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PM MODI'S PATNA ROAD SHOW EXPECTED TO SPUR ON VOTERS

The event on May 12 comes amidst concerns over lack of enthusiasm for NDA candidates and low voter turnout

ABHINANDAN MISHRA
NEW DELHI

Amidst concerns over low polling percentage and reports of lack of enthusiasm for the National Democratic Alliance candidates in Bihar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be doing a road show in Patna on the evening of 12 May.

This will be his first road show in Bihar which is being organized to enthrone the party workers and galvanize the voters of Bihar which sends 40 Lok Sabha Members to Parliament. On Sunday Modi had done a road show in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh.

The said road show will start from the statue of Bhimrao Ambedkar, Bailey road in the heart of the city and end at JP square at Gandhi Maidan while traveling through both commercial

PATNA PUSH



- This is the first road show in Bihar which sends 40 LS MPs
- This will be for the first time that Modi will do a road show in the city
- Next day, the PM will address three political rallies at Hajipur, Motipur
- This will be his sixth visit to Bihar in one month

and residential areas of the ancient city from where former union minister Ravi Shankar Prasad is seeking his second successive win.

On 27 October 2013, Modi, who was the Chief Minister of Gujarat then, was addressing a pre-election political

rally at the same Gandhi Maidan, when it was rocked by a series of bomb blasts in which six people were killed. Next day Modi had visited the family members of the deceased early in the morning to pay his homage. In the 2019 polls, Modi had

addressed a public rally at Gandhi Maidan but this is for the first time he will do a road show in the city.

Unlike a public rally, where the distance between the leader and the audience is big and interaction is restricted, in a road show, the distance between the leader and the spectators is a matter of few feet and involves more personal interaction and potentially fostering a stronger connection with the voters. Patna seat has always been a 'BJP seat'. Nevertheless, the I.N.D.I.A bloc nominee, Anshul Avijit, who is the son of former Lok Sabha speaker Meira Kumar, is working silently and tirelessly to reduce the winning margin of Prasad, who unlike other BJP MPs is not facing the charges of being un-accessible to his voters.

After his road show, that

Over 90 LS seats in 11 states vote today

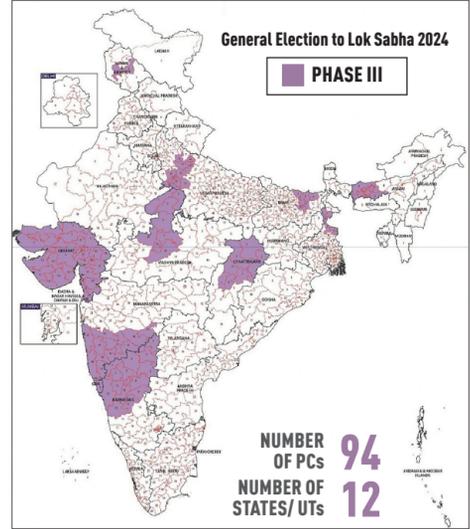
PM Modi, Amit Shah to cast vote in Ahmedabad

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Voting will be held in 93 constituencies spread over 11 states and Union Territories on Tuesday in the third phase of Lok Sabha polls, with stakes being high for the BJP which had won an overwhelming majority of these seats, including all in Gujarat, Karnataka, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, in the last election.

Over 1,300 candidates, including around 120 women, are in the fray. Among the bigwigs are Union ministers Amit Shah (Gandhinagar), Jyotiraditya Scindia (Guna), Mansukh Mandaviya (Porbandar), Parshotam Rupala (Rajkot), Pralhad Joshi (Dharwad) and SP Singh Baghel (Agra).

With the BJP bagging Surat unopposed, 25 seats



in Prime Minister Modi's home state of Gujarat will go to polls on May 7, besides 11 seats in Maharashtra, 10 seats in Uttar Pradesh, the remaining 14 of the 28 in Karnataka, seven in Chhattisgarh, five in Bihar, four each in Assam and West Bengal, and all two in Goa.

The Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (2 seats) and nine seats in Madhya Pradesh, including Betul where elections were deferred, will also go to polls on Tuesday and over 11 crore people will be eligible

SFJ FUNDING

Delhi L-G for NIA probe against Kejriwal

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena on Monday has recommended National Investigation Agency (NIA) probe against Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for allegedly receiving political funding from banned terrorist organization 'Sikhs for Justice'.

L-G had received complaint that Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP had received huge funds - USD 16 million - from the extremist Khalistani groups for facilitating the release of Devendra Pal Bhullar and espousing the Pro-Khalistani sentiments.

In a letter to the Union Home Secretary, Saxena referred to a video (which he said was enclosed with the missive) in which Pannun declares Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party "received a staggering amount of USD 16 million dollars in funding from Khalistani groups."

"I am directed to forward a

ED seizes Rs 20 cr cash from help of J'khand minister's aide

TDG NETWORK
RANCHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has conducted raids at multiple locations in Ranchi on Monday morning, uncovering over Rs 20 crore from the residence of a household help employed by Sanjiv Lal, the Personal Secretary to Jharkhand Rural Development Minister Alamgir Alam. The counting of the recovered cash is still in process.

The raids are part of an ongoing investigation related to the case involving Virendra K. Ram, the chief engineer at the Jharkhand Rural Development Department, who was arrested in February 2023 in connection with alleged irregularities in the implementation of government schemes.

"The Enforcement Directorate is conducting raids at multiple locations in Ranchi, Jharkhand. A



Congress made their servant's house a godown of black money. Why such mountains of notes are recovered from those who are close to the first family of Congress?
-PM Modi in Andhra

huge amount of cash was recovered from the household help of Sanjiv Lal, PS to Alamgir Alam, Rural Development Minister, Jharkhand. More than Rs 20 crores has been counted so far. Counting is still in process," ED officials said.

In 2019, a huge amount of cash was recovered from one of his subordinates. Later, the ED took over the case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. ED arrested Virendra K Ram, the chief engineer at the Jharkhand Rural De-

V-Cs dismiss Rahul's charges on their appointment

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Vice-Chancellors and academicians across the country have written an open letter to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in connection with his alleged remarks on the appointment of V-Cs, accusing him of "resorting to falsehood."

In the letter, it was stated, "It has come to our notice from tweet and open sources of Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader, that the appointment of Vice Chancellors is made solely based on affiliation with some organisation rather than merit and qualification, thereby questioning the merit of the process through which the Vice-Chancellors are appointed."

The letter rubbished the alleged claims by Rahul Gandhi, saying, "We categorically and unequivocally discard such claims."

The signatories of over 100 academic professionals, including VCs from top

universities across the world and academicians, have been attached along with the letter dated May 5.

It further delved into the appointment process, explaining that the selection is characterised by "stringent, transparent, rigorous procedure." The letter also urged people to abstain from "spreading unfounded rumours."

"The process by which Vice Chancellors are selected is characterised by stringent, transparent rigorous procedure grounded

'PM Modi wants to make Constitution redundant'

AGENCIES
RATLAM (MADHYA PRADESH)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday asserted that Prime Minister Modi wants to make the Constitution redundant by snatching away the rights of Adivasis, Backwards and Dalits, adding that Congress is attempting to stop it. Addressing a public meeting here today, Rahul emphasized that if voted to power, they will increase the reservation to more than 50 per cent.

"PM Modi wants to make the Constitution redundant and only he wants to rule. He wants to snatch all of your rights. This is their goal and we are trying to stop him. All the rights that the Adivasis, backwards and Dalits get, are due to this (Constitution). BJP leaders have said very clearly that if they come to power, they will put this book (Constitution) aside. This is why they have given a slogan of 400 seats. They are not going to get even 150 seats. Their leaders have been saying that we will take away the reservation,"



We will remove the 50 per cent limit implemented by the court. We will give the amount of reservation required by the Dalits, Adivasis, backwards and poor.

Rahul Gandhi

he said.

"We will increase the reservations to more than 50 per cent. We will remove the 50 per cent limit implemented by the court. We will give the amount of reservation required by the Dalits, Adivasis, backwards and poor," Rahul added. Further, he mentioned that the media also never highlights the problems of the tribals.

"They do not do this because not a single tribal will be found working in their big companies. One anchor and one journalist cannot be found in the tribal or Dalit class. Not a single tribal will be found in the 200 big companies of India. We gave you the Forest Conservation Act. Whatever work we do for the public, as soon as their gov-

ernment comes to power, they reverse it," Rahul Gandhi said.

The Congress leader also asserted that to increase Dalit, Adivasi and backward-class participation in the country, they have decided to conduct a caste census.

"Tribals, Dalits and backward people have no participation in the country. We want to change this. We want your people in government, media, public sector, big companies. Therefore, we have decided that we are going to conduct a caste census so that you will know what is your population and what is your participation in the country. This is a revolutionary work which will change the politics of India," Rahul added.

ISC, ICSE results out, 99.47% pass class 10

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), New Delhi announced results for the ICSE (Class 10th) and ISC (Class 12th) Examinations Year 2024 on Monday.

The passing percentage for the academic year 2023-2024 stood at 99.47% (2,42,328 students) for class 10th while 98.19% (98,088 passed) for class 12th.

The number of students appearing for the Class 10th examinations was 99,901, out of which there were 52,765 boys (52.82%) and



Students celebrate after the declaration of ICSE and ISC results, in Lucknow on Monday. ANI

47,136 girls (47.18%)

In both exams, girls achieved better results, with girls achieving a pass percentage of 99.65% against 99.31% of boys in class 10th. For class 12th, girls achieved a pass percentage of 98.92% while boys achieved a pass

percentage of 97.53%.

For class 10th, the Western region has the highest pass percentage with 99.91% followed by the Southern region (99.88%).

For class 12th, the Southern region has the highest pass percentage (99.53%)

followed by the Western region (99.32%).

For class 10th, 1,088 differently-abled students with learning difficulties took the exams and 98 of them obtained marks above 90%. While 40 visually challenged students took the exam and 12 candidates obtained marks above 90%.

236 differently-abled students with learning difficulties took the class 12th exam and 18 of them scored marks above 90%. While 11 visually challenged students took the exam and two obtained marks above 90%.

INSIDE

ELECTIONS IN THE SPIRITUAL CAPITAL

Varanasi, also known as Banaras and Kashi, holds immense religious and cultural significance in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. It is one of the oldest inhabited cities globally and a crucial Lok Sabha constituency.

DETAILS P9

Reports say Hamas has accepted ceasefire proposal of Egypt, Qatar

AGENCIES
TEL

JERUSALEM: Hamas announced Monday it has accepted an Egyptian-Qatari proposal for a cease-fire to halt the seven-month-long war with Israel in Gaza, hours after Israel ordered about 100,000 Palestinians to begin evacuating from the southern city of Rafah, signalling that a long-promised ground invasion there could be imminent.

There was no immediate comment from Israel on the deal, and details of the pro-



posal have not yet been released. In recent days, Egyptian and Hamas officials have said the cease-fire would take place in a series of stages during which Hamas would release hostages it is holding

Egyptian and Hamas officials have said the cease-fire would take place in a series of stages during which Hamas would release hostages

in exchange for Israeli troop pullbacks from Gaza.

It is not clear whether the deal will meet Hamas' key demand of bringing about an end to the war and complete Israeli withdrawal.

PEOPLE OF ODISHA REMAINED POOR DUE TO CONGRESS, BJD: PM MODI

TDG NETWORK
GANJAM (ODISHA)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday stepped up the attack on Congress and Naveen Patnaik's party Biju Janata Dal and said that the people of the "rich state" remained "poor" and both parties are responsible for it.

"In Odisha, the Congress party ruled for nearly 50 years, followed by 25 years of BJD government. But what happened? Odisha has water, fertile land, a treasure trove of minerals beneath the ground... a long coastline... trade centres like Berhampur... it's a Silk City and the food capital too. Here, there is history, heritage of culture as well. Still, the people of this 'rich' Odisha remained poor... Who is responsible for this



sin? The answer is Congress and BJD," PM Modi said addressing a rally in Behrampur.

Slamming the BJD government for not implementing the Centre's schemes, PM Modi said that while the Ayushman Bharat scheme has benefited over 6 crore people nationwide, the people of Odisha missed out due to the BJD's negligence.

"Modi has given a guarantee for free medical treatment up to Rs. 5 lakh, and over 6 crore people across the country have benefitted from this. Notably, Odisha has not benefitted from this very initiative as the BJD government did not allow the Ayushman Bharat Yojana to get implemented in Odisha," he said.

He assured free treatment worth 5 lakh rupees for el-

derly people above 70 years in Odisha, emphasizing the need for a BJP government in the state to ensure such benefits reach the people.

The Prime Minister said that the Odisha government does not care about the interests of women adding that the central government is providing financial help to every pregnant woman.

"Today, the government in Odisha shows no concern for the welfare of women. The central government provides financial aid of 6,000 rupees to every pregnant woman, aiming to ensure essential nutrition for both the mother and child. It's surprising to know that the Odisha government has not implemented this scheme here. Meanwhile, the BJP government is committed to

women's empowerment. The BJP's 'Subhadra Scheme' in Odisha will financially empower women," he said.

He further asserted that the BJD-ruled state government could not spend money sent by the Centre properly.

"The central government gave Rs 10,000 crore to Odisha for Jal Jeevan Mission. The government here could not spend that money properly. Modi sends money to build roads in villages, but here the condition of roads in villages is bad. Modi sends money for free rice from Delhi, but BJD government pastes its photo on this scheme and takes the credit of that," says PM Modi.

PM Modi said that for Odisha BJP has pledged to make 25 lakh women associated with self-help groups as Lakhpati Didis.

BJP daydreaming about forming government in Odisha: Naveen

TDG NETWORK
BHUBANESWAR

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday took a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his remark that "June 4 is the expiry date of the BJD government, saying that "BJP is daydreaming about forming government in Odisha."

Sharing a video on X, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) media coordinator Saurabh Srivastava wrote, "BJP daydreaming about forming a government in Odisha, says CM Naveen Patnaik."

VK Pandian, a close aide of the Odisha CM, said, "Naveen Patnaik will take oath again on June 9. He will take the oath as CM for the 6th term on June 9, 2024 with the people's blessings. The swearing-in ceremony will take place between 11.30 am to 1.30 pm."

Earlier today, addressing a public rally in Behrampur, PM Modi exuded confidence in the BJP forming a "double engine government" in Odisha



VK Pandian, a close aide of the Odisha CM, said, "Naveen Patnaik will take oath again on June 9. He will take the oath as CM for the 6th term on June 9, 2024 with the people's blessings. The swearing-in ceremony will take place between 11.30 am to 1.30 pm."

for the first time and stated that he is glad to be present in the pious land of Lord Jagannath.

"June 4 is the expiry date of the BJD government... On June 4, BJP's CM face will

be announced. On June 10, the swearing-in ceremony of BJP's CM will take place, in Bhubaneswar. Today, I am here to invite all of you to the swearing-in ceremony of BJP's CM," he said.

Punjab: BJP accuses rival parties of obstructing poll campaigning

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

In the midst of mounting protests from farmers against BJP candidates in Punjab, State Party Chief Sunil Jakhar urged the Chief Electoral Officer on Monday to intervene, citing alleged coercion leading to withdrawals from campaign activities. Jakhar raised concerns about potential collaboration between the ruling AAP and other parties, accusing them of obstructing BJP candidates' campaigns.

The ongoing Lok Sabha campaign has seen BJP candidates and leaders encountering farmer protests, with demonstrators posing questions and displaying black flags to express dissatisfaction with unmet demands.

Presenting a memorandum to Punjab Chief Electoral Officer Sabin C. Jakhar, accompanied by party leaders Parminder Brar and Vineet Joshi, decried the failure of

The ongoing Lok Sabha campaign has seen BJP candidates and leaders encountering farmer protests, with demonstrators posing questions and displaying black flags to express dissatisfaction with unmet demands.

state authorities to ensure BJP candidates' campaign rights. He warned that without equal campaign opportunities, the electoral process would be compromised.

Jakhar emphasized the BJP's commitment to farmers' rights through dialogue but cautioned against unchecked protests forcing withdrawals, potentially leading to violence. He highlighted the risk of anti-social elements exploiting the situation, undermining the fairness of elections.

Jakhar urged electoral authorities to thwart the alleged conspiracy against the BJP, citing disruptions and denial of campaign rights. He point-

ed to incidents like the recent death of a farmer during a BJP candidate's campaign in Patiala as indicative of deteriorating law and order under the AAP government.

Jakhar accused rival parties, including AAP, SAD, and Congress, of orchestrating disruptions to impede BJP's rising influence in Punjab. He called for accountability from the state's top officials, urging swift action to safeguard BJP candidates and uphold the electoral process. Expressing faith in the electoral system, Jakhar called on the Chief Electoral Officer to intervene urgently to address the BJP's concerns and ensure a fair campaign environment.

PM Modi has taken 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' mantra beyond borders: Jaishankar

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

India's foreign policy under the Modi government has witnessed some shining moments. A key diplomatic milestone was the successful adoption of the Delhi Declaration during the G20 Summit, amid simmering tensions over the Russia-Ukraine war, said External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

In an exclusive interview with Editor-In-Chief of NewsX, Rishabh Gulati, he highlighted how India's positive perception in the global stage has augmented over the last ten years.

Jaishankar said, "It's often in my interest not to make binary choices. We have the ability to have good relations with Russia and the US."

He further spoke about the Modi government's conscious decision to not pick sides in conflicts raging across the world, and India's endeavour



to create consensus among global leaders.

Jaishankar emphasised upon PM Modi's approach with regards to this, stating, "The Prime Minister has a vision for the world like he does for India. He has practical policies for India and he has practical ideas for the world. Just because you are practical doesn't mean you don't have ideals."

Jaishankar also spoke about carrying PM Modi's 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' mantra beyond borders. He emphasised upon India extending a helping hand to the world in providing Covid-19 vaccines, the flow of credit to cash-strapped Sri Lanka, and the

recent anti-piracy operations in the Arabian Sea.

Jaishankar iterated that there has been a marked improvement in India's fight against terrorism over the past decade. "Unlike 26/11, we will not turn the other cheek. If anything happens in India, there will be consequences."

This tough talk echoes the stance taken by the Narendra Modi-led government to combat terror. After Prime Minister Modi was sworn into power in 2014, India witnessed a marked reduction in terror attacks. In fact, there have been zero terror attacks in any major metropolitan city in the last ten years.

India's war on terror has progressed by leaps and bounds since the days when the government merely sent dossiers to Pakistan post tragedies that claimed the lives of hundreds of innocent people. Case in point is the dastardly 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks

that killed dozens.

Despite India's repeated diplomatic efforts to persuade Pakistan to extradite the 26/11 mastermind Hafiz Saeed, nothing much came of it. All the while, the perpetrators of the heinous attack continue to roam scot-free even today.

On the other hand, after the devastating attacks in Uri and Pulwama in 2016 and 2019, India did not shy away from giving a befitting response to the Pakistan-backed terrorists. Speaking on the surgical strikes conducted by India, Jaishankar said, "I think that the message has gone through."

He further commented on Canada harboring Khalistani terrorists and said, "The Prime Minister of Canada has said things that were none of his business."

Jaishankar lambasted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his 2023 Cambridge speech where he spoke how 'India

was falling apart', questioning his intentions. The External Affairs Minister said, "Some people who consciously go out of India, bad mouth the country. In politics, I don't have to say nice things about you, but, I don't have to run down the system. I don't have to say the country is falling apart."

He called out the Gandhiscion's remarks on the liberty of minorities in India and said, "Rahul needs to answer why he says some things. I can only guess it's because of lack of traction back home. He may feel there are more like-minded people out there."

He also raked up Rahul's visit to Cambridge University in March 2023 and advised people to listen to the entire lecture. Taking a dig at the Congress leader, Jaishankar highlighted, "You will see the admiration for China in the lecture. He will never criticise the Belt-and-Road that impinges on our sovereignty."

Channi clarifies 'stuntbaazi' remark, says 'statement was distorted'

TDG NETWORK
JALANDHAR (PUNJAB)

Former Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi issued a clarification on Monday over his alleged remarks on the recent terror attack incident in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch and said that his statement was "distorted."

Channi said that he intended to point out that a "similar attack" took place during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections referring to the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed by terrorists.

"My statement was distorted. What I meant to say was that a similar attack had taken place during the last Lok Sabha elections also. But it



was not investigated by BJP and till now it is not known who was involved in the said attack," Channi said in a self-made video released today after his remarks stirred a controversy.

Channi alleged that Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar had demanded the Prime Minister's resignation following the terror attack in 2019 adding that Jakhar has "no stand."

"Punjab BJP chief Sunil

Jakhar had asked for PM Modi's resignation over the last attack. This attack was carried out as part of a conspiracy. This statement was given by Jakhar on stage. Jakhar has no stand. Satyapal Malik, who was the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, had said about the last attack that such attacks can happen again. But the government did not take the gist of the said complaint," the former CM said.

Channi claimed that the BJP was turning the death of soldiers into a political stunt. "I feel sad when the soldiers of my country are martyred. But BJP is making it its stunt. We are proud of the jawans who joined the armed forces to safeguard the country. I gave a statement that in the

last Parliamentary elections, 40 jawans were attacked and they lost their lives," he said.

"To date, the Government has not found out who executed the attack and who was responsible for it. It is election time once again. Our jawans were attacked once again and one jawan lost his life. I would like to ask the Government - who are those people who orchestrate such attacks, why are they not brought before everyone,

and why does intelligence failure take place? Jawans have lost their lives once again. What I am saying is that why is this being made a political stunt and used by BJP?" PM Modi said.

Radhika Khera claims of being locked in room, offered alcohol during Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Chhattisgarh Congress leader Radhika Khera, who resigned from the party on Sunday after alleging "disrespect" from the state unit, claimed that the Congress began to "hate her" after she visited the Ayodhya Ram Temple and was reprimanded for sharing videos or photos of the grand temple.

Addressing a press conference in the national capital, Khera said that the party instructed her not to visit the temple during the election period.

"I always heard that Congress is anti-Ram, anti-Sanatan and anti-Hindu but I never believed it. Mahatma Gandhi used to start every meeting with 'Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram'. I got exposed to this reality when I went to the Ram temple with my grandmother and after returning from there, I put a 'Jai Shri Ram' flag on the door of my house



and after that, the Congress party started hating me. Whenever I posted photos or videos, I was scolded and asked why did I visit Ayodhya when elections were under way," Radhika Khera said.

She further alleged that during Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, the media chairman of Chhattisgarh Congress offered her alcohol.

"During Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, the media chairman of Chhattisgarh Congress - Sushil Anand Shukla offered me alcohol and he along with 5-6 party workers, used to knock on the door of my room in an inebriated condition. I informed Sachin Pilot, and Jairam Ramesh but nothing happened. I later un-

derstood that I was ignored because I did not follow the anti-Hindu ideology of the party," she added.

Khera further claimed that Chhattisgarh Congress - Sushil Anand Shukla misbehaved and abused her, adding that no action was taken by the party leaders.

"On April 30, when I went to talk to the media chairman of Chhattisgarh Congress, Sushil Anand Shukla, he started misbehaving with me and abusing me. I screamed a lot. I also shouted and told people to go down and call the General Secretary but no one moved. Then, when I took out my phone and said that I was recording you, Sushil Anand Shukla made a gesture and 2 more people in that room closed the door from inside. The room remained locked for about a minute and I was abused, Mujhe gandi gandi gaaliya di gai... All three men got up and came towards me. I kept screaming but no one tried to open the door... I pushed the door very hard and opened it and went to the room of the State General Secretary, but he kept sitting with his shoes off.

Bittu is neither a patriot, nor a nationalist; he is just an opportunist: Warring

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Congress president and party's candidate from Ludhiana parliamentary constituency Amarinder Singh Raja Warring today said that the BJP candidate Ravneet Singh Bittu was neither a patriot nor a nationalist, but just an opportunist.

"Once a traitor, always a traitor", he remarked about Bittu, while adding, "if he can betray the Congress that gave him everything, he can betray the BJP

also, which cannot give him anything" Addressing a series of public meetings here today, Warring told the people of Ludhiana not to get carried away by Bittu's false and fake claims as he had joined the BJP after deserting the Congress only for his personal ambitions.

The PCC president observed that Bittu mistakenly assumed that the BJP was returning to power at the centre and by joining the party he may become a minister. "Bittu's misplaced ambitions will come crashing down as neither the BJP is returning to power, nor is he go-

ing to win from here", he claimed, while emphasizing that he had deserted the Congress just with a selfish interest and not for anything else.

Warring said, if Bittu was truly an honest person, a patriot and a nationalist, he would never have deserted the Congress party to join the BJP. He observed, it will take BJP another hundred years or more to match the Congress on patriotic and nationalistic credentials and the number of sacrifices it has given, first for getting freedom for the country and then protecting and

ing to win from here", he claimed, while emphasizing that he had deserted the Congress just with a selfish interest and not for anything else.

SAD Chandigarh candidate resigns, party members follow suit amid debut election bid

TARUNI GANDHI
CHANDIGARH

In a significant blow to the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), Chandigarh candidate Hardeep Singh Butrela tendered his resignation from the party's membership on Monday. Speaking at a press conference held in Chandigarh, Butrela expressed his disillusionment with the party's policies.

Butrela lamented the lack of support from senior party

Earlier, with the announcement of Butrela's candidacy, the SAD had marked its debut in the Chandigarh Lok Sabha Seat.

leaders despite being declared the Chandigarh candidate. He emphasized that no senior figure visited Chandigarh to extend their support during his campaign. Asserting his decision to refrain from joining any other political outfit, Butrela, who also served as the president of the Chandigarh unit, announced his resignation from the party.

Earlier, with the announcement of Butrela's candidacy, the SAD had marked its debut in the Chandigarh Lok Sabha Seat. However, with Butrela's departure and that of his team members, the party faces a significant setback just as it

sought to establish a foothold in the region.

Accompanying Butrela, several other members like Gurpreet Singh, Charanjit Singh, Avtar Singh, Bibi Johal, Sukhwinder Singh Bhatia, Jaswant Kaur, Kamaljit Singh, Kuldeep Singh, Dhanas, Jagtar Singh, Ajit Singh. The collective resignation marks a notable development within the SAD's Chandigarh unit, reflecting growing discontent within the party ranks.

CONG TRIES TO COME TO POWER BY HOOK OR BY CROOK: NADDA

TDG NETWORK
PEDDAPALLI (TELANGANA)

BJP National President JP Nadda on Monday targeted the Congress party and claimed that the party tries to come to power by hook or by crook, through fake promises, fake slogans, politics of vote bank, and criminals.

The BJP National President made these remarks while addressing a public rally in Telangana's Peddapalli and said, "We have seen the era when Congress was ruling, and when we recall that, we must remember the concerns of corruption, policy paralysis and indecisiveness that entailed their governance model and Congress again wants to push the nation back in the same era."



He added further, "Congress tries to come to power by hook or by crook, through fake promises, fake slogans, politics of vote bank, and criminals. Today, under Modi ji's leadership, India has shunned dynastic politics and is moving forward with the politics of development."

JP Nadda also lauded Prime Minister Naren-

dra Modi's leadership and claimed that the country is making strides towards becoming Atmanirbhar Bharat, while adding, "We are moving forward with the idea of 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas'. Bharat is shining as a global leader. In Modi 3.0, India will become 3rd largest world economy."

The BJP National President in his speech mentioned

about India's achievements in sectors like automobiles, pharmaceuticals, and petrochemicals. He said, "I would also like to mention that in



the sector of automobiles, India ranks third and has left Japan behind. In the sector of pharmaceuticals and manufacturing medicines, the country stands in second position. We have left behind the other countries and today, India is making one of the most cheap and effective medicines.

FIR registered against Nadda, Amit Malviya, and BY Vijayendra over social media post

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

An FIR has been registered against BJP national president, JP Nadda, party's IT cell head Amit Malviya and Karnataka unit chief BY Vijayendra for allegedly intimidating members of the SC and ST community not to vote for a particular candidate, police said.

According to officials, a case under the sections of the Representation of People Act and IPC section 505 (2) (for statements creating or promoting enmity, hatred or ill-will between classes) has been registered against the BJP leaders.

The action comes after a formal complaint lodged

The action comes after a formal complaint lodged by the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) with the Election Commission and Bengaluru police on Sunday alleging a violation of the model code of conduct.

by the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) with the Election Commission and Bengaluru police on Sunday alleging a violation of the model code of conduct.

"The said video posted on social media featured animated characters of (Congress leader) Rahul Gandhi and (Chief Minister) Siddaramaiah. In the clip, the SC, ST and OBC communities are portrayed as 'eggs' in a nest

and it also suggested Rahul Gandhi planting a big egg labelled as the Muslim community. It is projected as though funds are being fed to the chick depicting the Muslim community, which then kicks out SC, ST and OBC communities," Ramesh Babu, the Chairman, media & Communication, KPCC, alleged in a complaint to Bengaluru City Police.

"As such, the intent of posting video by BJP on its

official X handle appears to be to seek votes in Lok Sabha Elections by projecting the Congress party to be favouring the Muslim community. However, the act of JP Nadda, National President - of Bharatiya Janata Party, Amit Malviya - National Social Media Incharge of Bharatiya Janata Party, BY Vijayendra - State President - Karnataka BJP and Social Media Incharge - of Karnataka BJP is to portray the SC and ST Community in a derogatory manner and the act showing SC and ST community being "kicked by another religion (Muslim) is with an intent to prevent or intimidate a member of Schedule caste or tribe to not vote for a particular candidate attracting offence punishable under Section 3(L)(A) of SC/ST PoA Act 1989.

Amit Shah doctored video case: Accused Arun Reddy sent to 1-day judicial custody

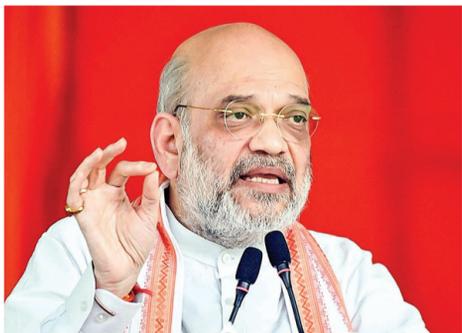
TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Patiala House Court of Delhi on Monday sent accused Arun Reddy who allegedly handled the 'Spirit of Congress' X account, in connection with the Union Home Minister Amit Shah's 'deepfake morphed video' case, to judicial custody till May 7, 2024.

Reddy was recently arrested by the Delhi Police in the case and was produced on Monday after three days of remand in the court.

Additional Sessions Judge (Link Judge) Neha Garg sent him to Judicial Custody for one day and also issued notice to the Investigation Officer of Delhi Police on a bail plea filed by Arun Reddy.

Last week, the Delhi Police arrested Arun Reddy, who handles the 'Spirit of



Congress' X account, in connection with Amit Shah's doctored video case.

In the doctored video, the Union Home Minister is purportedly heard saying that the BJP stands against the reservations in the country.

However, during his address at a public meeting in Congress-ruled Telangana, Shah said, "If the BJP forms

the government here, we will withdraw the unconstitutional reservations to Muslims. We will ensure that the SCs, STs and OBCs get quotas as guaranteed under the Constitution."

Earlier, five Congress workers were arrested by the Telangana Police in connection with Shah's fake video case.

West Bengal: Jobs, corruption, water crisis key issues as Murshidabad gears up to vote in Phase 3

TDG NETWORK
MURSHIDABAD

Known for its silk weaving industry Murshidabad is heading into polls in the upcoming third phase of the Lok Sabha elections tomorrow along with three other Parliamentary constituencies in the State- Jangipur, Malda Uttar and Malda Dakshin.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the All India Trinamool Congress had won Jangipur and Murshidabad out of the four constituencies.

Violence during polls and deaths have been reported in the Murshidabad district in all panchayat polls since 2003.

According to locals, key issues of concern are jobs and corruption at the local level. Locals allege that people from Bangladesh enter



here illegally and cast their votes. Illegal sand mining and cow smuggling to Bangladesh are other concerns of the voters.

The brand "Murshidabad silk" is not only famous across India, but also has a great demand throughout the world. The constituency is also famed for its brass and bell metalware. It was a prosperous city and capital of Bengal till the British

defeated Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula in the battle of Plassey in 1757.

The district has one of the largest international boundaries with Bangladesh compared to other districts of the state.

Murshidabad district comprises three Lok Sabha constituencies - Murshidabad, Berhampur and Jangipur - and a part of the Dakshin Malda constituency.

Madhya Pradesh: 9 women among 127 candidates in fray for third phase

TDG NETWORK
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh is set to go to the polls for nine parliamentary seats in the third phase of Lok Sabha election from 7 am onwards tomorrow and a total of 127 candidates, including nine women candidates are in fray in this phase, an official said.

Nine parliamentary seats in the state - Morena, Bhind, Gwalior, Guna, Sagar, Vidisha, Bhopal, Rajgarh and Betul - will go to the polls in the third phase of LS polls on May 7 from 7 am to 6pm.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Electoral officer, Anupam Rajan said, "Nine parliamentary seats in the state will undergo polling tomorrow in the third phase of Lok Sabha elections. A total of 72 assembly constituencies and 19 districts are included in these nine Lok Sabha seats which will undergo polling. There are 127 candidates in fray which include 118 men and nine women."

Bhopal has the maximum number of candidates where a total of 22 candidates are in the fray while Bhind has the least number of candidates which is seven. The Polling time will be from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Also, mock polls will be performed before polling in presence of polling agents, he added.

"There are a total of 20,456 polling stations for the third phase of LS polls in the state. Of these polling stations, 5,744 critical polling stations have been identified. Also, there are 2,043 pink polling booths, where all the polling personnel are women and similarly 75 booths are such that which will be managed completely by specially-abled agents in the third phase of polling in the state," Rajan said.

First roads, then votes: Tribals in Visakhapatnam protest by travelling on horses

TDG NETWORK
VISAKHAPATNAM

The tribals of Madrebu village of Anantgiri Mandal in Visakhapatnam district staged a protest by travelling on horses through the forests to demand road facilities to their villages on Sunday.

The protesters warned that they would boycott voting on May 13 unless the government addresses their transportation needs. It is alleged that the figures show that crores of funds have been spent for the Adivasis, but the development works are not seen in reality.

Govind Raju who is the tribal association leader, said, "For us, horses are cargo buses to transport agricultural produce to local markets for sale. Additionally, we use horses as ambulances to take patients or



full-term pregnant women to health centres."

Raju also alleged that there is no change in the lives of tribals, no matter how many governments change and added, "They depend on the forest to survive and are facing many problems with lack of minimal infrastructure. There is no road to go to the hospital in an emergency."

The tribal leader also complained about the medical

facilities and said, "There is no medical facility nearby. To go to the hospital, one has to cross streams and bends or carry a dolly. In this case, many pregnant women have given birth in the forest... At a time when the general elections are approaching in Andhra Pradesh, the tribals of Alluri district have launched an innovative protest."

Earlier, Former MP Botsa

Jhansi Lakshmi, who is contesting the Lok Sabha elections on the YSRCP ticket from Visakhapatnam on May 4 had asserted that Vizag (Visakhapatnam) is a well-developed city with advantageous geographical positioning and robust connectivity, drawing the attention of global investors. It is rapidly growing, and ranked as the ninth richest city in the country for contributing a significant USD 43.5 billion to the GDP, the former MP said that the city is set to emerge as a vital financial growth engine for the state.

She further said that the advancement of North Andhra depends upon the development of Vizag.

"Vision Visakhapatnam' is our vision document that will redefine the history of Visakhapatnam. The city is endowed with a wealth

Longest river bridge in India sparks political debate in Assam's Dhubri

TDG NETWORK
DHUBRI

As voters in Dhubri, Assam, prepare for the May 7 elections, the construction of the longest river bridge in India has taken centre stage in political campaigns. The bridge, which will span the Brahmaputra River, is set to connect Dhubri in Assam with Phulwari in Meghalaya, reducing travel time and easing trade and communication between the two states.

The 20-kilometre-long bridge, expected to be completed by 2027, has become a critical issue in the triangular electoral contest involving the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP), and the Congress party. The foundation stone for the bridge was laid in 2021, with Prime Minister



Narendra Modi officiating the ceremony.

Residents, including students, businessmen, and everyday commuters, have expressed enthusiasm for the bridge, citing the challenges posed by the current boat transportation system. Presently, travelling across the Brahmaputra by boat can take three to four hours, with significant disruptions during the monsoon season. The new bridge is expected to cut the travel distance be-

tween Dhubri and Phulwari by around 200 kilometres, streamlining trade and other essential activities.

A resident said, "If the bridge gets built, the benefit will be that we can reach Meghalaya in a much shorter time. It will make things easier for businesses since transporting goods on boats is very challenging. With the bridge, it will be much easier. It takes three hours by boat, so this bridge will save a lot of time."

Rahul Gandhi has 'forsaken' people of Wayanad, Amethi: Annamalai

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai alleged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has "forsaken" people of Wayanad and Amethi as the latter seeks people's mandate from Uttar Pradesh's Raebareli Lok Sabha seat which is polling on May 7.

Rahul Gandhi is sitting MP in Kerala's Wayanad where he is seeking a fresh term alongside Raebareli. Rahul represented Amethi from 2004 until 2019.

"Everybody knows the situation. When Rahul Gandhiji was contesting in Kerala's Wayanad, people of Wayanad were asking him, will you contest in a second constituency? He never answered. He told Wayanad people, that they are his family. And he will be with them always. We have seen for the last five years, Rahul Gandhiji has visited Wayanad a total of seven times. Total of seven times only, in five years," Annamalai said while speaking to ANI in the national capital on Sunday evening.



The BJP leader further claimed that the Raebareli people will "reject" Congress this time adding that the

people have read through the latter's "evil design." "Now Rahul Gandhiji has not only forsaken the people of Wayanad. He has

"The progress he has got for our country and more importantly his work like a 'sankalp', like a monk Modiji has done for our country. Our mothers and sisters and youth are very clear. They want to bless Modiji with a larger mandate this time," Annamalai said.

also forsaken the people of Amethi who elected him in 2004, 2009 and 2014. Now going to Raebareli, Rahul Gandhiji might think it is a safe seat. But people look

for courage in a leader, and that too Rahul Gandhiji is aspiring to sit on the Prime Minister's chair. It is a very clear case across India people have read through

Congress' evil design, and moral bankruptcy that they will take people for granted. After one phase of the election in Kerala is over, then they will go to the next phase and submit their nomination form. So we are confident even Raebareli people will reject Congress this time," he said.

Annamalai also expressed confidence in Prime Minister Narendra Modi returning to office with a larger mandate again this time.

"The progress he has got

for our country and more importantly his work like a 'sankalp', like a monk Modiji has done for our country. Our mothers and sisters and youth are very clear. They want to bless Modiji with a larger mandate this time," Annamalai said.

Raebareli along with 93 constituencies across the country will be voting tomorrow in the third phase. The voting in Kerala was held in a single phase on April 26. The counting of votes will be held on June 4.

AMIT SHAH ASKS FOR DETAILED REPORT ON SANDESHKHALI 'STING'

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE
KRISHNANAGAR

Home Minister Amit Shah, who spent the day in West Bengal on the campaign trail, is learnt to have asked for a "detailed report on the Sandeshkhali sting". BJP sources said that the Union Home Minister held an organisation meeting late last night and asked the BJP State leadership to submit to him a detailed report on the Sandeshkhali "sting operation".

After being on the backfoot for months since the women of Sandeshkhali rose in protest against the sexual exploitation and land-grabby Trinamool Congress leaders, the party struck back on Sat-

urday, unveiling a 30-minute "sting" in which a local BJP leader is heard saying that senior BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari had orchestrated the complaints of sexual crimes in Sandeshkhali.

Meanwhile, in twin rallies in Krishnanagar and Durgapur in support of party candidates, Amit Shah exhorted the people to "vote fearlessly", and defy the "threats of the ruling Trinamool Congress". He also asserted that the BJP would win at least 30 seats in West Bengal.

After holding a one-km roadshow on Krishnanagar's Sadar Hospital Road on a truck decked with multi-colour flowers in support of BJP candidate Rajmata

Amrita Roy, Shah said the Election Commission has already assured the countrymen that elections would be free and fair and strict action would be taken against any intimidation. Shah started the procession around 12:30 p.m. from Beldanga More.

"Only the BJP can stop infiltration in Bengal and hence Prime Minister Narendra Modi needs people's support for returning to the saddle for the third successive term in Parliament," Shah asserted.

Shah spelt out a long list of corrupt activities in Bengal under the Mamata Banerjee Government like "cut money business, extortion, arrest of the ministers after being caught with crores of money,



ANI discovery of bomb-making factories and confiscation of arms and ammunition, torture of the sisters and women at Sandeshkhali by TMC goons." Shah said the list was unending as the Mamata Banerjee Government had failed to deliver goods to the people.

"This TMC Government

ing his roadshow defying the heatwave and scorching sun and urged all to vote for Roy in large numbers on May 13, the fourth phase of polling.

"The BJP will end the menace of infiltration in the State. The TMC can never stop it. I would request all of you to ensure the victory of the BJP candidate from this seat. Seeing such a huge crowd and support of the people, I am confident of a victory in Krishnanagar," Shah said at the conclusion of the roadshow.

Thousands of locals queued up on both sides of the road and watched the procession pass.

Earlier Rajmata Amrita Roy told the gathering: "Do not fear and cast your vote

courageously as the TMC goons have been saying that if any Hindu voter found near the BJP booths will be dealt accordingly."

BJP's Amrita Roy, from the Krishnanagar royal family, is taking on the Trinamool Congress's Mahua Moitra who won the seat in 2019 and was expelled last year from the Lok Sabha in an alleged cash-for-query scam. The Trinamool Congress has renominated her from the seat.

In Durgapur, where Amit Shah campaigned for Dilip Ghosh, the Union Home Minister assured the people of Durgapur of reopening all closed factories in this industrial district. He also assured the people that the Narendra Modi Government planned

to pump in more funds for Durgapur Steel Plant and Urea factory here.

Addressing an election rally in favour of Durgapur-Bardhaman Lok Sabha candidate Dilip Ghosh, Shah accused the Mamata Banerjee-led State Government of letting her goons run a reign of terror across Bengal and said industries were closed down for alleged extortion.

He accused the Trinamool Congress Government of encouraging infiltrators from across the borders to increase Mamata Banerjee's vote bank.

Shah said several unlawful elements, who were against the national interests, were also taking shelter in the border areas.

PM Modi on Prajwal Revanna case: There should be zero tolerance against such people

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Amid the row over Prajwal Revanna 'obscene video' case, Prime Minister Narendra Modi strongly asserted that there should be "zero tolerance" against such people and "stringent punishment" should be given to them using all available legal options.

He, also attacked the Congress party over the issue, stating that these thousands of videos are not of one day. He accused Congress of allowing Prajwal to flee the state and videos were released only after he left the country.

Prajwal Revanna, the suspended Janata Dal-Secular

(JD-S) leader is the incumbent MP from the Hassan constituency. He is seeking re-election as an NDA candidate from the same seat. Polling on the seat was completed on April 26.

In an interview with Times Now, PM Modi said, "I am of the clear view that there should be zero tolerance against such people. Stringent punishment should be given using all the legal options available."

Prime Minister Modi further stated that it is a law and order issue and whichever party is in government in the state, is responsible for taking action.

"It is a law-and-order issue. If such an incident took

place in Bengal, then the Bengal government would be responsible. If it happened in Gujarat, then the Gujarat government is responsible. If it happened, then Andhra then Andhra government would be responsible. If it happened in Karnataka, then Karnataka government is responsible to take action," he further said.

Prime Minister Modi alleged that the videos were recorded when Congress was in power in the state in alliance with JD(S) and were released only after the Vokkaliga voters exercised their franchise during the second phase.

"However, these thousands of videos would not be of sin-

gle day which implies that it is of the time when JD(S) was in alliance with Congress. These videos were gathered when they were in power. They released it during the election after Vokkaligas exercised their franchise," the Prime Minister said.

"The videos were released after he was sent out of the country. You allowed him to go from the state. This is very suspicious," he added.

HD Revanna and his son, Prajwal Revanna are facing a probe by a Special Investigative Team (SIT), constituted by the Karnataka government, over allegations of sexual harassment and criminal intimidation following a complaint by a woman who

worked in their household.

HD Revanna is under Special Investigation Team (SIT) custody till May 8 in kidnapping case linked to "obscene video case", while Prajwal Revanna has fled to another country.

Voting for 28 Lok Sabha seats in Karnataka is being held in two phases. While 14 seats were polled on April 26, the remaining 14 will go to polling on May 7. The counting of votes is scheduled for June 4.

In the 2019 elections, the BJP almost swept the state by winning 25 out of 28 seats. While, Congress and JD-S -- who were in coalition in the state government -- could only win one seat each.

Over 90 LS seats vote today

CONTINUED FROM P1

to vote.

PM Modi and Shah, who are expected to arrive in Gujarat tonight, will cast their vote at booths in Ahmedabad city under the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha seat.

Former Madhya Pradesh chief ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Vidisha) and Digvijaya Singh (Rajgarh) have also returned to the Lok Sabha electoral fray this time.

A riveting contest is on in Maharashtra's In Uttar Pradesh, the current phase is important for the Mulayam Singh Yadav family, with

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav's wife Dimple Yadav aiming to retain the Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat.

Dimple Yadav had won the seat in bypolls following the demise of her father-in-law Mulayam Singh Yadav. Akshaya Yadav, son of Ram Gopal Yadav, the national principal general secretary of SP, will try to reclaim the Pirozabad seat, which he had won in 2014.

Aditya Yadav, the son of SP national general secretary Shivalp Yadav, is making his electoral debut from the Budaun Lok Sabha seat, which was represented by his cousin Dharmendra

Yadav in 2014. Baramati between Sharad Pawar's daughter Supriya Sule and Sunetra Pawar, wife of the veteran leader's estranged nephew and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawa

The fate of former Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai (Haveri) and AIUDF Badruddin Ajmal (Dhubri) will also be decided on May 7.

After the third phase, voting will be completed in 283 out of 543 seats in Lok Sabha. The next four phases will be on May 13, May 20, May 25 and June 1. Counting of votes is on June 4.

NIA probe

CONTINUED FROM P1

complaint dated 01.04.2024 (in original) received from Ashoo Mongia National General Secretary (World Hindu Federation India), along with printout of posts on platform 'X' (erstwhile Twitter), made by Dr. Munish Kumar Raizada, former worker of Aam Aadmi Party, referred in the enclosed letter and a pen drive as received," the letter stated.

He further stated that "In his communication, the complainant has referred to the contents of a video (in enclosed pen drive), purportedly featuring Gurpatwant Singh Pannun. (Khalistani terrorist and founder of banned organization Sikhs For Justice), wherein he has alleged that Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal has received a staggering amount of USD 16 million dollars in funding from Khalistani groups between 2014 and 2022. It has also been alleged that a clandestine meeting scurried in 2014 between Kejriwal and pro-Khalistani Sikhs at Gurudwara Richmond Hills, New York. During the said meeting, Kejriwal purportedly promised to facilitate

release of Devender Pal Bhullar, in return for substantial financial backing from Khalistani factions to Aam Aadmi Party."

The Principal Secretary of Lt Governor said that the complainant has requested for a comprehensive enquiry into the allegations regarding funding of Aam Aadmi Party by Extremist group Justice for Sikhs.

"The complainant has also stated that as per tweets on Platform 'X' (erstwhile Twitter) Dr. Munish Kumar Raizada, who was worker in AAP, shared a picture of Arvind Kejriwal and Sikh leaders that took place at Richmond Hill Gurudwara, New York, United States of America, in 2014 (a few copies of photographs enclosed). In his tweets he also confirmed that apart from attending public meetings, Kejriwal held a closed door meeting, at the Richmond Hills Gurudwara, with Pro-Khalistani Sikh Leaders. It has also been mentioned in the letter that Kejriwal wrote to former President Sh Pranab Mukherjee sexing clemency for Bhullar. In this context a copy of a letter by Arvind Kejriwal, addressed to one Sh. Iqbal Singh is enclosed.

PM Modi's Patna road show

CONTINUED FROM P1

is expected to end in late evening. Modi will spend the night at Governor house and leave next morning for three political rallies at Hajipur, Motipur that comes under Muzaffarpur Lok Sabha and Saran from where former union minister Rajiv Pratap Rudy is engaged in a tough battle against debutant Rohini Acharya, the daughter of former Chief Ministers Lalu Prasad Yadav and Rabri Devi.

This will be the PM's sixth visit to Bihar in the last one month. Earlier the PM had visited Bihar on 4 April (Jamui), 7 April (Nawada), 16 April (Gaya and Purnia), 26 April (Araria and Munger) and 4 May (Darbhanga).

Bihar based party leaders, who are camping in various parts of the state, said that as per the latest feedback based on the polling that has happened in the state, the NDA is looking strong on 30-32 seats. In the 2019 polls, the NDA alliance (BJP, JDU and LJP) had won 39 seats.

ED seizes Rs 20 cr cash

CONTINUED FROM P1

velopment Department, in February 2023 in a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the implementation of some schemes.

In addition to the raid at the residence of Sanjiv Lal's household help, the ED has also carried out searches at

other locations in Ranchi. One such location is the residence of Vikas Kumar, an engineer in the Road Construction Department.

Meanwhile, BJP Member of Parliament Deepak Prakash sharply criticised Jharkhand's ruling coalition of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Congress, and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD).

"Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Congress and RJD are doing the work of converting Jharkhand into 'Lootkhand'. Today again an amount of more than Rs 25 crore has been recovered, and it belongs to the ministers of the ruling party. The people of Jharkhand are feeling insulted today," Prakash said.

Priyanka at helm of Congress campaign in Rae Bareilly, Amethi

AJIT MAINDOLA
NEW DELHI

Rae Bareilly and Amethi seats are two of the most significant seats for the Congress. The party is doing meticulous planning to turn the table ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in both these constituencies. Congress General Secretary, Priyanka Gandhi shall be the main strategist. Yet, party's veteran leaders have been called to take forward the party's campaign.

After Rahul Gandhi's decision not to contest the elections from Amethi, numerous questions have surfaced. Party leaders are rallying behind him, asserting that the outcomes

will provide clarity on the correctness of the decision. The argument posits that Congress candidate Kishori Lal Sharma has been deeply involved in the area for four decades, with intimate knowledge of every household. However, the verdict will be revealed on 4 June.

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Gehlot has been specifically allotted the task of overseeing Amethi, where Priyanka will dedicate the majority of her time. Additionally, former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Baghel will be responsible for Rae Bareilly. Both leaders bring considerable experience in Uttar Pradesh, with Baghel previously serving as an observer during assembly elections.

Gehlot, in his capacity as party general secretary, previously contested elections independently in Uttar Pradesh in 2007, rejuvenating party workers through his efforts. Furthermore, he has previously led investigation committees.

In the past, all the strategy and planning of Congress has fallen flat and gone erroneous. Due to coalition politics, Congress was com-

"This is the same soil where my family's blood has mixed and the blood and sweat of your ancestors have been used to irrigate it. Now I will fight with you in Rae Bareilly and Amethi till May 14"

pletely destroyed. In 2019, Congress even lost the election of Amethi. The only seat won was Rae Bareilly, by Sonia Gandhi. In the 2022 assembly elections, Priyanka Gandhi did her own kind of politics. Tried many experiments. Gave tickets to 40 percent women. Took the responsibility of the elections herself, but the results were such that the vote percentage came down to three percent.

In Uttar Pradesh, Congress seems to have hit the bottom. For the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, the party is once again focusing its efforts on Rae Bareilly and Amethi. Winning both these seats would significantly boost the morale of party workers in Uttar Pradesh. It appears that Priyanka Gandhi has taken the responsibility for securing victory in both constituencies.

Considering their experience, Priyanka has enlisted the support of Gehlot and Baghel. Gehlot, renowned as a political strategist, holds considerable sway within the organization. Meanwhile, Baghel has matured into a seasoned politi-

cian. This election holds significant importance for both leaders, as a victory would elevate the party's stature.

Priyanka Gandhi has intensified her efforts by personally visiting Amethi and engaging in extensive meetings with officials and workers, initiating an assertive strategy. Party stalwarts are expected to join the campaign soon.

However, the contest in Rae Bareilly is anticipated to be challenging, with BJP candidate DP Singh maintaining a strong presence over the past decade.

In the previous election, Singh significantly narrowed Sonia Gandhi's victory margin. Despite the setback, the BJP has kept him active in the region. Consequently, the challenge for Rahul Gandhi may not be straightforward. Although Sonia Gandhi's presence in campaigning could garner sympathy for Rahul, Amethi presents an intriguing contest. Priyanka and Gehlot's strategy will be closely monitored, particularly as BJP candidate Smriti Irani has solidified her foothold in the constituency over the last decade.

V-Cs dismiss Rahul's charges on their appointment

CONTINUED FROM P1

on values of meritocracy, scholarly distinction and integrity. The selection has been completely based on academic and administrative prowess and with a vision to take Universities ahead," it mentioned.

"We strongly urge all individuals involved to exercise discernment in distinguishing fact from fiction, to abstain from spreading unfounded rumours, and to participate in dialogue that is well-informed, constructive, and supportive of our shared

goal of creating a dynamic and

inclusive educational environment. We would like to reaffirm our steadfast dedication to the principles of meritocracy, integrity, and excellence within the realm of higher education," it added.

Rubbishing the claims, the letter called them "baseless allegations" and accused Rahul Gandhi of defaming the office of the VCs at large with an "intent to derive political mileage."

"With utmost conviction,

the Vice Chancellors of prestigious Universities nationwide and academic leaders, address and refute the baseless allegations that have recently been circulated concerning the selection process," the letter stated.

"In view of the fact that Rahul Gandhi has resorted to falsehood and has defamed the Office of the Vice Chancellors at large with the intent to derive political mileage out of it. It is therefore, earnestly prayed that appropriate action be taken

against him forthwith in accordance with law," it added.

Speaking on the open letter and Rahul Gandhi's alleged remarks, Bhagwati Prakash Sharma, Vice Chancellor of Gautam Buddha University, Noida, called it "stupidity" from the Congress leader's part.

"Vice Chancellors of the universities are all highly qualified and will have a professorship of at least 10 years. Most of the VCs in the country are PhD holders, various degree holders and will have various pat-

ents to their credit. Despite all this, his claims that Narendra Modi have made all RSS people VCs, there are many places where there are Congress governments. Did Narendra Modi appoint VCs there too?" he said.

"VCs are never appointed through the Prime Minister; it is done through UGC's selection process. There are multiple private universities where the government doesn't have any say. So making such allegations on the appointments is stupid," the VC added.

NEWSCLICK CASE: COURT ORDERS RELEASE OF ACCUSED AMIT CHAKRAVARTY

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday ordered the release of Amit Chakravarty, HR head of news portal NewsClick, in the case registered by Delhi Police under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, following allegations that News Portal received huge money for pro-China propaganda.



He has recently turned approver in the case. The bench of Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma passed the order.

Recently, the trial court has taken cognizance of the chargesheet filed by Special Cell of Delhi Police against News Portal NewsClick PPK and its founder and Editor-in-Chief, Prabir Purkayastha, in a case.

During the arguments before the trial court on cognizance, Special Public Prosecutor Akhand Pratap Singh apprised the court that during the raids, two accused were arrested.

In this case, there are 8 protected witnesses, and on the basis of various statements, including these 8, the cognizance of these offences shall be taken.

The present chargesheet

that all the sanction orders have been obtained, in total there are three different sanction orders which are being filed in the form of supplementary chargesheet under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

The charge sheet was filed by Special Cell of Delhi Po-

Earlier, Delhi Police informed the Court, "We have obtained all the requisite sanction u/s 45 of UAPA and u/s 196 CrPC" for the prosecution of the accused in the NewsClick case.

is against Prabir and NewsClick PPK. Our investigation into other people and others whose names surfaced later is still continuing.

Earlier, Delhi Police informed the Court, "We have obtained all the requisite sanction u/s 45 of UAPA and u/s 196 CrPC" for the prosecution of the accused in the NewsClick case.

Delhi Police Special Cell, through Special Public Prosecutor Akhand Pratap Singh submitted

lice recently, in Patiala House Court and contained nearly 8,000 pages with annexures.

According to Delhi Police, a chargesheet has been filed against Newsportal NewsClick and its founder, Prabir Purkayastha, in a case registered under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, following allegations that News Portal received huge money for pro-China propaganda.

Prabir Purkayastha, founder and editor-in-chief of NewsClick, along with the head of its human resource department, Amit Chakravarty, were arrested in the case on October 3, 2023. Both were arrested under stringent provisions of the UAPA under sections 13, 16, 17, 18 and 22 of the UAPA, along with IPC sections 153A and 120B.

The Delhi police FIR, stated that foreign funds in crores have been infused illegally in India by Indian and foreign entities inimical to India in pursuance of a conspiracy to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India, to cause disaffection against India and to threaten the unity, integrity, and security of India.

The Delhi Police's Special Cell, in its FIR against news web portal NewsClick's founder and Editor-in-Chief Prabir Purkayastha, stated that People's Dispatch Portal, owned and maintained by M/S PPK NewsClick Studio Pvt. Ltd., has been used for intentionally peddling false narratives through paid news in lieu of crores of Rupees of illegally routed foreign funds as part of conspiracy.

11 cyber thugs held, over Rs 14-crore fraud busted

TDG NETWORK
GURUGRAM

Gurugram police on Monday said they arrested 11 cyber fraudsters who allegedly duped people across India of about Rs 14.60 crore.

According to police, 4,279 complaints and 198 cases were found to be registered against these fraudsters.

DCP Siddhant Jain said Rs 4.20 lakh, four mobile phones and two SIM cards were recovered from the accused.

After examining these SIM cards and reviewing the data from the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Center (I4C), it was found that fraud of about Rs 14.60 crore has been committed by these fraudsters across the country, he added. Out of the total cases registered against them, 16 are lodged in Haryana, including 5 in Gurugram, police said.

Those arrested have been identified as Deepak Kumar, Naveen, Dhant, Bharat Keshwani, Paras Rajbhar, Manish Kushwah, Deepak Kushwah, Nadeem, Rakesh, Navin and Amita Singh, they added. "During the police interrogation it was revealed that these accused used to commit fraud in the name of purchasing goods online" DCP said.

Kanhaiya Kumar files nomination

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Congress candidate from North East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency and former JNU student leader Kanhaiya Kumar filed his nomination for the ongoing Lok Sabha elections on Monday.

Before filing his nomination, the student leader-turned politician posted on X a series of pictures, which showed him with leaders of various faiths. One picture showed him participating in a 'hawan' and Sarvdharam prayers.

"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 said on X.

Yesterday, he shared a video stating that he will fight against injustice and appealed to those who for no fireworks to be set off, keeping the environment in mind.

Kanhaiya, who is contesting his second Lok Sabha election, will fight the poll battle against BJP's two-time MP from the same constituency, Manoj Tiwari.

In 2019, Kumar contested



part of Central Delhi district and entire North East Delhi district and part of Shahdara district.

Manoj Tiwari, secured 53.90 per cent of the votes in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

The Congress is contesting the Lok Sabha elections in an alliance with the AAP in Delhi. As part of the seat-sharing arrangement, the Congress is contesting three seats while AAP has fielded candidates from four constituencies in Delhi. The seven Lok Sabha

Before filing his nomination, the student leader-turned politician posted on X a series of pictures, which showed him with leaders of various faiths. One picture showed him participating in a 'hawan' and Sarvdharam prayers.

as a Communist Party of India (CPI) candidate from Begusarai in Bihar, which he lost to Union Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party leader Giriraj Singh. Later, he joined the Congress in 2021. North East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency is one of the 7 parliamentary constituencies in New Delhi. It is a general category parliamentary seat that comprises

constituencies in the Capital are New Delhi, South Delhi, East Delhi, West Delhi, Chandni Chowk, North West and North East Delhi.

The Lok Sabha elections in Delhi will be held in a single phase on May 25. Voting in Delhi will be held for 7 Lok Sabha seats. The counting of the votes will be done collectively across the nation on June 4.

Court convicts man for double murder

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A Delhi Court has convicted a person for double murder with the motive of robbery and said that the prosecution has been able to complete the chain of circumstances and has proved beyond the shadow of all reasonable doubts that accused has committed the crime charged with.

Additional Sessions Judge Shefali Barnala Tandon in a recent judgment stated, "In view of the forensic evidence, the medical evidence, the recovery of robbed articles at the instance of accused, the scene of crime report, the photographs of spot, the MLC and Postmortem Report of the deceased, the deposition of the independent witnesses which had remained coherent, reliable and trustworthy."

The judgment further stated that in view of the above discussions & findings, accused Deepanshu @ Deepu is held guilty and accordingly, convicted for the commission of the offences punishable under section 302 IPC (Punishment for murder) and Sections 394 (voluntarily causing hurt in



committing robbery) and 397 IPC (robbery or dacoity, with an attempt to cause death or grievous hurt).

The court further added that in the present case, the prosecution has been able to prove the complicity of the accused in the commission of crime beyond the shadow of all reasonable doubts as all the circumstances established are consistent only with the hypothesis of the guilt of the accused and the entire chain of circumstantial evidence is complete in all respects and no reasonable doubt is left which can lead to the conclusion of innocence of the accused persons and no other hypothesis is possible in the given circumstances.

The prosecution has been able to prove all the ingredients of the offences for which the accused has been charged and faced trial, said the court. The court further noted that the accused failed to explain the circumstances proved against him vis a viz recovery of the mobile phone, purse, PAN card and photograph of the deceased Smt Shashi, blood of both the deceased persons found on his wearing apparels and chappals, use of his sim in the robbed mobile phone, his subsequent conduct of fleeing from the area soon after the incident etc. though the burden of proof shifted upon them as per Section 106 of the Indian Evidence Act.

policy scam.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja, has dismissed the applications, saying the stage was not right to grant the relief. K Kavitha is in judicial custody in both the cases lodged by the ED and the CBI. During the hearing the Enforcement Directorate (ED) opposed the plea, alleging that Kavitha had

Excise Policy Case: No Bail to BRS leader K. Kavitha

ASHISH SINHA
NEW DELHI

Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court on Monday dismissed the bail applications filed by BRS leader K. Kavitha in corruption and money laundering cases being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with the alleged excise

Kavitha, aged 46, was apprehended from her residence in Banjara Hills on March 15 amidst protests by BRS supporters.

vitha of being a pivotal member of the "South Group," which purportedly paid kickbacks of Rs 100 crore to the ruling AAP in Delhi in exchange for a significant portion of liquor licenses in the capital. Kavitha, aged 46, was apprehended from her residence in Banjara Hills on March 15 amidst protests by BRS supporters.



tampered with evidence and influenced witnesses in the case.

The agency accused Ka-

MCC violation: SC grants anticipatory bail to Umar Ansari

TDG NETWORK
JAIPUR

The Supreme Court on Monday granted anticipatory bail to Umar Ansari, the son of late gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari, in a criminal case filed against him during the 2022 assembly elections for alleged violation of the model code of conduct.

However, a bench comprising Justices Hrishikesh Roy and PK Mishra directed Umar Ansari to appear before the trial court in connection with the case.

It is to be noted that the apex court had granted Umar protection from arrest on January 25, 2024.

On December 19, 2023, the Allahabad High Court dismissed the anticipatory bail application of Umar Ansari, stating that considering the facts and circumstances of the case, the offence is made



out. An FIR was registered on March 4, 2022, at Kotwali police station in May district against Umar Ansari, his brother Abbas Ansari (SBSP candidate from Mau Sadar seat), and 150 unknown individuals.

The complaint alleged that on March 3 at Pahadpura ground, Abbas, Umar and organizer Mansoor Ahmad Ansari, in a public meeting, advocated for settling a score with the Mau administration, constituting a violation of the election code of conduct.

Massive fire breaks out at plastic factory in Narela's Bhorgarh area

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A massive fire broke out at a plastic factory in Narela's Bhorgarh Industrial Area on Monday morning. No casualties have been reported in the incident.

The visuals of the incident showed a thick plume of smoke billowing from the factory engulfed by the fire. However, the cause of fire has not been ascertained yet.

According to fire department officials, 11 fire tender vehicles are on the scene.

Locals said that the fire broke out at 8.50 am.

"Fire engulfed all three floors of the factory. There were goods worth lakhs of rupees on every floor. There is no possibility of any person being trapped inside.



The visuals of the incident showed a thick plume of smoke billowing from the factory engulfed by the fire. However, the cause of fire has not been ascertained yet.

Nearby factories have also been evacuated," a local said.

Another local said that the fire is continuously raging due to the presence of plastic

grains and the building may collapse at any time.

Attempts to douse the fire are underway.

Further details awaited.

Alipur gang war hatched in jail to avenge Tillu Tajpuria's murder: Police

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police revealed that the conspiracy of the Alipur murder case was hatched in Delhi Jail to avenge gang leader Tillu Tajpuria's murder by Gogi gang members.

Delhi Police also mentioned that five of the shooters of the Tillu gang committed the crime on the instructions of jailed gangster Amit alias Dabang.

Additional CP Rajiv Ranjan Singh on Sunday said, "Delhi Police Special Staff of outer North District and special cell in two different operations have arrested two sharpshooters and an informant associated with the notorious Tillu Tajpuria gang and worked out the broad daylight murder in gang war case in Alipur police station area."

"With the arrest of these two shooters, the mystery of murder has been solved. Both the arrested individuals



hail from Haryana and were involved in killing of a rival gang member. Murder was planned and orchestrated in Prison to assert dominance and to avenge Gang Leader Tillu Tajpuria's death in jail by Gogi gang members. The informant behind the targeted killing, who is a resident of Alipur area, has also been arrested," he added.

Speaking to ANI DCP Ravi Kumar Singh said, "On April 22 a PCR call regarding firing near the opposite bus stop, Alipur was received at PS Alipur, Delhi. Upon receiving the call, the staff of PS Alipur reached the spot

where they found a Tempo with multiple gunshot marks. Subsequent inquiry revealed that 5 individuals had opened fire on the occupants of the aforementioned Tempo. The injured persons were immediately rushed to SRHC Hospital, Narela, for treatment. 1 individual was declared dead by the doctors, while another sustained gunshot injury to the leg."

The deceased was identified as Narender Malik alias Dhillu (26) while the injured was Tarun Yadav.

During the inquiry, it was found that the brother of the deceased, namely Surrender,

Delhi Police also mentioned that five of the shooters of the Tillu gang committed the crime on the instructions of jailed gangster Amit alias Dabang.

who is an active member of the Gogi gang and has been in Judicial Custody for the last four years in connection with a case under Alipur PS.

Local inquiries further revealed that after the arrest of Surrender, his brother Narender alias Dhillu (deceased) along with his associates, joined the Gogi gang and became active member of the gang.

Subsequently, based on the statement provided by the injured Tarun Yadav, a case was registered and further investigation was carried out. Inter-gang rivalry was suspected as the deceased Narender was connected with Gogi Gang but all the angles were being investigated. There is

an old rivalry between Gogi and Tillu Tajpuria, both resident of Outer Delhi's Alipur area since their college days in 2012-13.

After his escape from the custody of Haryana Police in 2016, Jitender Gogi along with Kuldeep, Fazza, Rohit and Moi were involved in many broad daylight shoot-outs, before his arrest by Special Cell in 2020.

Kuldeep and Fazza who escaped from custody of police in March 2021, were killed during action by Special Cell, Delhi. Later, Gogi was killed in Rohini Court by rival Tillu Tajpuria gang.

In May 2023, Tillu Tajpuria was stabbed multiple times by rival gangsters in jail and killed.

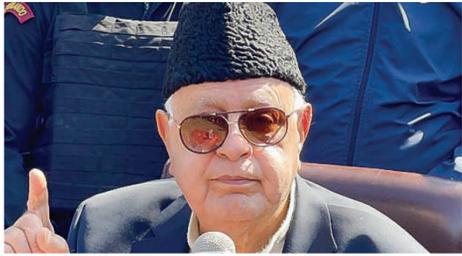
KARGIL UNIT OF NC SUBMITS MASS RESIGNATION. CITES 'PRESSURE' FROM HIGH COMMAND

TDG NETWORK
KARGIL

The Kargil unit of the National Conference has submitted a mass resignation letter alleging that the party's high command is pressurising them to support the Congress candidate for Ladakh.

It said in the interest of Ladakh, the Ladakh Democratic Alliance has decided to project a joint candidate, Mohammad Haneefa Jan as an independent candidate.

"In the interest of the Ladakh region as a whole and in order to secure the future of our region, the Ladakh Democratic Alliance has unilaterally decided to project a Joint Candidate namely Mohammad Haneefa Jan as an Independent Candidate for the forthcoming Lok Sabha Election from 1- Ladakh Parliamentary Constituency supported by all the Political and Religious Institutions



It said in the interest of Ladakh, the Ladakh Democratic Alliance has decided to project a joint candidate, Mohammad Haneefa Jan as an independent candidate.

unanimously coming across the party/religious affiliations," the letter stated.

"The party high command is pressurising us (both telephonically as well on social media) to support the official candidate of INC from Ladakh which is unacceptable to us including J&K NC and INC Unit Kargil," it added.

The Kargil unit said that

as it is being "insisted" to act against the interest of Ladakh people, they are "compelled to resign in masses."

"In this connection, as the party insists us to act against the interest of the people of Ladakh, so we are compelled to resign in masses from all party functionaries including the undersigned from the party post. This letter

may be considered as a mass resignation of all party functionaries from the primary membership of J&K National Conference," the letter further stated.

Following this, Qamar Ali Akhoo, the Additional General Secretary of NC Kargil Unit reiterated the stand, while speaking to ANI.

"We were pressurised by the high command to support the official candidate of INC from Ladakh which is unacceptable to us including J&K NC and INC Unit Kargil," he said.

Ladakh will go to polls on May 20. The votes will be counted on June 4.

In the 2019 elections, Jamiyung Tsering Namgyal of the BJP emerged victorious in Ladakh.

This time, the BJP has announced the candidature of Tashi Gyalsong from Ladakh Constituency replacing its current MP Jamiyung Tsering Namgyal from this seat.

'Proud of my brother': Sister of IAF soldier killed in Poonch

TDG NETWORK
CHHINDWARA

The mortal remains of an Indian Air Force soldier, Corporal Vikky Pahade who succumbed to injuries sustained in a terror attack on Saturday evening, arrived in his hometown in Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara for last rites on Monday.

Pahade lost his life in the Poonch Sector of Jammu and Kashmir after an Indian Air Force vehicle convoy was attacked by terrorists on Saturday, May 4.

The IAF soldier's sister, Geeta Pahade, who is a sub-inspector, said she learned about the incident on Saturday night and was proud of her brother.

"I am proud of my brother. I got to know about this (brother's demise) a day before yesterday. I want justice for my brother," Pahade added.

Brother-in-law of Pahade, Sanju Gaunekar said, "We



came to know about the matter on Saturday evening. We received a message at around 6:30 pm that Pahade suffered a bullet injury and was hospitalised in Udhampur. Later, we were informed at around 7:30 pm that he succumbed to injuries."

"We are proud of him, but it is a tragedy for the family as he was the lone son in the family and had three sisters. His father also passed away earlier," he added.

Pahade had left behind his five-year-old son, wife, mother and sisters. The Indian Air Force on

Sunday mourned Corporal Vikky Pahade.

"The CAS Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari and all personnel of (the) Indian Air Force salute the braveheart Corporal Vikky Pahade, who made the supreme sacrifice in (the) Poonch Sector, in the service of the nation. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved family. We stand firmly by your side in this hour of grief," read a post on the official X handle of the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Earlier, on Sunday, security personnel launched a massive manhunt follow-

ing a terrorist attack on an Indian Air Force convoy a day before, in which one personnel was killed. Security forces have laid down nakas and checking is going on in the area.

Additional forces of the Indian Army reached the Jarra Wali Gali (JWG) in Poonch on Saturday late at night.

After the ambush, which went down at Sanai village in the Poonch sector, the injured personnel were rushed to the Command Hospital in Udhampur. Nonetheless, one of the injured airmen succumbed to his injuries.

In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the local Rashtriya Rifles unit initiated a cordon and search operations in the vicinity, with support from the Army and police, to track down the perpetrators.

The IAF confirmed the incident through a tweet, stating that the targeted convoy was secured and an investigation was underway.

Uttarakhand State chief secy announces series of measures to control forest fire

TDG NETWORK
DEHRADUN

As forest fires continue to devastate parts of Uttarakhand, the state's Chief Secretary, Radha Raturi, announced on Monday a series of measures aimed at controlling the spread of the flames and mitigating further damage.

"Incidents of forest fire have increased," said Raturi, acknowledging the alarming rise in fire incidents across the state.

Raturi revealed that the Indian Air Force (IAF) has been called in to aid fire-fighting efforts, and plans are underway to implement a pilot cloud seeding project to induce rainfall in the affected regions.

"CM held a meeting the day before. For compliance with those directions, the Forest Department has been informed. The Forest Department has given responsibility for each district to its senior officials. Pauri Garhwal is facing the worst. For that, DM Pauri has also spoken with the Air Force. IAF choppers are now carrying water from Srinagar and sprinkling it on the affected area," Raturi said.

Raturi mentioned that the government is planning a pi-

lot project to implement this technology in Uttarakhand, starting with the Pauri district.

"We are also bringing in a new project - IIT Kanpur has experimented with cloud seeding. We are now trying to have rainfall through cloud seeding in Uttarakhand too so that forest fires come under control. We have spoken with the CM; he has agreed to a pilot project from Pauri," Raturi said.

"We have a meeting with Forest Department officials at 4 pm today. CM has also given directions to not go for stubble burning and strict action will be taken against violators," Raturi said.

Meanwhile, to prevent further incidents, the state government has banned the burning of agricultural residues and waste in urban areas. This ban comes in response to widespread stubble burning after wheat harvesting, which has been linked to the increased risk of forest fires. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama has directed Chief Secretary Raturi to enforce strict penalties against those found violating these orders.

After wheat harvesting, fire is set at many places to burn the stubble left in the

fields, in view of this, the Chief Minister has given instructions to ban the burning of weeds, etc.

Meanwhile, after the fire incident in the Dunagiri area of Almora, the situation has started to become normal, but the atmosphere is covered with smoke in the entire area.

For the last 2 days, there was a massive fire in the forests of the area, due to which thousands of hectares of forest were burned to ashes, while some parts on the way to the famous Dunagiri temple area also caught fire, after which the fire was controlled with the help of local people and forest department employees.

After the massive fire in the forest, the entire area was engulfed in smoke, due to which the devotees who came to the temple as well as the local people had to face a lot of problems.

Earlier on May 4, the Chief Minister today held a video conference with the state government officials and all the district magistrates from Uttarakhand Sadan in New Delhi on important issues like forest fire, drinking water problem, upcoming Chardham Yatra and power supply.

West Bengal: Police sends notice to user over sharing meme of Mamata Banerjee

TDG NETWORK
KOLKATA



The Crime Cell of Kolkata Police has sent a notice to a social media user who posted a meme of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the X platform.

The cyber cell has also asked the user to disclose his location over posting of "offensive, malicious and inciting" post. The user had posted the meme on X with the caption "This is pure gold. Whoever made this deserves an Oscar", followed with laughter emojis.

Reacting to the post, the cyber cell stated, "You are directed to immediately disclose your identity including name and residence. If the information sought is not revealed, you shall be liable for legal action under section 42 of CrPC."

The police also sent a notice to the user and asked him to delete the post and refrain from such acts "failing which you will be liable for strict penal action under relevant provision for law."

Agniveer pre-recruitment screening camp held in Assam's Sonitpur

TDG NETWORK
RANGAPARA

An Agniveer pre-recruitment screening camp for an eligibility check of Adivasi and Tea Garden Community youths was conducted at Rangapara Army Cantt in Sonitpur district on Sunday.

The initiative was organized by the Indian Army in collaboration with the Aadhunik India Foundation. The special screening camp aimed to train and empower the Adivasi and youth aspirants of the Tea Garden community of Sonitpur district and nearby district of Assam for physical, medical, and written tests in the Armed forces as Agniveers.

Nearly 1200 youths, including girls from different Tea Gardens under the district of Sonitpur and nearby districts, participated in the Agniveer awareness programme.

The youths were briefed about filling in forms, preliminary pre-enrolment screening as per physical standards and ground tests, thereby



Nearly 1200 youths, including girls from different Tea Gardens under the district of Sonitpur and nearby districts, participated in the Agniveer awareness programme.

creating a festive and enthusiastic atmosphere among the participants and motivating the aspirants in their preparation and transforming from raw youth to soldiers.

The commanding officer of the Rangapara Army Cantt of the Indian Army motivated the youth of the Tea Garden and the Adivasi Community as well.

The training team briefed

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A vigilance court in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala) on Monday dismissed a Plea filed by Congress MLA Mathew Kuzhalnadan, seeking a court-monitored probe into the alleged financial transactions between a private mining company and the now-defunct IT company of T Veena, the daughter of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Initially, Kuzhalnadan moved the Special Vigilance Court, stating that the

Vigilance Department had refused to investigate the financial transactions between Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd. (CMRL) and Veena's company Exalogic. However, he later changed his stance and requested a court-monitored probe into the alleged financial transactions.

Following a comprehensive hearing on the documents submitted by the Congress legislator, the court dismissed the plea. In response, Kuzhalnadan expressed surprise at the unexpected order and indicated that further action would be taken after

reviewing the judgment.

Previously, a plea by a social activist for an investigation into alleged illegal financial transactions between CMRL, Veena's firm, and suspected political leaders was dismissed by the Vigilance Special Court in Muvattupuzha due to lack of evidence.

Currently, the High Court is considering a revision petition challenging that order. A controversy arose in Kerala following media reports that CMRL had paid a total of Rs 1.72 crore to the CM's daughter between 2017 and 2020.



Tripura Club Secy murder case: One more accused held from Kolkata, SIT formed

TDG NETWORK
AGARTALA

In yet another significant development in the ongoing investigation of Bharat Ratna Sangha Club Secretary murder case, a team led by Tripura police arrested one accused person from Kolkata's Mukundapur.

The police team led by additional SP (Urban) Chiranjib Chakraborty arrested the accused identified as Bir Chakra Ghosh (46) from Kolkata's Mukundapur. He was brought to Agartala on transit remand. He will be produced before the Court on Tuesday.

Superintendent of Police West Tripura Kiran Kumar said, "One more person was arrested yesterday from Kolkata. We took a transit remand and brought him back

to Agartala. We will produce him before the Court tomorrow. So far three persons have been arrested in connection with the case. Pradyot Dhar Chowdhary and Susmita Sarkar were arrested earlier and now Bir Chakra Ghosh is arrested."

On the progress of the case, he said, "The investigation is underway in full swing. We have got many suspects and hopefully, all of them will be arrested very soon." He also informed that a specific case was registered on the day of the incident - May 1 - after which the investigation was started.

Meanwhile, top sources in the police department said that a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was formed for an effective inquiry into the sensational murder case.



MP: Massive fire breaks out in campus of Bhopal Carbide factory

TDG NETWORK
BHOPAL

A massive fire broke out on the campus of Carbide factory in Bhopal district on Monday.

Visuals show the smoke emanating from the factory engulfing the skies. The reason for the blaze is yet to be

ascertained.

No casualties or injuries have been reported from the incident as yet.

Further details on the matter are awaited.

In a similar incident today, a massive fire broke out at a plastic factory in Delhi's Narela's Bhorgan Industrial Area on Monday morning.

No casualties were reported in the incident.

Visuals of the incident showed a thick plume of smoke billowing from the factory engulfed by the fire.

According to fire department officials, 11 fire tender vehicles are on the scene. Locals said that the fire broke out at 8.50 am.

Man killed his pregnant wife in MP's Jabalpur

TDG NETWORK
JABALPUR

A man allegedly killed his pregnant wife following his extra martial affair under the Madhotal police station area in Jabalpur on Saturday night, police said.

According to the police, primarily the accused identified as Shubham Choudhary tried to mislead the police by presenting the incident as a

loot while they were on their way to his wife's house.

But during the investigation, police got to know that Shubham with three of his associates killed his wife.

Madhotal police station in-charge Vipin Tamrakar said, "Following the incident, Shubham has filed a complaint. But during investigation, we got to know that he was having an affair for the last 10 years and because

of this he wants to get rid of his wife and committed the crime."

"During investigation, we found contradictions in Shubham Choudhary's statement after which, family circumstances, and his call history details were scrutinized and we got to know about his relations with the woman. Later, during interrogation he confessed his crime," he added.

Why did Rahul Gandhi go to Rae Bareilly?

If Rahul Gandhi wins both Wayanad and Rae Bareilly seats, which of the two will he retain?



DR VIJAY DARDA

In this election, no other leader's constituency generated as much curiosity as that of Rahul Gandhi over where else he will contest polls from in addition to Wayanad. There were discussions regarding Amethi, where Rahul Gandhi faced defeat in the 2019 elections after representing the constituency as an MP for 15 years. The Gandhi family's ties with Amethi are very old and strong. Sanjay Gandhi was elected to the Lok Sabha from Amethi in 1980, followed by Rajiv Gandhi three times, Sonia Gandhi once and Rahul Gandhi thrice. However, the reason why Rahul Gandhi chose not to contest from Amethi this time remains unclear. Perhaps his advisors advised him against it, fearing a potential defeat. In my opinion, he should have still contested from Amethi, for it is believed that he would have emerged victorious there as well.

Congress has fielded Kishori Lal Sharma, a confidant of the Gandhi family, from Amethi. While many expected Priyanka Gandhi to fight the elections from Amethi, she has declared that she would campaign for Kishori Lal Sharma. In my opinion, Priyanka's presence in the fray would have increased

the chances of victory. However, since she is not in the race, Rahul Gandhi's decision to contest from Rae Bareilly, another traditional stronghold of the family, indicates his confidence in that constituency. The historical ties of the Gandhi-Nehru family with Rae Bareilly run deep. In the first and second Lok Sabha elections of the country, Feroze Gandhi was elected to Lok Sabha from Rae Bareilly. Indira Gandhi won the election from this constituency thrice. Sonia Gandhi has also been representing Raebareilly for four consecutive terms since 2004.

Rahul Gandhi filed nomination papers with great fanfare in Rae Bareilly. Quite naturally, everyone watches him closely. A BJP leader sarcastically told me that Rahul Gandhi was saying that ED had frozen Congress' bank account and the party does not have money even to buy train tickets. So, how could he afford a plane in which he arrived along with staunch Congress leaders Ashok Gehlot and K C Venugopal? Similarly, Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and Robert Vadra arrived on the second plane while Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge arrived on the third plane. Then the BJP leader also reminded me that none of them was present in Amethi to file Kishori Lal Sharma's nomination papers! The BJP is always ready to seize any opportunity that comes its way and obviously so. The BJP leaders even claimed that Rahul Gandhi had 'fled' from Wayanad fearing defeat. Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan stated that a formidable candidate has been fielded, making it difficult for Rahul Gandhi to



Congress has fielded Kishori Lal Sharma, a confidant of the Gandhi family, from Amethi. While many expected Priyanka Gandhi to fight the elections from Amethi, she has declared that she would campaign for Kishori Lal Sharma.

secure a victory. However, reports suggest that Rahul Gandhi is set to win the Wayanad seat. Therefore, the pressing question is that if Rahul Gandhi wins both the seats, which one will he choose to retain? In my opinion, he will most likely retain Rae Bareilly, the traditional stronghold of his family. He understands that without gaining a foothold in Uttar Pradesh, any aspiration of governing the nation would be futile.

In the realm of Indian politics today, Rahul Gandhi's influence is undeniable. Despite not holding the post of party president, the Congress cannot function without him, and the same can be said for the ruling party BJP. Right from Prime Minister to

other prominent leaders, nobody can complete his or her speech without mentioning Rahul Gandhi's name. Consistent efforts were made to brand him as 'Pappu'. What I feel is if someone is so unworthy in your view, why do you mention his name time and again? Why not simply ignore him? However, it is impossible to ignore Rahul Gandhi. How can the contribution of Gandhi family in the freedom struggle, the nation building thereafter and the supreme sacrifices made by the family, be forgotten! L K Advani had once told me that we have political differences with the Congress but they are not our enemies, and we cannot ignore them completely.

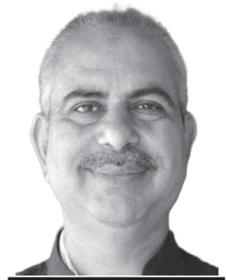
Many people often comment on Rahul Gandhi's attire and appearance too. They maintain that while Rajiv Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi were quite modern in their choices, both of them started wearing traditional khadi attire associated with the Congress party once they entered politics. Sonia Gandhi even began wearing sarees. From that point onwards, they were never seen in modern clothing. However, Rahul Gandhi stands out as being extremely modern in his fashion sense, embracing the attire of the youth. He has broken away from tradition, perhaps to maintain his own unique identity. However, I firmly believe that clothing plays a significant role in the realm of politics. Another aspect that is often mentioned is that Rahul Gandhi's nature is such that his close associates like Jyotiraditya Scindia, Jitin Prasada, Milind Deora, K P Singh left him. The question is whether they left because of Rahul's nature or they were feeling insecure? Or was the system around

Rahul Gandhi suffocating them?

Many leaders have parted ways with Congress. Sonia Gandhi is currently unwell. Notwithstanding this, Rahul and Priyanka are fighting even as they are pitted against the formidable BJP bolstered by Narendra Modi. Modi's leadership is charismatic. The party has seasoned players like Amit Shah, and Yogi Adityanath in UP. Even before the Congress could aim, their arrow hits the target. Rahul possesses the determination to triumph in the struggle but he does not have a team of fighters. I have stated on multiple occasions that a strong team or contingent cannot be assembled unless Congress is revitalised. The Congress leaders who win the elections do so on the strength of their own abilities. It is imperative to revitalise and strengthen Congress, but at the moment, it is not an easy challenge to accept.

The author is the chairman, Editorial Board of Lokmat Media and former member of Rajya Sabha.

Airing differences without being acrimonious



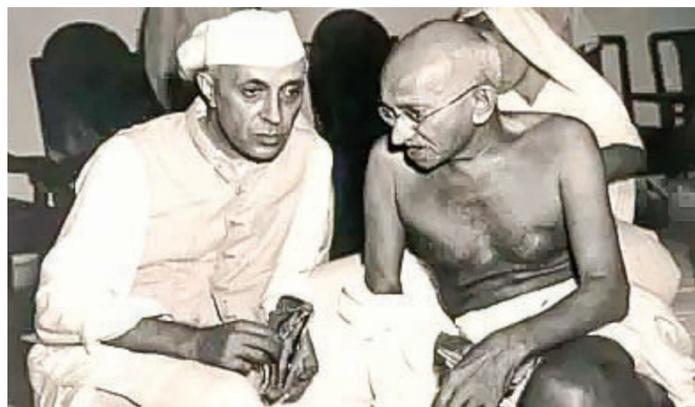
RASHEED KIDWAI

Both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru believed in writing and airing their differences out in the open often in rather acrimonious ways.

Nehru, twenty years younger and a self-confessed disciple of Gandhi, had serious differences with Gandhi's approach towards village economy, non-violence, religion and economic thinking. In 1945 when the freedom of the country was in sight, Gandhi wrote to him saying, "I believe that if India is to attain true freedom...then sooner or later we will have to live in villages in huts, not in palaces... the essence of what I say is that the things required for human life must be individually controlled by every person; the individual can not be saved without this control" (page 14 in Tendulkar D G's Mahatma, Vol VII, Times of India Press, Bombay).

As if speaking from a position of strength in anticipation of becoming prime minister of independent India, Nehru was quick to retort in some strong language, "It is many years ago that I read Hind Swaraj and I have only a vague picture in my mind. But even when I read it 20 or more years ago, it seemed to me completely unreal... it has been 38 years since Hind Swaraj was written. The World has completely changed since then, possibly in the wrong direction...A village, normally speaking, is backward intellectually and culturally and no progress can be made from a backward environment. Narrow minded people are much more likely to be untruthful and violent" (page 516 An Autobiography by Jawaharlal Nehru Oxford University Press)

More barbs followed as Nehru went on to say, "...It seems inevitable that modern means of transport as well as many other modern developments must continue and he developed. There is no way out except to have them. If this is so, inevitably a measure of heavy industries exists. How far will that fit in with a purely village society?" Nehru asked, reminding his mentor, "As you know, the Congress has never considered that (Hind Swaraj) picture, much less



Gandhi did not approve of Nehruvian thrust on socialism or planning for the growth of a backward economy. Barely hiding his disapproval, Gandhi wrote, "In my opinion, his planning is a waste of effort. But he can not be satisfied with anything that is not big."

adopted it. You yourself have never asked to adopt it except for some relatively minor aspects." It may be noted that throughout his political life, Gandhi did not hold any formal position in the Congress organisation.

For Gandhi, non violence was a weapon of the strong and a non-negotiable political expression that had to be practised under all circumstances. "Liberty and democracy become unholy

when their hands are dyed red with innocent blood." (page 70, New Directions Publishing) But his political heir had a different take. Nehru wrote, "Violence is the very lifeblood of the modern state and social system. Without the coercive apparatus of the state, taxes would not be realized, landlords would not get their rents and property would disappear" (page 540 An Autobiography by Jawahar-

lal Nehru Oxford University Press). Nehru also had no qualms in telling Gandhi how "Democracy indeed means the coercion of the minority by the majority" [the expression majority and minority was in the context of numerical strength than religious identity of communities]

Gandhi wrote to Agatha Harrison on April 30, 1936 stating, "But Jawaharlal's way is not my way. I accept his ideas about land etc. But I do not accept practically any of his methods" (cited in Jawaharlal Nehru's A Bunch of Old letters, Asia Publication House)

ning is a waste of effort. But he can not be satisfied with anything that is not big."

When Nehru wrote two letters explaining his aggressive pro-socialist leanings, Gandhi sent him a sharp rejoinder of sorts that read, "The differences between you and me are so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting ground between us. I can not conceal from you my grief that I should lose a comrade so valiant, so faithful, so able and so honest as you have always been; but in serving a cause, comradeships have to be sacrificed. (page 57 in Jawaharlal Nehru's A Bunch of Old letters, Asia Publication House)

At a time when the nation is collectively celebrating Amritkal of the country's independence from the British Raj, the current political class needs to draw some lessons from Gandhi and Nehru in candidly articulating their differences. Tendulkar has quoted Gandhi on Nehru as saying, "He says he does not understand my language, that he speaks language foreign to me. This may or may not be true. But language is no bar to union of hearts. And I know this - that when I am gone he will speak my language." [page 43; Tendulkar D G's Mahatma, Vol VII, Times of India Press, Bombay).

PERSPECTIVE BEYOND IDEOLOGY

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIZES COUNTRY'S NEEDS

In an interview with The Sunday Guardian, the sister publication of The Daily Guardian, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar was refuting the claim often made by policymakers that a country's foreign policy is constant irrespective of the party in power. He was speaking on how India's foreign policy has evolved in the last 10 years of the Narendra Modi government - how from an ideologically leftward tilt, the course has been corrected to make foreign policy an India/Bharat-first policy. He gave the specific example of India's Israel policy to make his point.

Looking at India-Israel relations, it is a fact that the current government has prioritised the need to have a strategic partnership with a defence and technology powerhouse like Israel, which had been shunned by India until 1992, when diplomatic relations were established. Even after 1992, for fear of angering the Arab-Muslim world as well as Indian Muslims, successive Congress-led governments kept relations between the two countries in abeyance. Things started improving only when Atal Bihari Vajpayee became Prime Minister for a second time. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's visit to India took place in 2003, when Vajpayee was Prime Minister. Vajpayee lost power in 2004 and a reciprocal visit to Israel by an Indian Prime Minister took place 25 years after diplomatic relations were established, when Narendra Modi landed in Tel Aviv in July 2017. It is noteworthy that India's robust diplomatic relations with Israel have had zero impact on India's relations with the Arab-Muslim world. Instead there has been significant improvement in India-Gulf relations. It is Prime Minister Modi's expertise at walking the tightrope between Israel and the Arab world that has facilitated the existence of platforms such as the I2U2 - India, Israel, United States and the United Arab Emirates - and the IMEC (India-Middle East Europe Corridor). Of course the signing of the Abraham Accords between Israel and some Gulf states under the supervision of President Donald Trump also helped. But the bottom line is that PM Modi has shown exemplary expertise at walking the tightrope between Israel and Palestine, while refusing to make common cause with only one side - Palestinian to be specific, as it was earlier. Post the 7 October 2023 blood-curdling terrorist attack on Israel by the Hamas, when India clearly spoke out against the terrorism inflicted on Israel, the response from within camps allied to the Opposition was both political and ideological. The government was accused by rival political parties of discarding India's well-established pro-Palestine policy. While political players were vocal, the larger ecosystem of the foreign policy establishment was equally critical, if not in public, but definitely in private. Since then much water has flown under the bridge, and the Modi government has extended a helping hand to the Palestinians once Israel invaded Gaza. New Delhi has reiterated its stand on a two-state solution, has even voted against Israel in the United Nations on a couple of resolutions. And all this without compromising its stance on Hamas-inflicted terrorism even once. India also has not made any attempt to qualify Hamas' action against Israel by saying "but think of what Israel has been doing to Palestinians", which, sadly, some retired Indian diplomats and bureaucrats steeped in India's traditional geopolitical thinking are doing even now.

As an aside, the chaos on US university campuses on the war in Gaza is a completely political response emanating from the left side of the spectrum, with even anti-Semitism being justified as a counter to Israeli action on Gazans. To call for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza is a legitimate demand - whether strategically viable or not, is a different matter - but no way can the Jewish population be targeted for the war that Israel is fighting in Gaza, a war that was inflicted on it by the Hamas. Hamas' action was meant to derail the mainstreaming of Israel in the Arab world, which it was able to do to a large extent post 7 October. The bad blood in Middle East is believed to be affecting even IMEC, with work on the Israel part of the corridor stalled. But India has insulated itself enough amid the turmoil to be able to pursue the India-Middle East part. This is a completely India-focused approach, where India is exploring the potential of such a corridor to ensure all-round prosperity. At the same time, its opposition to terrorism continues rock-solid. This is a major departure from India's largely "leftist" policy and must be appreciated.

In fact, India was never really nonaligned, even though espousing the cause. It was firmly aligned with Soviet Russia, with a strong streak of anti-Americanism defining its policy, even though the leaders, bureaucrats and diplomats who led India down that path, had their children studying or working in the US, or the West. Of course the US' closeness to Pakistan aggravated the problem. In the process, India became majorly dependent on Russian weapons, thus putting all its eggs in one basket. It is only in the last decade that India has started to diversify the sourcing of its weapons, apart from making at home. That today, India can stand up to the West in defence of its independent policy on Ukraine, while signing the United States-India Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET), thus ensuring the transfer of critical technology that only the US can provide, is a huge leap forward for the country. And all this because the India's foreign policy has undergone major changes in the last 10 years.

JOYEETA BASU

ELECTIONS IN THE SPIRITUAL CAPITAL

Varanasi, one of the oldest inhabited cities globally, is a crucial Lok Sabha constituency. Post India's independence, the constituency was a stronghold of Congress, and now is turning into a BJP bastion.

KAUSHAL VERMA
NEW DELHI

Varanasi, also known as Banaras and Kashi, holds immense religious and cultural significance in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. It is one of the oldest inhabited cities globally and a crucial Lok Sabha constituency. Currently represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi of the BJP, Varanasi has been a stronghold for the party. The Lok Sabha constituency comprises five assembly constituencies - Rohaniya, Varanasi North, Varanasi South, Varanasi Cantt, and Sevapuri. Varanasi has a population of approximately 37 lakh according to the 2011 census. According to mythological tales, Varanasi was established around 5,000 years ago, and it finds mentions in various Hindu scriptures like the Skanda Purana, Ramayana, Mahabharata, and the Rigveda. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections,

As a parliamentary constituency, Varanasi has both contemporary political importance and deep historical roots. Let's deep dive to know its electoral history today:

Historical Significance: Varanasi is one of the constituencies in 80-seat Uttar Pradesh. As per the estimates of 2011 census, out of total 22,51,773 population 34.54% is rural and 65.46% is urban population. The Scheduled castes (SC) and Scheduled tribes (ST) ratio is 10.13 and 0.74, respectively out of total population. As per the voter list of 2017, there are 1775890 electorates and 1718 polling stations in this constituency. Voter turnout in the 2014 Parliamentary election was 58.35% where as it was 42.61% in 2009 Parliamentary Election. The BJP, the BSP, the INC and the SP got 56.37%, 5.88%, 7.34% and 4.39% votes respectively in 2014-parliamentary election while 30.52%, 27.94%, 9.98% and 18.61% in 2009-parliamentary election respectively. Narendra Modi (BJP) is the present Lok Sabha MP of Varanasi Parliamentary Constituency - Lok Sabha. Congress won the seat for seven times and while BJP emerged out victorious for six time while Janata Party claimed the seat only once.

Raghunath Singh: He was an Indian politician Indian National Congress leader and was the first Member of Parliament from Varanasi. He belonged to a village Khewali, Lok Sabha from Varanasi, being elected in 1952, 1957 and 1962. He was the Chairman of Hindustan Zinc Limited in 1968. He was the Chairman of Shipping Corporation of India in 1977. He was born in Khewali, Varanasi and died on 26 April 1992 in Varanasi, India.

Satyanarayan Singh: He was an Indian politician and served as the Member of Parliament for Varanasi, in Uttar Pradesh, from 1967 to 1971, and was a member of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) political party. He was born in Khajurahvan, Jaunpur district in UP. His father was Aditya Narayan Singh. He received his early education in Deoband (UP) but soon quit his education to become a full-time politician.

Raja Ram Shastri: Shastri was an Indian educationist who was elected in the



Former Varanasi MP Anil Shastri



Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi



VOTE SHARE	
Indian National Congress and BJP are most successful political parties in Varanasi Lok Sabha elections.	
INC (7 terms)	(41.18%)
BJP (7 terms)	(41.18%)
CPIM (1 terms)	(5.88%)
JP (1 terms)	(5.88%)
JD (1 terms)	(5.88%)



1971 Indian general election as a Member of Parliament (MP) from Varanasi during the 5th Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament of India. He was a professor and subsequently Vice-Chancellor of the Kashi Vidyapeeth from 1964 - 1971. He was the grandson of Rai Bahadur Thakur Jaiswal. He served as a member of first National Commission on Labour and received Padma Vibhushan in 1991, the second highest civilian honor of India. He died in New Delhi on 21 August 1991, aged 87

Chandra Shekhar: He contested from Janata Party and won the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency in 1977 elections. He was the only MP from Janata Party.

Kamalapati Tripathi: He was an Indian politician, writer, journalist, and

freedom fighter. He was a senior Indian National Congress leader from Varanasi constituency. He served as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh (1969-1970) as well as Union Minister for Railways. He was the only executive president of Indian National Congress, serving from 1983 to 1986.

Shyam Lal Yadav: He was born on 1 May 1927 and was an Indian politician. He was the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha and was Member of Parliament in the 8th Lok Sabha. Yadav represented the Varanasi constituency of Uttar Pradesh and was a member of the Indian National Congress (INC) political party

Anil Kumar Shastri: He is an Indian politician and a senior leader of the Indian National Congress. He is known for his out-

spoken views. Presently, he is Chairman of the Hindi Department in All India Congress Committee. He was elected to the ninth Lok Sabha from Varanasi in 1989 as member of Janata Dal and was a Minister in the Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India. Anil Shastri was born in Lucknow to Lal Bahadur Shastri, a former Prime Minister of India and Lalita Shastri. He also served as the union minister in the ministry of finance. He is an alumnus of St. Columba's School, Delhi and St. Stephen's College, Delhi. He completed his Advanced Management Programme at Ashridge Business School, now part of Hult International Business School.

Shrish Chandra Dikshit: He was an Indian Politician and Member of Parliament

in the 10th Lok Sabha. Dikshit represented the Varanasi constituency of Uttar Pradesh and was a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party political party. He died in April 2014. In 1984, Dikshit became a member of VHP. Due to his association with VHP and involvement with the Ram Janmabhoomi movement, in 1990 he was arrested and detained.

Shankar Prasad Jaiswal: He was an Indian politician and was Member of Parliament for three consecutive terms in the 11th, 12th & 13th Lok Sabhas. Jaiswal represented the Varanasi constituency of Uttar Pradesh and was a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party political party. Although he was elected for three straight terms, he remained in office for a total of eight years only (from 1996 to

VARANASI: IN A NUTSHELL

Religious Significance: Varanasi is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world and is considered the spiritual capital of India. It is sacred to Hindus and is believed to be the abode of Lord Shiva. The city is dotted with numerous temples, ghats (steps leading to the river), and religious institutions, making it a focal point for pilgrimage and spiritual activities.

Cultural Heritage: Varanasi has been a center of learning, culture, and the arts for centuries. It has been a hub for musicians, poets, scholars, and artists, contributing significantly to India's cultural heritage. The city has a rich tradition of classical music, dance, and literature, which continue to thrive to this day.

Political Significance: Varanasi's political significance has increased in recent years due to its status as the parliamentary constituency represented by the Prime Min-

ister of India, Narendra Modi. In the 2014 general elections, Modi contested and won from Varanasi, which further elevated the city's political prominence on the national stage. Narendra Modi is contesting from this constituency third time in a row in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls against Congress' Ajay Rai.

Historical Events: Varanasi has been witness to numerous historical events and has played a role in shaping India's history. It has been a center of trade, commerce, and political activity since ancient times. The city has experienced the rise and fall of various dynasties, including the Mauryas, Guptas, Mughals, and British colonial rule, each leaving their mark on its culture and architecture. **Cultural Diversity:** Varanasi is known for its cultural diversity, with people from different parts of India and the world converging in the city.

LOK SABHA MPs FROM VARANASI		
Year	Member	Party
1952	Raghunath Singh	Indian National Congress
1957	Raghunath Singh	
1962	Raghunath Singh	
1967	Saty Narain Singh	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
1971	Rajaram Shastri	Indian National Congress
1977	Chandra Shekhar	Janata Party
1980	Kamalapati Tripathi	Indian National Congress
1984	Shyam Lal Yadav	Indian National Congress
1989	Anil Shastri	Janata Dal
1991	Shrish Chandra Dikshit	Bharatiya Janata Party
1996	Shankar Prasad Jaiswal	
1998	Shankar Prasad Jaiswal	
1999	Shankar Prasad Jaiswal	
2004	Rajesh Kumar Mishra	Indian National Congress
2009	Murli Manohar Joshi	Bharatiya Janata Party
2014	Narendra Modi	
2019	Narendra Modi	



2004). Prior to becoming MP, he was also a member of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly (1969-1974) and held charge of whip in Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly (1969-1970). During his political career, Jaiswal also held several party positions in the Bharatiya Janata Party. Jaiswal was born in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh in 1932. His highest attained educational qualification is Matriculation degree. Before entering politics, he was a social worker. He died in 2016.

Rajesh Kumar Mishra: He is a politician from Varanasi, India. He served as a member of the 14th Lok Sabha from Varanasi as a member of INC. He was also a candidate for 2022 Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly election in the seat of Varansi Cantonment. He joined BJP in 2024. He was born on 7 July 1950, in Deoria, Uttar Pradesh, and married Madhu Mishra in 1983.

Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi: He is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of which he was the President between 1991 and 1993. Joshi is the former Member of Parliament from Kanpur Lok Sabha constituency. He is one of the senior most leaders of the BJP and one of the founding members. Joshi later became the Union Human Resources & Development Minister in the National

Democratic Alliance government. Joshi was awarded Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award, in 2017 by the Government of India. Joshi has been a member of RSS since his college days. Joshi was a three-term M.P. from Allahabad before he was defeated in the Lok Sabha elections of May 2004. He won election to the 15th Lok Sabha from Varanasi as a BJP candidate.

He also served as the home minister for 13 days government in 1996. Joshi was appointed as Chairman of the Manifesto Preparation Board of the BJP in 2009. He was honoured as "Proud Past Alumni" of Allahabad University by Allahabad University Alumni Association. He was a sitting MP from Varanasi and he vacated that seat for Narendra Modi in 2014 Lok Sabha Elections. He later contested from Kanpur and won from the constituency by a margin of 2.23 lac votes.

Narendra Modi: Narendra Damodardas Modi is an Indian politician, who has served as the 14th prime minister of India since May 2014. Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014 and is the Member of Parliament (MP) for Varanasi. He is a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a right wing Hindu nationalist paramilitary

volunteer organisation. He is the longest-serving prime minister from outside the Indian National Congress.

In the 2014 Indian general election, Modi led the BJP to a parliamentary majority, the first for a party since 1984. Modi was a candidate for the Lok Sabha constituencies Varanasi and Vadodara. He won in both constituencies, defeating Aam Aadmi Party leader Arvind Kejriwal in Varanasi by 371,784 votes and Madhusudan Mishra of the Congress in Vadodara by 570,128 votes. India's president appointed Modi, who was unanimously elected leader of the BJP, Prime Minister of India. To comply with the law prohibiting MPs from representing more than one constituency, he vacated the Vadodara seat. When Modi was contesting, voter turnout in the 2014 Parliamentary election was 58.35% where as it was 42.61% in 2009 Parliamentary election. Modi garnered 56.37% total votes in Varanasi while Congress candidate opponent Ajay Rai opponent received 7.3% votes in

2014-parliamentary election. However, AAP Chief Arvind Kejriwal also fought against Modi same year and managed to gain 20.3% votes. In 2019, Modi bagged 63.62% votes while his opponent Congress candidate Shalini Yadav received 18.40% votes.

SUPREME COURT FRAMED ISSUES TO CONSIDER, HEARING IN JULY 2024: CHALLENGE TO SURROGACY LAW

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Arun Muthuvel v. Union of India observed and has elucidated the issues it would be considering in a batch of petitions filed challenging provisions of the Surrogacy, the Regulation Act, 2021 and the Surrogacy, Regulation Rules, 2022.

The bench comprising of Justice BV Nagarathna and Justice AG Masih passed the order recording the issues thus:

1. Whether the prohibition of commercial surrogacy as stated under Section 4(ii) (b) and section 4(ii)(c) of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 is constitutional?

2. Whether the right of a couple to avail surrogacy being restricted to married couples between the age of 23 to 50 years and in case of female and between 26 to 55 years in case of male as it is being provided as stated under Section 4(iii)(c)(I) read with Section 2(i)(h) of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, is constitutional?

3. Whether the right of a

single woman to avail surrogacy being restricted to only widows or divorcees between the ages of 35 to 45 years as it is provided being under Section 2(i)(s) of the Surrogacy, the Regulation Act 2021, is constitutional?

4. Whether the right of an intending couple to avail surrogacy being restricted to only those couples who do not have a surviving child as provided as stated under Section 4(iii)(c)(II) of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act 2021, is constitutional?

5. Whether individuals who initiated the process

of availing surrogacy which being prior to the enactment of the Surrogacy, the Regulation Act, 2021 have any right to avail surrogacy in a manner which being beyond the scope of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, save for cases falling within the ambit of Section 53 of the Act?

The petitioner in the plea highlighted one additional issue which relates to exclusion of single men from the purview of Surrogacy Regulation Act.

Therefore, the lead petition in the matter has been

filed by an infertility specialist from Chennai, Dr. Arun Muthuvel, through Advocate Mohini Priya and Advocate Ameyavikrama Thanvi. Therefore, while highlighting various contradictions in the Surrogacy Regulation Act and the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021, thus, the petitioner in the plea points out that the twin legislations inaugurated a legal regime that was discriminatory and was violative of the constitutional rights of privacy and reproductive autonomy.

The petitioner in the plea

states that the impugned acts through their discriminatory, exclusionary, and arbitrary nature, deny agency and autonomy in the discourse on reproductive justice and it also provide a state-sanctioned notion of the ideal family that restricts reproductive rights.

The Supreme Court in the case observed and has agreed to hear the petition wherein it challenges against the two Acts in September last year, several other petitions and applications were filed wherein similar questions were raised, such

as whether it was constitutional to exclude unmarried women from the ambit of the Surrogacy Act, or whether limiting the number of donations made by an oocyte donor under the ART Act would amount to unscientific and irrational restrictions.

The bench in the case observed and has expressed reservations about hearing the challenges to both the Acts simultaneously, as the linkage between the provisions of the two Acts could not be ascertained in the present matter. Further, the said court decided that

issues wrt the Surrogacy Regulation Act will be heard first, followed by those which relates to the ART Act.

The court asked the parties to file written submissions on the foregoing issues.

It has also been clarified by the said court that the petitioners need not restrict their submissions to the issues recorded by the court. Any 'related' issue may also be raised during the proceedings.

Accordingly, the court listed the matter for further consideration on July 30, 2024.

Delhi High Court: Transfer, Being An Exigency Of Service, Is Neither A Matter Of Right Nor Choice

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court in the case Pawan Kumar Mathuri vs UOI & Ors and has held that transfer, being an exigency of service, is neither a matter of right nor a matter of choice

The Division bench comprising of Justice V. Kameswar Rao and Justice Saurabh Banerjee was hearing the present matter.

Facts of the Case:

The petitioner i.e., Pawan Kumar Mathuri joined Central Industrial Security Force, CISF in 2010. Thus, in 2018, the petitioner was posted at the Agra Airport where he

started suffering from cold and cough due to the cold air from the air conditioners. Consequently, he was transferred to the IGI Airport in New Delhi.

However, the petitioner was declared in SHAPE II Category in medical fitness for the year 2023, he was still transferred to Sivagangia, Tamil Nadu in 2024.

Therefore, the petitioner filed the writ petition wherein challenging the order of transfer by the Deputy Inspector General/Office of CISF, IGI Airport i.e., the respondent for seeking a direction to be transferred as per "Guidelines for Transfer of the CISF Personnel, the Guidelines which

were issued by a circular dated September 25, 2017.

It was contended by the petitioner in the plea that considering his health condition and considering the fact that he has already served 13 years in CISF, his posting shall be in the Home Sector as per the Guidelines

On the other hand, it was contended by the respondent that the Petitioner has been declared in Shape II category, where as IGI Airport requires personnel to be in SHAPE I category. Since the transfer is an exigency of service, no one can ask for a choice of posting.

FINDINGS OF THE COURT:

The court in the case observed that transfer being an exigency of service, is neither a matter of right nor a matter of choice and when there is someone who is in the Discipline Force, they are bound to serve within the length and breadth of the nation which hardly leaves any scope of choice for them. Therefore, everyone like the Petitioner is bound to give precedence to the directions issued by the Respondents with respect to their place of transfer.

Further, the court observed that since the Petitioner was in SHAPE II category, it was improbable for the CISF to continue the posting of the Petitioner at the IGI Airport

which is classified as a hypersensitive area and required the Petitioner to be in SHAPE I category.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case stated that the Guidelines related to the Transfer Policy are not mandatory but directory in nature to aid and supplement the existing position. Accordingly, the court dismissed the writ petition.

The counsel, Mr. Ravindra Kumar Singh appeared for the Petitioner.

The counsel, Mr. Rakesh Kumar, CGSC with Mr. Sunil, Ms. Prerna Dhall, GP, for UOI with Sanjay Kumar, (Officer) (Law), CISF represented the Respondent.

SUPREME COURT: STRONGER EVIDENCE NEEDED TO SUMMON PERSON AS ADDITIONAL ACCUSED DURING TRIAL | SECTION 319 CRPC

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Shankar Versus the State Of Uttar Pradesh And Ors. observed and has held that to summon a person as an additional accused while invoking powers as stated under Section 319 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the degree of satisfaction is much stricter.

The court in the case stated that the evidence should be such that it should lead to the conviction of the accused if it is un rebutted.

It has been stated under section 319(I) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, CrPC that, where, in the course of any inquiry into, or trial of, an offence, it appears from the evidence that any person not being the accused has committed any offence for which such person could be tried together with the accused, thus, the said court may proceed against such person for the offence which he

appears to have committed.

The court also referred to the constitution bench dictum in the case Hardeep Singh v. State of Punjab, wherein the court observed that the extra-ordinary jurisdiction under Section 319 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, Cr.P.C. could only be invoked when the evidence to summon the accused is stronger and more reliable than the mere probability of his involvement in the crime.

The court stated that the degree of satisfaction required to exercise power as stated under Section 319 Cr.P.C. is well settled after the above-referred decision. Thus, the evidence before the trial court should be such that if it goes un rebutted, then it should result in the conviction of the person who is sought to be summoned.

The court stated that it being evident from the above referred decision, the degree of satisfaction that is required to exercise power under Section 319 Cr.P.C. is much stricter, considering

that it is a discretionary and an extra-ordinary power. Only when the evidence is strong and reliable, can the power be exercised. Thus, it requires much stronger evidence than mere probability of his complicity.

The court in the case observed and has reserved the decision of the High Court's decision.

The bench comprising of Justice PS Narasimha and Justice Aravind Kumar in the case observed that the High Court erred in not quashing the summons which is issued to the appellant as stated under Section 319 of Cr.P.C. to face the trial based on the deposition of the prosecution witness who was not an eye-witness to the incident.

Further, the court observed that the deposition of the prosecution witness, not being an eye-witness to the incident, would not be sufficient to summon the accused to face trial under Section 319 of the Code

of Criminal Procedure.

The court stated that the said court is of the opinion that PW-1, not being an eye-witness, her deposition is not sufficient enough to invoke the extra-ordinary jurisdiction as stated under section 319 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, CrPC to summon the appellants.

The court in the case noted that the deposition made by the prosecution witness was not sufficient to invoke the jurisdiction under Section 319 of Cr.P.C. to summon the appellant or accused to face the trial.

The court observed that there are no other witnesses who have deposed against the appellants and there being no documentary evidence that the prosecution had collected against the appellants. Thus, there being absolutely no role that is attributed to the appellants and the said court is of the opinion that the deposition of PW-1 is also in line and consistent with her statement under Section 161 and when these factors are

looked in a holistic manner, it would be clear that the higher degree of satisfaction that is required for exercising power under Section 319 Cr.P.C. is not met in the present case.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has held that the trial court and High Court committed an error in justifying the summons issued to the appellant or accused to face trial under Section 319 of Cr.P.C.

Accordingly, the court allowed the appeal and has set aside the impugned orders of the High Court and Trial Court.

The counsel, Ms. Preetika Dwivedi, AOR (the Arguing counsel) Mr. Abhisek Mohanty, Adv. appeared for the Petitioner(s).

The counsel, Mr. Yasharth Kant, AOR Mr. Jitendra Kumar Tripathi, Adv. Mr. Ankit Goel, AOR (Arguing counsel) Mr. Dhawal Uniyal, Adv. Mr. Nikhil Sharma, Adv. represented the Respondent(s).

SUPREME COURT: BANK VICARIOUSLY LIABLE FOR CONDUCT OF ITS EMPLOYEES

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Leelawati Devi And Anr. v. District Cooperative bank Ltd. observed and has held that recipients of a fixed deposit cannot suffer at the cost of the criminal conduct of the Bank officials and that, in such kind of an event the Bank would be held vicariously liable for the such kind of conduct of their employees.

The bench comprising of Justice S. Narasimha and Justice Aravind Kumar in the case was hearing an appeal against the order of the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, NCDRC.

The bench observed that the impugned order overlooked crucial findings of the District Forum which be-

ing on the aspect of criminal conduct by Bank employees which prevented the appellants from retrieving the Fixed Deposit amounts.

The present matter pertains to a consumer dispute between the District Cooperative Bank Ltd. in Varanasi and their customer i.e., the appellants over the non-release of fixed deposit receipts worth Rs. 1,60,000.

It has been claimed by the appellants before the court that the bank wrongly prevented them from withdrawing their deposited money. Thus, the matter was then filed before the District Consumer Forum, which favoured them, ordering the bank to return the money with 15% interest and an additional amount of Rs. 25,000 for damages.

Aggrieved with the said decision, the bank appealed to

the State Commission Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum in Lucknow.

The court rejected the appeal.

Further, the bank then preferred a revision before the NCDRC, which overturned the previous decisions on October 21, 2020.

The court stated that as per the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, NCDRC, records from the bank did not show any money being deposited on the date the fixed deposits were supposedly made July 10, 1993. Thus, they suggested that the fixed deposit receipts, FDRs might have been obtained through fraudulent means since there is a record of the deposit amount being transferred in the bank's ledger, but no corresponding record in the day book or supplementary

book and this discrepancy was discovered during an internal investigation by the bank. It was also noted that the FDRs which were issued did not bare the signature from the manager who was not given authority to issue the particular FDRs from the Bank Authorities.

However, the Supreme Court in the appeal filed by the bank customers observed that as per the findings of the District Forum, the appellants had in fact handed over an amount of Rs. 1,60,000/- to the Bank's officials.

Further, the court noted that as per an enquiry committee set up by the Bank, criminal proceedings were also initiated against the concerned bank officials which is followed by a due course adopted by the bank. The court stated that

SUPREME COURT: IF THERE ARE LAPSES BY PROSECUTORS, TRIAL JUDGES SHOULD PLAY ACTIVE ROLE IN EVIDENCE PROCESS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Anees v. The State Govt of NCT observed and has stated that the trial judges should take a proactive role instead of acting as 'mere tape recorders' recording witness statements and if there being any lapse by the prosecutor, then the judge should intervene and ask necessary questions to the witness to elicit relevant information which is required aid of justice.

The bench comprising of Justice of India DY Chandrachud, Justice JB Pardiwal and Justice Manoj Misra in the case observed that it being the duty of the court to arrive at the truth and subserve the ends of justice.

The bench stated that the courts have to take a participatory role in the trial and not act as mere tape recorders in order to record whatever is being stated by the witnesses.

Further, the court stated that the judge has to monitor the proceedings in aid of justice.

The bench in the case was deciding the criminal appeal

in a murder case.

In the present case, the appellant was convicted for the murder of his wife in his home and the only eye-witness was their 5-year-old daughter, who turned hostile.

The court observed that after the witness was declared hostile, all that the public prosecutor did was to put few suggestions to her for the purposes of cross-examination.

The court stated that the trial judge also failed to play an active role in the present case.

The bench made the remarks regarding the role of trial judge.

The judgement stated that the judge has to monitor the proceedings in aid of justice and even if the prosecutor is remiss or lethargic in some ways, the court should control the proceedings effectively so that the ultimate objective that is the truth is arrived at. Thus, the court must be conscious of serious pitfalls and dereliction of duty which being on the part of the prosecuting agency and upon the failure of the prosecuting agency showing indifference or adopting

an attitude of aloofness, the trial judge must exercise the vast powers conferred as stated under Section 165 of the Evidence Act and Section 311 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, CrPC respectively to elicit all the necessary materials by playing an active role in the evidence collecting process.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case stated that the judge is expected to actively participate in the trial, elicit necessary materials from the witnesses in the appropriate context which he feels necessary for reaching the correct conclusion.

Further, the court in the case stated that the judge has uninhibited power to put questions to the witness either during the chief examination or cross-examination or even during re-examination for this purpose and if a judge feels that a witness has committed an error or slip, it being the duty of the judge to ascertain whether it was so, for, to err is human and the chances of erring may accelerate under stress of nervousness during cross-examination.

Supreme Court Grants Anticipatory Bail To Mukhtar Ansari's Son In Model Code Violation Case

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Umar Ansari Vs State of UP observed and has granted anticipatory bail to Umar Ansari, son of gangster-turned-politician Lt. Mukhtar Ansari wherein it was alleged that he along with other accused threatened the District Mau Administration and violated the model code of conduct during the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly Polls.

In the present case, Ansari approached the Supreme Court against the decision of the Allahabad High Court wherein the court had refused to grant anticipatory bail to him.

FACTS OF THE CASE:

The FIR was lodged against Abbas Ansari, Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party candidate from Mau Sadar seat, Umar Abbas Ansari i.e., the present appellant, organizer Mansoor Ahmad Ansari and 150 unknown people.

The allegation against them was that on March

03, 2022, the accused, which includes the appellant, threatened the District Mau Administration and violated the model code of conduct and the FIR was registered under Section 171-F, Section 186, Section 189, Section 153-A, Section 120-B, and 506 of the Indian Penal Code, IPC.

The Supreme Court in the case granted ad-interim protection to Ansari from arrest on January 25, 2024.

The counsel, Additional Advocate General Garima Prashad appearing for the State of Uttar Pradesh protested against the grant of anticipatory bail to Ansari. Thus, she referred to the criminal antecedents of Ansari by stating that he along with other accused including a crowd of 150 unknown people threatened the District Administration of Mau and violated the model code of conduct being enforced during the State Assembly Polls in 2022.

The counsel, Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal appearing for Ansari submitted before the court

that the speech given during the election time, by the petitioner's brother i.e., Abas Ansari has led to the registering of the case against the petitioner or Umar Ansari.

Further, it has also been pointed out by him that the person who made the speech i.e., Abas Ansari and another co-accused have been granted regular bail.

The bench comprising of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra in the case observed and was inclined to grant anticipatory bail to Ansari while noting that the charges framed against him are subject to the adjudication in the trial.

Therefore, the court directed Ansari to cooperate with the investigation and appear before the investigative agencies as and when required.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has directed that in the event of arrest, Ansari shall be released on bail after furnishing a bail bond of Rs. 20,000/-.

MALDIVES URGES INDIANS TO 'BE A PART' OF ITS TOURISM

According to a report, the number of tourist arrivals from India declined by 42% in the first four months of 2024 compared to the last year.



AGENCIES
DUBAI

With the number of Indian tourists visiting the Maldives dwindling amidst strained bilateral ties, the archipelago nation's tourism minister on Monday urged Indians to contribute to the country's economy which is dependent on tourism.

In an interview Maldivian Tourism Minister Ibrahim Faisal emphasised on the historical relations between his country and India.

"We have a history. Our newly elected government also wants to work together (with India). We always promote peace and a friendly environment. Our people and the government will give a warm welcome to Indian arrivals. As the Tourism Minister, I want to tell Indians to please be a part of Maldives' tourism. Our economy depends on tourism," he said.

A full-blown backlash was directed at the Maldives following derogatory remarks against India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social media by three Maldivian officials after Modi

posted photos and video of the pristine Lakshadweep Islands on India's west coast on January 6 on his X handle.

Scores of Indians, including multiple celebrities, cancelled their reservations and dropped plans to visit Maldives. The tourism arrival statistics reflected how from being a top visitor country, India's position went down from topmost to sixth position after January.

According to a sun.mv report published on Monday, the number of tourist arrivals from India declined by 42 per cent in the first four months of this year compared to the first four months of last year.

At the start of this year, India was the top tourist market for the Maldives. Shortly into the year, India dropped to sixth place amongst the top tourist markets, the news portal reported.

According to Tourism Ministry statistics, Maldives recorded a total of 43,991 tourist arrivals from India as of May 4. Between January and April of last year, Maldives recorded 73,785 tourist arrivals. This year, the number stands at 42,638.

The report attributed the

steep decline in Indian tourists to the strained relations between India and the Maldives after the new administration led by President Mohamed Muizzu assumed office in November last year.

The India-Maldives ties have come under stress as President Muizzu, widely seen as a pro-China leader, maintained after assuming charge as the president in November that he will keep his election promise of evicting Indian military personnel from his country.

Soon after coming to power, Muizzu forced the withdrawal of the 88 Indian military personnel manning three aviation platforms gifted by India to the Maldives.

He has previously accused India of meddling in the affairs of the Maldives and won the presidential elections in September last year with an "India Out" campaign.

The Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and occupies a special place in its initiatives like 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and the 'Neighbourhood First Policy' of the Modi government.

IMF mission to visit Pakistan again this month for new loan program

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

An International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission is set to visit Pakistan this month regarding a new loan program and to discuss policies and reforms, reported Samaa TV.

Along with discussions on policies and reforms, the federal budget for the new financial year will also be discussed.

The visit coincides with the financial eagles of the country starting preparations to formulate the upcoming fiscal year's budget.

The IMF is pushing for the acceleration of reforms rather than the size of the program, reported Samaa TV, citing sources.

Last month, Pakistan successfully completed a USD 3 billion short-term program that saved it from defaulting.

Now, the government is pushing for a new long-term loan program, according to Samaa TV.

However, the IMF has not specified the date and duration of the visit yet.

Meanwhile, some days ago, the federal government decided to stop providing

subsidies to government officials ahead of the IMF mission's visit on a new loan package.

According to media reports, the subsidy given to Customs officers from grades 17 to 22 has also been abolished.

They added that the subsidized house rent and medical charges to customs officers have been abolished, Samaa TV reported.

According to sources, the customs officers were being given these incentives from the common pool fund, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) had ordered

to end subsidies and incentives from the common pool fund.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) received USD 1.1 billion from the IMF on April 30.

Moreover, the IMF Executive Board completed the second review under the stand-by arrangement in its meeting on April 29 and approved the disbursement for Pakistan. Accordingly, SBP received SDR 828 million in its account from the IMF. The amount was reflected in SBP's foreign exchange reserves for the week ending on May 3.

SC SUSPENDS PESHAWAR HC VERDICT

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Monday suspended the Peshawar High Court (PHC) and the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) order allocating reserved seats to other parties, The Express Tribune reported.

This comes as a three-judge bench, led by Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, granted leave to appeal and adjourned the matter till June 3.

The bench unanimously suspended the ECP's decision for the re-allocation of reserved seats to other political parties.

The PHC through its earlier verdict dashed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's hopes of getting reserved seats as it dismissed the Sunni Ittehad Council's (SIC) petition challenging the ECP's ruling that denied reserved seats to the party. PTI-backed independent candidates had found a new home in the SIC after the party lost its election symbol.

Karachi plagued by rampant street crime, robberies

AGENCIES
KARACHI

Karachi, with its turbulent history of crime, stands familiar with the spectre of lawlessness. In recent times, the city has grappled with rampant street crime, robberies, drug-related offences, and encounters with law enforcement. Street criminals operate with impunity, targeting citizens in broad daylight outside banks, amidst traffic snarls, and within bustling markets, resorting to violence when faced with resistance, Dawn reported.

President Asif Ali Zardari's recent directive to the Sindh chief minister underscores the gravity of the situation. He urged extensive action against street criminals in Karachi, as well as drug traffickers and bandits in the riverine areas of upper Sindh and southern Punjab, calling for collaboration among provinces.

While some crime control



measures have been reported, such as the revival of the Shaheen Force, an upgraded Madadgar-15 helpline, e-tagging of repeat offenders, and the implementation of the Sindh Smart Surveillance System, the response has been reactive rather than proactive.

Statistics mentioned in the Dawn report highlight the scale of the challenge: out of 103 kidnappings, 47 went unreported, while 104 individuals were recovered, leaving 19 still missing. Daily street crime incidents have declined from 252.32 in January to 166.2 in April. Of

the 48 incidents resulting in 49 casualties, 27 were identified, leading to 43 arrests and 13 police encounters, albeit with contentious implications, as reported by Dawn.

However, the belated intervention of the president and the provincial government's reliance on superficial measures underscore the need for a deeper, more holistic approach. Proactive policing demands a comprehensive assessment of root causes, patterns, and vulnerable areas. Long-term solutions necessitate multifaceted strategies encompassing training,

ISLAMABAD HC ORDERS ELAHI TO BE PLACED UNDER HOUSE ARREST

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued a directive to place former Punjab Chief Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) President Pervez Elahi under house arrest within 15 days, as reported by ARY News.

In a verdict announced by Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir on a plea filed by Qaisara Elahi, Pervez Elahi's wife, the court has instructed that he be moved to a sub-jail and kept under house arrest, taking into consideration his age (78) and health concerns.

Furthermore, the court has mandated authorities to ensure adequate medical care and facilities for Pervez Elahi during his house arrest period.

PAK FARMERS ANNOUNCE NATIONWIDE PROTESTS

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

The Kissan Ittehad Pakistan announced that thousands of farmers would participate in nationwide protests against the ongoing wheat crisis starting from May 10, reported Daily Pakistan. The protest will commence from Multan, the Kissan Ittehad Pakistan stated.

The plunging wheat rates in the market, far below the support price of Rs 3,900 per 40 Kg, have stirred discontent, with blame directed towards the decision to import wheat despite a "bumper crop" locally.

Last month, farmers resorted to protests in Lahore and several other cities, which prompted the government to initiate a crackdown against the demonstrations, reported Daily Pakistan.

Over 23 million Afghans in dire need of humanitarian aid: UNAMA report

AGENCIES
KABUL

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reports that a staggering 23.7 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance in 2024, Khaama Press reported.

Despite a decline in violence, Afghanistan continues to grapple with significant humanitarian challenges, as emphasised by UNAMA on Sunday.

Of the 23.7 million individuals requiring aid, 5.9 million are women and 5.4 million are men, according to the agency's statement, as reported by Khaama Press.

Echoing similar concerns, the International Federa-



tion of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has also highlighted the severe deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

Millions of Afghans endure the consequences of four decades of conflict, poverty, repeated disasters and an economic downturn.

Since the Taliban assumed control of the country in August 2021, the political transition, contraction of the economy and reduced levels of donor funding have increased risks and needs at the local level, witnessing an exacerbation of the humanitarian crisis, marked by forced deporta-

tions and dwindling international aid.

Returnees from neighbouring countries face a myriad of obstacles, including scarcity of food, clean water, adequate shelter, and employment opportunities.

The recent surge in migrant expulsions from neighbouring nations, coupled with recent earthquakes and natural calamities such as floods, has further underscored the pressing need for humanitarian intervention, Khaama Press reported.

According to the Taliban's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation, around 2,800 Afghan migrants returned from Iran, both voluntarily and forcibly, on May 1, according to TOLOnews.

Israel issues evacuation notice to residents of eastern Rafah

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

Israel's military has issued an urgent evacuation notice to residents of eastern Rafah, following a warning from the country's defence minister of impending "intense action" in the area, it is reported.

Avichay Adrae, head of the Arab media division of the IDF Spokesperson's Unit, urged residents to "evacuate immediately" to designated humanitarian areas at the checkpoints for their safety. The call specifically targets individuals residing in the municipality of Al-Shawka and the neighbourhoods of Al-Salam, Al-Jneina, Tiba Zarea, and Al-Bayouk in the Rafah area.

The announcement comes



amidst the ongoing bombardment of Gaza, with significant devastation witnessed since October 7. Many residents of Rafah, already displaced multiple times, now face the prospect of further displacement amid escalating conflict, as reported.

Humanitarian agencies have cautioned against a full-scale ground invasion

spokesperson, characterised the evacuation as a "limited scope operation" aimed at temporary relocation rather than a widespread evacuation.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Galant's remarks to troops inside Gaza indicate preparations for intensified military action in Rafah and other areas.

This follows the closure of the Kerem Shalom border crossing, a crucial lifeline for humanitarian aid, after being targeted by rocket attacks claimed by Hamas' military wing, resulting in casualties among IDF soldiers.

The decision to evacuate eastern Rafah raises concerns about the safety of displaced civilians and the lack of a secure refuge within Gaza.

IAEA chief in Iran as concern grows over nuclear activity

AGENCIES
TEHRAN

UN atomic watchdog chief Rafael Grossi arrived in Iran Monday, where he is expected to speak at a conference and meet officials for talks on Tehran's nuclear programme.

The visit comes at a time of heightened regional tensions and with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) criticising Iran for lack of cooperation on inspections and other outstanding issues.

News agencies reported Grossi's arrival "at the head of a delegation to participate

in the nuclear conference and negotiate with top nuclear and political officials of the country".

He met with Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and is scheduled to meet Atomic Energy Organization of Iran chief Mohammad Eslami. Grossi later said in a post on X, formerly Twitter, that at his meeting with the foreign minister he proposed "concrete practical measures" with the "aim of restoring process of confidence building and increasing transparency".

Grossi is also expected to deliver a speech at Iran's

first International Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, which began on Monday.

At its opening ceremony, Eslami expressed hopes of cooperation with the IAEA, saying this was "at the forefront of the Islamic republic of Iran's policies".

"We hope that the agency can play its role as an independent international institution free from political pressures," he added.

The three-day event is being held in Isfahan province, home to the Natanz uranium enrichment plant and where strikes attributed to Israel hit last month.

' Hamas suspends hostage and truce talks with Israel'

AGENCIES
TEL AVIV

Hamas will not return to Cairo for continued talks on a possible hostage deal and pause in fighting, The Times of Israel reported citing London-based Qatari outlet Al-Araby Al-Jadeed.

Hamas is suspending its involvement in the talks "pending the results of the mediators' efforts," says the Al-Araby Al-Jadeed source.

Meanwhile, meeting with families of hostages, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Galant said that refusal of the Hamas deal forces Israel to



continue efforts to free those held by Hamas in the Gaza Strip, amid the upcoming ground operation against the terror group in Rafah.

"The actions to return your loved ones continue all the

time, even now. We are committed to achieving the goals of the war, but the refusal of Hamas of any plan that would allow the return of the hostages forces us to start the operation in Rafah," he said to the families, according to his office.

"Even after the start of the operation in Rafah, all efforts to bring home the hostages will continue," Gallant added. Additionally, US President Joe Biden also held a telephone conversation with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu which lasted for half an hour, The Jerusalem Post reported.

Hezbollah says its drone hits northern Israeli town

AGENCIES
BEIRUT

Hezbollah said on Monday it carried out a drone attack on an Israeli military position near the northern Israeli town of Metula that left several dead and injured.

Israel's military said it could not yet confirm the injuries or casualties, but said a drone had crossed from Lebanon into the Metula area. Israeli media reported two people were seriously wounded in the attack.

Iran-backed Hezbollah also said it had sent dozens of rockets towards military targets across the border with Israel.

Israel and Hezbollah, which has amassed a formidable arsenal since 2006, have been engaged in daily cross-border strikes over the past six months, in parallel with Israel's war in Gaza. Hezbollah has so far restricted its attacks to a strip of northern Israel, seeking to draw Israeli forces away from Gaza. RAFAH, Gaza Strip (Reuters) - Israel's military carried out airstrikes in Rafah on Monday, residents said, hours after Israel told Palestinians to evacuate parts of the southern Gaza city where more than a million people uprooted by the war have been sheltering.

RACING ENTHUSIASTS



NASA's Boeing Crew Flight Test astronauts Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams. Photo: NASA

Russia announces nuclear drills amid deepening Ukraine involvement talks

AGENCIES
MOSCOW

Russia said Monday it plans to hold drills simulating the use of battlefield nuclear weapons amid rising tensions following comments by senior Western officials about the possibility of deeper involvement in the war in Ukraine. The announcement came on the eve of Russian President Vladimir Putin's inauguration to a fifth term in office and in a week when Moscow on Thursday will celebrate Victory Day, its most important secular holiday, marking its defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

The drills are a response to "provocative statements and threats of certain Western officials regarding the Russian Federation," the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

It was the first time Russia has publicly announced

drills involving tactical nuclear weapons, although its strategic nuclear forces regularly hold exercises. Tactical nuclear weapons include air bombs, warheads for short-range missiles and artillery munitions and are meant for use on a battlefield. They are less powerful than the strategic weapons — massive warheads that arm intercontinental ballistic missiles and are intended to obliterate entire cities. The Russian announcement was a warning to Ukraine's Western allies about becoming more deeply engaged in the 2-year-old war, where the Kremlin's forces have gained an upper hand amid Ukraine's shortage of manpower and weapons. Some of Ukraine's Western partners have previously expressed concern that the conflict could spill beyond Ukraine into a war between NATO and Russia.

Macron presses China's Xi on Ukraine

AGENCIES
PARIS

French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday pressed Xi Jinping to coordinate closely with Europe in the face of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and accept fair global trade rules as the Chinese leader began a state visit to France.

Xi's first visit to Europe since 2019 will also see him hold talks in Serbia and Hungary. Xi has said he wants to find peace in Ukraine even if analysts do not expect major changes in Chinese policy.

But his choice of France as the sole major European power on his itinerary indicates the importance the leader of the one-party Communist state of more than 1.4 billion people accords to Macron as an EU powerbroker over two years into Russia's invasion.

Hung House will be a disaster for UK: Sunak

AGENCIES
LONDON

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 mayoralities 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 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.

"[Labour Leader] Keir Starmer propped up in Downing Street by the SNP [Scottish National Party], Liberal Democrats and the Greens would be a disaster for Britain. The country 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, which had made them less inclined to vote for Tory councillors and mayors in the polls last Thursday.

"I know the last few years have been tough, and I understand why people are frustrated. Losing good Conservative councillors and a mayor as fantastic as Andy Street who has done so much good for the West



NASA's Boeing Crew Flight Test astronauts Barry Wilmore and Sunita Williams. Photo: NASA

Boeing's competitor Elon Musk's SpaceX was able to fly its crew flight test in the year 2020. It has sent 12 crewed missions to the ISS since 2020. After a botched attempt in December 2019, Starliner made a successful second uncrewed test flight in May 2022.

Williams, 59, a retired US Navy captain and Wilmore will pilot the flight, which Boeing is calling its Crew Flight Test (CFT) and that will be docked with the ISS for about a week. The Starliner flight to the ISS is expected to last about 26 hours, and the two astronauts will

live and work on the ISS for 8 days before undocking and returning to Earth on May 15. During the test flight, the astronaut duo will take the Starliner through a series of tests before NASA certifies it to be fit to fly to space on rotational missions to the ISS under the US space agency's Commercial Crew Program.

Unlike previous US capsules that splashed down in the sea on returning to Earth, the Starliner will touch down on land at a site somewhere in the western part of the United States, NASA said. Both the astronauts will be launching on a United Launch Alliance's Atlas V rocket to the International Space Station.

Williams and Wilmore were both former commanders of the International Space Station.

Germany recalls ambassador in Russia over hacker attack protest

AGENCIES
BERLIN

Germany said Monday it recalled its ambassador to Russia for a week of consultations in Berlin following an alleged hacker attack on Chancellor Olaf Scholz's party.

Germany last week accused Russian military agents of hacking into the top echelons of Scholz's Social Democrats' party and other sensitive government and industrial targets. Berlin has joined NATO and fellow European countries in warning that Russia's cyberespionage would have consequences.

The Foreign Office in Berlin said Monday that the government is taking the latest incident "seriously" and that Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had decided to call back German Ambassador Alexander Lambsdorff. He



would return to Moscow after a week, it said.

"The German government takes this event very seriously as behavior against our liberal democracy and the institutions that support it," Foreign Office spokeswoman Kathrin Deschauer said. Baerbock said last week that Russian military cyber operators were behind the hacking of emails of the Social Democrats, the leading

party in the governing coalition. Officials said the hackers had exploited Microsoft Outlook.

The German Interior Ministry said in a statement last week that the hacking campaign began as early as March 2022, a month after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, with emails at the Social Democrat party headquarters accessed beginning that December. It said German companies, including in the defense and aerospace sectors, as well as targets related to the war in Ukraine were the focus of the hacking attacks.

Officials said the attacks persisted for months. Relations between Russia and the West have been tense since Moscow's attack on Ukraine. Germany has been providing military support to Ukraine in the ongoing war.

Interpreters building bridges in EU voting season

AGENCIES
BRUSSELS

It's a back-to-back voting session in the European Parliament and hands shoot up in rapid-fire succession as the roll call sounds in German: "Dafuer!", "Dagegen!" — For or Against.

Overlooking the packed hemicycle in Brussels, in booths half-observed by tinted glass, a brigade of interpreters feed precious audio streams of the proceedings to lawmakers from 27 nations.

Humming with different languages like a modern-day Tower of Babel, the EU's institutions are the world's largest employer of interpreters — a veritable shadow Army present at every summit, web-streamed hearing and press briefing.

'Crash has indelible mark on our lives', says survivors Canada road accident

AGENCIES
TORONTO

A survivor of a fatal wrong-way crash at a highway in Canada said his family was "reeling" from the collision that left both his parents and his only son dead, leaving an "indelible mark" on their lives forever.

Gokulnath Manivannan,

33, and his wife Ashwitha Jawahar, 27, were the sole survivors in last Monday's multi-vehicle collision that took place after a police chase that began with an alleged liquor store robbery in Bowmanville, Ontario, in the regional municipality of Clarington. Police pursued the suspect as he drove the wrong way on Highway 401

in Whitby, about 50 kilometres east of Toronto.

A statement provided to CBC News from Ontario's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) on Sunday quoted Manivannan as saying: "We are at a complete loss of words to describe the agony and vacuum in our hearts knowing we can never hold our child Aditya Vivaan,

who gave us so many precious memories in such a short time, in our hands again."

"His small toys and clothes remain spread around our home, and we have no courage in us to even enter our home which is filled with our only son's memories," the statement quoted him as saying.

Indian student stabbed to death in Australia

AGENCIES
MELBOURNE

A 22-year-old MTEch student from India was stabbed to death in Australia during a fight between some Indian students and police are searching for two Indian-origin brothers in connection with the murder.

Navjeet Sandhu was fatally

attacked with a knife by another student when he tried to intervene in a dispute between a few Indian students over some rent issue, according to the deceased victim's uncle Yashvir in Karnal, Haryana. "Navjeet's friend (another Indian student) had asked him to accompany him to his house to pick up his belongings as he had a car.

While his friend went inside, Navjeet heard some shouts and saw there was a scuffle. When Navjeet tried to intervene asking them not to fight, he was fatally stabbed in the chest with a knife," Yashvir, who'll retire from the Army in July, said.

He added that like Navjeet, the alleged accused also hails from Karnal.

Yashvir said the family got the information about the incident early Sunday morning. Navjeet's friend, whom he was accompanying, also sustained injuries in the incident, the uncle of the deceased said. Yashvir said the family is in a state of shock. "Navjeet was a brilliant student and was to join his family in July for vacations," he said.

Death toll mounts to 75 in Brazil floods, over 100 missing

AGENCIES
BRASILIA

The death toll has risen to 75 in Brazil floods, as the calamity continues to wreak havoc in the country's southern Rio Grande do Sul state, Al Jazeera reported.

Another 103 people are reportedly missing, the local authorities have said.

More than 88,000 people were displaced from their homes as a result of the rains, according to state civil defence authorities on Sunday. Approximately 16,000 people

sought refuge in schools, gyms, and other temporary shelters.

Meanwhile, state Governor Eduardo Leite said on Sunday morning, "I repeat and insist: the devastation to which we are being subjected is unprecedented."

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva also visited Rio Grande do Sul for a second time on Sunday, accompanied by Defence Minister Jose Mucio, Finance Minister Fernando Haddad and Environment Minister Marina Silva, among others,



according to Al Jazeera.

The leader and his team surveyed the flooded streets of the state capital, Porto Alegre, from a helicopter.

Rescue operations are un-

derway as emergency responders race against time to locate survivors trapped amidst the debris of collapsed homes, bridges, and roads.

The surge in water levels in

the state of Rio Grande do Sul is straining dams and threatening the metropolis of Porto Alegre, the country's civil defence agency said, according to Al Jazeera.

Governor Eduardo Leite declared a state of emergency as the region grapples with the aftermath of the catastrophic weather event.

"We are dealing with the worst disaster in [our] history," Governor Leite lamented, acknowledging the grim reality that the death toll is expected to rise further as rescue efforts continue.

Trump fined \$1K for gag order violation in hush money case

AGENCIES
NEW YORK

The judge presiding over Donald Trump's hush money trial fined him \$1,000 on Monday for violating his gag order once again and sternly warned the former president that additional violations could result in jail time.

The fine marks the second time since the trial began last month that Trump has been sanctioned for violating the

gag order, which bars him from making incendiary comments about jurors, witnesses and other people closely connected to the case. He was fined \$9,000 last week, \$1,000 for each of nine violations. "It appears that the \$1,000 fines are not serving as a deterrent. Therefore going forward, this court will have to consider a jail sanction," Judge Juan M. Merchan said before jurors were brought into the court-

room. Trump's statements, the judge added, "threaten to interfere with the fair administration of justice and constitute a direct attack on the rule of law. I cannot allow that to continue."

The violation in this case stems from an April 22 interview with television channel Real America's Voice in which Trump criticized the speed at which the jury was picked and claimed it was stacked with Democrats.

ASHUTOSH RANA OPENS UP ABOUT HIS ROLE IN 'MURDER IN MAHIM'

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Ashutosh Rana is gearing up for the release of the psychological thriller 'Murder in Mahim'.

As per the makers, the series is a social commentary that explores the chilling murder mystery and the underbelly of Mumbai, highlighting the reconciliation of a lost friendship between Peter (Ashutosh Rana) and Jende (Vijay Raaz).

On what audience can expect from the show, Ashutosh in a statement shared, "Playing gray characters takes a toll on artists, to get into the skin of the character; you become that demon, and you have to act, think, and express in the same way. But the best part is when you get back to reality, you come back with more humanity in you." Earlier, Vijay Raaz also opened up about his experience working in the series.



He said, "The most fascinating aspect of Jende's character is the various shades of his persona. My effort was to bring a humane touch to this character, which is evident in the investigation scenes, but at the same time, there is aggression on the personal front which comes out in front of his family. So, it was exciting to etch out the emotional arc of my character and bring an entire gamut of emotions on screen. Working on a show like Murder in Mahim is a rare experience. The entire team has put their heart and soul on this show, hope the audience will enjoy watching it."

MANOJ BAJPAYEE, RAJ & AMP; DK START SHOOTING FOR 'THE FAMILY MAN 3'



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The wait is finally over. Manoj Bajpayee-starrer 'The Family Man' franchise is returning with the third season.

On Monday, the makers officially announced the third season, updating fans that they have commenced the shoot.

Taking to Instagram, streaming platform Amazon Prime Video shared pictures of Manoj sitting with the makers and wrote, "#TFM3W??? us: shoot begins drop your excitement." The update left fans extremely excited.

"Yaay finally," a social media user commented.

"Can't wait for the season 3," another user wrote.

In the series created by Raj and DK, the 55-year-old actor plays Srikant Tiwari, a middle-class man leading a double life as an intelligence officer for the Threat Analysis and Surveillance Cell (TASC), a fictional division of the National Investigation Agency. Written by Suman Kumar and Raj & DK, the eagerly awaited third season will bring back many of the original cast members, including Priyamani (Suchitra Tiwari), Sharib Hashmi (JK Talpade), Ashlesha Thakur (Dhriti Tiwari), Vedant Sinha (Atharv Tiwari), amongst others. It is produced by Raj & DK's D2R Films banner.

AMITABH BACHCHAN SHARES PICTURES FROM SUNDAY MEET AND GREET WITH FANS OUTSIDE JALSA



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PICTURE PERFECT

Bollywood actress and model Mugdha Godse walks the ramp on the first day of Bombay Times Fashion Week, in Mumbai. (ANI)



'MAIDAN' CONTINUES ITS SUCCESSFUL RUN IN CINEMAS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Ajay Devgn's Maidan continues its impressive run, enthraling audiences and maintaining its stronghold at the box office. This weekend the movie has witnessed a rapid growth and earned 3.25 cr which also sums up to 50.74 crs India net collection. The movie has proved how content is the king and a well crafted story always makes an impact.

The movie has received lot of love and widespread appreciation by people of all age groups across the nation. Parents have been taking their children and flocking the movie theatres as the movie sends out a strong message on dedication and resilience. The



movie had also received support from the various Football clubs where children were shown this story of Coach SA Rahim and his unwavering love for the

sport and the country.

Directed by Amit Sharma and produced by Zee Studios, Boney Kapoor, Arunava Joy Sengupta and Akash Chawla, Maid-

aan features Ajay Devgn as Coach Syed Abdul Rahim along with Priyamani, Gajraj Rao and Rudranil Ghosh. Watch Maidaan in cinemas now!

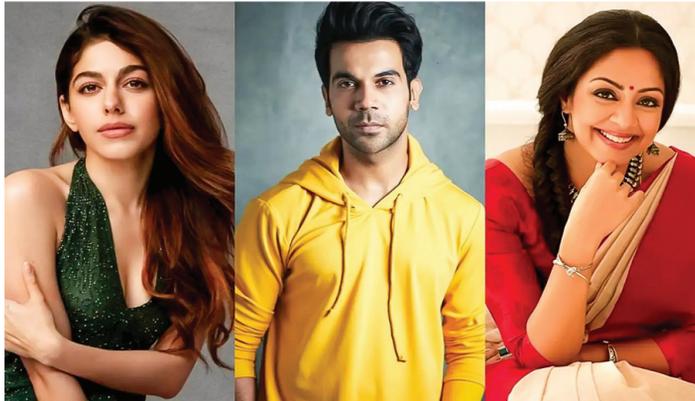
'Srikanth' is an inspiring film say Rajkummar Rao and Jyotika

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Srikanth, a film based on blind Telugu industrialist Srikanth Bolla, is all set to release on May 10. The director and cast have been busy promoting the film and call Srikanth Bolla 'an inspiration'.

Talking about his character in Srikanth, actor Rajkummar Rao said, "Srikanth Bolla is an inspiration! It's indeed a privilege to play such an inspiring persona who has been through a lot of hardships and despite that has risen like a phoenix! I am really looking forward to playing Srikanth. I'm happy to collaborate with Bhushan sir yet again on this compelling project."

Actress Jyotika who was seen in Shaitaan recently, said, "Srikanth is an inspirational and bold film. I am



proud to be a part of this film which is also an important film in my career. After seeing Srikanth Bolla, my perspective towards visually challenged people has changed. And interestingly, this is the third film where I am playing the role of teacher."

"I personally like the

character of Srikanth. When our team first met industrialist Srikanth Bolla he didn't look blind. I'd like to show this character and the story around it in an entertaining way to people. I enjoy making biopics and there are many stories in India to be told," said director Tushar Hiranandani.

at press meet.

Gulshan Kumar and T-Series Presents a T-Series Films & Chalk N Cheese Films Production LLP, tentatively titled Srikanth Bolla, directed by Tushar Hiranandani is produced by Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar and Nidhi Parmar Hiranandani.

KARISMA KAPOOR SHARES STUNNING SUNKISSED SELFIES

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actress Karisma Kapoor recently treated fans as she shared sunkissed selfies on social media.

Karisma on Sunday took to her Instagram Stories to share her pictures. Wearing a white shirt, the 'Zubeidaa' actress looked stunning as she kept her hair down and makeup subtle.

Earlier this month, Karisma shared glimpses from her recent road trip.

Sporting a laid-back look, she rocked a basic white t-shirt, grey pyjama, beige cap, and black sunglasses.

The caption of the post read, "Road-trippin."

In the first picture, Ka-



risma radiated joy with her infectious smile while posing for the camera.

Other pictures showed her

chic demeanour in candid poses, adding a touch of elegance to her road adventure.

The final picture captured

BRAIN PICKING

I am not the one for monotony. I am all for chances and its every medium, every genre that I want to explore.



-MRUNAL THAKUR
(Indian actress)

VARUN SHARMA UNVEILS NEW TRAILER OF 'GARFIELD MOVIE'



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actor Varun Sharma on Monday unveiled the new trailer of the much-awaited Hindi version of 'The Garfield Movie'.

Taking to Instagram, Sony Pictures treated fans with the trailer video and captioned the post, which read, "Indoor cat. Outdoor adventure. Watch the new trailer for The #GarfieldMovie in Hindi - voiced by none other than @fukravaranun! Exclusively in cinemas May 17 in English, Hindi & Tamil- in 2D & 3D!"

As soon as the trailer was shared, fans and industry members chimed in the comment section.

Varun's 'Sab First Class' co-star Shehnaaz Gill wrote, "wow."

One of the users wrote, "This is gng to be the best." Another user commented, "Mera fvt cartoon."

Helmed by Mark Dindal, the film also features Hannah Waddingham, Ving Rhames, Nicholas Hoult, Cecily Strong, Harvey Guillen, Brett Goldstein and Bowen Yang.

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"The Garfield Movie" is all set to hit the theatres on May 17, 2024.

Meanwhile, Varun is all set to star opposite Shehnaaz Gill in the upcoming movie 'Sab First Class'.

Recently, Shehnaaz posted a cozy photo with her co-star and the film crew.

The actress on Friday, shared a picture on Instagram from a cozy dinner with the movie's cast and crew. She took the photo with Varun Sharma, director Balwinder Singh Janjua, and others present.

The film is being helmed by Balwinder Singh Janjua and produced by Murad Khetani.

SHANAYA KAPOOR SHARES STUNNING PICTURES IN RED LEHENGA



TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Actress Shanaya Kapoor wowed her fans as she dropped a series of gorgeous pictures, in a stunning red lehenga.

Shanaya, on Monday, took to her Instagram account to share a couple of gorgeous pictures in her beautiful lehenga.

In the pictures, Shanaya looked radiant as she posed gracefully, exuding confidence in the vibrant attire.

Soon after the actress shared the picture, fans chimed in the comment section to shower her with compliments.

https://www.instagram.com/p/C6noB6OxIL-/?utm_source=ig_web_

copy link One user wrote, "You are such a gorgeous lady."

Another user penned, "You look so beautiful Shanaya."

"Such an angel you are," penned a third user.

Shanaya is all set to make her acting debut with Mohanlal's pan-India 'Vrushabha', directed by Nanda Kishore. It will be released simultaneously in Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada, Tamil and Hindi in 2024.

Earlier, Dharma Productions announced a film titled 'Bedhadak' with Shanaya, Lakshya and Gurfateh.

Sharing the update, Shanaya took to Instagram and unveiled her first look from the film.

RELATION BETWEEN MIGRAINE & VOMITING



DR. SUNIL SINGLA

sea and vomiting in most patients. Nausea can occur at any time and it may or may not lead to vomiting. It has been shown that vomiting, in some cases, may alleviate or stop Migraine pain. Truth be told, some people with Migraine induce vomiting in order to make their headaches stop.

Migraine headaches can be debilitating. People who are diagnosed with Migraine know that the symptoms can arise any time before, during or after the migraine attack. There are varying symptoms of Migraine headaches ranging from irritability to severe throbbing headaches. People have also complained of symptoms like sensitivity to light and sound and distorted vision along with unilateral (one-sided) headaches varying in intensity.

Migraine headaches also present with gastro-intestinal symptoms such as Nau-

CAUSES OF MIGRAINE

It is unsure what causes Migraine headaches, however, a variety of triggers are associated with this condition, including bright lights, loud noise, changes in weather, hormonal changes, too much caffeine and alcohol intake, to name a few. Certain foods like chocolates and nuts may also trigger Migraine attacks.

PREVENTING NAUSEA WITH MIGRAINE

Prevention of Migraine induced nausea is possible and you may take a few steps to lower the frequency of Migraine attacks.



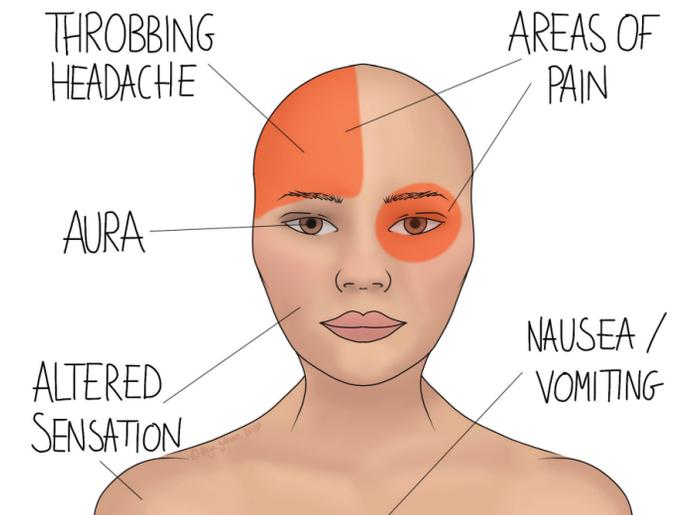
• **Lifestyle modifications:** These lifestyle changes involve following the mnemonic: SEEDS. It translated to getting quality and adequate sleep, eating balanced meals at regular and timely intervals, keeping yourself active and doing moderate

exercises regularly, keeping a headache diary and managing your stress levels. You may be able to reduce the frequency and understand your triggers this way.

• **Avoiding your triggers:** Once you're done tracking your migraine attacks, you

would be able to a better picture of your triggers. It's a great way to avoiding them and it can help prevent or decrease migraine attacks.

• **Medications:** Prescription medications by an expert neurologist can be a huge help in reducing the



severity of the pain.

• **Alternative practices:** Like doing yoga, breathing exercises to keep you relaxed and manage your stress levels and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy may help reduce the number of attacks or prevent them, al-

together.

Feeling nauseated and throwing up are common symptoms of Migraine and the attacks combined with these symptoms are agonising and unendurable. They can stop an individual from living their life to the fullest.

Understanding your triggers and taking preventive measures can greatly help in leading a healthier quality of life.

The author is the Director & HOD at the Department of Neurology in SHALBY Sanar International Hospitals, Gurugram.

PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF 'TEXT NECK' PAIN

DR. MUKESH PANDEY

The term "text neck" refers to persistent neck pain brought on by repeatedly putting tension on the neck muscles when utilizing electronic gadgets such as computers, phones, and tablets. According to a survey, participants who spent more time on their phones experienced more severe neck pain. Text neck is precipitated by long hours spent in watching phones when ur neck is bent forward. Human cervical spine is meant to be in straight position. Its natural curve is slightly back ward bent (LORDOTIC CURVE).

Bending neck forward is like putting extra 8 pounds of weight over ur head and one can easily imagine consequences of putting this kind of weight over head for long hours.

So watching phones for long hours in forward bent positions can cause muscular fatigue and spinal misalignment over time, which can result in pinched nerves, herniated discs, poor posture, and joint inflammation.

Looking down at your phone or other electronic gadgets for extended periods of time can cause text neck. Your neck muscles are built to support the weight of your hefty head. Your neck muscles get strained when you stoop down to use a computer or scroll through your phone. This may cause discomfort, stiffness, or soreness in your neck and result in postural issues.



HOW TO PREVENT TECH NECK

1. Stretch your neck (but be gentle)

Try slowly rotating your neck in a clockwise and counter-clockwise direction. Afterwards, turn your head to face the opposite shoulder. You can perform these exercises even when seated at a desk. Additionally, they both aid in improving circulation in the region and relaxing the muscles in your neck.

2. Take frequent breaks

This is a crucial guideline, but many people are reluctant to follow it since we are frequently overly dependent on technology. However, taking regular breaks—roughly every 15 to



20 minutes—gives your neck muscles a much-needed rest. To help you remember to take a break (and even sneak in a nap), set a timer or download an app.

3. **Examine your work area**
You run the risk of straining your neck at work if your chair is coming apart or if your monitor is significantly lower than

your eyes. Attempt to align your display with your field of vision by lifting it, and choose a chair that provides enough lumbar support and a headrest. For further support, try reclining a little bit while working and placing your head on the headrest of your chair.

4. Apply heat and cold therapy

Try switching between an ice pack and a heating pad for 15 to 20 minutes at a time to relieve painful muscles. Heat improves circulation to the region, while cold helps your neck muscles become less inflamed.

5. Engage in physical activity

While neck workouts are beneficial, don't ignore your other body parts. Frequent aerobic activity improves circulation to the neck, bringing nutrients and oxygen in while flushing out inflammatory-related toxins. Exercises that strengthen your core provide additional support for your spine and back, helping you maintain good posture.

6. Limit your time spent on screens

You might have to spend a lot of time in front of a screen at work. If this describes you, make an effort to spend your free time on activities that don't involve staring at a screen. Take advantage of that time to do something enjoyable and beneficial to your physical and emotional well-being, such as taking a nap, going for a stroll, or spending time with friends in person. Your neck will thank you.

EFFECTS OF TEXT NECK

Tech neck can cause your chest muscles to shorten and your neck muscles to extend, hunching your shoulders and increasing strain on your neck. Pain, tightness, and stiffness in the shoulders and neck are caused by this misalignment. Additionally, nerves that cause lower back pain, neck discomfort, and tingling or numbness in the hands can be pinched by pressure on the spine.

Furthermore, the rotator cuff tendons—the muscles and tendons that surround your shoulder joint—can be pinched and rubbed by forward-slumping shoulders. Rotator cuff tendonitis, a condition marked by inflammation and shoulder discomfort, may eventually result from this irritation.

Tech neck can lead to other problems beyond just your shoulders and neck. Herniated discs (slipped or bulging discs), headaches, and lower back discomfort can all be caused by excess spinal pressure in the neck. Temporomandibular joint (TMJ) discomfort can also be brought on by strained jaw joints and muscles as a result of altered neck muscles and bad posture.

Finally, cervical kyphosis, or the loss of your neck's natural C-shaped curve, may result from tech neck. With cervical kyphosis, the C-shape opens toward the front of your body as the curvature straightens or even reverses.

The author is the Associate Director & HOD - Neurosurgery, Asian Hospital, Faridabad.

STONE-FREE FUEL: NOURISHING YOUR KIDNEYS WITH A SMART DIET

FOOD IS MEDICINE
DR ANISH DESAI

Kidney stones, the formation of stones in the kidneys, are one of the oldest known and most widespread diseases in the urinary tract system, with a relapse rate of 50% in 5-10 years. It is the third most common disorder among urinary diseases. It can be a painful condition. While dietary changes alone may not eliminate kidney stones, certain foods and lifestyle adjustments can help prevent their formation or recurrence. It's crucial to consult with a healthcare professional for personalized advice, as individual needs vary.

Hydration: Adequate water intake is essential for preventing kidney stones. Drinking plenty of water helps dilute substances in the urine that lead to stone formation. Aim for at least 8-10 glasses (64-80 ounces) of water per day.

Green Tea has long been used as an herbal remedy with several polyphenols, making them potent antioxidants. It has anti-lithogenic, anti-atherosclerotic, and antioxidant effects. The protective effect of green tea is most likely due to the presence of polyphenols and other phytochemicals.

Fruits with a high citrate content: Citrus fruits, such as grapefruits, oranges, and lemons, naturally prevent the formation of stones. Eating citrus fruits or in-



corporating their juice into water can raise urine citrate levels, which may lower the incidence of kidney stones.

Magnesium-rich foods, such as nuts, seeds, and whole grains, can inhibit the formation of specific kidney stones. Adequate magnesium intake contributes to kidney health by preventing the crystallization of certain substances. Incorporating these foods into your diet may help reduce the risk of kidney stone formation.

Limiting sodium is crucial to prevent calcium-based kidney stones. Excessive salt intake contributes to stone formation. Choose a

low-sodium diet by choosing fresh, whole foods over processed and packaged options, as they often contain elevated sodium levels.

Quercetin, a natural antioxidant found in foods like apples, onions, and citrus fruits, has been studied for its potential in preventing kidney stones. It may help inhibit crystal formation and possess anti-inflammatory properties.

Reduce Sugar and Fructose: Sugar and fructose-rich diets can contribute to the development of kidney stones. Kidney stones have been linked to high-fructose corn syrup, which is frequently present in sweetened drinks. Moderate use of natural sweeteners and a reduction in sugar-filled beverages are recommended. Remember, individual responses to dietary changes vary, and it's crucial to consult with a healthcare professional for personalized advice, especially if you have a history of kidney stones or other medical conditions.

Staying cool in summer: Top tips to keep cool in hot weather



DR. JATIN MITTAL

Heat waves are happening around the world and summer can bring its own set of challenges for skin and hair care due to increased sun exposure, humidity, and other environmental factors. Here are some tips to help you stay cool and deal with issues that appear during the summer months:

1. **Hydration:** Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day to keep your skin hydrated from the inside out

2. **Moisturize well:** Use a lightweight, non-comedogenic moisturizer to keep your skin hydrated without clogging pores. Use moisturizing skin and hair products, such as conditioners and leave-in treatments, to combat dryness caused by sun exposure and saltwater or chlorine from swimming.

3. **Be sun smart:** It's best to avoid going out during the hottest hours of the day, but sometimes that can't be avoided. When out in direct sunlight remember to wear sunscreen regularly and re-



apply every 4 hours, SPF 40 or above is the ideal for Indian skintone.

4. **Regular breaks:** Take regular breaks indoors or in a shady area to avoid get-

ting heat exhaustion or heatstroke. Wearing light-colored, loose-fitting clothing will also help you to stay cool.

5. **Healthy Diet:** Incorporate plenty of fruits, vegetables,

and lean proteins into your diet to nourish your skin with essential vitamins and nutrients. Food with a high water content like strawberries, water melon, sugarcane

juice, cucumber, celery, and lettuce, will also help to keep you hydrated and cool in summer weather.

6. **Exfoliation:** Regularly exfoliate to remove dead skin cells and promote cell turnover, revealing smoother brighter skin.

7. **Limit your alcohol:** The sun is high, and so are many people's spirits. And that can lead us to the pub. Unfortunately, mixing too much sun with a few too many drinks is not a good combination. Alcohol causes dehydration, which can hit especially hard if your body is already struggling to stay cool in the summer. Drinking alcohol can also make it harder to get a good night's sleep, some-

thing that's already difficult in warmer temperatures.

8. **Avoid Heat Styling:** Minimize the use of heat styling tools such as blow dryers, flat irons, and curling irons, as they can further damage your hair and increase dryness. Embrace natural hairstyles or use heat protectant products when styling.

9. **Keep your home cool:** During the hot weather, it's important to make your home a place you can escape to out of the heat, so keeping it cool is key to feeling comfortable. Keeping your house cool is especially important at night. During a heatwave temperatures often stay high even at night making it difficult to get a good night's sleep. While it

affects everyone in areas affected by a heatwave, people living in high-rise buildings and in urban areas may particularly struggle with this problem

10. **Quality Sleep:** Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night to allow your skin time to repair and regenerate.

Consult a skin care expert if you're struggling with persistent acne or skin issues, or if any other skin issues appears in your body do consider seeking professional advice for proper guidance do not rely on home remedies.

The author is the Co-founder, Skin care expert and Cosmetologist from Abhivrit Aesthetics, New Delhi.

WEAVE A COCOON OF PEACE AROUND YOU



RAJINDER SINGH JI MAHARAJ

The stress and strife is prevalent in our lives today, no matter where we live. When we live in

stress there is turmoil in our lives; and where there is turmoil, there can be no peace. How can we reach a state in which the turmoil and difficulties of the world around us do not disturb our peace? Interactions with others can be disruptive when we have disagreements or engage in intellectual wrangling.

The key is to experience such tremendous joy in meditation that we are oblivious to the turmoil around us. We



have to learn to be in a spiritual, meditative cocoon that helps us remain in a state of bliss and joy after we finish meditating. Just as indoor air conditioning can help keep us cool and comfortable despite high temperatures outside, so can meditation keep us peaceful and calm as we deal with the outer world.

In meditation, as we experience God's love, we find there is more to our existence than what goes on in the physical

world. We become more detached from events and problems that might have bothered us in the past and see life from a higher angle of vision. We see the larger picture of life, and over time, develop the equilibrium of mind to function more effectively and more peacefully in this world.

As we spend time in meditation, we create a calm haven in which we restore equilibrium and peace to our mental functioning. Researchers have recorded that the

brain activity in people who meditate reflects a state of deep relaxation. Their mind becomes calmer. The tranquil effect of meditation lasts beyond the time spent in meditation. The carry-over effect helps us maintain peace of mind as we continue our activities throughout the day.

The more we practice, the more we will enjoy deeper states of consciousness that protect us from all that interfere with our state of peace and calm.

Journey through the Human spirit: A triptych of dance-dramas explores existence, virtue, & liberation

NEHA SOLANKI

In the realm of theatrical mastery, where the boundaries between reality and imagination blur, three mesmerizing dance-dramas beckon audiences on an odyssey of introspection and enlightenment. "Parikrama," "Karna," and "Meera" stand as artistic marvels, each weaving a tapestry of profound narratives drawn from the rich tapestry of Indian philosophy, mythology, and historical folklore.

"Parikrama" embarks on a philosophical voyage, delving deep into the labyrinthine corridors of the human psyche. Through the lens of Indian philosophy, it unravels the intricate threads of existence, from the primordial potentiality symbolized by the Hiranagarbh to the soul's journey towards liberation, as depicted in the Katha Upanishad. With innovative choreography and a

poignant script, this production breathes life into abstract concepts, offering audiences a transcendent experience of clarity and enlightenment.

Meanwhile, "Karna" emerges as a poignant exploration of human resilience amidst the tumultuous currents of fate and adversity. Drawing from the epic Mahabharata, the dance-drama casts a penetrating spotlight on the character of Karna, whose life unfolds as a relentless struggle against the forces of destiny. Despite facing repeated injustices and societal norms, Karna's noble virtues shine forth, evoking sympathy and admiration. Through his unwavering ideals of friendship, charity, and righteousness, "Karna" serves as a timeless reminder of morality's triumph in the face of adversity, echoing the eternal wisdom of Lord Krishna himself.

In stark contrast, "Meera" illuminates the life of one of India's greatest saint poetesses, whose verses resonate with the melody of liberation and inner awakening. Meera's



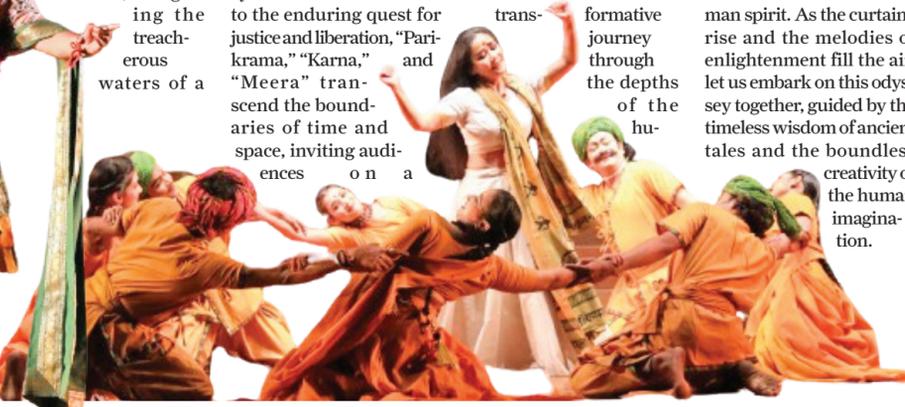
vibrant poetry, infused with messages of freedom and emancipation, transcends the barriers of time and tradition. Breaking free from royal constraints, she emerges as a beacon of female empowerment, her dance and song embodying the spirit of liberation. As the production seeks to redefine Meera's image, it casts a critical gaze on the plight of women in India, navigating the treacherous waters of a

male-dominated society. Through an introspective exploration of their struggles, "Meera" invites audiences to confront the complexities of gender dynamics with empathy and understanding.

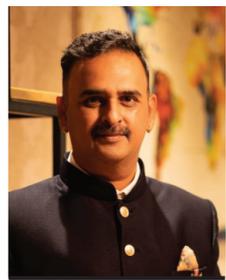
Together, these three dance-dramas form a triumvirate of artistic excellence, each offering a unique perspective on the human condition. From the cyclical nature of existence to the enduring quest for justice and liberation, "Parikrama," "Karna," and "Meera" transcend the boundaries of time and space, inviting audiences on a

"Parikrama" embarks on a philosophical voyage, delving deep into the labyrinthine corridors of the human psyche. Through the lens of Indian philosophy, it unravels the intricate threads of existence, from the primordial potentiality symbolized by the Hiranagarbh to the soul's journey towards liberation, as depicted in the Katha Upanishad. With innovative choreography and a poignant script, this production breathes life into abstract concepts, offering audiences a transcendent experience of clarity and enlightenment.

transformative journey through the depths of the human spirit. As the curtains rise and the melodies of enlightenment fill the air, let us embark on this odyssey together, guided by the timeless wisdom of ancient tales and the boundless creativity of the human imagination.



HOW TEMPLE CONNECT BE USEFUL FOR THE COMMON MAN OR PILGRIM?



GIRESH KULKARNI

Temple Connect is a platform which bridges the gap between temples and devotees by providing up-to-date information on darshans, puja rituals, nearby attractions, and the overall temple experience. The platform offers insights into the significance and historical context of each temple, explaining how visiting can fulfil pilgrims' wishes and resolve their problems. This enhances the spiritual journey for all visitors.

Temple Connect also focuses on improving temple administration, operations,

and management with in the temple ecosystem. While devotees visit temples for spiritual purposes, the temple management teams ensure a high-quality experience through effective setup and management. This includes optimizing donation processes and transaction systems. Temple Connect collaborates closely with these teams to enhance the visitor experience through better queue management, parking systems, mobile toilet quality, and clear directional markers. Additionally, the platform addresses safety, security, surveillance, disaster planning, fund management, and sustainability. Special attention is given to accommodating senior citizens, mothers with children, and expectant mothers, ensuring a comfortable and secure environment for all.

Temple Connect also ensures special access for quicker darshans and manages donations that



are utilized for the welfare of pilgrims and the needy. Renowned temples like

Siddhi Vinayak, Shirdi, and Vaishno Devi use these funds to support individu-

Temple Connect also focuses on improving temple administration, operations, and management within the temple ecosystem. While devotees visit temples for spiritual purposes, the temple management teams ensure a high-quality experience through effective setup and management.

als with medical expenses, providing up to 10,000 Rs per patient in certain cases. Additionally, these temples operate blood banks and medical centres. Temple Connect collaborates with these temples to enhance and support these initiatives, improving the overall quality of services offered to devotees.

Temple Connect integrates modern technology to enhance various educational and support initiatives. Temples have established student libraries and provide financial aid for

education to needy students whose parents cannot afford tuition fees. These efforts are managed through temple trusts and administration, which offer extensive facilities for the benefit of pilgrims.

Temple Connect works behind the scenes, ensuring these programs are effectively implemented and evaluating the need for further modern support, thereby fulfilling its mission to assist both devotees and pilgrims comprehensively.

The author is the Founder of Temple Connect & ITCX.

SHORTEN THE LINE



MYSTIC MUSING

RAJESH M. IYER

Woe, thy name is life! That's a statement constantly made by all of us. Ditto with Vedika. Named after knowledge, she felt the source of her name eluded her completely. She found herself consumed by the problems that plagued her life. She'd rue that she was the chosen one to undergo the miseries of life: extremely pushy parents, a failed marriage, a persistent struggle to fight conspiracy in office. Her mind's constant query had been, 'Why does so much trouble befall me?'

When a friend took her to meet the recluse spiritual guru known as Paglot Baba, she ranted and poured out her anguish. In his trademark style, Baba heard her without interruption. Then he asked her if she remembered her childhood games. The question took her by surprise. Before she could answer, Baba took a notebook, and drew a line on it. 'Now, shorten this line without touching it,' he instructed her. She had no clue what to do. 'Didn't you play this in school?' Baba asked.

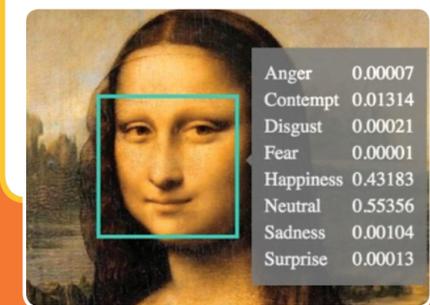
Strangely, Vedika had forgotten it. She was distraught. She knew



that the solution to this problem must lie in her memory. When she didn't respond, Baba took the notebook and drew a bigger line below the earlier drawn one. 'See, now the line is short. And I didn't even touch it! A human life is similar to this. Who doesn't have troubles? Even Mona Lisa, experts say, has trauma hidden behind the smile. Yet, to remain agitated with the shorter lines of troubles and ignoring the bigger lines of possibilities that can be drawn through our infinite talent is unpardonable and goes against the basic tenets of life,' Baba explained.

That little exercise was akin to a magic potion: simple and even absurd, yet profound at the same time. Vedika found a new universe open in her mind. How could she overlook such an elementary fact of life, she thought? 'Forever bogged down by destiny, one forgets what one can achieve through free will,' Baba added as he dismissed her.

As is the case with Vedika, we invariably forget our innumerable talents that can draw bigger lines in our lives instead of fretting over shorter lines of troubles and problems. Let's shorten these negative, troublesome lines without even touching them by drawing a bigger positive, creative line.



Let's shorten these negative, troublesome lines without even touching them by drawing a bigger positive, creative line.

NARINE EQUALS RUSSELL'S RECORD, CLAIMS MOST 'POTM' AWARDS

TDG NETWORK
LUCKNOW

Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) all-rounder Sunil Narine equalled Andre Russell's record of claiming the most 'Player of The Match' awards for the franchise in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

While batting in the first inning, Narine scored 81 runs from 39 balls at a strike rate of 207.69. He hammered 6 fours and 7 sixes during his time on the crease. With the ball, the 35-year-old picked one wicket and gave 22 runs in his four-over spell.

Narine achieved the feat during KKR's clash against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) at the Ekana Cricket Stadium on Sunday, where the Caribbean cricketer was named the 'Player of the Match' with which he has 15 PoTM awards for the Kolkata-based franchise. While



Russell too has 15 PoTM awards for KKR.

Former KKR skipper Gautam Gambhir has claimed 10 PoTM awards and holds the third place on the list.

Recapping the game between Lucknow and Kolkata, LSG opted to field first after winning the toss.

Narine's 81, combined with solid knocks from Phil Salt (32), Angkrish Raghuvanshi (32) and Ramandeep Singh (25*) took KKR to 235/6 in their 20 overs.

Naveen-ul-Haq (3/49) was the pick of the bowlers for LSG. Yash Thakur, Ravi Bishnoi and Yudhvir Singh

Former KKR skipper Gautam Gambhir has claimed 10 PoTM awards and holds the third place on the list.

got a wicket each.

During the run chase of 236, Lucknow lost wickets at regular intervals. Marcus Stoinis (36) and skipper KL Rahul (25) were the top scorers as LSG bundled out for 137 in 16.1 overs.

Harshit Rana (3/24) and Varun Chakaravathy (3/30) were the top wicket-takers for KKR. KKR is at the top with eight wins, three losses and 16 points. LSG is at fifth with six wins, five losses and 12 points. Sunil Narine took home the 'Player of the Match' for his one wicket and 81-run knock.

HARBHAJAN QUESTIONS CSK'S DECISION TO SEND DHONI TO BAT AT NO. 9 SPOT

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Former India spinner Harbhajan Singh raised doubts over MS Dhoni batting at the No. 9 spot despite being in form during the Chennai Super Kings clash against Punjab Kings at the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024.

The CSK icon for the first time in his illustrious T20 career, came at the number 9 spot to bat at the scenic Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium.

As fans awaited the much-expected fireworks from the veteran's bat, a delightful off-cutter from Harshal Patel on the final ball of the penultimate over cut short the celebrations, as Dhoni walked back for a golden duck.

Harbhajan questioned the strategy behind reserving Dhoni for the last moment rather than sending him up in the order that would have allowed the in-form batter to make a big impact.

"I don't understand, he is



in such good form and he is coming so low in the batting order to bat. He got dismissed on the first ball but I was hopeful that he would come in place of Mitchell Santner in the 14th over. He could have made a big impact. I don't understand why he is coming so low in the batting order. At no. 9 a bowler comes to bat not a player like Dhoni who has the calibre as well as the form to score runs. It was hard to understand what was the strategy behind that decision," Harbhajan said on his YouTube channel.

A slower off-cutter on the stumps dipped enough to get

past Dhoni's bat and peg the off-stump. While Dhoni fans were left stunned, the PBKS camp felt a wave of ecstasy. Preity Zinta broke into a big smile as PBKS fans rejoiced to watch the veteran depart for a golden duck.

Despite falling short in the batting department, the 42-year-old became the first-ever player to complete 150 catches in the cash-league history.

Dhoni took a catch to dismiss Jitesh Sharma for a duck in the match. CSK managed to defend 168 on the board by restricting PBKS to 139/9 and emerge victorious with a 28-run

ICC assures stakeholders after reports of terror threats to T20 World Cup

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Following reports that stated that Cricket West Indies had received an alleged terror threat to the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, the International Cricket Council has responded. The ICC has announced that they have taken steps to mitigate any risks associated with the hosting of the marquee event.

The T20 World Cup will start on June 1 and will be played in Venues in the USA and the Caribbean.

"We work closely with authorities in the host countries and cities, and continually monitor and evaluate the global landscape to ensure appropriate plans are in place to mitigate any risks identified to our event," ICC said in an official statement.

The Cricket West Indies also spoke about the terror threats.

5 Indians strike gold at Asian U-22 and Youth Boxing Championships

TDG NETWORK
ASTANA (KAZAKHSTAN)

Five youth boxers Brijesh Tamta, Aryan Hooda, Yashwardhan Singh, Laxmi and Nisha from India put up impressive performances to clinch gold medals at the Asian U-22 & Youth Boxing Championships 2024 in Astana, Kazakhstan on Monday.

Brijesh gave India its first gold medal of the tournament with a unanimous 5-0 win over Tajikistan's Muminov Muinkhodzha in the men's 48kg final. Aryan (51kg) continued the momentum with an equally dominant 5-0 victory against Kyrgyzstan's Kamilov Zafarbek.

Yashwardhan Singh (63.5kg) had to work hard against Gafurov Ruslan of Tajikistan as both boxers showed great attacking intent but it was the Indian who ultimately clinched the win with a 4-1 verdict.

In the women's category,



reigning junior world champion Nisha grabbed the yellow metal in the 52kg category as she outperformed Kazakhstan's Otynbay Bagzhan in a 5-0 win. Later, Laxmi (50kg) won India's fifth gold medal with a referee who stopped the contest (RSC) win in the second round of the bout against Enkh Nomundari of Mongolia.

Meanwhile, nine youth boxers, Sagar Jakhar (60kg), Priyanshu (71kg), Rahul Kundu (75kg), Aryan (92kg), Tamanna (54kg), Nikita Chand (60kg), Shrushti Sathe (63kg), Rudrika (75kg) and Khushi Pooniya (81kg) ended campaigns with silver medals after losing in their respective finals.

On Saturday night,

Olympic-bound boxer Preeti (54kg) entered the U-22 finals along with five other Indian women.

With, Muskan (75kg) and Alfiya Pathan (81kg) already in the finals after receiving byes in their respective semi-finals, country's eight women and four men pugilists will compete in the U-22 finals on Tuesday.

Jyoti set to lead as HI announces 22-member Indian junior women's hockey team for Europe tour

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Hockey India on Monday announced the Indian junior women's hockey team that will tour Europe between May 21 and May 29.

The team will play six matches across three nations against Belgium, Germany and Bredase Hockey Vereniging Push and Oranje Rood, two club teams in the Netherlands.

The Indian Junior Women's Hockey team will be playing matches in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands to work on their game and push beyond their limits in a bid to go on to dominate the game on the world stage.

They will play their first match on 21st May against Bredase Hockey Vereniging Push in Breda before playing Belgium at the same venue on May 22. The Indian Junior Women's Hockey team will then play Belgium a second time but with the latter playing host on this occasion on May 24.



This will be followed by consecutive games against Germany on May 26 in Breda and May 27 in Germany respectively. They will then return to Breda to play their final game of the tour on May 29 against Oranje Rood.

The team will be led by defender Jyoti Singh while midfielder Sakshi Rana has been named as her deputy. Aditi Maheshwari and Ni-

dhi form the goalkeeping department while Jyoti Singh, Lalthanluangi, Anjali Barwa, Puja Sahoo, Mamita Oram and Nirru Kullu form the defence.

Kshetrimayum Sonia Devi, Rajani Kerketta, Priyanka Yadav, Khaidem Shileima Chanu, Sakshi Rana, Anisha Sahu and Supriya Kujur make up the midfield. The forwards named in the squad are Binima Dhan,

Hina Bano, Lalrinpuii, Ishika, Sanjana Horo, Sonam and Kanika Siwach.

"There's great camaraderie in the squad. All of us have gotten to know each other pretty well during the camp. Everyone here is very skilful and talented. It will be fun and a good learning experience playing abroad against other top-quality teams," said captain Jyoti Singh as quoted from Hockey India.

Indian men's, women's 4x400m relay teams earn spots in Paris Olympics

TDG NETWORK
NASSAU (BAHAMAS)

Indian 4x400m relay teams, both women's and men's, qualified for the Olympics in Paris on Monday after placing second in their respective second-round heats at the World Athletics Relays held here at Nassau, Bahamas on Monday.

In heat number one of the women's tournament, Jamaica (3:28.54) finished first, with Rupal Chaudhary, M R Poovamma, Jyothika Sri Dandi, and Subha

Venkatesan finishing second and earning a ticket to the Paris Games.

The men's team, which includes Muhammad Anas Yahiya, Muhammad Ajmal, Arokia Rajiv, and Amoj Jacob, finished second in their heat with a combined time of 3 minutes and 3.23 seconds, trailing only the USA (2:59.95).

The two teams that placed highest in each of the three heats during the second round would advance to the Olympics which will take place from July 26 to August 11.

In the first-round qualifying heat on Sunday, the Indian women's team placed seventh in a timing of 3 minutes and 29.74 seconds.

The men's team was unable to complete the first-round qualifying heat after Rajesh Ramesh, the second-round runner, withdrew due to cramps halfway through.

With this, India has 19 track and field competitors headed to Paris, including Neeraj Chopra, the reigning javelin throw champion.

The athletics events of the Paris Olympics will start on August 1.

Premier League: Aston Villa's Top-4 bid rocked at Brighton, Chelsea rout West Ham

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aston Villa's bid to finish in the Premier League's top-four was rocked by a 0-1 defeat at Brighton, while Chelsea thrashed West Ham 5-0 to keep alive their hopes of European qualification on Sunday. A Villa win combined with a Tottenham loss at Liverpool in Sunday's late game would have sealed a Champions League place for Unai Emery's side. But Villa were unable to fulfil their part of that equation as Joao Pedro's 87th minute goal condemned them to a second painful defeat in four days.

Ending Brighton's six-match winless run, Pedro headed in the rebound after Robin Olsen saved his penalty, which had been awarded for Ezri Konsa's foul on Simon Adingra. Surprisingly beaten 4-2 by Olympiakos in the Europa Conference League semi-final first leg on Thursday, Villa were well below their best once again.



headed in the rebound after Robin Olsen saved his penalty, which had been awarded for Ezri Konsa's foul on Simon Adingra.

Ending Brighton's six-match winless run, Pedro

At Stamford Bridge, Chelsea crushed London rivals West Ham to move above Manchester United into seventh place.

Chelsea boss Mauricio Pochettino is fighting to convince the club's co-owner Todd Boehly to give him a second season in charge after his troubled debut campaign. Pochettino admits it is "not his decision" if he stays, but securing a place in Europe could be enough to avoid the sack.

Cole Palmer put Chelsea ahead in the 15th minute with his 21st league goal of the season, the forward firing home after West Ham failed to clear. Conor Gallagher doubled

Chelsea's advantage after 30 minutes with a blistering volley after West Ham's Kurt Zouma deflected the ball towards the midfielder.

Noni Madueke bagged Chelsea's third six minutes later as the winger turned in Thiago Silva's header from close-range. Nicolas Jackson piled on the misery for woeful West Ham in the 48th minute with a tap-in from Madueke's cross. The Senegal striker was on target again with 10 minutes left. The lopsided nature of defeat did little to quell speculation over the future of West Ham boss David Moyes, who has come under fire from fans for his perceived negative game-plans.

Malaysia football star suffers acid attack days after assault on teammate

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A Malaysian national footballer suffered second-degree burns after he was splashed with acid in an attack at a shopping mall over the weekend, a sports official has said. National team player Faisal Halim was burned on the neck, shoulder, hands and chest during the attack Sunday



Selangor police chief Hussein Omar Khan was quoted by private television station Astro Awani as saying on Monday that a male suspect had been arrested, though he did not disclose a motive.

in Petaling Jaya district outside the capital Kuala Lumpur, according to Najwan

Halimi, a sports official in Selangor state. Faisal, 26, is a winger at the Selangor

Football Club.

"I strongly condemn this violence and urge the police to bring the perpetrator to justice," Najwan said in a statement late Sunday.

Selangor police chief Hussein Omar Khan was quoted by private television station Astro Awani as saying on Monday that a male suspect had been arrested, though he did not disclose a motive.

A photo that went viral

online showed a visibly shocked Faisal in brown pants seated on a bench with burn marks on his body.

The attack came three days after another national player, Akhyar Rashid, was injured in a robbery outside his home in the eastern state of Terengganu. Akhyar, 25, was struck with an iron rod by two unidentified suspects and suffered injuries to his head and leg that re-

quired stitches, local media reported.

Local police chief Azli Noor said the suspects fled after taking Akhyar's money.

Football Association of Malaysia President Hamidin Mohamad Amin said he was "upset and sad" over both attacks. "The people of Malaysia pray that Akhyar and Faisal recover quickly and get back to action," he said in a statement on Sunday.

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