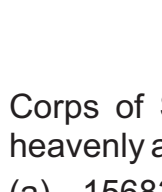
General Public and the contesting candidates of North West Parliamentary Constituency 05 are hereby informed that the Election Commission has designated the General Observer, Expenditure Observer and Police Observer for the General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 in respect of North West Parliamentary Constituency-05. The Names, Contact Details and Office Addresses of the Observers in Delhi Technological University, Shahbad Daultpur, Main Bawana Road, Delhi-110042 and DC Office, Kanjhawala, Delhi-110081 are given below:

S. No.	Name of Observer	Contact No/ Email ID	Office Address in DTU/DC Office	Area of Assembly Constituency No. & Location
1.	Sh. Manish Kumar Sinha, IPS (Police Observer)	Mob. 7015590553 Email ID- tc@aptransport.org	Room no. LW5-SF1, Second floor, Mechanical Wing, DTU	AC-1 Narela AC-5 Badli AC-6 Rithala AC-7 Bawana AC-8 Mundka AC-9 Kirari AC-10 Sultanpur Majra
2.	Ms.Sujata Ghosh, IAS (General Observer)	Mob. 8178108207 Email ID- sgghoshk99@gmail.com	Room no. LW5-SF2, Second floor, Mechanical Wing, DTU	AC-11 Nangloi Jat AC-12 Mangolpuri AC-13 Rohini
3.	*Sh. D. RanjithKumar, IRS (Expenditure Observer)	Mob. 8920961882 Email ID- ranjith.devarajan@g mail.com	Room no. LW5-SF2, Second floor, Mechanical Wing, DTU Also at: Room no. 23, DC Office, Kanjhawala	

* Sh. D. RanjithKumar, IRS has been designated by Election Commission of India as new Expenditure Observer, rest of content of public notice dated 01.05.2024 remains the same.

Sd/-
(ANKITA ANAND, IAS)
RETURNING OFFICER
NORTH WEST PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY-05

DIP/SHABDARTH/CLASSIFIED/0044-24-25



CENTRAL ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

4th Floor, Chanderalok Building, 36 Janpath, New Delhi-110001
Phone: 23353503 FAX: 23753923

Petition No. 122/TL/2024 **Dated: 3.5.2024**

NOTICE UNDER CLAUSE (a) OF SUB-SECTION (5) OF SECTION 15 OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT, 2003

An application under Sections 14, 15 and 79 (1) (e) of the Electricity Act, 2003 (the Act) has been made by Fatehgarh IV Transmission Limited, T-15 A, Third Floor, Saloon Rasvillas, Saket, New Delhi-110017, for the grant of a separate transmission licence for implementation of the 'Bus Sectionalizer at 220 kV level of 400/220 kV Fatehgarh-IV PS (Section-1)' under the Regulated Tariff Mechanism (RTM) mode (hereinafter referred to as the 'transmission scheme'). The scope of the project for which the transmission licence has been sought is as under:

S. No.	Scope of the Transmission Scheme	Item Description	Implementation Timeframe
1.	One set of bus sectionalizer at 220 kV level of 400/220 kV Fatehgarh-IV PS (Section-1)	220 kV Bus Sectionalizer-1 no.	1.2.2025
Total Estimated Cost:			Rs. 11.74 crore

2. The Central Transmission Utility of India Limited vide its letter dated 9.4.2024 has recommended for the grant of a transmission licence to the applicant to establish the proposed transmission system.

3. Based on the material available on the record, the Commission vide order dated 30.4.2024 in Petition No. 122/TL/2024, has proposed to issue a transmission licence to the applicant for establishment of the transmission scheme as noted in para 1 above.

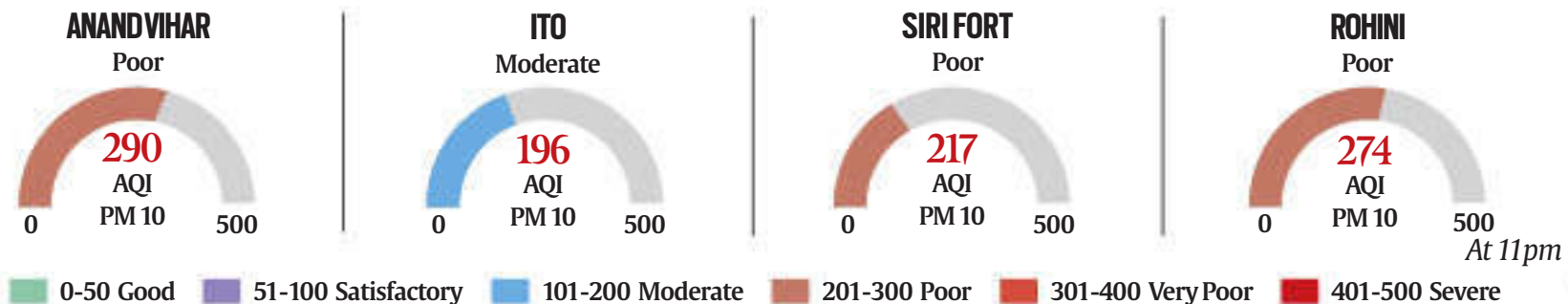
4. A copy of the application, along with its annexures and enclosures, made by the applicant for the grant of an inter-State transmission licence to Fatehgarh IV Transmission Limited before the Commission can be accessed at the website www.apraava.com or inspected by any person in the Commission's office by following the laid down procedure.

5. Notice is hereby given in pursuance of clause (a) of sub-section (5) of Section 15 of the Act that suggestions or objections, if any, to the Commission's proposal to grant a transmission licence to the applicant, as aforesaid, be sent to the undersigned by **20.5.2024** at the above noted address. The suggestions or objections received after the specified date shall not be considered.

6. The application shall be taken up for the further hearing by the Commission on **22.5.2024**. Any person who files suggestions or objections may in his/her discretion attend the hearing, for which no TA/DA shall be paid by the Commission.

Sd/-
(Harpreet Singh Pruthi)
Secretary

epaper.indianexpress.com



SKYWATCH
May 7
Partly cloudy sky, Possibility of thunderstorm/duststorm accompanied with gusty winds towards night

MAX: 42
2.7°C above normal

MIN: 25
0.1°C below normal

BJP FACES CRUSHING DEFEAT: AAP

When a similar plea was termed ‘frivolous’ by HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

TWO YEARS before Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena recommended an NIA enquiry into a complaint alleging that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had received political funding for AAP from the banned extremist organisation Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), the Delhi High Court had called a petition seeking an enquiry into AAP's links with the organisation "frivolous".

Referring to the HC Order, the Aam Aadmi Party said Monday, "L-G saab is desperately trying to make headlines during election season. This is a complete misuse of the constitutional office of the L-G. The PIL demanding a high level investigation in the same matter was dismissed by Delhi High Court two years ago... At the behest of the BJP, a conspiracy has been hatched by the L-G to recommend an NIA investigation against Arvind Kejriwal, so that his image can be tarnished... The BJP is doing all this through the L-G because it is clearly seeing its crushing defeat in the Lok

The division bench had dismissed the petition and imposed a token cost of Rs 10,000 on the petitioner

Sabha elections... In this nervousness, the BJP has hatched this big conspiracy by making the L-G a pawn," AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj said in a statement.

The petition, filed by one Jagdish Sharma, also sought that AAP be barred from contesting any polls till the enquiry is completed.

The division bench of then Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Navin Chawla dismissed the petition and imposed a token cost of Rs 10,000 on the petitioner.

The court observed, "If the establishment is sensitised. If they are aware of the situation, is there any reason for anyone to think that they would not act on it or they are not already acting on it? Where is the question of this court stepping in?"

The petition referred to a let-

ter written by former Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi in 2022 to Union Home Minister Amit Shah in this regard and statements made by former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas.

As Punjab Chief Minister in 2022, before the state went to polls a day later, Channi had written to Shah, alleging links between SFJ. He had also referred to former AAP leader Kumar Vishwas's allegation that Kejriwal wanted to become Punjab CM by seeking support from separatists.

Shah, in response to Channi's letter, wrote, "The Government of India has taken it seriously and I will get it looked into."

Bharadwaj said that nothing was found in the investigation. "Now once again the same allegation has been made... The people of Delhi will respond to such cheap tactics by defeating the BJP which insulted CM Arvind Kejriwal, who has provided good education, health, free electricity, and water... This time also nothing will come out in the investigation and the public will not be misled by them," he added.



Congress's NE Delhi candidate Kanhaiya Kumar during his nomination rally on Monday. Praveen Khanna

Many firsts, much fanfare: Cong's NE Delhi pick Kanhaiya files nomination

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

BLENDING "SECULAR" messaging by seeking blessings from religious leaders of different faiths with Congress's political pitch to save the Constitution; ensuring his nomination process ended, instead of starting, with a procession of the ubiquitous e-rickshaws acting as his 'palki'; Congress's North East Delhi candidate Kanhaiya Kumar's official foray into the Capital's politics was marked by many firsts and much fanfare on Monday.

Kumar posted photographs with religious leaders across faiths and communities — whose blessings he took before setting out on the last day of the nomination process — and culminating in a roadshow of e-rickshaws stringing down the congested streets of North East Delhi amid a shower of confetti and flower

petals to slogans of 'Haathi ghoda palki, jai Kanhaiya lal ki' for 4 kms, while a campaign song inspired by 'Omikara' played throughout. "Dham Dham Dhadam Dhadaaya re, dekho aaya Kanhaiya re, sabka pyara, Omkara."

"Today, before filing my nomination, gurus of all religions presented me with the Preamble of the Constitution and prayed for me and blessed me. This is our India. This is our Constitution. Sarva Dharma Sam Bhaav. I will sacrifice my life to protect this India and its Constitution," he posted on X. Clutching a framed copy of the Preamble to the Constitution atop an e-rickshaw during the roadshow between the Maujpur Metro station and the DM's office at Nand Nagari, Kumar later stepped onto a makeshift stage to declare: "The fight for justice has begun, but this beginning will not reach its conclusion till we do not finish this fight."

Commenting on the BJP's target of achieving 400 seats and the perceived threat that it brings to the Constitution, Kumar said: "They don't just want your vote to impose dictatorial governance... 280 seats are enough to form a government in this country, to tackle unemployment, to end inflation, so please put your hands on your heart and ask why they are stern on securing 400 seats..."

Also slamming his opponent, BJP's sitting MP and the party's only candidate who was able to retain his seat, he said: "The question is that when they changed the candidates on 6 seats, why was the north-east Delhi candidate not changed? Because they felt that honourable MP ji will come, he will entertain for a bit, will take the votes and go away." He tagged BJP's New Delhi candidate, Bansuri Swaraj for nepotism.

Kumar also drew religious parallels, between himself and Lord Krishna, saying: "My name

is Kanhaiya, they had put me in jail as they wanted to suppress dissent but I came out of Tihar... continued speaking truth to power..."

Giving a response to the Congress leaders who called him a "Bahari umeedvaar (outsider)", Kumar said: "You and I are both the same... when my candidature was announced, people said that I am an outsider, it's not new to refer a Bihari as a Bahari... had the Biharis not migrated to Delhi then their your roads couldn't have been cleaned, they wouldn't have been able to ride on a tempo, their roads wouldn't have been built, their buildings wouldn't have been constructed... That is why I'm saying that I am not the candidate, the 24 lakh people of north-east Delhi are the candidates."

"He has risen from poverty, he presented a strong front against authority... we support him... he wants to... unite," said Shayar Insaan Raza from Ghaziabad.

Accused flees custody after climbing out of police station's toilet window

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 25

A KIDNAPPING-MURDER suspect allegedly escaped from the custody of Delhi Police after making his way out of the window of the toilet at a police station in South Delhi's Lodhi Colony, officers said.

The accused, identified as Salman alias Raja, was tracked down after a two-day search and apprehended on Monday.

Salman was first taken into police custody on May 2. On May 4, he requested the police to allow him to use the washroom where he pushed a head constable, "took advantage of the open window and fled from the custody", said police.

The accused was produced before the court on May 6 after expiry of police remand.

Said DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan, "The accused opened the window in a split second and escaped after climbing through it..." The DCP said strict action will be taken against officials found responsible for the escape.

Salman has been accused of being involved in the kidnapping and murder of one Chandan, in a case lodged at Lodhi Colony Police Station on April 24. Police arrested Salman, 29, and his aide Dharmesh Malik, 33, the same night in Ghaziabad.

Ashoo Mongia and Munish Raizada — the duo in complaint against CM Kejriwal

MALLICA JOSHI & JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

ASHOO MONGIA, national general secretary of an organisation called 'World Hindu Federation', wrote to Delhi L-G VK Saxena on April 1, seeking an enquiry into the origins of funding of the AAP after coming across a video by Gurpatwant Singh Pannun which said that his organisation Sikhs for Justice had given \$16 million between 2014 and 2022.

A video was posted by Pannun after Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest on March 21. Pannun has made similar allegations in the past. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Mongia said that he came across the video on a WhatsApp group and he decided to file a complaint so that action could be taken against Kejriwal.

While the AAP alleged that Mongia was a BJP leader, he said he was not associated with any party. "I am part of a Hindu *sangathan* and we will always stand with BJP and have stood with them in the past as well... I have never needed the support of any political party," said Mongia.

On X, Mongia, over the past several months, has posted several posts and videos related to the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. He has also posted videos of a song sung by BJP leader and former AAP minister Kapil Mishra, after



Mongia; Raizada. Archive

Kejriwal was arrested. "I was in Ayodhya at the time of the temple consecration. Several members of our organisation were there. It was a very big day for me," he said.

Ex-AAP member Munish Raizada, who was suspended from the AAP in 2015, was also mentioned in the complaint. A doctor who was based in Chicago at the time, Raizada was an office-bearer of the party's Overseas Wing till 2015 and, initially, worked in association with Dinesh Vaghela, a founding party member, who passed away in April 2024. He was among the people who met Kejriwal in New York when the latter was called to Columbia University for a talk in December 2014. After Pannun's video was posted online, Raizada, in a series of posts on X, said that when Kejriwal came to New York, he held meetings with Sikh leaders, of which he was not a part. AAP had suspended Raizada for starting a website, seeking suggestions and inputs on organisational activities and for portraying it as a platform of AAP's Lokpal.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

UAPA case: HC orders release of NewsClick's HR head Chakraborty

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

THE DELHI High Court Monday ordered the release of NewsClick HR head Amit Chakraborty after he was granted pardon by the trial court in a UAPA case lodged against the news portal following allegations that it was given money to spread pro-China propaganda.

A single-judge bench of Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, in its order, noted that the prosecution had told the HC that it has "no objection" if Chakraborty is released from judicial custody, considering that he had recorded his Section 164 CrPC statement before the Magistrate where "he has disclosed the true facts in relation to the present case".

Thereafter, the HC, after con-

sidering the no-objection given by the prosecution along with Chakraborty's medical condition and facts and circumstances of the case, directed that he be released from custody on furnishing a "personal bond" of Rs 25,000 with a surety of the like amount, subject to certain conditions.

The conditions recorded in the HC order are that Chakraborty "shall comply with all the conditions" based on which pardon was granted to him by the trial court. Secondly, he shall appear before the Trial/Sessions Court as and when directed; and finally, he shall not leave the country without the "prior permission of the Trial/Sessions Court."

The HC, however, clarified that its order should not be considered as an opinion on the merits of the matter.

BRS legislator Kavitha denied bail in excise case

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

A DELHI court on Monday rejected the bail pleas of Bharat Rashtra Samithi legislator K Kavitha, who is accused of paying Rs 100 crore to AAP leaders in return for liquor licences, in the money laundering and corruption cases related to the alleged excise policy scam.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja denied Kavitha bail stating that she may destroy evidence or influence the witnesses of the prosecution considering her "influential political position" and that she does not therefore fulfil the "triple test" of bail.

The bail pleas filed before Special Judge Kaveri Baweja of the Rouse Avenue Courts stated that Kavitha's arrest was a "method devised by the ruling party at the Center to deprive level playing field to her and her party in the upcoming elections".



BRS legislator K Kavitha. Archive

"The arrest and continuous incarceration of the applicant (Kavitha) is an attempt to attack the democratic structure of this great country," stated the bail plea, calling her arrest politically motivated.

It was Kavitha's case that the agencies had arrested her for "non-cooperation" and that this cannot be a sole ground for arrest.

Seeking parity with other co-accused persons, Kavitha sought bail stating that only the statements of approvers were relied on to make allegations against her, which was "impermissible in law". However, the Court rejected the parity argument stating that Kavitha's role could not be equated with that of other co-accused persons.

Vote share in mind: Both BJP and INDIA bloc field Gurjar leaders from key South Delhi seat, here's why

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

CARVED OUT in 1966, the South Delhi Lok Sabha constituency — which has the large presence of Jaats and Gurjar communities — accommodates both affluent and non-affluent localities, from major fashion brands, cafes, clubs, restaurants, farmhouses, and bungalows in Mehrauli and Chattarpur to migrants and labour communities in Deoli, Sangam Vihar and Badarpur.

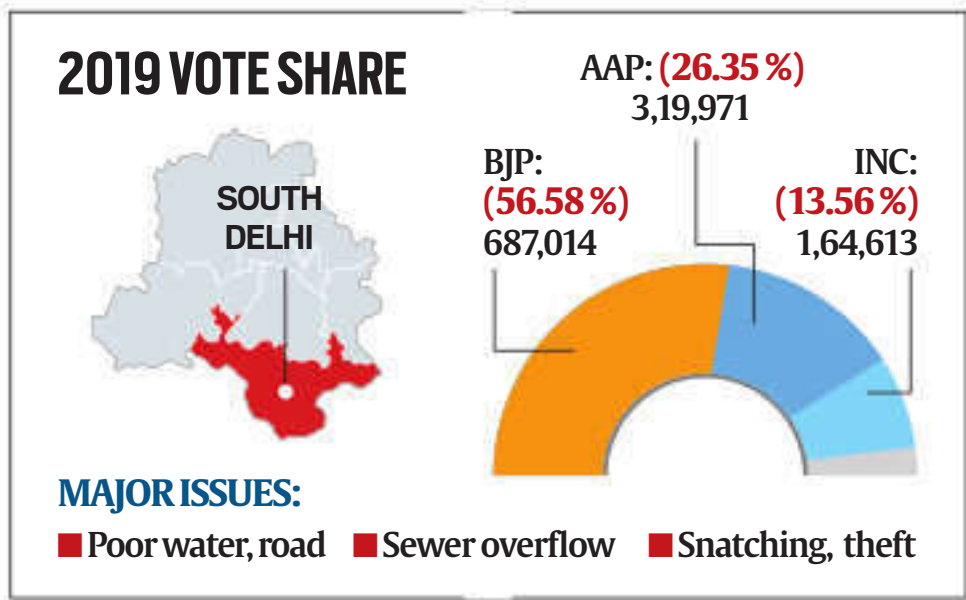
The seat is known as a stronghold of the BJP with incumbent MP Ramesh Bidhuri winning the seat consecutively for the last two terms, 2014 and 2019, with a vote share of 56.58 per cent in the last election in 2019. Although AAP had fielded Raghav Chadha from the seat, the party lost the election, while bagging a vote share of 26.35 per cent. The reason: the constituency accommodates a large number of labourers, migrants and lower-middle class people spread especially across Sangam

Vihar, Deoli and Badarpur constituencies.

The BJP, however, has replaced incumbent Ramesh Bidhuri with Leader of Opposition and Badarpur MLA Ramvir Singh Bidhuri in the constituency this time. The AAP and the Congress, meanwhile, are contesting the polls in an alliance and have nominated Sahi Ram Pahalwan. To be sure, both the BJP and the INDIA bloc have fielded a Gurjar leader for the Lok Sabha polls, eyeing the majority of vote share.

Forty eight-year-old Suresh Kumar from Tigri Colony, who is a painter, said: "One of the major issues being faced by the residents is sewer overflow and poor infrastructure... Every year, the MCD comes two weeks before the monsoon to desilt the drains and leaves dirt everywhere... they never clean it, it gets worse."

Pawan Yadav, a Sangam Vihar resident who runs a kirana shop, also raised issues of poor infrastructure. "Water scarcity is one of the major issues in our area... every



summer, Sangam Vihar gets parched and aches for water... We hardly get a drum of water..."

Sushila Devi, who is a resident of Deoli, said that she will cast vote on the basis of work the party has done in the area. "No leaders have visited this area in the last five years... I have been living here for the last 30 years... my children work now... but I am still struggling to get a ration shop... everyone talks about free electricity and water... I am not getting any of that... From my family, 10 members will vote this

year, and our decision will depend on this."

Shashank Gupta (24), a resident of Prahladpur, rued over the rise in street crime cases, especially snatching and thefts. "I run a small cloth shop which does not require four locks, but there is no option... theft cases are on the rise... *Har din snatching hota hai... kabhi phone toh kabhi chaina...*" said Gupta who runs a shop in Tigri.

Echoing the concerns, another resident Sant Goswami said: "I had to install multiple CCTV cameras amidst increasing theft

cases... the area is not secured..."

Constituencies like Sangam Vihar, Deoli and Badarpur have a larger lower-middle class population, labourers and Purvanchalis; Ambedkar Nagar and Mehrauli along with Deoli have more people from the Muslim community as well as the Brahmin and SC categories; Tughlakabad, Mehrauli, Palam, Bijwasan, Chattarpur and parts of Mahipalpur are dominated by the members of the Jaat and Gurjar communities (under the OBC category).

Arman Dagar from Kishan Garh in Mehrauli, said: "There are scores of issues across Delhi... poor roads, absence of streetlights, no women safety... I feel that BJP safeguards the country, so my vote will go to BJP... in the Assembly polls, I might vote for AAP."

Meanwhile, a senior BJP leader on the condition of anonymity said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath are likely to hold roadshows in the Capital after May 10.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

ICSE, ISC RESULTS DECLARED ON MONDAY

Tests, months of prep: Gurgaon high-scorers share success mantra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, MAY 6

A LITTLE over a month before his boards began, Aadith Raghunathan Parthasarathy was in Andaman and Nicobar islands, playing football at School Games Federation of India, where he was on a 10-day trip. On Monday, when the ICSE results were announced, Aadith scored an aggregate of 99.6 per cent, one of the highest in the Capital region.

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) declared the ICSE (Class 10) and ISC (Class 12) results on Monday, while announcing that it would not release the list of toppers in a bid to discontinue competition. While 99.47% of students passed Class 10 exams, 98.19% cleared the Class 12 exams, a CISCE official said.

Originally from Tamil Nadu's Chennai, Aadith, a student of Shri Ram School, Aravalli, is a "well-rounded kid," said his mother Vajji Raghunathan. "He plans every-



Tarinini Malhotra; Aadith Raghunathan Parthasarathy

thing in advance and organises his day to make time for everything he likes — he plays the piano, is a footballer and also sketches..." she said. Aadith, however, modestly attributed his success to his school, which had a "thorough system of cycle tests" which helped him prepare well. "There would be one test every week and this would help us cover the syllabus from the beginning of the academic year," he said.

Class 12 star set to join Ivy League varsity

Another high-scoring student, this time in the ISC, is from the Mouslari branch of the same school. With a 99.25% score, Tarini Malhotra is the topper in her

school. Moreover, she has scored 100 in Maths and Psychology. She has also got admission in Brown University and is set to go to the Ivy League institution in August.

"My favourite subjects are Chemistry and Psychology and I found the right course in the university," she said. In 2021, a student had scored a slightly higher aggregate of 99.75% in the ICSE exams, the school authorities said.

Tarini said: "I studied my syllabus, practised previous question papers, and even covered NCERT syllabus just in case I had missed something. But everything went well." Her father, Sarat Malhotra, president and director at Nippon Paints, said the result did not come as a surprise to the family given her high score in Class 10 boards. "She had applied to many universities and received offers from other Ivy League colleges as well. It would be sad to see her leave, but that is a part of life," he added.

School principal Rippelle Sethi said: "...She runs an NGO called Nai Subah. We are extremely proud of her..."

I HEREBY DECLARE



KANHAIYA KUMAR, Congress's North East Delhi candidate

TOTAL ASSETS ₹10.72 L (2024)

Movable assets	₹8.07 L
Immovable assets	₹2.65 L
Liabilities	Nil
Conviction	Nil
Pending criminal cases	7
Education	PhD

BALLOTIN

Lovely in BJP's list of star campaigners

New Delhi: The Delhi wing of BJP has announced a list of its 40 star-campaigners, including Delhi Congress' former chief Arvinder Singh Lovely, and sent it to the ECI. This comes a week after Lovely quit the post, and joined BJP two days later. The list also includes PM Narendra Modi, senior BJP leaders J P Nadda, Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Smriti Irani, K Annamalai, Hema Malini, Nitin Gadkari, Yogi Adityanath and Pushkar Singh Dhami, along with other Union ministers, CMs and Delhi's sitting MPs including Dr Harsh Vardhan from Chandni Chowk and Gautam Gambhir (East Delhi). "I enclosed a list of BJP leaders who would be participating in the election campaign pertaining to the Lok Sabha elections, in the state of NCT of Delhi," said Arun Singh, BJP's national general secretary, in the letter to ECI.

BSP's Anand to contest from New Delhi

New Delhi: The last day of nominations for the sixth phase of the Lok Sabha elections saw a surprise contender file his papers — former AAP minister Raaj Kumar Anand. Anand threw his hat in the political ring from the New Delhi seat just a day after his sudden move to BSP. He will be contesting against the likes of his former party colleague, Somnath Bharti, and BJP's Bansuri Swaraj. Anand, at a press conference after joining the third political outfit in his career so far, said that he felt like he has "come back to my party." As per the affidavit, Anand's total asset is at around Rs 83 crore.

Channi now targets Govt on Pulwama, Jakhar counters him



ANJU AGNIHOTRI CHABA
JALANDHAR, MAY 6

FACING FLAK for his “poll stunt” remark on the Poonch terror attack Saturday in which an IAF officer was killed, former Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi Monday targeted the Centre over the 2019 Pulwama terror strike, saying the government was yet to ascertain who carried out the attack just ahead of 2019 LS polls in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

In a video message, Channi said, “We are proud of our soldiers who protect our country. Ahead of the last parliamentary polls (in 2019), 40 jawans were killed a terror attack. The government still hasn’t figured out who was responsible for that attack and who should be held accountable”.

Referring to the Saturday’s attack, Channi said, “... I want to ask the government who are the people who get such attacks carried out and why are they not being brought to book?” Jakhar said Channi was speaking the language of Canadian PM Justin Trudeau. “Just as Trudeau prides himself in his support for hardliner and anti-India elements sheltered in Canada, Channi appears to follow suit by calling the attack on our brave Air Force personnel in Poonch a political stunt,” he said.

With Priyanka’s arrival, Congress kicks off mission Amethi, Rae Bareilly

ASAD REHMAN & MAULSHREE SETH
NEW DELHI, LUCKNOW, MAY 6

THE CONGRESS may have delayed the announcement of names of candidates for its UP bastions — Amethi and Rae Bareilly — but it has wasted no time in making it clear that the two seats will be its focus in the run-up to the fifth phase, with party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra having reached Amethi on Monday evening.

The party has appointed two of its top leaders as observers to the seats — former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot has been given the responsibility of Amethi and former Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel has been asked to oversee poll preparations in Rae Bareilly.

Setting the ground for the campaign of her brother Rahul Gandhi, the Congress’s candidate from Rae Bareilly, Priyanka invoked her grandmother Indira Gandhi and great grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru and called herself a “sherni (tigress) who would not budge from the region till end of polling. In her meeting with Congress workers in Rae Bareilly, Priyanka asked them to give the most of the 329 hours left for campaigning for the elections to the two seats. She expressed her gratitude towards Congress’s Amethi candidate Kishorilal Sharma with whom she worked during the first election of her mother Sonia Gandhi from Amethi in 1999.

She said when discussions were going on about the Congress candidate from Amethi, Sharma



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra with party leaders and workers in Rae Bareilly, Monday. Express

wanted her to contest but she asked him to make his poll debut. “I have come here to manage the election campaign for my brother and for my colleague Kishorilalji,” Priyanka told the workers.

In Rae Bareilly, the contest is between Rahul and Dinesh Singh, an MLC and UP’s horticulture minister, while Sharma will face Union Minister Smriti Irani in Amethi. Talking about Rahul’s defeat in Amethi, Priyanka made a reference to the time when her grandmother was defeated from Rae Bareilly. She said the people of Rae Bareilly probably got angry with Indira Gandhi, but she never got angry with them. She said that the people of Rae Bareilly eventually showed Indira the right way. “Sometimes, maybe you get angry, but you also show the right way. When Indiraji was defeated from here... she learned from her defeat. She contemplated why the public was angry, changed her path and got

elected again.”

A senior party leader who is part of Priyanka’s team said she will spearhead the Congress’s campaign in Rae Bareilly and Amethi. “The plan is to hold 20 small meetings every day under Priyankaji’s leadership,” said the Congress leader.

“Didi (Priyanka) will hold nukkad sabhas in at least 500 villages in both constituencies... Every party worker is energised as both Priyanka and Rahulji (Gandhi) are part of the election. While didi isn’t contesting, she will lead the charge for strengthening the party here,” said the leader.

assigned booths to senior leaders in the two constituencies. And they have been told to start working from today (Monday). One senior leader has been given responsibility of 10-15 booths.” “Priyankaji will also keep an eye on the party’s social media

campaign. The idea is to make Didi the head of the campaign in these two seats,” said another leader deployed in Rae Bareilly.

Priyanka will stay at a party-owned guest house in the Rahi area of Rae Bareilly till May 18.

Asked about the prospect of Rahul Gandhi holding programmes in Amethi and Rae Bareilly, a Congress leader said, “He will definitely hold multiple programmes. I think Rahulji will come here around May 10 or maybe a few days before polling.”

With one member of the Gandhi family in the fray, the UP Congress is striving to ensure the party wins back Amethi and registers a “huge win in Rae Bareilly”.

According to party leaders, the Congress’s delay in announcing its candidates for Amethi and Rae Bareilly — Rahul and Sharma’s names were declared on the last date for filing nominations — has increased people’s interest in the two seats and the Congress’s next move. “The TV channels may have ignored the two seats if so much suspense was not built up. The delay increased the interest in the two seats manifold over the last few days,” said a Congress leader in UP.

AICC general secretary in-charge of UP Avinash Pandey said, “The decision to field Rahul Gandhiji from Rae Bareilly has had a huge impact on every party worker in not just UP, but across north India. The message is clear — that we will take the BJP head on. The party leadership in UP and some leaders from other states will work under the leadership of Priyanka Gandhiji.”

Woman abduction case: Revanna ‘relative’ sent to 8-day police custody

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, MAY 6

A CITY court Monday remanded Satish Babu alias Satish Babanna, who is said to be a relative of JD(S) MLA H D Revanna’s wife Bhavani Revanna, to eight days of police custody in connection with the alleged abduction and illegal confinement of a woman.

Meanwhile, the SIT, accompanied by the victim, conducted spot mahazar (inspection) at Revanna’s residence in Bengaluru’s Basavanagudi in connection with the case Monday. Revanna was arrested for alleged abduction and confinement of a 47-year-old woman at a farm house in Kalenahalli in Mysuru district’s Hunsur taluk.

According to a family member, the woman was allegedly taken away by one Satish Babu alias Satish Babanna on 29 April. Babu was arrested on May 3.

Revanna’s advocate Gopal

claimed that he was not allowed to enter the house by the officials during the spot mahazar. “They are investigating in a biased manner,” he said.

The SIT also launched a helpline for the victims and informants and assured their identities will remain confidential.

With sex videos, allegedly involving JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, doing the rounds, the SIT issued a statement warning people of legal action for “either storing or circulating videos or images”. The SIT said that such persons would be booked under section 67 (a) of the IT Act.

“Whoever tries to harm the confidentiality or try to vilify any women, it will be seriously dealt with,” said the statement. SIT chief BK Singh said, “Storing videos, images and audio clips also attracts criminal action... Therefore, it is advised to the public to delete the video/audio/photos of victims of sexual crimes from their devices to avoid legal action.”

Probe ‘politically influenced’, says BJP leader

Bengaluru: BJP leader and lawyer G Devarajegowda alleged Monday that the SIT investigation into the sexual abuse allegations against JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna was “politically influenced”, and claimed that the “Congress government was trying to fix me”.

Addressing a press conference Monday in Bengaluru, Devarajegowda said, “The victims were being fed money to appear before the investigating officials. The videos in circulation are morphed.”

In 2023, Devarajegowda had written to the national and state BJP leadership warning of the consequences for the BJP-JD(S) coalition for LS elections in Karnataka if the videos were leaked to the public.

Though he claimed he had given all the information about the case to SIT officials, Devarajegowda said he was issued a notice by SIT. A former driver of Prajwal, Karthik, had approached Devarajegowda seeking legal help. Devarajegowda said, “The videos (allegedly involving Prajwal) leaked are not the ones I have.” ENS

OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER
NORTH WEST PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY (NWPC-05)
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE,
NORTH WEST DISTRICT
DC OFFICE COMPLEX, KANJHAWALA, DELHI-110081
PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of General Public that the Election Commission of India has deployed Ms. Sujata Ghosh, IAS as General Observer for the General Election of Lok Sabha- 2024 in respect of NorthWest Parliamentary Constituency-05. She will be available to general public on working days as per under mentioned schedule:-

Name of Observers	Contact No.	Date & Time	Office Address in DTU
Ms. Sujata Ghosh, IAS (General Observer)	Mob. 8178108207 Email: sghoshck99@gmail.com	Between 3:00 PM to 04:00 PM w.e.f. 07/05/2024 till end of election (From Monday to Friday only).	Room No. LW5-SF2, Second floor, Mechanical Wing, DTU, Shahbad Daulatpur, Main Bawana Road, Delhi- 110042

Sd/-
ANKITA ANAND, IAS
RETURNING OFFICER
NORTH WEST PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY05
DIP/Shabdarth/Classified/0045/24-25

OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER, 03-EDPC
GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI
L.M. BUNDH, SHASTRI NAGAR, DELHI – 110031
TEL. NO.21210845: E-mail: sdmelectioneast@gmail.com
PUBLIC NOTICE

THE GENERAL ELECTIONS TO LOK SABHA – 2024
Scheduled to be held on 25.05.2024

This is for the information of General Public/Voters of East Delhi Parliamentary Constituency 03 as well as Political Parties that the Election Commission of India has designated the General Observer and Police Observer for the General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 to be held on 25.05.2024, in respect of East Delhi Parliamentary Constituency 03. They will be available to general public on working days as per under mentioned schedule:-

Name of Observer	Deputed as	Contact No.	Time & Date	Office Address
Sh. Sameer Verma, IAS	General Observer	9289729900	Between 11:00 AM to 01:00 PM w.e.f. 06.05.2024 till completion of poll/ re- poll	Room No. 109, 1st Floor, New Building, I&FC Department, L. M. Bandh, Shastri Nagar, Delhi-110031
Ms. James, IPS Nisha	Police Observer	9810500661	w.e.f. 06.05.2024 till completion of poll/re- poll	Room No. C-106, Delhi Minorities Commission, GNCTD, C-Block, 1st Floor, Vikas Bhawan, I.P. Estate, New Delhi - 110002

Any complaint w.r.t malpractices in Election and violation of Model Code of Conduct may be reported to the contact number given above.

Sd/-
(AMOL SRIVASTAVA, IAS)
Returning Officer
03-East Delhi Parliamentary Constituency
DIP-SHABDARTH/CLASSIFIED/0041/24-25

केनरा बैंक
Canara Bank
सिंडिकेट Syndicate
A Govt. of India Undertaking

[Rule 8 (1)] POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property) [Section 13 (4)]

Whereas : The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Canara Bank under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice on below mentioned date calling upon the following borrower to repay the below mentioned amount in the notice to repay within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under section 13 (4) of the said Act, read with Rule 8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on following date. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **Canara Bank** for below mentioned amount. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Branch Name & Address Address of Borrower / Mortgagee / Guarantor	Date of Demand Notice/Amount Dues & Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Property
Bikrampur Bande Branch (3629) Borrower - M/S Lucky Kirana Stores , Prop- Shashi Bhuvan Prasad, Proprietor/ Borrower- Shashi Bhuvan Prasad S/o- Ram Vinod Singh / Mortgagee- Meena	01.02.2024 Rs. 18,47,354.47 plus Int. & other charges 03.05.2024	All that part and parcel of the property consisting in the name of Ram Vinod Singh S/o- Motilal Singh, Land Situated at Vill- Baghi, PS/ Anchal –Tajpur, Sub-Registry & Dist- Samastipur, Khata No. - 90 (Old) 692 (New), Khesara No. - 1603 (old) 3378 (New), Khesara No. -1603 (Old) 3376 & 3377 (New) Thana No- 151, Sale Deed No- 14467, Area- 02 katha 09 Dhur, Boundary - North - Jagdish Singh South - Road, East - Mehilal Singh, West - Duki Singh Land & Building Situated at Vill- Baghi, PS/ Anchal –Tajpur, Sub-Registry & Dist- Samastipur, Khata No. - 63 (Old) Khesara No- 1894(old) 3744(New), Thana No- 151, Sale Deed No-11042, Area- 11 Decimal, Boundary - North - Pramod Singh & Others, South -Sitararam Singh & Others, East -Road, West -Ritlal Singh
Muktapur Branch (0989) Borrower - Md. Athesham Khan S/o- Md. Nizamuddin Khan, Guarantor / Mortgagee-Meena	08.11.2023 Rs. 26,73,000/- plus Int. & other charges 03.05.2024	All that part and parcel of the property consisting in the name of Meena Khatoun W/o- Md. Nizamuddin Khan, Land Situated at Mauza Govindpur Ibrahimpur Khajuri, PS - Kalyanpur, Dist- Samastipur, Khata No-187(old) 74 (New), Khesara No- 1039 (old), 1040 (Old) 1865 (New), Thana No- 100, Tauzi No-5866, Area- 07 katha 11 Dhur, Boundary: North - Safique Miya, South - Safique Miya, East -Kashi Khatoun, West -Nijamuddin & Others Khatoun W/o-Md. Nizamuddin Khan, Guarantor-Tanveer Khan S/o- Md. Nizamuddin Khan, Guarantor-Md. Nizamuddin Khan
Rosera Branch (4572) Borrower / Mortgagee-Late Himat Sahni S/o- Late Baldev Sahni & Late Vimla Devi W/o- Late Himat Sahni	10.01.2024 Rs. 7,04,000/- plus Int. & other charges 03.05.2024	All that part and parcel of the property consisting in the name of Late Himat Sahni S/o- Late Baldev Sahni & Late Vimla Devi W/o- Late Himat Sahni, Situated at Khata No-107(old) 267 (New), Khesra No- 466 (old) 423 (new) Tauji No. - 5966, Thana No. - 74/2, Mauza - Sahiyar Burj, Anchal/Sub Registry - Rosera, Dist- Samastipur, Area- 01 Katha, Boundary - North - Bhola Mahto & Rudro Mahto and Others, South - Road Pakki R.E. O, East - Hal Purchaser Md. Masihuzzamma, West -Ranjit Purvey

Raja Sahni S/o- Late Himat Sahni and Sharvan Sahani S/o- Late Himat Sahni

Authorised Officer (Canara Bank)

OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER
NORTH WEST PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY (NWPC-05)
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, NORTH WEST DISTRICT
DC OFFICE COMPLEX, KANJHAWALA, DELHI-110081
PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for the information of General Public that the Election Commission of India has deployed Sh. Manish Kumar Sinha, IPS as Police Observer for the General Election of Lok Sabha-2024 in respect of North West Parliamentary Constituency-05. He will be available to general public on working days as per under mentioned schedule:-

Name of Observer	Contact No.	Date & Time	Office Address in DTU
Sh. Manish Kumar Sinha, IPS (Police Observer)	Mob: 7015590553 tc@aptransport.org	Between 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon (Tue, Thu & Sat) W.e.f. 07/05/2024 till end of elections.	Room no. LW5-SF1, Second Floor, Mechanical Wing, DTU, Shahbad Daulatpur, Main Bawana Road Delhi-110042

Sd/-
(ANKITA ANAND, IAS)
RETURNING OFFICER
NORTH WEST PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY-05
DIP/Shabdarth/Classified/0046/24-25

TRAFFIC ADVISORY
IPL T20 CRICKET MATCH
on 07-05-2024
DELHI CAPITALS VS RAJASTHAN ROYALS
7:00 PM TO 11:30 PM

LEGENDS

- THOSE NOT HAVING PARKING LABEL TO FOLLOW RED
- THOSE HAVING PARKING LABEL MAY FOLLOW BLUE ARROWS.
- FREE PARK & RIDE (MATA SUNDRI RD. RAJ GHAT POWER HOUSE ROAD, & UNDER VELODROME FLYOVER)
- PICK UP POINT SHUTTLE SERVICE
- DROP OFF POINT SHUTTLE SERVICE
- TAXI (DROP OFF / PICK UP LANE)

Nearest Metro Station:
Delhi Gate, (Gate No. 4 & 5)
ITO (Gate No. 3, 4 & 5)

RIDE METRO/FREE SHUTTLE BUS FOR HASSLE FREE JOURNEY
Free shuttle service provide by DELHI CAPITALS
Parking : Mata Sundari Parking, Rajghat Power House Road, Under Velodrome Road
SECURITY INSTRUCTIONS: Spectators visiting the stadium are requested not to bring the following prohibited items:

- Laptop
- Camera
- Helmet
- Bagpack
- Eatables
- Water Bottles
- Power Bank
- Lighter & Match Box
- Knives & Arms

24 Hours Traffic Helpline: 011-25844444 / 1095

Ministry of Culture
Government of India

Prime Ministers Museum and Library

cordially invites you to a Talk on

Deendayal Upadhyaya's Overseas Trip: A Tale of Three Continents by **Dr. Lalit Kumar**

Fellow, PMML

Tuesday, 07 May 2024 at 3:00pm

Venue:
Seminar Room, Library Building Prime Ministers Museum and Library Teen Murti House, New Delhi

All are Welcome.

Those wishing to have their names added to the email list may please email us at:- ccs2nmml@gmail.com

CBC 09142/12/0003/2425

ARUN JAITLEY STADIUM, FIROZESHAN KOTLA GROUND, NEW DELHI
DIVERSION / RESTRICTION (AS AND WHEN REQUIRED)

There will be diversion of traffic for half and hour after conclusion of the match. No heavy vehicles and buses shall be allowed on Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, Delhi Gate to J.L.N. Marg, from Darya Ganj to Bahadurshah Zafar Marg and from Guru Nanak Chowk to Asaf Ali Road, People are requested to avoid following roads from 5:00 PM to 11:30 PM on the match day respectively when the spectators would be coming to the stadium and congestion is expected.

ENTRY TO THE STADIUM

Nos. 1 to 8 are located on the southern side of the Stadium & entry to these are from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg.

Nos. 10 to 15 are located on the Eastern side of the Stadium on the road and entry is from J.L.N. Marg Next to Ambedkar Stadium Bus Terminal.

(iii) Gate Nos. 16, 17 & 18 are located on the Western side of the Stadium & entry is from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg near Petrol Pump.

PARKING

Labeled Vehicles

free parking for vehicle is available on Mata Sundri Road, Rajghat Power House Road and Velodrome Road and free park & ride and shuttle bus service also available. Limited parking is available for labeled vehicles in the proximity of the Stadium. Display of car parking label on windscreen is mandatory. Vehicle number must be written on the parking label. Those who do not display parking label with vehicle number will not be allowed in the proximity of the stadium. Car parking label holders are advised to take Ring Road, J.L.N. Marg, Asaf Ali Road or Bahadurshah Zafar Marg. 'U' turn at Delhi Gate is allowed. Entry to parking lots P1, P2, & P3 shall be from Bahadurshah Zafar Marg only from near the Vikram Nagar Cut, Shaheed Park.

General Vehicles

No vehicle shall be allowed to be parked on Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, Jawaharlal Nehru Marg & Ring Road from Rajghat to I.P. Flyover (both the carriageways) on the match day. Vehicles parked on these roads shall be towed away and prosecuted as per law.

PARK & RIDE

For spectators, unlabeled vehicles 'park and ride' facility has been created at the following places:-
•Mata Sundri Parking • Rajghat Power House Road • Under Velodrome Road•
All the spectators coming in their vehicles shall reach these Park & Ride sites, and avail "Park & Ride" facility or walk down to reach stadium.

BUS

All buses will start their service 2 hours before the match and will continue till one hour after the start of match. The bus service from the stadium to their respective destinations will start as soon as the game ends and will continue for one hour after the match ends.

TAXI

Spectators using app based taxi and other taxis should use the service lane on Ring Road between I.P. flyover & Rajghat crossing for drop & pickup.

JOHNSON T A
BENGALURU, MAY 6

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
AHMEDABAD, MAY 6

SUKRITA BARUAH
GUWAHATI, MAY 6

JAYPRAKASH S NAIDU
RAIPUR, MAY 6

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE
APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED**

SEE SECTION U/S 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Suraj @ Santosh S/o Dasrath Choudhary, R/o H No. Jhuggi No.195, Near Metro Pillar No. A4-26, Shiv Basti Rama Road, Delhi 2nd Address 62/195, Shiv Basti Rama Road Zakhira Delhi**, has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **FIR No.520/2020 U/s 379/411/34 IPC, P.S. Moti Nagar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **Suraj @ Santosh** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Suraj @ Santosh** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Suraj @ Santosh** of **FIR No.520/2020 U/s 379/411/34 IPC, P.S. Moti Nagar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **11.07.2024**

**By Order
Ms Shagun
Metropolitan Magistrate-04 (West)
Room No.268
Tis Hazari Court, Delhi**

DP/5288/WD/2024



93 SEATS IN 11 STATES, UTs AT STAKE

71 BJP vs 4 Cong: 2019 score in seats voting today

Polling to wrap up in Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Assam and Goa

ANJISHNU DAS
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

IN THE third phase of voting for the Lok Sabha elections, 93 seats across 11 states and UTs will go to polls on Tuesday. After Phase 3, a total of 283 seats would have completed polling. In Phase 3, five states will complete polling – Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Karnataka and Gujarat, where the BJP candidate in Surat won unopposed after other nominations were rejected or withdrawn.

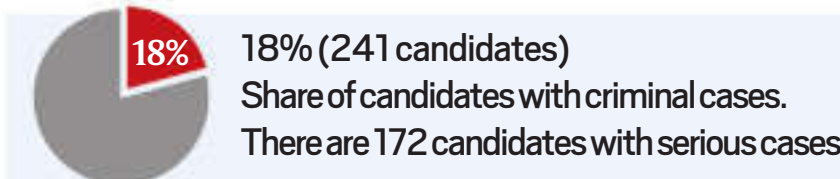
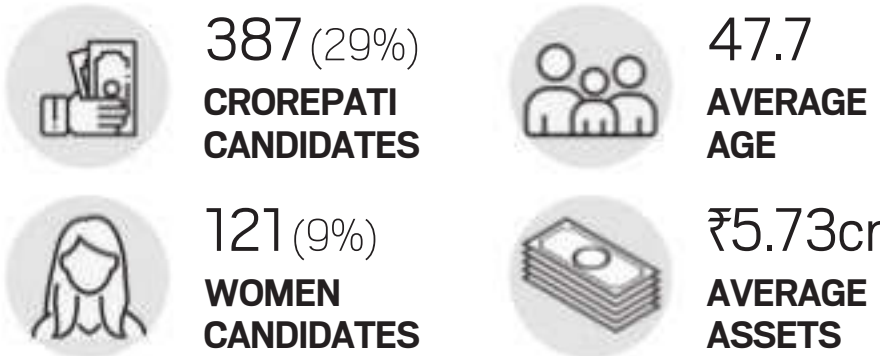
In 2019, the parties that now constitute the Opposition INDIA bloc and the ruling NDA had won 8 and 75 of these seats, with the 10 remaining seats split between the undivided Shiv Sena (4), the undivided NCP (3), the Bajiruddin Ajmal-led AIUDF (1) and two Independents. In terms of vote share, the NDA had got 51.8% of the votes compared to the INDIA bloc's 31.9% (excluding the votes of the Shiv Sena and NCP, both of which were united at the time).

The BJP alone had won 71 of these 93 seats, with the Congress far behind at 4. In 2014, the NDA had won 68 of these seats and the INDIA bloc parties 15, with 11 going to other parties.

1,332 CANDIDATES IN THE FRAY ON TUESDAY

■ The BJP has fielded the most candidates at 82, followed by the BSP at 79 and the Congress at 68. With 25 seats in Gujarat going to polls, the state has the most candidates overall at 266, followed by Maharashtra's 258 candidates in 11 seats, and Karnataka's 227 in 14 seats.

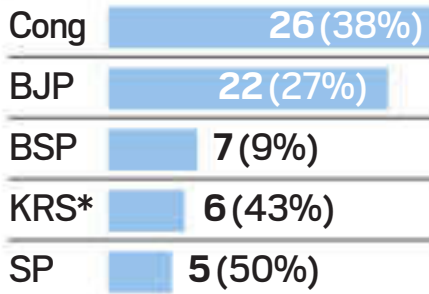
CANDIDATE BREAKDOWN



Candidates who are graduates and above 591
Share of graduates 44%

■ Till Phase 3, a total of 356 women have entered the fray.
■ In 2014, 12 women won from the Phase 3 seat and in 2019, 14 women won.
■ At 14, the Congress has the most women candidates today, followed by the BJP at 13 and the BSP at 7.
■ Chhattisgarh has the most women candidates at 27.

Party-wise candidates with criminal cases



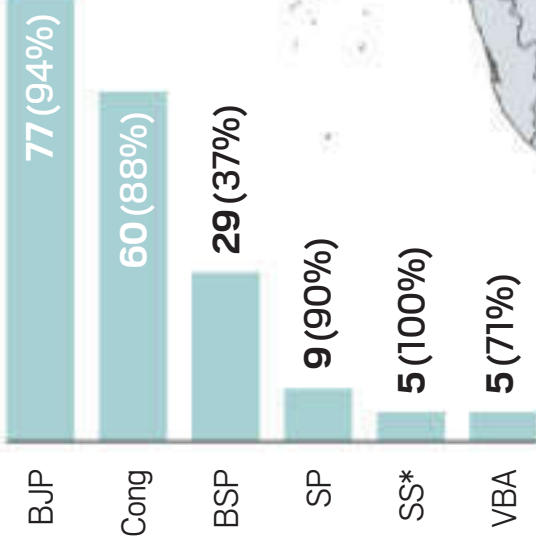
Maharashtra has the most candidates with criminal cases at 67, followed by Karnataka at 37 and Gujarat at 36.

*Karnataka Rashtra Samithi; % of all party candidates

After Phase 3, a total of 283 will have completed polling. At the end of the day, five more states – Assam, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Gujarat and Goa will finish voting

Surat
Already, the BJP candidate here has won unopposed after others' nominations were rejected or withdrawn

Party-wise crorepati candidates

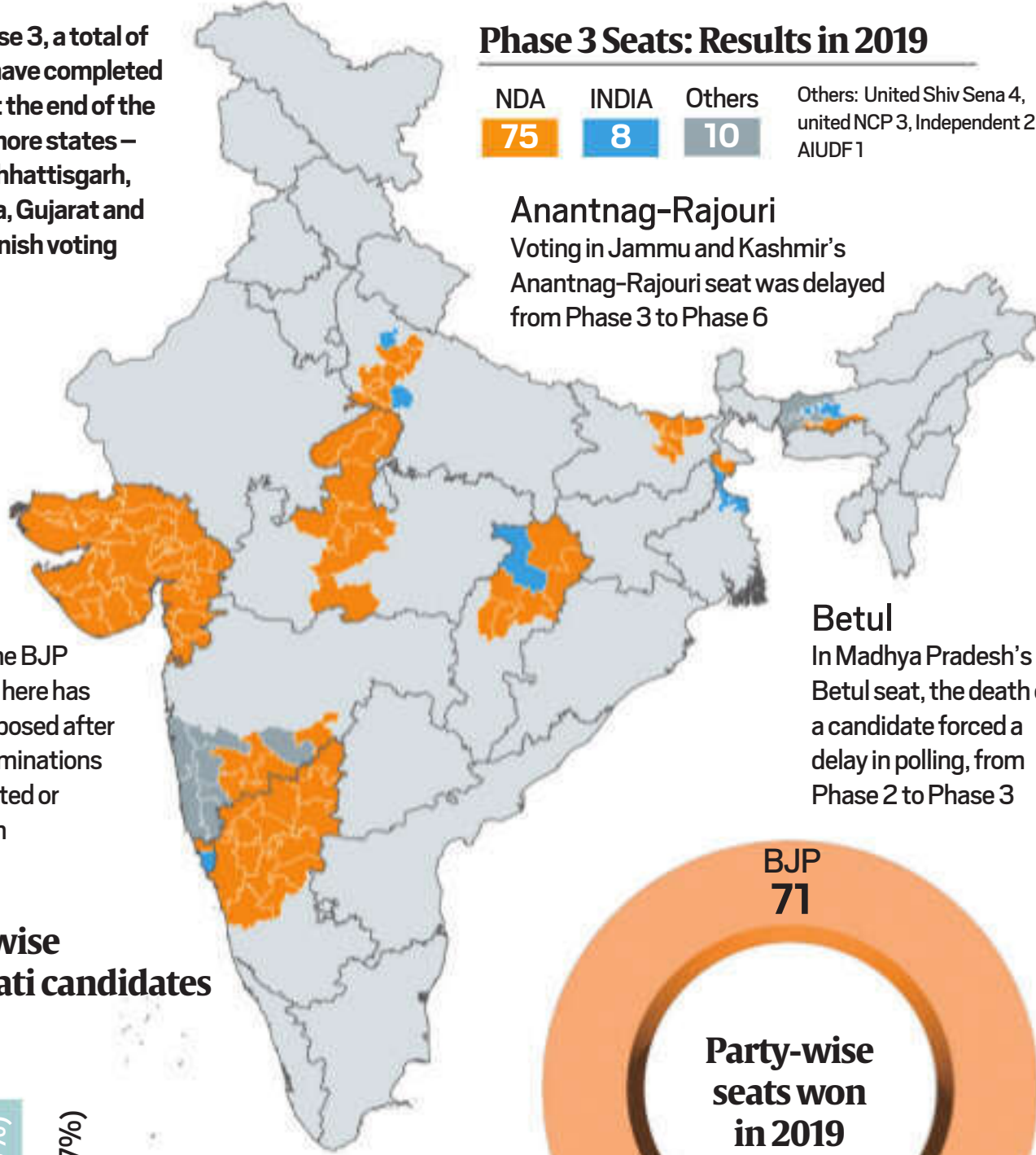


*Shiv Sena (UBT)

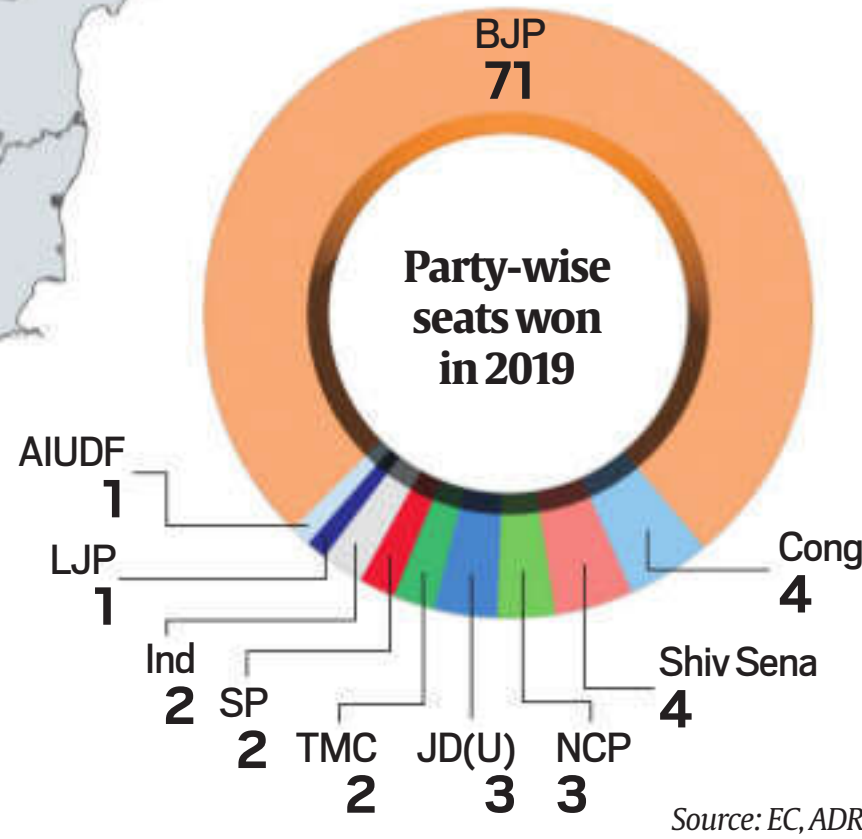
Phase 3 Seats: Results in 2019



Anantnag-Rajouri
Voting in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag-Rajouri seat was delayed from Phase 3 to Phase 6



Betul
In Madhya Pradesh's Betul seat, the death of a candidate forced a delay in polling, from Phase 2 to Phase 3



Source: EC, ADR

5 CONTESTS TO WATCH OUT FOR

1 **GANDHINAGAR, GUJARAT:** Union Home Minister and sitting MP Amit Shah (BJP) vs AICC secretary Sonal Patel (Congress)
2 **VIDISHA, MADHYA PRADESH:** Former CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan (BJP) vs former MP Pratap Bhanu Sharma (Congress)
3 **GUNA, MADHYA PRADESH:** Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia (BJP) vs

former MLA Yadendra Rao Deshray Singh (Congress)

4 **BARAMATI, MAHARASHTRA:** Sitting MP Surpriya Sule (NCP-Sharad Pawar) vs Sunetra Pawar, wife of Deputy CM Ajit Pawar (NCP)

5 **MAINPURI, UTTAR PRADESH:** Sitting MP Dimple Yadav, wife of former CM Akhilesh Yadav (SP) vs sitting MLA Jayveer Singh (BJP) vs former MLA Shiv Prasad Yadav (BSP)

OTHER MAJOR STATES GOING TO POLLS

BIHAR: 5 SEATS

Araria, Jhansi, Jharkhand, Khagaria, Madhepura, Supaul

Raigad, Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg, Sangli, Satara, Solapur

UTTAR PRADESH: 10 SEATS

Agra, Aonla, Badaun, Bareilly, Etah, Fatehpur Sikri, Firozabad, Hathras, Mainpuri, Sambhal

GOA: 2 SEATS

North and South Goa

MADHYA PRADESH: 9 SEATS

Betul, Bhind, Bhopal, Guna, Gwalior, Morena, Rajgarh, Sagor, Vidisha

WEST BENGAL: 4 SEATS

Jangipur, Maldaha Dakshin, Maldaha Uttar, Murshidabad

MAHARASHTRA: 11 SEATS

Baramati, Hatkanangle, Kolhapur, Latur, Madha, Osmanabad,

DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI: 1 SEAT

DAMAN AND DIU: 1 SEAT

RICHEST CANDIDATES



PALLAVI SHRINIVAS DEMPO (BJP), contesting from South Goa
ASSETS: ₹1,361 cr



JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA (BJP), contesting from Guna, Madhya Pradesh
ASSETS: ₹424 cr



CHHATRAPATI SHAHU SHAHAJI (Congress), contesting from Kolhapur, Maharashtra
ASSETS: ₹342 cr

YOUNGEST AND OLDEST

YOUNGEST:

10 candidates aged 25, including 6 Independents and 4 from minor parties

OLDEST:

ABDUL RASHID, an 84-year-old Independent contesting from Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh

In Raichur, fears of Constitution change resonate

Concern is especially strong among Karnataka's Madigas, the most backward among Dalits, who have been supporting BJP

JOHNSON T A
RAICHUR, MAY 6

AT A time when the ruling Congress has made the "delay" in release of drought relief funds by the Centre to Karnataka a poll issue, the agrarian crisis is set to be the determining factor in Raichur, one of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in north Karnataka going to polls on May 7. Another is the fear that a BJP government at the Centre would "change the Constitution".

An ST- reserved seat, Raichur is identified by the NITI Aayog as an "aspirational district", on account of "the lowest composite indicators in terms of health and nutrition, education" among others.

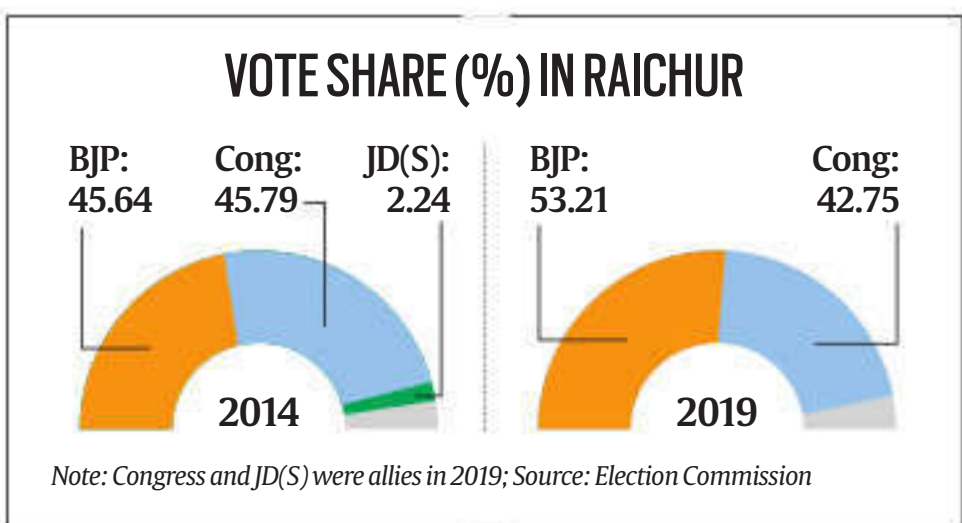
At B Hanumapura village, around 40 km from Raichur city, entire families have moved to Bengaluru for work at construction sites since drought conditions

began in 2023. In the houses that are not locked, of the 700-odd in the village, there are mostly just the elderly and women.

Nagaraj H. 24, a Dalit, among the few youths around, says his entire family, went to Bengaluru for work this year after the family ran up Rs 3 lakh in farm loans. "Living in the village means accumulating more debts. We had no other option," says Nagaraj.

A life-saver for families like Nagaraj's is the Rs 2,000 a month given to one woman per poor household by the Congress since it came to power last May, apart from MNREGA wages.

"Before the Assembly elections, when the Congress announced its guarantees, there was not much interest. Now a lot of hope is pinned on the monthly payments," says Chinnamma Muddanaguddi, the president of the Jagruti Mahila Sanghatane, a



Note: Congress and JD(S) were allies in 2019; Source: Election Commission

women's collective in Raichur.

Unlike the Congress's programmes, the BJP's schemes like PM-KISAN, Ujjwala, and infrastructure projects, are seen as more beneficial for dominant castes. Abhay Kumar of the Grameena Koolikarmikara Sanghatane, an agricultural workers' group, says the BJP's Ram Temple pitch doesn't have "much effect in this region". "It is an issue

only among the upper castes."

One issue that appears to have struck deep roots is the Congress's claim that the BJP intends to change the Constitution, a campaign point taken up nationally by the INDIA bloc. This concern is very real among the Dalits and the Madigas – the most backward among the Dalits – in particular.

"Many BJP and RSS leaders have said this," says unemployed

Dalit youth Parushuram, 24, in Raichur city, pulling up a video of a speech by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to prove his point. Despite protests by his friend, who points out the video has been declared fake, Parashuram doubts the BJP's "intentions".

In fact, the first BJP leader to talk of changes in the Constitution was Anant Kumar Hegde, the sitting MP from Uttara Kannada in Karnataka. Speaking at an event in March, Hegde said, "The Constitution has to be amended as Congress people have fundamentally altered it with unnecessary things... it cannot be done without a two-third majority."

The BJP quickly distanced itself from the remarks. Hegde has not been fielded this time.

The fears over the Constitution are now threatening the support base earned by the BJP among Madigas in recent years, on

grounds of the perception that the Congress favours the more upwardly mobile Holeyas among the SC community. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, state ministers G Parameshwara and H C Mahadevappa are all Holeyas.

"News has spread that the RSS has said the Constitution would be changed and that reservation for SCs finished," says H P Murari, a local Congress Madiga leader.

Admitting the Madigas see the Congress's leaders as against the community, Murari says the Constitution issue overrides this. "The Madigas are making a sacrifice for the Congress in the polls."

If there is one thing common to the BJP (Raja Amaresh Naik) and Congress (Kumar Naik) candidates in Raichur, it is that not many people know about them. "We vote for the party symbol, not the candidate," says Lakshmi in Hanumapura.

KEY COMMUNITIES

Driving Goa's power play: Bhandaris to Saraswat Brahmins

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
PANAJI, MAY 6

ALTHOUGH POLLS in Goa are not fought strictly along the caste lines, there has always been an undercurrent of caste in state politics. Caste has not figured prominently in the ongoing Lok Sabha campaign. However, a Lokniti-CSDS post-poll survey of the 2022 Assembly polls found one-third of the voters considered caste important.

As the state's North and South Goa seats go to polls on May 7, here are the major caste groups and communities.

Bhandaris

The Bhandari community is

Goa's largest caste group constituting a significant share of its Hindu population. Categorized as Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Bhandaris are spread across Goa and Maharashtra's Konkan belt.

A state survey conducted in 2014 estimated the OBC population to be 3.59 lakh, or 27% of the state population, and the Bhandaris at 2.19 lakh, or 61% of the OBC population and over 15% of the state population.

The Gomantak Bhandari Samaj has challenged these figures, claiming the number of Bhandaris to be over 5.29 lakh, or 30% of the population.

Despite their numerical strength, there has been only one Bhandari CM – Ravi Naik –

since 1961. Naik became the CM in the 1990s by engineering defections and not by popular vote.

While observers say Bhandaris do not vote as a bloc, given their numbers, the community is seen as a crucial factor in polls.

Over the last two decades, the community has been closely associated with the BJP. The BJP's North Goa MP and candidate Shripad Naik, a Bhandari, plays a key role in consolidating Bhandari votes.

Saraswat Brahmins

Saraswat Brahmins make up about 3-4% of Goa's population. Though their influence in state politics has waned over the years, this community has al-



BJP's Shripad Naik, who is a Bhandari, at a temple. Facebook

ways been seen as the 'opinion-maker' due to their hold over administration and positions of power. Former CMs – including Manohar Parrikar and Digambar

Kamat – belong to the community, which is largely considered to back the BJP.

With the BJP fielding industrialist Pallavi Dempo, a Saraswat Brahmin, from South Goa, the ruling party expects the community in the Margao and Ponda areas to rally behind her.

Kshatriya Marathas

Kshatriya Marathas constitute 8-10% of the state.

In recent years, the community's representation in state politics has increased.

Goa CM Pramod Sawant is a prominent Kshatriya Maratha.

Christians

Religious identity is also considered a notable factor in state

politics. According to the 2011 Census, 66.1% of Goans were Hindus, 25.1% Christians and 8.3% Muslims.

North Goa, where Hindus are 76% of the population, has been a BJP bastion. Christians account for only 16% of North Goa.

South Goa, which is 36% Christian, has been a Congress stronghold, with the party having won this seat 10 times since 1961. Hindus make up 53% of South Goa, while Muslim are at 10%.

However, a change in the demographics of South Goa's most populous taluk, Salcete, in recent years in the wake of migration and continued exodus of Goans opting for Portuguese passports and giving up voting rights, may hurt the Congress's prospects.

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ANANTNAG TO VOTE ON MAY 25 NOW; WHEN ARE POLLS PUT OFF?

5 QUESTIONS

SUPRIYA SULE, BARAMATI: VOTES ON MAY 7 SITTING MP AND NCP(SP) CANDIDATE

'Toughing it out in heat, we have it easier than farmers in fields'



Supriya Sule campaigns in Baramati. Facebook

What's your typical day?

I keep very long hours. I am normally at work by 8 and usually work till 9 pm. Nowadays it goes on till 10 pm.

What's your meal on the go?

I eat whatever I get on the way during the campaigns. At anyone's house, I don't carry any food.

Dos and donts for your party workers in the heat?

None. Not for me, not for them. We are all tough and

clearly we have it easier than the farmer who tills in 42 degrees in the field.

How often do you check your mobile on campaigns?

Once every three or four hours.

How do you unwind?

I spend time with my family. I read a lot, though nowadays it's just manifestos and newspapers. And I love music – Indian classical, rock, jazz, everything.



In Gandhinagar, an academic question: What will be Shah’s victory margin?

RITU SHARMA
AHMEDABAD, MAY 6

TEN LAKH vote margin vs 10 lakh rupees. The lopsided battle for the Gandhinagar seat of Gujarat perhaps can’t be framed better than this.

If on the BJP side is Union Home Minister Amit Shah, looking for his second successive victory from the seat that the party has not lost since 1984, on the other is Sonal Patel, whose only electoral experience so far is the 2022 Assembly poll loss from Naranpura.

With Shah’s victory a given, the BJP’s target for Gandhinagar is ensuring that the party’s chief electoral strategist wins by no less than 10 lakh votes (double his 2019 margin). Patel, meanwhile, did not just plough a desolate furrow but also struggled to raise funds, with a donation drive raising – by her own admission – barely Rs 10 lakh.

Given Shah’s poll duties across the country, his family, including wife Sonalben, son Jay and daughter-in-law Rishita, did the heavy lifting in Gandhinagar, with the campaign wrapping up on Sunday.

Addressing a voter awareness campaign in the Bopal area of Ahmedabad, Jay exhorted the crowd: “Last time, only 52% of you in Bopal voted, and we got 98% of those votes. This time ensure that 85% of you vote. Will you do that?”

The 10 lakh target for Shah, 59, was set by Gujarat BJP president C R Paatil – a whopping 3 lakh votes more than the all-time high margin of 6.96 lakh votes, by which the BJP’s Pritam Munde won the Beed seat in Maharashtra in 2014. Paatil, who himself missed this record by a whisker in 2019, has



Union Home Minister Amit Shah’s wife Sonalben campaigns in Gandhinagar. Express

now set a 5 lakh-margin target for 24 of the Gujarat seats and 10 lakh for Gandhinagar, with one seat (Surat) won uncontested.

CM Bhupendra Patel, who represents the Ghatlodia Assembly segment falling within Gandhinagar, was among those who campaigned for Shah.

To get to the target in the Gandhinagar seat, which has 21.5 lakh voters, the BJP must register impressive wins in all seven of its Assembly segments.

In 2007, Shah had won one of these Assembly seats, Sarkhej, by 2.35 lakh votes, the highest in the state in that year’s polls. Shah also has an association with Gandhinagar LS seat going back years, having been the election manager for L K Advani when he was its MP.

After becoming a Rajya Sabha MP in 2017, Shah contested for the first time from Gandhinagar in 2019, and won by 5.57 lakh votes, the biggest victory margin so far in the seat. Recently, he said, his margin this

time “would be much higher”.

BJP chief spokesperson Gujarat Yamal Yyas told *The Indian Express*: “We have set the target because of the popularity of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah, as well as the hard work of BJP workers.. The BJP has been representing Gandhinagar for very long and all its MPs have strived to make it a model constituency, especially Amit Shah, with development projects of over Rs 22,000 crore.”

If Jay addressed mass meetings for Shah, and held sabhas with specific groups such as Patidars and Maldharis, Shah’s wife and daughter-in-law’s campaign focused on women.

Satish Patel, 50, the sarpanch of Ramnagar village in Gandhinagar district, said the women in Shah’s family are regular visitors, irrespective of polls. “They come, talk to villagers, address their issues.”

Rajeshkumar Shah, a resident of the same apartment complex in Naranpura area as

Amit Shah, talked about a recent poll meeting at the society which was attended by Sonalben. “She keeps dropping in to meet old neighbours, particularly if there is an illness or death in a family.”

A party worker at the BJP office said: “Anyone in the entire Gandhinagar constituency can directly call or visit us if they have issues. Everything is documented, right from the complaint to its redressal.”

BJP leaders say Shah himself keeps track of what is happening, notwithstanding his busy portfolio.

But even if all this means the Congress always had a Herculean task in Gandhinagar, many feel the party gave up without a fight in fielding Sonal Patel. Its earlier candidates from the seat have included former chief election commissioner T N Seshan and late superstar Rajesh Khanna.

Patel, 63, an architect and town planner, is the daughter of a former municipal councillor

from Naranpura ward, and has held the post of AICC secretary and Gujarat Congress Mahila president. In 2022, she was among those who lost when the BJP swept all the seven Assembly seats falling under Gandhinagar.

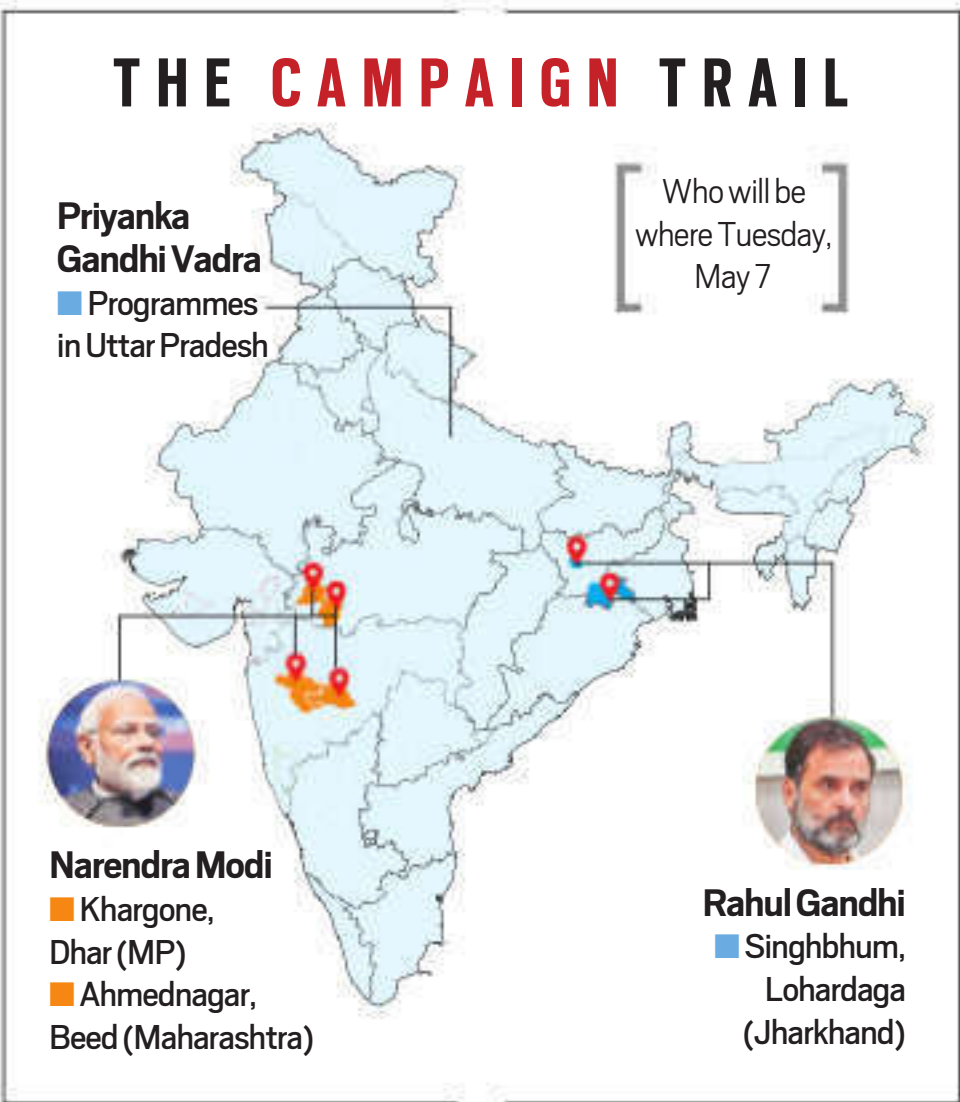
Patel’s husband and son, also architects, pitched in for her campaign. She held rounds of the constituency and small meetings.

Patel says she tried to raise funds via crowd funding, but did not get an encouraging response. “People were perhaps scared to show their support on record. The collection wasn’t much, around Rs 10 lakh,” she told *The Indian Express*.

Patel has described the 10 lakh-vote margin target for Shah as impossible, pointing out that roughly 60% of the 21.5-lakh voters of Gandhinagar (or about 12.9 lakh) usually turn up to cast their ballot. “The target is not possible unless they mess with the EVMs,” she has said.

Including Shah and Patel, there are 14 candidates in fray, even after withdrawal of 17. Those who withdrew included Independents, and candidates of parties such as the ‘Gunj Satya Ni Janata Party’, ‘Bhartiya Rashtriya Dal’ and ‘Aapki Awaaz Party’. Those who remain include the BSP’s Mohammedanish Desai, candidates of registered parties such as the ‘Right to Recall Party’, ‘Prajatantra Aadhar Party’, ‘Insaniyat Party’, and eight Independents.

Patel says whatever the result on June 4, she doesn’t regret the experience. “Initially workers were sceptical given the 2022 results, but slowly people got receptive... My family members also tried to dissuade me from contesting against the Home Minister, but I told them, ‘Why not? Someone has to.’”



Rallying Point

Rahul talks of farm loan waiver, Nadda brings up Sanatan, Mamata says BJP ‘defaming Bengal’ and Adityanath points to Opposition bloc DNA



SP chief Akhilesh Yadav at a temple in Kannauj, Monday. Express

CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI IN MADHYA PRADESH ‘WILL INCREASE MGNREGA WAGES FROM ₹200 TO ₹400’

CONGRESS LEADER Rahul Gandhi Monday said that if his party comes to power, it would double MGNREGA wages from Rs 200 to Rs 400. At rallies in Ratlam and Khargone in MP, Rahul also spoke about slew of “revolutionary” promises like farm loan waivers, a law on MSP, depositing Rs 1 lakh annually into the bank accounts of women, and for the youth ‘Pehli Naukri Paki scheme’ to provide a 1-year apprenticeship in big companies.

Rahul reiterated the promise that his party would remove the 50% cap on

reservation. “(PM) Narendra Modi waived off loans worth Rs 16 lakh crore of 22 industrialists. If they can give money to industrialists, we can also give money to the poor, Dalits, backwards, and economically weaker sections of the general category,” he said, adding that the honorarium for ASHA and Anganwadi workers’ will also be doubled.

Rahul emphasised that this election is to save the Constitution. “Narendra Modi has made up his mind that he wants to change, abolish and discard the Constitution. Your jal, jangal and zameen will vanish,” he said. ENS

JPNADDA, BJP CHIEF IN HYDERABAD ‘CONG ANTI-SANATAN, JOINS HANDS WITH ANTI-NATIONALS’

IN A scathing attack on Congress, BJP president J P Nadda on Monday alleged that the grand old party is “anti-Sanatan” and “anti-Ram” and that it joins hands with anti-national forces.

At Peddapalli in Telangana, he also said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi accusing the BJP of seeking to end reservations is a case of ‘ultra chor kotwal ko dante’. “The Congress is an anti-Ram party. Congress is anti-Sanatan. Congress is such a party that joins hands with anti-national forces,” he said.

Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi remained silent when DMK leader Udhayanidhi Stalin compared Sanatan with HIV, dengue and malaria, Nadda said. In Karnataka, the Congress curtailed the reservation of OBCs and gave it to Muslims, but the BJP government did away with it and gave the OBCs their rights. PTI

MAMATA BANERJEE, WEST BENGAL CM IN BIRBHUM DISTRICT ‘BJP PREPARING BLUEPRINT OF LIES TO WIN LS ELECTIONS’

WEST BENGAL Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday alleged that the BJP is “preparing a blueprint of lies to win the Lok

Sabha elections”. At Santhia in Birbhum district, she accused the BJP of having two top national level leaders who are “looting the whole country but defaming Bengal to hide their sins.”

“BJP is chalking out a blueprint to win polls by spreading lies. Will you vote for a riot plotter PM?” she said. PTI

YOGI ADITYANATH, U.P. CM IN LUCKNOW

‘RAMDROH, RASHTRADROH IN CONG, INDI ALLIANCE DNA’

UTTAR PRADESH CM Yogi Adityanath Monday described the Congress and INDIA bloc as ‘Ramdrohi’ and ‘Rashtradrohi’, accusing them of betraying God and country. His comments came a day after AICC spokesperson Radhika Khera resigned from the party claiming she faced intense criticism within the party for visiting the Ram temple. “This shows ‘Ramdrohi’ is there in the DNA of Congress, SP, and the INDI alliance. They are ‘Ramdrohi’ (anti-Ram) and ‘Rashtradrohi’ (anti-national),” he said.

“This is the character of INDI alliance. They have always disrespected Lord Ram and his devotees. Whether it’s Congress, SP, NC or DMK, the conduct of all these parties is condemnable. And it is this ‘Ramdrohi’ conduct of these parties that is throwing them into the abyss,” he said, according to a statement. PTI

Party forcing them to back Congress pick, NC’s Kargil unit quits en masse

NAVEED IQBAL
SRINAGAR, MAY 6

THE NATIONAL Conference’s Kargil unit has resigned en masse, citing pressure from the high command to support the Congress candidate. This comes days after NC’s Kargil district president, Haji Hanifa Jan, filed his nomination as an independent candidate from the Ladakh parliamentary constituency.

On Monday afternoon, the NC issued a statement directing the Ladakh unit to support INDIA bloc candidate Tsering Namgyal from the Ladakh seat. “NC president Dr Farooq Abdullah has directed the party’s Kargil unit to support the

INDIA bloc candidate, T Namgyal in the Lok Sabha election for the Ladakh seat. He has told his colleagues that failure to follow this directive will be seen as a serious breach of party discipline,” the party statement said.

By evening, NC’s additional general secretary Qamar Ali Akhoun held a press conference in Kargil and stated that the party functionaries have decided to choose “unity over party”, so they will support Hanifa Jan’s candidature for the Lok Sabha.

In a letter to Farooq Abdullah, Akhoun said, “As the party insists us to act against the interest of the people of Ladakh, so we are compelled to resign en masse... This letter may be considered as

mass resignation of all party functionaries from the primary membership of J&K NC.”

In a press conference on May 1, the Kargil units of both NC and Congress had announced Hanifa as Kargil’s consensus candidate. However, in its formal announcement Thursday, the Congress named Namgyal from Leh. A long-time Congress worker, Namgyal represents the Lower Leh seat in the Leh autonomous hill council.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, activist and KDA member Sajjad Kargili said, “It’s been more than a decade since Kargil got representation in Parliament. Ladakh has largely been represented by Leh and it is time that we also find fair representation.”

FROM PAGE ONE

A little reversal: Where labharthis cite Didi, challenge is Modi – and anti-incumbency

steel almirahs and bundles of election material, the pamphlet for the party’s candidate, Alakesh Das, starts like this: “Lokkhi Bhandar and all schemes will not be shut down. The funds for these schemes will be increased”. In village Fulia Belgharia in the same constituency, the BJP’s sitting MP, Jagannath Sarkar, tells *The Indian Express*: “This time ‘Jai Shri Ram’ is khullam khulla (in the open)... We will also give Lokkhi Bhandar, and we will give more money under it”.

But if schemes for women mean Mamata, in many places fear also carries the name of TMC. In chai shop addas in West Bengal, many more voters refuse to talk openly about the election than in the other states *The Indian Express* travelled to for this series. The results of panchayat elections, inevitably marred by violence, including the last one in 2023, are frequently cited as a barometer of political trends – but they also suggest a cramping politicisation of public spaces.

In West Bengal, the national Opposition front, INDIA, has been interrupted – Congress has joined hands with the Left, while the TMC has opted out of the “jot” or alliance to go it alone in the state’s 42 seats. In the CPM office at Ranaghat, Central Committee member and CPM secretary Sumit Biswas says: “Trinamool

and BJP feed off each other, they are trying to establish a religious binary”.

That binary has already been established by the results of the 2019 Lok Sabha and 2021 Assembly polls – Congress got only 2 MPs and the CPM zero in 2019, neither could open its account in the Assembly.

The TMC trolls the BJP as “bo-hiragato” or outsider, but Modi’s party got more than a foot in the Bengal door in 2019 – its Lok Sabha tally shot up from two to 18. In the Assembly polls in 2021, it may have finished well short of its hyped target, but it registered a spike from three to 77 seats. Arvind Menon, all-India general secretary and Tamil Nadu in-charge, camping in Bengal for the 3rd, 5th and 7th phases, says: “This is a badlav (change) election. Our vote here is going up daily”.

In the Malda-Murshidabad belt, Congress and Trinamool accuse each other of dividing the vote, read “Muslim vote”, and both allege the other has a secret pact with the BJP. Their war of accusations does not find a strong echo outside this belt for two reasons – elsewhere, the minority concentration is smaller and Congress a diminishing presence, not seen to hold up its end of the electoral field.

In Murshidabad, after a long day of campaigning, Congress vet-

eran of many battles, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury says that in this election, it is clear that “the CM (Mamata) is hell-bent on defeating me, BJP is the beneficiary”. Shah-nawaz Ali Raihan, TMC candidate, says “Here, Adhir and others in the Congress are the BJP’s B-team”.

Even in this traditional Congress bastion of north Bengal – it is from here that the party won both its two Lok Sabha seats – a BJP knock was heard in 2019. It won a seat by a margin of over 84,000 votes and lost another one narrowly, by a margin of about 8,000.

In Malda south, Congress candidate Isha Khan Choudhury, whose uncle Ghani Khan Choudhury held the seat for long decades, and whose father is the sitting MP, says: “We lost all our MLAs here in the 2021 Assembly election because of CAA-NRC. The minorities panicked, the BJP and TMC capitalised on it... Now people feel they cried wolf.” But he also acknowledges the new reality: “The BJP remains a big factor, since 2014, it has crept into Malda, and elections here are under shadowed by polarisation still”.

In West Bengal, among anti-BJP forces, Congress and Left are seen to be fighting to remain in the game, not to win – Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury himself describes the election as “a battle for survival” for his party, which, he says, is fo-



Poll graffiti of Congress candidate Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and posters of TMC’s Yusuf Pathan on a house in Sargachi under Baharampur Lok Sabha constituency. Partha Paul

cusing only on seven constituencies. The Left is battling rampant perceptions of being a party of the past – there are 18 new faces in its list of 30 this time, but there is little visible evidence that its attempted makeover is working on the Bengal street.

And the main Opposition player, the TMC, even as it fights for every inch – see the war of narratives and videos that has broken out, from allegations of molestation in Raj Bhawan to Sandeshkhali – also bears the brunt of local anti-incumbency.

Women voters on the road *The Indian Express* traveled counted out the Mamata government’s

schemes. Apart from the most talked about Lokkhi Bhandar, a host of cash transfers and subsidies, from birth to school to marriage and old age.

But among both men and women, the TMC also has to battle perceptions of failure on the jobs front and unchecked corruption – for any work to be done, they say, you need to pay a TMC functionary. Even among women who express gratitude to Didi, you sense Modi’s appeal as the leader who made the Ram Mandir.

In a state that, along with Punjab, bore the brunt of Partition, and still lives with its scars, support also comes the BJP’s way on

the back of myths of Muslim “population growth” and “infiltration” and a BJP campaign that labels Mamata as “pro-Muslim” – she is routinely referred to as “begum” by LoP Suwendu Adhikari.

On the campus of the University of Gourbangai in Malda town, Dona Kundu, who is doing a PhD in Mathematics, says: “I don’t like some things about the BJP, it seems like a controlling parent to me. But I may vote for it or press NOTA because the whole education department has been implicated in the (teacher recruitment) scam under the TMC. So many deserving candidates also lost their jobs. In 2-3 years’ time I too will be in the job market, there is so much uncertainty. I don’t even know who the Congress candidate is, Left has no influence, I am left only with the BJP”.

A group of women who work in the university administration, who ask not to be named, say that even though they benefit from the Mamata government’s schemes, they will vote Modi because: “If someone says Jai Shri Ram, why is Didi unhappy?” And “What if the Muslim population increases...?”

In Begunbari village in Murshidabad district, migration is the big issue, apart from water – a water tank looms over the skyline, but even though its construction began in Left rule, it does not function, the ground water is

laced with arsenic and villagers buy water from private vendors for their daily needs.

They say that there is not a home here from where young men have not migrated to other states and countries. In the neighbouring village of Hijuli, Nazir Husain, 34, counts out a long list of cities and countries he has worked in: “Philippines, Bangalore, Mumbai, Visakhapatnam, Chennai, Surat, Nagpur, Akola, Bhubaneswar, Jamshedpur, Meerut...”

The Congress may gain from voter discontent against the TMC in minority-dominated pockets like Begunbari, but elsewhere, the BJP seems better placed to reap the benefit of anti-incumbency.

In Krishnanagar, Sumanta Sarkar, who drives a “Toto” or an e-rickshaw, says: “Among my fellow drivers here, there is one with a first class in BSc... I am 8th-fail, I have no prospects, but if a new party becomes powerful here, maybe others will have a shot at better things”. In Malda town, Ashutosh Kundu, a research scholar, says: “There is a road and train connectivity problem where I live. I like the agenda of making India developed by 2047 put forward by the BJP”.

In Dhulia panchayat in Krishnanagar, Kunal Mukherjee, a shop owner, says: “You cannot bribe me with cash transfers...

You have to run the *desh* (country), not just my *bari* (home). TMC is steeped in corruption, Congress has no *asitva* (existence) in Bengal. We tried the CPM for 30 plus years and now we have to look for it with a telescope (“*durbeen*”). Only the BJP is new”. But for all its successes in positioning itself as the new and the challenger in Bengal, ironically the BJP’s core CAA promise, much hyped in an earlier election, the rules for which were recently notified, may be having an unintended effect on its proclaimed beneficiary. The Matuas, the large SC community that came from Bangladesh to Bengal, are baulking at first declaring themselves non-citizens, and then putting together documents to apply for citizenship.

At Thakurnagar, in Bongaon, at the main temple of the community, questions about CAA are met with a sullen silence. In her home, a stone’s throw from the temple premises, Mamata Thakur, Rajya Sabha MP from the TMC, who presides over the All India Matua Mahasangha, says: “No one has applied here for citizenship. If I fill the form, I will forego government facilities. The law says we need to supply documents... We don’t have them, because of floods, death and other things. Is this because we are SCs? Is this any way to give citizenship?”

9 GOVT & POLITICS



DELHI **CONFIDENTIAL**



FATHER'S LEGACY

SAMAJWADI PARTY president Akhilesh Yadav, who is contesting from the Kannauj Lok Sabha constituency, is giving special attention to the Mainpuri seat from where his wife and sitting MP Dimple Yadav is contesting. On May 1, he addressed a rally in Jaswant Nagar Assembly area, and on May 3, he held two rallies in Kishani and Karhal Assembly segments of Mainpuri constituency. On May 4, the SP chief led a roadshow in the Mainpuri Sadar area. Party leaders say that Akhilesh is making every effort to win Mainpuri and maintain the legacy of his father, late Mulayam Singh Yadav, who was elected from the seat for the fifth time in 2019 polls. Mainpuri is going to polls on May 7, while voting in Kannauj is scheduled for May 13.

BEAT THE HEAT

AS GUJARAT prepares for voting on Tuesday, the state BJP has provided its workers a "booth kit", containing essential medicines and oral rehydration solution, to beat the heat. The kit contains a letter from Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, who is contesting from the Porbandar seat, informing the workers of the medicines and asking them to take care of their health "as they try to achieve their target of 1,001 votes" per worker. When a booth worker thanked the Minister on X for the kit, Mandaviya soon replied that he too is a BJP worker and because of their hard work the government is formed "which works day and night for the development of poor, backward classes, farmers, women, and youth".

VOTE RIGHT

FOLLOWING A dip in the voter turnout during the first two phases of Lok Sabha elections, the chairperson of National Commission For Backward Classes, Hansraj Ahir, has appealed to voters from all backward classes to come out and exercise their constitutional right in the next phase of polling. Ahir has urged the voters to participate effectively, bearing in mind the future of the current and coming generations, national interest and strengthening of democracy.

EC to parties: Don't post deepfakes, misleading info on social media

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

THE ELECTION Commission on Monday issued an advisory to all recognised parties not to use deepfakes and misinformation in their social media posts and to take down any such fake audios and videos within three hours of coming to know of it.

While the advisory did not mention any specific complaints or posts, it said its attention had been drawn to "certain violations of Model Code of Conduct and the extant legal provisions by political parties/their representatives while using social media for election campaigning, which need to be regulated in the interest of transparency, ethical campaigning and level playing field during the elections."

"The use of such manipulated, distorted, edited content on social media platforms has the potential to wrongfully sway voter opinions, deepen societal divisions, and erode trust in election-eering process," the EC wrote.

The advisory — following a Delhi HC direction to resolve the issue raised by a petition on the use of deepfakes during campaign — asked parties to, "not use social media platforms to disseminate any misinformation or information which is patently false, untrue or misleading in nature and those that impersonate another person, including any information which is synthetically created or generated or modified in a manner that such information reasonably appears to be authentic or true while in actuality dishonestly or fraudulently deceive any person who receives such information."

EC censures Andhra CM, TDP chief for poll code violations

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

THE ELECTION Commission Monday censured Andhra Pradesh CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu for repeated MCC violations in their statements attacking each other.

In orders issued Monday, the EC said the Andhra Pradesh CEO had issued show-cause notices to both leaders after receiving MCC violation complaints.

In Reddy's case, the EC cited five different statements at rallies from April 2 to 4. The Andhra Pradesh CEO had on April 7 issued a notice to Reddy on the TDP's complaint on April 5, to which Reddy replied on April 9. The EC said Reddy had "nowhere in his reply denied using the statements/words against Naidu" cited in the complaint. The CEO reported Reddy continued making such remarks after the notice

as well. The EC found he had violated the MCC provision against the use of personal attacks and unverified allegations, as well as the EC's March 1 advisory to parties not to make false statements while campaigning.

In the order to Naidu, the EC said the CEO had first received a complaint from the YSRCP on April 1 regarding his speech on March 31. The order cited 7 other instances where his attacks on Reddy violated the MCC. Naidu had been issued a show-cause notice by the CEO on April 3, to which he replied on April 6. He, too, did not deny making the statements against Reddy.

"Repeated violations of the MCC provisions and EC's guidelines and advisories by Naidu showcases blatant attempt on the part of Naidu to undermine the electoral process and disturb the level-playing field by degrading the level of political campaign in the ongoing elections in Andhra Pradesh," the EC order read.

'OVERWHELMING PUBLIC INTEREST'

Maharashtra: HC stays exemption to pvt schools from RTE admissions

OMKARGOKHALE
MUMBAI, MAY 6

THE BOMBAY High Court on Monday stayed until further orders the February 9 notification of the Maharashtra government that exempted private schools within one-km radius of government or aided schools from Right to Education Act quota admissions.

Maintaining that the matter contained "overwhelming public interest", a division bench of Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Justice Arif S Doctor held that the impugned amendments contravened the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, also known as the RTE.

The RTE Act requires private schools to ensure that 25% of Class 1 students belong to "weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood". Students ad-

mitted under this quota are given fee concessions, and the state government reimburses private schools for the same. Earlier, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Kerala diluted private schools' obligations under the RTE Act.

"It is a settled principle of law that any piece of subordinate legislation cannot be made in contravention of the principal Act itself," the bench noted.

"Even otherwise, by adding impugned provisions, the right of children to get elementary education is being hampered, which is otherwise guaranteed in Article 21-A of the Constitution," it added.

The bench granted interim relief in a batch of pleas, including a writ petition by 17 people, mostly members of management of aided schools and parents from economically backward classes.

Appearing for the petitioners, senior advocate Gayatri Singh argued that the notification be

stayed as it was contrary to the RTE Act that provides quota at municipal schools, aided schools and private unaided schools.

Due to the government's decision, many needy students are unable to seek admission, she added. While around 5,00,000 students applied through RTE last year, fewer than 50,000 students have applied so far this year, she said.

On April 29, the state government informed the high court that the last date for submitting online applications for admissions under the RTE Act would be extended from April 30 to May 10.

On Monday, the petitioners urged that an interim stay be granted in the matter because of impending admissions to be made in school starting May 10.

The petitioners argued that the amendment was not only unconstitutional, being violative of Articles 14 (equality before law) and 21 of the Constitution, but

was also in contravention of the principal Act of 2009, under which rules were formulated.

The petitioners argued that newly added rules excluded private unaided schools while the 2009 law mandated them to be included. Additional Government Pleader Jyoti Chavan for the state argued that the exclusion applied only to certain unaided schools and was "not absolute" as the government or local authority has established schools within 1-km radius of private unaided schools.

The bench said everyone is bound by the mandate under the 2009 law for 25% reservation in admission in Class 1 to children from weaker sections. Therefore, prima facie, the rule cannot be amended on the ground that sufficient numbers of government schools are available in the area concerned. It asked the respondent authorities to file their reply before the next hearing on June 12.



FINAL JOURNEY

IAF personnel carry the mortal remains of Corporal Vikky Pahade, who was killed in a terror attack in Poonch region of J&K, on arrival in Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh, Monday. The funeral was carried out with full military honours. *PTI*

TOP COURT SAYS OTHER GENDERS CAN ALSO EXPERIENCE PREGNANCY

Amid debate over gender vocab, SC opts for 'pregnant persons'

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

AMID A debate over gender-neutral vocabulary, a Supreme Court bench opted to call pregnant women "pregnant persons" stating that "we...recognise that in addition to cisgender women, pregnancy can also be experienced by some non-binary people and transgender men among other gender identities".

The two-judge bench, presided by CJI D Y Chandrachud and also comprising Justice J B

Pardiwala, in its 22-page judgment on April 29, recalling its earlier order allowing a 14-year-old rape survivor to terminate her about 31-week pregnancy, used the phrase "pregnant person/persons" 42 times. The bench explained the reason in a footnote on page 12 of the order.

The SC recalled its April 22 order after the parents of the girl expressed concerns over her health if the abortion is carried out in an advanced pregnancy. In its earlier ruling, the SC had allowed the request of the girl's mother for Medical Termination of

Pregnancy (MTP), terming it a "very, very exceptional case where we have to protect her". The girl's mother had moved SC after the Bombay HC dismissed her request for her daughter's abortion.

The ruling, which elaborated on the "primacy of the pregnant person's consent in abortion", also said "in case there is a divergence in the opinion of a pregnant person and her guardian, the opinion of the minor or mentally ill pregnant person must be taken into consideration as an important aspect in enabling the court to arrive at a just conclusion".

MOLESTATION ALLEGATIONS

Raj Bhavan staff threatened by Governor, alleges complainant

Mamata Banerjee's politics is dirty... won't accept 'didigiri', says Bose

SANTANU CHOWDHURY
KOLKATA, MAY 6

THE WOMAN complainant in the Raj Bhavan "molestation" case on Monday alleged that Governor CV Ananda Bose was "threatening" Raj Bhavan staff not to speak up. The woman's claims came a day after Governor Bose wrote a letter to Raj Bhavan staff, asking them to ignore any communication from the Kolkata Police in connection with the case.

In a text message to the newspaper, the woman, who is a contractual employee at the Raj Bhavan, alleged, "I am telling you one thing more, I have come to know that employees of Raj Bhavan are being threatened by Dr Bose and his OSD, so that no one can dare to cooperate in investigation."

On Sunday, Governor Bose wrote to Raj Bhavan employees and asked them to ignore any communication from the police regarding the matter. He also reminded the Raj Bhavan staff that no criminal proceedings can be instituted against the Governor during his term of office, as per the Constitution.

The move from Bose came a day after the Kolkata Police formed a special team to probe the sexual harassment allegations against him.

The complainant also wondered why the Governor is against an investigation if he has not done any wrong.

"He (Bose) is claiming that my complaints are fake and politically motivated. If he believes that I am a liar and politically motivated, why is he hiding behind the shield of (constitutional) immunity? Why not allow an investigation? Why is he so scared?" the woman asked.

According to Article 361 (2) of the Constitution, no criminal proceedings can be instituted or



West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose

continued against the President, or the Governor of a state in any court during their term of office.

On Friday, the woman filed a written complaint with the Kolkata Police alleging molestation by the West Bengal Governor in the Raj Bhavan. The Governor has described the allegations as "absurd drama", and said that none would be able to deter him from his "determined efforts to expose corruption and curb violence."

"I have already proposed to sit in front of him to face any test... May it be lie detector or any superior technology. If he is innocent, why is he escaping?" said the woman.

She claimed that her "next course of action would depend on the outcome of the police investigation."

"I have faith in the administration that they will try their best," she said. She added, "Yes, I am getting support from the police. I am thankful to them. I have been told that investigation would be done," she said.

Meanwhile, Governor Bose on Monday targeted Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for raising the issue and described the CM's politics as "dirty".

Speaking to mediapersons outside the Kolkata airport, Bose said he would not allow "didi-giri" (high-handedness) of Banerjee on the "distinguished office of the Governor."

"Mamata Banerjee's politics is dirty. Still, I will pray to God to save her... But this is difficult even for God. I will never accept this 'didigiri' on the distinguished office of the Governor. That is all I have to say," Bose said after his return to the city from Kerala.

BOTH RENU, TASLIMUDDIN ARE 'VOICES OF SEEMANCHAL' IN THEIR OWN WAY

Which way will Araria swing? Signs at its famous sons' birthplaces

The Indian Express travels to their ancestral homes to find out how the election is playing out this time around

SANTOSH SINGH
ARARIA, MAY 6

THE LAST of the Seemanchal seats set to go to polls, the story of the election in Araria in north Bihar that votes on Tuesday lies in its two famous landmarks linked to figures, almost a generation apart, who were voices of the region in their own way, one a pioneering writer and the other a strongman-politician.

The first is the village of legendary Hindi writer Fanishwarnath Renu, Aurahi-Hingana in Forbesganj, and the second is the Jokihat subdivision, about an hour away, that was the home of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Mohammed Taslimuddin, a former Araria MP who influenced the region's politics for five decades till his death in 2017.

Amid the backdrop of Renu's thatched house, his youngest son Dakshineshwar Roy, talks of politics and literature. He recalls how his father, a pioneering novelist

known for works such as Mailla Anchal and Juloos, contested the 1972 Assembly elections from Forbesganj as an Independent and badly lost. "After the defeat, he said, 'That a new pair of shoes is experienced only after walking in those shoes.'"

Though Renu never tried politics again, his elder son Padma Parag Venu successfully contested from Forbesganj as a BJP nominee in the 2010 Assembly polls. Dakshineshwar too nurses political ambitions and has his eye on contesting the Assembly elections next year from Forbesganj. While Renu was a socialist by temperament, his sons preferred to join the Hindu right-wing. Their political choice mirrors how the BJP slowly consolidated itself in the region over the decades.

"Renu is a great symbol we hardly encashed as sons. But we cannot wait any longer. I wish to contest not just because I am his son but because our caste, EBC (Extremely Backward Class) Dhanuk, plays a key role in decid-



Writer Fanishwarnath Renu's youngest son Dakshineshwar Roy at his ancestral home in Aurari-Hingana village. *Express*

ing the elections," says Dakshineshwar.

Of the estimated 20 lakh voters in Araria, there are about five lakh EBCs, 2.5 lakh OBC Yadavs, and three lakh Muslims. While the Araria and Jokihat Assembly segments of the parliamentary constituency are currently held by

the Congress and the RJD, respectively, the Assembly segments of Narpatganj, Sikti, Raniganj, and Forbesganj are currently held by the BJP and the Janata Dal (United).

A fracture in the RJD's Muslim-Yadav (M-Y) vote bank because of polarisation has always kept the

BJP in the play in this constituency, which it won for the first time in 1998. Dakshineshwar believes the EBC votes and the popular support for Prime Minister Narendra Modi factor will help the BJP go past the finishing line this time too. In the constituency, the party has renominated sitting MP Pradeep Kumar Singh who, locals say, is facing anti-incumbency. Though Dakshineshwar admits that the anti-incumbency factor is present, he believes Singh, an EBC Gangei, "will sail through".

At a recent public meeting, the BJP candidate said, "Narendra Modi fulfilled every promise he made in the last polls. He removed Article 370 and triple talaq and the Ram Temple was constructed in Ayodhya. Besides, we are giving 5 kg ration to people for free. On the one hand, there is a strong leader such as Modi and there is no leader from the INDIA bloc."

Singh is up against Taslimuddin's son and current Jokihat MLA Shah Nawaz Alam of the RJD. Shah Nawaz won the Lok

Sabha bypoll in 2018 necessitated by his father's death but to Singh the following year. Taslimuddin was born in the village of Sisauna in the Jokihat block.

"Though BJP has dominated Araria politics since 2004, Taslimuddin won the seat in the 2014 polls despite Modi's popularity. Taslimuddin, who also represented Kishanganj during his political career, had an appeal across religious lines. But Araria has shown religious polarisation since 2019," says Mohammed Maqsood Alam, an elderly resident of Jokihat.

Following his party leader Tejashwi Yadav's lead, on the campaign trail Shah Nawaz stuck to talking about migration, jobs, and communal harmony. He also spoke of how his father was a great symbol of communal harmony in the region. "We are talking about how Mahagathabandhan gave jobs in Bihar and how NDA at the Centre failed to create jobs," Alam said at a meeting in Narpatganj last week.



CLEAR THE BILL

Government must sort out issues related to delayed payments to micro, small and medium enterprises

MICRO, SMALL AND medium enterprises are a key part of the Indian economy. Not only do they account for a significant share of the country's manufacturing output and exports, they also employ a sizable section of the labour force. However, among the considerable hardships they face, the lack of access to credit and the issue of delayed payments are particularly serious. Micro and small enterprises, as several studies have shown, account for a majority of the annual delayed payments. Over the years, the government has taken steps to make matters easy for these enterprises. For instance, it launched the Samadhaan portal to monitor the outstanding dues to these enterprises. In the Union budget 2023-24, the government also introduced a provision to ensure timely payments to MSMEs. The typical payment cycle of MSMEs ranges from 90 to 120 days. This large window tends to create mismatches between an entity's cash inflows and outflows, thereby increasing its working capital requirements. The new provision tried to address this issue by aiming to secure payments to MSMEs within 45 days of the supply of goods and/or services. This was a well-intentioned move. However, it has ended up having unintended consequences.

According to a report in this newspaper, larger companies are trying to circumvent this provision by cancelling orders to registered MSMEs as they prefer the longer payment cycles. In fact, they are now placing orders with unregistered MSMEs, who they would rather prefer to deal with as it gives them greater flexibility in operations. The new provision "allowed for deduction for larger companies" against payments to these enterprises "only after they are paid". Not being permitted to "make deductions in their tax returns" would only increase their tax liability. There are also reports of the bigger companies trying to "force suppliers to cancel their MSME registration". After all, the larger companies exercise considerable negotiating heft against their MSME suppliers. This asymmetry in relations has also resulted in a worrying development: MSMEs are choosing to deregister in order to make sure that they do not lose their orders. At the end of last year, the total number of MSMEs registered on the Udyam registration portal stood at 3.16 crore. This includes informal micro-enterprises registered on the Udyam Assist Platform, which according to more recent data stands at 1.5 crore.

The government has initiated conversations with stakeholders for possible solutions to straighten out issues. It has also sought suggestions on ways to ensure "timely clearance of MSME bills". Delayed payments have hobbled the working of these enterprises for long. They also have difficulty accessing low-cost credit. Appropriate steps must, therefore be taken to resolve the issue related to the window of payments at the earliest.

PETTY POLITICS

Former Punjab CM Channi's comments on Poonch terror attack show a cynical disregard for imperatives of national security

IN THE CUT and thrust of an election, barbs are exchanged, and accusations made. Much of this is, of course, campaign rhetoric. Yet, even after accounting for what is par for the course during electioneering, the back-to-back statements by former Punjab chief minister and Congress Working Committee member Charanjit Singh Channi cross an important line. On Sunday, Channi all but called the attack by militants in Poonch — in which an Indian Air Force corporal was killed and four others injured — a false flag operation. "This is a stunt to make the BJP win, there is no truth in it. Getting people killed and playing politics over their bodies is what the BJP does," he said. This even as his leader Rahul Gandhi called the attack "sad and shameful". The BJP accused Channi of disrespecting military personnel's sacrifice and demanded an apology from the Congress leadership. Rather than doing so, Channi doubled down a day later. While he expressed pride and admiration for soldiers, he also accused the BJP-led government of not doing enough to probe the 2019 Pulwama attacks — in which 40 soldiers were killed — for political reasons.

In a vibrant democracy, national security should be debated and some of its aspects even contested. Of course, security and safety of military personnel is a very valid issue for debate. What is not is to bring in the imperatives of electoral politics to a terrorist attack. Senior leaders of the ruling party and government have often alluded to military operations to score political points on the campaign trail. One popular refrain has been to underline how the government goes "inside enemy territory to strike" (*ghar mein ghus ke maartein hain*) or how a political party has been a "disciple" of Pakistan.

This conflation of military operations, national security, and muscular nationalism may be good politics but it's certainly not good strategy. Mud flying thick and fast on the campaign trail doesn't exactly lend itself to reasoned debate and discourse on national security. It also reduces the sacrifices of India's armed forces a pawn in games of political one-upmanship. That's why the Congress should get Channi to apologise to the families of the soliders — and accept that he crossed a line.

DON'T BURN THEM OUT

Fast bowling talents such as Mayank Yadav have to be nurtured — not rushed back to action after an injury

FOR THE FIRST time, India unearthed a fast bowler in Mayank Yadav who could consistently bowl over 150kph, triggering raves from fast bowling legends around the world such as the Australian great Brett Lee. Inexplicably, Mayank, the 21-year-old Delhi cricketer who plays for Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL, is already facing a threat of repeated injury breakdown. He was sidelined first due to a "side strain", which according to Lee usually takes "3-4 weeks to recover" but was pushed into an IPL game this week and once again broke down in the middle of the game. He has been virtually ruled out for the rest of the tournament. Questions have to be asked about the mismanagement by the franchise, especially as at the toss before the start of the game, the captain KL Rahul would claim that he "pushed the medicos and trainers" to accelerate Mayank's recovery and that it's "important that he (Mayank) gets out of his head that he is injured". A stale whiff of old conservative thinking evaporated from the episode.

It brings into focus two competing factors: Short-term urges of IPL franchises which desperately seek those two points to move ahead in the competition vs the long-term vision of Indian national team which would usher Mayank gradually into the big league and get him ready for the all-important Test tour of Australia in December. It's not as simple as asserting that it was the franchise which groomed, selected, and unleashed him in the big league. Does that give it a license to push Mayank hastily through a vulnerable injury recovery stage?

Injuries can happen anytime, but mismanaging or wrongly diagnosing the recovery period can break down a talent irrevocably. Better scientific counsel and patience is needed to handle fragile talents who are just finding their way in competitive cricket. Perhaps it's not Mayank who needs to get out of his head that he is injured, but the decision makers who need to get into their head that he is injured.



MAIDUL ISLAM

THE 2024 LOK Sabha election campaign in West Bengal has generated more heat than the scorching summer the state is experiencing. However, the voter turnout in the first two phases showed that the average voter is less enthusiastic about going to the booth on polling day than in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Given that elections in West Bengal are mostly held during the summer, the weather is not the sole reason for the low turnout.

Although one has to wait for all seven phases to make a proper assessment, especially because 36 more seats (85 per cent) are going to polls in the subsequent five phases, two factors may explain the turnout when compared to the previous two Lok Sabha elections that were seen as Modi wave elections. First, compared to Trinamool Congress, the BJP's booth-level organisation is weak. This was also noted in the 2021 assembly elections, the municipality polls in 2022 and the panchayat elections in 2023. The BJP's organisational strength has declined in West Bengal after the party's loss in the 2021 assembly polls. This may affect the BJP since the booth-level worker ensures the party's voters turn up at the polling stations. Several grassroots organisers from the Hindi heartland that were essentially part of the broader Sangh Parivar came down to West Bengal to assist the BJP's Bengal unit in the 2019 and 2021 elections. They do not seem to be present in large numbers in the current polls. They might be primarily busy working in the Hindi heartland states like UP and Bihar, where elections are also being held in seven phases.

The absence of significant sections of the migrant workers is another cause for low turnout. The post-Covid situation has created job-related uncertainties for the state's employable population. Many have migrated to other states. Given the precarious nature of

BJP has ambitious targets for West Bengal. Its challenge is to make corruption charges against TMC a poll issue

Generally, the BJP gets more votes in the Lok Sabha than the Vidhan Sabha elections in West Bengal — a trend for over three decades since the 1991 elections held at the height of the Ram Mandir movement. The BJP leadership is primarily banking on Sandeshkhali incidents and the corruption charges against the Trinamool. In the last few elections, particularly after 2014, corruption allegations like Ponzi schemes and teacher recruitment scams did not cut much ice with the voters in Bengal. Trinamool has capitalised on welfare schemes, Mamata Banerjee's charisma and a crafty campaign narrative of celebrating Bengali identity against BJP.

their employment, most migrant labourers did not take the risk of coming back on polling day. Travel is also not easy on their pockets.

The absence of migrant labour from polling is likely to hurt the TMC, given that a number of government-sponsored schemes cover low-income families in West Bengal. A sizeable section of the families of the migrant labourers are beneficiaries of the state government's welfare projects.

The BJP's top leadership has reportedly set a target of 25-35 seats in West Bengal. This ambitious goal is not just a number but also the party's tactic to rejuvenate its workers. Matching even the last Lok Sabha figures of 18 seats could be challenging, given that the BJP's vote share came down by over 2 per cent in the 2021 assembly elections compared to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. The party was only leading in 12 Lok Sabha seats if one calculates the 2021 assembly election results. Since then, BJP candidates have come third after Trinamool and Left-Congress candidates in several by-polls and municipality polls. The Left appears to have improved its organisational strength in some areas thanks to a new generation of leaders.

The BJP's spectacular rise between the 2011 and 2021 assembly elections was due to four reasons. First, the rapid decline of the cadre-based Left parties was filled up by another cadre-based party. The BJP, which got only 6.14 per cent votes in the 2009 Lok Sabha elections and 4.06 per cent votes in the 2011 assembly elections, jumped to 17.02 per cent and 40.64 per cent in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections, respectively. It was a time of continuing electoral decline of the Left.

The Left did manage to put up a fight against the ruling TMC in the 2016 assembly polls by making a seat-sharing arrangement with the Congress, and the BJP vote share came down from 17.02 per cent in the 2014

Lok Sabha election to a little over 10 per cent in 2016 assembly elections. However, after the 2016 assembly polls, the Left and Congress could not resist the BJP becoming the state's principal opposition party. Second, the rise of the BJP in West Bengal, particularly after the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, was partly due to the impact of the BJP-led central government's power and financial resources to influence the voters. Third, the slow but steady rise of the RSS organisation after 2011 helped the BJP expand its wings in West Bengal.

Finally, a section of the Trinamool leadership has flocked to the BJP in the last few years. This has made the BJP's West Bengal unit a curious mix of Congress *gharana* politicians and the old Hindu Mahasabha and RSS-trained cadres. This ensemble has created conditions for intra-party rivalry within the state's BJP.

Generally, the BJP gets more votes in the Lok Sabha than the Vidhan Sabha elections in West Bengal — a trend for over three decades since the 1991 elections held at the height of the Ram Mandir movement. The BJP leadership is primarily banking on Sandeshkhali incidents and the corruption charges against the Trinamool. In the last few elections, particularly after 2014, corruption allegations like Ponzi schemes and teacher recruitment scams did not cut much ice with the voters in Bengal.

Trinamool has capitalised on welfare schemes, Mamata Banerjee's charisma and a crafty campaign narrative of celebrating Bengali identity against BJP. West Bengal also has a history of voting against national parties. How will the average voter react to the opposition campaign against Trinamool in 2024?

The writer is a political scientist at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. Views are personal



SHAHID JAMEEL

PEOPLE ON SOCIAL media and even some mainstream channels are having their "we told you so" moment this week after the pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca "admitted" in court to the side effects of its Covid-19 vaccine, manufactured and marketed in India as Covishield.

This follows a story in *The Telegraph* of the UK on April 28 about a class action suit brought against the company. The report says, "AstraZeneca has admitted for the first time in court documents that its Covid vaccine can cause a rare side effect," a condition called Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (TTS), which translates to blood clots and low levels of platelets (a type of blood cell that prevents bleeding).

The key words are "rare side effect". What does that mean?

Australian Department of Health and Aged Care found TTS in people who had taken the AstraZeneca vaccine to be "very rare" — 2-3 per 1,00,000. In April 2021, the World Health Organisation's Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety computed this risk for the UK and EU to be one in 2,50,000 and one in 1,00,000, respectively. Such data is unfortunately not available for India, even after reportedly using 1.75 billion (or 175 crore) doses of Covishield. The risk is likely to be similar for Indians as well.

To put this in perspective, the global risk of dying in a traffic accident is 17.4 deaths per 1,00,000. For low-income countries, this risk is 24 deaths per 1,00,000, and for high-income countries, it is nine deaths per 1,00,000. So, the risk of TTS in those who took the AstraZeneca vaccine is about 5 to 12 times lower than the risk of dying in a road accident.

Medicine is all about risk versus bene-

DON'T DEMONISE THE JAB

'New' disclosures by AstraZeneca don't take away from the vaccine's value

fit. If the benefits of a drug far outweigh the risks, we use it. The hugely successful oral polio vaccine, which has been instrumental in eradicating polio from most of the world, including India, has a one in 2.7 million risk of causing vaccine-associated paralysis. To that one child, the risk is very high but for public health, the benefits are extremely high. And therefore, we use it.

Can we test for these rare risks before a vaccine is approved? A risk of one in 1,00,000 will not show up in a clinical trial that has 30,000 volunteers — half getting the vaccine and the other half a placebo. This was typically the size of phase 3 trials for Covid-19 vaccines. Should we then have clinical trials with millions of volunteers (where would we get so many volunteers?), spread over many years, and at a huge cost to inform of a minuscule risk before a vaccine is approved? That makes little sense. Further, such a vaccine would be useless for a pandemic caused by a newly-emerged pathogen.

The rare events become visible only after a vaccine is rolled out and millions of doses are administered. A multi-country observational study on the Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca vaccines was published in the journal *Vaccine* on April 2, 2024. It showed that these vaccines increase the incidence of Guillain-Barré syndrome, an autoimmune disorder that leads to neurological symptoms and brain clots within 42 days of receiving the vaccine. About 200 cases were found among 99 million people who were studied — a risk of one in 5,00,000. A separate study of 6.7 million people in Australia found a risk of one in 5,00,000 to one in 1.3 million for brain and spinal cord inflammation in people receiving these vaccines.

The value of such studies is two-fold.

They establish the safety of these vaccines in very large populations and real-world conditions. They also alert scientists to potential (albeit low) risks associated with the RNA and viral vector platforms. Future research will focus on making these vaccine platforms even safer.

In India's election season, Covid-19 vaccines have once again attracted political attention. However, using vaccines for political one-upmanship can be detrimental to public health. In a study that evaluated over 5,00,000 deaths in the states of Florida and Ohio (in the US) during the pandemic, excess mortality was significantly higher for Republican voters than Democratic voters after Covid-19 vaccines were available to all adults, but not before. This was attributed to political rhetoric that reduced trust in science in general, and vaccines in particular. We should not repeat the same mistakes.

Vaccines remain the most effective of public health tools. A modelling study on Covid-19 transmission and vaccination from Imperial College, London, estimated that vaccines saved 14 to 20 million excess deaths in just the first year of use. A Working Paper from the US-Asia Technology Management Center at Stanford University estimated that India prevented around 3.4 million excess deaths due to its Covid-19 vaccination programme.

The bottom line is that these "new" disclosures by AstraZeneca are neither new nor worth worrying over. We should stay focused on improving public health everywhere and for everyone. Vaccines will remain central to those efforts.

The writer is a virologist, and currently a Fellow at OCIS and Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, UK

MAY 7, 1984, FORTY YEARS AGO

ADIVASIS HARASSED

SOME ADIVASI LEADERS in the Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh were handcuffed, arrested and harassed for filing a writ petition in the Supreme Court against the practice of bonded labour in the area, according to a commission appointed by the court to inquire into the incident. Under pressure from vested interests, "the administration made a clumsy effort to terrorise the petitioners," according to Krishak Mazdoor Sangh activists.

OCEAN OF CONFLICT

PRIME MINISTER INDIRA Gandhi said in

Bombay that in spite of our peace policy, we have to be prepared to face any eventuality and threat to peace. She said the Indian Ocean had become an arena of superpower rivalry. "It is difficult for a developing country like India to compete with the other advanced countries, yet we have to work out ways and means to achieve high levels of sophistication," she said.

INDO-PAK TENSIONS

DEFENCE MINISTER R Venkataraman has said that India is prepared to meet any threat on its frontiers from Pakistan, which has stockpiled sophisticated imported military

equipment. He showed concern over massing of Pakistani troops on the Ladakh border. He dismissed suggestions that India's defence expenditure was high.

PRESERVE CONSTITUTION

OPPOSITION PARTIES ARE set to resist; any move by the government to amend the Constitution for the purpose of protecting legislative and parliamentary privileges from judicial scrutiny. The CPI-M, the largest opposition group in both Houses of Parliament and the ruling party in two states, has made it clear that it is against any amendment to Article 32 of the Constitution.



THE IDEAS PAGE

To auction or not

Telecom policy, including spectrum allocation, is best left to TRAI and DoT, not courts



RAJAT KATHURIA

THE 3G SPECTRUM auction of 2010, held in the wake of the 2G scandal of 2008, was a blessing at the time, for it achieved two objectives for the beleaguered process of air wave assignment to telecom operators. One, it ensured transparency in the process of allocation of scarce spectrum and two, it resulted in a revenue windfall for the government. The auction Rs 67,718.95 crore as per the government. This was a massive amount, even if significantly less than the notional — and, if I might add, illusory — Rs 1,76,000 crore that was estimated as loss to the government by the then CAG, when spectrum was given away on a “first-come-first-served basis” (FCFS). Reams have been written about this. What was a blessing then, has turned into a curse now, but it is not my intention to delve into the past. Rather, the purpose is to argue that auctions, in the current format, are inimical to the sector’s growth and downstream competitiveness and that the historical lack of institutional integrity is adding to the challenge.

The year 2010 was a defining moment for Indian telecoms. Until then, spectrum was administratively assigned, and thereafter by auctions. The pre-2010 administrative assignment of spectrum suffered from a lack of transparency, favouritism and avoidable scandals. The Supreme Court thus ordered the government to auction spectrum for “all time to come”.

The phrase “all time to come” was not pronounced in a vacuum: It was in retaliation to the bitter political economy associated with administrative spectrum assignment, including the half-baked and bungled FCFS method. It was also a telling comment on the government’s incapability to assign spectrum transparently by any other method. Spectrum is desirable for its own sake, and in a democracy like ours, its value multiplies manifold. Besides, if resources are to be generated in the process, these should go to government coffers, rather than unscrupulous individuals and private corporations, so that the money can be used for financing public goods.

No one could possibly quarrel with these arguments. Except that resources can be generated by means other than auctions. Think of toll roads that are coming up all over the country. Their existence has spawned businesses, generated tourism, and led to efficient transportation of goods to railways and ports. The income tax and GST revenue thus generated is also money for the government to spend on much-needed public goods. For telecoms, the backbone of Digital India, downstream competitiveness of user industries relies heavily on robust connectivity. Providing spectrum at a reasonable upfront fee to operators, thus helping firm-level efficiency and promoting competitiveness, would do what toll roads have done for the government. As the maxim goes, American roads are not good because America is rich, America is rich because American roads are good. That was the 1960s. Today’s carrier is digital infrastructure, of which spectrum is a vital input.

There are many dots (including DoT or



CR Sasikumar

the Department of Telecommunications) to be connected to even put this on the agenda for discussion. At the outset, the government will have to be amenable to giving up a bird in hand for many more later — just as investors do for long-term gains. Another consideration against auctions is that the revenue outcomes have been mixed. The direct and indirect opportunity costs of unsold spectrum due to high reserve prices have been steep. The auction regime worked well when demand exceeded supply, either genuinely or artificially engendered. It is quite revealing that 100 per cent of the spectrum was sold in only one of the seven auctions that have been held. That was in 2010, close on the heels of the 2G scam. Are auctions the only route to transparency?

On April 22, the DoT moved the Supreme Court to modify its 2012 order to allow administrative allocation of spectrum in select cases, where using the auction route is either not technically feasible or not desirable, such as for space and satellite applications. The recently-passed Telecom Act, 2023, specifies that only limited and narrowly-defined cases, including spectrum for BSNL, will be given on administrative basis. There are reportedly 19 such cases.

It is the government’s prerogative whether it uses auctions for these or other types of assignment. It could have easily arrogated to itself the power to assign spectrum in the best interest of the country in the Telecom Act, 2023. This is a policy decision and ought not to be subject to a Supreme Court decision from over a decade ago, which directed that all spectrum will be assigned by auction for all time to come.

Situations and market dynamics change and, hopefully, so do institutions. The DoT is

giving itself the benefit of doubt that it can, under changed circumstances, assign spectrum through administrative procedures that will stand the test of transparency and legitimacy. Or it doesn’t wish to, and is taking aim from the Supreme Court’s burdened shoulders. Whatever route the assignment of spectrum takes, it is a policy decision and under normal circumstances ought to be decided by the policy maker — which is the DoT.

I recall a time when the newly-established Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) was engaged in telecom tariff fixing, a power that it has to this day. It was 1998 and the regulator was involved with what was known as “tariff-rebalancing”, thereby reducing the cross subsidy from long distance to monthly rentals. This was necessary to attract competition and to keep the incumbent public sector undertaking, BSNL, afloat. Naturally, when competition arrives, the incumbent would lose market share and subscribers. That is inevitable. The CAG told TRAI that its actions were prejudicial to the revenue interest of the public sector and, as a consequence, overstepped into policy, beyond its audit function. This example is just for the purpose of illustrating the importance of specialists and expert bodies executing functions entrusted to them because these can have far-reaching implications. Thus, policy for the telecom sector is best left to TRAI and DoT; to auction or not to auction is a task given to them and they should be responsible for it and be made accountable.

The writer is dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences and professor of Economics at the Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence. Views are personal

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WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“China will continue to support Europe in achieving strategic autonomy, and the more Europe develops, the more stable the West will be; Europe should also open its minds, embrace and support China to advance Chinese modernisation.” — GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

Search for the decisive edge

While photo finishes cannot be written off, BJP’s political push in Karnataka has come with a recognition of its weaknesses



SRIKAR RAGHAVAN

I HAVE BEFORE me an edition of the famous periodical *Lankesh Patrike*, from September 1994, with a scathing cover headline that translates to: ‘November Elections, Five Parties in the Fray, Five Hundred Scoundrels, Innumerable Problems.’ Numerous photographs of leaders outline the headline. Inside, a two-page article mourns the many evils bedevilling the assembly elections of that year — rampant corruption across parties, lack of genuine leaders, communal tension — all of which remain prime issues that the average voter must navigate even today. *Lankesh Patrike* had created, in the Eighties and Nineties, a daring adversarial discourse which revelled in mocking the corrupt political class. As the decades rolled by, media houses became targeted by increasingly bad actors on the political stage, who have now become elephants in the room that cannot be made to budge.

Today, the political establishment comfortably secures court-mandated gag orders that prevent journalists from publishing any potentially defamatory content. Reports show that there are presently more than 600 suits registered against media houses in Bengaluru courts, involving 23 politicians from the BJP, eight from Congress, and three from the JD(S). The most shocking repercussion of such unprecedented immunity came to light recently in the context of the serial sexual abuse incident involving Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, who had secured for himself a gag order last year. Three days before the Lok Sabha polls in Hassan this April, a bevy of pen drives were distributed across Hassan, carrying thousands of videos where Prajwal is allegedly seen abusing and molesting women — the victims include helper-women in the Revanna household and wives of local JD(S) workers and police officers, who have been traumatised by the predatory and feudal establishment into keeping fearfully silent. Prajwal has fled the country, but will eventually have to return and face the consequences. It is ultimately the patriarchal underbelly of the political class that has come fully unveiled in the course of the last two weeks. It is a cesspool, and a shockingly shallow one at that. His father HD Revanna was arrested on Saturday after allegedly trying to kidnap and intimidate a witness. All this is a death knell for the JD(S), whose sharp fall from grace is going to open up a fresh political vacuum in the future.

The BJP’s political push in Karnataka had begun soberly with a recognition of its weaknesses — it had denied its most fervent hardliners a ticket, and entered into a desperate alliance with the JD(S), once its staunch enemy, to consolidate their Vokkaliga vote-base in south Karnataka. Carrying neither the anti-corruption wave

of 2014, nor the rhetoric of 2019’s surgical strikes, this is the first time the BJP is organising itself solely around an unfluffed Modi factor, which is poised to yield only diminishing returns. Having hastily recognised this, the campaign retreated to familiar ground — communal tension. The murder of a Congress legislator’s daughter by a Muslim man became a war cry around which the BJP’s campaign coagulated, seemingly oblivious to the fact that entitled men knifing women has become a distressingly common occurrence around the country, cutting across religious boundaries. This kind of politicking is, of course, an old trick. In 2017, the tragic death by drowning of a young man named Pareshe Mesta in Uttara Kannada had been funnelled into allegations of torture and “jihad”, spawning violent protests and a bandh. The CBI concluded later that it was merely an unfortunate accident. There are numerous other such instances.

The 14 seats of the northern half of Karnataka that go to polls on May 7 will largely hinge on the Lingayat voter-base that dominates the region. The BJP presently holds all 14 seats, but fighting within their own cadre, rebellion against the dominance of the Yediyurappa family, the impact of the Congress’ guarantee schemes on women and aggrieved farmers facing acute drought, will all be factors that are going to significantly dilute the BJP’s vote bank. Dingaleshwari Swami, head of a Lingayat mutt in Shirahatti, has deemed the task of defeating Pralhad Joshi (the sitting four-time MP from Dharwad) to be no less than a personal *dharma yudha*, having also criticised his non-performance in matters of health and education over the last 20 years. The contest in Shivamogga is intriguing as well. It is a three-way battle between KS Eshwarappa (who is personally engaged in an ego-duel with Yediyurappa), BY Raghavendra (son of Yediyurappa), and Geetha Shivarajkumar, (daughter-in-law of the film star Dr Rajkumar). The Rajkumar family is enormously well-respected across the state and carries a legacy of philanthropy, with a particular emphasis on the education and rehabilitation of girls and women from disadvantaged backgrounds. Geetha Shivarajkumar also happens to be the daughter of former chief minister Sarekoppa Bangarappa, whose legacy is strong in the region. These could potentially supply the decisive edge.

While photo finishes cannot be written off, pollsters have predicted that the Congress is likely to win between 13-18 out of the 28 Lok Sabha seats in Karnataka. As the world’s largest voting exercise proceeds apace, the overarching theme of this election season — hate, bile, and slander — continues to keep level with the rising mercury. One hopes that civil society will recognise why political accountability, empowerment of women, economic distress, and climate change must ultimately override the manufactured optics of caste, communalism, and hero worship.

Raghavan is an independent writer and researcher from Mysore. A New India Foundation fellow, his book, Rama, Bhima, Soma is forthcoming

A confusing foundation

Undergraduates appearing in UGC-NET exams will make higher learning more elitist



SHIVANI NAG

RECENTLY, THE UGC chairperson announced that students with four-year undergraduate degrees can now appear for the National Eligibility Test (NET), an exam that certifies eligibility for lectureship in colleges and universities in India, and PhD programmes. Earlier, the eligibility for both was a Masters’ degree. In other words, if one qualifies for the NET after a four-year undergraduate degree, one can now teach other undergraduate students. Which universities would recruit these fresh undergraduates? Will these be the universities with the Institution of Eminence tag, and high NAAC ratings, positioned as the Harvards and Oxfords of India? Would it be the local public colleges which provide education to lakhs of first-generation university-goers who dream of social and economic mobility through quality higher education? It is not difficult to imagine for whom the quality of higher education stands further compromised.

The chairperson added that candidates could appear in a subject in which they want to pursue a PhD irrespective of the discipline in which they have obtained the four-year bachelor’s degree. According to him, “This step will help replace the need for separate entrance tests conducted by individual universities and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).” It is, he added, the aim of the UGC to dismantle the perception of PhD as an “elite qualification”.

A PhD or a doctorate in philosophy is a

degree awarded after a candidate carries out rigorous original research for a period usually longer than two to three years. If a Master’s degree in any discipline is seen as a “specialisation”, a PhD reflects a research scholar’s ability to think creatively, ask new and insightful questions, explore them rigorously and systematically and, through this process, enable newer insights that challenge and advance existing theories and concepts. For this, a student would need to be conceptually and methodologically informed and able to use these skills for observation and analysis. This is not to say that a PhD programme should not itself aim to strengthen the conceptual and methodological tools of the research scholars, but there is a huge difference between strengthening and refining existing tools and aiming to introduce and instil them in a short period of one year. To further suggest that the hierarchies across degrees, from undergraduate, postgraduate and research levels are indicative of “eliteness”, is dangerous. To confuse a foundation attained through immersed and rigorous engagement with concepts with “eliteness” is a grave undermining of the academic process.

A rigorous conceptual and methodological preparedness at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels must be the aim. What we instead find is consistent dilution of this responsibility by first eliminating the MPhil programmes and now even the need for

postgraduate degrees. It also appears to be a misinformed understanding of PhD-level research when one sees separate entrances as a hurdle, rather than as a useful modality to align the research interest of a student with a supervisor who is an expert in the given field, in an institution with the necessary resources to support the research.

As a university faculty engaged with teaching and research for the past decade, it is clear to me that the inequities of our schooling systems have only become more glaring with time. It takes considerable mentoring and work to help students transition from a system that requires confining oneself to textbooks, to reading original and more advanced works and writing analytically and reflectively. Also, in the case of social sciences in particular, the development of questions that hold possibilities to advance an existing knowledge discourse requires active, critical and reflexive living and participation in social spaces. This, in turn, requires an entry into the various theoretical and conceptual frameworks that provide us with the vocabulary to talk about it. This is how theories on gender, caste, class, group processes, identities and many other aspects of the human world have evolved and transformed.

As a student of Psychology, the undergraduate programme was crucial in helping me become familiar with the focus and language of the discipline, but it was in the postgraduate programme that a deeper ex-

ploration of concepts became possible. Thereafter, work in clinics and classrooms enabled me to see the potencies, contradictions and gaps in the current theorisations. In the last few years, it has not been uncommon to find PhD candidates appearing in interviews without their own questions, but willing to adopt the questions of the supervisors as their own. The several critical researches that have managed to challenge the status quo would not have been possible without newer questions emerging from locations that were, till then, denied opportunities to ask and research. A related concern is also that if undergraduate degrees were to be sufficient for undertaking PhD research, it would actually lead to further “elitisation” of higher education as only those with existing linguistic and academic capital would be able to take the risk of pursuing a four-five year research programme in the absence of sufficient mentoring and preparation period.

What we need today are more publicly-funded research institutes with better infrastructure and more fellowships. This would be meaningful for individual students and the country, only if the requirements for rigour and the active provisions for sustained mentoring are not diluted.

The writer is an assistant professor at the School of Education Studies in Ambedkar University, Delhi

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FREE SPEECH MYTH

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘Campus and camp’ (IE, May 6). The crackdown on pro-Palestine protests at Columbia University and other campuses across the US is an assault on free speech and academic freedom. Silencing dissent only deepens the wounds of injustice and undermines the values that the US claims to uphold. Condemning Israel’s excesses is not tantamount to anti-Semitism. It is a legitimate form of protest, rooted in the principles of human rights and international law.

SS Paul, Nadia

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘Campus and camp’ (IE, May 6). The demonstrations in US campuses have divided the democratic party like never before. The Biden camp has to perform a juggling act wherein some voters are not antagonised by the US stand on Gaza. The US can not abdicate its leadership of the liberal world. On the other hand, the university authorities are confronting a difficult question: When does a protest cross the line? In the crucible of the current moment on US campuses, its future citizens will hopefully learn about the potential and limitations of democracy.

Shubhada H, via email

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LR Murmu, New Delhi

SC overturns NGT order, puts brakes on Silchar airport project

EXPRES NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

THE SUPREME Court on Monday put on hold all further work on the proposed greenfield airport at Doloo in Assam's Silchar noting that no environmental clearance had been obtained for the project. A three-judge bench presided by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud set aside the NGT order dismissing the plea challenging the project on the ground that it was devoid of merits at that stage as the Environment Impact Assessment was still awaited. It directed that "there shall be no activity shall be tendered in breach of the notification date of September 14, 2006."

Overruling the objections, the court said "there has been a complete abdication of duties by the NGT". It added that "as an expert body formed by a Statute enacted by the Parliament in the interest of the preservation of the environment, it was the duty of the Tribunal to verify the the grievance of the appellants".

5-year-old girl injured in attack by 2 pet Rottweilers in TN, hospitalised

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
CHENNAI, MAY 6

A FIVE-YEAR-OLD girl was grievously injured when two pet Rottweiler dogs ferociously attacked her in a park here and three persons including the pet owner have been detained, police said on Monday.

The girl was playing in the

Illegal sand mining: Don't harass TN dist collectors, SC tells ED

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

TAKING NOTE of submission by the Tamil Nadu government that district collectors from the state who appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the money laundering probe in the illegal sand mining scam were made to wait from morning till evening, the Supreme Court on Monday asked the agency not to harass them unnecessarily.

A bench of Justices Bela M Trivedi and Pankaj Mithal was hearing the ED's appeal challenging the Madras High Court's order staying the summons issued by the agency to five district collectors in the state.

The court had in the previous hearing asked the collectors to appear before the agency in response to the summons.

Monday, Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal appearing for TN told the bench that they had accordingly appeared. He added, "they

made them arrive at 8 in the morning and sit till 6".

Taking note, Justice Trivedi told ED counsel Advocate Zoheb Hossain, "you cannot do that. Do not detain them unnecessarily. They have to tend to their districts".

Justice Mithal added, "do not harass them unnecessarily".

Hossain said though they had appeared, they had not shared all the records sought for. Sibal disagreed and said all documents sought for in the summons had been shared with the agency.

Hossain submitted that the collectors had sought more time to produce the relevant records. He said he will file an affidavit bringing the facts on record.

Agreeing, the bench adjourned the hearing till after the summer recess.

ED had summoned the Collectors of Vellore, Trichy, Karur, Thanjavur and Ariyalur in 2023 to answer queries on the scam but the TN government moved the HC against this. The HC stayed the summons following which the agency approached the SC.

Soren moves SC against HC's dismissal of plea against arrest

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

FORMER JHARKHAND Chief Minister Hemant Soren, arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the land scam case, approached the Supreme Court on Monday seeking urgent hearing of his petition challenging the state High Court order dismissing his plea against arrest.

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal appearing for Soren urged Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud who was presiding over a three-judge bench, to consider listing the Special Leave Petition on an early date given that elections will start in the state on May 13.

Pointing out that the HC had dismissed his plea on May 3, the senior counsel said he had thereafter filed the SLP overnight. Seeking urgent hearing, he



Hemant Soren at the funeral of his uncle in Ramgarh. PTI

added, it's "very unfortunate that rights are being trampled in this fashion".

On being told that a pending petition in the matter is listed for hearing before a bench presided by Justice Sanjiv Khanna on Tuesday, the CJ asked Sibal to send an email communication as per the Standard Operating Procedure and that he will look into it.

Dismissing his petition challenging arrest, the HC had said that Soren cannot "wriggle out

Naresh Goyal gets two-month bail from HC to avail cancer treatment

OMKAR GOKHALE
MUMBAI, MAY 6

The Bombay High Court on Monday granted temporary bail of two months to Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal, arrested in a money laundering case lodged by the ED.

Goyal was arrested by ED in September last year and had approached the HC after a special court denied his bail plea.

"Application stands partly allowed. Applicant be released on bail for a limited period of two months to avail the treatment for



Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal

the cancer he is suffering from and attend to his wife, who is also suffering from cancer of an advanced grade." The court said he shall remain within the jurisdiction of a special court designated under PMLA court, Mumbai. It also asked Goyal to surrender his passport with the trial court. It noted that "the possibility of applicant Goyal fleeing

of the mess he created for himself" by citing political vendetta. Soren had told the court that his arrest was part of the BJP's "game plan" of vendetta against leaders of the opposition (INDIA bloc) in which he and his party are vocal participants.

The HC said, "there is prima facie evidence of the petitioner's association with Bhanu Pratap Prasad. At the relevant time, the petitioner was CM and there was manipulation in registering the report in Sadar Police Station... The recovery of huge cash from his Delhi residence is not denied... and the excuse of the illness of his parents for keeping more than Rs 36 lakh in cash prima facie looks untenable. In this state of affairs, by raising a technical plea, the petitioner cannot wriggle out of the mess he created for himself. Like the last resort to a losing litigant, an anxious petitioner has raised the bogey of political vendetta."



Indian Coast Guard personnel detain an Iranian fishing vessel, with six Indian crew members, off Kerala coast. PTI

Coast Guard detains Iran vessel with six Indian crew off Kerala

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

THE INDIAN Coast Guard (ICG) has detained an Iranian fishing vessel with six Indian crew members off the Kerala coast, the Ministry of Defence said Monday. The Indian nationals, all fishermen from Tamil Nadu, fled Iran where their sponsor had allegedly mistreated them, it said.

In a statement, the Ministry said a "swift, coordinated operation involving ships and aircraft of the ICG" was launched Sunday night to intercept the Iranian-flagged vessel off the west coast of Bepore in Kozhikode district.

An ICG team boarded the vessel and thoroughly investi-

gated it to check the involvement of any anti-national activity, it said.

"Initial investigation revealed that the owner of the boat was an Iranian sponsor who had contracted these Indian fishermen from Tamil Nadu and issued them Iranian visas for fishing off the Iran coast," the Ministry statement said.

"The crew alleged that the sponsor ill-treated and deprived them of basic living conditions, besides confiscating their passports," it said, adding the crew had decided to escape to India using the same boat.

The detained vessel was brought to Kochi for further investigation on Monday, the Ministry added.

BSF to offer on-request posting, airfare booking for its personnel

MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

FIVE INDIVIDUAL choices for posting, on-request posting, and booking of air tickets for all the personnel while proceeding on leave—these are some of the key decisions made by the BSF in a bid to improve 'satisfaction level' of its personnel.

According to the data, provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs, more than 46,000 personnel from six Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) took early retirement during the last five years (2019-2023). "The maximum—more than 21,000 men and women—who took early retirement were from the Border Security Force (BSF), which guards the Pakistan and Bangladesh borders," an official said.

A order issued last month by IG (personnel) said: "The DG (BSF) has approved the guide-

lines/instructions to be complied regarding posting/transfer and grievance redressal of non-gazetted officers with a view to improve satisfaction to the force personnel based on the recommendations of the board. Five choices for posting will be obtained from the individual at the time of Annual Turnover in Personnel and training (P&T). All static posting of any particular location will be considered as one choice. Similarly, all headquarters at Delhi, 25 as well as 95 battalions of BSF will be considered as one choice," the order said.

"On-request posting of the individual will be counted if he gets posting at the desired place. Posting of the individual at the surrounding place of his request will not be counted as 'own request posting'. However, if someone has completed his tenure at a particular place and requested for posting at another place, his posting even if considered based on his choices will

not be considered as own request. Moreover, requests for posting on terminal ground to any particular location will not be considered as 'own request posting,'" the letter states.

"In order to prompt disposal of all grievances, including DG's interview cases in frontier headquarter (FHQ), the concerned heads of unit, headquarters, and training centres will forward all grievance and DG's interview cases of directly to FHQ with their specific recommendation and relevant documents through software only," the letter further said.

Last month, the BSF signed a memorandum of understanding with a Delhi-based travel company—for booking of air tickets for its personnel proceeding on leave. According to a communication, the facility is available for personnel and their dependents—air ticket with concessional fixed fares for one year, free seat selection, free rescheduling, and no convenience fee."

ENS & PTI
CHANDIGARH, MELBOURNE, MAY 6

A 22-YEAR-OLD MTech student from Haryana's Karnal was stabbed to death in Australia during a fight between some Indian students, the Victoria Police said, adding they are searching for two Indian-origin brothers in connection with the murder. Like Navjeet, the alleged accused also hail from Karnal. The victim's family has now ap-

pealed to the Centre to help them bring the body to India.

Navjeet Sandhu, native of village Gagsina in Karnal, was fatally attacked with a knife on May 4 night in Ormond suburb of Melbourne when he tried to intervene in a dispute between a few Indian students over some rent issue, his father Jitender Singh told media persons in Karnal.

He said Navjeet's friend Shraavan, who hails from Bajina village of Karnal, had asked him to accompany him to his house to

pick up his belongings as he had a car. "Shraavan shared the house with two others—Abhijeet Gartan and Robin Gartan—who are natives of Bastara village of Karnal. Shraavan went inside while Navjeet kept sitting in the car. He heard some shouts and saw there was scuffle between Shraavan and the two others. As he tried to intervene, Abhijeet and Robin attacked him with a knife. He was fatally stabbed in the chest," said the father.

Navjeet's uncle Yashvir Singh said the family got the informa-

tion about the incident early Sunday morning. Navjeet's friend Shraavan, also sustained injuries in the incident, he said.

Meanwhile, Victoria Police's Homicide Squad detectives released details and images of the two men. A search is currently underway for brothers Abhijeet and Robin, both of Indian descent, they said.

Abhijeet is 26 years old and described as being 170 cm tall with a solid build and black hair. Robin is 27 years old and is also described as being 170 cm tall

with a solid build and black hair.

It's believed they are travelling in a stolen 2014 white Toyota Camry sedan.

The pair was last seen in the Ormond area in the early hours of Sunday, shortly after the incident occurred.

Emergency services were called to a residential property at about 1 am on Sunday, following reports of a dispute, the statement said. Upon arrival, two men were located with stab wounds. Victoria Police, however, did not identify the victims.

HARYANA REAL ESTATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY
Mini Secretariat, 2nd Floor, Sector-1, Panchkula.
E-mail: hrrerapl-hrv@gov.in, officer.rera.hrv@gmail.com
Website: www.harvanarera.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

For kind attention of allottees of the Real Estate Project –“Santushti Estate” - being developed on land measuring 5.94 Acres situated in Sector-7,Palwal bearing registration no. HRERA-PKL-PWL-121-2019 dated 02.07.2019 by Rurban Development Corporation Pvt. Ltd.

1. The above-mentioned project was registered with HRERA Panchkula vide Registration No. HRERA-PKL-PWL-1 21-2019 dated 02.07.2019 valid upto 31.12.2021. Thereafter, extension of registration for one year and nine months (General Extension due to COVID-19) was granted upto 30.09.2023.

2. The promoter has requested the Authority that instead of revoking the registration on its expiry, the Authority may permit it to remain in force for the second year i.e upto 30.09.2024 subject to such further terms and conditions as it thinks fit to impose in the interest of the allottees and any such terms and conditions so imposed shall be binding upon the promoter.

3. The Authority is considering the application of the promoter to permit continuation of the registration certificate under section 7(3) of the Act for this project. However, the first right of refusal for carrying out of the remaining development works is that of the association of allottees. Therefore, the Authority hereby invite objections from the association of allottees in particular and any other concerned persons in general.

4. The objections shall be filed in the registry of the Authority before 15.05.2024 which will be considered by the Authority under section 7(3) of the Act.

Executive Director,
HRERA Panchkula

HARYANA REAL ESTATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY
Mini Secretariat, 2nd Floor, Sector-1, Panchkula.
E-mail: hrrerapl-hrv@gov.in, officer.rera.hrv@gmail.com
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PUBLIC NOTICE

For kind attention of allottees of the Real Estate Project –“Amanvilas” being developed by Puri Construction Pvt. Ltd. on land measuring 84.135 Acres situated in Sector-88 and 89, Faridabad, Haryana bearing registration no. 120 of 2017 dated 28.08.2017 valid upto 28.01.2021.

1. The above-mentioned project was registered with HRERA Panchkula vide Registration No. 120 of 2017 dated 28.08.2017 valid upto 28.01.2021.

2. The promoter has requested the Authority that instead of revoking the registration on its expiry, the Authority may permit it to remain in force for three years and nine months subject to such further terms and conditions as it deems fit to impose in the interest of the allottees and any such terms and conditions so imposed shall be binding upon the promoter.

3. The Authority is considering the application of the promoter to permit continuation of the registration certificate under section 7(3) of the Act for this project. However, the first right of refusal for carrying out of the remaining development works is that of the association of allottees. Therefore, the Authority hereby invite objections from the association of allottees in particular and any other concerned persons in general.

4. The objections shall be filed in the registry of the Authority before 09.05.2024 which will be considered by the Authority under section 7(3) of the Act.

Executive Director,
HRERA Panchkula

HARYANA REAL ESTATE REGULATORY AUTHORITY
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Website: www.harvanarera.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

For kind attention of allottees of the Real Estate Project –“BMG City Centre” Residential Plotted Colony (Commercial project in Elegant City) being developed on land measuring 1.685 Acres situated in Sector-26, Rewari part of Residential plotted colony ‘Elegant City Township’ of area measuring 52.218 acres bearing registration no. 243 of 2017 dated 26.09.2017 valid upto 25.09.2020 by M/s BM Gupta Developers Pvt. Ltd.

5. The above-mentioned project was registered with HRERA Panchkula vide Registration No. 243 of 2017 dated 26.09.2017 valid upto 25.09.2020.

6. The promoter has requested the Authority that instead of revoking the registration on its expiry, the Authority may permit it to remain in force for two years subject to such further terms and conditions as it deems fit to impose in the interest of the allottees and any such terms and conditions so imposed shall be binding upon the promoter.

7. The Authority is considering the application of the promoter to permit continuation of the registration certificate under section 7(3) of the Act for this project. However, the first right of refusal for carrying out of the remaining development works is that of the association of allottees. Therefore, the Authority hereby invite objections from the association of allottees in particular and any other concerned persons in general.

8. The objections shall be filed in the registry of the Authority before 22.05.2024 which will be considered by the Authority under section 7(3) of the Act.

Executive Director,
HRERA Panchkula

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PUBLIC NOTICE

For kind attention of allottees of the Real Estate Project –“RAS Residency” being developed on land measuring 5.187 Acres situated in Sector-35, Karnal bearing registration no. 23 of 2018 dated 13.07.2018 valid upto 30.12.2021, First and general extension granted upto 29.09.2023 to RAS Developments Private Limited.

5. The above-mentioned project was registered with HRERA Panchkula vide Registration No. 23 of 2018 dated 13.07.2018 valid upto 30.12.2021. First extension and general was granted upto 29.09.2023.

6. The promoter has requested the Authority that instead of revoking the registration on its expiry, the Authority may permit it to remain in force for one year subject to such further terms and conditions as it deems fit to impose in the interest of the allottees and any such terms and conditions so imposed shall be binding upon the promoter.

7. The Authority is considering the application of the promoter to permit continuation of the registration certificate under section 7(3) of the Act for this project. However, the first right of refusal for carrying out of the remaining development works is that of the association of allottees. Therefore, the Authority hereby invite objections from the association of allottees in particular and any other concerned persons in general.

8. The objections shall be filed in the registry of the Authority before 22.05.2024 which will be considered by the Authority under section 7(3) of the Act.

Executive Director,
HRERA Panchkula

MUTHOOT FINCORP LTD.

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

Regd. Office: Muthoot Centre, TC No 27/3022, Punnem Road, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India - 695001.
CIN : U65929KL1997PLC011518, Ph: +91 471 4911400, 2331427

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that Gold ornaments pledged with under mentioned branches of the company for the period upto 30.09.2023 & MSGL, SPL-16, One plus, Guide Prepaid, Super value, ADGL and all other 6 months tenure Gold loans up to 30.09.2023 and MSGB, SME Svarna & EMI due up to 31.03.2024 which were overdue for redemption and which have not been redeemed so far in spite of repeated notices, will be auctioned on 20.05.2024 from 10 am onwards.

DEWAS DISTRICT - DEWAS-AB ROAD: 261000002, 261000014, 261000027, 261000028, 261000038, 261000057, 261000061, 261000151, 261000155, 261000158, 261000165, 261000169, 261000172, 261000177, 261000187, 261000188, 261000189, 261000190, 261000191, 261000192, 261000193, 261000194, 261000195, 261000196, 261000197, 261000198, 261000199, 261000200, 261000201, 261000202, 261000203, 261000204, 261000205, 261000206, 261000207, 261000208, 261000209, 261000210, 261000211, 261000212, 261000213, 261000214, 261000215, 261000216, 261000217, 261000218, 261000219, 261000220, 261000221, 261000222, 261000223, 261000224, 261000225, 261000226, 261000227, 261000228, 261000229, 261000230, 261000231, 261000232, 261000233, 261000234, 261000235, 261000236, 261000237, 261000238, 261000239, 261000240, 261000241, 261000242, 261000243, 261000244, 261000245, 261000246, 261000247, 261000248, 261000249, 261000250, 261000251, 261000252, 261000253, 261000254, 261000255, 261000256, 261000257, 261000258, 261000259, 261000260, 261000261, 261000262, 261000263, 261000264, 261000265, 261000266, 261000267, 261000268, 261000269, 261000270, 261000271, 261000272, 261000273, 261000274, 261000275, 261000276, 261000277, 261000278, 261000279, 261000280, 261000281, 261000282, 261000283, 261000284, 261000285, 261000286, 261000287, 261000288, 261000289, 261000290, 261000291, 261000292, 261000293, 261000294, 261000295, 261000296, 261000297, 261000298, 261000299, 261000300, 261000301, 261000302, 261000303, 261000304, 261000305, 261000306, 261000307, 261000308, 261000309, 261000310, 261000311, 261000312, 261000313, 261000314, 261000315, 261000316, 261000317, 261000318, 261000319, 261000320, 261000321, 261000322, 261000323, 261000324, 261000325, 261000326, 261000327, 261000328, 261000329, 261000330, 261000331, 261000332, 261000333, 261000334, 261000335, 261000336, 261000337, 261000338, 261000339, 261000340, 261000341, 261000342, 261000343, 261000344, 261000345, 261000346, 261000347, 261000348, 261000349, 261000350, 261000351, 261000352, 261000353, 261000354, 261000355, 261000356, 261000357, 261000358, 261000359, 261000360, 261000361, 261000362, 261000363, 261000364, 261000365, 261000366, 261000367, 261000368, 261000369, 261000370, 261000371, 261000372, 261000373, 261000374, 261000375, 261000376, 261000377, 261000378, 261000379, 261000380, 261000381, 261000382, 261000383, 261000384, 261000385, 261000386, 261000387, 261000388, 261000389, 261000390, 261000391, 261000392, 261000393, 261000394, 261000395, 261000396, 261000397, 261000398, 261000399, 261000400, 261000401, 261000402, 261000403, 261000404, 261000405, 261000406, 261000407, 261000408, 261000409, 261000410, 261000411, 261000412, 261000413, 261000414, 261000415, 261000416, 261000417, 261000418, 261000419, 261000420, 261000421, 261000422, 261000423, 261000424, 261000425, 261000426, 261000427, 261000428, 261000429, 261000430, 261000431, 261000432, 261000433, 261000434, 261000435, 261000436, 261000437, 261000438, 261000439, 261000440, 261000441, 261000442, 261000443, 261000444, 261000445, 261000446, 261000447, 261000448, 261000449, 261000450, 261000451, 261000452, 261000453, 261000454, 261000455, 261000456, 261000457, 261000458, 261000459, 261000460, 261000461, 261000462, 261000463, 261000464, 261000465, 261000466, 261000467, 261000468, 261000469, 261000470, 261000471, 261000472, 261000473, 261000474, 261000475, 261000476, 261000477, 261000478, 261000479, 261000480, 261000481, 261000482, 261000483, 261000484, 261000485, 261000486, 261000487, 261000488, 261000489, 261000490, 261000491, 261000492, 261000493, 261000494, 261000495, 261000496, 261000497, 261000498, 261000499, 261000500, 261000501, 261000502, 261000503, 261000504, 261000505, 261000506, 261000507, 261000508, 261000509, 261000510, 261000511, 261000512, 261000513, 261000514, 261000515, 261000516, 261000517, 261000518, 261000519, 261000520, 261000521, 261000522, 261000523, 261000524, 261000525, 261000526, 261000527, 261000528, 261000529, 261000530, 261000531, 261000532, 261000533, 261000534, 261000535, 261000536, 261000537, 261000538, 261000539, 261000540, 261000541, 261000542, 261000543, 261000544, 261000545, 261000546, 261000547, 261000548, 261000549, 261000550, 261000551, 261000552, 261000553, 261000554, 261000555, 261000556, 261000557, 261000558, 261000559, 261000560, 261000561, 261000562, 261000563, 261000564, 261000565, 261000566, 261000567, 261000568, 261000569, 261000570, 261000571, 261000



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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com



Boeing's Starliner aboard an Atlas V rocket to be launched on Tuesday. Reuters

EXPLAINED SCIENCE

WITH VETERAN SUNITA WILLIAMS ON BOARD, BOEING'S STARLINER SET TO LAUNCH: WHAT IS ITS SIGNIFICANCE?

ALIND CHAUHAN
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

Boeing's Starliner spacecraft, carrying two NASA astronauts, will be launched by an Atlas V rocket from Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Florida, to the International Space Station (ISS) on Tuesday. This will be Starliner's first crewed test flight. If the mission is successful, Boeing will become the second private firm to be able to provide NASA crew transport to and from the ISS, alongside Elon Musk's SpaceX.

What is Boeing's Starliner?

Starliner is a partially reusable crew capsule, officially known as CST-100 (crew space transportation). The capsule, which is 5 m tall and 4.6 m wide, consists of two modules. One is the crew module, which can accommodate seven astronauts — although, for trips to the ISS, it will be modified for four astronauts and cargo. The crew module can be reused up to 10 times, with a six-month turnaround. The other is the service module — the powerhouse of the spacecraft — which supplies electricity, propulsion, thermal control, air, and water in space. This module is not reusable.

What is the mission objective?

The main objective of the mission is to see how Starliner fares in space with a crew on board. It is supposed to dock with the ISS a day after the launch, and return to Earth after around 10 days. But before Starliner automatically docks with the space station, the crew members, who are NASA astronauts Barry 'Butch' Wilmore and Sunita Williams, will test flying it manually. The crew will also test seats, onboard life-support, navigation systems, and the system that moves cargo into the ISS. The space suits worn by Wilmore and Williams will also be tested — these blue suits are around 40% lighter than their predecessors and have touchscreen-sensitive gloves. On the return journey, NASA and Boeing will be keeping an eye on the spacecraft's heat shield and parachutes. They will slow the descent before airbags open to soften the moment of impact with the ground — unlike other crew cap-

sules, Starliner will land on the ground and not in the sea.

How has Boeing's journey been?

After NASA retired its space shuttle fleet in 2011, it invited commercial space companies to help it transport astronauts and cargo to the ISS. Two companies got the contracts: SpaceX and Boeing. While SpaceX has been ferrying astronauts to and from the ISS since 2020, Tuesday's launch will be Boeing's first crewed flight. Starliner's first uncrewed flight had come after four years of delay. Although it was set to take off in 2015, the company postponed it to 2019. When it did finally happen, a series of software and hardware failures thwarted the spacecraft from getting into its planned orbit and docking with the ISS.

It took more than 80 fixes for Starliner to make its first successful uncrewed flight. Even after achieving the goal, there were concerns about the performance of some thrusters and the spacecraft's cooling system. Additional problems were found subsequently — there were issues with the safety of wiring and parachutes. As a result, Boeing delayed the launch of Starliner's first crewed flight from 2023.

Why is the mission significant?

The mission's success is crucial for both NASA and Boeing. Currently, NASA has only one private company, SpaceX, which can take its astronauts and cargo to the ISS. Starliner getting approval for conducting routine flights to and from the ISS would give NASA a second option. The success, however, is more important for Boeing. The launch of Starliner has come at a time when the company's airline business — entirely independent of its space program — has been plagued by safety issues in recent years. For instance, in January, a door-size panel blew out of a Boeing 737 Max, leaving a gaping hole shortly after takeoff. If Starliner completes its objectives, it will help Boeing rebuild its reputation. "The company has been working on the spacecraft for so long, they have had a few problems with the test flights and there's a lot riding on this," Dr Simeon Barber, a space scientist at the UK-based Open University, told the BBC.

EXPERT EXPLAINS

FAIZAN MUSTAFA



IN ELECTION season, India is debating fundamental constitutional questions around reservation. Can a secular country like India have religion-based reservation? Have Muslims ever been given reservation by reducing the quota for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), or Other Backward Classes (OBCs)? Does reservation for SCs that is limited to only certain religious denominations amount to reservation based on religion?

Reservation & Constitution

The Constitution of India moved away from equality, which refers to equal treatment for all, to equity, which ensures fairness and may require differential treatment or special measures for some groups. The Supreme Court has held that equality is a dynamic concept with many aspects and dimensions, and it cannot be "cribbed, cabined and confined" within traditional and doctrinaire limits (*EP Royappa vs State Of Tamil Nadu*, 1973). Formal equality is concerned with equality of treatment — treating everyone the same, regardless of outcomes — which can at times lead to serious inequalities for historically disadvantaged groups. Substantive equality, on the other hand, is concerned with equality of outcomes. Affirmative action promotes this idea of substantive equality.

The Constitution of 1949 dropped the word 'minorities' from Article 296 of the draft constitution (Article 335 of the present Constitution), but included Article 16(4) that enabled the state to make "any provision for ...reservation...in favour of any backward class of citizens which...is not adequately represented in the services under the state".

The first constitutional amendment inserted Article 15(4), which empowered the state to make "any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes". Article 15 specifically prohibits the state from discriminating against citizens on grounds *only* of both religion and caste (along with sex, race, and place of birth). After the Supreme Court's judgment in *State of Kerala vs N M Thomas* (1975), reservation is considered not an exception to the equality/ non-discrimination clauses of Articles 15(1) and 16(1), but as an extension of equality. The crucial word in Articles 15 and 16 is 'only' — which implies that if a religious, racial, or caste group consti-

tutes a "weaker section" under Article 46, or constitutes a backward class, it would be entitled to special provisions for its advancement. Some Muslim castes were given reservation not because they were Muslims, but because these castes were included within the backward class, and reservation was given without reducing the quota for SCs, STs, and OBCs by creating a sub-quota within the OBCs. The Mandal Commission, following the example set by several states, included a number of Muslim castes in the list of OBCs. The Supreme Court in *Indra Sawhney* (1992) laid down that any social group, whatever its mark of identity, if found to be backward under the same criteria as others, will be entitled to be treated as a backward class.

Kerala: Muslim sub-quota

Religion-based reservation was first introduced in 1936 in Travancore-Cochin state. In 1952, this was replaced by communal reservation. Muslims, who constituted 22% of the population, were included within the OBCs. After the state of Kerala was formed in 1956, all Muslims were included in one of eight sub-quota categories, and a sub-quota of 10% (now 12%) was created within the OBC quota. Unlike the faulty report of the Mandal Commission which concluded, on the pattern of Hindus, that only 52% Muslims were OBCs, in Kerala and Karnataka, from the times of the Hindu *maharajas*, Muslims were seen as having been drawn overwhelmingly from the "untouchable" and other "low" castes, and were thus included among the backward classes.

Karnataka: JD(S) decision

The Third Backward Classes Commission of Karnataka headed by Justice O Chinnappa Reddy (1990) found, like the Havanur (1975) and Venkataswami (1983) Commissions, that Muslims fulfilled the requirements for being considered among the backward classes. In 1995, the government of Chief Minister H D Deve Gowda, who is currently an ally of the BJP, implemented 4% Muslim reservation within the OBC quota. Thirty-six Muslim castes which are part of the central list of OBCs were included in the quota. Deve Gowda's JD(S) had criticised the decision of the Basavaraj Bommai government to scrap the Muslim quota before the Assembly polls of 2023. The Supreme Court subsequently stayed the Bommai government's decision.

TN: Backward Muslims

The government of M Karunanidhi passed a law in 2007 based on the recommendations of the Second Backward Classes Commission headed by J A Ambasankar (1985), that provided within the 30% OBC quota, a sub-cate-

gory of Muslims with 3.5% reservation. This did not include upper-caste Muslims. The Act gave reservation to some Christian castes, but this provision was subsequently removed on the demand of Christians themselves.

Andhra Pradesh & Telangana

The question of giving Muslims reservation along with 112 other communities/ castes was referred to the Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Commission in 1994. In 2004, based on a report by the Commissioner of Minority Welfare on the social, economic, and educational backwardness of Muslims, the government provided 5% reservation, treating the entire community as backward. The High Court struck down the quota on the technical ground that the mandatory consultation with the AP Commission for Backward Classes was not done. It also held that the minority welfare report was bad in law because it laid down no criteria for determining backwardness. (*T Muralidhar Rao vs State of AP*, 2004)

However, the court held that "reservations for Muslims or sections/ groups among them, in no manner militate against secularism, which is part of the basic structure of the constitution". Relying on *M R Balaji vs State of Mysore* (1962), the court noted that "Muslims or for that matter Christians and Sikhs etc., are not excluded for the purpose of conferring the benefits under Articles 15(4) or 16(4)".

In *M R Balaji*, the Supreme Court observed: "It is not unlikely that in some States some Muslims or Christians or Jains forming groups may be socially backward. That is why...though castes in relation to Hindus may be a relevant factor to consider in determining the social backwardness of groups or classes of citizens, it cannot be made the sole or the dominant test in that behalf."

In *Indra Sawhney* (1992), the Supreme Court held that "in a particular state, Muslim community as a whole may be found socially backward. (As a matter of fact, they are so treated in...Karnataka as well as...Kerala...)". Following the 2004 HC decision, the AP government referred the issue to the Backward Classes Commission. In 2005, based on the Commission's report, the state promulgated an ordinance declaring the entire Muslim community as backward, and providing 5% quota. But the HC struck down the ordinance in *B Archana Reddy vs State of AP* (2005) on the ground that the benefit could not be extended to the whole community without proper identification of social backwardness of Muslims by the Commission. The five-judge Bench of the HC reiterated that there is no prohibition on declaring Muslims as a community socially and educationally backward, provided they satisfy the test of social back-

EXPLAINED LAW

What is SFJ, alleged to have links with AAP?

ARJUN SENGUPTA
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

DELHI LIEUTENANT-Governor V K Saxena on Monday recommended a National Investigation Agency (NIA) probe against jailed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for allegedly receiving political funding from Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), a New York-based pro-Khalistan organisation that is banned in India.

Sources in the LG House told *The Indian Express* that the recommendation was made based on a complaint by Ashoo Mongia of the World Hindu Federation, a diaspora-based Hindu advocacy organisation. Mongia alleged that Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party received \$16 million from SFJ for "facilitating the release of Devinder Pal Bhullar and espousing pro-Khalistani sentiments".

'Ballots not Bullets'

SFJ was founded in 2007 by Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, a US-based attorney who is



Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, founder and chief of the SFJ. File

currently in his late 40s. According to its website, SFJ seeks to achieve "self-determination for the Sikh people in their historic homeland" in "Indian held Punjab", and "establish a sovereign state, popularly known as Khalistan". "It was formed with the overt recognition that the wanton use of violence had been the Khalistan movement's Achilles heel," Terry Milewski, Canadian journalist and the author of *Blood for Blood: Fifty Years of the Global Khalistan Project* (2021), had previously told *The Indian Express*. Pannun's motto was "balloons not bullets", Milewski said. Thus far, SFJ's most notable activity has been the so-called 'Referendum 2020' for the secession of Punjab — specifically the Indian

state and not the Pakistani province — held among the Sikh diaspora in some cities. "The rules and identification requirements are farcical," Milewski told *The Indian Express*. "I have a friend in London who logged on online to register to vote, put down Angelina Jolie as his name, and was successfully registered for the vote. Pannun and his ilk put up random, unverifiable numbers hailing the referendum's success," he said.

Doublespeak of Pannun, SFJ

Despite supposedly "turning a page" from the violence-ridden Khalistan movement of yesteryears, SFJ and Pannun have not been shy to glorify terrorists and mass murderers. For instance, the campaign headquarters for the 'referendum' in Canada is named after 'Shaheed' (martyr) Talwinder Singh Parmar, the mastermind behind the 1985 Air India bombing which killed 329 innocents, and remains the most deadly mass murder in Canadian history. SFJ has also repeatedly hailed Indira Gandhi's killers, Beant Singh

and Satwant Singh. In a viral video from 2020, Pannun promised to gift new iPhones to anyone who flew the Khalistan flag in honour of 'Shaheed' Beant Singh. "Terrorists have been an absolutely essential part in SFJ's iconography ... SFJ has completely contradicted themselves," Milewski said. And SFJ does not stop at simply glorifying terrorists. Pannun himself has often mounted veiled threats at Hindus and other non-Sikh members of the Indian diaspora.

Banned in India

India refers to Pannun as a terrorist, and has banned SFJ under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967. The Home Ministry's 2019 notification issuing the ban says: "In the garb of the so-called referendum for Sikhs, SFJ is actually espousing secessionism and militant ideology in Punjab, while operating from safe havens on foreign soils and actively supported by inimical forces in other countries." Currently, almost a dozen cases are registered against Pannun and SFJ in India.

IndiGo's wide-body order: Why is low-cost, long-haul a difficult model?

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

AFTER PLACING the world's largest commercial aircraft order for 500 Airbus A320-family narrow-body aircraft last year, IndiGo has now ordered 30 wide-body Airbus A350-900 planes. Deliveries are set to begin in 2027; in addition, IndiGo has purchase options for another 70 aircraft of the A350 family. India's largest airline wants to make a mark globally with non-stop, long-haul flights from Indian airports. However, long-haul, low-cost is a difficult model to crack. Wow Air, Norwegian Airlines, Thomas Cook, Air Jume, and XL Airlines could not succeed, and AirAsia X has been struggling. Examples of profitable long-haul budget operations such as Scoot, Jetstar, Cebu Pacific, Tui, and French Bee are more the exception than the rule.

Problem of costs

The core business principle of low-cost

carriers (LCCs) is to minimise costs in order to offer low fares and fill up the aircraft, while still earning a profit. Higher costs limit their pricing power, and shrink the gap with full-service carriers (FSCs). Airlines flying longer routes with larger aircraft have relatively less control over fuel expenses, which are determined by international oil prices, and tend to have a disproportionately high share in the cost structure. Latest wide-body aircraft like the A350 are a lot more fuel-efficient than earlier generations of planes, but it is not certain they can make a decisive difference in favour of low-cost, long-duration travel. At the same time, wide-body aircraft are a lot more expensive than narrow-body planes — the new-generation wide-body planes even more so. Also, wide-body planes require additional crews due to the length of the journey, and that adds to costs. The rapid turnaround times and high capacity utilisation levels that budget carriers thrive on can be challenging to achieve on a sustained basis in long-haul

operations. Maintenance and repairs cost more and take longer for wide-body aircraft.

Network planning

Network planning is a big factor when it comes to success and failure in commercial aviation. In the case of the low-cost, long-haul airlines, the importance of the network design is even greater. An airline's network design is shaped by a number of factors, including demand and competition, so there is no one winning formula. However, aviation sector experts point to a few common elements in the network designs of some of the relatively successful long-haul, low-cost carriers. As in the case of successful short-haul LCCs, these elements broadly include operating more routes with few or no competing airlines and with low overall flight frequencies, instead of trying to break into competition-heavy, high-frequency routes. Operating

from multiple points instead of one major hub might be a better network design for LCC operations even in the long-haul segment. In other words, the global experience with successful LCCs has shown that they tend to perform better financially with point-to-point networks and a focus on serving latent demand and even stimulating it on the not-so-busy routes. And they often try to fly to and from secondary airports, which are cheaper than large ones.

EXPLAINED AVIATION

Low-cost, some frills

The positioning of the low-cost product matters. A barebones, no-frills product without much comfort and amenities may not be attractive for long-duration flights. But adding more amenities — more comfortable seats, in-flight entertainment and ovens to enable hot meal service — add to the costs. Airlines apply various solutions and innovations, some of which are not exactly in line with what LCCs have traditionally repre-

sented. These are often called hybrid products, offering a mix of LCC and FSC features. Thus, carriers have introduced dual-class cabins, offering business class or premium economy-like seats and service for a higher price. Some offer in-flight entertainment, power outlets, and hot meals to economy class passengers, perhaps for an additional price. Some of these airlines are even offering all-inclusive bundled fares, in addition to the standard LCC practice of unbundled fares in which flyers pay extra for everything from seat selection to luggage allowance to food and drinks on board.

IndiGo's possible path

IndiGo has not provided details of the potential routes on which the A350s will be deployed, their cabin configuration, or amenities on board. In a recent investor call, IndiGo's chief executive officer Pieter Elbers said all options were open. However, there are signals that IndiGo could go for a dual-class cabin configura-

tion, with some premium economy or business class-like seats complete with a few bundled services — sold for a notably higher price than the regular economy class seats. IndiGo currently offers all-economy cabins on almost all its flights. For in-flight entertainment, the airline is already running a trial on a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) basis on its Delhi-Goa route. It would be interesting to see if it graduates to seat-back screens on its A350s, like the Paris-based long-haul LCC French Bee. On network design, Elbers said IndiGo would be looking to offer direct international flights from multiple points in India, in line with the multi-hub network designs of most successful long-haul LCCs. Given the growing demand for international travel and IndiGo's strong domestic and short-haul international network, this model could work well in long-haul operations with strong potential for domestic-to-international and even international-to-international connections.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is general information that I,ASHOK KUMAR,S/O-JAI RAM,R/O-PLOT.NO-5A,BLOCK-B,STREET.NO-3,NEAR RAJDHANI PUBLIC SCHOOL,VIKAS NAGAR EXTENSION,JUTTAM NAGAR,DELHI-110059, Declare the name of my wife has been wrongly written as BIDAUTI DEVI,in my service records.The actual name of my wife is VIDYAWATI DEVI respectively which may be amended accordingly. 0040727108-1

It is for general information that I,Ramakant Joshi S/o Late Damodar Prasad Joshi R/o B-810,first floor,sector-1,Rohini,Avantika,Delhi-110085,declare that name of my wife has been wrongly written as Manju Joshi in my passport-NO.F336093. The actual name of my wife is Madhuri Joshi, which may be amended accordingly. 0040727098-7

I,Yogesh Kumar Daulat S/o Suresh Kumar,R/o ASA/177, Janakpuri, New Delhi-110058 have changed my name to Yogesh Kumar. 0040727106-1

I,WASEEM AHMAD S/o RAZAUR RAHMAN R/O-FLAT,NO-46,PLOT,NO-7 SWEET HOME,APARTMENTS Sector-14 Rohini Delhi-110085,have changed my name TO WASEEM AHMED 0040727094-2

I,Vishal S/o Roshan Lal Heera R/o H.No.728, Sector 15A, Faridabad have changed my name to Vishal Heera. 0040727094-7

I,VEENA ANTIL,wife of, KUMESH KUMAR, Presently, resident of, Village-Kunarp, P.O.- Sonipat,Teh-Sonipat, Dist-Sonipat, State- Haryana(131001) have changed my name from VEENA ANTIL to VEENA RANA, Vide-affidavit-06-May-24. 0040727098-10

I,VANDANA THOMAS,W/O ROBIN BABY,H.NO-19,RAJAL.NO-06,SHIV-MANDIR DHIRPUR-VILLAGE NIRANKARI-COLONY DELHI-110009, have changed my minor daughter name, from ISMAELA STONE to ISMAELA ROBIN, permanently. 0040727041-2

I,TRILOK RAM,S/O DALL RAM CHOUDHARY,Address-DDA FLATS E1,A9 BUILDING FLAT NUMBER-71,VASANT KUNJ,DELHI,110070, changed my name to TRILOK RAM CHOUDHARY. 0040727104-1

I,Surender Kumar,S/O Radhey Shyam,R/O House No-209/1 Mugulpura Gohana Sonipat Haryana-131301,Have Changed My Name To Surinder Madhu Permanently 0040727120-3

I,Satish Kumar S/o Hans Raj Gosain R/o 47/2,East Patel Nagar,Delhi-110008 have changed my name to Satish Kumar Gosain. 0040727106-8

I,Sagar Khatri S/o Dalip Khatri R/o 3 D/160, NIT, Faridabad have changed my name to Saagar Khatri. 0040727094-10

I,SAYRA, W/O.ZAKIR HUSSAIN,ADD-B-13/1,GALI,NO-4, CHAND BAGH KARAWAL NAGAR,NORTH-EAST DELHI-110094, changed my name to MERAJ JAHAN, for all future purpose. 0040727105-7

I,Rupali W/o Vishal Heera R/o H.No.728, Sector 15A,Faridabad have changed my name to Rupali Heera. 0040727094-8

I,Rinki W/o Anil,H.No-90 Village Khanpur,Kasna, Gautam Budh Nagar,Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301,have changed my name Rinki Bhati,for all purposes. 0040727106-4

I,Nit Atol Aka Leena Anand Aka Nagdev D/o Dharamdas Mulchand Nagdev R/o Shri Anandpur Trust,R-697-698,New Rajinder Nagar,Delhi-110060, have changed my name to Nit Atol Anand. 0040727094-3

I,Raveena Singh alias Raveena Kathuria W/o Gurcharan Singh R/o-Flat,No.97,near Bhagwati Hospital Farmers Apartment Plot No.8, Sector-13,Rohini Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Raveena Kathuria 0040727094-5

I,Rakesh S/o Harish Chand R/o Oxford Green Public School,Village Sirsa, Gautam Budh Nagar,UP,have changed my name to Rakesh Kumar. 0040727089-2

I,Rajat Arora R/o-L-804, Maceo, Sector-91 Gurgaon-122001 have changed name of my minor son from Parin to Parin Arora for all purposes. 0040727057-1

I,Taranjeet Singh S/o Rajender Singh G-68 Sant Nagar Extn Tilak Nagar Delhi have changed my name to Taranjeet Singh Sandhu. 0040727125-2

I,RAM RUP/RAM ROOP S/O SHIVDHAN MAL R/O U-22,PHASE-1,BUDH VIHAR,ROHINI,DELHI-110086,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO RAM ROOP MITTAL. 0040727105-2

I,Puneet Walecha S/o Krishan Kumar Walecha R/o-271,Rajdhani Enclave Pitampura Delhi-110034,have changed my name to Punit Walecha 0040727094-4

I,BHAWNA GANDHI,W/o Pankaj Gandhi,R/O-D-57 F/F, D-57,First-Floor Tagore Garden Extn,New Delhi-110027,have change my name after-Marriage Bhawna Arora to Bhawna Gandhi,for all legal purpose. 0040727105-10

I,Atulif S/o Smt. Rashmi Sharma R/o D-165, Ashok Vihar, Phase-1, Delhi-110052 changed my name to Atulif Sharma. 0040727104-3

I,Atul Malik S/O Surender Singh,House,No-2184, Sector-19 Eledco County Sonipat Haryana-131001,Have Changed My Minor Daughter's Name Aaradhya Malik To Aaradhya Permanently. 0040727120-1

I,Arvind Soni,S/o-Kundan Lal Soni,R/o-1/2265,B, East Ram Nagar,Gali No-10,Near Balaji Mandir,Shahdara,Delhi-110032, inform that Arvind Soni & Arvind Kumar Soni both are one & the same person. 0040727108-2

I,Arora ShaluRani Kishanlal, D/o Kishanlal,R/O- Gaur city1 5th Avenue,E41, Greater noida-201301,have changed my name, from Arora ShaluRani Kishanlal to Shallu Verma. 0040727105-9

I,Archana Sood,D/O-Mangrat Rai Sood,R/O D-11/140,Third Floor, Sector-8, Rohini, Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Archana S. Bhatia. 0040727108-7

I,Anukrit Dhanjal, W/o-Shubham Bhargava, House.No.2, Road.No.22, East Punjabi Bagh, New Delhi-110026,changed my name to Anukrit Dhanjal Bhargava. 0040727104-2

I,Amar Chand Gupta,S/o Laxman Prasad Gupta,H.No-526,Bhud-Colony,Near Oil Mill,Old Faridabad Haryana-121002,have changed my name Amar Agrawal for all purposes. 0040727106-3

I,Alka Devi W/o Ravindra Singh R/o,H.No-1108, Sector-16A, Vasundhara Ghaziabad U.P-201012 have changed my name to Babli Devi for all future purposes. 0040727098-5

I,ANIL KUMAR MITTAL S/O RAMROOP MITTAL R/O U-22,PHASE-1,BUDH VIHAR,ROHINI,DELHI-110086,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO ANIL KUMAR. 0040727105-1

I,Vinay Jha S/o Ramashray Jha R/o Flat No.2706, Tower-F, Supertech Livingston, Crossing Republik, Ghaziabad, UP-201016 have changed my daughter's name from Vaishu to Vaishnavi Jha for all future purposes. 0040727040-1

I,KM Pooja Arora W/o Rakesh Suden R/o 1694, New Shivpuri, Hapur, UP have changed my name to Pooja Suden. 0070901906-1

I,Vicky S/o Sunil Kumar Gupta R/O W-52 R9, Gurudwara Mandir, Raghubir Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Vicky Gupta 0070901903-1

I,Tarun Kaul S/o Late J.N. Kaul R/O C-4/123, Near Hanuman Mandir, Sector-31, Noida, Distt- Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P.-201301 have, changed my name form TARUN KAUL to TARUN SHARMA S/O SHRI RAM KISHNA SHARMA for all future purposes. 0070901908-1

I,Sushail Dureja S/O Om Prakash Dureja, R/o 7801, Roshanara Road Subzi Mandi, Malka Gani, S.o, North Delhi, Delhi-110007, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Sushil Kumar Dureja. 0070901868-1

I,Sunil Kumar S/o Indra Lal R/O W-52 R9, Gurudwara Mandir, Raghubir Nagar, Delhi-110027 have changed my name to Sunil Kumar Gupta 0070901905-1

I,Sonika W/o Lalit Kumar Jain R/o Flat no-203, 2nd floor, plot no-3/66 HIG Type Sec-2 Rajendra Nagar Sahibabad Ghaziabad U.P-201005 Have changed my name After Marriage to Sonika Jain for all future purposes. 0070901888-1

I,Sonia W/o Pankaj Goel R/o H.No.1013, Sector-17, Faridabad have changed my name to Sonia Goel after marriage. 0040727098-2

I,Shashi Kant Sareen S/o late Shri Ram Lubhaya r/o B-5/6, first floor, front side, Rana Pratap Bagh,near Geeta Ashram Mandir, Delhi-110007 have changed my name to Shashi Kant Kumar for all purposes. 0040727046-1

I,Shabana Khan, W/o Gyasuddin Ahmed Siddique, R/O R-206 Pan Oasis, sector 70, Noida-201301 have changed my name to Shabana Siddique. 0070901853-1

I,Bicky Ram,S/O-Chiranji Lal,R/O-C-3/5, Sector-11,Rohini, Delhi-110085, have changed my name to Vicky Ram. 0040727108-3

aI,Baljit Kaur D/O.Gurdeep Singh R/o B-94/95,DDA-Colony,Choukhandi,New Delhi-110018,have changed my name to Baljeet Kaur and my correct-DOB is-01.05.1966 instead of 04.05.1966. 0040727089-3

I,Dalip Kumar Khatri S/o Sohan Lal Khatri R/o 3 D/160,NIT,Faridabad have changed my name to Dalip Khatri. 0040727094-9

I, Seema Devi W/o Sandeep Sharma R/o B-196, Indira Kalyan Vihar, Okhla-1, Delhi-110020, have changed my name to Seema Sharma. 0070901898-1

I, Sarvesh Singh Rajput S/o Anoop Singh R/o Village Banska Madaripur Hasanpur, Amroha have changed my name to Sarvesh Singh. 0070901913-1

I, Sanjeev Kumar S/o Birendra Singh Yadav R/o Flat no. 903, Darius-7, Supertech Czar Suites, Sector Omicron-1, Dadha, Greater Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201310, has changed my name to Sanjeev Yadav for all purposes in future. 0040727026-1

I, Sandeep Kathariya S/o Shastri R/o Village-Barola, Sector-49, Noida, U.P-201301 have changed my name to SANDEEP KATHARIA for all future purposes. 0070901893-1

I, Saly Joseph W/o Joseph C.T., R/o C-29/B2, Block-C, Dilshad Colony, Jhilmil, P.O. Shahdara, Delhi, have changed my name after marriage from Pallan Devassy Saly to Saly Joseph for all future purposes. Both are the same & one person only. 0040727092-1

I, Saleem S/O Mohsin Khan, R/O A-16/6, Puri Gali, Maujpur Khn-148, Garhi Mendu, Seelampur, North East Delhi, Delhi-110053, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Saleem Sheikh. 0070901909-1

I, Rosy Gupta, W/o Atul Garg, R/o 165 Tarun Enclave, Pitampura, Delhi-110034 have changed my name to Rosy Garg, for all future purposes. 0040727039-1

I, Rati Bhusan Saha, F/o Arup Kumar Saha R/o Mahavir Vihar, Dwarka Sector-1, Delhi-110045 have changed my name to Rati Bhushan Saha vide Affidavit dated 06-05-2024 before Notary Public, Delhi. 0070901911-1

I, Leena Kelkar Bamonida d/o Jagdish Kumar R/o EA-38, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, Delhi-110064 have changed my name to LEENA KELKAR 0040727035-5

I, Neha Gupta W/o Rahul Jain R/o Flat no-203, 2nd floor, plot no-3/66 HIG Type Sec-2 Rajendra Nagar Sahibabad Ghaziabad U.P-201005 Have changed my name After Marriage to Neha Jain for all future purposes. 0070901885-1

I, Meena Devi W/o Sanjeev Yadav R/o Flat no. 903, Darius-7, Supertech Czar Suites, Sector Omicron-1, Dadha, Greater Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201310, has changed my name to Meena Yadav for all purposes in future. 0040727026-2

I, Maqsood Alam S/O Sahur R/O Shivam Enclave Old Haibatpur Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar UP-201301 has changed my name from Maqsood Alam to MD MAKSOOD for all future purposes. 0070901914-1

I, Manoj Kumar Dharmani S/o Soman Das R/o FA-9, Third-Floor, Mansarovar Garden, New Delhi-110015, have changed my name to Manoj Dharmani. 0040727122-2

I, Leena Kelkar R/o EA-38, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, Delhi-110064 have changed my son's name from Shaurya to SHAURYA KUMAR 0040727035-4

I, Kulwant Singh Negi S/O Gaje Singh R/O E-2740, 7th Avenue Gaur City-1 Greater Noida West Gautam Buddha Nagar UP-201306 has changed my name from Kulwant Singh Negi to KULWANT SINGH for all future purposes. 0070901899-1

I, Jatin Garg,R/o Shahjani, Bodla Road,Vinay Nagar, Agra(UP)have changed my minor son name,from Heyansh Garg to Hiyanash Garg. 0040727106-5

I, Jasvinder Kour W/O: Pardeep Arora, R/o-734, near-water tank, sector-1,Rohtak, Rohtak,Haryana-124001, changed my name to Jasvinder Kaur. 0040727125-1

I, Gursewak Singh S/o Gurdial Singh R/o B-71, 2nd-Floor, Asha-Park, Fateh Nagar, West-Delhi, Delhi-110018, have changed my minor son's name Vihaan Sandhu to Vihaan Sndhu. Aged-13-years. 0040727122-4

I, Gauranga Kumar Das S/O Gopal Chandras Das R/O 23, Shiv Puri Samay Pur Delhi in my some document my name wrongly mentioned as Gauranga Kumar Das but my correct and actual name is Gauranga Kumar Das for all purposes. 0040727088-1

I, Fulmizra, W/o Aas Mohammad, R/o 25, Kumar Basti, Gharoli Village, Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi-110096, have changed my name to Phoolmizra, for all purposes. 0040727042-1

I,Ratnam Tiwari W/o Puneet Mishra R/o Flat-1931, ATS Village, Sector-93A, Noida(U.P.) have changed my name to Ratnam Mishra for all purposes. 0040727047-1

I,Hitherto known as Nakshatra,S/o Sunil Kumar,R/o-RZ-39,Lokesh-Park,Najafgarh, South-West-Delhi-110043,Have Changed My Name and Shall hereafter be known as Nakshatra Kumar. 0040727104-4

I, Dinesh alias Dinesh Garg alias Dinesh Singhal S/O Bhagirath R/o-17/41, Nice-Apartment, Punjabi-Bagh, West-Delhi, Delhi-110026,have changed my-name to Dinesh Singal. 0040727122-3

I, Devinder Kaur Sahota w/o Charanjit Singh Sahota R/o 5, Palika Kumbumb, Chanakya Puri, Delhi-110021 have changed my name to DAVINDER KAUR SAHOTA 0040727035-3

I, Deepak Kumar Vij / Deepak Vij s/o Anil Kumar Vij R/o BE-87-88, Hari Nagar, Delhi-110064 have changed my name to DEEPAK 0040727035-1

I, Charanjit Kaur W/o Manjeet Singh R/o WZ-168, First-Floor, Mangal Bazar Road, Vishnu Garden, New Delhi-110018, have changed my name to Charanjeet Kaur. 0040727122-1

I, Charan Jit Singh Sahota s/o S.S.Sahota R/o 5, Palika Kutumb, Chanakya Puri, Delhi-110021 have changed my name to CHARANJIT SINGH SAHOTA 0040727035-2

I, Basant Chhetri S/o Nar Bahadur Chhetri R/o Kanglangtongbi,Imphal West, Manipur-795136, have changed my name to Basant Kumar Chhetri. 0040727098-6

I, Mohit S/o Rajiv R/o Village-Badli, Badli(72), Hajjar (Haryana)-124105, have changed my name to Mohit Gulia. 0040727105-4

I, Ashok Kumar S/o Hans Raj Sachdeva, R/o S-141, Rampuruli,Uttam Nagar,New Delhi-110059,have changed my name as Ashok Sachdeva,for all future purposes. 0040727024-1

I, Arti Kumar yadav, D/O kamala yadav, R/o Plot No. 290, G/F, KH.No- 7/2, Gali No. 14 Ajay Park, Naya Bazar, Najafgarh, Delhi 110043 have changed my name to Arti Yadav. 0070901864-1

I, Ankit Kasana S/o Tej Singh R/o 98, Dabri Road, Roopvas, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-203207 have changed my name to Rudhransh Kasana 0070901856-1

I, Ahmad Ali S/O Mohammad Ismail, R/O Mosampur Kankara, Alwar, Rajasthan-301701. Declare that Name of Mine and My Father has been wrongly written as Ahmaddali Rathor and Mh Ismail Rathor in my 10th Class Certificate and Service Record. The actual name of Mine and My Father are Ahmad Ali and Mohmad Ismail, which may be amended accordingly. 0070901871-1

I, Yunas S/O Mamman R/O Nangal Shahpur(19),PO:Umra Distt- Mewat -122108 Haryana Have changed My Name to Yunus. 0040727098-3

I,Vikas Selwal S/o Sewa Singh R/o # 305/2, PWD Colony, Sector 14, Panchkula, Sector 15 Panchkula, Haryana-134113, have changed my name to Vikas Singh 0070901855-1

I,Trilok Ram S/o Har Ram R/o H.No.31, Tahsil Ward -2, P.O-Didihat, Teh.-Didihat, Dist-Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand-262551, have changed my name to Trilok Baruri 0070901858-1

I,Thutop Phuntsok S/o Shri Rinzin Phuntsok R/o House No.10/98, Old Camp, Majnu Ka Tila, New Aruna Nagar, Delhi-110054 have changed my name to Tenzin Topden for all purposes. 0040727032-10

I,Rahul Kumar S/o Sh. Rakesh Kumar,R/O H.No.D-1/77, Street No.1, 20 Foata Road, Brijpuri, North East Delhi, Delhi-110094 have changed my name to Rohit Sharma for all purposes. 0040727032-8

I,Rahul Gaur S/o Sh. Govind Sharma R/o V-54, 1st Floor, West Patel Nagar, Delhi-110008 have changed my name to Heyansh Gaur for all purposes. 0040727032-7

I,Priyanka Malik W/O Atul Malik,House.No-2184 Sector-19 Eledco County Sonipat Haryana-131001,Have Changed My Name To Priyanka Kadyan Permanently. 0040727120-2

I,Priyanka D/o Umesh Sharma R/o Village Sihl, Sector-8, Faridabad, Haryana-121006, have changed my name to Priyanka Sharma.0070901895-1

I,Prem Lal S/O Late Sh. Shyalik Ram Bhatt R/O RZ/122, Mahavir Enclave, Palam, New Delhi-110045, have changed my name to Prem Lal Bhatt for all purposes 0070901860-1

I,BV PRADIPTI,wife of,BVRK SANDEEP,resident of, B TYPE,LS8 UNIT-1, POST: NIMPURA KHARAGPUR, Dist-MIDNAPORE STATE- WESTBENGAL(721304),have changed my name from BV PRADIPTI to BULUSU VENKATA PRADIPTI vide-affidavit, 06-May-24. 0040727098-9

I,Surender Banga S/O Ram Nath,R/O A-14, Green View Apartment,Sector-9,Rohini,Delhi-110085,have Changed my name to Surender Paul Banga. 0040727108-4

I,Smt. Rajesh Attri,W/O-Shri Hem Chand,R/O Kh.No.22/23,First Floor,Gali No.1,Block-A,Hardev Nagar,Jharoda Majra,Burari-110084,inform that Rajesh Gautam and Rajesh Attri is the same person. 0040727108-5

I,Ojasvi Anand Sahni W/o Amit Sahni R/o C-22, S1, Krishna Apartments, Ramprastha Colony, Uttar Pradesh-201011 is also known as Ojasvi Sahni and Ojasvi Anand. All names are of one and the same person. 0040727032-1

I,Mohd. Khalil S/o Mohammad Ibrahim R/o H.No.2139, First Floor, Katra Gokul Shah, Bazar Sita Ram, Delhi-110006 have changed my name to Mohammad Khalil for all purposes. 0040727032-2

I,Mohd. Arshad Naem s/o Mohd. Zakir r/o 2738, Gali Chandi Wali, Sita Ram Bazar, Delhi-110006, have changed my name from MOHAMMAD ARSHAD NAEEM to MOHD. ARSHAD NAEEM for all future purposes. 0040727032-11

I, Annita Bhat W/o Anil Kumar Bhat R/o 1694, Jain Nagar, Karala, New Delhi-110081. I have changed my name to Anita Bhat for future purposes 0070901873-1

I,MOHD. ZAKIR s/o Mohd. Sami R/o 496, Churi Walan, Gali Tike Wali, Jama Masjid, Delhi-110006, have changed my name from MOHAMMAD ZAKIR to MOHD. ZAKIR for all future purposes.0040727032-12

I,Jitendra Kumar S/o Sh. Jai Sah R/o H.No.0699, Type-4, Ground Floor, Sector-8, R K Puram, R K Puram Sect-8, South West Delhi, Delhi-110022 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Jaanvi to Jaanvi Kumari for all purposes. 0040727032-5

I,Jitendra Kumar S/o Sh. Jai Sah R/o H.No.0699, Type-4, Ground Floor, Sector-8, R K Puram, R K Puram Sect-8, South West Delhi, Delhi-110022 have changed the name of my minor daughter from Aarohi to Aarohi Kumari for all purposes. 0040727032-4

I,Harshit Goyal S/o Sh. Naresh Kumar Goyal R/o Flat No.C4/53, C-Block, Keshav Puram, North West Delhi, Delhi-110035 have changed my name to Harshit Kumar for all purposes. 0040727032-9

I, Eshaya Subroto Sutradhar, W/o Subroto Sutradhar, R/o C 2/182, Lodhi Colony, Lodhi Road H.O, South Delhi, Delhi-110003, have changed name of my minor child (son) from Ayaan Subroto Sutradhar to Advik Sutradhar for all purposes. 0040727053-1

I,Deep Prakash D/o Sh. Ram Kishore R/o H.No.177, Gali No.18, Sidhatri Enclave, Arihant Public School, Bhagwati Garden Extn., D.K. Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi-110059 have changed my name to Akansha for all purposes. 0040727032-6

I,Anil Bhat S/o Prithvi Nath Bhat R/o 1694, Jain Nagar, Karala, New Delhi-110081. I have changed my name to Anil Kumar Bhat for future purposes 0070901874-1

I,Amtul Tasleem W/o Mohammad Khalil R/o H.No.2139, First Floor, Katra Gokul Shah, Bazar Sita Ram, Delhi-110006 have changed my name to Amtul Taslim for all purposes. 0040727032-3

I,Akash Srivas alias Akash Singh S/o Raju Agarwal R/o 609/5-A, GaliNo-1, Indra Colony, School Block, Near Tulsi Dairy, Talib Chowk, Mandawali,, Fazalpur, East Delhi, Delhi-110092, have changed my name to Akash 0070901859-1

I,Sandeep Kumar Jain,S/O-Jaikaran Jain,R/O-B-6/108-109,Second Floor,Sector-11,Rohini,Delhi-110085,have changed my name to Sandeep Jain. 0040727108-6

I,Hari Chand S/o Govind Shahay,R/O Oxford Green Public School,Village Sirsa, Gautam Budh Nagar,UP,have changed my name to Harish Chand. 0040727089-1

I,Punam Sharma,W/O Bahadur Sharma,R/O A-150,Shastri Nagar,Delhi-110052,have changed my name to Poonam Sharma, for all purposes. 0040727098-4

I,PRINCE S/O VIR BHAN,R/O H.No.547/17, STREET NO.2,DHARAMPURA, BAHADURGARH,HAJJAR,HAR YANA-124507,have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PRINCE PRUTHI. 0040727041-1

I,PAWAN KUMAR S/O RAMROOP MITTAL R/O U-22,PHASE-1,BUDH VIHAR,ROHINI,DELHI-110086,HAVE CHANGED MY NAME TO PAWAN MITTAL. 0040727105-3

I,NOOR HUSSAN,S/O.NOOR AZIZ,ADD-1468-1469,GALI NAWAB SAHIB FARASH KHANA NORTH DELHI 110006,changed my name to NOOR HASAN,for all future purpose. 0040727105-5

I,JILE SINGH,FATHER OF,DHARAM VEER SINGH,Presently,resident of,VILLAGE-RANSI-MAJRI P.O.-NANGAL-TEJU TEH-BAWAL DIST-REWARI STATE-HARYANA(123501)have changed my name from JILE SINGH to ZILE SINGH, Vide affidavit, date-06-MAY-24. 0040727098-8

I,CHANDER MOHAN GOEL S/O SHRI JOGDHAN GOEL R/O CP-45, PITAMPURA, DELHI-110034, have changed my DAUGHTER name VRIITKA GOEL to AISHWARYA GOEL 0040727094-1

I,NAHID SULTANA JILANI, D/O.ZAINUL ABBEEDIN, R/O.343/90A, GHAFAR MANZIL EX,JAMIA-NAGAR OKHLA,DELHI 110025, changed my name to ANUM ALI,for all future purpose. 0040727105-8

I,Mohd Sharif, S/o Sayyed Mohd Hanif, R/o 1677, Gali Takhat Wali, Suivalan, Darya Ganj, Delhi-110002,have changed my name to Sayyed Mohammad Bhat, for all purposes. 0040727033-1

I,M WAHAR,S/O,ZAKIR HUSSAIN,ADD-B-13/1 GALI,NO-4 CHAND BAGH KARAWAL NAGAR,NORTH EAST DELHI-110094,changed my name to MOHD WAHAR,for all future purpose. 0040727105-6

I,Lakhvandara Singh S/o Santokh Singh WZ-5A Plot No.22 Vishnu Garden Tilak Nagar Delhi have changed my name to Lakhvinder Singh. 0040727125-3

I,Kusham W/o Laxman Prasad Gupta,H.No-526,Bhud Colony, Near Oil Mill,Old-Faridabad, Haryana-121002,have changed my name Kusum Agrawal,for all purposes 0040727106-2

I,Kavita Ahuja W/o-Gaurav Jain R/O-2956, 1st-Floor,Sainik Colony-Part-2,Sector-49, Faridabad,have changed my name to Kavita A Jain after-marriage. 0040727098-1

I,Kanwaljit Kaur alias Kanwal Wason W/o Sukhinder Singh, R/O GH-5/7,Flat No.1078,Behind St.Marks,School Meera Bagh Paschim,Vihar Delhi-110087,have changed my name to Kanwal Wason. 0040727094-6

LOST & FOUND

I Tushar Chaudhary S/o Sh. I.J. Chaudhary R/o 13/138, Geeta Colony, Delhi -110031 have lost my Original Registered Sale Deed registered in Document No. 4733 dated 20.10.1993 of Property/Plot area 120 Sq. Yards in Khewat/Khasra No. 96/117, situated at Village Sehampur, Faridabad, Haryana. Finders may contact at above address. 0040727032-13

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that Sh. Hamid Ali S/o Sh. Rifakat Ali is absolute owner of House No. HIG-K-41, Sector-23, GMP Sanjay Nagar, Distt. Ghaziabad vide Sale Deed bearing Document No. 10435 in Book No. I, Vol. 1352 on Pages 138-149 dated 29.06.2003 registered with the office of Sub Registrar-II, Ghaziabad, But Original Allotment Letter dated 30.07.1987 and Original Possession Letter dated 4.08.1987 was misplaced and in this regard a missing complaint was lodged on 30.04.2024 with PS Crime Branch, Delhi bearing L.R. No. 1658419/2024 and have represented that the said property is free from all kinds of encumbrances (registered or unregistered) including but not limited to private sale, gift, mortgage, lien, claims, disputes, charge etc..Any Govt. institution/ Bank/ NBFC/ Other persons) have any claim, right, interest against it or upon the said property or any part of the said property there by virtue of sale, inheritance, agreement or contract, mortgage, lien, charge, or otherwise however or whatsoever nature is hereby required to notify the same in writing alongwith the supporting documentary evidence to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which my client shall conclude the sale and any claim and/or objection if any shall be considered as waived and abandoned and shall not be binded upon Sh. Hamid Ali. Sr./ MANOJ GUPTA Advocate CHAIRMAN, CHANDI WADI CHAWL Ch. No. 651, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

RE:- Second Floor without roof rights hereinafter referred to as SAID FLOOR of property bearing No. NH-36 B, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 Notice is hereby given to the general public including banks, financial institutions etc. that our clients Mr. Shanti Batra wife of Shri D.D. Batra resident of 374, DDA Flats, Block-1, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 intend to purchase the said floor (hereinafter called the purchaser) from the owners Mr. Deepak Bansal and Mrs. Nisha Bansal, who are the owners of Mr. K. C. Bansal and Mrs. Kajal Bansal wife of Mr. Deepak Bansal both resident of 129, SFS flats, Gulmohar Enclave, New Delhi (hereinafter called the Seller). The seller has informed the purchaser that they are the owners of above said floor by virtue of Sale deed duly executed in their favour by Smt. Shanti Devi wife of Late Sh. Sham Sunder resident of Nil-36 B, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017 duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar, New Delhi vide document No. 4794 Addl. Book No.1 Vol. No. 1909 on pages 181-194. The seller further informed the purchaser that the said floor is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or dispute or any litigation pending regarding the said floor. Any person including Bank/s, Financial institution/s, relative/s any claim, right, title or any interest of any nature whatsoever into or upon the aforesaid floor is hereby called upon to make the same known in writing with documentary evidence by Registered AD post to the undersigned at the address mentioned hereinbelow within 10 days of publication of this notice and in event no response having been received to the notice, the title of the seller to the said floor shall be deemed to be clear of any charge or encumbrances of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our client/purchaser, in any manner whatsoever. Sr./ Amit Garg (Advocate) 30/152, Basement, Vikram Vihar Lajpata Nagar, IV, New Delhi, Ph.:9810175534

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Narendra Kumar & his wife Smt. Asha Devi both currently residing at House No. 211/172, Sarabh Vihar Jaipur Bapnagar, South Delhi-110044 were all relations & dearer their son Aditya Kumar and his wife Nisha (Daughter in law) from all movable & immovable properties due to their misconduct, misbehavior and immoral attitude. My Clients & their family members & relatives will not be responsible for their any acts in future whatsoever. Anybody deal with them shall do at his/her own cost and risk. Sr./ Akhilesh Kumar Pandey Advocate Chamber No.917, Rohini Court, Convent Delhi-110085

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to public at large that my clients GULSHAN KUMAR BAGGA S/O LATE TAKUR DASS, and Smt. Veena Bagga both R/O 4C, DDA FLATS, PANDAV NAGAR, NEW PITAEAL NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110008 have severed all relationship from their son Pawan Bagga and disowned and debarred him from all their moveable and immovable properties as he has become disobedient and he is out of control of my above clients and my clients have nothing to do with him. My clients shall not be responsible for his acts, deeds. If any person deals with him then he will be doing that at his/her own risk, cost and consequences. Sr./ Anil Kumar Advocate Ch. No. 332A, Western Wing, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-110054

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. Sahil Kumar S/o Sh. Vijay Kumar R/o Flat No. DA-78-8, LIG Flats, Hari Nagar, Hari Nagar, P.O. Hari Nagar Dabk Block, Distt. South West Delhi, Delhi-110064, has disowned his father namely "Vijay Kumar S/o Sh. Rameshwar Dass", from all his Properties (Moveable & Immoveable) from today onwards and severed relation from him, due to his disobedient/willitary conduct. My client shall not be responsible for his any legal/legal acts, transactions and deeds. Chhaya Sharma (Advocate) Off: LGF-26, Parswanath Mall Sector-12, Faridabad, Haryana.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to general public that my clients Anshuma Bhagat W/o Late Sh.Naveen Kumar being the legal owner of entire property No. 81-82 D.S.New Rajinder Nagar New Delhi-110016 had earlier entered into an agreement to sell on 24.12.2020 with Sh.Shalender Juneja S/o Sh.C. Juneja R/o R-7/81 UGF NBSN, ND-60 which has now been cancelled/terminated by my clients vide regd. AD cancellation notice dated 28.2.2024. I am owed by subsequent reminders dated 30.3.2024, 01.4.2024, 5.4.2024 and 12.4.2024 due to non fulfillment of terms and conditions laid down in the ATS dt 24.12.2020 & advance payment given by him/ them has been forfeited. Now my clients intend to take the above said entire property to someone else if anybody has any objection/interest in the property regarding the sale of my above said entire property, he/she may contact the undersigned in writing within 15 days from the date of issue of this public notice. Otherwise any claim after this date shall be treated null and void. Sr./ Anshuma Bhagat Juneja Off: 10/10, West Wing, Tishazari Court Convent-54

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Sh. Vinay Kumar S/o Sh. Vikram Kumar R/o Flat No. DA-78-8, LIG Flats, Hari Nagar, Hari Nagar, P.O. Hari Nagar Dabk Block, Distt. South West Delhi, Delhi-110064, has disowned his father namely "Vijay Kumar S/o Sh. Rameshwar Dass", from all his Properties (Moveable & Immoveable) from today onwards and severed relation from him, due to his disobedient/willitary conduct. My client shall not be responsible for his any legal/legal acts, transactions and deeds. Chhaya Sharma (Advocate) Off: LGF-26, Parswanath Mall Sector-12, Faridabad, Haryana.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Clients Mr. Ajit Singh R/o 1224-B, Third Floor, Right side, Gali No-10, Govindpuri, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019, Mrs. Asha W/o Ajit Singh R/o 1224-B, Third Floor, Right side, Gali No-10, Govindpuri, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110119,disowned their son Abhishek Singh Dhaka from all his moveable and immovable properties. Their son Abhishek Singh Dhaka would not have any rights on their all moveable and immovable properties during her life time or thereafter. Anybody deal with respect to their all moveable and immovable property with their own cost, risk and consequences. Sr./ Vandana (Advocate) Supreme Court of India K-23A, Basement Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019

PUBLIC NOTICE

Know all men that my client Sh. BHAGWAT PRASAD S/O LATE SHRI RICHPAL SINGH, R/O 1297A, LONI ROAD, RAM NAGAR, SHARDA, DELHI-110012 HAVE SEVERED ALL HIS RELATIONS WITH HIS SON / SACHIN KUMAR HIS WIFE /PRIYI SHARMA AND THEIR SON, NAMELY MASTER SHARH PANCHAL and has debarred them from all his moveable and immovable properties and from all his rights in and to the said property. My client shall not be responsible for their any acts.

RENU SHARMA Advocate LAWYERS CHAMBER NO. 463, WESTERN WING, TIS HAZARI COURTS, DELHI

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL –I, DELHI.

4th FLOOR JEEVAN TARA BUILDING PARLIAMENT STREET NEW DELHI – 110001. TA NO- 2686/2022. HDFC BANK LTD. VERSUS GAJENDER SINGH AND ORS.

(1) Mr Gajender Singh Proprietor Of M/s Deep Fashions A Proprietorship Firm A-31. Ground Floor Gautam Marg Johipur New Delhi 110094 Also At : 59, Durgapur Mohalla Gautam Marg Johipur New Delhi 110094

2. Mr.Chander Bhan Singh S/o Mr Phool Singh R/o B-108 Gali No 1, Gulab Vatika Loni Dehat Loni Ghaziabad Up 201102

Whereas The Above Named Applicant has Instituted A Case For Recovery of Rs. 66,82,917.43/- (Rupees Sixty Six Lakh Two Thousand Nine hundred Seventeen and Paise Four Three only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way, Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on 27.08.2024 at 10:30 AM. (for further details kindly visit DRT website www.tribunal.gov.in Phone Number: 011-23748473). Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be heard and decided in your absence. Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose:-All The Advocates/Litigants Shall Download The "Cisco Webex" Application/software; "meeting Id" And "password" For The

BRIEFLY

Ind-Ra raises India's FY25 growth estimate

New Delhi: India Ratings and Research on Monday revised upward the country's GDP growth estimate for FY25 to 7.1 per cent from 6.5 per cent earlier. The projection is marginally higher than the Reserve Bank's estimate of 7 per cent. In a statement, the domestic rating agency said strong support from the sustained government capex, deleveraged balance sheets of corporate and banking sector, and the incipient private corporate capex cycle make it revise its estimate. It said that factors that may constrain growth include consumption demand not being broad based and the headwinds faced by exports due to sluggish growth globally. PTI

Car dealers can claim ITC on demo cars: AAR

New Delhi: Registered automobile dealers can claim input tax credit (ITC) on cars that are used for demonstration to potential customers, commonly known as demo cars, the West Bengal bench of the GST Authority for Advance Ruling (AAR) has ruled. PTI

'Indian airlines to have 50% market share'

Mumbai: As much as half of the country's international air passenger traffic is expected to be catered by Indian airlines by financial year 2027-28, credit ratings agency Crisil said on Monday. The share of Indian airlines in international passenger traffic, including originating or terminating as well as the traffic transitioning through the country, is seen surging 700 basis points to around 50 per cent by 2027-28, from 43 per cent in the previous fiscal, it said. PTI

Bajaj Auto launches Pulsar NS400Z

New Delhi: Bajaj Auto has recently launched Pulsar NS400Z priced at Rs 1.85 lakh (ex-showroom - Delhi). The Pulsar NS400Z sports a dynamic and muscular form inspired by the Pulsar NS DNA, with a bigger and more powerful 373 cc engine. It comes with a signature lightning bolt DRL, floating panels, carbon fibre graphics, and a sporty underbelly exhaust. ENS

P-note investments near 6-year high

New Delhi: Investments through participatory notes in the capital markets reached Rs 1.5 lakh crore at the end of February, making it the highest-level in nearly six years, driven by a strong performance of the economy. PTI

'GST MOP-UP AS PERCENTAGE OF GDP AT PRE-GST LEVELS'

FM: GST exemplifies cooperative federalism, empowering states

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU

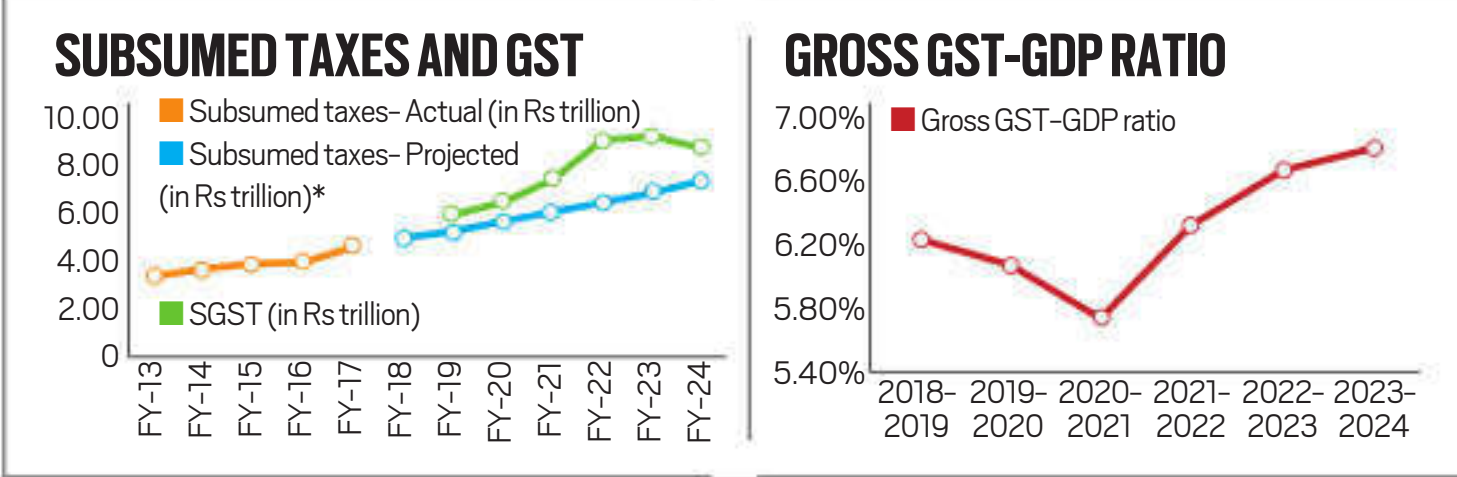
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

GOODS AND Services Tax (GST) collections as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) have reached pre-GST levels, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday. Underlining the milestones achieved under the GST regime, Sitharaman said it is a myth that all GST collections are "pocketed by the Centre", adding that GST contributes significantly to state revenues.

The statement by Sitharaman came on the day of her having administered the oath to Justice (Retd) Sanjaya Kumar Mishra as the President of the GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT). Mishra's appointment marks the beginning of the operationalisation of the GSTAT, a crucial body for resolving GST-related disputes that has come after a long gap of nearly seven years of rollout of the indirect tax regime in July 2017.

The monthly gross GST collections have been picking pace, recently crossing a landmark of Rs 2 lakh crore, as per the monthly data for April released on May 1 by the Finance Ministry.

"Despite the GST rate being less than the prescribed Revenue Neutral Rate and COVID-19 affecting the revenues, GST collections (as a % of GDP) have now reached the levels they were before GST (both net and gross). This demonstrates that the Centre &



States, collectively, through better tax administration, are able to collect the same revenue with a lower burden on our taxpayers," Sitharaman said in a post on social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

GST "exemplifies cooperative Federalism in India, empowering states", Sitharaman said, adding that it has improved tax buoyancy for states. "It is a myth that all GST collections are pocketed by the Centre. GST contributes significantly to state revenues - States receive 100 per cent of SGST collected in that state, approx. 50 per cent of IGST (i.e. on inter-state trade). A significant portion of CGST, i.e., 42 per cent, is devolved to the states based on the Finance Commission's recommendations. GST has improved tax buoyancy from 0.72 (pre-GST) to 1.22 (2018-23). Despite compensation ending, state revenues remain buoyant at 1.15," she said.

Without GST, states' revenue from subsumed taxes from FY19 to FY24 would have been Rs 37.5 lakh crore. With GST, states' actual revenue

amounted to Rs 46.56 lakh crore, she said.

Stating that it is a pro-poor approach, the Finance Minister said the effective weighted average GST rate has consistently fallen since 2017. "The Revenue Neutral Rate was suggested to be 15.3 per cent but was lower at 14.4 per cent in 2017, and it has come down to 11.6 per cent in 2019," she said.

In a post on X on May 2, former Chief Economic Adviser Arvind Subramanian had pointed out that despite recovery from the pandemic and better implementation, "GST revenue for FY24 @ 6.1 per cent of GDP has still (after 7 years) not surpassed pre-GST level". He had said in the first half of FY24, pre-GST levels had been surpassed but after updating the with the estimate for FY24, it suggested it had not happened. "...the focus must be on revenues, net of refunds, not on headline collections," he had said.

Sitharaman said as the Chairperson of the GST Council, she "ensured all states' voices are equally heard without bias".

GST Council, with a 75 per cent majority vote requirement, assigns one-third voting power to the Centre & two-thirds to states. "Out of 52 meetings, all decisions but one were reached through consensus. As Chairperson of @GST_Council, I have ensured all states' voices are equally heard without bias," she said.

She also said that GST has lowered taxes on many essential items compared to pre-GST rates. GST has exempted many essential items and services, such as unbranded food items, certain life-saving drugs, healthcare, education, public transport, sanitary napkins, hearing aid parts, agricultural services, etc. Common items like hair oil and soaps saw a tax cut from 28 per cent to 18 per cent, while electrical appliances are taxed at 12 per cent versus 31.5 per cent before. "Movie tickets were taxed lower, too. Further tax rate rationalization has been done since 2017. National Anti-profiteering Authority ensured that companies passed the benefits to the consumers," she said.

Permanent deletion of transactions can help make e-rupee anonymous, says Das

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, MAY 6

RESERVE BANK of India Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said that permanent deletion of transactions can make the e-rupee or central bank digital currency (CBDC) become anonymous and make it at par with paper currency.

Speaking at the BIS Innovation Summit, Das said India is also working on making the CBDC transferable in the offline mode along with introducing the programmability feature to help its financial inclusion goals.

It can be noted that since the introduction of the CBDC in late 2022, there have been concerns about the privacy aspect, with some saying that the electronic nature will leave a trail of where all the currency has been used, unlike cash which offers anonymity.

"Anonymity can be addressed through legislation and/or through technology. For example, through permanent deletion of transactions," Das said.

"The basic principle is that CBDC can have the same degree of anonymity as cash, no more and no less," he added.



Since the introduction of the CBDC in late 2022, there have been concerns about the privacy aspect.

In the past, the RBI brass, including Das and his Deputy T Rabi Sankar have said that technology offers the solutions to such concerns on privacy.

In the run-up to the launch of the pilot, former RBI Governor D Subbarao in 2021 had flagged the issue of data privacy saying the CBDC will allow the government or the RBI access to all the data on how each unit of the currency has been used and also asked for a strong data protection law to tackle with it.

Meanwhile, Das reiterated that India is working on making the CBDC transferable in the offline mode also, pointing out that one of the key features of

cash is that it does not require network connectivity to work.

In February this year, Das announced the offline and programmability features of the CBDC. "Programmability will facilitate transactions for specific/targeted purposes, while offline functionality will enable these transactions in areas with poor or limited internet connectivity," Das had said then.

Speaking on Monday, Das said that despite the efforts which are being undertaken by the Reserve Bank, the RBI still sees preference for UPI (unified payment interface) among retail users.

Anonymity can be addressed through legislation and/or through technology. For example, through permanent deletion of transactions ... The basic principle is that CBDC can have the same degree of anonymity as cash, no more and no less"

— SHAKTIKANTA DAS
GOVERNOR, RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

"We of course, hope that this will change going forward," he said, specifying that the RBI has also enabled interoperability of CBDC with UPI.

India has made CBDC non-remunerative, by making it non-interest bearing to mitigate any potential risks of bank disintermediation, Das said, adding that the central bank creates the CBDC and the banks distribute it.

To widen the reach of the e-rupee, the RBI recently announced the participation of non-banks in the pilot with the expectation that their reach can be leveraged for distribution of CBDCs and for providing value-added services, he added.

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA PROPOSES TIGHTER RULES

Draft project finance norms: Banks may need 0.5-3% additional provisioning

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU

MUMBAI, MAY 6

THE RESERVE Bank of India's (RBI) proposed norms to tighten project financing, which has recommended an increased standard asset provisioning of up to 5 per cent on loans, is likely to result in an additional provisioning of 0.5-3 per cent of banks net worth.

Last week, the RBI released a draft framework for lenders who undertake project finance. The framework proposed to tighten monitoring and guidelines for restructuring and to maintain a general provision of 5 per cent of the funded outstanding on all existing as well as fresh exposures on a portfolio basis. At present, the standard asset provisioning is 0.4 per cent for project finance.

"We estimate additional provisioning requirements to be 0.5-3 per cent of banks' net worth and hurt CET1 (Common Equity Tier 1) ratio by 7-30 basis points (bps)," IIFL Securities said in a report.

CET 1 ratio is a measurement of a bank's core equity capital, compared with its risk-weighted assets. It shows a bank's ability to withstand any financial stress. One basis point is one-hundredth of a percentage point.

Project finance refers to the method of funding in which the lender looks primarily to the revenues generated by a single project, both as the source of repayment and as a security for the loan. This type of financing is usually for large, complex and expensive installations such as power plants, chemical processing plants, mines, transportation infrastructure, environment, telecoms etc.

A significant increase in provisioning requirement will result in lower returns for lenders in project finance and reduce incremental appetite for such exposures, if implemented in current form, a

EXPLAINED
Framework to govern lending to projects

THE TIGHTER norms proposed by the Reserve Bank of India was released as a draft framework for lenders who undertake project finance. Under the proposed norms a bank will have to maintain a general provision of 5 per cent of the funded outstanding on all existing as well as fresh exposures on a portfolio basis. Once the project reaches the operational phase, the 5 per cent provisions can be reduced to 2.5 per cent of the funded outstanding. It can be further reduced to 1 per cent of the funded outstanding.

report by JM Financial said in a report. The draft guidelines have suggested that once the project reaches the operational phase, the 5 per cent provisions can be reduced to 2.5 per cent of the funded outstanding. It can be further reduced to 1 per cent of the funded outstanding provided that the project has a positive net operating cash flow that is sufficient to cover current repayment obligation to all lenders, and total long-term debt of the project with the lenders has declined by at least 20 per cent from the outstanding at the time of achieving DCCO.

DCCO (Date of Commencement of Commercial Operations) is the date by which the project is expected to be put to commercial use and completion certificate/provisional completion certificate is issued to the concessionaire.

For non-banking finance companies (NBFCs), additional provi-

sions will not be routed through P&L (profit & loss), but instead will be apportioned to the impairment reserve. Therefore, NBFCs will not have an impact on RoE (return on equity), IIFL Securities said.

It said infrastructure-focused NBFCs such as REC Ltd, Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and IREDA (Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited) can see a potential hit of 200-300bps to their capital ratio. Valuation of these NBFCs can also be potentially impacted as the adjusted net worth will be 8-13 per cent lower.

On Monday, the share prices of REC Ltd, PFC and IREDA dropped by 7.35 per cent, 8.93 per cent and 4.06 per cent, respectively. Even shares of Punjab National Bank (PNB) tumbled 6.41 per cent, Canara Bank plunged 5.42 per cent, Bank of Baroda tanked 3.71 per cent and Union Bank of India declined 3.12 per cent on the BSE. The stock of State Bank of India dropped 2.86 per cent and Bank of India dipped 2.57 per cent.

"Profit After Tax (PAT) is expected to be largely unaffected, while there may be marginal impacts on Net Worth and Capital Adequacy Ratio (CRAR). However, with our currently healthy CRAR (capital to risk (weighted) assets ratio) levels, any marginal impact can be accommodated accordingly," said Pradiip Kumar Das, Chairman & Managing Director, IREDA. The draft norms said in projects financed under consortium arrangements, where the aggregate exposure of the participating lenders to the project is up to Rs 1,500 crore, no individual lender shall have an exposure which is less than 10 per cent of the aggregate exposure. For projects where aggregate exposure of lenders is more than Rs 1,500 crore, this individual exposure floor shall be 5 per cent or Rs 150 crore, whichever is higher.

INDIA VIX JUMPS 13% ON MONDAY, RISING FOR 8TH SESSION

Volatility index soars to 52-week high on poll jitters

VIVEK KUMAR M

MUMBAI, MAY 6

CAUTION OVER the ongoing Lok Sabha elections continued to unnerve investors as they rushed to hedge their positions, leading to India VIX rising for the eighth consecutive session on Monday. The volatility indicator soared 13.6 per cent to 16.6, registering its biggest single day rise in more than a year. This was also the highest level for the index in over a year.

Market experts said there is a feeling that the ongoing Lok Sabha elections may not be a walk in the park for the ruling government. This was not the case 2-3 weeks ago. India VIX is a volatility index computed by NSE based on the order book of Nifty options contracts. As per the NSE, it takes the best bid-ask quotes of near and next-month Nifty options contracts which are traded in the F&O segment.

While many still believe the

BIGGEST SINGLE DAY RISE IN OVER A YEAR

The volatility indicator soared to 16.6, registering its biggest single day rise in more than a year. This was also the highest level for the index in over a year

ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA)-led by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will come back to power, there are divergent opinions on the number of seats that it can win.

Experts said given that VIX was at ultra-low levels around a couple of weeks ago, even the slightest of uncertainty is leading to a sharp surge now. In eight sessions, the fear gauge has risen more than 60 per cent.

For the uninitiated, the current level of India VIX is still signifi-

cantly lower compared to what it was during the previous General Elections. For example, the index had risen till around 30 level during the 2019 General Elections and 40 during the 2014 polls.

UR Bhat, co-founder of Alphaniti Fintech, said he does not expect India VIX to rise to the levels seen in previous elections. "I don't think VIX can go to those levels just based on uncertainty on election-related news. But if West Asia crisis gets worse.... or if the tensions in Taiwan, Ukraine mound, then it can go further up," he said. Market participants also highlighted that interest rates potentially staying higher for a longer time than what was anticipated earlier is also weighing on investor sentiment.

Benchmark Sensex ended flat at 73,895.54 points on Monday after a slightly volatile trade where it moved in the range of around 570 points intraday.

Nifty closed lower at 22,442.70 points. FE

DATA LAW TO CURB THIRD-PARTY SOURCING OF PHONE NUMBERS BY NEXT POLLS

'Call' for votes: 2024 polls set to ring the curtain down

JATING GROVER

NEW DELHI, MAY 6

ANNOYED BY out-of-the-blue phone calls asking for your vote? Well, the ongoing general elections may be the last one when political parties can get your phone number from third party agencies to make a pitch for their candidates.

While the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act is in place, it has not been implemented in the absence of supporting rules. Once the new government assumes office in June, the rules are expected to be finalised, which will put an end to such practices. At the most such calls will bug subscribers during the next few assembly elections, but not beyond that, officials said.

Passed by Parliament in August 2023, the DPDP Act aims at data minimisation, purpose



limitation and storage limitation. Data minimisation, means entities can only collect the absolute minimum required data. Purpose limitation restricts use of the data only to the purpose for which it was acquired, while storage limitation requires the entities to delete the data after the services have been delivered.

Political parties will thus need to collect phone numbers - with user consent - while specifying

the purpose for which they are being collected and then also delete them. Any violation of the guidelines may lead to a penalty as high as Rs 250 crore, and even the entities from whom the data has been sourced will be booked.

According to legal experts, complaints of data breach can currently also be made under the Information Technology (Reasonable security practices and procedures and sensitive personal data or information) Rules, 2011, and Section 72 of the Information Technology Act, 2000. However, the punishments and liabilities under these are not that severe.

Political parties currently use the services of cloud telephony and SMS companies for bulk IVR calls and messages. According to independent political consultant, Sagar Vishnoi, "huge amount of data is being collected and assessed by political parties and

their agencies. Data is not just restricted to phone numbers and names, but details about caste, religion, income status, etc, are also being used for targeting voters with campaigns". However, compared to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, where parties spent approximately Rs 100 crore on IVR calls, the expenditure this time is estimated to be less, especially by opposition parties, analysts said.

"We have the legislation in place, but the nitty-gritty of that will have to come through the Data Protection Rules. For instance, the rules will prescribe a model for seeking consent from users. The details on how a data principal can approach the data protection board in cases of breach etc, will be incorporated in such rules," said Kamesh Shekar, senior programme manager, privacy, data governance and AI, at The Dialogue. FE

Services sector growth eases in April, still among strongest in 14 years: PMI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, MAY 6

INDIA'S SERVICES sector growth eased slightly in April but growth of new business and output remained sharp and among the fastest in 14 years amid favourable economic conditions and strong demand, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services Business Activity Index fell from 61.2 in March to 60.8 in April, highlighting one of the strongest growth rates seen in just under 14 years.

Survey members attributed the latest upturn in output to favourable economic conditions, demand strength and rising intakes of new work.

AT 60.8 IN APRIL

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Services Business Activity Index fell from 61.2 in March to 60.8 in April, highlighting one of the strongest growth rates seen in just under 14 years

In the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction. "India's service activity rose at a slightly softer pace in April, backed by a further rise in new orders, with a notable strength in domestic demand," said Pranjul

Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC. In addition to buoyant domestic demand, firms noted new business gains from several parts of the world, which collectively underpinned the second-quickest upturn in international sales since the series started in September 2014.

On the job front, a few service providers in India showed an increased appetite for new hires in April, amid rising inflows of new business. However, several companies indicated that payroll numbers were sufficient for current requirements, and the rate of job creation was marginal and softer than that seen at the end of the previous fiscal year.

"In response to increased new orders, firms expanded their staffing levels, though the pace of

hiring growth decelerated," Bhandari said. On the price front, wage pressures and higher food prices meanwhile led to another increase in cost burdens, which firms partially passed on to their customers. "Input costs continued to rise sharply, albeit slower than in March, but resulted in squeezed margins for service firms, as only part of the price rise was passed on to clients through output charges," Bhandari said.

Meanwhile, confidence among service providers towards the year-ahead outlook for business activity improved to a 3-month high. Marketing efforts and efficiency gains, alongside plans to price competitively and predictions that demand conditions will remain favourable, boosted optimism, the survey said.

PLAYING TODAY

IPL: DC vs RR, 7:30pm;
Live on: Star Sports Network & streaming on Jio Cinema

How Kuldeep shed his ego to excel

With form, rhythm, and an arm around his shoulder, spinner will be key for India at the T20 World Cup

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, MAY 6

KULDEEP YADAV will turn 30 in less than six months and while experience and age has mellowed him down a bit, the ego and self-confidence is still intact. The football buff who spent his early teens kicking a ball in the park with friends and stayed up late to watch European football thinking he can do a better job than the likes of Arsene Wenger, Jose Mourinho, Carlo Ancelotti, Jurgen Klopp and Pep Guardiola is still full of belief that he can get any batsman out at any time.

Injuries, loss of form have brought maturity and wisdom. He is not the youngster who, as he recalled in a podcast with Ravichandran Ashwin, didn't heed the advice of Kolkata Knight Riders bowling coach Carl Crowe to work on his length. Kuldeep admits he was too rigid or too scared to make any changes in his bowling.

"I was very egoistic. I had a lot of belief in my skill. I used to believe that I could get anyone out. I had so much confidence in my skill set that I thought what he was saying was not important," Kuldeep told Ashwin.

Even now, he is keen to take over the mantle of India's leading spinner from the legendary off-spinner and is confident of holding his own in the run-fests in the IPL.

However, a few years later, loss of form and a career-threatening knee surgery put his career on a crossroads. In the span of two years, he went from being hailed as 'India's lead spinner in overseas Tests' by then head coach Ravi Shastri to becoming the fifth-choice tweaker after Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel and Washington Sundar.

That was the time Kuldeep needed a comforting arm around his shoulder.

Ashwin, in his podcast, said how it took Kuldeep a few years to even open up with him. His international form had nosedived after MS Dhoni retired.

"After Dhoni retired, my performance with the ball wasn't great. It happens that a person guides you and when that person's influence is not there anymore, suddenly everything is on your shoulders. It takes time for you to react to the situation... that probably happened to me," Kuldeep told *The Indian Express*.

But the left-arm spinner is lucky to have found the required support. In his first year under Rishabh Pant's captaincy at Delhi Capitals, he scalped 21 wickets in 14 games. Last year, when Rishabh missed the tournament after a road mishap, Kuldeep had an average season, taking 10 scalps in 14 games. This year with Rishabh back and chirping "Ye wala achha tha Kullu (This one was nice, Kuldeep)", his performance has improved. He has picked 12 wickets in eight matches so far.

In the Indian set-up, Kuldeep has found comfort in the form of captain Rohit Sharma.

"Rohit *bhai* has always supported me. When I was injured, he was continuously in touch with me, and specifically told me about what he wanted from me. After the injury, he picked me directly in the team," Kuldeep said in a select media interaction.

"Now he is after me to improve my batting," Kuldeep burst into laughter. "He was impressed with my batting during the Test series against England. For the past year, I



After impressive performances for India, Kuldeep Yadav has been in form in the IPL with 12 wickets so far. *Sportzpics*

have had more discussions with him on my batting than my bowling," he said.

During the Ranchi Test, Kuldeep stitched a series-turning 76-run stand with Dhruv Jurel for the eighth wicket. In the IPL, against his former team KKR, he scored a career-best 26-ball 35.

Trying new things

There was once a perception that Kuldeep needed to work on the speed of his bowling; that the fizz was lacking and he was too slow to beat batsmen. His relationship with Kolkata Knight Riders soured drastically as everyone said he needed to increase his pace. It was like a maths teacher narrating a formula but not explaining how to solve a problem.

"*Sab kehnte rahe speed badhao, but kaise kama hai wo kisi ne nahi bola* (Everyone said, I need to increase my speed but no one told me how)," Kuldeep said.

"I was scared to try new things. Before my injury, I had been bowling with the same action for 15 years. There were lots of questions in my mind," he said.

After his rehab when a puzzled Kuldeep reached Kanpur, his childhood coach Kapil Pandey immediately realised that his ward was all over the place but he made sure that he would not let him throw in the towel.

"I asked him first to tell me the suggestions he had received from everyone. He said Sunil Joshi ji wanted him to work on his angle. Rohit Sharma wanted him to bowl a tad quicker. Ashish Kaushik, a physio at NCA, warned him against putting too much weight on his front leg. He sounded insecure and feared that by trying new things he might end up losing his loop and turn," Kapil Pandey told *The Indian Express*.

"I sent him his old bowling footage and explained to him that since he gives more air to the ball and it goes above the eye line, the batsmen had a lot more opportunities to play the big shots. I didn't think he got my point. He was in two minds and insecure about losing his mystery. I literally shouted at him and told him to give it a try before jumping to any conclusion.

"After having a closer look at his medical report, I understood what Ashish ji meant. He wanted to protect his knee. We made a few adjustments in his run-up. I asked him to be aggressive. The results were not sudden. I made him bowl three hours in the morning and then a couple of hours in the evening at the nets but he needed match practice," said Pandey.

He asked Kuldeep to play in a local T20 tournament in Kanpur. "Sir wanted me to get the taste of a match," said Kuldeep.

"It was frustrating to start with. I was not getting my length right, I was losing the trajectory. I did work a lot and my leg would swell up but I would say, 'Sir, don't worry, I will apply ice'. He was with me through that journey.

"With the new run-up, I increased my pace but was bowling flat. After a couple of matches, I realised that batsmen were not getting more time with this new action and run-up. That was the first ray of hope I saw after a long time," said Kuldeep.

"In my first season with Delhi Capitals, (head coach) Ricky Ponting and Pant told me that I would get to play all the matches. Ricky even liked the changes I had made in my bowling.

"In 2022 against Punjab Kings, I lost my rhythm and without even realising I started bowling with old action. I remember during the strategic timeout, Shane Watson came

and told me 'Mate, I want to see Kuldeep 2.0. Show us what you have done in the past games,'" recalls Kuldeep.

Betrayal and setbacks

Kuldeep's career has been like his bowling. It has turned, bounced, and drifted, but has found the accuracy and zip in the past couple of years. So what has changed? He had shed his ego and learnt from his mistakes. On the show *Breakfast with Champions* when host Gaurav Kapoor teases him about his weight, Kuldeep immediately replies: "*Dhoke-dhake sab khaya hun* (I had faced betrayal and setbacks)."

There is a tectonic shift in Kuldeep's attitude as well. Now he is not happy being just the third spinner in India's Test team. In the podcast with Ashwin, Kuldeep made his ambition clear to his senior. "You remember, Ash bhai, after the Hyderabad Test (against England) you told me if I was to play as the lead spinner, I must bowl 15 overs and not give away more than 25-30 runs in a spell. Earlier, I used to think about getting four wickets and it didn't matter how many runs I conceded."

Even in the ongoing IPL, with the Impact Player rule and prevalent power-hitting, Kuldeep blames the bowlers for not executing their plans well.

"I feel bowlers should be a bit braver. Instead of sticking to their own plans, they are more worried about the strength of batsmen. Look at Jasprit Bumrah. The other day, Ashutosh Sharma scooped his yorker for a six but has he stopped bowling the yorker? No, he is sticking to his strengths and that's why he is doing so well," said Kuldeep.

IPL SNIPPETS

STANDINGS

	M	W	L	T	Pts	NRR
KKR	11	8	3	0	16	1.453
RR	10	8	2	0	16	0.622
CSK	11	6	5	0	12	0.700
SRH	11	6	5	0	12	-0.065
LSG	11	6	5	0	12	-0.371
DC	11	5	6	0	10	-0.442
RCB	11	4	7	0	8	-0.049
PK	11	4	7	0	8	-0.187
MI	12	4	8	0	8	-0.212
GT	11	4	7	0	8	-1.320

Narine foiled bowling plans: Naveen

Sunil Narine was the pick of the batters for the Kolkata Knight Riders once again as the two-time champions handed a 98-run drubbing of the Lucknow Super Giants to move to the top of the points table Such was the impact from the former West Indies international that LSG pacer Naveen-ul-Haq even admitted that nothing they tried against the KKR opener worked on the night. "We planned against Narine. We wanted to mix it up with bouncers and yorkers but nothing worked against him. It was quite a brilliant innings, to be honest. He was properly middling it. He has been doing it from the start of the season," he said post-match. **ENS**

Jadeja an 'absolute' class player: Finch

Former Australia skipper Aaron Finch has termed India all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja a 'class player' because of his versatility which brings in a lot of balance in all the teams that he represents. Jadeja scored 40-odd runs and took three wickets in Chennai Super Kings' victory over Punjab Kings on Sunday. "Ravindra Jadeja is such a versatile player, which makes him so effective. With the ball, he would have loved more wickets," Finch told Star Sports. "He's been economical, going at under eight per over throughout the tournament. He showed he is an absolute class player." **PTI**

Ponting in no mood to give up yet

Delhi Capitals face a must-win situation in their remaining three games to stay in the hunt for a play-off berth but head coach Ricky Ponting is confident that if Rishabh Pant and Co. can play their best cricket for 40 overs, they will be hard to beat. "Our last performance against Kolkata wasn't one of our best, but we're back home now. We've won two of our three games here," Ponting said. "We know we're coming up against a very good Rajasthan side. It doesn't matter who we play or where we play. We know we can beat anybody." **PTI**

Surya shines at the end of the tunnel, cloud over Sunrisers



Suryakumar Yadav hit a 51-ball 102 to guide MI to victory on Monday. *Deepak Joshi*

Hyderabad then conceded just 10 runs in three overs as Mumbai were 84/3 at the halfway stage of the chase.

From there, it was entirely Suryakumar who owned the night. For a batsman who was injured till well into the IPL campaign, it was a timely knock that would have helped him regain confidence. That early in his innings, Jansen fed him with deliveries in his arc would have helped a great deal as well. After riding his luck against Bhuvneshwar and Cummins to fetch a boundary and six, it was against Jansen that

Suryakumar started to free his arms. His second six, when he walked across and lofted the ball over fine-leg, showed his intentions. And after going through a brief lull, when he scored only two boundaries between the 7th and 13th overs, the return of Jansen, allowed him to open up again.

By now, he was beginning to limp as well. Minimising the singles and twos, off the last 18 balls he faced, Surykumar scored 43 runs, including two boundaries and a six – all via pulls shots off Cummins' three successive slower deliveries. A six off Natarajan sealed

Mumbai's win and also brought up his century. Varma remained unbeaten on 37 as the 143-run stand ensured Hyderabad's net run rate took a massive hit.

Digging their own grave

After the defeat, there is plenty to ponder for Hyderabad. They now appear a side slightly short on balance, especially with the bat. Before the season began, all eyes were on how Hyderabad would make full use of their resources. Apart from having remarkable squad depth, they were spoilt for choice when it came to picking their four overseas picks. They didn't sweat when Wanindu Hasaranga pulled out with injury. That Glenn Phillips, a marauder in the middle order and one who could have walked into any XI thanks to his multidimensional capabilities, is yet to play this season, should be a good indicator of how Hyderabad are spoilt for choice.

But as the tournament gets to the business end and Hyderabad racing alongside teams like Chennai and Lucknow for a play-off berth, they are showing signs of pressing the panic button. After starting with Mayank Agarwal and Travis Head, they quickly moved with pairing Abhishek Sharma with the Aussie. It was against Mumbai that Hyderabad set the trend of humongous totals.

As the play-off spot still looks uncertain, it would be interesting to see where Hyderabad go from here. When they dropped Aiden Markram, it came as a surprise. In a batting line-up that's not short on resources when it comes to displaying intent, Markram's omission means the batting depth required while embracing a bold approach has gone missing. And as the pitches

begin to show signs of slowing down, they are short on a spinner as well, with Mayank Markande, often an Impact Player, nowhere in the picture. That they sent in Sanvir Singh as the Impact Player at No.9 showed a hint of desperation as well.

At the Wankhede as Hyderabad lost their fourth wicket, in-walked Marco Jansen. With Abdul Samad, Pat Cummins and Shahbaz Ahmed being the next three, had Mumbai's attack been relentless and their fielding not lacklustre, they would not have let Hyderabad put 173 runs on board. In successive matches, even with Markram around, once their top three faltered, their chase had fizzled out. But as they move forward, they are in a spot where they have to take a hard look at their resources. Mayank Agarwal at No.3 hardly inspires confidence.

It was a night when Hyderabad's batsmen rode their luck with Head starting off with two boundaries off an inside edge that narrowly missed the woodwork. Then on 24, debutant Anshul Kamboj bowled him off a no-ball. On 45, Nuwan Thushara dropped him at third man before Piyush Chawla came on and had Head caught at deep square-leg for 48. From there on, the usual intent that one saw with Hyderabad went missing. That they managed 173/8 was largely down to Cummins' unbeaten 35, but it was way short of a par score.

BRIEF SCORES: Sunrisers Hyderabad 173/8 in 20 overs (Head 48, Cummins 35; Hardik 3/31, Piyush Chawla 3/33) lost to **Mumbai Indians** 174/3 in 17.2 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 102 not out, Tilak Varma 37 not out; Bhuvneshwar 1/22) by 7 wickets.

Dhoni batting at 9 does not work for CSK: Irfan

FORMER INDIA all-rounder Irfan Pathan has made a scathing remark on Chennai Super Kings' MS Dhoni for coming out to bat at No.9 during their match against Punjab Kings on Sunday.

MS Dhoni batted at No.9 – for the first time – and Harshal Patel bowled him for a golden duck. In this season so far, MS Dhoni has amassed 110 across 7 innings at an average of average of 55 and a strike rate of 224.49. "MS Dhoni batting at No.9 doesn't work for CSK, it's doesn't help the team's cause. I know that he is 42, but he is in solid form," Irfan Pathan told Star Sports. "He should be taking the responsibility of batting up the order. He should bat for at least 4 to 5 overs. He is batting for the last over or last 2 overs and that doesn't serve the purpose for CSK for a long time."

Chennai moved up to third with 12 points, ahead of Lucknow Super Giants and Sunrisers Hyderabad on net run-rate. "It might happen that we will see CSK qualify for the playoffs from here on and they need to win 90 percent of their games," said Pathan. "As a proper senior guy, who's in form, he needs to bat up the order. He can't be doing the same thing that he has done on quite a few occasions.

"Yes, he made an impact against Mumbai, but here, when the team needed him, you can't send Shardul Thakur ahead of yourself. You can't see Dhoni batting at No.9. "Sameer Rizvi was also padded up in the 15th over. They need to work out something; someone has to tell Dhoni. 'Come on mate, bat for 4 overs,'" he added. **EXPRESSNEWSERVICE**

SYNOPSIS

Suryakumar Yadav hits a blistering century as Mumbai Indians make Sunrisers Hyderabad's play-off race harder.

VENKATA KRISHNA B
MAY 6

Surya power

There was a point during Mumbai Indians' chase when it looked 174 was beyond their reach. In the Powerplay, they went 20 straight deliveries without a run off the bat as they lost Ishan Kishan (9), Rohit Sharma (4) and Naman Dhir (0) in that phase. A disappointing season was beginning to get a lot worse. There were no traces of the team that looked title material when the season began. As Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma too lived dangerously, they cut a sorry figure, waiting for their campaign to end and pack their bags.

But an hour later with Suryakumar finding his flow back, they gave enough optimism to their fans and those of several other teams, who desperately wanted Sunrisers Hyderabad to falter. With Hyderabad's new ball bowlers – Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Marco Jansen and Pat Cummins – coming aggressively in search of wickets, Suryakumar counter-attacked. The 50-run partnership between Suryakumar and Varma came in just 28 deliveries; a remarkable turnaround from where they were in the Powerplay.

Batra foxes World No.2 Chinese with smart switch-hit to score big upset

SHIVANI NAIK
MAY 6

WITH TWO months to go for the Paris Olympics, Manika Batra pulled a stunning win out of the hat, at the Saudi Smash in Jeddah on Monday. She beat Chinese World No 2 Wang Manyu 3-1 (6-11, 11-5, 11-7, 12-10) for the first time ever in her career, after 5 straight losses to the top opponent including at World's and Asian Games.

Coming on the heels of eye-popping wins for other paddlers at Asian Games and on the circuit where Indians are regularly nicking some big scalps, there was more good news in store. The mixed doubles pairing of Harmeet Desai and Yashaswini Ghorpade also upset fifth seeds Alvaro Robles and Maria Xiao 11-5, 5-11, 3-11, 11-7, 11-7 to move into the pre-quarters. But Manika's was a special coup, given how she had narrowly lost twice this year to Wang, the 2021 World Champion.

For Asha, hope is a good thing

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
MAY 6

ON MONDAY in Sylhet, Asha Sobhana, 33, became the oldest Indian woman to make her international debut. India's fourth T20I of the five-match series against Bangladesh was a special milestone in a career. After showcasing her skills at the WPL, Asha made it to the national team. It helped that India have not had a leg-spinner of note for a while.

For a while, it looked like the weather would make her debut a damp squib. Rain relented eventually, and she had the chance to bowl – and celebrate two wickets. Asha took the prize wicket of captain Nigar Sultana Joty as India recorded a 56-run win to take the series score to 4-0. The leggie beat her on the inside edge with a straighter one and trapped her in front. Her second wicket was more classical leg-spin, turning away from the right-handed Shorna Akter, inducing an edge that was pounced by the 'keeper.

"This is really special, because it is for a special player," vice-captain Smriti Mandhana said in a team huddle as she handed over the cap to her RCB teammate. "Seen you for more than 15 years in domestic cricket, perform well for any team you play. Your career has already been inspirational for a lot of domestic girls."

Asha's cricket journey started with her bowling with rolled-up balls of waste paper that she would wrap up with empty milk packets, tied up with a rubber band. She made the decision to pursue cricket as a profession in 2003. Her father was an auto driver, so finding money for kit bags and bus fare was difficult, but she got help from her coach Aaron George Thomas.

Toiling away on the domestic circuit for more than two decades, Asha's breakthrough came through the Women's Premier League. RCB scouts spotted her, wanted a leg-spinner in their arsenal, and took a punt. After a decent first season, she worked with former India spinner L Sivaramakrishnan, and made the headlines when she picked up a 5-for against UP Warriorz this year.

After the match in Sylhet, in an interview with the broadcaster, Asha could barely stop smiling as her teammates cheered her on. "This was everything I was waiting for the past 12 to 15 years. 2012 was the year I came to the probables of India. From there to now 2024 is a long journey for me."

Brief scores: India 122 for 6 (Harmanpreet 39, Ghosh 24, Marufa 2-24, Rabeya 2-28) beat Bangladesh 68 for 7 (Dilhara 21, Deepti 2-13, Asha 2-18) by 56 runs via DLS method

"It's come just before the Olympics, so it raises hopes of a medal," Batra's coach Aman Balgu ventured. "It's a big win before the Olympics. It's a signal to others to not take India lightly in team events with Sreeja (Akula), Manika and Aishika getting these wins," said former Olympian Neha Agarwal, adding she was especially delighted with how Batra closed out the match.

The pressure was unbelievable in the fourth game, as she went from leading 8-5 to dropping 5 points in a row, and trailing 8-10. Manika, who's been on the circuit for a good 12-13 years now, has come close to these big wins, but not converted. Another crunch moment loomed. It could've gone down as another forgettable narrow miss. But she composed herself.

At 11-10, Manika loosened her wrist on the grip. And did what Neha says her compatriot has been unfailingly trained to practice since they were kids, for 10 minutes every day even while watching TV: she twiddled, rotating the



Manika Batra beat Wang Manyu 3-1 (6-11, 11-5, 11-7, 12-10).

racket to flip backhand-forehand rubbers. It was muscle memory summoned for the clutch.

"Manika has been around for years, and her long pimple isn't exactly a surprise. Everybody knows her game. But crucially at 11-10, she correctly anticipated that Wang would turn, and she twiddled, sending it on her forehand. It was superbly gutsy and fooled the Chinese completely," Neha would chortle.

Manika is known to twiddle-rotate and switch grips quickly, but she always follows it with a hard hit. On Monday at Jeddah, Manika added a coolly wicked twist, and played pure placement in her blocked winner. "To do something like this at 11-10, knowing if the twiddle had gone wrong, and Wang hadn't turned, she took a big risk," Neha explained. Baglu would credit her composure. "The reason she's beating more Asians this year is because she can play calm and controlled. But when needed like today, she can go aggressive with her attack. The combination is helping," he said.

Manika's long pimple rubber is often rendered ineffective over 5 games, as opponents get time to get used to her style in this format. "It can be scary to twiddle against the top Chinese, because they counter well. Plus, you don't want to go into a decider with the Chinese. They are masters of best-of-5. It was a do-or-die at 11-10," Neha explained.

The Chinese are known to line up sparring opponents in training that mimic all expected players, and Neha reckons they weren't unprepared for Batra. "They all know her game, but the millisecond grip twiddle at that juncture was unexpected," she says.

For someone who came to prominence at the 2018 Commonwealth Games, the 2022 edition was a disaster. Batra faced the lowest of form lows which continued till the Asiad. And she was considered washed-up, as Sreeja Akula superseded the 28-year-old in rankings.

"She's gone through many ups and downs and been under a lot of pressure. Coach changes were a struggle, but she's found sta-

bility now," Neha says. The last year saw her settle her coaching base, find teammates she enjoyed sparring and raising her game with, and crucially, improve the first ball attack from her forehand - a career long weakness. The forehand now is greatly improved, employed on counters, when playing from near the table and further behind, in closing out rallies.

Neha reckons Manika has always been a smart cookie in strategies and decision making in 8, 9, deuce situations. But it's her fearlessness that's priceless.

"One thing about Manika is she's not scared of Chinese, Japanese or any reputation. No respecting rivals too much, and she believes 'Haan ok, they maybe whoever, but I'm the best'. But wohi attitude chahiye na! When we played in my day, we would think Oh god, no, it's Chinese, how will we win? She never thought like that. Indian women in TT need that attitude. It's what will give us the edge in team events. Exciting days ahead," Neha said.

Fuelled by father's passion, Jyothika shines

After missing Asiad due to injury, Andhra girl bounces back to run fastest leg for India at World Relays in Bahamas to seal Paris berth

VIDHATRI RAO & ANDREW AMSAN
MAY 6

BEFORE THE second-round heats, India's last chance to qualify for the Paris Olympics from the World Relays, Jyothika Sri Dandi made a call to her biggest supporter, father Srinivasa Rao. The shaky wife forced the conversation to be brief, but the instructions were effectively conveyed.

"I told him that the wife connection was weak, and he replied, 'forget the wife connection, get connected to the race'. He asked me to give my best and that's what I tried," Jyothika, who ran the second leg in the 4x400m in the Bahamas, told *The Indian Express*.

It may have been a short, routine conversation but that was more than enough to motivate Jyothika, who ran the fastest split (51.36s) in the 3:29.35s team timing that earned them the second spot in the race and a ticket to Paris.

The 23-year-old from Tanukuru town in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, took to running when she was 13. For initial training and diet, she didn't have to look too far as her father, a bodybuilder himself, took charge.

"Jyothika used to participate in local rotary club competitions and win all the races. I recognised her talent and realised that she had a future in athletics," Rao recalls.

A turning point in Jyothika's career came in 2021 when her coach Vinay Prasad suggested she seek seasoned coach N Ramesh's help. Ramesh, who is now the chief national coach for juniors, has a knack for spotting talent. When he first saw Jyothika run at the Gachibowli stadium in Hyderabad, he knew the youngster had potential.

"She had the physique of a quarter-miler (long limbs) and her stride lengths were good as well. But the thing that impressed me the most was her endurance. Usually, 400m runners get a little tired after the 350m mark but that's not the case with her," recalls Ramesh, who has been in the national set-up for over 15 years.

When Jyothika first arrived to train under Ramesh, she was clocking around 55 seconds. Although blessed with great stamina, she lacked strength and speed. "We did a lot of sessions in the gym to strengthen her muscles. Lots of resistance running and drills that focused on strengthening especially her core muscles," explained Ramesh.

Her first big break came two years later at the 2023 400m nationals, where she bagged the gold clocking 53.05s. The effort also earned her a place in the national camp at Thiruvananthapuram. Ramesh refuses to take credit for Jyothika's rise and feels it's her father's passion that has brought her this far.

"I have never seen any parent so passionate



Father Srinivasa Rao, a body builder, is Jyothika Sri's biggest supporter.

about their children's sport. I remember when Jyothika was offered a job in the Railways, he didn't want her to take it as he thought it might affect her sport. Usually, parents just care about jobs. But this was a refreshing change. I had to convince him," says Ramesh.

It wasn't just people on the athletics circuit who had a great interest in Sunday's race but also a well-known figure from badminton. Chief national coach Pullela Gopichand, whose Mytrah foundation supports Jyothika and other athletes from the state, keenly followed the proceedings. He was ecstatic with Jyothika's blistering run.

"She has been fantastic and I'm very happy to see her performance at the highest level. It is wonderful to see such talent come – whether it's Jyothi Yarraji, Jyothika or Nandini Agasara. It feels good to play a small part in their success," Gopichand tells *The Indian Express*.

Ups and downs

It has not been a straight career graph for Jyothika. Last year, after medalling at the Asian Championship, she suffered a knee injury that cost her a spot at the Hangzhou Asian Games. "I think my father

was more depressed than me. But then, giving up was not an option," says Jyothika in a determined tone.

When Jyothika watched her teammates win a silver medal at the Asian Games a month later, she had mixed feelings. "I was happy that they won but sad that I was not part of the team. When they climbed the podium to receive their medals, I imagined myself there," she says.

But her teammates' triumph also motivated her. Jyothika was back on the track just a month after the injury, but it took her almost a full season to regain peak fitness.

"When I was back on the ground trying to push myself, I had the fear of getting injured again. It was a difficult phase but I have worked a lot with my physios. We found that the muscles around the knee weren't strong, and were putting more pressure on the knee. Now things are better," she says.

Finally, when she did get a good wife connection after her race in the Bahamas, the conversation with her father was as brief as it could be. "He was emotionally overwhelmed and told me he didn't have words to express how he felt," she said.

Quartermilers back on track after early setback



Muhammed Anas, Muhammed Ajmal, Arokia Rajiv, and Amoj Jacob ran a season-best of 3:03.23 to confirm their automatic qualification. *X/ILS_Vijayanagar*

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
MAY 6

THERE WERE a lot of expectations on the Indian men's 4x400m relay team at the World Athletics Relays in Bahamas, given what they had achieved the last time they were on the world stage. A stunning sub-3 minute run at the Budapest World Championships before a fifth-place finish in the final grabbed headlines. So, naturally, when the quartet stepped up for the Olympic Qualifying Round 1, there was pressure to deliver in Bahamas on Saturday.

But Rajesh Ramesh – who ran a memorable anchor leg in Budapest – pulled up sore in the second leg. A race that started with expectations, ended with heartbreak... and more importantly, no timing registered. But on Sunday, the team – with veteran Arokia Rajiv stepping up in place of Ramesh – bounced back, once again finishing behind the USA but ahead of Mexico and Kenya to ensure they booked their tickets to the Paris Olympics. Muhammed Anas, Muhammed Ajmal, Arokia, and Amoj Jacob ran a season-best of 3:03.23 to confirm their automatic qualification. Earlier in the day, the women's 4x400m team of Rupal Chaudhary, MR Poovamma, Jyothika Sri Dandi, and Subha Venkatesan also made the most of the second-chance saloon to qualify for Paris 2024.

The quartet registered a timing of 3:29.35 to finish behind Jamaica but ahead of Brazil,

Germany, and Colombia. In the second round of qualifying, the mixed 4x400m relay team did not start, presumably to ensure the men's and women's squads were fresh for their last chance.

Ramesh ran the mixed 4x400m on Saturday early on in the session and then returned to run in the men's event too when he pulled up due to cramps in leg muscles at the first bend (as confirmed later by the federation). Without their main anchorman, India needed a good start again from Anas, who kept them in the hunt with a solid opening leg. The second leg was by Ajmal, who kept pace too but Kenya and Mexico wouldn't go away easily.

Arokia had to step in and keep India in the hunt and avoid any mishaps during a crowded baton exchange. But once Amoj got the handover in the final leg, despite some catching up to do, he seemed in control of his strides as he broke through in the final bend and kept the Mexicans at bay.

In the women's 4x400, 19-year-old Rupal replaced Vithya Ramraj and gave India a decent start in a Heat where there were only 5 nations competing for the two spots. But Germany's strong start meant India were under early pressure.

Fortunately for India, there was a massive mix-up in the German ranks. That coupled with a sensational second leg from Jyothika put India in control, then Poovamma and Subha ran solid legs to comfortably finish second in the end and pick up the quota.

[SPORTS BAR]



Moyes to leave West Ham at end of season

London: West Ham United manager David Moyes will leave the club by mutual consent upon the expiry of his contract at the end of the season, the Premier League club said on Monday. "On behalf of everyone at West Ham United, I would like to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to David for the contribution he has made to the Football Club during his time as manager," Joint-Chairman David Sullivan said in a statement. **REUTERS**

Dharamsala gets first 'hybrid pitch'

Dharamsala: India's first-ever 'hybrid pitch' was unveiled at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) stadium in a grand ceremony here on Monday. The event was attended by IPL Chairman Arun Dhimal and cricket dignitaries including Paul Taylor, a former England cricketer and SIS's international cricket director. "The introduction of hybrid pitches is set to revolutionize cricket in India, following their success in iconic venues like Lord's and The Oval in England," said Dhimal, who hails from Himachal Pradesh. **PTI**



Lando Norris held off Max Verstappen.

USA TODAY Sports

McLaren's Norris wins Miami Grand Prix

McLaren's Lando Norris capitalised on a bit of good fortune to win the Miami Grand Prix on Sunday, holding off Red Bull's triple world champion Max Verstappen for his first Formula One victory. It was a long overdue triumph for the Briton who held the record for most podiums without a win (15), having finished runner-up an agonising eight times in 110 grand prix. Verstappen had seemed well placed to claim a fifth win in six races until a midway crash allowed McLaren to cash in on a safety car period, with Norris pitting and coming out with the lead. **REUTERS**

Jyoti to lead Indian junior hockey team

New Delhi: Defender Jyoti Singh was on Monday named the captain of the Indian Junior Women's team by Hockey India with midfielder Sakshi Rana as her deputy in a 22-member squad which will tour Europe from May 21 to 29. India will play six matches across three nations against Belgium, Germany and two club teams in the Netherlands from May. "There's great camaraderie in the squad. All of us have gotten to know each other pretty well during the camp," Jyoti said in a HI release. **PTI**

Uganda's Nsubuga oldest player at WC

Kampala: Uganda off-spinner Frank Nsubuga is set to become the oldest cricketer to play in the upcoming T20 World Cup at the age of 43. On Monday, the Uganda Cricket Association announced a 15-member squad for the marquee event set to be held in the Americas from June 2, the nation's first-ever appearance in the main round of the competition. Brian Masaba will lead the side, while Riazat Ali Shah has been named his deputy. In the Africa Qualifiers, Uganda finished second in the Regional Final, behind Namibia, to seal their berth. **PTI**



Amir's Ireland trip delayed by visa issues

Lahore: Pakistan pacer Muhammad Amir may not be able to leave with the national squad on Tuesday morning for the three-match T20 series in Ireland due to visa issues. While a source in the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said the visa delay in Amir's case was due to his involvement in the 2010 spot-fixing scandal, another source insisted it was purely due to technical reasons. "The delay is because of some technical reasons and he will be issued a visa soon," the source said, adding "it is not fair to bring up his past all the time in the media." "Didn't Amir tour Ireland and England in 2018 with the Pakistan team?" the source questioned. "We are hopeful he will get his visa in a day or two and he can join them later," he added. **PTI**

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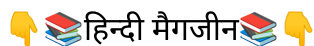
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