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Biden-led US gov't pauses a shipment of bombs to Israel over concerns about a potential military offensive on Rafah, according to a senior administration official. The delivery was supposed to contain 3,500 bombs. **P 18**

Australia says it will raise the amount of savings foreign students will need to get a visa. From Friday, int'l students must show proof of savings of A\$29,710 (\$19,576) to get their visa, the second increase in about 7 months. **P 18**

British PM Rishi Sunak is accused of leading a 'chaotic' gov't as another one of his Conservative lawmakers defects to the main opposition Labour Party ahead of a looming general election. **P 18**

Mats Hummels headed in the only goal as Borussia Dortmund stunned Kylian Mbappe and PSG in their Champions League semifinal second leg, winning 1-0 on the night and advancing 2-0 on aggregate to next month's final. **P 20**



IN THE COURTS

- SC rules that money saved by availing of interest-free or low-interest loans from their employer will be liable to be taxed under I-T laws. **P 15**
- Hearing a plea seeking urgent action to safeguard U'khand forests from wildfires, SC tells state 'cloud seeding is not the answer' and authorities will have to take preventive measures. **P 15**
- Countering Centre's stand that it wields no power over CBI, Bengal gov't tells SC Delhi Special Police Establishment Act says its superintendence shall vest in central gov't. **P 15**
- Observing that property left behind by late yoga guru Dhirendra Brahmachari was supposed to go to state, Punjab and Haryana HC asks Haryana gov't to inform court whether it's going to take over his ashram/properties. **P 15**
- A court sentences two men to a life term for killing a 28-year-old in 2011 after they tried to extort money from him. **P 8**
- Allahabad HC's Lucknow bench holds that a follower of Islam can't be in a live-in relationship, particularly if his spouse is alive. **P 11**

'Chori Ka Maal' Reaching Congress For Elections, Says PM In Telangana Did Ambani-Adani buy Rahul's silence: Modi; PM afraid: Cong

Sribala Vadlapatta & Akhilesh Singh

Hyderabad/New Delhi: In a curious twist to the electoral discourse on crony capitalism, PM Modi on Wednesday accused Congress of striking a deal with "Ambani and Adani" and asked if the party had received "tempo loads of black money" from the two businessmen in return for Rahul Gandhi to stop "abusing" them during the elections.

"You must have seen, for the past five years, the Congress shehzada used to chant morning to evening... Since his Rafale issue got grounded, he started chanting about 'five industrialists'... then 'Ambani-Adani'." But ever since elections have been announced, these people (Congress) have stopped abusing Ambani-Adani," the PM said at a rally in Karimnagar in Telangana.

Modi said there was certainly something fishy ("daal me kuch kaala hai") as for five years, they (Congress and Ra-

Send CBI-ED to probe them: Rahul to Modi

For five years, Cong's shehzada used to chant five industrialists, Ambani-Adani... But since elections were announced, these people (Cong) have stopped abusing them. Let him declare how much money has been taken from Ambani-Adani... how many sacks of black money? Have tempos full of currency notes reached Cong? What deal has been struck? —PM Modi

New Delhi: Congress Wednesday debunked PM Modi's charge that Rahul Gandhi has not been attacking Ambani and Adani during the elections because of a deal, circulating a video with snippets of Rahul's speeches between May 2 and the one he delivered in Jharkhand on Tuesday, where he highlighted the PM's "nexus" with the industrialists.

In a video issued Wednesday, Gandhi himself challenged the PM to send agencies to probe his own allegations that Ambani-Adani had sent crores to Congress.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said the PM's charge was "shaking" and his attack on his "own friends" was the best opinion poll on the first three phases of polls. "Time is changing... Dost dost na raha

Chautala: Will back Cong if it wants to topple Saini gov't

Oppn Can't Bring No-Trust Motion Now, Rules Say

EX-DY CM TO CM: PROVE MAJORITY

Chautala speaks to reporters in Hisar

Hisar/Sirsa: BJP's estranged ally JJP is ready to support Congress-led opposition's bid to topple the Nayab Singh Saini gov't in Haryana, former deputy CM Dushyant Chautala declared on Wednesday, simultaneously firing a warning to his MLA colleagues that defying a whip and siding with the saffron party would invite disqualification.

Chautala's statement came a day after three Independent MLAs withdrew support from the BJP-led coalition, reducing its strength to 43 in what is effectively an 88-member assembly after the resignations last March by ex-CM Manohar Lal Khattar and Independent MLA Ranjit Singh Chautala.

Saini insisted there was no threat to his gov't and it would complete its tenure without a hitch. "We weren't a minority gov't earlier and are not a minority now," he said in Sirsa.

Haryana is due for state elections in Oct. Although the BJP gov't technically appears safe for now, three Independents withdrawing support could affect the party's prospects in the Lok Sabha poll. The state will vote in the fifth phase on May 25, with BJP facing the challenge of retaining all 10 seats it won in 2019.

Dushyant, JJP's national senior vice-president, told reporters in Hisar that the party would write to the governor to ask the BJP gov't to take a floor test to prove its majority. The rulebook stipulates that a no-confidence motion can't be moved against any gov't within six months of the previous one, which in Haryana's case was in Feb.

SC verdict on CM's bail plea likely Fri

SC said Wednesday it may decide and pass an order on May 10 on Arvind Kejriwal's plea for interim bail in the excise policy case in which he was arrested by ED. SC had reserved its order Tuesday and said the accused was an elected CM and not a habitual offender. **P 3**

Noida cops in Delhi to nab AAP MLA, son

Noida police on Wednesday sent teams to Delhi to arrest AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan and his son Anas Ahmed, a day after they had been booked for allegedly assaulting staffers of a petrol pump in Noida. However, the two weren't found at their house. **P 4**

3rd terrorist killed in Kulgam op

Security forces gunned down a third terrorist of The Resistance Force holed up in a house in J&K's Kulgam district Wednesday, following the killing of the outfit's "area commander" and an unidentified associate the day before in the same Redwani locality. **P 15**

Bengal woman revokes rape plaint

One of the three Sandeshkhal women whose rape complaints against Trinamool functionaries stoked unrest did an about-turn on Wednesday, saying she faced no such assault and that local BJP members forced her to sign a blank sheet of paper and approach police. **P 12**

3 children drown in Ganga in UP

Three children, all class five students, drowned in Ganga at Patiyali sub-division of UP's Kasganj district Wednesday. Local divers recovered the bodies. The boys might have been trapped in one of the several pits in the riverbed formed due to sand extraction. **P 14**

BJP slams Pitroda, Cong distances itself from 'skin colour' remark

After Fresh Gaffe, He Quits Overseas Congress Post

Today I found out why Congress was trying so hard to defeat Droupadi Murmu (in prez race), daughter of a tribal... Seeing the colour of her skin, they believe she, too, is from Africa —PM Modi

New Delhi: Sam Pitroda, a confidant of Nehru-Gandhi family since the days of his friend, the late PM Rajiv Gandhi, hastily stepped down as chief of Indian Overseas Congress on Wednesday after his comment likening Indians in different parts of the country to different racial groups sparked an outrage.

PM Modi, who was campaigning in Telangana and Andhra, savaged the "friend, philosopher, guide and uncle of shehzada (Rahul Gandhi)" for his "racism", linking the "racial profiling" to Congress's opposition to the elec-

We have survived 75 years... (and) could hold a country as diverse as India together... where people in east look like Chinese, people in west like Arabs, people in north like whites and people in south like Africans —Sam Pitroda | Cong

I am from South India. I look Indian! My team has members from northeast. They look Indian! My colleagues from west India look Indian! But, for the mentor of @RahulGandhi we look African, Chinese, Arab and white! Thanks for revealing your mindset —Nirmala Sitharaman | Finance Minister

tion of Droupadi Murmu as President in 2022 because of "the colour of her skin".

Congress, which swiftly went into damage-control mode by disassociating itself from US-based Pitroda's remark, immediately accepted his resignation later in the day in a bid to cap the contro-

65.7% turnout in Phase 3, almost same as 2019

Dhuhri saw the highest voter turnout among all 283 seats where elections have been held so far, registering 92.1% polling during the third phase on Tuesday, while in Nawada (Bihar), it was 43.2%, the lowest.

Amreli in Gujarat, with 50.3% polling, saw the lowest turnout in Phase 3, according to data available on EC's Voter Turnout app, reports Dipak Dash. EC updated the overall turnout in the third phase to 65.7% from 64.5% late on Tuesday. The comparable figure for 2019 was 66%. Of 93 seats that went to the polls, 39 saw higher turnout, which included all 7 seats in Chhattisgarh, all 14 in Karnataka and the two in Goa. All seats in Bihar and West Bengal saw a lower turnout during the third phase. **P 12**

Vote for us, BJP will revoke Cong's 'unconstitutional' Muslim quota, says Shah

Lucknow: BJP seeks the people's mandate to cancel 'unconstitutional' reservations extended to Muslims by Congress and give back to backward classes what is rightfully theirs, home minister Amit Shah said Wednesday at a rally in Kheri.

Shah accused the opposition of peddling lies about BJP preparing to change the Constitution and do away with SC, ST & OBC reservations. "It is Congress that stole OBC quotas and diverted that to Muslims in Andhra (2004) and more recently in Karnataka," he said. Mocking Rahul Gandhi for saying his party aimed to eradicate poverty "ek jhatke mein" (at one go), Shah said history suggested otherwise. **P 12**

AstraZeneca pulls out Covid vax, says no demand

Months after admitting to rare side-effects in a UK court, UK-based drug major AstraZeneca withdrew its Covid-19 vaccine globally, citing decline in demand and a "surplus of available updated vaccines". Serum Institute of India, which provided the vaccine in India as 'Co-vishield', said it had stopped manufacturing the vaccine in Dec 2021 due to a fall in demand as well as the emergence of new variants. **P 15**

AI Express set to axe staff after 300 report sick

Air India Express began issuing termination letters after more than 300 cabin crew reported sick from Tuesday, leading to cancellation of 90-odd flights till Wednesday evening. The airline operates 350-400 flights daily and is cutting 40 each day till May 13. With over 80% aircraft occupancy these days, 13,000 flyers were affected. **P 9**

Denied property share, Gzb man kills mom, bro

Ghaziabad salesman, 45, was arrested Wednesday for allegedly killing his mother and mentally challenged younger brother while they were sleeping at the family's house in Loni Border. Days before, Dharmendra had an argument with his mother when she refused to help him clear a loan of Rs 1.5 lakh and also told him he won't get his share of the property, police said. **P 8**

CBI busts bribe-for-stent racket at RML, arrests 2 cardiologists, 7 others

Rajsheshkar Jha @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Blowing the lid off a massive corruption racket operating at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in central Delhi, CBI has arrested nine people, including two senior cardiologists, on charges of demanding and accepting bribes.

The arrested doctors have been identified as Dr Ajay Raj, professor, cardiology department, and Dr Parvathouga, assistant professor, cardiology. They have been accused of forming a nexus with firms engaged in supply of medical equipment, primarily stents, and promoting their products in lieu of pecuniary benefits.

The agency has also arrested a director and employee of companies supplying medical equipment besides

We stand by allegation on Nijjar killing: Canada; India warns separatists

'BIG RED LINE'

New Delhi: Days after three Indian men were arrested in Canada for the killing of Khalistan separatist and Canadian national Hardeep Singh Nijjar, foreign minister Melanie Joly backed the police action saying Canada stood by its allegations that Indian agents murdered Nijjar, an India-designated terrorist.

Speaking later on Tuesday, Indian high commissioner Sanjay Verma accused foreign Sikh groups of crossing the "big red line" by casting an evil eye on the territorial integrity of India. "We stand by the allegations that a Canadian was killed on Canadian soil by Indian agents," Joly said.

"The investigation by the RCMP is being done. I won't further comment and no other

Two-hour rain claims 20 lives across T'gana

Hyderabad: A two-hour spell of torrential rain on Tuesday night wreaked havoc in Telangana, leaving at least 20 dead in different incidents across the state. While Telangana has seen a high number of rain-related deaths in the past as well, Tuesday's death toll — amid peak summer — stands out as unusual.

In one instance, seven migrant workers were crushed to death in Bachupally after a 25-foot retaining wall collapsed at a construction site in the area late on Tuesday evening. Two other labourers were killed in a similar incident in neighbouring Medak district. The victims died when an under-construction wall fell on them following the downpour accompanied by gale. According to IMD data, most parts of Telangana received an average of 12mm rainfall between 5.30pm & 7.30pm Tuesday. **TNN**

Malegaon probe fabricated by Karkare: Prasad

In his final statement in the 2008 Malegaon blast trial in the special NIA court, accused Lt Col Prasad Purohit said police officers carried out what he called a "fabricated, orchestrated and concocted" investigation.

He alleged this was done on the orders of Hemant Karkare, ATS chief at the time, Param Bir Singh, the joint commissioner of ATS at the time, and Mohan Kulkarni, then ACP (ATS) and investigating officer, who hatched a conspiracy to suit political requirements. A Congress-led gov't was in office at the Centre and state when Purohit was held in 2008, reports Rebecca Sameruel. Purohit said the probe was a reflection of the officers' professional and moral corruption and criminal mindset. **P 9**

Aerocity to have India's biggest mall

In 2027, IGI's Aerocity is set to boast India's largest mall of over 28 lakh sq feet, reports Saurabh Sinha. This will be part of a \$2.5-billion expansion to build the country's first aeropolis — a metropolis in the vicinity of an airport — growing eight times in the next five years. Aerocity, which now has 15 lakh square feet of leasable area, will get over 1 crore sq feet more by 2029.

Subsequently, the global business district will be expanded by another 65 lakh sq feet, making 1.8 crore sq feet of leasable area for offices, retail, food courts and a mega mall apart from public spaces. **P 4**

Diet mantra for Indians: Less oil, sugar, avoid protein supplements

U.Sudhakarreddy @timesgroup.com

Hyderabad: After a 13-year hiatus, city-based National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) has revised its 'Dietary Guidelines for Indians', considering new scientific findings, lifestyle changes, diseases and food habits. It advised Indians to restrict intake of sugar to 20-25 grams a day (a teaspoon is roughly 5.7g) since it comes from natural carbohydrates, avoid protein supplements and reduce oils. It also gave a thumbs-up for air-frying and granite-coated cookware.

NIN also for the first time released guidelines for interpreting packaged food labels.

Amul may take over MP brand, call after polls

Amul is in talks for a possible takeover of Sanchi Dairy — a brand as familiar to Madhya Pradesh homes as Nandini in Karnataka, and just as emotive. The BJP-led MP gov't wants to adopt the Gujarat-based Amul-like model for Sanchi in MP, sources told TOI, adding that whether Amul will assist Sanchi to increase its base in MP or take it over will be decided soon after the LS polls. MP gov't feels it will be beneficial for the state's dairy farmers. Gov't does not want an Amul vs Sanchi in MP, and is treading cautiously. This is why the decision has been put on hold till the polls. **P 15**

India got \$111bn in remittances in 2022, first to go past \$100bn mark

Lubna Kably | TNN

Mumbai: India is the origin of the largest number of international migrants — nearly 18 million, with large diasporas in the UAE, US and Saudi Arabia. And it continues its march as the top country receiving remittances from its diaspora: the figure crossed \$110 billion in 2022.

According to the World Migration Report, 2024, released in Dhaka on Wednesday by the UN's International Organisation for Migration, India, Mexico and China were the top three remittance recipient countries in 2022, followed by the Philippines, France and Pakistan. India received \$111 billion, the first country to reach and even surpass the \$100-billion mark. In 2020, it had received \$83 billion. Mexico, with forward remittances of \$61 billion, was the second-largest recipient; in the previous year it had replaced China to occupy the second spot and continued to hold sway.

The report points out that international remittances have recovered from the dip in 2020 due to the pandemic. Migrants sent an estimated \$831 billion in international remittances globally in 2022.

Migration corridors, P 11



Winds bring respite to city from heat and pollution | 9

38.2° MAXIMUM
27.5° MINIMUM

FORECAST ▶ Partly cloudy sky. Maximum and minimum temperatures will be around 39°C and 26°C

SUNSET 7.02PM (THU) | MOONSET 8.38PM (THU)
SUNRISE 5.34AM (FRI) | MOONRISE 6.58AM (FRI)

225

AQI IN DELHI ON WEDNESDAY (POOR CATEGORY)

What are we eating? Ramp up food testing: HC to FSSAI | 8



Nothing to hide? Go to cops if call warns you of arrest for drugs link | 4

How CBI Cracked Doctor-Company Nexus At RML

Extensive Surveillance Since March Unearthed Modus Operandi, Led Sleuths To Associates

CBI trying to zero in on patients who got 'stents for bribe'

Rajshankar Jha
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9 IN CBI NET, 7 OTHERS NAMED IN FIR

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation's crack-down at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital was the result of a technical surveillance-based operation since March, sources disclosed to TOI. Not just that, CBI is learnt to have used decoy patients to corroborate their information on the ground before taking action. The surveillance led the investigating team to minutely understand the modus operandi of the racket. It also confirmed the mode of payments, mainly UPI, bank transfers and cash.

The first breakthrough came on March 22 when one of the two arrested doctors, Dr Parvathgouda, allegedly contacted a man named Akarshan Gulati who worked as a territorial sales manager for Gurgaon-based Biotronics. CBI's surveillance revealed that the doctor instructed Gulati to deliver the bribes for the favours he had done for Biotronics.

Gulati is apparently heard saying in surveillance data that he was out of the station and assured the doctor that he would deliver the bribe by April 24 through an employee named Monika. "Parvathgouda contacted Monika on April 24 as per the deal and asked for Rs 36,000 through UPI and the balance

From RML

- 1 Dr Parvathgouda | Assistant professor, cardiology dept
 - 2 Dr Ajay Raj | Professor, cardiology dept
 - 3 Rajnish Kumar | Senior technical in charge, cath lab
 - 4 Bhuwal Jaiswal | Clerk
 - 5 Sanjay Gupta | Clerk
- Others**
- 6 Naresh Nagpal | Owner of Nagpal Technologies
 - 7 Bharat Singh Dalal | Bharti Medical Technology
 - 8 Abrar Ahmed | Director, Scienmed
 - 9 Vikas Kumar | Collection agent



Others named in the FIR

- 1 Akarshan Gulati | Territory sales manager, Biotronics
- 2 Shalu Sharma | Nurse at RML
- 3 Monika Sinha | Employee of Biotronics
- 4 Nagpal Technologies
- 5 Bharti Medical Technology
- 6 Scienmed
- 7 Biotronics

How CBI busted the racket

Late Dec-early Jan

> CBI receives tip from a source about 'several doctors and employees of Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital indulging in corrupt practices'

> Inquiry reveals bribes being collected from patients, either directly or indirectly

> Bribe givers included medical suppliers, and representatives of the firms supplying equipment required for diagnosis and treatment

> Human intelligence and technical surveillance mounted

Initial probe

> Bribes were being exchanged for allowing the use of medical devices like stents to be implanted allegedly by Dr Parvathgouda and Dr Ajay Raj

> Naresh Nagpal, owner of Nagpal Technologies, allegedly supplied stents and bribed doctors

> Dr Parvathgouda allegedly demanded bribe from Nagpal for allowing the use of a medical equipment supplied by him

> He also allegedly demanded a bribe from Abrar Ahmed for promoting medical equipment supplied by him

> Ahmed allegedly transferred nearly ₹ 2 lakh bribe to the bank account provided by Dr Parvathgouda on March 26



The operation

May 2 (Surveillance result)

> Parvathgouda allegedly asked Nagpal to clear previous month's pending bribes

> Nagpal assured him that the amount would be delivered by him on May 7 at RML



May 7

> CBI laid a trap and arrested Nagpal and the doctor during the exchange of bribe

> Subsequent raids and operation conducted to nab another doctor, Ajay Raj,

and seven others

> All 9 accused produced before the court and taken on remand till May 14

in cash," says the CBI's FIR.

Another transcript relates to March 26 when Parvathgouda allegedly demanded a bribe from one Abrar Ahmed, director of the firm

M/s Scienmed Pvt Ltd. "The bribe was for promoting the medical equipment supplied by him. Ahmed transferred the bribe amount to the bank account named by Dr Par-

vathgouda," the FIR reads. CBI then discreetly analysed the bank transactions between the two and found that Ahmed had wired Rs 1.95 lakh from his account in Axis Bank

to the Canara Bank account number 1101494922**** maintained in the name of the doctor's father on March 26. The doctor is heard making another call to Ahmed on April 23

RML junior staff took bribes for admissions, certificates: Agency

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New Delhi: While a few doctors at RML Hospital were allegedly engaging in malpractices, it appears that some clerical staff and nurses too indulged in corruption at their level, CBI's probe has revealed. The racket was not limited to stents and medical gear, but extended to bribes for admission and certificates. Medical certificates for 'bed rest' were being issued for as low as Rs 100 a day. From cro-

res at the top level to a few hundred at lower ranks, CBI unearthed corruption in the hospital.

CBI's surveillance detected the first instance of an alleged bribe exchange by the hospital's junior staff in Jan. Clerk Bhuwal Jaiswal was arrested while nurse Shalu Sharma has joined the investigation. "The probe found that Sharma and Jaiswal demanded undue advantage from patients for appointments, admission, and investigations. On Jan

17, Jaiswal and Sharma demanded Rs 20,000 as bribe for getting the wife of one Aryan Kumar from Najafgarh admitted in the hospital for delivery," the FIR says.

Sharma threatened Aryan that if the bribe amount wasn't given, she would stop the treatment of his pregnant wife and ensure his wife was discharged immediately. Aryan, therefore, transferred the amount in Jaiswal's account through UPI, according to CBI.

Another clerk named Sanjay Gupta was involved in corrupt and illegal activities in connivance with others, CBI alleged. Gupta allegedly prepared medical and fitness certificates for various persons in lieu of bribes.

"On Jan 24, one Krishan Kumar contacted Gupta and asked him to extend his medical rest certificate for seven more days. Gupta demanded Rs 700 to be deposited in his UPI-linked bank account, after which Kumar transferred and confirmed

the payment. The same day, one Vishwapal contacted Gupta for a certificate for seven days of medical rest and Gupta provided it for the same amount," reads the FIR.

CBI's investigation continued in Feb and it found that a man named Kuldeep asked for a rest certificate for three days on Feb 10 and it was given to him for Rs 300. On Feb 23, Gupta demanded Rs 500 for a certificate from another person named Kailash Kumar who paid it through UPI.

and asking him to pay his all pending bribe amounts at the earliest, saying he would be leaving for Europe on a personal tour. Ahmed is heard assuring Parvathgouda that he would deliver the demanded bribe at the earliest.

The investigation has also revealed that a Delhi-based company, Bharati Medical Technology, supplied various medical equipment to RML Hospital for medical procedures and the firm's representative, Bharat Singh Dalal, was in touch with the second arrested doctor, Ajay Raj, professor of cardiology at the hospital.

"On April 26, Dr Ajay Raj demanded a bribe of Rs 25,000 from Dalal for promoting medical equipment supplied by him. Ajay Raj sent the account details to Dalal who then wired the money to him. On May 3, Ajay Raj demanded Rs 35,000 from Dalal in the same account and this was transferred as well," the FIR mentioned.

The investigation by CBI has also revealed the role of one Rajnish Kumar, senior technical in-charge of the cath lab at RML Hospital. "On March 30, Rajnish Kumar demanded Rs 1 lakh from Ahmed in lieu of promoting equipment supplied by him to patients. On March 31, Ahmed paid the bribe amount in the account maintained in the name of Rajnish's father," CBI further said.

▶ Continued from P1

CBI subsequently conducted raids and searches at over 13 locations in Delhi and other places and seized around Rs 2.5 lakh in cash, gold bars and lockers of the accused. The scam, CBI alleged, was being carried out at multiple levels. The probe is at an early stage and more arrests are likely.

CBI sprung a trap on Dr Parvathgouda and arrested him red-handed on Tuesday. During technical surveillance, the agency had discovered that the doctor had demanded a bribe from one Naresh Nagpal, owner of Nagpal Technologies, on May 2 for having allowed the use of medical equipment supplied by him. "Dr Parvathgouda asked Nagpal to clear previous month's dues of bribes because he was leaving for Europe. Nagpal assured him that the amount would be delivered on May 7 at the hospital," said an official. This communication prompted CBI to register an FIR under sections of Prevention of Corruption Act besides those related to criminal conspiracy on Tuesday. "There is a likelihood that Nagpal may deliver the bribe money of Rs 2.48 lakh to Dr Parvathgouda at RML anytime on May 7," reads the FIR.

CBI laid a trap at the hospital. Its sleuths in disguise were stationed at the hospital. Nagpal's movements were already being tracked. He entered the doctor's cabin following which CBI conducted a raid during the alleged exchange of bribe. Another doctor, Ajay Raj, was arrested on Wednesday on the basis of the investigation. Based on its probe, CBI summoned other accused too and placed them under arrest. One of them, Abrar Ahmed, fled to

Jaipur but was tracked down.

The CBI FIR reads: "Information has been received through reliable sources that several doctors and employees of Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in Delhi have been indulging in corrupt practices and collecting bribes from patients either directly or indirectly through representatives of the companies supplying different equipment required for diagnosis and treatment of patients. Sources have informed that Dr Parvathgouda and Dr Ajay Raj were blatantly demanding and accepting bribes in pursuance of the conspiracy with Naresh Nagpal in lieu of allowing the use of medical devices to be implanted in patients." Parvathgouda joined the hospital in 2021 after completing his MD from the same hospital in 2016. Raj has been there since 2011 after completing his MD from another hospital in 2006, said a source.

The agency is in the process of summoning the accused from different firms who were in touch with the doctors. Account transaction analysis is under way to ascertain the number of patients who were given stents in lieu of bribes. "We are also probing if the stents were substandard. The patients are being contacted after checking hospital records. Other doctors are being spoken to. We are also probing the price difference of the stents," said an officer.

The director and medical superintendent of the hospital, Dr Ajay Shukla, said the arrest of the hospital employees was shocking. "No complaint was filed by any of the patients. We will cooperate with the agency to ensure a fair probe," he said. Efforts to contact the head of the department of cardiology, Prof. Ranjeet Nath, proved futile.



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Number Of Voters Up, But Fewer Booths This Time

However, Poll Body Doesn't Expect Overcrowding

Atul.Mathur@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: While the number of voters in Delhi has witnessed a sharp increase in the last five years, there is a fall in the number of polling booths and locations.

According to the data provided by the office of the chief electoral officer, voting for seven Lok Sabha seats, which is scheduled to be held on May 25, will be done at 13,637 polling booths at 2,627 locations spread across the city.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the votes were cast at 13,816 polling booths across 2,700 locations.

There has, however, been a 6% or nearly 9 lakh increase in the number of electors—from 1.43 crore in 2019 to 1.52 crore in 2024. While there were an average of 1,036 voters at each polling booth in the last Lok Sabha elections five ye-

ars ago, the number has now increased to 1,115.

The election officials, however, said the adjustment in the number of polling booths and locations has been done for an equitable distribution of voters and better poll management.

The chief electoral officer of Delhi, P Krishnamurthy, said the maximum number of voters registered at a polling booth is 1,800 this time and at four locations where the number is higher, auxiliary booths are being set up.

"The analysis of past elections shows that a maximum of 1,300 electors turn out to cast their votes at a polling station. Even if there is 80% voter turnout at certain locations, it can be easily handled by the staff," Krishna-

1,8 K

MAX VOTERS REGISTERED AT A POLLING BOOTH IN THE CAPITAL

murthy said. He added that the number of voters per booth in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections was 2,000 and it was 1,800 in the 2020 Delhi assembly polls.

"The decision to reduce the number of polling booths in the city was taken after considering all aspects. It will not lead to crowding at polling booths. Additional booths put a lot of pressure on infrastructure and manpower," the chief electoral officer added.

Krishnamurthy also said that in case the number of voters at a polling booth goes beyond 1,500, a new unit of VVPAT machine will be installed and attached to the ballot unit. One VVPAT machine can generate a maximum of 1,600 paper slips.

At rally, Gadkari hardsells AAP, Cong to play to strengths in campaigning

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New Delhi: Union minister for road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari, who addressed a public gathering in Jaitpur in southeast Delhi's Badarpur canvassing votes for BJP's South Delhi candidate Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said that the capital was developing rapidly.

Discussing the steps he has taken to improve road connectivity from Delhi to other states, Gadkari said it will take just 12 hours to reach Mumbai from Delhi after the express highway is ready by Dec. He said the drive from Delhi to Jaipur, Amritsar, Katra, Srinagar and Manali would take, respectively, two, four, six, eight and six hours.

"Delhiites will be able to reach Dehradun in two hours by road. That's less time than reaching the airport to board a flight," said Gadkari, amid chants like 'Gadkari ki ko jai Shri Ram', 'Desh ka beta kaisa ho, Modi jaise ho' and 'Abki baar, 400 paar'. Gadkari claimed his ministry alone provided work of Rs 1.1 lakh crore to Delhi in the past decade.

He also mentioned proposed projects like the electric cable bus between Delhi and Jaipur. "It will cover the distance in just two hours and fare will be 30% less than on the normal diesel bus," said the minister. He added that an



Nitin Gadkari campaigns for Ramvir Singh Bidhuri at Jaitpur

amphibious plane service would take off from the Yamuna and reach different parts of the country, including Triveni Sangam in Prayagraj, Ganga in Varanasi, Brahmaputra in Guwahati and the Taj Mahal in Agra.

Gadkari said central govt was providing funds under various schemes to clean the Yamuna. Harvest stubble would be used to generate ethanol to reduce air pollution, while the dirty water in the drains in Badarpur would be used to produce hydrogen in the future, he claimed.

"What could not be done till now has been done by the BJP government under the leaders-

hip of Modi ji," he asserted.

Saying that it was he who had got candidate Bidhuri to join BJP, Gadkari asked the people to vote for him, assuring, "Whatever changes you see around you is just a trailer as the entire movie is left. It is important that this time too, the BJP govt led by Modi ji is made victorious in all the seven seats of Delhi."

Bidhuri also addressed the crowd and mentioned the projects taken up by the Centre. Before Jaitpur, Gadkari addressed the public at Shastri Nagar in support of BJP candidate from Chandni Chowk parliamentary constituency, Praveen Khandelwal.

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New Delhi: The coordination committee formed for the AAP-Congress alliance in Delhi for the Lok Sabha elections has developed a framework to ensure regular interactions are held between ground-level workers and itineraries are drawn up for campaigning. MLAs and councillors have also been asked to assist the candidates with voter outreach.

"Cadres in most areas have been made familiar with each other. We are already carrying out 'jail ka jawab vote se' campaign in various areas and have also devised assembly-level plans for the public gatherings that would be held," said Durgesh Pathak, AAP's state-level coordinator for the committee.

"AAP has a deep connect at the grassroots level in Delhi, with the highest number of councillors and 80% MLAs. They have been told to ensure that the candidates reach out to the right areas," he added.

Pathak said a meet was recently held with Congress functionary Subhash Chopra and others. Representatives from both the sides are in regular touch for any issues that may arise during the campaign, he added.

In the municipal polls held in 2022 to elect councillors for 250 seats of Delhi, AAP had won 134 seats. It also has 62 out of 70 MLAs.

Sources in INDIA bloc said that while AAP will help with the ground-level strategies, Congress will bring high-profile leaders to the national ca-



Subhash Chopra speaks at a joint campaign held at Kalkaji in support of Sahi Ram, in which Atishi was also present

pital, who will hold roadshows and public meetings to garner support for the nominees.

Subhash Chopra, who is leading the coordination from the Congress side, said, "The party's top functionaries, including its president Mallikarjun Kharge, MP Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, will campaign in support of

the candidates." "The venue and the nature of campaigning, whether it is in the form of roadshows or public gatherings, will be decided soon," Chopra added.

Other top campaigners include former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot and other Congress CMs. Gehlot's former deputy Sachin Pilot

will also canvas for candidates, he said.

"I met AAP's Sanjay Singh and Atishi on Wednesday, and I am in regular contact with Durgesh Pathak as well," said Chopra.

On Wednesday, a joint campaign was held in Kalkaji in support of AAP's Sahi Ram 'Pahalwan', who is contesting the South Delhi seat. Both Atishi and Chopra were present at the event. Similar public meetings are also scheduled in Okhla and East Delhi, in which senior functionaries from both the parties are expected to be present.

"We have always fought elections against each other, but this time, the sentiments are against BJP, so we are not facing any issues on the ground," Chopra said.

AAP's Ph-IV campaign to woo 4 voter groups

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With a little over two weeks to go for polls for seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi, Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday announced its fourth phase of the election campaign, which will target four big voter groups — traders, women, villagers and Poorvanchalis.

AAP's state convener Gopal Rai said the campaign would start on May 13 and end on May 23. The party functionaries will address meetings of these four segments of voters in each of the four parliamentary constituencies on which AAP has fielded its candidates under the seat-sharing arrangement with Congress, he added.

"AAP will hold trade town hall, mahila samvad, poorvanchal samagam and grameen panchayat in all constituencies. These events will start from East Delhi, New Delhi, South Delhi and West Delhi seats, respectively, and then will be held in other constituencies," Rai said. "These are four key segments that have a huge bearing on the election," he added.

Aam Aadmi Party has already been running a door-to-door campaign, holding multiple 'sankalp sabha' (public meetings) and has organised three roadshows of jailed chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife, Sunita Kejriwal.

Rai said the party functionaries would talk about the works done by

Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi govt for the four targeted groups in the last nine years of being in office in the capital. He claimed that AAP govt did a lot of work in power, water, education and health sectors besides providing free bus travel to women and free pilgrimage to the elderly.

"In the trade town hall, we will discuss the work that our govt has done for traders and their expectations from us once our candidates are elected as MPs," Rai said, adding that Kejriwal govt reduced VAT to 5%, ended the 'Raid Raa' and made a plan for the redevelopment of Delhi's market in the budget.

The minister added that the gram-teen panchayat would focus on the deve-

lopment of villages and how thousands of crores of rupees Delhi govt spent on rural development. "In the current budget, Rs 1,000 crore has been allocated for the development of villages," he said.

Rai said issues related to the security of women, including the installation of CCTV cameras, free bus travel for them, and the provision of Rs 1,000 honorarium to each woman about 18 years every month in this year's budget, will be discussed. "Today, 90% of the labour comes from Poorvanchal. They get free electricity and water. We have doubled up the minimum wages, increased the number of Chhath ghats and helped them live with dignity," Rai added.

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SC decision on CM's interim bail plea likely tomorrow

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Supreme Court on Wednesday said that it may decide and pass an order on May 10 on plea of interim bail to Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in Delhi excise policy case in which he was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta had reserved its order on Tuesday amid stiff opposition from ED and had observed that the case concerned an extraordinary situation where the accused was an elected chief minister and not a habitual offender at a time when elections were round the corner.

While rising for the day after hearing a batch of petitions pertaining to CGST Act, Justice Sanjiv Khanna told additional solicitor general S V Raju, who had appeared for ED in Kejriwal's case, that the court may pass the order on Friday as far as interim order is concerned.

Kejriwal was arrested on March 21. The apex court in its previous hearing expressed reservation on Kejriwal discharging his function as CM after coming out on interim bail if it was granted. It had observed that Kejriwal performing his official duties as CM and signing files if he was granted interim bail would have a cascading effect and would lead to conflict of interest. The court had indicated that he might not be allowed to discharge his duties as head of the Delhi govt if he was allowed to come out of jail.

Opposing the proposal for interim relief, solicitor general Tushar Mehta said the court should not treat politicians as a separate class for interim relief as it would demoralise common people like workers, farmers and labourers who would think the law is favourable to those who hold high posts.

Modi central theme at Olympian Rathore's roadshow in east Delhi

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Olympian Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, one of BJP's star campaigners and also a Rajasthan minister, on Wednesday held a roadshow in Kalyanpuri in support of the party's candidate from East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency, Harsh Malhotra. The rally, however, saw a tepid response.

The roadshow started an hour late, around 6pm. Traversing the 1km stretch, Rathore, sporting a blue kurta, waved and smiled at the crowd. While some curious onlookers stood on the balconies of their houses or peeked from the windows, many went about their daily chores.

Several BJP supporters, waving saffron flags with the party's lotus symbol, held cutouts of PM Narendra Modi, with "Main hoon Modi ka Pariwar (I am Modi's family)" written over them. In the background, a song, "Phirse Modi ji ki sarkar dekhna chahu su... (I want to see Modi govt again)", played loudly on the public address system, stressing on the temple theme: "Ram pratishthit kiya jinhone Awaadh puri ke aasan pe... Ram bhakt hi raj karega Delhi ke singhasan pe (those who set up the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya... will rule Delhi too)."



Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore takes part in a roadshow in Kalyanpuri in support of BJP's candidate from East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency, Harsh Malhotra

BJP functionaries Anil Gupta, Mahendra Ahuja, Vijendra Dhama and Sanjay Goyal, along with National Minority Morcha's Yaseer Jilani and party officials were present too.

Rakhi Awasthi, who sells plastic products in the area, said, "I don't know about the candidate, but my vote is for Modi." At the same time, she said sitting MP Gautam Gambhir "did not do anything for the constituency". But, she "had hope from Modi govt".

According to Anil Kumar, who

has a confectionery shop, this time, BJP "seems to be on weak ground". "Unlike this one, there was a massive crowd at Sunita Kejriwal's roadshow," he said, adding that it was difficult to predict who would win.

Later, Rathore said, "The 2024 elections are another opportunity to ensure that corrupt parties and dynastic rulers stay away from power yet again. To ensure a developed and strong India, we need Narendra Modi as PM for the third time."

Will assume role of party worker, quit politics rather than leave BJP again: Lovely

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Former Delhi Congress chief Arvinder Singh Lovely, who recently resigned from his post and switched to BJP, on Wednesday said he would rather quit politics than leave the saffron party.

Lovely, along with former minister Raj Kumar Chauhan, Naaseeb Singh and Amit Malik, joined BJP last week.

"Last time, I quit Congress in anger. This time, however, I have taken the decision with a cool head and much thought. Now, I will do politics here (in BJP) only, or quit politics instead of leaving the party," Lovely told mediapersons at the Delhi BJP office.

Lovely said that in any party, the role of a worker is the most important, and he will assume that role for BJP and campaign wherever he is asked to.

Lovely, who is among BJP's 40 star campaigners for the LS polls in Delhi, hinted others from Delhi Congress could also join the saffron party in the coming days.

"Raj Kumar Chauhan is a known name in north-west Delhi, but his influence is not limited to that constituency. Similarly, I and Naaseeb Singh are based in the trans-Yamuna area where there are two seats. This is just the beginning. If the party allows, our other friends will come too," he said.

Lovely quit Congress and joined BJP in April before the municipal polls. However, he returned to Congress in 2018. Last month, he resigned from the Congress president's post over differences with the senior leadership and choice of candidates for the Lok Sabha polls.



Arvinder Singh Lovely

Taming big cats: Forest guards to train in Mumbai

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New Delhi: As leopards are being sighted in human settlements in the city, forest and wildlife department will send 40 forest guards to Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Mumbai for training to deal with man-animal conflict. They will later conduct similar workshops in Delhi to sensitise local people on the steps to be taken after spotting a leopard.

In 2022, a report by Bombay Natural History Society and Delhi forest department confirmed the presence of eight leopards as permanent residents of Asola. On April 1, 2023, a leopard barged into a few houses in Jagatpur, injuring eight people. In retaliation, local residents had attacked the animal with lathis. It was finally tranquilised and later released into Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary. A leopard was also frequently sighted in Sainik Farms last year



SPOTS OF BOTHR: The forest guards will later conduct similar workshops in Delhi to sensitise local people on the steps to be taken after spotting a leopard

and one person got injured in Dec. Chief wildlife warden Suneesh Buxy said, "It is estimated that the population of leopard will increase

in the future in Delhi. Hence, we need specialised teams to minimise man-animal conflict." He added that a team of 10 forest guards led by a ranger

would go to Mumbai in four separate batches, starting from June.

A forest official said, "A two-day workshop was organised recently in Delhi. Experts from Wildlife Conservation Society and other specialists from Mumbai, which also witnesses incidents of leopards straying into human settlements, conducted the workshop. On the first day, the workshop was organised at forest and wildlife department's office and the second day's session involved field training at Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary."

The official added that a special leopard rescue team was being formed in each of the four forest divisions to tackle such cases. "We want to replicate the successful model, like around Sanjay Gandhi National Park, of peaceful co-existence. The focus is that these teams should know what should be done if a leopard is spotted in an urban space and sensitise the locals."

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PHASE I (EXISTING)

15 lakh square feet (LSF) gross leasable area (GLA)

PHASE II

63 LSF of GLA. 35 LSF commercial offices and 28 LSF mega mall. Delivery starts next year, complete by March 2027

When ready, existing 5,000 hotel rooms across 11 properties go up to 7,000 in 16 hotels

India's biggest mall to be entertainment-focussed

PHASE III

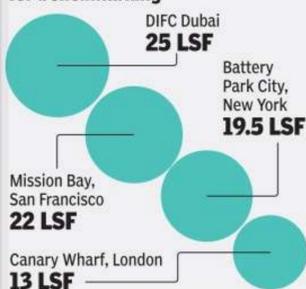
40 LSF GLA of commercial offices. Work starts in 2025, estimated completion 2029

Cost of Phase II & III \$2.5 billion

Future development potential

65 LSF GLA of commercial offices

Global business districts used for benchmarking



Upcoming Worldmark Aerocity at IGIA ranked among most attractive global business districts by EY

Connectivity

Existing | Roads, including Delhi-Gurgaon e-way; Airport Express and Magenta Line of metro

Under development | DMRC Silver Line; Urban Extension Road; Dwarka e-way

Upcoming | Elevated corridor from INA; RRTS from nearby cities like Meerut, Panipat, Alwar; Silver Line extension to T1; air train linking IGI terminals; Rangpuri bypass-tunnel alignment from Nelson Mandela Marg to Shiv Murti interchange

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New Delhi: Come 2027 and Indira Gandhi International Airport's Aerocity will boast India's largest mall after a massive \$2.5 billion expansion that will see the country's first aeropolis (metropolis in the vicinity of an airport) growing around eight times in the next five years. Aerocity currently has 15 lakh square feet of leasable area and will get over one crore square feet more in two phases by 2029.

That isn't the end of it all. Subsequently, the global business district will be expanded by another 65 lakh sq feet, making 1.8 crore sq feet of leasable area for offices, retail, food courts and an entertainment-focused mega mall apart from public spaces. The GMR-backed Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) had bid for the development of Aerocity with Bharti Realty winning the same. Bharti has the lease for Aerocity, co-terminus with DIAL's lease for developing and running the airport, whose ownership remains with the state.

"Phase 2 and 3 will have an investment of \$2.5 billion, an amount being raised through a mix of debt and equity. Phase 2 will see Aerocity getting Worldmark 4, 5, 6 & 7 with 35 lakh sq feet leasable area and India's

COMING SOON: INDIA'S BIGGEST MALL IN DELHI

TARGET 2027: \$2.5-Billion Expansion Plans In The Works At Aerocity, A Stone's Throw From Indira Gandhi International Airport

largest mall sprawled over 28 lakh sq feet — three times as large as the existing Vasant Kunj malls. We will start delivery of Phase 2 next year and will complete the process by March 2027," SK Sayal, MD & CEO, Bharti Realty, told TOI while sharing the plans for what will be India's biggest aeropolis next to India's busiest airport. There are plans for underground parking for over 8,000 cars.

At present, Aerocity has 5,000 hotel rooms in 11 leading hotels such as JW Marriott, Accor Group and Roseate. When Phase 2 is completed, the count rises to 7,000 rooms in 16 hotels with marquee names like St Regis and JW

Marriott Marquis coming up between the Aerocity metro station and the existing hotel district. "Retail at Worldmark 2.0 with more than 30 lakh sq feet of retail leasing area makes it one of the largest retail destinations in India," Sayal claimed.

Phase 1, which attracted the world's biggest corporate names like Airbus, EY, IMF, KPMG, Emirates and Pernod Ricard, saw Brookfield, one of the largest alternative investment management companies globally, agreeing to buy 51% stake in Bharti's four commercial properties, including Aerocity Worldmark Phase 1, at an enterprise value of Rs 5,000 crore, two years ago.



largest retail destinations in India —SK Sayal, MD & CEO, Bharti Realty

With more than 30 lakh sq feet of retail leasing area, Worldmark 2.0 will be one of the largest retail destinations in India

Phase 3 will see Aerocity getting 40 lakh sq feet leasable commercial space across Northern Access Road that connects Mahipalpur and Terminals 2 and 3. "We will start work on this phase in 2025 and complete it by 2029," said Sayal. "These will be offices with retail space on the ground floor and will be a boundaryless district. The entire place will be linked by cycle tracks and walkways."

When complete, Sayal anticipates Aerocity to have 20 lakh people working there and an annual footfall of at least three crore. When that happens, IGI could be handling over 10 crore passengers annually and well on its way to replacing T2 with a much bigger T4 that will take the airport's yearly capacity to over 14 crore flyers. Add to it the number of people working at the mega airport, both passenger and cargo side, and the area is set to become a magnet for footfall.

To handle that, DIAL is developing India's first interstate

multi-modal transport hub near the Aerocity metro station. This hub will likely incorporate an interstate bus terminus, Delhi Metro's upcoming Phase 4 line and the Rapid Rail Transit System station, including the station for the automated passenger mover or air train.

"Worldmark Aerocity will be the world's most well-connected global business district with different modes of transport available. People coming from Meerut, Alwar or Panipat will reach here within 45 minutes on the upcoming RRTS. The mega mall will have parking space for thousands of cars," said Sayal.

Bharti is focusing on the mega mall that Sayal said would become India's biggest when it opens by 2027. "We have sent teams across the world and are developing the mall as the country's largest indoor entertainment destination offering the most sought after global entertainment genres," he added.

As of now, DIAL and the Union aviation ministry are in a back and forth over the number of stops the proposed air train linking T1 on one side and T3/2 (or T4 in place of T2 by the end of this decade) should have. While the airport operator favours two air train stations in Aerocity, the ministry favours fewer stops to ensure quick intra-terminal transfers.

COUNTRY'S BIGGEST MALLS

Upcoming Aerocity mall 28 lakh square feet (LSF)



Sources: Magicbricks

Tilak Nagar 'spotter' in net, one more car dealer gets extortion call

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Even as Delhi Police's Special Cell on Wednesday claimed to have arrested a "spotter" involved in the attack at a car showroom in west Delhi's Tilak Nagar on Monday, another car dealer in west Delhi received an extortion call allegedly from Europe-based gangster Himanshu Bhau. Bhau demanded Rs 2 crore as "protection money" from the businessman and threatened to eliminate him if the money was not paid.

"The businessman, who deals in used luxury cars in Naraina, received the call from a foreign number on his WhatsApp. He is known to the owners of Fusion Cars, where the previous shooting incident occurred," a source said, adding that they were now probing the role of an insider or a cop who may be giving tip-offs to the gangsters.

Meanwhile, the spotter arrested for allegedly firing at Fusion Cars in Tilak Nagar was identified as Ketan. He was riding the bike from which two shooters fled the scene. He was produced before a magistrate and taken into custody on remand for four days. Raids are being conducted to apprehend others.

Speaking to reporters, the spotter in custody claimed that he had received instructions from gangster Himanshu Bhau to carry out the task. "20-21 rounds were fired. We were three people. The purpose was to scare..." he said.

Police have identified one of the shooters as Sunny Gurrar, who has a double murder case registered against him in Hisar. Incidentally, TOI reported on Wednesday that the shooter/s would soon be "arrested" by specialised units like Special Cell or Crime Branch, which has usually been the case in such incidents that have become routine in the last six months.

There has been panic in the business community since the brazen shooting incident at Tilak Nagar. The second call has only led the traders to approach the police brass to ensure safety.

The matter came to light after an MNC executive in Munirka Enclave, Sharad, filed a complaint in Dec last year at cyber police station (south-west), saying he had lost Rs 44 lakh to the con. He told cops he received a phone call wherein the caller, posing as a

All three accused — Rakesh Kumar Shaw, Rashid Khan and Niva Singh — are residents of West Bengal.

The matter came to light after an MNC executive in Munirka Enclave, Sharad, filed a complaint in Dec last year at cyber police station (south-west), saying he had lost Rs 44 lakh to the con. He told cops he received a phone call wherein the caller, posing as a

courier company representative, claimed to have intercepted a package containing illegal documents, credit cards, clothes and drugs. The contents of the parcel, the caller said, were linked to his Aadhaar card and phone number.

Sharad was then transferred to a video call, in which people posing as "crime branch officers" threatened legal action. The scammers demanded a hefty "security deposit" — nearly 89% of his savings — and promised a quick refund once the "investigation" was over. They persuaded the executive to transfer

him. He also asked her to file a false report of the phone number and the current account kit, including the credentials, which she did," said an officer who is part of the investigating team.

Acting on Shaw's information, police arrested Shaw in West Bengal. A subsequent raid led to the arrest of Khan, who allegedly managed the fraudulent bank accounts used by overseas operators.

Police recovered incriminating evidence in the form of WhatsApp chats, photos and voice notes used to carry out the con. Khan, they said, used to handle the current accounts from his phone for the fraudsters operating the syndicate from abroad. "He also used to make calls to the targets by posing as cops or courier employees," the officer said.

When contacted, DCP (Southwest) Rohit Meena refused to comment, saying the investigation was ongoing.

Aditya Bahl, son of AAP MLA, in assault case

Noida: A day after they were booked for allegedly assaulting and threatening employees of a petrol pump in the city, Noida police on Wednesday sent teams to Delhi to arrest AAP's Delhi MLA Amanatullah Khan and his son Anas Ahmed.

SHO of Phase 1 Dhruv Bhusan Dubey said the Okhla legislator and his son were not found at their Batla House residence.

"We have formed three teams to investigate the incident. On Wednesday, a team was sent to the MLA's residence in Delhi to nab the Khan and his son, but they were not found there. Another team is gathering statements of eyewitnesses and staffers present at the fuel station at the time of the incident, while the third is analysing the CCTV feeds," Dubey said.

A law student, Ahmed tried to skip the queue at a Sector 95 fuel pump on Tuesday and allegedly assaulted a staffer when he was asked to get back in line. The incident was caught on a CCTV camera installed at the fuel pump and widely shared on social media.

In his complaint, fuel station owner Vinod Kumar Singh claimed Ahmed had pulled out an iron rod from his car's boot and hit a staffer. He also said that Ahmed had vandalised a card machine.

"The MLA's son (later) called his father, who arrived in two cars. He threatened the petrol pump manager," the complaint said.

Police filed an FIR against the MLA, his son and two other unidentified car occupants under IPC sections 323 (voluntarily causing hurt), 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 427 (mischief causing damage).

Nothing to hide? Go to cops if call warns you of arrest for drugs link

Abhay@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: In the latest "digital arrest" scam, police claimed to have busted a gang that allegedly targeted victims by claiming they had links to drug trafficking, money laundering or gangsters, threatening them with arrest by posing as officers of the law, and eventually duping them of money. Three people have been nabbed in the case. Police said 113 complaints have been received against the gang so far.

All three accused — Rakesh Kumar Shaw, Rashid Khan and Niva Singh — are residents of West Bengal.

The matter came to light after an MNC executive in Munirka Enclave, Sharad, filed a complaint in Dec last year at cyber police station (south-west), saying he had lost Rs 44 lakh to the con. He told cops he received a phone call wherein the caller, posing as a

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When contacted, DCP (Southwest) Rohit Meena refused to comment, saying the investigation was ongoing.

Cops busted a gang that targeted people by claiming they had links to gangsters and threatening them with arrest by posing as officers of law

After Sharad approached police, a cyber cell team of southwest district was formed to crack the case. Investigation revealed the use of proxy SIM cards, video call apps with VPNs and a complex money trail involving over 35 accounts across different states. The account where Sharad's money was transferred belonged to Singh.

Upon questioning, she claimed she used to stitch clothes and lived with her son, aged 13, and was separated from her husband, police said.

Singh said in 2018-2019, she started purchasing fabric for stitching from Shaw. However, as she was unable to pay him on time, Rakesh extended the credit facility to her on the condition that she would provide him with a current bank account.

"The woman opened the bank account and handed over relevant documents to

Nand Nagri and Anand Vihar. Together, these projects will cost approximately Rs 1,951 crore to the public exchequer.

By reviewing the status of these projects and identifying the bottlenecks caused by the lack of approvals, govt hopes to find solutions and ensure their timely completion.

PWD had earlier written to the forest department, requesting it to expedite permissions, and now it has asked other departments like Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and power discoms.

According to officials, the projects receive approval from UTTIPEC after obtaining consent from all stakeholders, but still, during the stage of execution, the approvals from the different departments take time, causing delays.

According to officials, the Anand Vihar flyover came to a standstill after the forest department received complaints of a few trees being illegally felled at the project site.

Talks between PWD and forest officials were on for the last 2-3 months, but no headway was made, an official said. Also, a small parcel of land is required to shift a power line. The project involves construction of a flyover between Anand Vihar rail overbridge and Apsara border.

Barapullah Phase-III, which has long faced hurdles related to land acquisition, is also delayed as permission to cut or transplant 274 trees is awaited. There is also land from the revenue department

needed to complete it. The project envisages seamless connectivity between Mayur Vihar-I and Sarai Kale Khan. It was started in April 2015 and was to be over in Oct 2017.

At Punjabi Bagh, the project was supposed to be completed in Jan this year. That dream remains distant, and the area continues to see heavy congestion. Here, also, a green nod from the forest department and a Delhi Jal Board nod are awaited.

In Nand Nagri, PWD had started a 1.5-km flyover. But clearances from the forest department and power discom are awaited. An underpass near Mukarba Chowk from Badli to Haiderpur is held up because of approvals from the power discom and the irrigation and flood control departments.

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10 Bishnoi-Brar gang henchmen nabbed

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Cracking down on the Lawrence Bishnoi-Goldy Brar syndicate, Delhi Police's Special Cell has apprehended 10 of its henchmen in a multi-city swoop.

They were found connected through various social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, besides encrypted chat services like WhatsApp. Seven pistols with 31 live cartridges and 11 mobile phones were seized from them.

The crackdown was carried out by a team led by DCP Lalit Mohan Negi and inspector Shiv Kumar following a tip-off about an interstate module of shooters operating at the behest of Bishnoi and Brar. "This module was active in Delhi-NCR and adjoining states, committing extortion, killings and other heinous acts," said a sub-inspector.

While monitoring their activities through technical surveillance, police noticed

incriminating conversations among the suspects located in different states. The conversations indicated a conspiracy to possibly commit a killing. "This suspicion was further corroborated by source information. It was also found that they had procured weapons," an officer said.

A case was registered on April 24, and multiple teams raided different locations in seven states. "Two were nabbed from Delhi, one each from Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and two, including a minor, from Uttar Pradesh. Two were also caught from Punjab, and one each from Haryana and Bihar," police said.

Investigation has revealed several gangsters are also orchestrating crimes like extortion, murder and attempted murder from overseas hideouts by leveraging their connections and henchmen within India. "Some even orchestrate these activities from prison," the officer said.

AIIMS to start cath lab for emergencies

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The All India Institute of Medical Sciences has decided to operationalise Cath Lab facility for emergency patients to ensure prompt primary neuro, cardio, and other Endo vascular interventions within the crucial "golden hour". Till date, there is no dedicated Cath Lab for emergency patients within the emergency department.

This strategic decision comes after careful consideration of the current patient load and the need for prompt interventions, particularly in emergency situations. It was observed that the current number of operational Cath Labs falls short of meeting the escalating demand, resulting in extended waiting times for complex neuro and cardio procedures, said officials.

Furthermore, the absence of a dedicated Cath Lab within the emergency department has led to delays in administering primary interventions, consequently impacting patient outcomes. TNN

Check status of projects: Atishi to chief secy

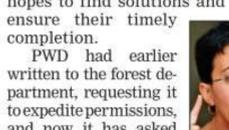
Siddhanta.Mishra@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: PWD minister Atishi has instructed the Delhi chief secretary to assess the progress of major infrastructure projects that are nearing completion but have been delayed for pending approvals from departments.

Officials said that five significant road infrastructure projects are 90% complete but are facing obstacles related to the relocation of utilities such as power, water and gas.

The minister's directive aims to expedite the completion of these projects, which are crucial for improving the city's infrastructure.

The projects are Barapullah Phase-III, Punjabi Bagh-Raja Garden elevated corridor, and a flyover each at



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HC gives a week to probe agencies to respond to Sisodia's plea Rohini hit-and-run: 24-year-old arrested

TIMES NEWS NETWORK
New Delhi: Delhi High Court on Wednesday granted more time to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to respond to former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia's plea seeking bail in the alleged exci-

se policy scam. Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, who listed the matter for further hearing on May 14, was informed by the counsel for the probe agencies that they needed some more time to respond. The counsel for Sisodia opposed the request, pointing out that ED and CBI had assured

the Supreme Court that the trial would be completed in six months. The court recorded that "ED is in the process of filing another prosecution complaint in relation to a co-accused in the case...irrespective of that, the accused is in custody, and four more days are granted to the respondents to

file their replies. The reply will be placed on court record by Monday and an advance copy is also supplied to the other side by Monday." In the high court, Sisodia has challenged a trial court's April 30 order by which his bail petitions were dismissed on the ground that the stage was not right for granting bail to him.

Sisodia's judicial custody extended till May 21: A Delhi court extended the judicial custody of Sisodia till May 21 in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam, which was filed by ED. The custody was extended by the court of special judge Kaveri Baweja.

TIMES NEWS NETWORK
New Delhi: A day after 62-year-old Congress functionary Hari Kishan Jindal died in a case of hit-and-run in Rohini's Prashant Vihar area, a 24-year-old man was arrested in connection with the case, police said. The accident took place on Tuesday morning when the victim was out for a morning

walk and was hit by a speeding SUV, which fled the scene. Upon receiving information about the accident, a police team rushed to the spot and came to know that the injured had sustained grievous injuries on the head and had been shifted to a hospital where he was declared brought dead, said G S Sidhu, DCP (Rohini). A case was registered un-

der relevant sections of rash driving and death due to negligence under the IPC. "During the investigation, the police team analysed more than 250 CCTV's footage in the vicinity where the alleged SUV was found escaping. A trail of its route was created and following a raid, accused Chirag Chaudhary was nabbed," DCP Sidhu said.

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- Abhishek Amir Girdhar (Son)
- Mr. Ashok Sethi & Ms. Shashi Sethi (Brother in Law & Sister)
- Mr. Rajeev Girdhar & Ms. Parul Girdhar (Brother & Sister in law)
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S C Gupta

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Prayer meeting will be held on May 9th, 2024 from 4pm to 5pm at Aggarwal Dharamshala D-13A/31 Model Town Delhi - 110009.

In grief: Agarwal Family
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In Loving Memory of

Shri Dilip Singh Rawat

On his 23rd Death Anniversary

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 ever smiling face and unconditional
 love inspires us on every occasion
 and each passing day.
 We pray to the Almighty for
 Your eternal bliss and peace.



(1944 - 2001)

Fondly remembered & deeply missed by :

- Family:** Mrs. Urmila Rawat (Wife), Dipikka -Uday Marya, Jyotsna - Siddhartha Jain, Shruti - Anshul Chanana, Avanee - Vaibhav Lakhi (Daughters & Sons-in-law), Aarriyana, Aavyan, Allaina, Jivraj & Samara (Grandchildren)
- Management & Staff** South Delhi Education Society (Regd.), South Delhi Public School (Defence Colony), South Delhi Public School (East of Kailash), Saksham (Africa Avenue)

OBITUARY
REMEMBRANCES

Vimla Sawhney



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Sawhney Family
 Raj Uday, Marsha, Kate & Natasha
 Abhay, Chris, Jerad & Olivia

Man killed on suspicion of illicit affair

New Delhi: A 56-year-old man has been murdered allegedly on suspicion of an illicit affair in north Delhi's Anand Parbat area. A friend of the victim has been arrested, police said. The deceased Ram Bhujaaram, a resident of Baljit Nagar, worked as a welder at Anand Parbat. Police received a PCR call about the murder on Tuesday night. Inquiry revealed that Bhujaaram and Khetu (50) were drinking liquor and there was an argument between them, a senior police officer said. "Khetu hit Bhujaaram with some heavy object, due to which he collapsed. He was taken to the hospital where he was declared dead by the doctor," said Manoj Meena, DCP (north). During investigation, Khetu told the cops that he had a suspicion that Bhujaaram had an illicit relationship with his wife, the DCP said, adding that the suspect has been arrested. **TNN**

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18th Death Anniversary
SMT. PRATIMA DAS

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KL Das, Kumal, Rajashree, Shayon & Riyan



3rd Death Anniversary
Mr. Jatender Kumar Puri

12.12.1940 - 09.05.2021
 Every day, in some small way, memories of you come our way. Though absent, you are ever near, still missed, still loved and ever dear. Deeply missed by **Anupama Puri (wife), Reena, Ryan, Ritu, Anoop, Krisna, Katyani, family and friends.**



Smt. Madhuri Mehrotra

24.04.1943 to 09.05.2003
 You are always in our hearts even if a lot of time has elapsed. Your sociability is discussed among friends and relations quite often. May your soul rest in peace. **P.S. Mehrotra, Pankaj & Shikha, Deepa & Shobhit.**

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(04.12.1939 - 06.05.2024)
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- VIMLA MAN MOHAN SINGH (SISTER)
- NALINI PURI (SISTER IN LAW)
- KOHLI AND PURI FAMILY
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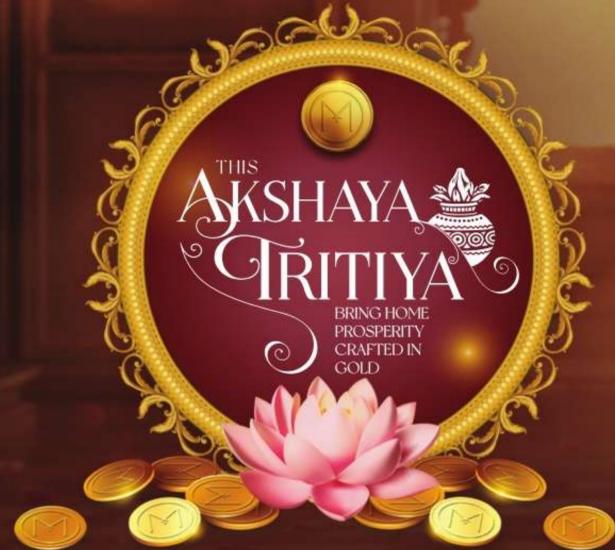
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Ramp up testing of food products: HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi High Court on Wednesday underscored the need to ramp up testing of food products in the capital, saying the food cycle has become "corrupted".

It said that being the apex body, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) needed to take steps to ensure that there was enough testing while also seeking a detailed report from Delhi govt's food and safety department.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Manmeet PS Arora expressed concern on the quality of milk and milk products being sold in the city and asked Delhi govt to file an affidavit on the level of testing, the number of food-inspecting teams and its budget.

"FSSAI needs to ramp up testing. It is minimal. What sort of products are we eating? We do not know. You are taking no steps. You are living in some ivory tower or what? You pick up any food product, there is a problem. There is so much pesticide," the bench remarked.

The FSSAI counsel said food testing was carried out by the state food safety commissioners. Noting that 25 samples per food safety officer per month is the prescribed norm for testing, the court remarked that appropriate random testing had to be carried out given the city's population.

"Look at the population of Delhi. How much food consumption is taking place on a daily basis. How many FSOs are there in Delhi? Sampling needs to be ramped up," Justice Manmohan said.

The court was hearing a suo motu case initiated by it in 2010 following a news report on the use of certain pesticides for growing vegetables, which cause serious neurological problems, kidney damage, skin diseases, cancer and other grievous ailments.

In a separate matter relating to the shifting of nine dairies to better locations, the court again flagged the need for testing of milk and sought a report from the authorities. Some of the dairies, it pointed out, are located next to landfills and cattle consumed contaminated food.

"Today, the administration has turned a blind eye as if these dairies do not exist at all. Milk from here is used in sweets and chocolates and it is entering our food. Cattle have been moved to the second floor where we are told and then they never come down in their life. Imagining the cruelty and amount of waste and excreta among which they live. Oxytocin is a banned drug, but it is rampant in these dairy colonies. Responsibility needs to be fixed," the bench told chief secretary and MCD commissioner who were present virtually in the hearing.

Six injured in an escalator snag at metro stn, case filed

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Six people were injured after they fell on each other on the escalator due to a technical snag in Kashmere Gate metro station.

Police have registered a case in this regard.

The people in the escalator were identified as Manoj (48), Naman Kumar Gupta (22), Manoj Verma (38), Hiba (32), Pankaj Kumar (34) and Sangita (49).

The complainant — a B.Tech second-year student — told police that on May 6 when he was returning home from his college in Noida, he "got off at Kashmere Gate metro station and used the escalator from the Violet Line to reach the Red Line platform. Between 6.30 pm and 6.45 pm, while ascending in the escalator, it suddenly stopped for a second and then resumed its movement at double speed," he said.

"This caused several passengers to lose balance and fall on top of each other, resulting in injuries to many. My shoulders, right ear, right eye, right toe, right elbow were injured," he said. He said that he also suffered internal injuries to his back. "My right ear was even partially severed," he said.

The complainant added that he was taken to multiple hospitals for treatment. "At Safdarjung Hospital, doctors stitched my ear back together. However, they informed me that I would require plastic surgery for my ear," he added.

Sources in Delhi Metro said an escalator developed a technical snag so those in it fell on each other.

A case under Sections 287 (negligent conduct with respect to machinery), 337 (causing hurt by act endangering life or personal safety of others) of IPC was registered.

Police will probe the role of people who were involved in maintenance of the escalator. They will also scan CCTV footage to ascertain sequence of events.

Winds Bring Respite From Heat, Pollution

Day Temp Drops, Air Quality Improves To Poor

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Strong easterly winds on Wednesday brought the city some respite from heat and the very poor air quality of Tuesday.

On Wednesday, the air quality index (AQI) was 225, against 302 on Tuesday.

The city's maximum temperature was recorded at 38.2 degree Celsius, a notch below normal and against 42 degrees a day earlier. Moisture-laden easterly winds up to 25kmph brought the daytime temperature down. The minimum temperature was recorded at 27.5 degrees Celsius, two notches above normal and the highest of the year so far. On Tuesday, the minimum was 24.2 degrees Celsius.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board data, the city witnessed a streak of bad air days — AQI over 200 — starting May 3. It deteriorated to very poor on May 7 and settled in the poor range on Wednesday.

According to the pollution forecasting agencies, the air quality will remain poor for two days and the readings will move towards moderate after that.

"The air quality is likely to be in the poor category from



SCURRYING FOR COVER

May 9-11," IITM's forecast said. The outlook for the subsequent six days shows that the air quality is likely to be in the "moderate category... The predominant surface wind is likely to be from the southeast directions in Delhi with a speed 15-20 kmph", the forecast said. Partly cloudy skies and strong surface winds (speed 20-30 kmph) during the day on May 9 is also likely.

According to the weather scientist, the city is likely to get some temporary relief later this week due to the possi-

bility of rain.

"The main reason behind rise in minimum and drop in maximum temperature is strong easterly winds that have moisture. So, the minimum temperature did not fall. There is a western disturbance, which amid prevailing easterly winds may lead to a thunderstorm and light rainfall on May 11 and 12. This will bring a temporary relief from scorching heat," Kuldeep Srivastava, senior weather scientist at India Meteorological Department (IMD), said.

Bid to force 2 into sex trade, woman held

New Delhi: Two women, aged 22 and 29, were prevented from falling prey to nefarious intentions of human traffickers in southwest Delhi's Sagarpur. The women, lured by the promise of jobs, were being forced into joining the prostitution racket.

On Wednesday, police received information about a girl who was in trouble. A team reached Sagarpur where they met the 22-year-old woman. Later, they discovered the other woman at the same location.

When questioned, the 22-year-old woman revealed that she was from Agra and had recently come to Delhi to find any work. She met a woman, Rajni, here who asked her to contact one person named Sonu who would "help her find a job". She then went to Dashrathpuri three days ago where she met both Rajni and Sonu. They coerced her and attempted to involve her in prostitution. But she strongly denied it and informed an NGO about the incident," an officer said.

The 29-year-old woman said that she had also come in search of a job and was being forced into prostitution. "A case was registered and Rajni (25) arrested," said DCP (southwest) Rohit Meena. Sonu is on the run.

During interrogation, Rajni disclosed that she also used to contact girls for prostitution through online classifieds. TNN

Life term for three in 10-yr-old murder case

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A court has sentenced two men to a life term for murdering 28-year-old Rohit Ahlawat in 2011 after they failed to extort enough money from him. The duo and another man also got a life term for criminal conspiracy and kidnapping.

The court of additional sessions judge Virender Kumar Khartia, however, did not award death penalty to them, saying the offence was not in the rarest of rare category. In its May 6 order, the court stated that though the offence was heinous, capital punishment was not being awarded as there was a chance of the convicts being reformed.

Anadil Hasan, Mehboob Alam and Raju Lal Jaat had invited Ahlawat, who was an employee of Bureau of Indian Standards, to a party in Noida. After getting drunk, they asked Ahlawat, the son of an advocate, for money. When he refused, they threatened to kill him. Ahlawat then handed over his ATM card, but the account had only Rs 8,500, which enraged the trio. They strangled and then shot him. His body was found in a sugarcane field along Sambhal Road in Amroha, Uttar Pradesh.

The court had convicted the men on March 30, 2024 under Indian Penal Code sections 302 (murder), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 364A (kidnapping for ransom). Whi-

The court, however, did not award death penalty to them, saying the offence was not in the rarest of rare category

le Hasan, Alam and Jaat got a life term for criminal conspiracy and kidnapping. Hasan and Alam were also sentenced to life for the murder. The sentences will run concurrently.

The court pointed out that the convicts were not involved in any crime earlier nor did they commit any penal offence after being released on bail. "The prosecution has not furnished any material on the basis of which can be said that the convicts cannot be reformed," it added. Additional public prosecutor Pankaj Kumar Ranga appeared for the prosecution.

The court, however, also said the offences were heinous and the trauma of the deceased's family members could not be ignored. Noting that the family members had suffered loss of dependency, mental trauma, inconvenience, hardship, love and affection, disappointment and frustration, the court said adequate compensation was required to be granted.

As the convicts did not have the financial capacity to pay compensation, the judge referred the case to Delhi Legal Services Authority for the determination and award of adequate compensation.

Charging ahead: 8k DU students take part in run for Viksit Bharat

Shreya Ghosh @timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Amid slogans of *Bharat mata ki jai*, more than 8,000 students charged ahead in the 2.5km Run for Viksit Bharat organised on Wednesday by Delhi University in collaboration with Viksit Bharat Ambassador Club.

"Viksit Bharat 2047" is PM Narendra Modi's action plan to transform India into a developed country by 2047 in terms of economic growth, social progress, environmental sustainability and good governance exactly 100 years after gaining independence from foreign rule.

Urging the students to find their personal roles in Bharat 2047, vice-chancellor Yogesh Singh said, "We must all contribute to Bharat moving forward and progressing. All students should vote and also motivate 10 others to vote so democracy is strengthened." He claimed that "many good things" would happen in the country over the next 25 years.

Actor Rajkumar Rao, badminton player Saina Nehwal and Hitesh Jain, vice-pres-



Badminton player Saina Nehwal and actor Rajkumar Rao at the run which saw crowd and cheers

ident of Mumbai BJP, flagged off the run that started at 7am from DU's Gate No. 1 and ended at the university's sports complex.

"This was a good initiative for Viksit Bharat. I felt very good returning to my university and interacting with students," said Rao. "When we reach 2047, we should have a 'Viksit Bharat'. I appeal to all of you to go and cast your vo-

te." The actor is also the ambassador of the Election Commission of India.

Nehwal said, "As a sports person, running daily is good for fitness. But we are here for a different reason today — to build a future and a country that is the best in the world. We are doing so well in every field, but I want us to work even harder to become one of the best countries by 2047."

Rohini Singh, a student, said, "I was inspired by the event. The run offered a platform for the youth to be aware of the development of the country, to take pride in it and be hopeful of the future."

Congress's Delhi unit, meanwhile, lodged a complaint with the election commission, saying the event was organised in violation of the model code of conduct.

Exchange old ACs for efficient ones under BSES' new scheme

New Delhi: With the mercury crossing 40 degrees Celsius in the city, the BSES discoms are offering their domestic consumers up to 63% discount to replace old air conditioners with energy-efficient ones.

According to a BSES statement, the cooling load can account for up to 50% of a household's annual energy expenses and switching to a 5-star energy-efficient air conditioner can significantly reduce it.

BSES Rajdhani Power Limited and BSES Yamuna Power Limited have launched the limited-period AC Replacement Scheme in partnership with leading air conditioner manufacturers. The scheme will be available in BSES' operating areas in south, west, east and central Delhi for all ACs, including next-generation inverter technology models, the statement said.

Around 40 window and split models of leading brands are on offer on a "first cum, first served" basis. A domestic consumer will be eligible to exchange a maximum of three air conditioners against a unique contract account number, BSES stated.

A BSES spokesperson stated, "We have been powering the adoption of sustainable technologies, including LED lighting, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and rooftop solar net metering. Now, the AC scheme will not only help consumers lower annual electricity costs and monthly expenses but also bolster our collective efforts towards a more sustainable and greener future." TNN

HC fines petitioner ₹1L over PIL for 'gag order' in Kejriwal case

New Delhi: Delhi High Court on Wednesday slapped a cost of Rs 1 lakh on a lawyer and dismissed his PIL seeking appropriate arrangements for chief minister Arvind Kejriwal to run the govt from jail.

The petitioner sought to restrain political parties and the media from exerting any "undue pressure" for the resignation of Kejriwal. "Do we impose an emergency? Should we impose censorship or martial law? How does the court gag the press or political rivals?" a bench of acting chief justice Manmohan and justice Manmeet PS Arora asked the petitioner, after briefly hearing his submissions.

"All we can say is, keep a bank draft of Rs 1 lakh ready," the court told the petitioner. The bench further pointed out that the court cannot impose censorship on the media or stop political rivals from making statements, rejecting the arguments made by the petitioner.

In the latest PIL filed on the issue of Kejriwal's arrest, the petitioner argued that although it was "practically impossible" to run the govt from jail, the same could be made possible with the use of technology. He prayed for arrangements for video conferencing to Kejriwal. The PIL also said media should be stopped from running "sensational headlines" speculating on his resignation.

Additional solicitor-general Chetan Sharma said the petition was filed with oblique motives. PTI

Denied property share, Gzb man murders his mom, younger brother

Avishek Kumar @timesgroup.com

Ghaziabad: A man was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly bludgeoning to death his 65-year-old mother and younger brother (38) while they were sleeping at the family's two-storey house in Loni Border.

Police said Dharmendra Kumar (45), a salesman and resident of Gulab Vatika, was intoxicated when he decided to kill his mother Yashoda and brother Vijender on Tuesday night. Days before, Dharmendra had an argument with Yashoda when she refused to help him clear his loan and told him he won't get his share of the property, police said.

DCP (rural) Vivek Yadav told TOI Dharmendra went to Loni Border police station around 8am on Wednesday morning and told cops someone had killed his mother and younger brother.

Dharmendra, the eldest of three brothers, said the youngest Akash (34) lived on the ground floor of the house, Yashoda and Vijender lived on the first floor, and he lived on the second floor with his own family.

Vijender was physically and mentally challenged. "A police team went to the house and saw blood stains on the bed and walls. During questioning, Dharmendra told police that he woke up around 7.30am and went down to see his mother. He knocked on her room's door a few times and when she didn't open it, he forcefully

opened it and saw the bodies of his mother and younger brother," the DCP said. A preliminary probe indicated the two people were killed around 2am when they were sleeping. Cops suspected that one of the two sons may have been involved as there were no signs of forceful entry into the house, and there was no theft of cash and valuables.

"During the benzidine test, we found some blood spots on the terrace going towards the second floor where Dharmendra lived with his family. Then we also found a blood spot in the washroom on the floor where Dharmendra lived. We also found some clothes that were used to clean blood in his room. He hid his blood-stained clothes between his suitcases after putting some more clean clothes on top of the pile," Yadav said.

Other family members in the house did not hear any noise as they were sleeping at the time on separate floors.

Investigators said Dharmendra confessed to the crime after he was detained for questioning. He told cops he had a loan of Rs 1.5 lakh, and his monthly salary of Rs 8,000 as a salesman wasn't enough to pay it back.

Late at night, he took the leg of a bed and hit Yashoda, who lost consciousness. Dharmendra then attacked Vijender, killing him. "He then smashed the object on his mother a few times. He went to the terrace and fell asleep there. He woke up in the morning and told everyone he had found their bodies," the DCP said.

Denmark's envoy posts video showing trash, NDMC quickly swings into action

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Freddy Svane, Denmark's ambassador to India, on Wednesday posted a video on social media, showing trash dumped in a service lane outside the embassy.

"Lovely, green New Delhi. Many words but no action. Saddened by this," the diplo-

mat wrote on X, tagging the official handles of the Danish embassy, "Denmark in India", Delhi chief minister's office and the LG office.

Svane said garbage had been thrown in the common service lane between the embassies of Denmark and Greece. "This used to be a service lane, but you see, it is just full

of trash. No more nice words, just actions, my friend," he said, ending the video with "dhanyavaad (thank you)".

Soon after the video went viral, NDMC arranged for the lifting of debris under the supervision of senior officials. The council, however, claimed it was not a service lane, but a piece of 'private land' between the two embassies.

"We welcome feedback from any stakeholder. The social media message from Svane was promptly acted upon. Immediate steps have been taken on the plot of land by lifting the dumped material," NDMC said, adding it will continue to clean the area until its ownership is fixed.

Addressing the media, Svane said: "I am the Danish ambassador to the great green and now clean New Delhi. This is the service lane, and a few hours ago, I put out a video to showcase that it could be a mess. But it takes human action, and the heroes from NDMC listened to the cry about why we should not leave such a beautiful lane full of trash. They took action. That is fantastic. Dhanyavaad!"

Responding to the video, residents urged the authorities to address waste management issues effectively.

Office of the District Magistrate & District Election Officer North 24 Parganas, Barasat, North 24-Parganas-700124

Notice

Information for all concerned that the Hon'ble Expenditure Observer of 16-Dumdum PC, 17-Barasat PC & 18-Basirhat PC will be available for public hearing in connection with General Election to Lok Sabha-2024. Anyone having any grievance w.r.t. election can visit personally as per following schedule with prior appointment.

Sl. No.	Name of the Hon'ble Expenditure Observer	Parliamentary Constituency	Contact No	E-Mail ID	Meeting Venue	Meeting Date & Time
1	Manu Chaurasia, IRS	16-Dumdum	9748310496	expobserversmchaurasia@gmail.com	Coal India Guest house, Coal Bhawan, Premise No-04, AF-III, New Town, Kolkata-700156	15th-20th May, 2024 From: 11.00am to 2.00pm
2	Beenu, IRS	17-Barasat	9748310434	expobserversbeenu@gmail.com	New VC Room (2nd Floor), Office of the District Magistrate, North 24-Parganas, Barasat, Kolkata-700124	On 13-May-2024 From: 3:00pm to 4:00pm.
3	Suni Kumar Gautam, IRS	18-Basirhat	9748310464	expobserversksgautam@gmail.com	Conference Hall, Dakshini Kunjo, P.O: Basirhat, near Basirhat SDO office, Pin-7434411	From 14-May-2024 onwards 10:00am to 11:00am

Sd/-
District Magistrate & District Election Officer
North 24 Parganas

Memo No. : 986(3)/DICO/N24Pgs.

Date: 08.05.2024

TIMES INTERNET LIMITED

PUBLIC NOTICE
Optimal Media Solutions (A division of Times Internet Limited) presents "Times of India Film Awards (TOIFA) - OTT Edition - 2023" that aims to recognize and honour talent for excellence in acting and content creation of films and series released first on online video streaming platforms in Hindi language within the period of Jan 01, 2023, to Dec 31, 2023.

The awards are segregated into 3 broad categories:
• TOIFA Academy led - Web films with Exceptional Talent (9 awards)
• TOIFA Academy led - Web series with Exceptional Talent (13 awards)
• People's choice awards (4 awards)
The management has made every endeavour to identify all the web film and series eligible to participate in the awards. In case one believes that any web film or series has been missed out, then for details of the categories please write to us at toifa@timesgroup.com before 06:00 pm IST of May 15, 2024.

* Terms & Conditions apply.
Log on to www.toifa.in



GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
West Bengal Medical Services Corporation Ltd. is inviting electronic bids for procurement of different type of medical equipments for health facilities of Govt. of West Bengal per details indicated in the table below:

Sl	Item (Qty)	Bid Ref. No.	Last date of submission of online bid	Remarks
1	Omnitrack Surgical Retractor System (Upper & Lower Abdominal) (01)	WBMSCL/NT-262/2024; Dated: 06.05.2024	30.05.2024 up to 05:00 PM	2 nd call of Bid Ref. No. WBMSCL/NT-132/2024, Dated: 19.02.2024
1	Anesthesia work station with facilities of Neonatal anaesthesiology (01)	WBMSCL/NT-263/2024; Dated: 06.05.2024	30.05.2024 up to 05:00 PM	2 nd call of Bid Ref. No. WBMSCL/NT-132/2024, Dated: 15.02.2024
1	03 (three) different types of medical equipment	WBMSCL/NT-264/2024; Dated: 06.05.2024	30.05.2024 up to 05:00 PM	2 nd call of Bid Ref. No. WBMSCL/NT-539/2023, Dated: 03.10.2023

Interested Bidders may download the tender document and submit their bids online at the website www.wbmtenders.gov.in. The tender document may also be downloaded from the websites www.wbhealth.gov.in and www.wbmsc.gov.in Sd/-General Manager & Joint Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department ICA-17935(3)2024



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CBC 52101/13/002/1/24/25

AI Exp cuts 40 flights daily till May 13, flyers may have to shell out extra on other airlines

Starts Sacking Cabin Crew After 300 Report Sick, Forcing 90 Cancellations

Saurabh Sinha | TNN

New Delhi: Tata Group's airline merger woes continue unabated. Budget Air India Express — which operates 350-400 flights daily, of which over 250 are domestic and 120 international — is cutting about 40 flights daily till May 13, for now.

In a replay of last month's trouble at full-service Vistara, which is being merged with Air India, more than 300 AI Express cabin crew members started reporting sick from Tuesday afternoon, forcing cancellation of more than 90 flights till Wednesday evening. The airline on Wednesday started issuing termination letters to the crew who had reported sick.

With over 80% aircraft oc-



VISTARA RE-RUN IN AI EXPRESS: With over 80% aircraft occupancy, about 13,000 passengers were affected by the cancellations. The airline is offering a full refund or complimentary rescheduling

cupancy these days, about 13,000 passengers were affected by the cancellations.

The airline has asked passengers scheduled to fly Wednesday "to check if their flight is affected before heading" to the airport. "The situation is dynamic as senior ca-

bin crew are reporting sick at the last minute, just before they are to operate flights. While we are proactively cancelling flights till next Monday, the actual number may differ depending on crew turnout. We are minimising international disruptions and

less than 20% of the cancellations will be of our overseas flights," airline sources said.

"Guests may visit the 'Flight Status' section on our website for real-time information. If their flight is cancelled, or delayed beyond 3 hours, they may opt for a full refund or reschedule to a later date without any fees on Tia on WhatsApp (+91 6360012345) or on airindiaexpress.com," a spokesperson said.

AI Express cancellations in peak summer are bound to affect travellers as capacity is already constrained — over 75 IndiGo planes are grounded due to snag-ridden Pratt & Whitney engines, GoAir has shut down, struggling SpiceJet is operating few flights, and deliveries

of new aircraft from Airbus and crisis-ridden Boeing have been slower than expected.

While Air India Express is offering "a full refund or complimentary rescheduling", affected passengers may need to buy last-minute tickets on other airlines at sky-high spot fares, especially over the weekend.

The aviation ministry has asked the airline to submit a report on the mass cancellation and "resolve issues promptly". The airline has "been advised to ensure facilities to passengers as per DGCA norms", said a senior ministry official. The airline said its "teams are (trying) to minimise any inconvenience caused to our guests". However, passenger complaints are pouring in on social media.

KERALA TO BENGAL IN 2.5 DAYS

To fulfil 70-year-old's last wish, ambulance makes 2,500km dash

CG.Sankar@timesgroup.com

Thiruvananthapuram: Arun Kumar is no stranger to navigating the streets of Kerala's Kollam or racing down the highway to Thiruvananthapuram with sirens blaring. Yet, when faced with the prospect of a 2,400km journey from Kollam to Raiganj in Bengal and medical advice of minimal stops for food and fuel, he felt doubt creep in for this insurmountable challenge.

However, driven by the last wish of a 70-year-old bedridden woman, ambulance driver Arun knew he had to rise to the occasion. The initial plan to have a spare driver was dropped as the patient's family, including her daughter-in-law and two children, insisted on accompanying her. In just two-and-a-half days, Arun reached Raiganj in Uttar Dinajpur district. "We started on April 21 and reached there on April 23. The patient was a little bit uncomfortable and I tried my best to reach the destination without seeing her condition worsen," he said.

For 15 years, ever since she moved to Kollam with her son Sowthish, 44, Bodhini Bhahan had never had the urge to return to the hard-scrabble life she had left be-



COMPASSION ON WHEELS

hind. Sowthish worked at a brick factory in Mynagappally and the family was getting by blissfully. However, earlier this year, Bodhini suffered a stroke and became bedridden. She wished to return to her hometown and reunite with her kin.

Sowthish couldn't afford the airfare, and a midsummer train journey was not feasible. "The only option was an ambulance, but no ambulance driver was willing to take us to Bengal due to the distance," Sowthish said. He contacted Emirates Ambulance Service's owner Kiran G Dileep. Due to his financial constraint, Emirates Ambulance Service reduced the fare to Rs 90,000 from of Rs 1.20 lakh.

Kiran said, "It was only because Arun's determination, this became possible. It's not easy to drive such long distance alone," he said.

MP election lottery rings didn't have real diamonds

Bhopal: All that sparkles, evidently, isn't diamond. The 'diamond' rings given away as lottery prizes to four voters in Bhopal on Tuesday turned out to be 'American diamonds', reports **Ashutosh Shukla**.

The controversy erupted when some winners suspected on Wednesday that they weren't real diamonds. The rings had come in small boxes labelled 'Lucky Jewellers, Bairagarh'. Soon enough, its proprietor, Mahesh Dadlani, began getting calls. He said he had nothing to do with the rings.

When TOI spoke with Dadlani, he said, "Those were not my rings. The box was provided to the district administration by Vasudev Wadhvani, president of Kapda Vyapari Sangh. I have nothing to do with them."

Wadhvani said, "It's American diamond. The district collector had convened a meeting of Bhopal Chambers of Commerce & Industries and asked us to provide gift items... It was never to be a diamond ring."

District collector Kaushlendra Vikram Singh said, "The ring was a gift to encourage people to come out and vote. I can't say whether the diamond in the ring is natural or lab-made, but it has gold." The winners, however, are not complaining. It's a gift. They gave me whatever they had, and I accept it with humility," said Gayjyo Sahu, one of the winners. "I have no problem with the ring," added Ayan Khan, another winner.

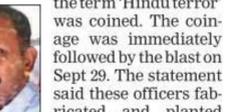
Purohit says framed by Karkare, PBS & then govt

Rebecca.Samervel
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: In his final statement in the 2008 Malegaon blast trial in the special NIA court, accused Lt Col Prasad Purohit has said that all the police officers who carried out what he called the "fabricated, orchestrated and concocted" investigation — on the orders of Hemant Karkare (then ATS chief), Param Bir Singh (then joint commis-

sioner of ATS), and Mohan Kulkarni (then ACP-ATS and investigating officer) — were part of a conspiracy hatched by the senior officers to suit the political requirements of the government of the day at the Centre and the state.

A Congress-led govt was in office at the Centre and state when Purohit was arrested in 2008. He said that in Aug 2008, the president of a political



party spoke about the existence of Hindu terrorists and the term 'Hindu terror' was coined. The coinage was immediately followed by the blast on Sept 29. The statement said these officers fabricated and planted evidence and were involved in the extra-judicial killings of wanted accused Ramchandra Kalsangra and Sandeep Dange and a witness.

Purohit said that with wit-

nesses turning hostile and bringing out the fact that they were tortured to extract statements as required by ATS and or their political masters, it was clear that the whole case against him was a "concocted lie". He said the officers had compromised national security, demoralised intelligence officers and permanently harmed Army's reputation.

Purohit said that during his time as an intelligence officer, he initiated reports re-

garding "fugitive terror accused and ISI agent" Dawood Ibrahim, proclaimed fugitive Dr Ganapati of CPI (Maoist) and now-proclaimed fugitive Zakir Naik and illegal funding of his organisation.

He said he was treated worse than a prisoner of war. Karkare and Singh insisted that he should own up to "his role" and name functionaries of RSS and VHP, and Yogi Adityanath, the then MP from Gorakhpur, UP, Purohit said.

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In accordance with Ind AS 32 "Financial Instruments: Presentation", the company had classified these CCPS as a financial liability and presented it in accordance with Schedule III division III of the Companies Act, 2013 (disclosed under the head of subordinated liabilities). These CCPS are subsequently measured at fair value through profit or loss as per IND-AS 109 requirements. If these CCPS were classified in accordance with section 43 of the Companies Act, 2013 i.e., as equity, profit after tax for the year ended March 31, 2024 would be higher by ₹348.69 Crore (₹985.74 Crore - ₹637.05 Crore), total equity would be higher by ₹2,611.24 Crore, and subordinated liabilities would be lower by ₹2,611.24 Crore as at March 31, 2024.

Note: All numbers are consolidated as on March 31, 2024; ²Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance; ³Total of on-roll & off-roll employees

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Aniket S/o Rakesh R/o S-83/223 Indira Camp Begumpur Malviya Nagar New Delhi 110017 Have Changed My name from aniket to aniket singh chautale for all purposes

Vipin Bhardwaj s/o Manmohan Kumar Bhardwaj, r/o hno 260, sector 23, Faridabad, Haryana 121005, has changed my son's name from Kiyansh Bhardwaj to Arhant Bhardwaj for all purposes.

Surbhi Sudhir D/O Sudhir Babu W/O Apurv Gaurav R/O Sector 168, Noida have changed/corrected my name from Kunal Valsap Surbhi Sudhir to Surbhi Sudhir for all future purposes

Rabani Kapoor W/o Mr. Anil Arora R/o Apartment no.405B, The Camellias, DLF Phase-5, Golf Course Road, Sector-42, Gurugram -122009, Haryana India have changed my name to Mrs. Rabani Kapoor Arora vide affidavit dated 17-01-2024 sworn before Ram Niwas Malik, Advocate, Notary, Gurugram, India.

Saraswati Dhauri W/o Kundan Singh Dhauri R/o D-2/50, Jewan Park, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059, have changed my name from Saroj to Saraswati Dhauri affidavit dtd 08-May-23 sworn before Notary N.K.Verma, Delhi.

Anum Ali D/O of Late Zainul Abideen R/O 343/90A Chaffee Manzil Ex. Jamia Nagar Okhla, New Delhi 110025 has changed my name from Nahid Sultana Jilani to Anum Ali for all future purposes

Vikas Kumar S/o Late Sh. Babu Lal R/O 38A, 3rd Floor, Block A1, Birla Farm, Chhatrapur Ext. Delhi-74 have changed my name from VIKAS to VIKAS KUMAR for all future purposes.

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tender & notices

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Fax No. : 011-24651505
Email: [ndrc\[at\]nic\[dot\]in](mailto:ndrc[at]nic[dot]in)
Website: www.ndrc.nic.in
Revision Petition No. 349/2021
(Against the order dated 24 Feb 2021 in Appeal Number 105/2020 of the State Commission, Uttar Pradesh)

JITENDRA SINGH
...Petitioner/Appellant
Versus
DAL CHANDRA (EX-SUBEDAR) & 3 ORS.
...Opposite Party/Respondent(s)
To:
1. Ex-Subedar Mahender Singh, C/o. Sainik Welfare Organization India, 409, Block C, Virawas, Sector-18A, New Delhi-110078 (R-2)
2. Lt. Col. (Retd.) Rakesh Rana, Chairman, Sainik Welfare Organization, 409, Block-C, Virawas, Sector-18A, New Delhi-110078. (R-3)
3. Mathura Vrindavan Development Authority, Civil Lines, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh. (R-4)

NOTICE
WHEREAS JITENDRA SINGH, vs. DAL CHANDRA (EX-SUBEDAR) & 3 ORS., has filed a Revision Petition No. 349 of 2021 against the order dated 24 Feb 2021 in First Appeal No. 105 of 2020 of the State Commission, Uttar Pradesh. The abovementioned Revision Petition is pending before the National Commission, New Delhi wherein you have been arrayed as Respondent.

WHEREAS this Commission has ordered vide order dated 04.03.2024 to effect service upon you by this Publication returnable on 04.07.2024.

NOW, THEREFORE, TAKE NOTICE that you are hereby directed to appear before this Commission in person or through your counsel/authorized representative on 04.07.2024 at 10.30 a.m., failing which the Petition will be disposed of ex-parte on merits.

Dated this 15th April, 2024.
SECTION OFFICER

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
Consequent upon the Draw of Lots held in the presence of the Observer, appointed by the Registrar, Cooperative Societies, New Delhi, on 07.05.2024 for grant of membership of NPSC Cooperative Group Housing Society Ltd., the following two Applicants have been declared successful in the draw of lots and their names are being proposed for grant of membership of the NPSC Cooperative Group Housing Society Ltd.:

(a) Dr. Gaurav Malhotra S/o Late Mr. Laxmi Narain Malhotra & Mrs. Nidhi Kapur Malhotra w/o Dr. Gaurav Malhotra (joint membership), Resident of A-2/105 (First Floor), Janakpuri, New Delhi 110058.
(b) Mr. Pulkit Gupta S/o Mr. Vinod Kumar Gupta, Resident of C-01/01, Manglik Apartment, Plot No 25, Sector 6, Dwarka, New Delhi-110075.

Objections, if any, are invited from the general public for clearance of membership for allotment of Flats in the NPSC Cooperative Group Housing Society Ltd. Plot 5, Sector 2, Dwarka, New Delhi 110075, in respect of above mentioned proposed Members. The objections, if any, may be communicated at npsc.cgshs@gmail.com or through registered post on the address mentioned above by 16 May 2024.

Honorary Secretary
NPSC CGHS Ltd

TENDERS

SBI

STATE BANK OF INDIA
Regional Manager, Region-4
4th Floor, Administrative Office Building, 14 Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) PREMISES REQUIRED ON LEASE
SBI invites offers from Owners/ Power of Attorney holders for premises on lease rental basis for Commercial/ Office use.

Name of Branch
SME, Lahori Gate,
Naya Bazar, Delhi
(Branch Code 40321)

Hiring of premises for Shifting of Branch at SME, Lahori Gate, Naya Bazar, Delhi, Branch Code 40321. Built up area approx. 2500-3500 sq ft, preferably on Ground Floor/ First Floor with Lift Facility.

Complete details of the Tender Documents will be available on www.sbi.co.in under "Procurement NEWS" tab from 06.05.2024 to 15.05.2024 till 03:00 pm

Prospective Bidders are requested to browse through captioned website regularly as any further amendments/clarifications/extensions etc. if any, will be published.

SBI

STATE BANK OF INDIA
Regional Manager, Region-4
4th Floor, Administrative Office Building, 14 Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) PREMISES REQUIRED ON LEASE
SBI invites offers from Owners/ Power of Attorney holders for premises on lease rental basis for Commercial/ Office use.

Name of Branch
Vijay Nagar, Delhi
(Branch Code 01714)

Hiring of premises for Shifting of Branch at Vijay Nagar, near Hudson Lane, Delhi, Branch Code 01714. Built up area approx. 2000-2500 sq ft, preferably on Ground Floor/ First Floor with Lift Facility.

Complete details of the Tender Documents will be available on www.sbi.co.in under "Procurement NEWS" tab from 06.05.2024 to 15.05.2024 till 03:00 pm

Prospective Bidders are requested to browse through captioned website regularly as any further amendments/clarifications/extensions etc. if any, will be published.

Authorised Signatory

MIS HS FITNESS PRIVATE LIMITED.
Khasra Plot No. 167 Bhabli Industrial Area Bahadur Puri Road, Near Dew Dharan Kanta, Sector-49, Faridabad-121004

BIDDING NO. 2024-25/01/STOCK

The Competent Authority invites E-bids for disposal of Fire Affected MS scrap material salvage which had been damaged due to fire i.e. (fire) affected on 'As is where basis'.

The interested bidders are advised to visit the www.justauction.in. The details of the E-bidding including list of items, approximate quantity available for disposal and its pictures are displayed on website.

Contact Person: Mr. Robin Vipan of M/s HS Fitness Private Limited
Contact No.: 9915700175.
Contact No.: 7011489391 Jyoti (Surveyor official).
Inspection of fire affected scrap material can be done from 10.05.2024 to 20.05.2024 between 10.00 AM TO 05.00 PM. E-bidding will be conducted on 20.05.2024 at 03.00 P.M to 04.00 P.M. hours.

To place your bid -
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Director,
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KARMA LAKELANDS
GOLF RESORT & RESIDENCES
TENDER NOTICE
Karma Lakelands Golf & Resort Pvt Ltd invites sealed tenders from the reputed suppliers, manufacturers & wholesalers for the supply of the following items on an annual contract basis for the financial year 2024-2025.
Indian/imported fruits & vegetables, Dairy products, Cheese, Ice-cream, Mutton, Chicken, Fish & Sea Food, Cold Cuts, Eggs, frozen products as French Fries, Potato Wedges, Peas, Sweet Corn, Imported/Indian Grocery, Rice, Refined Oil, Juices, Tea, Tin Product, Bakery products etc.
Paper, packaging products, Solid Fuel, Charcoal, Flowers, House Keeping Items, Printing Stationary, Cartridges, Engineering Items Electrical, Plumbing, Paint & Hardware, Golf Items, Irrigation Items, HTP Plant Chemicals, Plants and Gardening Items, Diesel & Petrol, Security Services etc.
Rs. 1000/- (Non Refundable) for each category
Tender form will be issued from 09.05.2024 till 17.05.2024
Last date for submission of sealed tender is 20.05.2024(5:00PM)
Only Vendor with valid FSSAI/GST/MSME registration need to apply. The Management has the right to select or reject any tender form without giving any reason.
Please Contact Purchase/Finance office of the Following Resort for tender forms.
Karma Lakelands Golf & Resort Pvt Ltd. Sector-80, Naurangpur, Manesar, Gurugram-122015 Haryana Mob: -9953497748

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that our client intends to enter into a transaction in respect of lands admeasuring 23 Kanal 18 Marla i.e. approx. 2.9875 Acres situated at Village: Begampur Khatola, Tehsil Kadipur, and District: Gurugram, Haryana and 18 Kanal 16 Marla i.e. 2.35Acres situated at Village: Fazilpur Jharsa, Tehsil Badshahpur, and District: Gurugram, Haryana (hereinafter referred to as the "Said Land") from its current owners and under our client's instructions, we are investigating the rights, title and interests over the Said Land. The description and current ownership of Said Land is detailed in **Schedule-A**.
Any entity / person having or claiming any right, title, claim, benefit, demand, possession or interest of any nature in and over with respect to the Said Land or having any objection to the intended transaction or if any entity / person has any knowledge of or is party to any sale, agreement, exchange, assignment, charge, gift, license, tenancy, inheritance, lien, mortgage, hypothecation, encumbrance, pending litigation, possession, contract/agreement, development rights, partnership, family arrangement/ settlement, decree or order of any Court, acquisition by Government or any other entity, prohibition or any other impediment with respect to the Said Land, then such entity / person should inform us in writing with documentary proof on the address mentioned below within a period of 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be deemed and presumed that no adverse right, title, interest, share, claim or demand of any nature whatsoever exists in or upon or in respect of the Said Land.

SCHEDULE - A

S. NO.	LAND DESCRIPTION	LAND OWNERS
1	Rectangle No. 51 Killa No. 61(6-7), 6/2(1-13), 8/1(2(0-15), 15(1(4-18), 15(2(2-2), Rectangle No. 52 Killa No. 10(0-4) situated at Village: Begampur Khatola, Tehsil Kadipur, and District: Gurugram, Haryana	Randhir Chadha
2	Rectangle No. 51 Killa No. 7/2(19) situated at Village: Begampur Khatola, Tehsil Kadipur, and District: Gurugram, Haryana	Randhir Chadha (1/3 share), Gaurav Chadha, Shruti Chopra (2/3 share)
3	Rectangle No. 41 Killa No. 11(8-16), 20(8-0) Rectangle No. 42 Killa Nos. 16(2-0) situated at Village Fazilpur Jharsa, Tehsil Badshahpur, and District: Gurugram, Haryana.	Randhir Chadha (2/3 share), Gaurav Chadha, Shruti Chopra (1/3 share)

Sachit Mathur & Ajay Bhadu
Advocates
Emerald Law Offices
E-mail: sachit@emerald.law.in, ajay@emerald.law.in
G-2, Ground Floor, Anand Niketan, New Delhi- 110021

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PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that our client intends to enter into a transaction in respect of lands admeasuring 106 Kanal 4 Marla i.e. 13.275 Acres situated at Village Jharsa, Tehsil Wazirabad, District Gurugram, Haryana (hereinafter referred to as the "Said Land") with its current owners, and under our client's instructions we are investigating the rights, title and interests over the Said Land. The description and current ownership of Said Land is detailed in **Schedule**.
Any entity (including any bank or financial institution) / person having or claiming any right, title, claim, benefit, demand, possession or interest of any nature in and over with respect to the Said Land or having any objection to the intended transaction or if any entity / person has any knowledge of or is party to any sale, agreement, exchange, assignment, charge, gift, license, tenancy, inheritance, lien, mortgage, hypothecation, encumbrance, pending litigation, possession, contract/agreement, development rights, partnership, family arrangement/ settlement, decree or order of any Court, acquisition by Government or any other entity, prohibition or any other impediment with respect to the Said Land, then such entity / person should inform us in writing with documentary proof on the address mentioned below within a period of 10 (Ten) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be deemed and presumed that no adverse right, title, interest, share, claim or demand of any nature whatsoever exists in or upon or in respect of the Said Land.

SCHEDULE

S. NO.	LAND DESCRIPTION	LAND OWNERS
1	Rectangle No. 37 Killa No. 20(7-12), Rectangle No. 38 Killa Nos. 7(8-0), 8/1(4-0), 8/2(4-0), 9(8-0), 12/2(3-0), 13(8-0), 14(8-0), 16(8-0), 17/1(5-4), 17/2(2-16), 18(8-0), 23/1(1-8), 23/2(6-12), 24/1(2-16), 24/2(5-4), 25/1(6-0) situated at Village Jharsa, Tehsil Wazirabad, District Gurugram, Haryana	Barmalt (India) Private Limited
2	Rectangle No. 37 Killa No. 21(7-12), Rectangle No. 38 Killa Nos. 25/2(2-0) situated at Village Jharsa, Tehsil Wazirabad, District Gurugram, Haryana	Adesh daughter of Puran Chand (1/2 share) and Asha daughter of Puran Chand (1/2 share)

Sachit Mathur & Ajay Bhadu
Advocates
Emerald Law Offices
E-mail: sachit@emerald.law.in, ajay@emerald.law.in
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BJP may not let up on new Ambani-Adani line of attack

Continued from P 1

The PM said, "Mein aaj Telangana ki dharti se poochna chahta hoon... shehzade ghoshit kare ki chunaav mein yeh Ambani-Adani se kitna maal utthaya hai. Kaale dhan ke kitne bore bhar kar ke rupye maare hain? Kya tempo bhar kar ke nain Congress keliye pahunchi hai kya? Kya sauda hua hai? (I ask from the soil of Telangana, let the shehzada declare how much money he has taken from Ambani-Adani these elections... how many sacks of black money? Have tempos full of currency notes reached Congress? What deal has been struck?)"

While Congress rejected the charge by saying Rahul has consistently attacked Ambani and Adani, there were indications that BJP may not close the fresh front it has opened. Sources in BJP said unlike in the past, the campaign has seen Adani-Ambani ceasing to be Congress's main line of attack. "In any case, isn't Ambani now missing from their concocted narrative of crony capitalism?" a source asked.

Modi's speech focused on alleged corruption in Telangana under the Revanth Reddy-led Congress govt with the PM suggesting that one part of the bribes earned by one "R" in Hyderabad was getting transferred to another "R" in New Delhi. Mentioning the Telugu blockbuster "RRR", Modi said there was a discussion on an "RR Tax" in Telangana. "Even a child in Telangana knows about the double R tax... You all know about the RRR film but I was told that the RR have left behind the RRR film in collections. As



PM Modi at Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy temple in Telangana's Wamulawada on Wednesday

you know, RRR earned more than Rs1,000 crore but I was told that this much was collected by RR just in a few days, such a loot they have organised," he said.

Although the PM did not take any names, his mention of "RR" was seen as a reference to Rahul and Revanth Reddy. He said wherever Congress formed govt, its "ATM of money collection" started as he also mentioned unaccounted cash collected from the staff of a Jharkhand minister. Modi said Congress's fuse was blown after the third phase of polling and that the INDIA bloc would need a microscope to find its winning seats after the fourth phase.

"Wherever there is Congress, there will be plenty of lies and fraud," Modi said. "It is an anti-SC/ST/OBC party. One of the prominent faces of Congress alliance has stated that all reservations must be given to Muslims. This despite Ambedkar making it clear that no religious reservations can be given. They have no respect for the Constitution. These people do not want SC, ST and OBC to come up and take away their seats," he added.

PM giving a lot of clarifications these days: Priyanka

Continued from P 1

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that Congress had repeatedly demanded the formation of a joint parliamentary committee to investigate the "Modani scam" since Jan last year. "Modiji, are you scared? Normally, you speak of Adani-Ambani in closed rooms. For the first time, you have taken their names in public. You even know that they send money in tempos, is that your personal experience? Send CBI-ED to them, get an inquiry done as soon as possible," Rahul said in the message hours after Modi made the surprise attack.

Rushing to her brother's defence, Priyanka Gandhi said, "The PM might be saying that Rahul does not take the name of Adani and Ambani, but the fact is that he (Rahul) does so every day. On the contrary, I feel the PM is giving a lot of clarifications these days. After all, he has given the nation's wealth to billionaires. Airports, ports, roads or mines, you name it, and it is gone."

Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal called the PM's statement "laughable" and one that further "confirms his desperation after the drubbing in phase three." He shared a video clip from Rahul's speech on Tuesday in which the latter says, "You have to decide whether you want to make a govt of Modi and Adani or a govt of farmers, poor, tribals, Dalits and marginalised."

Pot calling kettle black: FM on Rahul's PSU policy criticism

New Delhi: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday hit out at Rahul Gandhi's criticism of Modi govt's policy on public sector companies and argued that state-run companies and banks had been severely neglected during the UPA regime.

Dismissing Rahul's charge in a social media post, Sitharaman said the claims were a textbook example of the pot calling the kettle black. She said that public sector undertakings (PSUs) are thriving, benefiting significantly from the culture of professionalism infused in them along with increased operational freedom. State-run banks too had seen an improvement during Modi govt's tenure.

PSUs that were previously neglected under the UPA govt, such as Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd, have seen a resurgence, she said. "Repeated claims from the @INCIndia ecosystem and @RahulGandhi in particular that Public Sector Undertakings are being dismantled & are in disarray under the current govt are a textbook example of 'ulta chor kotwal ko daante' (pot calling the kettle black), as the facts reveal a very different picture," Sitharaman posted on X.

She said govt's focus on capital expenditure has led to substantial growth in the stock performance of PSUs, as the net worth of all central public sector enterprises increased 82% between March 2014 and FY23. TNN

Modi, Ambani, Adani shaping India into eco superpower: Report

New Delhi: India is poised to become a 21st-century economic powerhouse, offering an alternative to China for investors looking for growth and for reducing supply chain risks with PM Narendra Modi and industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani playing a fundamental role in shaping the economic superpower the country will become in the coming decades, says a CNN report. To spur growth, Modi govt has begun a massive infrastructure transformation. It is also heavily promoting digital connectivity.

"Both Adani and Ambani have become key allies as the country embarks on this revolution," it said. Reliance Industries and the Adani Group, the two conglomerates having valuations worth over \$200 billion each, have established businesses in sectors ranging from fossil fuels and clean energy to media and technology.

"Investors have been cheering the duo's ability to adroitly bet on sectors prioritised for development by Modi," the report said, adding, "As a result, these three men — Modi, Ambani and Adani — are playing a fundamental role in shaping the economic superpower India will become in the coming decades." It also pointed out that the kind of power and influence being enjoyed by the two tycoons has been seen before in other countries "experiencing periods of rapid industrialisation".

It said both Ambani and Adani are often compared by journalists to John D Rockefeller, who became America's first billionaire during the Gilded Age, a 30-year period in the last decades of the 19th century.

"India is in the middle of something that America and lots of other countries have already gone through. Britain in the 1820s, South Korea in the 1960s and 70s, and you could argue China in the 2000s," said James Crabtree, the author of The Billionaire Raj, a book about India's wealth. It is "normal" for developing nations to go through such a period of rapid growth, which sees "income accumulation at the very top, rising inequality and lots of crony capitalism," he added.

Guido Cozzi, professor of macroeconomics at the University of St Gallen in Switzerland, said these "conglomerates are very, very important and very well connected," noting that both the Adani Group and Reliance Industries were founded years before Modi came to power.

"They are not typical stagnant monopolistic conglomerates. They are pretty dynamic," Cozzi said. Not only are they playing "an important role" in building infrastructure, which helps "growth directly," but the two business groups are also helping the country expand "indirectly" by boosting connectivity through digital innovation, he explained. ANI

Not even your grandmother can repeal CAA: Shah to Rahul

Continued from P 1

Mocking Rahul Gandhi for saying his party aimed to eradicate poverty "ek jhatke mein" (at one go), Amit Shah said, "You should look at your track record. Your dad (Indira Gandhi) imposed Emergency at one go. Your father introduced triple talaq at one go, and now your party has stolen OBC reservations at one go."

He also slammed Congress for declaring it would repeal CAA after winning the Lok Sabha elections. "Rahul baba, aapki dadi bhi upar se aa jayin to bhi CAA ko nahi hata payengi (RAH, even if your grandmother were to return from heaven, CAA can't be repealed)," he said, iterating BJP's vow to accord respect to every Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist coming to India from Pakistan and Bangladesh by giving them citizenship.

Referring to SP general secretary Ram Gopal Yadav's re-



Union home minister Shah at a rally in Lakhimpur, UP, on Wednesday

Amit Shah said neither Congress nor SP could secure India like Modi did. "This is not a shop selling herbal powders, this is a country that needs strong leadership. And there is only one, Narendra Modi," he said

marks on the Ram temple in Ayodhya, Shah said that if the opposition had its way, they would put a "Babri lock" on the shrine. He said that when SP was in office, uninterrupted power supply was ensured during Ramzan, but not on Diwali and Holi. Shah declared BJP had already crossed 190 seats after the third phase of polling and was on course to achieve the goal of 400-plus, ensuring Narendra Modi becomes PM for a third consecutive term.

He said neither Congress nor SP could secure the country like PM Modi did, cracking down on terrorism in the last 10 years. "Yeh chooran ki dukkan nahi hai, yeh desh hai, desh. Iske liye mazboot netritva chahiye. Aur wo ek hi hai, Narendra Modi (This is not a shop selling herbal powders, this is a country that needs strong leadership. And there is only one, Narendra Modi)," he said.

Shah, who campaigned for BJP nominee Ajay Mishra Tera in Kheri, also addressed rallies in Kannauj and Hardoi.

Size of migration corridors hints at top sources of remittances

UAE Has 3.5m Indians, US 2.7m And Saudi Arabia 2.5m: IOM Report

Continued from P 1

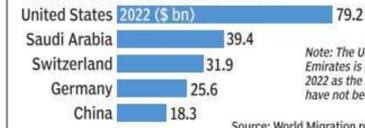
The figure of \$831 billion for international remittances globally is an increase from \$791 billion in 2021 and significantly more than \$717 billion in 2020.

China's inward remittances in 2022 were \$51 billion. The contraction and its slipping to third spot has been attributed to multiple factors, including demographic shifts that have resulted in shrinking of the working age population and the country's zero-Covid policy, which prevented people from travelling abroad for work. During 2022, India's other neighbouring countries Pakistan (rank 6) saw an inflow of nearly \$30 billion and Bangladesh (rank 8) received \$21 billion.

Migration corridors: In 1970, there were just 84 million international migrants,

MONEY FLOW

Top five countries sending remittances



Note: The United Arab Emirates is not included for 2022 as the remittances data have not been updated

Source: World Migration report, World Bank

which translated to 2.3% of the world's population. By mid-2020 (per latest available data), nearly 280 million people lived in a country other than their country of birth, constituting 3.6% of the world's population.

The size of migration corridor from 'country A' to 'country B' is measured as number of people born in 'country A' who were residing in 'country B' at the time of the estimate. The Mexico-to-US corridor is the largest in the world at nearly 11 million people. This is fol-

lowed by the Syrian Arab Republic to Turkey and Russian to Ukraine corridors, attributed largely to displacement of people owing to civil unrest and invasions.

The India-UAE corridor is the fourth largest. An interactive map released by IOM shows there were 3.5 million Indians in UAE, followed by 2.7 million in US (which was the sixth largest international migration corridor) and 2.5 million in Saudi Arabia (in ninth position). The report does not sepa-

rately reflect the top source countries of inward remittances to India, but understandably it would be from the top diaspora-centric countries. US and Saudi Arabia were the top two in the list of those sending remittances overseas, with outflows of \$79 billion and \$39 billion, respectively, in 2022.

Net migration is the difference between inflow of migrants into a country and those who migrate from it overseas. For 10 countries including India, estimated net outflow of migrants exceeded one million over the period from 2010 through 2021. India's net migration flow was (-)3.5 million during this period. Interestingly, India, which in mid-2020 had the largest diaspora of nearly 18 million (1.3% of the global population) occupied the 13th rank as a destination country, hosting 4.5 million migrants (0.3% of the global population).

Ex-Ulfa militant held for 'gunrunning' in Assam

A team of police and Army arrested a former Ulfa militant after recovering from him a US-made pistol and 12 bullets, reportedly meant for sale, in Assam's Tinsukia on Wednesday, raising suspicion of a large gunrunning racket in the region, reports **Rajib Dutta**.

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Chautala: Saini should prove majority or quit

Continued from P 1

Former deputy CM Dushyant Chautala said CM Saini should either prove his majority in the assembly or immediately resign.

The three Independents who withdrew support to the govt — Sombir Sangwan (Dadri), Randhir Singh Gollen (Pundri) and Dharampal Gonder (Nilokheri) — said at a presser on Tuesday that they would back Congress, which has 30 MLAs in the House.

Dushyant said JJP MLAs violating the party's whip risk facing the same treatment some rebel Congress legislators in Himachal Pradesh some time ago for turning against their party in the Rajya Sabha election.

He said JJP had already issued notices to three MLAs for sharing the stage with rival parties. One of them could be JJP's Narwana MLA Ramni-was Surjakhara, who backed BJP's Sarsa candidate Ashok Tanwar at the saffron party's rally in his constituency on Wednesday. Chief minister



Haryana CM Nayab Saini. Ex-CM Khattar said many MLAs were in touch with BJP and there was no threat to the govt

Saini led the campaign. The JJP MLA previously attended a rally by former CM Khattar, who is BJP's nominee for the Karnal seat.

Khattar downplayed the withdrawal of support by three Independent MLAs, saying at roadshows in Nilokheri and Indri that such things were par for the course in politics. "It's election time, someone will join the party while someone will quit. It doesn't matter. Many MLAs are in contact with us. Hence, there's nothing to stress about," he said.

Man displaced due to strife shot at near relief camp in Manipur

Imphal: A 28-year-old person displaced by the ongoing ethnic conflict was shot at by two unidentified miscreants near his relief camp at the Thanga area in Manipur's Bishnupur district on Wednesday morn-

ing, police said, reports **K Sarojkumar Sharma**.

Sawajam Dhanabir, who received four bullets in the attack, is undergoing treatment in a private hospital in Imphal city. He is said to be critical.

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ELECTION OFFICER (NEW DELHI DISTRICT)
12/3, Jam Nagar House, Shaheen Road, New Delhi - 110011 Ph. 23073031 email: sdnd@delhi.nic.in
No. F. 4/124/SOM/EC/ND/2024 465/1 Dated: 04/05/2024

PRESS NOTICE

Regarding Change of two Polling Station Locations & one Creation of Auxiliary Polling Station for General Election to Lok Sabha-2024 at NDPC-24.

This is for information of political parties and General Public. The following 02 Polling Station Locations have been changed and approved by ECI and there will be 01 creation of Auxiliary Polling Station approved by ECI, in view of large number of voters in this polling station.

S. No.	District Name	AC No. & Name	Polling Station No.	Existing Polling station location	New Polling station location
01.	New Delhi District	AC-24, Patel Nagar	107 & 111	Community Centre, West Patel Nagar	Govt. Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008
02.	New Delhi District	AC-40, New Delhi	68	Govt. Boys Senior Secondary School No.03, Sarojini Nagar	Govt. Boys Senior Secondary School No-04, Sarojini Nagar

S. No.	Name of the AC & District	Polling Station No.	Total Electors in the PS	Proposed Auxiliary PS No.	Name of the polling station location	SL No of the electors to be shifted to Auxiliary PS
01.	AC-40 New Delhi & New Delhi District	124	1801	124A	Atal Adarsh Vidyalaya, Kidwai Nagar, East, New Delhi	1058 onwards

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Islam doesn't allow live-in for a married Muslim: Allahabad HC

Lucknow: Allahabad HC's Lucknow bench has held that a follower of Islam cannot be in a live-in relationship, particularly if his spouse is alive. "Islamic tenets do not permit live-in-relationship during a subsisting marriage. The position may be different if the two persons are unmarried and the parties, being adults, choose to lead their lives in a way of their own," said the bench, reports **Ravi Singh Sisodiya**.

With this observation, the bench of Justice AR Masoodi and Justice AK Srivastava refused to provide police protection to the petitioners, both from UP's Bahraich district. The petitioners are from different faiths. The petitioners claimed they were in a live-in relationship but the woman's parents lodged an FIR against Khan for kidnapping and inducing their daughter to marry him. The petitioners sought police protection saying they are adults and, as per a Supreme Court order, they were free to stay in a live-in relationship. On enquiry, the bench found that Khan was already married (in 2020) and even had a daughter. Considering this fact, the court declined to provide him police protection on the grounds of the SC verdict, which permits live-in relationships.

1 killed in road accident in Raj: A pedestrian was killed and another injured in a hit-and-run involving a speeding SUV in Rajasthan's Jaipur Tuesday. **TNN**

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STATEMENT OF STANDALONE & CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

(₹ in Crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Standalone				Consolidated			
		Quarter ended		Year ended		Quarter ended		Year ended	
		31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023
1	Total income from operations	8,140.17	6,675.28	31,924.90	26,478.66	9,998.94	8,098.54	39,250.56	32,111.99
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional items)	671.63	546.62	2,780.66	2,003.37	650.39	486.50	2,702.92	1,937.90
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	671.63	546.62	2,780.66	2,003.37	650.39	486.50	2,702.92	1,936.03
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after exceptional items)	485.43	410.27	2,083.00	1,491.03	411.53	335.67	1,778.54	1,309.46
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income / (Loss) (after tax)]	473.16	394.88	2,063.26	1,463.35	372.65	314.41	1,725.07	1,368.74
6	Paid up Equity share capital (Face value of Re.1/- each)	47.51	47.51	47.51	47.51	47.51	47.51	47.51	47.51
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	-	-	7,683.53	6,000.34	-	-	6,736.00	5,457.49
8	Security Premium Account	- NOT APPLICABLE -							
9	Networth	7,725.95	6,038.35	7,725.95	6,038.35	6,751.08	5,422.76	6,751.08	5,422.76
10	Outstanding Debt	1,027.61	2,010.23	1,027.61	2,010.23	22,930.82	19,775.04	22,930.82	19,775.04
11	Outstanding redeemable Preference Shares	- NOT APPLICABLE -							
12	Debt Equity Ratio (Times)	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.3	3.4	3.6	3.4	3.6
13	Earnings Per Share (Face value of Re. 1/- each) (not annualised)								
	(i) Basic (in Rs.)	10.22	8.64	43.84	31.38	8.15	7.07	35.50	27.97
	(ii) Diluted (in Rs.)	10.22	8.64	43.84	31.38	8.15	7.07	35.50	27.97
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	- NOT APPLICABLE -							
15	Debenture Redemption Reserve	- NOT APPLICABLE -							
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio (Excluding NBFC Subsidiary) (Times)	5.2	5.4	2.5	5.4	3.3	2.9	1.5	3.1
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio (Excluding NBFC Subsidiary) (Times)	25.1	21.0	21.6	19.6	10.6	10.7	10.5	10.5
18	Current Ratio (Times)	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.0	0.9	1.0	0.9
19	Long term debt to working capital (Times)	-	-	-	-	2.4	3.0	2.4	3.0
20	Bad debts to Accounts Receivable ratio (Times)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	Current liability ratio (Times)	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7
22	Total debts to total assets ratio (Times)	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
23	Debtors Turnover ratio (Times)	27.9	27.0	27.9	27.0	25.3	26.5	25.3	26.3
24	Inventory Turnover ratio (Times)	18.0	17.0	18.0	17.0	11.7	11.7	11.7	11.7
25	Operating Margin (%)	11.3	10.3	11.1	10.1	10.3	8.8	9.9	9.1
26	Net Profit Margin (%)	5.9	6.2	6.6	5.7	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.1

Notes:
1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of financial results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulations 33 & 52 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the financial results are available on the Stock exchange websites (www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com) and on company's website (www.tvsmotor.com).
2 Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.

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Date : May 08, 2024

First came voter cards, and then parties, to Maha homeless shelter

Vijay Singh | TNN

Navi Mumbai: Empowering the disenfranchised is the last critical mile in the process of conducting a free and fair election. In the Mumbai region, more than 100 rescued homeless persons living at a shelter in New Panvel have managed to get voter identity cards, the first such batch of beneficiaries at the 25-year-old institution run by the Social and Evangelical Association for Love (SEAL). In all, a total of 125 homeless persons at the shelter have benefited from the initiative undertaken by SEAL's social workers. They are now looking forward to cast their votes in the upcoming Phase-4 of the elections in Maval constituency on May 13.

This electoral addition of 125 names has been quickly noticed by party workers too. They have started visiting the SEAL Ashram to canvass for their candidates and inquire if its inmates have issues that they can resolve. Pastor Biju Samuel, who is second-in-command at SEAL, told TOI: "We are happy that our shelter home is now finally showing on the political radars of parties, since we now have 125 newly registered voters. For the past quarter century, local politicians were hardly inter-



Ghanshyam Chavan (in blue shirt) shows his new voter ID card

ested in homeless people. Now they do."

There is an interesting backstory to how the rescued homeless at SEAL became voters. "During the Covid lockdown period, in the year 2021, we were desperately trying to get vaccinations done for all our inmates. But none of them had any legit ID cards at that time. That is when the then Raigad district collector, Nidhi Choudhari, personally took interest in our problem and issued Aadhaar cards for all of them," said Samuel.

One of the residents at the shelter, Ghanshyam Chavan, 68, happily held out his new ID card for this correspondent, and said: "I used to earlier stay at Lalbaug in central Mumbai, but later I lost my family and also my money. Due to my advancing age, a kind lady brought me to SEAL Ashram. I will surely vote now on polling day."

At 92.1%, Dhubri sees highest turnout this polls so far, Nawada posts lowest at 43.2%

EC Updates Overall Turnout In 3rd Round Of Polling To 65.7% From 64.5% On Tue

Dipak.Dash@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Dhubri saw the highest voter turnout among all 283 seats where elections have been held so far, registering 92.1% turnout during the third phase on Tuesday.

The constituency in Assam, from where AIUDF chief Badruddin Ajmal is seeking a fourth successive term, has bettered its own record from 2019 when 90.7% turnout was recorded — the highest during the last general elections.

Of the 93 seats that went to polls, 39 saw higher turnout than in 2019. These included all seven Chhattisgarh seats, all 14 in Karnataka and the two in Goa

Barpeta, also in Assam, has so far seen the second highest turnout at 85.2%, but it is lower than the 2019 level (see graphic).

With 26.6 lakh registered voters in Dhubri, the turnout means that 2.1 lakh people did not vote. This is in sharp contrast to Nawada (Bihar) where 11.4 lakh of the over 20

VOTER TURNOUT IN PHASE-3

State (seats)	2019*	2024
Assam (4)	NA	85.5
Bihar (5)	61.3	59.1
Chhattisgarh (7)	70.9	72.0
Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu (2)	77.1	71.3
Goa (2)	75.1	76.1
Gujarat (25)	62.3	60.1
Karnataka (14)	68.7	71.8
Madhya Pradesh (9)	66.7	66.7
Maharashtra (11)	63.9	63.6
Uttar Pradesh (10)	60.0	57.6
West Bengal (4)	81.7	77.5
Total (89)	66.0	65.7

At 9.30 PM on May 8; Figures in %; Note: Doesn't include 4 seats in Assam where boundaries have been redrawn & hence can't be compared with 2019; Source: ECI

Constituencies with highest voting in 3 phases

Constituency	2019	2024
Dhubri (Assam)	90.7	92.1
Barpeta (Assam)	86.6	85.2
Nagaon (Assam)	83.2	85.0
Outer Manipur	84.1	84.9
Lakshadweep	85.2	84.2

Constituencies with lowest voting in 3 phases

Constituency	2019	2024
Nawada (Bihar)	49.7	43.2
Almora (Uttarakhand)	52.3	48.7
Mathura (UP)	61.1	49.4
Ghaziabad (UP)	55.9	49.9
Amreli (Gujarat)	56.0	50.3

lakh registered voters did not turn up, translating into a turnout of 43.2%, the lowest in the first three rounds.

During the third phase, Amreli in Gujarat, with 50.3% polling, saw the lowest turnout, according to data available on the Election Commission's voter app.

EC updated the overall

turnout in the third phase of polling to 65.7%, from 64.5% late on Tuesday. Excluding the four constituencies in Assam where delimitation took place, the turnout in 2019 in these seats was pegged at 66%.

Data available at 10 pm on Wednesday showed the sharpest increase in Assam where the four seats saw a turnout of

85.5%, compared with 81.6% late on Tuesday night.

Of the 93 seats that went to polls, 39 recorded higher turnout, which included all seven seats in Chhattisgarh, all 14 in Karnataka and the two in Goa.

In Gujarat, only Banaskantha recorded higher voting, while six each in MP and

Maharashtra saw more voters turn up at booths than in 2019. UP's Mainpuri, where SP boss Akhilesh Yadav's wife Dimple Yadav is contesting, saw a two percentage point increase in voting.

All seats in Bihar and West Bengal, however, saw a lower turnout during the third phase.

Oppn netas to meet EC today on turnout data

New Delhi: Top functionaries of the opposition INDIA bloc will meet the Election Commission on Thursday over their demand to promptly release the absolute voter turnout figures in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls after each phase, sources said.

They will also raise the issue of alleged "use of religious symbols" by BJP in their campaign, they said.

The sources said leaders from the INDIA bloc will meet the full bench of the Election Commission of India on Thursday, submit a memorandum and also discuss the issues with the poll panel.

INDIA bloc parties, including Congress, Trinamool Congress and the CPM, have written to the poll panel separately so far, expressing concern over the alleged "delay" in the release of the voter turnout data in the first two phases. Amid the opposition's allegations, the poll body had asserted that booth-wise data of the "actual number of votes polled" is available with the candidates soon after the voting ends. **PH**

B'luru police summons Nadda, BJP IT head over clip

Bengaluru: Bengaluru police have issued notices to BJP's national president J P Nadda, state president B Y Vijayendra and IT cell head Amit Malviya, summoning them in connection with a social media post accusing Congress of Muslim appeasement.

The notices, issued by High Grounds police station through the state BJP office on Monday, directed them to appear before the investigating officer within seven days.

The notices issued to Nadda, BJP state chief Vijayendra and IT cell head Amit Malviya asked them to appear before the investigating officer within seven days

This came a day after an FIR was registered against the trio based on a complaint filed by Ramesh Babu, chairman of the media wing of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, over an animation video posted on BJP's X handle. In his complaint, Ramesh Babu said Malviya posted the video based on instructions from Nadda and Vijayendra.

The video shows caricatures of Rahul and Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah placing an egg labelled 'Muslims' in a nest with three others marked 'SC', 'ST' and 'OBC'. The caricature of Rahul feeds 'funds' only to the bird that hatches from the 'Muslim' egg, while the other three hatchlings are pushed out of the nest. **TNN**

CONG OUT, IT'S BJP VS NOTA IN INDORE



A NOTA campaign is on in Indore ever since Congress candidate Akshay Kanti Bam pulled out of the contest at the last minute, leaving the party with no contestant and sitting BJP MP Shankar Lalwani with no challenger. Posters and banners that call for NOTA votes to 'save the Constitution' and 'teach a lesson to those trading with democracy' have become a common sight on the streets of Indore, MP's commercial capital. BJP is responding with posters saying the corrupt are pushing for NOTA and urging people to cast votes in national interest

Now, bulldozer 'break dance' at Yogi poll rally in Farrukhabad

Deepak.Lavania @timesgroup.com

Agra: After bulldozer roadshow in Mainpuri, it was bulldozer "break dance" that made the crowd ecstatic at Wednesday's venue of UP CM Yogi Adityanath's election rally in Aliganj sub-division of Etah district under Farrukhabad Lok Sabha seat.

Yogi was scheduled to address a rally at DAV Inter College ground in Aliganj on Wednesday afternoon. Before the CM's arrival, dozens of bulldozers reached the venue and, amid loud music, the machine operators performed stunts as the crowd cheered and 'Jai Shri Ram' slogans reverberated. BJP workers with



Dozens of bulldozers reached the venue amid loud music

party flags were seen on the dozer blades as the operators rotated the machines 360 degrees and used brakes and engine thrust to move the shock absorbers of the heavy vehicles up and down to simulate "break dance" steps.

However, the stunts did not go down well with BJP's Aliganj MLA Satyapal Singh Rathore. On seeing that the

gathering was more interested in the bulldozer dance rather than the speeches delivered from the stage, Rathore first requested the BJP workers and the machine operators to stop their show. But the stunts intensified and the crowd increased, prompting the MLA to reprimand the bulldozer drivers and asked them not to carry on with the stunts as any mishap might happen.

After the CM arrived, he said, "We have invented a unique use of these machines to deal with criminals and anti-nationals... The Congress SP alliance is tampering with our security; it is an alliance that is robbing every person's pocket, it is an alliance that opposes the Ram temple..."

For this 125-member Odisha clan, irrigation, jobs & potable water are issues that matter

Minati.Singha @timesgroup.com

Bhubaneswar: There are some polling booths in the country with a handful of voters and then there's the Srichandan family, whose members can demand a booth in their village just for themselves.

The Srichandans are a family of 125 in Gayabandh village in Khordha district of Odisha, 80 of whom are eligible to vote. They have been living together, in a joint family setup, for four generations and the bond is as strong as ever, despite many having left home in search of better-paying jobs in cities.

The family has a sprawling house with 36 bedrooms. For lunch, 16 kg of rice and 4 kg dal are cooked every day. Most members still depend on agriculture.

Come elections and the family gets together to discuss candidates and votes. There is no pressure on anyone though. Unemployment, Family Politics

Senior members like Gopal Srichandan, 80, feel there should be a change in govt. For youngsters like Smruti Ranjan, 23, and Bismajeet, 19, a first-time voter, candidates must focus on local issues.

"Elephant menace, drinking water scarcity and lack of irrigation facilities are major issues. A proposed Manibhadra dam over Mahanadi would have helped irrigate 500 villages in several districts, including Khordha, but is yet to be completed. In summer, vil-



The Srichandan family of Odisha's Khordha district has 125 members. While many of the younger lot have moved out to the cities for better prospects, they return twice a year to their 36-bedroom village home. For the family that depends on agriculture, the elephant menace in the region, drinking water scarcity and lack of irrigation facilities are major issues, besides absence of jobs in the state



ported the Congress as one of them, Dillip Srichandan, was a legislator from Khordha between 1995 and 2000. However, he lost in the 2009 and 2014 elections. "To serve the country and its people, we do not always need to contest elections," said Dillip, who has made planting trees his mission in life. In this, he gets support from the rest of the family.

Senior members like Gopal Srichandan, 80, feel there should be a change in govt. For youngsters like Smruti Ranjan, 23, and Bismajeet, 19, a first-time voter, candidates must focus on local issues.

"Elephant menace, drinking water scarcity and lack of irrigation facilities are major issues. A proposed Manibhadra dam over Mahanadi would have helped irrigate 500 villages in several districts, including Khordha, but is yet to be completed. In summer, vil-

lagers have to depend on tankers for drinking water. The tankers come once in three days," rued Gopal.

The Srichandans — belonging to the Paika community — depend on farming as a major source of income. They grow paddy, vegetables and pulses for their own consumption. Besides, cashew, mango, jackfruit and guava are grown in over 200 acres of farmland.

Men, including elders, are engaged in farming. But with time, many of the younger lot have moved out for em-

ployment. The whole family assembles twice a year — during Holi in March and Dussehra in October. Then there are important social events like weddings when they come together.

The family has a fund, made up of earnings from farming, that covers daily expenses. Those working outside contribute to this kitty too. "We believe in living a frugal life though the family is financially sound and debt-free. We also invest in the education and business ventures of the younger lot," said Madhu Sudan Srichandan, a third-generation member.

"If you have ever lived in a joint family, you will not want to move out," said Madhu Sudan. "The family is a huge support system. Love, affection, cooperation and adjustment keep us together. There are differences and misunderstandings, of course, but those are manageable."

Congress voted against Murmu based on her skin colour, says PM

Continued from P 1

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL SANDEEP ADHWARYU MEANWHILE IN US...



the same colour," Modi said. Senior ministers joined in the attack with FM Nirmala Sitharaman declaring, "I am from south India, I look Indian," adding to Congress's discomfiture and putting it under pressure to disengage itself

from Pitroda. Although the Congress brass claimed Pitroda had resigned of his own volition, there were clear indications that he was nudged into it, lest his image as a serial offender and loose cannon creates more problems for the par-

ty in the final stretch of polls. Congress, which was still trying to contain the fallout from Pitroda's remarks on "inheritance tax", found itself pushed into fire-fighting mode again. "The analogies drawn by Sam Pitroda in a podcast to illustrate India's diversity are most unfortunate and unacceptable. Congress completely dissociates itself from these analogies," party general secretary in-charge of communications Jairam Ramesh said.

There was disquiet in Congress over repeat offences by the US-based Pitroda. The fact that he is routinely in the news for the wrong reasons, and is specially vulnerable to BJP's strategy, is hurting the party, while no action was taken against him because of his closeness to the "family". There were some demands that strict action should be taken against him to dissociate the party from his comments.

BJP rejected Congress's bid to disassociate itself from Pitroda and said the party had been indulgent of him despite his history of "insulting and demeaning" comments.

Sikh seminary: Couples must have 5 children to boost Punjab

Yudhvir Rana | TNN

Amritsar: Damdami Taksal, a prominent Sikh seminary that wields significant influence among the community has issued an appeal to Punjab — particularly Sikhs — that they should have a "minimum of five children", claiming that it will cultivate "stronger familial bonds and contribute to society's prosperity".

The Taksal, which was once headed by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, announced that it would fully mobilise its resources to support the upbringing of children, in case people faced economic difficulties in raising large families.

The 16th chief of Damdami Taksal, Baba Harnam Singh Khalsa, said Sikh couples "should aim to have a minimum of five children to strengthen Punjab religiously, socially, politically and culturally". "Not only Sikhs, but Hindus and people of other communities living in Punjab should also have a minimum of five children," he said.

Sandeshkhali woman revokes rape plaint against TMC men

Sanjib.Chakraborty @timesgroup.com

Sandeshkhali: One of the three Sandeshkhali women whose rape complaints against Trinamool functionaries stoked unrest in this rural block of Bengal's North 24 Parganas district did an about-turn on Wednesday, saying she faced no such assault and that local BJP members forced her to sign a blank sheet of paper and approach police.

The woman lodged a fresh complaint at Sandeshkhali police station, citing threats and social ostracism because of her decision to withdraw the purportedly false charge of rape.

She alleged that a local BJP Mahila Morcha functionary and other party members visited her home and asked her to sign what was to be a fictitious complaint. "They asked for my signature on the pretext of enlisting my name for PMAY. Later, they took me to the police station to lodge a complaint of sexual abuse.



West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee greets children during a rally in Bardhaman on Tuesday

There was no sexual assault on me inside the Trinamool office. I was never forced to go to the party office late at night," she said.

The woman said she and her family were facing a social boycott engineered by local BJP functionaries ever since she decided to come clean. "We are feeling unsafe, and I have sought police help."

The Mahila Morcha member named by the complainant said the latter was the wife of a Trinamool booth president and was being guided by party seniors.

"Nobody forced her to file a complaint. She and other women themselves narrated their plight to National Commission for Women chairperson Rekha Sharma. The truth will come out if CCTV footage from inside the police station is released. She and her husband have also been accused of siphoning money from Amphan and Bulbul cyclone relief funds."

The twist in the case comes three days after a purported sting showed Gangadhar Koyal, a BJP mandal president in Sandeshkhali block II, saying no rape or sexual harassment took place and that the woman had filed the complaints at Nandigram MLA Suvendu Adhikari's behest.

TMC minister Shashi Panja said, "After Saturday's video exposed BJP's conspiracy behind the Sandeshkhali incident, women are bravely trying to withdraw the false complaints. But the BJP-backed culprits are threatening to harm them. They are even trying to extort money."

SHOPS FOR LEASE AT YOL MILITARY STATION, HIMACHAL PRADESH

NOTICE

1. Commanding Officer, Corps Signal Regiment, PIN-916009, C/o 56 APO on behalf of Station Commander, Yol Military Station invites applications from individuals for running various shops at Rising Star Suvidha Plaza, Yol Military Station. Preference will be given to war widow/ widows of defence personal killed while on duty / disabled soldiers and spouses/widow of ex-servicemen and ex-servicemen. Shops to be leased out are as out are as follows:-

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(a)	16	Magazines & Stationary Shop	13.774	01 Jun 2024
(b)	17	Army Store	49.817	01 Jun 2024
(c)	28A	Dry Cleaning	15.500	01 Jun 2024
(d)	29A	Mens Saloon	20.357	01 Jun 2024
(e)	30A	Courier Services, Transporter, Packers and Movers	19.871	01 Jun 2024
(f)	33B	Grocery & Confectionery	22.868	01 Jun 2024
(g)	42	Optician	19.757	01 Jun 2024
(h)	43	Cloth Items / Ready Made Garments	28.737	01 Jun 2024
(i)	63	Frozen Food / Fast Food	35.033	01 Jun 2024

- Applications forms can be obtained from Rising Star Suvidha Plaza at a cost of Rs. 100/- duly completed application forms have to be submitted in the application box kept in Nabha Gat, Yol Military Station by 23 May, 2024. Date of opening of bid will be 25 May 2024. Date of auction will be intimated separately.
- Terms & Conditions :- (a) Contract for initial allotment of shop would be eleven months which can be extended for maximum period of five years after fulfilling of terms & conditions. (b) Monthly maint. water & electricity charges should be paid by the allottee. Advance Security Deposit money for eleven months of total rebate should be paid. (c) Monthly rebate will be renewed annually.
- Queries if any will be entertained on mobile number 8290476121.

Govt. of Bihar

Cabinet Secretariat Department (Directorate of Aviation) Patna Airport, Patna - 800014

TEL No:- 0612-2225659, 2224423, Fax 0612 2224614, e-mail-cadbihar@bihar.gov.in
Letter. No: CBN(Misc.)-05-32/2022-374 Patna

CORRIGENDUM

(PR.NO.011352 (Cabinet)/2023-24, 014467 (Cabinet Secretariat)/2023-24, 015569 (Cabinet Secretariat) 2023-24, 016500 (CSD) 2023-24, 018710 (CSD) 2023-24 & 000045 (Cabinet) 2024-25)

CHANGE IN LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF EOI

With reference to our Expression of Interest (EOI) Ref. No. PR.NO.011352 (Cabinet)/2023-24 published on date 05.11.2023 for Purchasing a brand new Twin Turbine Engine Helicopter.

Due to unavoidable Circumstances:-

We hereby revise last date of submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) to 05.06.2024 at 05:00 PM.

Participants are requested to contact Director, Directorate of Aviation (8757894141).

Alternatively, interested and qualified agencies may send their queries through mail cadbihar@bihar.gov.in.

For detailed notification or further updates, kindly visit the following website; www.state.bihar.gov.in/csd

Other terms and conditions of the tender published in PR.NO.011352 (Cabinet)/2023-24 will remain unchanged.

This bears approval of the Add. Chief Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Department.

This information is available on website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar also

(Nishith Verma)
Director

PR.No.000635 (Cabinet) 2024-25

लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024- मतदान का महात्योहार, बिहार है तैयार

Govt. of Bihar

Cabinet Secretariat Department (Directorate of Aviation) Patna Airport, Patna - 800014

TEL No:- 0612-2225659, 2224423, Fax 0612 2224614, e-mail-cadbihar@bihar.gov.in
Letter. No: CBN(Misc.)-05-32/2022-373

CORRIGENDUM

(PR.NO.-011354 (Cabinet)/2023-24, 014468 (Cabinet Secretariat)/2023-24, 015571 (Cabinet Secretariat) 2023-24, 016501 (CSD) 2023-24, 018711 (CSD) 2023-24 & 000044 (Cabinet) 2024-25)

CHANGE IN LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF EOI

With reference to our Expression of Interest (EOI) Ref. No. PR.NO.011354 (Cabinet)/2023-24 published on date 05.11.2023 for Purchasing a brand new Twin Turbine Engine Aircraft.

Due to unavoidable Circumstances:-

We hereby revise last date of submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) to 05.06.2024 at 05:00 PM.

Participants are requested to contact Director, Directorate of Aviation (8757894141).

Alternatively, interested and qualified agencies may send their queries through mail cadbihar@bihar.gov.in.

For detailed notification or further updates, kindly visit the following website; www.state.bihar.gov.in/csd

Other terms and conditions of the tender published in PR.NO.011354 (Cabinet)/2023-24 will remain unchanged.

This bears approval of the Add. Chief Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Department.

This information is available on website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar also

Director
(Nishith Verma)

PR.No.000636 (Cabinet) 2024-25

लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024- मतदान का महात्योहार, बिहार है तैयार

भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर

राष्ट्रीय / स्यदा ई 0 निविदा पद्धति के अनुसार बेवसाइट

एवं www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर

ई 0-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

एस0वी0डी0 निविदा संख्या-41 मुजफ्फरपुर / 2023-24

शुद्धि-पत्र

इस कार्यलय का ज्ञापक-679, दिनांक-15.03.2024 द्वारा राष्ट्रीय / स्यदा ई 0 निविदा पद्धति के अनुसार बेवसाइट एवं www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर ई 0-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना एस0वी0डी0 निविदा संख्या-41 मुजफ्फरपुर/2023-24 का जिसका पी0आर0 सं0-020063 (BCD) 2023-24 है, जिसका प्रकाशन "हिन्दुस्तान" समाचार पत्र में दिनांक-16.03.2024 को हुआ है, के अपरिहार्य कारणवश "तिथि" को निम्न अनुसार संशोधित की जा रही है।

क्र0	निर्माण विधि	संशोधित (अधिति विस्तारित) तिथि	कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर।
1.	विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता	कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर।	कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर।
2.	परिमाण विवरण विधि (बायबल) की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-15.04.2024 से दिनांक-15.05.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक	दिनांक-16.05.2024 से दिनांक-06.06.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक
3.	निविदा प्राप्ति (बायबल) करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-16.05.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ	दिनांक-08.06.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ
4.	निविदा (तकनीकी शीट) खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-20.05.2024 को 3:30 बजे अपठ	दिनांक-10.06.2024 को 3:30 बजे अपठ
5.	निविदा विधायक शीट खोलने की तिथि एवं समय	तकनीकी शीट निष्पादन के पश्चात	तकनीकी शीट निष्पादन के पश्चात
6.	दिनांक-28.04.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक को अंतिम तिथि एवं समय, मुजफ्फरपुर का कार्यलय।	(i) दिनांक-22.05.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक को अंतिम तिथि एवं समय, मुजफ्फरपुर का कार्यलय। (ii) दिनांक-27.05.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक को अंतिम तिथि एवं समय, मुजफ्फरपुर का कार्यलय।	(i) दिनांक-22.05.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक को अंतिम तिथि एवं समय, मुजफ्फरपुर का कार्यलय। (ii) दिनांक-27.05.2024 को 3:00 बजे अपठ तक को अंतिम तिथि एवं समय, मुजफ्फरपुर का कार्यलय।
7.	परिमाण विवरण की विधि स्थान	बेवसाइट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)	बेवसाइट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
8.	निविदा प्राप्ति का स्थान	बेवसाइट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)	बेवसाइट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
9.	निविदा बेवसाइट की तिथि	120 दिन	120 दिन

शेष सभी शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।

PR-000628 (BCD) 2024-25

कार्यपालक अभियंता,
भवन प्रमंडल, मुजफ्फरपुर

लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024- कोई मतदाता न छूटे

Spurt in post-Covid measles cases reveals big gaps in vaccination

1 In 9 Kids Got No Vaccine In '19-'21 And 30% Got Just 1 Dose: Study

Rema.Nagarajan@timesgroup.com

More than one in nine eligible children nationally did not receive any dose of the measles vaccine in the 2019-21 period and nearly 30% received just one dose. This worrying fact came to light after frequent outbreaks of measles post-Covid prompted researchers from the health ministry's immunization division, Banaras Hindu University and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to take a closer look at vaccination data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5).

In some districts in Uttar Pradesh, with high number of births, prevalence of zero-dose children was as high as 34.2% in Prayagraj and 32.2% in Hapur. In almost all northeastern states, zero-dose prevalence was roughly 25%.

In a paper published in the journal Vaccine, the researchers investigated dose-wise measles vaccination coverage and explored gaps in immunization focusing on zero-dose, one-dose, and two-dose coverage among children aged 24-35 months. The study analysed information from 43,864 children taking into account socio-demographic variables such as birth order, wealth quintile, gender, social group, religion, residence, mother education, delivery-related factors, and media exposure.

The study noted that a significant percentage of children receiving zero doses signalled a concerning gap in immunization coverage. Even within a state, there were significant differences at the district level. For instance, in Arunachal Pradesh, West Siang district had the highest prevalence of children classified as zero-dose cases, 49.6%, while Lower Dibang Valley district had 2.8%. Another major cluster region was in UP where Prayagraj and Banda districts had 34.2% and 32.2% respectively, while in Hapur and Etawah 2.6% and 2.1% were zero-dose children.

The analysis found children with higher birth orders and those

Zero-dose prevalence in major states/UTs



from the poorest wealth quintile exhibited a higher percentage of zero doses. Mothers with lower levels of education showed increased odds of having zero-dose measles children. Additionally, mothers with limited media exposure demonstrated a higher probability of their children having a zero-dose status for measles.

"Measles outbreak is considered an early warning sign for immunization programmes and can be effectively used as a signal for tracing missed and dropout children and overall systems strengthening. It is an ideal tracer as measles outbreaks visibly signal clusters with suboptimal immunization service delivery and can drive prioritisation of targeted

interventions to improve programme performance and advocacy," stated the paper. Measles outbreaks were reported in 2022 from several districts of Maharashtra, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala and Delhi, and measles-related deaths were also recorded subsequently.

With humans being the only reservoir for the measles virus and no documented evidence of asymptomatic carriers, it is believed it can be eliminated. In 2017, India adopted the 'National Strategic Plan for Achieving and Sustaining Measles and Rubella Elimination'. In Sept 2022, India adopted a roadmap for eliminating measles and rubella. There is an urgency to reach at least 95% coverage for both doses of measles vaccine as unvaccinated (zero-dose) children "pose an immediate health risk, amplify disease transmission, and act as a barrier to the measles elimination goal."

"With consistent efforts, the country aims to catch up on the immunization gaps and vaccinate dropped-out and left-out children this year through Intensified Mission Intradhanush (IMI) 5.0 campaigns. So far six phases of Intensified Mission Intradhanush (IMI) have been conducted from 2017 to 2022 with a focus on measles rubella (MR) elimination vaccinating approximately 1.9 million children," stated the paper.

3 kids drown while bathing in Ganga

Agra: Three class 5 students drowned while bathing in the Ganga near Kadarganj Ganga Ghat in UP's Kasganj district, police said Wednesday, reports Deepak Lavania. The deceased had the day off due to LS elections Tuesday.

Construction work at Narora Dam has led to sand extraction, resulting in formation of deep pits in the riverbed. The kids may have gotten trapped in these, sources said.

Foreigners having evil eye on India's territorial integrity a big red line: Envoy

Continued from P 1

Indian high commissioner Sanjay Verma also warned that Sikh groups in Canada who call for the separation of their homeland from India are crossing "a big red line" that New Delhi sees as a matter of national security.

"Indians will decide the fate of India, not the foreigners," Verma told the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations, a prominent think-tank. He also told the Council that relations between India and Canada are positive overall despite "a lot of noise". Verma also said that the two countries are "trying to resolve this issue." "We are ready to sit down at the table any day, and

we are doing that," he said.

Verma said the deeper problems underneath the recent "negative" developments have to do with Canada's misunderstanding of "decades-old issues," which he blames Canadians of Indian origin for resurfacing. He said his chief concern is "national-security threats emanating from the land of Canada," noting that India does not recognise dual nationality, so anyone who emigrates is considered a foreigner. "Foreigners having, if I can call it, (an) evil eye on the territorial integrity of India—that is a big red line for us," he said. He did not specify whether he was referring to foreigners being involved in the Nijjar case or the issue of Sikh separatism

more broadly, the report said.

On Tuesday, India told Canada in a statement that celebration and glorification of violence should not be a part of any civilised society. Democratic countries which respect the rule of law should not allow intimidation by radical elements in the name of freedom of expression. Verma also mentioned "so many positive things" happening in the relationship between India and Canada.

He noted the annual value of two-way trade is 26 billion Canadian dollars, and in the past 11 months, there has been a 75% jump in Canadian lentil exports and a 21% increase in Indian-prepared medicines reaching Canada.

Appeal for Identification



General Public is hereby informed that a male dead body Name: Dinesh Sharma, S/o Sh. Pratibhan, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 75 years, Height: 5'3", Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Thin, Face: Oval, Wearing: Blue Color Pant & White Color With Black Strip/Check Shirt he was found near D.C. Revenue Office Kirpa

Naryan Marg, Civil Lines, Delhi on 04.05.2024. In this regard a DD No.48A, dated 04.05.2024 has been lodged at PS Civil Lines, Delhi.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so far.

Any person having any information or clue about this person may kindly inform to the following SHO

P.S., Civil Lines, Delhi

DP/5467/N/2024 Ph. : 011-2315444, 8750870127

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male (depicted in the photo) name unknown, residence and family is unknown was found dead at Main Hall, Pahar Ganj Side, Bag Scanner Machine No. 2, New Delhi Railway Station on 06.05.2024 at 09:50 AM. In this regard a DD No. 21-A, U/s 174 CrPC, dated 06.05.2024 has been lodged at PS New Delhi Railway Station, Delhi. The Dead body has been preserved in LHMC Hospital Mortuary for 72 hrs. for identification. His physical description is as under:

Sex: Male, Age: 28-30 years, Height: 5' 8" ft., Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Built: Thin, ID Marks: "ऊ" tattoo on behind right hand, Wearing: Red colour T-Shirt and blue colour lower and barefoot.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers:-

SHO

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> PS: New Delhi Rly. Stn., Delhi
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-23744073
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob.: 8750871305
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/5472/Rly/2024

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that one female person was admitted in Raja Harish Chandra hospital dated 05.05.2024. During the treatment declared dead by doctor. In the regard DD No. 31A dated 05.05.2024 has been lodged in P.S. Kashmiri Gate, Delhi. The description of the dead body is given as under Name: Mamta, W/o: Unknown, R/o-Unknown, Age: 60 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Fair, ID Mark: Tatto on left forearm "Madan Lal", Wearing: White colour Saree and Blue colour Blouse.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead female person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead female person please inform undersigned.

SHO

P.S. Kashmiri Gate, Delhi
DP/5431/N/2024 Ph. : 011-23962210, 9599879034

Regular intake of protein powders not advised: NIN

Hyderabad: Dietary guidelines revised by National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) after a hiatus of 13 years said protein supplements are best avoided as the benefits are not commensurate with risks, reports U Sudhakarreddy. Protein powders are made from eggs, dairy milk, or plant sources such as soybeans, peas, and rice. "Protein powders may also contain added sugars, non-caloric sweeteners, and additives such as artificial flavouring, hence, are not advisable for regular consumption. Proteins rich in branched-chain amino acids may increase the risk of non-communicable diseases. Consuming high levels of protein, especially in the form of supplement powders, is therefore not advisable," NIN said.

Research findings indicate dietary protein supplementation is associated with only a small increase in muscle strength and size during prolonged resistance exercise training (RET) in healthy adults. Protein intake levels greater than 1.6g/kg body weight/day do not contribute further to RET-induced gains.

"A significant proportion of children suffer from impaired nutritional status. Concurrently, there is a rising prevalence of overweight and obesity, creating a dual burden of malnutrition where both under-nutrition and obesity coexist within the same communities and households. Estimates show 56.4% of the total disease burden in India is due to unhealthy diets. Healthy diets and physical activity can reduce a substantial proportion of coronary heart disease and hypertension, and prevent up to 80% of type 2 diabetes," said NIN director Dr Hemalatha R, chairperson of the committee that formulated the guidelines.

No circular issued on ironed clothes: CSIR

New Delhi: A day after CSIR reposted the visual of a campaign 'Wrinkles Achhe Hain', posted by one of its institutes, it clarified on X Wednesday that it has not issued any order to its labs to refrain from wearing ironed clothes.

On May 7, CSIR-NISCPR posted on X that "join CSIR's #WAHMondays campaign and say #WrinklesAchheHain. Wear your non-ironed clothes every Monday. Let's iron out climate change, not our clothes!" Along with the tweet, it also posted a campaign logo, saying, "WAH Mondays @CSIR 'Wrinkles Achhe Hain'. Let's wear unironed clothes on Mondays. A reminder to: Save Energy, Be Environment Conscious & Fight Climate Change." The X post has not been removed.

CSIR Wednesday said, "With regard to certain news reports, CSIR wishes to clarify that NO CIRCULAR or OFFICIAL ORDER has been issued by CSIR HQ to its labs asking staff to refrain from wearing ironed clothes." TNW

Decade after killing, court set to rule on rationalist's murder

More than 10 years after Narendra Dabholkar's killing, a court is expected to soon give its verdict on whether five men arrested are guilty. The verdict could have a bearing on three other killings

Alka Dhupkar
@timesgroup.com

On the morning of August 20, 2013, 68-year-old doctor Narendra Dabholkar was on his morning walk and had just reached the VR Shinde bridge in Pune. Two men on a motorcycle stopped near him.

The two men are believed to have pulled out country-made pistols and shot at him three times at close range, once in the head. The doctor collapsed and died almost instantly. Two sweepers from the civic body, who were present at the bridge, saw the two men get on the motorcycle after the shooting and drive off.

According to investigators, the assailants handed over the motorcycle to a third individual at a location where there were no CCTV cameras. They then caught a bus and fled to Aurangabad, now renamed Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar.

The trial of five men for the killing of rationalist Dr Narendra Dabholkar is set to end on May 10 with a court in Pune expected to pronounce its verdict. The killing was viewed as one of multiple murders of individuals who were popular rationalists, and were perceived to be anti-Hindu by some.

The three others targeted were CPI member Govind Pansare and academic MM Kalburgi in 2015, and journalist Gauri Lankesh in 2017.

Dabholkar was founder of Maharashtra Andhashradha Nirmulan Samiti (roughly translates to organisation for the elimination of superstition in Maharashtra).

The night before he was killed, Dabholkar had returned from Mumbai where he had been pressing for a law to eradicate human sacrifice and black magic. He had been seeking the creation of a law for over 15 years.

During his 40 years of social work, Dabholkar was attacked and threatened multiple times, but he had refused to accept police protection. His work, and the demand for the new law, were viewed as being anti-Hindu and an attack on Hindu religious practices. The law was passed in 2013, after his killing.

The probe was monitored by Bombay high court and two judges presided over the trial. The case was probed by two investigating agencies. The weapons and the motorcycle

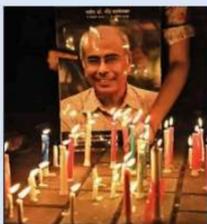
THE MAN WHO STOOD FOR SCIENCE

Narendra Dabholkar practiced medicine for 12 years before taking up social work in the 1980s, inspired by social reformer B Premanand

Authored more than 40 books that were translated into multiple languages

Conducted seminars in schools against beliefs in black magic and to spread awareness about science

Challenges to religious figures like Sathya Sai Baba and others to prove their unscientific claims earned social acclaim



Started organisation 'Parivartan' with wife Shaila Dabholkar; helps people with alcohol and drug de-addiction as well as mental health problems

used for the murder haven't been found despite multiple agencies being involved.

A misstep to start with

Five members of the Goa-headquartered Hindu group Sanatan Sanstha are accused of orchestrating the murder and destruction of evidence.

A special investigation team (SIT) - which included the Pune police, Maharashtra police, and anti-terrorism squad (ATS) - was formed to catch the culprits.

Five months after the murder, in June 2014, Pune police arrested arms dealer 24-year-old Manish Nagori and 22-year-old aide Vikas Khandelwal. The police claimed to have found a gun they said was used to commit the murder. When produced before court, Nagori claimed the then ATS chief Rakesh Maria offered them Rs 25 lakh to confess to the murder.

However, the police case fell flat after Pansare was murdered in 2015, allegedly with a gun that matched the one used in the Dabholkar case. After the police failed to file a chargesheet in the stipulated time, Nagori and Khandelwal were released on bail.

Forensic reports later concluded that the gun used to kill Dabholkar was used in the Pansare murder as well. Another gun also used in the killing of Pansare was said to have been used to kill Kalburgi in Dharwad and Lankesh in Bengaluru in 2017.

Turning to the netherworld to solve a murder

After sifting through millions of phone numbers, 32 police

THE THREE OTHER MURDERS

Dr Govind Pansare | 82
Member of CPI and labour union leader, he was shot at his residence in Maharashtra's Kolhapur on Feb 20, 2015. He succumbed to injuries

Prof MM Kalburgi | 77
The academic was shot dead at his residence in Karnataka's Dharwad on Aug 30, 2015. He had retired as VC of Kannada University in Hampi

Gauri Lankesh | 55
The editor of Lankesh Patrike was shot dead outside her residence in Bengaluru on Sept 5, 2017. She was an outspoken critic of right-wing politics and a champion of Dalit, tribal and minorities' rights

teams failed to make any headway after a year.

Journalist Ashish Khetan reported how Pune police hired retired police officers for the probe, who allegedly tried to use occult practices to communicate with Dabholkar's soul to know the sequence of the murder. Ironically, while he was alive, the rationalist was opposed to such practices. Following the revelations, the Pune police commissioner was transferred.

CBI takes over

RTI activist Ketan Tirotkar filed a petition in Bombay HC in 2014, demanding the probe be given to CBI. Despite the

initial objections of the Dabholkar family, the probe was transferred to the agency.

However, the same year BJP took office and the agency struggled to obtain administrative and personnel assistance from the state government for the investigation. Bombay HC, which was supervising the probe, made multiple strong remarks about the lack of progress. In June 2016, CBI arrested Tawde.

CBI initially named two other individuals from Sanatan Sanstha - wanted in another blast case - as the alleged shooters. In a supplementary chargesheet in 2018, the agency alleged the shooters were Kalsakar and Andure.

How an arms haul led to the alleged killers

In 2018, when Maharashtra ATS raided the residence of Sanatan Sanstha member Vaibhav Raut in Nalasopara, on the outskirts of Mumbai, they found crude bombs and other material for making bombs. Raut - and two of his aides Andure and Kalaskar - were arrested.

During interrogation, Andure and Kalaskar allegedly confessed to their involvement in Dabholkar's murder. At least 10 other accused in the Nalasopara arms haul were accused of being involved in the four murders.

For instance, Amol Kale, a former convener of Sanatan Sanstha and a leader of Hindu Janjagriti Samiti, is an accused and alleged key conspirator in both the Pansare and Lankesh murder cases. Bharat Kurne, another member of the group, is an accused in the same cases. Police said members of the group were planning a blast at the 2017 Sunburn music festival in Pune.

The motive

The chargesheets say Dabholkar and three others were targeted because they were seen as a hurdle in the creation of a theocratic state, or a Hindu Rashtra. The victims' views on superstition, rationalism and secularism - which were frequently expressed in articles and speeches - were not appreciated by Sanatan Sanstha members.

Chargesheets filed by three separate agencies - CBI, a Karnataka SIT and the Maharashtra SIT - concur that the murders of the four individuals were connected.

Money saved through zero or low-interest loans taxable: SC

Junks Pleas Of Bank Staff Challenging Provisions Of I-T Act

Dhananjay Mahapatra
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: In a setback to employees of public sector banks, Supreme Court has ruled that money saved by availing interest-free or low-interest loans from their employer would be liable to be taxed as it upheld the validity of Section 17(2)(vii) of the Income Tax Act and 3(7)(i) of I-T Rules.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta pronounced the ruling on Tuesday while dismissing petitions filed by All India Bank Officers' Confederation and a batch of appeals filed by staff unions and officers' associations of several banks, who had challenged the validity of the provisions of the I-T Act and its rules.

"The benefit enjoyed by bank employees is a unique benefit/advantage enjoyed by them. It is in the nature of a 'perquisite', and hence is liable to taxation," the bench said.



The benefit enjoyed by bank employees is in the nature of a 'perquisite', and hence is liable to taxation, Supreme Court said

As per the Rule, when a bank employee avails a zero-interest or concessional loan, the amount he saved annually when compared to the amount paid by an ordinary person by taking a loan of same amount from SBI that attracts market rate of interest, would be liable for income tax.

Writing the judgment, Justice Khanna said the value of interest-free or concessional loans is to be treated as 'other

fringe benefit or amenity' for being taxed as perquisite.

"Perquisite is a fringe benefit attached to the post held by the employee unlike 'profit in lieu of salary', which is a reward or recompense for past or future service. It is incidental to employment and in excess of or in addition to the salary. It is an advantage or benefit given because of employment, which otherwise would not be available," the bench said.

Justices Khanna and Datta said, "Rule 3(7)(i) posits SBI's rate of interest, that is the PLR, as the benchmark to determine the value of benefit to the assessee in comparison to the rate of interest charged by other individual banks. Fixation of SBI's rate of interest as benchmark is neither an arbitrary nor unequal exercise of power."

Bengal counters Centre in SC, says CBI can't conduct probe sans state consent

Amit Anand Choudhary
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New Delhi: Countering Centre's stand that it wields no power over CBI which is an independent agency, West Bengal govt on Wednesday told Supreme Court that Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, under which the agency was formed specifically says that its superintendence shall vest in central govt in all cases except those related to corruption and contended CBI probe can't be ordered in the state without its consent.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal told a bench of Justices BR Gavai and Sandeep Mehta that Sections 4 and 5 of the Act confer the power pertaining to superintendence and jurisdiction of agency to the Centre. "Centre has no jurisdiction to allow its investigating agency to come in my state



The Centre told the court that it wields no power over CBI as it is an independent agency

against my consent. Such an act is unconstitutional. It would be an encroachment on the rights and jurisdiction of the state and its police. It would be constitutional overreach and exceeding of jurisdiction and would destroy the federal structure of the country," Sibal said.

The lawyer referred to various sections of Delhi Special

Police Establishment Act to make a point that the Centre controls CBI but clarified that role of the Centre is only upto the registration of case but not investigation and probe was not influenced by it.

Reading Section 4 of the Act, he said the superintendence of the Delhi Special Police Establishment in so far as it relates to investigation of offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act shall vest in Central Vigilance Commission but the superintendence in all other matters shall vest in the central govt. He said section 5 empowers Centre to extend the powers and jurisdiction of CBI to any area.

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta reiterated that original suit filed by the state under Article 131 of Constitution against it to not allow CBI probe was not maintainable and is an abuse of legal process. He said

that article 131 could be invoked only in case of inter-governmental dispute and the grievance of the state was against CBI and not the Union.

The court, after hearing both the warring sides, reserved its order on maintainability of suit and said that it would deliver the verdict after summer vacation.

The Centre had earlier submitted that the suit was inherently not maintainable at all. "The Union and DoPT have nothing to do with registration of cases by CBI, probe and prosecution of a case. We do not have administrative and supervisory power over. I cannot tell the agency on registration of cases or how to investigate or whether to file closure reports or chargesheet. It is a separate statutory entity, supervised by another statutory body CVC," Mehta had submitted, adding that CBI is not a limb of govt.

Rain god is not the answer, take steps to douse wildfires: SC

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Dehradun: Supreme Court, while hearing a plea filed by Dehradun-based advocate Rituparn Uniyal, seeking immediate action to safeguard the region's forests, wildlife, and birds from the devastating impact of wildfires, told the state govt on Wednesday that "cloud seeding or depending on rain god is not the answer" to the raging forest fires and the authorities will have to take preventive measures to tackle the problem.

In response, the state govt informed apex court about steps taken to control the forest fires and said that "only around 0.1% of the wildfire cover in the state was on fire due to such incidents."

Deputy advocate general of Uttarakhand Jatinder Kumar Sethi told the bench of Justices B R Gavai and Sandeep Mehta that since Nov last year, there have been 398 such incidents, all caused by human activities, leading to five fatalities.

The applicant told the bench that the state is painting a "very rosy picture", but media reports claim that the state machinery is preoccu-

10 'negligent' forest staffers suspended

Following a review meeting on forest fires and upcoming Char Dham yatra on Wednesday, Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami ordered suspension and disciplinary action against 17 forest department employees on grounds of "negligence and dereliction of duties", reports Kautilya Singh. Of these, 10 have been suspended, 5 others have been 'attached to headquarters' and show cause notices have been issued to two employees.

pleaded with election duties rather than firefighting efforts. The petitioner called for the central and state govt, as well as the principal chief conservator of forests in the hill state, to establish pre-fire strategies and a policy framework to mitigate such disasters, underscoring the vital role forests and wildlife in maintaining the ecological balance, economic health and social fabric of the hilly regions.

The court has scheduled further hearing on May 15.

3rd terrorist killed on Day 3 of Kulgam op

Srinagar: Security forces gunned down a terrorist holed up in a house in J&K's Kulgam district in a shootout that entered its third day on Wednesday, following the killing of banned outfit The Resistance Force's (TRF) "area commander" Basit Dar along with an unidentified associate the day before, reports Saleem Pandit. The third slain terrorist hasn't been identified till last reports came in.

According to a police officer, the gunfight began on Monday after security forces surrounded a house in Redwani locality of Kulgam. Although the operation was temporarily suspended at night, it resumed on Tuesday in an effort to flush out the hiding terrorists.

Dar was among those gunned down. He was allegedly involved in a dozen murders, particularly targeted killings, over the past two years. NIA had announced a bounty of Rs 10 lakh on his head.

Stopped producing Covishield in Dec '21: SII after AstraZeneca recall

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: UK-based drug major AstraZeneca's decision to withdraw its Covid-19 vaccine globally, days after admitting to side effects, prompted Serum Institute of India to disclose that it had stopped manufacturing Covishield in Dec 2021 due to a fall in demand as well as the emergence of new variants.

"With India achieving high vaccination rates in 2021 and 2022, coupled with the emergence of new mutant variant strains, the demand for previous vaccines diminished significantly. Consequently, since Dec 2021, we have stopped the manufacture and supply of additional doses of Covishield," said a SII spokesperson.

The global drug giant had recently admitted to Vaxzevria causing Thrombocytopenia with Thrombocytopenia (TTS) in very rare cases.



With the emergence of new mutant variant strains, the demand for previous vaccines fell significantly, SII said

Covishield accounted for nearly 80% of Covid-19 vaccine doses administered in India. AstraZeneca said its decision to withdraw marketing authorisation of Vaxzevria was due to a "surplus of available updated vaccines" since the pandemic.

The SII spokesperson said the company fully understood the ongoing concerns. "We have disclosed all rare to very rare side effects, including Thrombocytopenia with TTS, in the packaging insert in 2021," the spokesperson said.

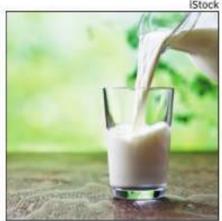
New milk shake? Amul now eyes MP brand

Ankur Sirothia
@timesgroup.com

Bhopal: Amul is in talks for a possible takeover of Sanchi Dairy - a brand as familiar to Madhya Pradesh homes as Nandini in Karnataka, and just as emotive.

The BJP-led MP govt wants to adopt the Gujarat-based Amul-like model for Sanchi in MP, sources told TOI, adding that whether Amul will 'assist' Sanchi to increase its base in MP or take it over will be decided soon after Lok Sabha polls.

MP govt feels it will be beneficial for the state's dairy farmers. Principal sec-



Whether Amul will 'assist' Sanchi to boost its base in MP or take it over will be decided after polls

retary of animal husbandry and dairy department, Gulshan Bamra, told TOI, "A decision on Amul's role in MP for the benefit of milk-pro-

ducing farmers will be decided by govt soon."

Since Jan this year, several rounds of discussions have taken place between the animal husbandry department and Amul in this. Officials said Amul is keen on a takeover and merger of Sanchi with Amul. However, govt is wary of a Karnataka-kind Amul vs Nandini battle that turned into an explosive political issue during the assembly polls there around this time last year.

On Jan 10 this year, MP chief minister Mohan Yadav took part in a joint meeting of Sanchi and Amul in Ahmedabad to ensure pro-

duction of milk from milk producers of MP and help dairy farmers' interest getting guarded.

At the Ujjain investors' summit in March, the MP govt wanted to enter into an MoU with Amul for collaboration to promote Sanchi. "It couldn't happen, despite last minute efforts, as Amul was not keen on it (collaboration) and MP govt had nothing to offer to get it interested," said an official.

Sanchi is one of MP's best known brands. Run by Madhya Pradesh State Cooperative Federation, it boasts of a range of products from milk and milk products to sweets.

SC: Can't carry Raj-era bias to tag castes, tribes 'history-sheeters'

Dhananjay Mahapatra

New Delhi: Supreme Court had ruled that police cannot carry colonial era biases against persons belonging to certain tribes and Scheduled Castes to mechanically brand them in their records as 'bad characters' or 'history-sheeters' and said such archaic mindset violated individuals' right to dignity guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution, reports Dhananjay Mahapatra.

After nudging Delhi Police to amend the format, which was copied from 90-year-old Punjab Police Rules of 1934, to exclude the minor children and wife of a

person from getting included with him as a bad character, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and K V Vishwanathan on Tuesday asked all states to revisit their rules within six months regarding inclusion of a person in police's 'history-sheeter/bad character' record and weed out colonial era biases from relevant provisions.

After deciding the case from Delhi, the bench resorted to its suo motu jurisdiction and examined the desirability of ensuring that no mechanical entries in 'history sheet' are made of innocent individuals.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
File No. IC-MG-MMLT-HUK-2024
Delhi Division, Northern Railway invites 'Expression of Interest' for providing value added facilities/services at proposed 'World class multi modal logistics terminal' at Holambi Kalan, Delhi Division.
The detailed information regarding EOI is available on the official website of Northern Railways i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in Last date for submission of EOI is upto 16.00 Hrs on 10/05/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1401/24

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU PORT AUTHORITY
(PORT PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT)
ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 27001:2013, ISO 45001:2018 CERTIFIED
SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE
JNP/PPD/VPPL/2024/T-06 Date: 07.05.2024
Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority invites e-Tenders "ONLINE" in two Bid system (Technical and Price Bid) from 10/05/2024 to 30/05/2024 from experienced, reputed National / International consultant fulfilling the Minimum Eligibility Criteria (MEC) as stipulated in the Tender for the Work of "Request for Proposal (RFP) for Providing Techno Economic Feasibility Study for Automatic & Real Time Cargo Evacuation System at Vadvan Port." Detailed Notice Inviting Tender and Tender Document is available on JNPA website "www.jnport.gov.in" and "https://eprocure.gov.in".
Chief General Manager (PP&D)

GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
HOME DEPARTMENT: ITANAGAR
NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR 01(ONE) POST OF MEMBER OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
1. Applications are invited from eligible candidates for recruitment against 1 (one) post of Member of Arunachal Pradesh State Human Rights Commission.
2. Details regarding application forms, eligibility criteria, pay scale, procedure to apply etc. are available on the State Portal www.arunachalpradesh.gov.in.
3. Application complete in all respects must be addressed to the Principal Secretary to the Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Department of Home, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, A. P. Civil Secretariat, Block No. 2, Itanagar and should reach latest by 5.00 PM on 24.05.2024.
Sd/-
Kaling Tayeng, IAS
Principal Secretary to the Government of Arunachal Pradesh
DIPR/ARN-087-89/2024

उपद्रवा सुचित किया जाता है कि चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, 30प्र0 (एलोपैथी) के अन्तर्गत विभिन्न विधिदलाओं में से चिकित्साधिकारी ग्रेड-2 (स्तर-2) के काडियोलॉजिस्ट, यूरो सर्जन, फॉरेन्सिक स्पेशियलिस्ट, गैस्त्रो सर्जन एवं प्लास्टिक सर्जन पदों पर सीधी भर्ती द्वारा चयन हेतु साक्षात्कार कार्यक्रम निम्नवत् है:-

क्र. संख्या	विभाग	विभाग संख्या	पद का नाम	साक्षात्कार की तिथि	पदों की संख्या
1	चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, 30प्र0 (एलोपैथी)	एस-8/21	चिकित्साधिकारी ग्रेड-2 (स्तर-2) काडियोलॉजिस्ट	17 मई, 2024	134
2	चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, 30प्र0 (एलोपैथी)	एस-8/15	चिकित्साधिकारी ग्रेड-2 (स्तर-2) यूरो सर्जन	17 मई, 2024	19
3	चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, 30प्र0 (एलोपैथी)	एस-8/12	चिकित्साधिकारी ग्रेड-2 (स्तर-2) फॉरेन्सिक स्पेशियलिस्ट	17 मई, 2024	57
4	चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, 30प्र0 (एलोपैथी)	एस-8/19	चिकित्साधिकारी ग्रेड-2 (स्तर-2) गैस्त्रो सर्जन	18 मई, 2024	02
5	चिकित्सा स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग, 30प्र0 (एलोपैथी)	एस-8/18	चिकित्साधिकारी ग्रेड-2 (स्तर-2) प्लास्टिक सर्जन	18 मई, 2024	50

नोट: साक्षात्कार कार्यक्रम की विस्तृत सूचना आयोग की वेबसाइट <https://uppsc.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है।
संख्या: 01(4)/01/डीआर0/एस-8/2024-25
दिनांक: प्रयागराज, 08 मई, 2024
विनोद कुमार सिंह (संयुक्त सचिव)



BATTLEGROUND INDIA | APRIL 19-JUNE 4, 2024

In Kuppam heat, Naidu locked in revival battle

Former CM Breaks Tradition And Steps Out To Campaign

Sandeep Raghavan
@timesgroup.com

Kuppam (Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh): At 74, TDP national president Nara Chandrababu Naidu is pulling out all the stops to reclaim the position of chief minister of Andhra Pradesh. However, he faces a tough challenge right in his backyard — Kuppam — where he's seeking his eighth consecutive term in the 2024 elections.

Naidu's political journey began in 1978 when he contested from Chandragiri on a Congress ticket. He swiftly rose through the ranks, becoming one of the youngest ministers in T Anjaiah's cabinet in 1980. However, his life took a turn in 1980 when he married Bhuvaneshwari, the

daughter of legendary actor N T Rama Rao.

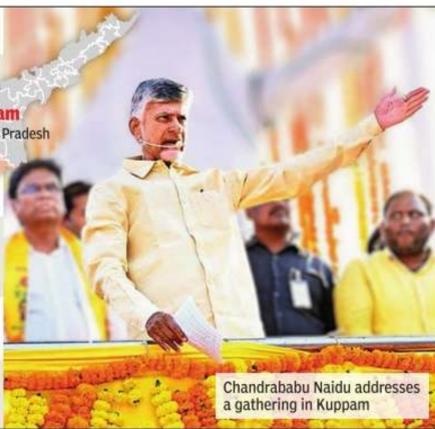
The emergence of Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in 1982, led by NTR, changed the political landscape of Andhra Pradesh. After facing defeat in 1983, Naidu jumped ship and joined TDP, shifting focus to the Kuppam constituency in Chittoor district, securing his maiden victory here in 1989.

Naidu has now been the MLA of Kuppam for 35 years, serving thrice as CM between 1995-2004 and 2014-2019. However, the 2024 elections present a critical challenge for him both at the state level and in his very own constituency.

After YSRCP reduced TDP to just 23 seats in the 2019 elections, they set their sights on unseating Naidu in Kuppam. The ruling party's focus intensified after chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy entrusted minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy with the task of

CM Vs ASPIRING CM

- ▶ Naidu, 74, has been Kuppam MLA for 35 years, seeking election for 8th consecutive term
- ▶ After reducing TDP to 23 seats in 2019, YSRCP set sights on unseating Naidu from Kuppam
- ▶ Jagan Reddy's party coined 'why not Kuppam' slogan and fielded MLC K R J Bharat, who has CM's direct backing
- ▶ Naidu answered with 'Bangaru Kuppam' (Bangaru is a word for a beloved term)
- ▶ For the first time, Naidu is personally campaigning in the assembly constituency



Chandrababu Naidu addresses a gathering in Kuppam

ending Naidu's winning streak. YSRCP introduced the "Why not Kuppam" slogan and fielded MLC KRJ Bharat against Naidu, backed by local support.

Bharat, the son of former IAS officer K Chandramouli, emerged as Naidu's strongest contender, with the direct backing of the CM and minister Ped-

direddy Ramachandra Reddy. In response, Naidu coined "Bangaru Kuppam" to counter the campaign — 'Bangaru', a term of endearment to refer to

someone beloved. He appointed MLC Kancherla Srikanth to handle constituency issues and thwart opposition strategies.

Breaking from tradition, Naidu personally campaigned in this election, supported by his wife, Nara Bhuvaneshwari, who joined him on the campaign trail to secure his 8th consecutive victory in Kuppam.

As polling day approaches, both parties are leaving no stone unturned. The YSRCP aims to dethrone Naidu, while Naidu aims to secure a majority of 1 lakh votes, having seen his vote share decline drastically in the 2019 elections.

"The people of Kuppam have been my strength and inspiration through my political journey," Naidu said at a recent campaign rally. "Their trust and support have been unwavering, and I am committed to continuing to serve them with dedication and integrity." Meanwhile, Bharat ex-

pressed confidence in connection with the voters. "Kuppam deserves effective representation and real change. I am here to be the voice of the people and address their concerns head-on," he declared passionately, emphasizing his determination to bring about a positive change in the constituency.

Amid the campaign fervour, both parties are not only focusing on mobilising supporters but also on reaching out to undecided voters. With door-to-door campaigns, public rallies, and social media blitzes, every effort is being made to sway the voters in their favour.

Adding to the drama, Kuppam's residents express mixed feelings. "We've seen Naidu's long reign, but now it's time for change," says a local vendor, capturing the sentiment of many. On the other hand, a retired school teacher defends Naidu, stat-

ing, "He's brought development to our region. Why fix what's not broken?"

Local businesses are abuzz with discussions about the upcoming election. "This election will decide the fate of our town for the next few years," says a shop owner, echoing the sentiments of many residents who see the election as a pivotal moment in Kuppam's history.

While the candidates trade barbs and promises, the people of Kuppam are weighing their options carefully. "I've always supported Naidu, but this time, I'm not so sure," says a farmer, reflecting the uncertainty that pervades the electorate.

With just days left until the election, as the candidates make their final push and the voters prepare to cast their ballots, one thing is certain — Kuppam is at the centre of attention, and the outcome of this election will reverberate far beyond its borders.

Why Andhra edu barons are joining poll class

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Students from Andhra Pradesh fare well in UPSC Civils exam

5 AP students score 100 Percentile in Jee Main

AP, Telangana and Karnataka students shine in JEE Advanced, NEET UG

Three Andhra students in AIEEE top 10

JEE-Advanced results | Six out of top 10 are Telugu students

NEET 2023: Two students from Andhra, TN share top rank

On the face of it, these mundane headlines, that appeared over the past couple of years, may seem to have nothing to do with the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. But they do.

In Andhra Pradesh, where clearing a competitive exam is seen as the only gateway to success and almost every second student appears for JEE or NEET, these headlines reflect the growing influence, both financial and political, of the founders of the various educational institutions. As more Andhra students clear entrance tests, owners of institutions that train them add more political heft for themselves.

Although some of them have always been part of political parties, their numbers are growing every year. Information gleaned from election affidavits list hundreds of crores in assets for each educationalist contesting the elections. Also, safeguarding the interests of their institutions often aligns them closely with parties. A college chain donated Rs 5 crore in elec-

toral bonds to a leading party in Andhra even though very few educational institutions donated through bonds elsewhere in the country.

These candidates contesting across different LS and assembly seats include prominent individuals such as Narayana educational institutions' founder Ponguru Narayana, Vignan University vice-chairman Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu, Gitam deemed-to-be-university president and Kautilya School of Public Policy founder M Sriharat, Avanathi educational institutions founder M Srinivasa Rao, and Sri Balaji Educational Society director Palle Sindhura Reddy.

Additionally, Andhra Pradesh education minister Botcha Satyanarayana, who runs the Satya Institute of Technology and Management, and Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, founder of US edtech company UWorld, have also announced their candidacies.

Take Ponguru Narayana of Narayana educational institutions, known for churning out JEE and NEET rankers. He is contesting in Nellore city assembly constituency on a TDP ticket. As the former minister for municipal administration and urban development from 2014 to 2019, he played a key role in the planning and design of Amaravati, the capital of bifurcated Andhra. Starting with a modest coaching centre serving just seven students, his organisation has now expanded to operate in 23 states. He declared assets worth about Rs 800 crore.

State education minister Botcha Satyanarayana is contesting as an MLA candidate from Cheepurupalli. His wife Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi, who serves as Satya Institute's correspondent, is YSRCP's pick from the Vizag



A DIFFERENT KIND OF TEST

Some educationists already have political links, others want to extend their success stories to the electoral field

LS constituency:

TDP has fielded another academic leader, M Sriharat, for the Vizag LS seat. Following the death of his grandfather, M V V S Murthi, a former MP and MLC, in a road crash in the USA in 2018, Sriharat ventured into politics. He narrowly lost in 2019 from the Vizag LS segment by 4,000 votes.

Asked about how he balances politics and academic affairs, the Stanford alumnus said that his priority was serving and interacting with the public. "The university is managed by experts such as the vice-chancellor, pro VCs, registrar, and deans. They diligently follow the university's vision plan. I often leverage technology to virtually interact with the university leadership," Sriharat told TOI.

Pemmasani Chandrasekhar, TDP candidate for the Guntur LS seat, recently hogged the spotlight by declaring assets worth Rs 5,705 crore — the highest in these LS elections. His pioneering online education enterprise, UWorld, is widely utilised by students preparing for high-stakes examinations such as SAT, ACT and USMLE.

According to H Lajipathi Rai, former VC of Dr B R Ambedkar University, parties often prioritise educationists who possess a combination of educational expertise and political family background. "These candidates are favoured because they are better equipped to understand complex issues and engage in meaningful deliberations in Parliament," he said. Former minister Muttamsetti

Srinivasa Rao, also known as 'Avanathi' Srinivasa Rao due to his association with the Avanathi Group of institutions, is contesting against former HRD minister Ganta Srinivasa Rao as the YSRCP candidate from the Bhemili assembly seat. Avanathi began with a computer training institute and has since expanded to establish a network of management and engineering colleges across north coastal Andhra.

V Hari Babu, a faculty member of political science at Andhra University, said founders of academic institutions are increasingly getting into politics. "Their expertise has the potential to contribute to the legislative processes, potentially resulting in more effective and progressive laws. However, political dynamics may differ significantly from academic settings. These leaders may face challenges in navigating the complexities of politics, especially in their formative political years," he said.

Narasaraopet MP and TDP-LS candidate, Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu, introduced the highest number of private member's bills (seven) from Andhra in the 17th Lok Sabha.

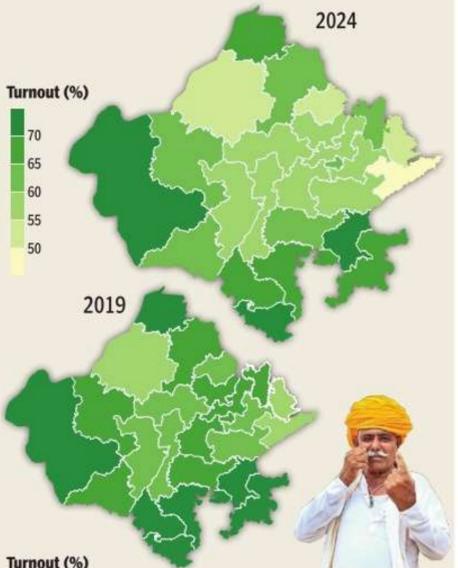
Lokam Madhavi, the BJP-TDP-Jana Sena alliance candidate for the Nellore assembly constituency, serves as vice-president of the Miracle Educational Society. With extensive experience in the IT industry, Madhavi has declared assets worth nearly Rs 900 crore. Her expertise is expected to be valuable in shaping policies.

"While the Constitution doesn't prohibit non-literates from contesting, having academic leaders serving as MLAs or MPs can benefit society. However, it is important to involve them in manifesto writing and policy formulation," added Lajipathi Rai.

GEO GRAPH

Raj Voter Turnout Decoded

Rajasthan voted in the initial two phases of the Lok Sabha elections. Participation was subdued in both, affecting the state's poll percentage significantly. Notably, voter turnout decreased by over 5 percentage points in nearly 16 constituencies, with 11 voting in the first phase. Among the constituencies most affected, Ganganagar, which had recorded the highest turnout at 74.77% in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, saw the turnout plummet to 66.59%.



PC Name	2024	2019	Change
Jhunjhunu	52.9	62.1	-9.2
Jaipur Rural	56.7	65.5	-8.8
Ganganagar	66.6	74.8	-8.2
Ajmer	59.7	67.3	-7.7
Sikar	57.5	65.2	-7.6

Source: ECI; Research: Richa Gandhi

267 years on, Mir Jafar's progeny struggle to erase 'traitor' taint

Krishnendu Bandyopadhyay & Sukumar Mahato | TNN

Lalbagh (Murshidabad): In Bengal's political discourse, Mir Jafar's name has long been used as a synonym for 'gaddar' (traitor). Even 267 years after the decisive battle that brought Bengal under British control, the legacy runs so deep that Mir Jafar's present-day heirs want to distance themselves from their forefather's treachery.

It was in the Battle of Plassey in 1757 that Mir Jafar, one of the most trusted generals of Bengal nawab Siraj-ud-Daulah, defected to the British side, leading to the victory of the East India Company.

TOI travelled to Mir Jafar's birthplace to learn more about the legacy of deceit that continues to cast a shadow on the present. At Quila Nizam, in Murshidabad, TOI met the 14th great-grandson of Mir Jafar, Syed Reza Ali Meerza, who lives a humble life and refers repeatedly to how the slur stubbornly haunts his family. His drawing-cum-bedroom wall adorns portraits of all his ancestors, even nawab Siraj-ud-Daula, but not Mir Jafar.

"I don't want abuse from my guests," he said candidly. In his early 80s, Meerza, known as Chhote Nawab, is agile and amiable despite a monumental decline in the family's prestige and prosperity. He now rides a bicycle but vividly remembers going to school on a royal elephant.

Wasn't he disgusted with Mir Jafar's being so widely used in elections to describe a political traitor? "What to do? I cannot alter the course of history associated with my 14th great-grandfather's name, nor can I change the popular coinage. Even though Mir Jafar was not part of the original conspiracy hatched by Ghaseet Begum,



Syed Reza Ali Meerza, or 'Chhote Nawab', is the 14th great-grandson of Mir Jafar

Jagat Seth, the company's Qasimabazar chief William Watts, and Robert Clive at Sang-i-Dalan, Motijheel," he said, feebly trying to defend his ancestor.

Chhote Nawab's son, Fahim Meerza, is a primary school teacher and the Trinamool councillor of ward 10 in the TMC-run Lalbagh Municipality. "My great-great-grandfather Wasif Ali Meerza, who was educated at Sherborne School, Rugby School and Trinity College, largely redeemed the notoriety earned by Mir Jafar," Fahim said.

"On August 15, 1947, the Radcliffe Award allotted the district of Murshidabad to Pakistan, and the flag of Pakistan was hoisted at the Hazarduari Palace here. But within two days, because of Wasif Ali Meerza's intervention, two dominions were exchanged. Khulna became part of Bangladesh, and the Indian flag was hoisted at Murshidabad's grand palace on August 17, 1947. The Indian god restored all his estates to him in 1953. He was the big-

gest champion of Hindu-Muslim brotherhood," Fahim added.

Later, a family member, Iskander Meerza, became Pakistan's first president. "He went to Nawab Bahadur Institute and then went to Bombay for higher studies and later moved to Pakistan as a military officer," said Chhote Nawab. His Murshidabad house lies in ruins for want of upkeep.

Chhote Nawab, however, does not want to be buried in Jafarganj cemetery. Mir Jafar's family burial ground. "Jodi kichuta kom gaali khai (That way, I'll receive fewer abuses). People visiting his grave often spit on it in disgust. We then change a Rs 500 penalty and wash the grave and put flowers and incense sticks," said Laltan Hossain, a guide at the cemetery. He receives a salary of Rs 11 a month from the district treasury, an amount that hasn't changed since the nawab's days.

The massive gateway to Mir Jafar's palace at Jafarganj is still called Nemaq Haram Deuri or Traitor's Gate.

How young grads are helping craft poll narratives of veterans

Divisha Ranka | TNN

Mumbai: Talk of a paradigm shift in politics is often blab but young interns in campaign backrooms are part of just that. You won't see them at rallies or on TV screens though. These are grads hired in large numbers by consulting firms specialising in communication and public relations, and well entrenched in the political space.

Until 2014, poll strategies were devised through a process of trial and error based on public opinion. "But it's a thing of the past now. After BJP's 2014 win, they (politicians) started understanding the need for professionals who can gather and analyse data to be put to use," said an employee of a top consulting firm.

Months ahead of an election, political consulting firms deploy teams to interact with voters and seek their opinion on issues ranging from economic concerns to welfare benefits. This understanding of on-ground sentiment then feeds into campaign strategy. The firms also provide support in other areas such as managing media and communication, handling logistics and research and data analysis.

A Nation with NaMo (NwN) employee told TOI that in the run-up to polls, NwN teams were split into campaign war rooms (CWRs), political war rooms (PWRs), and under the category governance, policy and intelligence (GPI). "CWRs have a client-facing role. They design campaigns for the client... provide them with a hundred solutions. It is up to them to implement which ones, if any," he said. GPI, on the other hand, analyses data and handles preparation of manifestos.

PWRs comprising field workers form the largest group. "For Rajasthan assembly's 200 seats, some 80 people were working on ground to collect data. Just speaking to 10 people on an average every day, we were able to get 800 responses in a day and as many as 24,000 in a month," he added.

Given the extent of work, hiring, too, is



on a large scale. Most of them are freshers looking for a break and they could be from B-schools, NLU, or even IITs. But most of them are hired on a contractual basis and once elections are over, the CWRs and PWRs are dissolved. In NwN, there are two kinds of hires — short-term members (STMs) on-boarded on a contractual basis and full-time members (FTMs), who are permanent employees hired as part of a Graduate Impact Leadership Programme (GILP). The FTM cohort is given extensive training. For those on contract, "they are directly thrown at the deep end". Those hired for both categories are paid competitively, but STMs are not eligible for benefits, bonuses, and even the chances of them transitioning to an FTM are slim-to-none.

An engineering graduate said, "NwN had stepped up hiring in the run-up to the polls and visited my campus. But they were large-

ly looking for people for the short term. Though a more permanent role would have been preferable, they had an interesting job description that got me to apply. The job market also hasn't been the best, so you take what you get."

The pay offered is a deciding factor for many. Among his peers, the employee added, the average package on campus was Rs 9 lakh per annum. NwN was offering as much as Rs 18 lakh for a full-time role. Consulting firms I-PAC, Varahe Analytics, Inclusive Minds, and ShowTime Consulting did not respond till the time of going to press, but their policies on staffing and pay may not differ much.

The placement cell of Hindu College in Delhi told TOI that political consultancies have been hiring more aggressively, especially for summer interns. "But a key reason why students' applications have shot up is not because of an interest in politics... it's due to the lack of opportunities compared to other domains."

A former staff with Varahe Analytics said the average employee age in the industry is between 24 and 27 years, and a significant portion of hiring is via campus placements. "Young professionals are more efficient, driven, and can take the long hours," he added. Another benefit with a younger cohort is they are largely party-agnostic. Though not a requirement, it plays to the analysts' benefit when clients or roles change.

Aakansha Patodia, an ex-consultant with a leading political consultancy, said youngsters are also chosen as they don't have a hectic personal life. From the candidate's viewpoint, Patodia believes motivations are two-fold. "The competitive pay, of course, is a determinant. But it's also the impact you create."

Many, however, have only a brief stint in the field. This is partly because of how these places are run. "The environment is semi-corporate at best. Work is hectic and can come up in the middle of the night also... you have to get it done," said an industry insider.

In perfume hub, SP smells blood as Akhilesh arrives to reclaim family turf

Entry Lights Up Kannauj Contest, BJP MP Terms It India-Pak Match

Neha.Shukla@timesgroup.com

Kannauj: The Samajwadi Party (SP) office in Kannauj, known as the perfume capital of the country for its aromatic 'attars', has been humming with anticipation ever since Akhilesh Yadav, party chief and three-time MP from this seat, stepped into the electoral arena, replacing his nephew. His eleventh-hour decision has injected vigour into the party faithful. "While Tej would have easily won from here, Bhaiyaji is the face of this city," says Vijay Singh Yadav, a seasoned party worker, with unwavering conviction that the outcome is already sealed. On the opposing end, BJP is determined to defend its hard-won turf. The party's incumbent MP, Subrat Pathak, says the contest is akin to a "cricket World Cup clash between India and Pakistan" not giving away whether he

means how one-sided these contests have been, the pulsating excitement these matches stir up or the religious divide between the two. Pathak's supporters are as confident as Akhilesh's. "We are winning from here. The excitement among our cadre is palpable and speaks for itself," says Prabal Pratap Singh, party in-charge for the Kannauj assembly seat. While both parties predict their potential victory by margins of 2 lakh votes, people say it will be a closely contested battle. "It may come down to a paper-thin margin," says Dharendra Mishra, an 'attar' trader. "In 2014, Dimple Yadav triumphed over Pathak by 19,907 votes. In 2019, he defeated her by 12,353 votes. These are slim wins in a constituency with almost 20 lakh voters." Before 2019, BJP won Kannauj just once — in 1996 — when Chandra Bhushan



SCENT OF SUCCESS?

Yadav defeated Chhotey Lal Yadav, a three-time MP from Janata Party who had jumped ship to SP. Party loyalists even attribute Pathak's win to the feud within the Yadav clan. "People did not appreciate the dispute. Shivpal ji (Akhilesh's uncle) was upset, and it had severe repercussions in the polling booths," says Ramasree Yadav, a staunch SP supporter. As the streets of Kannauj bustle with activity, workers from both parties have

fanned out across the constituency armed with campaign material and unwavering resolve. "During the 2019 polls, the names of many traditional SP supporters were missing from the electoral rolls. Ensuring this does not happen again is our most crucial task," emphasises Prabal Pratap Singh. In the complex tapestry of caste dynamics, alliances shift like desert sand, shaping the contours of electoral outcomes. From influential

Brahmins and Yadavs to decisive Dalits, each community carefully weighs its options. "There are two ways of looking at the contest — as 'Pathak vs Yadav' or 'Modi vs Yadav'," observes Mishra. The constituency has over 19 lakh voters, with approximately 3 lakh Muslims, and Brahmins and Yadavs each a shade more than 2.5 lakh. Dalits, the largest demography with a population of over 4 lakh, can sway the outcome. Alongside, Rajputs, Vaishyas, Lodhs and Kurmis also wield considerable influence. Despite the Dalit population, Mayawati-led Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has never won the constituency. "This time, she has nominated Imran Bin Jafar, a move that will only divide Muslim votes," a Dalit voter says. While Akhilesh has a robust support base in Kannauj, credited for developmental initiatives such as the establishment of a medical college, a 100-bed hospital, a bridge spanning the Kali river, and the construction of roads in every colony, the



SHORELINE SORROW

Trapped in net of apathy, Kolis fish for a better deal

Bella Jaisinghani & Mohua Das | TNN

Mumbai: The 2024 Lok Sabha elections have put the spotlight back on the otherwise forgotten Kolis — the fishing community of Mumbai. Considered one of the original inhabitants of the city, Kolis are finding it hard to eke out a living due to overfishing, use of purse seine nets, pollution, steep rise in fuel prices and govt apathy. The issue of depleting livelihood is a raging concern among the community that has prompted GenNext to pursue other jobs. Kolis, who have faced neglect from successive govt both at the state and Centre, seldom vote en bloc. Most mainstream political parties have some foothold in Koliwad. Some lean towards the Marathi-led Shiv Sena or MNS, others NCP, with old-timers sticking to Congress, while nationalists are enamoured with BJP. However, these Lok Sabha polls are the first since the split in Shiv Sena and NCP and will be a litmus test in Koliwad across Maharashtra's 720 km coastline. In Mumbai region, large settlements are located in Andheri Versova, Khar Danda, Worli, Madh, Colaba, Vasai and Satpatti. Tushar Munde, secretary of Versova Koli Jamat Trust, says, "The next central govt must reduce diesel rates. Secondly, public infra projects must be developed mindfully. Some compensation must be given to us for projects like Coastal Road that hamper fishing. Koliwada boundaries must be identified so that we can redevelop our homes along the coastline. But most political parties only provide false assurances." In the Khar Danda settlement, Ratnadeep Bane, chairman of Vyavasik Sahakari Sanstha, says the Coastal Road has decimated shore fishing, leading to a 50% decline in business and made navigation for deep-sea fishing boats challenging. The community conducted a joint survey with the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation, fisheries department, Maritime Board, Mangrove Cell, and Kolis from Chimbai, Parmeshwari, Juhu Morgaon and Khar Danda. "We suggested locations for boat navigation based on our knowledge," says Bane. It also engaged with the MSRDC to establish a clear navigation path. "They allocated two spans on either side of the watchtower, but the blueprint was never shared with us. The designated area has proved to be problematic as it's too close to the rocks," recalls Bane. Creeks resemble cesspools, polluted by industrial effluents and garbage inflow. Versova seafront is a vast expanse of dirty brackish water — one glimpse would deter any buyer of fish here. "Plastic waste from canals

and creeks gets entangled in our nets, obstructing water flow and tearing up our nets," adds Deepak Nanaposh of Khar Danda. The community had hoped that the pumping station at the Khar Danda creek, built to mitigate flooding during heavy rains, would trap garbage and clean the nullah waters before it enter the sea. "It's been a decade, but we see no improvement. Instead, the pumping station has reduced water currents," he says. "Illegal use of purse seine nets by LED fishers is another issue," Bane says. Despite a statewide ban in Maharashtra since 2017, fishermen from Alibag and Raigarh still use high-power LED lamps to attract and catch large quantities of fish. "The volume of fish they catch in a single day equals our catch over three months. They also catch baby fish, depleting the fish population," adds Bane. Devendra Tandel, president of Akhil Maharashtra Machhimar Kriti Samiti, says, "Fishing is undergoing a drastic change in terms of methods and demographics. Modernisation of fishing vessels

has resulted in uncontrolled overfishing, depleting the stock of fish in the sea. Ghol and pomfret are on the brink of extinction. Costs are high so fish is more expensive." Tandel says their industry does not merely involve a Koli fisherman who goes out to sea and his wife who sells fish in the market. "There are 'khalashis' (boat workers), tandels (captains of fishing vessels), logistics labourers, transporters, women involved in fish cutting, net makers, ice factory and cold storage workers, wholesalers, suppliers, exporters and local vendors." The younger generation of Kolis is staying away from fishing "for the sole reason that there are no fish left in the sea". So, our youth opt for other jobs, even as people from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have got involved in mental work, thereby eating away the share of fishermen. The younger generation hopes for better infrastructure and sustainable fishing that involves govt officials doing their job in letter and spirit."



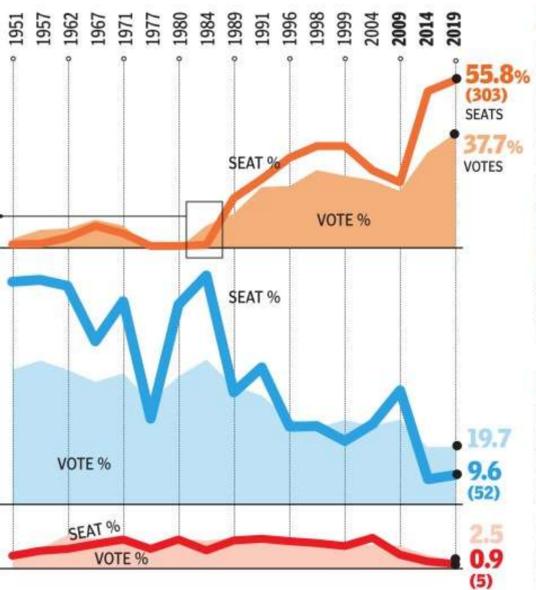
The younger generation of Kolis is staying away from fishing & pursuing other jobs for the sole reason that there are no fish left in the sea

Why a party can get more votes, but win fewer seats

The first-past-the-post system of voting — where electors cast a vote for a single candidate, and the candidate with the most votes wins — can often lead to counterintuitive outcomes. A party's gain or loss of seats can many times be disproportional to its vote share. If a party crosses its 'threshold votes', it gains disproportionately, and if its votes fall below this threshold, its seats fall dramatically. Since analysis of a party's electoral performance is more focused on seats, people tend to ignore the fact that a party might not be winning seats but still remains a force on the ground. Other factors like elections getting two-cornered from multi-cornered and the formation of alliances also impact how votes get converted to seats.

BJP's gain in 2014 and the collapse of Congress and Left

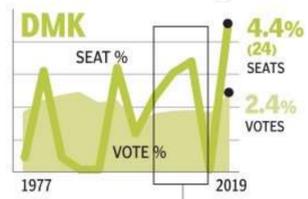
BJP • From the time of Jan Sangh — 1951 to 1971 — to BJP's first election in 1984, the party had a low conversion ratio of votes into seats. Its vote share was always higher than its seat share. In 1984, it got 7.4% of the votes and 0.4% of the seats. From the next election onwards, when it crossed 11% of votes — which might be near the party's seat conversion threshold — it saw a dramatic increase in seats. From 1989 onwards its seat share was always higher than vote share. Between 1984 and 2014, the party peaked in 1998-99, when it got around 24-26% of the votes and 34% of the seats. The next dramatic jump came in 2014. From 18.8% in 2009, vote share increased by 12.5 percentage points to reach 31.3%. Share in seats, however, improved by more than 30 percentage points — from 21.4% in 2009 to 51.9% in 2014.



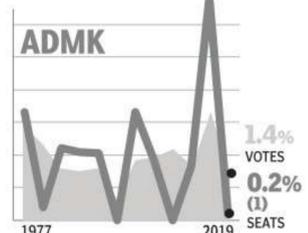
Cong • Congress, on the other hand, went on a different trajectory. In 2009, the party had got 28.6% of the votes and won 37.9% of the seats. In the next election, its vote share declined by 9 percentage points while seats came down by almost 30 percentage points. Despite getting around 20% votes in 2014 and 2019 — which seems to be lower than the party's threshold — the party got less than 10% of the seats, indicating that seats alone are no benchmark to understand its ground presence.

Left • Between 2004 and 2009, the Left's vote share increased by 0.4% while seats increased by 3.1%, indicating that for that election the party's threshold was between 7% and 8% of votes. In the next election, the party saw a 0.6 percentage point dip in its vote share but the seat share came down by 6.4 percentage points.

Fence-sitting voters are the real sultans of swing



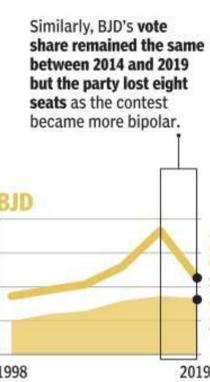
For many parties like DMK and ADMK, the dedicated voters remain loyal as their vote share remains constant but seats might change dramatically. This could be because fence-sitting voters with no committed loyalty to DMK or ADMK switch votes in different elections. For instance, in the 2004, 2009 and 2014 LS elections, DMK's vote share remained constant at 1.8% while its seats changed from 16 to 18 to 0 in the three elections. In 2019, its vote share increased by 0.6 percentage points while its seats increased by 4.4 percentage points. Similarly for ADMK, between 2009 and 2014, the vote share increased by 1.6 percentage points while the corresponding increase in seat share was more than 5 percentage points.



TMC gained 0.4% votes, lost 12 seats...

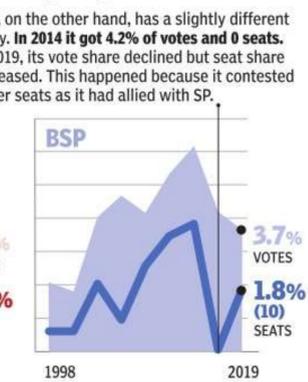
Trinamool Congress' vote and seat shares show an interesting trend. Between 2004 and 2009, its vote share increased by 1.1 percentage points while seat share saw a 3.1 percentage point rise. Similarly, BJD's vote share remained the same between 2014 and 2019 but the party lost eight seats as the contest became more bipolar.

For these elections, which were multi-cornered between the Left, Trinamool and Congress, the party's threshold might be around 3% votes, and hence a small jump in votes gave a disproportionate gain in seats. Elections in West Bengal kept on becoming two-cornered, which might have pushed the threshold vote share. Between 2014 and 2019, when the election was between BJP and Trinamool, the party's vote share increased by 0.4 percentage points while its seats dropped by 2.2 percentage points.



...but BSP lost 0.5% votes, yet gained 10 seats

Samajwadi Party saw a slight increase in its vote share but lost 18 seats between 2009 and 2014 because of a similar reason. BSP, on the other hand, has a slightly different story. In 2014 it got 4.2% of votes and 0 seats. In 2019, its vote share declined but seat share increased. This happened because it contested fewer seats as it had allied with SP.



In these Bihar villages, massacre wounds unhealed but water is new battlefield

Manoj.Chaurasia @timesgroup.com

Laxmanpur-Bathe/Senari: A worn-out sari partly covers her head as Uma Devi, 45, sits forlornly at the door of her unplastered house. Campaign vehicles belonging to various political parties come and go by, blaring poll slogans but she remains unmoved, her eyes barren of hope. Laxmanpur-Bathe village, where the soil still whispers the anguish of the 1997 massacre in which 58 Dalits were killed, lies trapped between horrors of its past and broken promises of its future. "No one comes to see us once elections are over. They show their faces only before elections," grumbles Uma, who lost nine members of her family to the carnage. On the night of Dec 1,

1997, an armed gang of Ranvir Sena, a private militia of upper-caste landlords, entered the houses of Laxmanpur-Bathe villagers — some already asleep after a day's hard work and others planning to go to bed — and resorted to indiscriminate firing. The victims included six girls in the age-group of 3-12, nine boys between 1 and 10, 26 females between 15 and 70, and 17 males in the age-group of 15-60. Of the 26 women killed, eight were pregnant, as per police records. "The horror is yet to vanish from my mind. Mine is a haunted house," says Uma. It is not just the loss of lives that weighs heavy on her heart, but the stark reality of daily existence without even the most basic necessities. "We have to fetch water from the Sone river as no water is available

here," she rues, adding that CM Nitish Kumar's piped water scheme has turned out to be a big failure. "The Sone, which flows by this ill-fated village, is the only hope." Vijyanti Devi's grief mirrors Uma's. Her home is a shrine to six lives — including her mother-in-law and sister-in-law — lost in the same carnage, her heart exhausted by unkept assurances. "Leaders have again started visiting our homes and making scores of promises. We are tired. When they can't even solve our water crisis, how can we believe them?" says Vijyanti, 40. Laxman Rajvanshi, 70, who lost his wife, daughter and daughter-in-law to the massacre, refuses to forget the horror. "I lost almost my entire family in one go but



A memorial for 1999 Senari carnage victims — 34 upper-caste villagers were slaughtered. Sunaina Devi (right), who lost 7 family members to the 1997 Laxmanpur-Bathe massacre that claimed 58 Dalit lives, at a memorial



the absence of fundamental amenities, like roads, hospitals, and irrigation, in the village — home to about 200 families — serves as a stark reminder of the indifference. Political pledges ring hollow through its desolate streets as majority of victim families

what pains me the most is the conduct of politicians. They have ignored our village," says Rajvanshi, whose only son was given a class IV govt job on compensatory grounds. In the neighbouring village of Senari, where the scars of another massacre still linger, the tale of neglect finds a bitter resonance. On March 18, 1999, 34 upper-caste villagers — all Bhumihars — were slaughtered here, supposedly by Maoists to avenge the Laxmanpur-Bathe massacre. Twenty-five years on, as the wounds refuse to heal,

the absence of fundamental amenities, like roads, hospitals, and irrigation, in the village — home to about 200 families — serves as a stark reminder of the indifference. Political pledges ring hollow through its desolate streets as majority of victim families

have shifted to nearby towns after their kin were given govt jobs on compensatory grounds. Locals say two days after the massacre, George Fernandes, Nitish Kumar and Ram Vilas Paswan reached the village and promised full attention the moment they formed their own govt in the state. "Abhi to hamare paas kuchh nahi hai (Right now, we do not have the power to do anything)," Nitish, then Samata Party leader, had said to pacify the locals, recalls villager Radhe Mohan Sharma. "Keval wada karke chale jate hain (They leave after making poll promises)," says 58-year-old Sharda Devi, whose 16-year-old son Rajesh Kumar was slaughtered in Senari. Brahma Devi, 60, who lost her husband and a son to the bloodshed, has shifted to

Gaya with her other son, switching over to sharecropping. "It is troubling. Senari doesn't even have a good road that can be used in the event of any emergency," she says. Laxmanpur-Bathe and Senari are part of Bihar's Jahanabad Lok Sabha constituency that votes on June 1. Jahanabad MP Chandeshwar Prasad Chandravanshi of Janata Dal (United) says he has been visiting his constituency when free from House sessions. "Imagine the law-and-order situation before 2005 (during the RJD govt)," Chandravanshi says. "But I can't visit every village." Meanwhile, RJD's Jahanabad seat candidate, Surendra Prasad Yadav, says, "RJD has always worked for poor and taken care of their interests. People must trust me."



SPAIN PROSECUTORS SEEK TO DISMISS 2ND TAX FRAUD CASE AGAINST SHAKIRA, CITE INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE

SANDRA BULLOCK SAYS SHE WANTS TO ACT WITH KEANU REEVES AGAIN 'BEFORE I DIE' AFTER LATTER SAYS THEY WOULD 'KNOCK IT OUT OF PARK' WITH 'SPEED 3'

3,500 Israel-bound bombs halted over Rafah use concerns, says US

Report Says Israeli Officials Warned US Arms Pause Could Hit Hostage Talks

US Prez Joe Biden paused an arms shipment to Israel last week to prevent US-made weapons from being used in a long-threatened assault on the city of Rafah, administration officials said Tuesday night, a sign of the growing rift between the US and Israel over the conduct of the war.

Biden withheld 1,800 2,000-pound bombs and 1,700 500-pound bombs that he feared could be dropped on Rafah, where more than a million displaced Gazans have taken refuge, the officials said. The administration is reviewing whether to hold back future transfers, including guidance kits that convert so-called dumb bombs into precision-guided munitions. The decision to delay the delivery of the 3,500 bombs was the first time since the Oct. 7 Hamas-led attack that Biden has used his power to curtail arms as an instrument to influence Israel's approach to the war that followed. A number of Biden's Democratic allies in Congress have for weeks urged him to limit or halt arms shipments to Israel, something he had refused to do until now because of his strong support for the effort to destroy Hamas.

Israeli officials disclosed the weapons pause to Axios earlier this week, but US officials refused to confirm it until Tuesday night. The fact that they finally did so was a clear indication of how much frustration is growing among administration officials that their Israeli counterparts are not heeding US warnings against a major operation in Rafah. Confirmation came hours after Israel sent tanks into the city. US defence secretary Lloyd Austin also, on Wednesday, confirmed the weapons delay.



Displaced Palestinians arrive on a beach near Deir el-Balah in central Gaza

Israel forces block Rafah border crossing. UN warns its teams are running out of fuel

Israeli forces have seized the Gaza side of the Rafah border crossing with Egypt, pressing their offensive into the southern city on Tuesday. The closed border means UN humanitarian teams in Gaza will run out of diesel fuel by Wednesday, a senior humanitarian official said, leaving them unable to pump drinking water, maintain communications and deliver aid. Israel's air force said it had struck "over 100 terror targets" across the entire territory in the past 24 hours, including military structures and launching areas for rockets. The Gaza health ministry said Israeli bombardment since Tuesday had led to "a significant increase in the numbers of dead and wounded," particularly in Rafah. It did not provide specific numbers for those killed in Rafah but said Israeli forces killed 55 people and injured 200 more across the entire territory in the preceding 24 hours. AGENCIES

telling the Senate Appropriations Defence subcommittee that the US paused "one shipment of high payload munitions." He said, "We're going to continue to do what's necessary to ensure that Israel has the means to defend itself. But that said, we are currently reviewing some near-term security assistance shipments in the context of unfolding events in Rafah." Austin told lawmakers, "It's about having the right kinds of weapons for the task at hand. A small diameter bomb, which is a precision weapon,

that's very useful in a dense, built-up environment, but maybe not so much a 2,000-pound bomb that could create a lot of collateral damage." He said the US wants to see Israel do "more precise" operations.

Axios, on Wednesday, reported that senior Israeli officials have warned their US counterparts that the Biden administration's decision to pause weapons shipments could jeopardise hostage negotiations, citing two unidentified sources briefed on the matter. One US official said the ad-

ministration began reviewing arms shipments last month when it became clear that Israel seemed to be reaching a decision on a Rafah operation. Biden initially took the position that Israel should not attack Rafah without a plan to effectively minimise civilian casualties, but in recent weeks the White House has increasingly indicated that it did not believe such a plan was even possible.

Israel has not made clear whether it is on the verge of opening the assault on Rafah but has taken actions in the last couple of days that seemed to hint it was moving in that direction. Israeli forces ordered the evacuation of 110,000 civilians from Rafah and mounted air strikes against targets on the border areas of the city in response to Hamas rockets that killed four Israeli soldiers over the weekend. Israel called the entry of tanks into Rafah and seizure of the city's border crossing with Egypt on Tuesday a limited operation to eliminate Hamas fighters and infrastructure tied to the rocket attack.

Biden made no mention of his decision to withhold the bombs on Tuesday, but repeated his support for Israel. "My commitment to the safety of the Jewish people, security of Israel, and its right to exist as an independent Jewish state is ironclad even when we disagree," he said.

The administration is not halting all weapons to Israel. In fact, officials said the administration had just approved the latest tranche of aid amounting to \$827 million worth of weapons and equipment. The administration intends to send "every dollar" of the money just appropriated by Congress, the officials said. NYT & AP

In fresh blow for Sunak, another Tory lawmaker defects to Labour

London: British PM Rishi Sunak was accused Wednesday of leading a "chaotic" govt as another one of his Conservative lawmakers defected to the main opposition Labour Party ahead of a looming general election.

In a stunning move just ahead of weekly prime minister's questions, Natalie Elphicke crossed the floor of the House of Commons to join the ranks of Keir Starmer's Labour Party, which appears headed for power after 14 years. "We need to move on from the broken promises of Rishi Sunak's tired and chaotic govt," said Elphicke, who represents the constituency of Dover in southern England which is at the front-line of migrant crossings from France. "Under Rishi Sunak, the Conservatives have become a byword for incompetence and division." Elphicke is the second Conservative lawmaker to defect to Labour in two weeks after Dan Poulter quit in anger over the govt's handling of the National Health Service.

The defection of Elphicke is particularly surprising as she was widely considered to be on the right of the Conservative Party and has been hugely critical of Labour in the past. But she has recently been increasingly disapproving of the govt's approach to migrant crossings. "From small boats to biosecurity, Rishi Sunak's govt is failing to keep our borders safe and secure," she said. REUTERS

Pak court orders transfer of Imran's wife to same jail

Islamabad: The wife of former Pakistan PM Imran Khan was moved Wednesday from house arrest to the same jail as her husband, lawyers said, where the pair will serve matching prison terms for illegal marriage. Bushra Bibi, 49, and Khan, 71, have both been convicted of corruption and breaking Islamic marriage laws in the lead up to Feb's general election.

"She has already been shifted to a female ward of the jail on her own request," Intazar Hussain Panjutha, a lawyer for Khan's PTI party, told AFP. She had been held at the home she shared with Khan—declared a sub-jail—on the outskirts of the capital for the past three months. Khan is also serving a concurrent 10-year term for leaking state secrets. She had made repeated requests to be "treated as a commoner" and taken to the prison, a spokesman for the party said. PTI

To rein in migration, Aus raises minimum savings for student visa

Sydney: Australia said Wednesday it would raise the amount of savings international students will need to get a visa and warned several colleges of fraudulent student recruitment practices, as part of efforts to rein in record migration. From Friday, international students must show proof of savings of at least A\$29,710 (\$19,576) to get their visa, the second increase in seven months. It was raised to A\$24,505 from A\$21,041 in Oct.

The moves follow a raft of actions in recent months to tighten the student visa rules as the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions in 2022 triggered a sudden influx of migrants, exacerbating pressure on an already tight rental market. English language require-



From Friday, int'l students must show proof of savings of at least A\$29,710 (\$19,576) to get visas, the second increase in seven months

ments for student visas were increased in March and the govt has been taking steps to end settings that allowed students to prolong their stay. Home affairs minister Clare O'Neil said warning letters had been sent to 34 education providers for "non-genuine or exploitative recruitment practices". They could be jailed for up to two years and banned from recruiting students if found guilty, she said.

International education is one of Australia's largest export industries and was worth A\$36.4 billion (\$24 billion) to the economy in 2022/23. But record migration, mostly driven by international students, has put the govt under pressure with rental prices soaring across the country. Net immigration rose 60% to a record 548,800 in the year to Sept. 30, 2023. The govt expects its policies could halve Australia's migrant intake over the next two years. "We are significantly reducing migration levels—we are in the middle of the biggest drop in migration numbers in Australia's history, outside of war or pandemic," O'Neil said. REUTERS

China warships docked in Cambodia 5 mths ago, govt says not permanent

Phnom Penh: Cambodia's defence ministry insisted on Wednesday that the months-long presence of two Chinese warships in a strategically important naval base that is being newly expanded with funding from Beijing does not constitute a permanent deployment of the Chinese military in the country.

Questions had arisen after the Centre for Strategic and International Studies reported last month that two Chinese corvettes that docked at the Ream Naval Base's new pier in Dec had maintained a nearly permanent presence there since. Satellite images confirm that the two ships remained there on Wednesday, more than five months since they initially appeared.

The US and others have long worried that the new pier at the Ream Naval Base, built with Chinese funding, could serve as a new outpost for the Chinese navy on the Gulf of Thailand, but Cambodia has said that would not happen. Asked about why the two ships had been there for five months, defence ministry spokesperson Gen Chhum Socheat said they were due to take part in a joint Cambodian-Chinese military exercise later this month, and that they were also involved in training Cambodian sailors. "We have been clear that Cambodia is not allowing any foreign forces to be deployed on its territory," he said. He said the ships were also "testing" the new pier, and



The US has long worried that the new pier at the Ream Naval Base, built with Chinese funding, could be a new navy outpost for China

that they were on show for Cambodia, which was considering purchasing similar warships for its own navy. "The ships are docked for the training period only, they are not staying permanently."

Controversy over Ream Naval Base initially arose in 2019 when Wall Street Journal reported that an early draft of an agreement would allow China 30-year use of the base, where it would be able to post military personnel, store weapons and berth warships. The base sits adjacent to the South China Sea, where China has aggressively asserted its claim to virtually the entire strategic waterway, and also provides easy access to the Malacca Straits, a critical shipping route leading from it to the Indian Ocean.

China only operates one acknowledged foreign military base in the strategically key Horn of Africa nation of Djibouti, but many believe that it is establishing an overseas network. The US has more foreign military bases than any other country, including in the Asia-Pacific. REUTERS

US prez candidate RFK Jr said in 2012 that he had a dead worm in his brain

In 2010, Robert F Kennedy Jr was experiencing memory loss and mental fog. Several doctors noticed a dark spot on his brain scans and concluded he had a tumour; he said in a 2012 deposition reviewed by NYT. He was immediately scheduled for a procedure.

While packing for the hospital trip, he said, he got a call from a doctor who had a different opinion: Kennedy had a dead parasite in his head. The doctor believed that the abnormality seen on his scans "was caused by a worm that got into my brain and ate a portion of it and then died," he said in the deposition.

Now an independent prez candidate, the 70-year-old Kennedy has portrayed his athleticism and relative youth as an advantage over the two oldest people to ever seek the White House: Joe Biden, 81, and Donald Trump, 77. But for decades, Kennedy suffered from atrial fibrillation, a common heart-beat abnormality that increases the risk of stroke or heart failure. He was also diagnosed with mercury poisoning, most likely from ingesting too much fish containing the dangerous heavy metal, which can cause serious neurological issues.

Kennedy, who says he has had no aftereffects from the parasite, could pick up 8% of voters nationwide. His spokeswoman said that any suggestion his health could be an issue was a "hilarious suggestion, given the competition". NYT



Police clear anti-war stir on DC campus, 33 held

Washington: Police using pepper spray cleared a pro-Palestinian tent encampment at George Washington University and arrested demonstrators Wednesday, hours after dozens marched to the home of the school's prez as city officials prepared to appear before Congress on the protest's handling.

District of Columbia mayor Muriel Bowser and Metropolitan police Chief Pamela Smith were called to testify Wednesday at the Republican-led House Committee on Oversight and Accountability, but the hearing was cancelled after the arrests. The mayor said she spoke with Representative James



Police used pepper spray on students at George Washington University, DC

Cramer, chairman of the House panel, on Wednesday and "he expressed his interest in making sure the city and the chief can focus on this ongoing operation" and pulled the hearing. After the crackdown, Bowser told reporters that she and

police made the decision to clear the camp based on shifting information about increased threats to public safety. Smith said there were signs "the protest was becoming more volatile." Among them were indications that protesters had "gathered improvised weapons" and were "casing" university buildings with the possible intention of occupying them.

DC police said 33 arrests were made, including for assault on a police officer and unlawful entry. George Washington had warned of possible suspensions for continuing the camp on University Yard. Police officers in riot gear

also cleared a pro-Palestinian tent encampment at the University of Chicago late Tuesday. Since April 18, more than 2,600 people have been arrested on 50 campuses across the US.

The anti-war movement has spread to other parts of the world too. Protesters built barricades at the University of Amsterdam Wednesday, using desks and railings to block off the canal-side entrance in the heart of the city. Police used a bulldozer to knock down barricades at another UVA site on Tuesday and detained 169 people, but said the varsity had not yet asked for similar intervention on Wednesday. AP & REUTERS

TRENDSETTERS OF 'LEGALISE DRUGS' CAMPAIGN TAKE A STEP BACK

Thailand was 1st in Asia to decriminalise marijuana. It is preparing to do a U-turn

Bangkok: Thailand will re-list cannabis as a narcotic by year-end, its PM said Tuesday, in a stunning U-turn just two years after becoming one of the first countries in Asia to decriminalise its recreational use. The moves come despite rapid growth of a domestic retail sector for marijuana with the industry projected to be worth up to \$1.2 billion by 2025.

"I want health ministry to amend the rules and re-list cannabis as a narcotic," PM Srettha Thavasin said on X. "The ministry should quickly issue a rule to allow its usage for health and medical purposes only." It was not immediately clear when cannabis will be re-listed as a narcotic or what processes must first take place.

Cannabis was decriminalised for medical use in 2018 and recreational use in 2022 under



PM Srettha Thavasin said govt will soon issue a rule allowing usage of cannabis for medical purposes only

Under the changes, which went into effect immediately, adults will still be allowed to possess small amounts of drugs. But they will now have to use them in legal residences, at safe injection sites and at other harm reduction centres established by health authorities. The re-criminalisation of public drug use in British Columbia underscores the difficulties that govt faces as they grapple with the opioid crisis.

After backlash, public drug use is back being a crime in Canada's British Columbia

Ottawa: Canada govt on Tuesday walked back part of a programme allowing people in British Columbia to possess small amounts of drugs, including heroin and cocaine, without fear of criminal charges. At the request of the province and after public and political backlash, people in the province are no longer permitted to use drugs in public places.

Under the changes, which went into effect immediately, adults will still be allowed to possess small amounts of drugs. But they will now have to use them in legal residences, at safe injection sites and at other harm reduction centres established by health authorities. The re-criminalisation of public drug use in British Columbia underscores the difficulties that govt faces as they grapple with the opioid crisis.



A province that was a global pioneer in harm reduction took a step back after political backlash

Even in a province that has been a global pioneer of the harm reduction movement, an approach that seeks to reduce risky behaviour rather than to punish drug users, there are no easy answers. The province's coroner estimated that there were a record 2,511 toxic drug deaths last year. The goals of decriminalising possession were to enable police officers to focus their time on large drug distributors rather than users and encourage users to be open to treatment. NYT

UK's 200-year-old Garrick Club to let women join

London: London's elite Garrick Club voted to allow women to join for the first time since being founded in 1831, responding to growing public pressure to end its archaic all-male setup.

After a vote, female members approved by the Garrick's admissions process can have a place at one of the British establishment's top tables; it boasts King Charles as a current member and 19th century author Charles Dickens in the past.

Located in London's West End theatre-land, the private members club has been criticised this year after a leak revealed its roughly 1,300 members to be who's who of politicians, journalists, judges and actors. While other male-only private clubs still exist in London, the Garrick's high-profile membership triggered debate about elitism and exclusion of women in British society. REUTERS

AROUND THE WORLD



WHAT A FEET: Two paintbrushes between the toes, two in her hands, and fierce concentration etched on her face, Dutch artist Rajacenna van Dam, 31, is crafting 10 paintings at the same time. It started as a party trick, but today her videos attract millions of views. Neurologist Onur Gunturkun says Rajacenna is 'capable of things that neuroscience deems impossible'. 'A brain scan showed that the left and right sides of her brain are three times more connected than average,' he said

Hong Kong court bans protest song, calling it a 'weapon'

Hong Kong court Wednesday granted a govt request to ban a popular pro-democracy anthem, raising further concerns about free speech in the China-controlled city. The decision could give the govt power to force Google and other tech firms to restrict online access to the song in Hong Kong. At issue in the case is "Glory to Hong Kong", which emerged in 2019 as an unofficial anthem for democracy protests and a flashpoint for the authorities, who considered it an insult to China's national anthem. The song has been banned from schools and has drawn angry official rebukes when played, apparently by mistake, at international sports events. The court said the anthem was a "weapon" that could be used to undermine national security. It was the first time a song has been banned in the city since

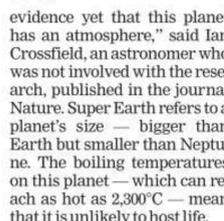
Britain handed the territory back to Chinese rule in 1997.

US rapper Macklemore releases 'Hind's Hall' in support of anti-war stir

US rapper Macklemore has released a song in support of Palestinians that also praises students across the US protesting against Israel's war in Gaza. "If students in tents posted on the lawn / Occupying the quad is really against the law / And a reason to call in the police and their squad / Where does genocide land in your definition, huh?" Macklemore raps in "Hind's Hall". The song is named after the building at Columbia University that students recently occupied and renamed after a six-year-old girl killed in Gaza. Macklemore admonishes the US govt, telling Prez Joe Biden "blood is on your hands." He also criticises the music industry for being "complicit in their platform of silence" while casting Drake and Kendrick Lamar's rap beef as trivial in light of actual war.

Scorching, rocky planet twice Earth's size found to have thick atmosphere

A thick atmosphere has been detected around a planet that's twice as big as Earth in a nearby solar system, scientist reported Wednesday. The so-called super Earth—known as 55 Cancri e—is among the few rocky planets outside our solar system with a significant atmosphere, wrapped a blanket of carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide. Exact amounts are unclear. Earth's atmosphere is a blend of nitrogen, oxygen, argon and other gases. "It's probably the firmest



SEARCH FOR HOME-LIKE PLANET An illustration depicting 55 Cancri e orbiting its star. The scientist says that the discovery is a promising sign that other such rocky planets with thick atmospheres could exist that may be more hospitable



exist that may be more hospitable. The exoplanet 41 light years away is eight times heavier than Earth and circles its star Copernicus so closely that it has permanent day and night sides. A light-year is nearly 9.7 trillion kms. Its surface is encrusted with magma oceans. To identify the makeup of its atmosphere, researchers studied Webb Space Telescope observations before and after the planet passed behind its star. They separated the light emitted from the planet versus

its star and used the data to calculate the planet's temperature. There's evidence the planet's heat was being distributed more evenly across its surface—a party trick atmospheres are known for: Gases from its magma oceans may play a key role in holding its atmosphere steady. Exploring this super-Earth may also yield clues to how Earth and Mars might have evolved. "It's a rare window," said Yenu Hu from Nasa's Jet Propulsion Lab, who was part of the research. AP



*Selected major EV markets, incl. battery electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids

There were 2.7mn public charging points worldwide by the end of last year, with over 900,000 added in 2022

China has invested significantly in EV infra, with over 1mn public charging stations built since 2019

South Korea leads in public charging stations per 1,000 plug-in EVs, while The Netherlands ranks second

China has most charging points globally (1.8mn) but ranks third in chargers per EV due to its large EV fleet



From teens to seniors: RBI talks UPI scale-up with cos

Das Holds Meeting With Bank, Payments App & NPCI Execs

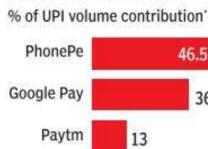
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Payments for minors and senior citizen-friendly features were some of the proposals discussed during a meeting convened by RBI with UPI players. RBI governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday convened a meeting of banks, leading third-party UPI apps, and NPCI. Banks said they have beefed up their systems to manage transactions, which have more than tripled after the pandemic. NPCI is geared up to handle 100 crore transactions daily, which is more than double the current level of transactions.

Some fintechs suggested that merchant discount rates — a fee charged to merchants to facilitate digital payment acceptance — be allowed on UPI payments to enterprise retail. Currently, Google Pay and PhonePe have a large share of the UPI

Smaller Fintechs Seek Revenue Streams

3 Apps Account For Over 95% of All UPI Payments



Source: Worldline; *As of Dec 2023

Bankers said while UPI is among the most secure systems, frauds occurred because people fell victim to confidence tricksters and shared credentials

Meanwhile, most banks do not issue debit cards to minors, which makes onboarding them on to UPI platform difficult

market. Smaller fintechs have said they are not in a position to make large investments to increase their share of UPI transactions because there is no revenue.

There are 25 third-party application providers, which include large players like Bajaj Finserv, Tata Neu, Samsung, Whatsapp, Aditya Birla Digital and Cred. However, PhonePe, Google Pay and Paytm command over 90% market share.

Bankers said that while the UPI system was among the most secure payments,

frauds still occurred because people fell victim to confidence tricksters and shared credentials. However, govt is having a separate discussion to expedite the freezing of accounts where funds have been wrongly transferred.

RBI laws allow those above 10 years of age to independently operate a bank account. However, the UPI platform is not actively promoted among the youth. Most banks do not issue debit cards to minors which makes onboarding difficult. RBI said the discussions

focused on expanding the reach and usage of UPI. Stakeholders provided input and suggestions on scaling up UPI infrastructure, expanding the product portfolio, and addressing the ecosystem's challenges with innovative solutions. Suggestions were also made on integrating potential users into the digital payments ecosystem.

"The suggestions received will be examined, and appropriate action will be initiated by RBI in due course," the central bank said in a statement. RBI has been asking banks to invest in IT capacity. Kotak Mahindra Bank CEO Ashok Vaswani had said the bank would be prioritising investments to building capacity and resilience for IT transactions given that UPI transactions have gone through the roof. RBI has recently restricted the bank from onboarding new customers digitally and issuing credit cards after finding inadequacies in IT system.

RBI lifts curbs on Bank of Baroda app after 6 mths

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: RBI on Wednesday lifted restrictions on Bank of Baroda's app six months after it imposed them over lapses in the customer onboarding process. RBI had on Oct 10, 2023 directed Bank of Baroda not to add customers to its app 'Bob World' following complaints that some bank employees used mobile numbers of strangers to onboard customers for mobile banking to meet enrolment targets.

"RBI conveyed to the bank its decision to lift the restrictions on Bob World with immediate effect, as such the bank is free to onboard customers through the application," the bank said in an exchange filing. It reiterated its commitment to ensuring adherence and compliance with regulatory guidelines. Bank of Baroda is the second-largest PSU bank and the third-largest state-owned bank in terms of active mobile banking customers.

In its 2023 order, RBI had highlighted material supervisory concerns in the onboarding process, and had said that further onboarding will be subject to rectification of deficiencies. At the time of the ban, Bank of Baroda had said that it had started addressing RBI concerns on the HR side as well as in processes. The bank had also assured that it had measures in place to prevent multiple linkages of the app to a single mobile number. Earlier this month, RBI barred Kotak Bank from onboarding new customers digitally.

'Lower net household savings not a concern'

It Was Portfolio Shift Where Savings Were Going Into Real Assets: CEA Nageswaran

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Chief economic adviser V Anantha Nageswaran on Wednesday said that lower flow of net household savings was an account of a shift in portfolio and was not a cause for concern.

"Household net financial savings flows were lower in FY23 and there were some concerns around that, which said households are saving less. But, in reality, it was a portfolio shift where the savings were going into real assets," he said at an event organised by thinktank NCAER. Latest data showed that net financial savings of households fell to a five-year low of Rs 14.2 lakh crore, as financial liabilities soared.

Nageswaran was upbeat on the current economic situation, arguing that India could grow 7% and faster, if some of the impediments can be converted into opportunities, and flagged power sector, bolstering MSMEs as reform initiatives apart from reducing inspections and other compliance burden for businesses at the state level.

"To continue a steady growth rate in FY25 the gap between two financial cycles has to be lengthened. This

will give us the employment generation that we aspire for. If every four-five years, we are running into overheating issues, then it is a problem for the economy. As of now, the economy is better

economy will have grown at 7% or more. The RBI forecast of 7% for FY25 turns out to be either correct or even underestimated, then it would be the fourth consecutive year of 7% or higher growth rate

To continue a steady growth rate in FY25, gap between two financial cycles has to be lengthened. This will give us employment generation that we aspire for. If every four-five years, we are running into overheating issues, then it is a problem for economy. As of now, economy is better placed than before to pursue non-inflationary growth

If that materialises (RBI growth projection), of course, it will be fourth consecutive year after Covid starting from FY22 that economy will have grown at 7% or more. RBI forecast of 7% for FY25 turns out to be either correct or even underestimated, then it would be the fourth consecutive year of 7% or higher growth rate



V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISER

placed than before to pursue non-inflationary growth," govt's chief economist said.

He expected the growth during the last financial year to be around 8%, higher than the current estimate of 7.6%. During the current financial year, while pointing to growth projections by IMF (6.8%) and RBI (7%), CEA said: "If that materialises, of course, it will be the fourth consecutive year after Covid starting from FY22 that the

te." He, however, said a lot would depend on how the monsoon shapes up.

NCAER director general Poonam Gupta, a member of the Economic Advisory Council to PM, too sounded upbeat, arguing that there was increased resilience in the Indian economy due to lower political uncertainty, lower dependence on oil and low current account deficit. She, however, flagged high debt levels as a concern.

NLC lines up \$3.4bn green energy plan

Sanjay.Dutta@timesgroup.com

Nyeveli: NLC (formerly Nyeveli Lignite Corporation) will invest about \$3.4 billion in expanding renewable energy capacity by 394% to almost 7GW (gigawatts), as the state-run lignite/coal and thermal power producer looks to reduce its carbon footprint in line with India's 2070 net-zero target, chairman Prasanna Kumar Mottupallai said.

Easily the largest green investment committed by any state-run coal company in the country, outlay accounts for a third of company's nearly \$11-billion plan to ramp up core mining and thermal generation capacities by 2030. Kumar said a subsidiary, NLC India Green Energy has been formed as the vehicle for future renewable energy investments. Another arm, NLC India Renewables is being put in place for monetising existing solar/wind portfolio and ploughing back proceeds into new projects.

Sensex swings 600 pts, dips at close as FPIs sell

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

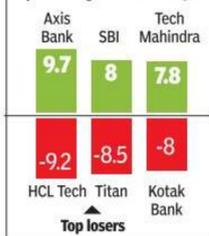
Mumbai: In another volatile trading session, the sensex gyrated over 600 points before closing marginally lower on Wednesday. Tech stocks showed weakness while PSU infra financing stocks like PFC and REC made a stellar comeback, reversing recent slides driven by a proposed stricter RBI project finance norms.

Following Tuesday's slide, markets opened on a weak note with the sensex hitting an intraday low at 73,074 points. The index then rallied to the day's high of 73,685 points before settling at 73,466 points, down 45 points on the day.

Since Lok Sabha polls started in the third week of April, volatility in the stock market has gone up with India VIX, the 'fear index' to gauge the same, currently at a 15-month high.

POLL VAULT

Since voting started (April 19), Top sensex gainers (% change)



The day's trading was marked by strong selling by foreign funds but buying by domestic institutions nearly matched that offloading. At close of trading, net selling by foreign portfolio investors was at Rs 6,669 crore compared to a Rs 5,929 crore net buying by domestic funds, BSE data showed. A recent report by Angel

One Wealth showed how over the last few years, it's the domestic institutions that are not only balancing out foreign fund selling but even helping push up the leading Indian indices.

The day's session saw technology stocks witnessing some selling pressure. Among the leaders, HCL Tech closed 1.3% lower while Infosys was down nearly a percentage point.

There was strong buying interest in the stocks of PSU infra financing companies. At close, the stock price of REC on BSE was up 5.4% at Rs 534 while PFC closed 4.5% higher at Rs 441 and Ireda was up 2% at Rs 171. In the two previous sessions, these stocks had come in for strong selling after RBI on Friday said that it was proposing to hike provisions for financing of on-going projects, in a phased manner, to 5% from the current level of 0.4%.

'Rents rise by 16% across 13 major cities in March qtr'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Rents across 13 major Indian cities surged 16% year-on-year in the March quarter with Greater Noida, Gurugram and Bengaluru taking the lead.

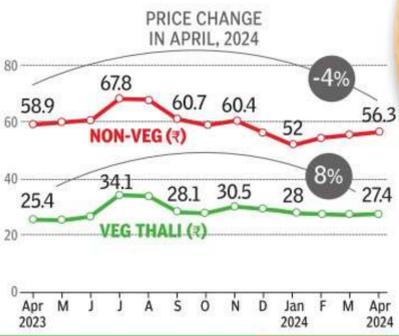
In Greater Noida, an emerging home to several techies and corporate employees, rents soared 32.1% while Gurugram and Bengaluru saw an increase of 24.5% and 23.7%, respectively. Sequentially, rents increased by 1.6% between Oct and Dec 2023, Magricks said in a statement.

The data, which is based on the reading of preferences of over two crore customers, rental accommodation of Rs 10,000 to Rs 30,000 a month was the dominant segment, accounting for 42% of the demand. Chennai, Navi Mumbai and Noida led the rental demand on a quarterly basis. However, the supply couldn't keep pace with the demand and has increased only marginally by 1.8% q-o-q, due to swift absorption of available rental units. Overall, rental demand grew 16% q-o-q during the March quarter.

In Chennai, rental demand increased by nearly 25% q-o-q in the March quarter while in Navi Mumbai and Noida, it grew by 20.1% and 19.2% respectively, the report said.

'PRICES OF VEG & NON-VEG THALIS DIVERGE SINCE NOV'

Cost of a home-cooked veg thali rose 8% year-on-year in April, while that of a non-veg thali declined 4%, according to Crisil's Roti Rice Rate index



Since Nov 2023, the prices of vegetarian and non-vegetarian thalis have been diverging... Going ahead, we expect vegetables prices to remain firm, though an anticipated decline in the prices of wheat and pulses would provide some respite

PUSHAN SHARMA, DIRECTOR-RESEARCH, CRISIL MARKET INTELLIGENCE AND ANALYTICS

WHAT LED TO RISE IN COST OF VEG THALI



Non-veg thali cost declined on 12% YoY fall in broiler prices

WHY THE SURGE: Low base of last fiscal, Damage to potato crop in West Bengal

Note: A veg thali comprises roti, vegetables (onion, tomato and potato), rice, dal, curd and salad. A non-veg thali has the same elements as the veg thali, except for dal, which is replaced by chicken (broiler); broiler prices for April 2024 are estimated figures. Weightage of ingredients does not vary based on volatility in commodity prices

AI startup Atlan valued at \$750mn

Mumbai: AI is perhaps the only new age tech space that has continued to evince investor interest despite a global slowdown in tech funding. US-based AI startup Atlan led by Indian founders Prukalpa Sankar and Varun Banka has bagged \$105-million funding led by Singapore's sovereign wealth fund GIC along with co-investor Meritech Capital at a valuation of \$750million.

Existing investors Peak XV Partners and Salesforce Ventures also participated in the round taking the five-year old company's total fund count to over \$200 million. Atlan is building a platform for AI and data governance. TNN

L&T Q4 net up 10% at ₹4.4k cr

New Delhi: Engineering and construction major L&T on Wednesday reported a 10.2% increase in consolidated net profit at Rs 4,396 crore in the March 2024 quarter on the back of higher income.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 3,987 crore in the year-ago period. The consolidated income of the company rose to Rs 68,120 crore in the March quarter from Rs 59,076 crore recorded in the year-ago period, L&T said in a BSE filing. "The year has concluded on a very strong note for us. We have secured order inflows of more than Rs 3 lakh crore and order book is around Rs 4.8 lakh crore, reflecting the continued trust reposed on us by all our esteemed clients.

"During the year, we successfully completed the maiden buyback of equity shares, in line with our aim to improve shareholder value," chairman and managing director S N Subrahmanyam said. AGENCIES

Tata Power profit rises 11% to ₹1k cr

New Delhi: Tata Power on Wednesday posted an 11% rise in its consolidated net profit to Rs 1,046 crore in the March quarter compared to the year-ago period mainly on the back of higher revenues.

The consolidated profit stood at Rs 939 crore in the quarter ended on March 31, 2023, a BSE filing showed. Total income of the company rose to Rs 16,464 crore in the quarter from Rs 13,325 crore in the same period a year ago. The consolidated net profit in the fiscal year 2023-24 rose to a record Rs 4,280 crore from Rs 3,810 crore in the year-ago period, the company said in a statement.

Total income increased to Rs 63,272 crore in FY24 from Rs 56,547 crore in 2022-23. According to the statement, the company's market cap has surpassed Rs 1.4 lakh crore. Fiscal 2023-24 saw the company achieve its highest-ever revenue and ebitda at Rs 61,542 crore and Rs 12,701 crore, respectively. AGENCIES

Legacy cos pip startups, bag 75% funds in '23

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Traditional companies trumped new age firms to emerge as the favourite of private equity and venture capital investors. Legacy companies cornered bulk of PE-VC investments in 2023 due to their established business models.

The investments have been largely led by PE funds that have been more inclined to back legacy firms. Over the years, PE funds have also actively evaluated deals in new age tech firms and invested in companies in the space — Dream11, Sugar are among startups that have been backed by PE investors like TPG and L Catterton.

Last year, 75% of PE-VC investments flowed into traditional sectors like health-

HEALTH, RETAIL TAKE LEAD

Top PE-VC investments in '23



Last year, 75% of PE-VC investments flowed into traditional sectors like healthcare, retail and energy against 60% in 2022, a report by Bain & Co showed

A slowdown in VC funding took the total count of PE-VC investments to \$39 billion in 2023 from \$62 billion in 2022

care, retail, energy and advanced manufacturing against 60% in 2022, a report by Bain & Co showed.

While investments in healthcare hit a record high of \$5.5 billion in 2023, a series of PE investments into Reliance's retail unit shored up the share of consumer deals. Typically, VCs invest largely in startups,

which entails more risk. PEs, however, tend to invest more in established companies.

Although a slowdown in VC funding took the total count of PE-VC investments to \$39 billion in 2023 from \$62 billion in 2022, India's share of PE-VC investments in Asia-Pacific has grown over the past five years alongside Ja-

pan. China's share declined to 31% in 2023 from 55% in 2018.

"Favourable policies in India such as production-linked incentives, export promotion initiatives, and customs duty rationalisation drove some shift in economic activity and subsequent investments to India.... global firms diversified production outside China," analysts at the firm said.

Even as analysts have flagged sluggish global GDP growth and geopolitical tensions in West Asia as risks to investor appetite, which may lead to cautious deployment of capital in 2024 as well, the overall tally may be better than the previous year. Investments in 2024 continue to see green shoots over 2023, Sai Deo, partner at Bain & Co

told TOI. "India as a centre within Asia-Pacific is becoming important," Deo said.

Last week, TOI had reported that several global and domestic PE and VC funds have raised new funds and are scouting for investments. Share of domestic funds in India has steadily grown, increasing their share of PE investments by 2.5 times over the past four years. "This trend has been accompanied by a significant expansion of India-based teams by PE funds, growing roughly twofold over 2019-23.

"Leading global funds are planning to ramp up capital allocation to India", analysts at Bain said, adding that players such as KKR and Blackstone entered new asset classes like growth and private credit over 2021-23.

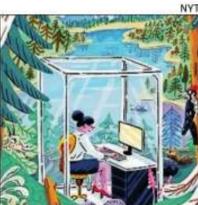
VPN, colour code: How Dell will track 'hybrid' attendance

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Dell Technologies is implementing a new system to monitor office attendance of its hybrid employees, online tech chronicle The Register reported on Wednesday. The company will use electronic badge swipes, VPN, and a color-coding system to track employee presence.

The four colors used are blue, indicating consistent onsite presence; green, indicating regular onsite presence; yellow, showing some onsite presence; and red, indicating limited onsite presence. Dell has a sizable presence in India but doesn't share a breakdown of how many employees it has in India.

Dell recently informed its employees that those in hybrid roles are expected to work from the office for at least 39 days per quarter, which equates to an average of 3 days per week. When TOI reached out to Dell, its spokesperson said, "In today's global technology revolution, we believe in-person



NEW AGE WORK

connections paired with a flexible approach are critical to driving innovation and value differentiation."

Furthermore, a recent employee memo from Dell requires employees to classify themselves as either remote or hybrid. The memo emphasised the consequences of choosing remote work, stating, "For remote team members, it is important to understand the trade-offs: Career advancement, including applying to new roles in the company, will require a team member to reclassify as hybrid onsite." According to a recent regulatory filing, Dell has approximately 120,000 employees.

Birla eyes \$1.2bn from Novelis IPO

Billionaire Kumar Mangalam Birla's Hindalco Industries is considering seeking about \$1.2 billion in a planned IPO of US aluminium products maker Novelis, people familiar with the matter said, in what could be one of the year's biggest share sales. Hindalco may target a valuation of about \$18 billion for Atlanta-based Novelis, the people said. The group could seek to list Novelis in New York by Sept, pending approvals from the US Securities and Exchange Commission, the people said. Novelis is the world's biggest maker of flat-rolled aluminium products, used in an array of goods, from cars to soda cans. Novelis said in February it had filed confidentially for the listing with the SEC.

Deliberations are ongoing and details of the fundraising, including size, could change, the people said. The aluminium products maker may also still decide not to proceed with an IPO, they said. A representative for Hindalco declined to comment. Hindalco purchased Novelis in a multibillion-dollar deal in 2007. The US unit contributed to more than 60% of the Indian company's revenue last financial year. BLOOMBERG



A thought for today

I often quote myself.
It adds spice to my conversation

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Behind The Seats

Vote shares are a good way to read poll politics.
But the ways they matter can vary wildly

First-past-the-post electoral system never fully captures keen contests on the ground. Because victory, seat by seat, is what matters, what's often ignored is that larger parties form coalitions on the strength of smaller parties' vote shares, a metric that reflects a party's strength, regardless of seats won.

All about presence | BJP yesterday claimed it will win 5 seats and pull 20% votes in Kerala, from its 2019 tally of 13% vote share and zero wins. So, on a 7 percentage-point increase, BJP says it'll swing a 5-seat haul. June 4 will show what's what, but how does the math play out?

No set threshold | Conversion of votes to seats is where political parties – and poll pundits – sweat it out. What share guarantees a win? A conversion formula is elusive. In Rajasthan assembly elections, Congress and BJP have won the state on vote share differences of as little as 1 percentage point. When chemistry is not a factor – read Modi waves of 2014 and 2019 – in a multi-party contest, even a 20% vote share can bring victory. Normally a lead of about 9 percentage points in a nearly bipolar contest leads to a sweep. But there are no hard and fast rules.

Averages half the story | Reading vote shares demands careful parsing. State averages can mislead. Take Dec 2014's J&K assembly poll. BJP had the largest vote share – 23%, slightly over PDP's 22.7%, NC's 20.8% and Congress's 18%. BJP votes were in Jammu region. A closer reading showed BJP had 2.2% votes in Kashmir's seats, 22% in Ladakh, but an impressive 48% in the 25 Jammu seats.

Making it add up | In multipolar contests, even slight shifts can cause upheavals. For instance, before the Modi tides, four-cornered contests in UP meant minor changes in vote shares could translate into huge shifts in seats. In state elections in 2007, for instance, BSP won about 30% votes, SP 26%, BJP 17% and Congress 8.5%. In 2012, SP raised its tally by barely 3 percentage points, but its seats went from 97 to 224. BSP's vote share (2012) was about 4.5 percentage points lower than in 2007 – seats crashed from 206 to 80. It is this unpredictability that drives parties to form alliances. A large vote share scattered across constituencies does not make a winner.

AGAIN & AGAIN

Air India's business decisions are its prerogative.
But another pilot strike shows poor management

India's aviation sector is in a strange place. Airfares are soaring and profitability is high, but passengers are increasingly frustrated. Yesterday, it was the turn of Air India Express to be confronted by irate passengers. Over 80 flights were cancelled after cabin crew went on mass sick leave, a euphemism for industrial action.

Merger blues | AI Express is part of the Tata group's aviation business. It's the second time since April that an airline in the group inconvenienced passengers because of internal turmoil. The Tata group is in the midst of merging different airlines in its portfolio. That's a business decision, and it's the group's prerogative. However, when the fallout of the decision affects passengers, it reflects poorly on the way the process is being managed.

No slack available | India's aviation market is today characterised by tightness. The post-Covid recovery in passenger traffic is being serviced by fewer aircraft than the phase before the outbreak of the pandemic. One result of this situation is a sharp increase in airfares. In addition, the tight market means that mass cancellations like that of AI Express flights result in great hardship for passengers. AI Express operates on international routes in addition to domestic ones. The mass cancellation has had a particularly harsh impact on passengers booked to fly overseas.

Duopoly overhang | Close to 90% of the domestic aviation market in the Jan-Mar quarter was serviced by IndiGo and the Tata group's airlines. It's a market close to being a duopoly, which means that there's not enough competition. One result of it is that airfares, which are high, are expected to stay that way for a while. Globally, the aviation industry is also experiencing supply constraints because of production problems among companies.

Aviation regulator DGCA needs to nudge airlines to ensure their internal problems don't cost passengers more.

Hat tricks

Indian election times are turban-ulent times

Bachi Karkaria

Neta rhymes with pheta, no? That's why all those addressing election rallies resemble bridegrooms – or bearers. Both looks are valid. One will arrive to baarat-grade band-baaja; the rest will have to remain wait-ers. Having thrown their hat in the ring, our leader-cadre dons traditional headgear in this five-yearly doff to people power. The variety makes for impressive optics, but 'apt-ics' are trickier since every region proudly boasts its own pheta-pagri-patka-safaa.

In Maharashtra, the billed speaker must switch from Kolhapuri to Purneri to intriguing Peshwai. Add the pheta sported by bike-borne battalions of Maratha women in navvari saris who varroom through the streets on May 1, state formation day. It's even more challenging in Rajasthan where there are as many turban-tying types as those claiming sun-moon ancestry. Udaipur's newish super deluxe hotel spent months getting the authentic Mewari pagdis for restaurant staff. One wrong twist would result in faces akin to the lal-maas.

So, do star campaigners too include sartorial aides in their entourage to avoid the electoral equivalent of wardrobe malfunction? Moreover, what ultimately happens to that array of headgear? Is it restyled for the next foray? Auctioned to buy more laddoos for overworked party workers? Or, will a future Nationalist Gallery showcase a permanent collection of those once worn by our netas?

For the present, these past months have displayed more than the full 2.278 yards of the traditional 82-inch turban. Some wearers look the fable's crow in borrowed plumes, but some have the swag blag to carry it off. Bharatiya Janata gets more bang for its heat-stroke when the party leader also looks like a Wow when promising a future of ditto dazle.

Forget pomp and pageantry. Even simplest headgear gets elevated to metaphor. In politics, loser types are the ones who meekly accept the cap believing that it fits. Winners are those who make rivals wear a topi.

Alec Smart said: "Revanna, straying governors, wrestling's 'Sharam' Singh's seat bestowed on proxy son, judges who think consent is irrelevant in marital sex...What we NOW have is a National Omission for Women."

What Bengal Thinks Today

BJP's campaign in the state hasn't gone as smoothly as planned. CAA hasn't worked for the party. TMC, Congress & CPM are now rivals, not enemies

Shikha Mukerjee



Bengal is crucial for BJP. Retaining the windfall 18 Lok Sabha seats the party won in 2019, out of a total of 42 in the state, is important for any path to a third term. But the party's campaign in the state has kept floundering. So much so that, with three phases of Bengal's seven-phase election completed, BJP finds itself at a point from where salvaging the narrative is difficult.

BJP's CAA rules have misfired | Especially when the underlying issue is the Centre's treatment of the people in the state, one misstep is all it takes to make fidgety voters jump the political fence. And this is precisely what CAA seems to have accomplished.

The rushed notification of rules under CAA was meant to be a BJP masterstroke. Instead, it will likely end up being a disadvantage. And its impact on voter choice will be spread across anything up to 20 Lok Sabha constituencies.

As has the 'redistribution' blame game | A similar fallout can be seen with how BJP's campaign swerved sharply from Viksit Bharat by 2047 to stoking majoritarian paranoia. This took place in the form of an attack that branded all opposition parties as pursuing hidden agendas. BJP has gone to town with how, allegedly, all these parties have been promising more minority appeasement. This includes, per BJP, redistributing wealth, cancelling reservations for Dalits and Tribals and rerouting these to Muslims.

This attack, as it played out in Bengal, clubbed Congress, Trinamool Congress and CPM-led Left all together. And that isn't working out well for BJP. For the

only thing that this attack has ensured is that those who were hitherto enemies have become friends, united in the common cause of fending off BJP in Bengal.

Its opponents are now 'united' | Especially from phase three of the election, as more and more constituencies in south Bengal prepare to vote, there are signs that a

this. Congress, CPM and Trinamool Congress are all on the same side. The common enemy is BJP, an "outsider" as Mamata Banerjee and Left have branded it.

It appears that BJP's backroom strategists did not read the 2021 state assembly election results correctly. Winning 77 seats out of 294 was a message that the Hindutva spin intrinsic to the Sangh Parivar's manual in north India does not work in Bengal.

had swept through the country and gathered such momentum that voters in Bengal believed a new strong force had risen. Votes from CPM shifted in droves to BJP. From 29.9% in 2014, Left's vote share dropped to 7.5%. Conversely, BJP's zoomed to 40% from 17% in 2014.

Murshidabad tells a tale | This time, CPM is confident that voters are returning to its fold in urban and rural areas. By standing for election from Murshidabad, state party boss and politburo member Mohammad Salim has gambled on three things in his constituency. One, a transfer of votes from Congress to CPM. Two, sweeping up anti-incumbency votes both from Trinamool (in the wake of the teachers' recruitment scam, Sandeshkhali etc) and BJP (perceived failures on jobs and inflation). Three, the absence of a pro-BJP wave.

What INDIA got serendipitously right | The faceless opposition loosely sheltered by the unwieldy INDIA banner has not bothered with a common manifesto. But this could end up proving a smart, organic strategy that holds good as much in Bengal as it does in Maharashtra, Bihar and perhaps to an extent in Uttar Pradesh. Up against BJP, the game is to consolidate votes and simplify the choice for voters.

The assertion of the politics of the middle, with the Right and the Left as bookends, is a correction of an imbalance. If the collective opposition and its apparently shambolic tactics can nudge BJP even a little way out of its occupation of the middle ground, this would also be a major breakthrough. In Bengal, a Lok Sabha win and a jump in vote share would be the first strong confirmation of a revival of CPM, and therefore the restoration of the missing Left bookend.

The writer is a senior journalist

Bengal votes on May 13 (8 seats) in the fourth of its 7-phase polls



Consider the many BJP stumbles besides the CAA rules. Centre has not been releasing payments for MGNREGA and PMAY, citing irregularities. Then, there are central agency raids. The sexual harassment allegation against governor CV Ananda Bose is also seeing heated exchanges between BJP and the governing party. All in all, the politically experienced Bengal voter has enough reasons to reconsider past preferences.

2019 was different | Looking back, the 2019 election result turned BJP from a small party into the principal opposition. In that election, CPM was reduced to zero while Congress retained its bastions of Baharampur and Malda Dakshin. That was when a Modi wave

POLITICS
Special Series on Elections

significant shift is underway. The results of this movement will unfold over time. But what is already clear is that for all the parties BJP has clubbed together – Congress, Trinamool Congress and CPM-led Left – the principal enemy in 2024 is now BJP.

The confusion and ambivalence of past elections is over. Trinamool is a rival, not the enemy it was earlier, both in the 2021 state assembly and in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Let's underline

Is The Danger As Spicy As Headlines Suggest?

Ethylene oxide (EtO) in packaged spice seems terrible. But science has a more nuanced view: EtO inhalation is bad, small residues in food not so much

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When Hong Kong and Singapore suspended the sale of a few packaged spices and spice blends exported from India a fortnight ago over the presence of 'carcinogenic residue' ethylene oxide, or EtO, it triggered a chain reaction. Australia and then US started testing spices from India.

In the dock were India's largest spice manufacturers, and only pan-India spice retailers, MDH and Everest. MDH denied it used EtO at any point in its production process.

What's the permissible limit of EtO? | EtO is the season's flavour – at the heart of global trade battles. This is because there are no international standards set for EtO's presence in foods or spices. Countries often have their own policies. Since 2020, many food recalls over EtO prompted Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand and Peru last year to propose that FAO-WHO's global food coding body, Codex, evaluate EtO residue in foods and spices, towards setting a global standard.

What's the regulatory position in India? | One part of India's food safety rules deals with 'contaminants, toxins and residues' – a long list of residues, heavy metals, and naturally-existing toxins, each of which has a maximum residue limit or MRL. This is tested against items classed under various food types – milk and dairy, cereal, pulses, veggies and fruits, fish, seafood, meats etc. In the domestic market, spices, barring chillies, don't feature in these long lists of foods and no MRLs are fixed for residues.

Does India have testing facilities? | India's agri labs have a certain renown. Agri certification body APEDA and FSSAI's network of food labs are very well-equipped to analyse regulated food contaminants and toxins – pesticide residues, heavy metals etc, says ICAR

scientist Kaushik Banerjee.

As research continues, in 2022 following EU red flags, FSSAI had said till India sets its own MRLs for residue in spices, testing for EtO would be set at 0.01mg/kg, the standard in Japan and some other countries. An April 8 circular overruled this, making the standard for the time being 0.1mg/kg.

Why is EtO used? | EtO's a basic chemical, a petrochem product, a building block to make plastics, medicines, detergents, adhesives etc. Used in industrial applications for decades, its role in sterilising medical

to be the "single biggest contributor to excess industrial cancer risk from air pollutants nationwide".

Here's the thing. S Chandrasekaran, professor of organic chemistry at IISc, says EtO "as an inhalant is more serious...in factories/establishments where large-scale use of EtO for fumigation is done, or in places where EtO is used as a raw material for conversion to other useful chemicals". But the key point he makes is that, "presence of EtO as residue in spices is usually very small, and less likely to harm than as an inhalant."

In short, word on EtO residue being carcinogenic is inconclusive, globally, while EtO as an inhalant has an established carcinogenic link.

How much EtO is too much? | EU prohibits any use of EtO in food imports. In US and Canada, MRLs for EtO are 7mg/kg on various fresh products. EtO MRL for walnuts is 50mg/kg. South Korea and Japan have a limit of 0.01mg/kg. Singapore allows EtO only in whole spices, up to 50mg/kg.

In India, research is at the stage of identifying analysis methods to correctly estimate undesirable residues – only then can crop-specific MRLs be fixed. It's work-in-progress. Banerjee says that while the capacity of Indian labs to analyse pesticide residues, mycotoxins and heavy metals is satisfactory, research on other contaminants and toxins is limited.

A big gap in research is the lack of validated analytical methods, regulatory limits, and also poor standards of 'label claims' of pesticides. A label claim is the statement on ingredients, process, and function claims, regulated by govt agencies to ensure that they're truthful.

Everest and MDH will be inspected for flouting export norms, but the bottomline, according to scientists, is that the science so far does not indicate a strong carcinogenic link regarding exposure to EtO through food. "A daily consumption of 0.037 micrograms of EtO per kg of body weight is considered of minimal concern," says Banerjee. Let's stick to science.



equipment has been noteworthy. The gas slips into nooks and crannies of devices to zap lurking micro-organisms, which are a source of infection.

Similarly, EtO has been used to fumigate spices, at one time seen as the go-to chemical to preserve spices and herbs, in reducing bacterial/microbial loads. EtO has proven ability to eliminate disease-causing microorganisms, such as salmonella.

Is EtO carcinogenic? | Consider this. On April 18, US EPA finalised new standards for cancer-causing chemicals. The regulation included EtO, which a study had found

Calvin & Hobbes



Sacredspace

In politics we presume that everyone who knows how to get votes knows how to administer a city or a state. When we are ill...we do not ask for the handsomest physician, or the most eloquent one.

Plato

Cultivating Contentment As Conscious Practice

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

The Divine has granted you all the little pleasures of the world, but the highest of them all – eternal bliss – can be had only by going to the Divine.

It is difficult to get into bliss. It dawns in you after many lifetimes, and once you are in it, it is even more difficult to get out of it. We seek bliss, divine union with the Source all our lives, but the world keeps getting in the way. There are so many inexplicable, incomprehensible ways of not coming home; a zillion distractions keep you from moving towards that goal.

We keep our minds alive through cravings and aversions – through should and should not. The mind must die for bliss to dawn. The abode of all the devas or divinities is bliss. Only in this physical body can you comprehend and uphold bliss.

Seeing our life and the universe as one unit of energy removes us from the mind's chatter and brings us closer to our true nature. What does it mean to see everything as a unit of energy? Like the rainbow, whatever colour is there, it is still light. It doesn't matter whether it's blue, green, yellow, orange, or violet. In the same way, all different emotions are also part of one light, one energy.

Vedant, the highest knowledge, is about letting go and letting be. What are you 'letting go' of? The small mind. Due to ignorance, all the mental gymnastics that you go through becomes negative energy. We call them negative feelings because they restrict you. But still, it's energy. The same energy becomes positive with wisdom. Energy with wisdom is bliss.

That one field of consciousness from where everything has come, in which everything is, and which is everything, is called Brahmn. That's what the Brahma Sutra or Vedant is all about. The Brahmn is all around us. It's always there. This energy is wisdom and knowledge; when practised, it manifests as bliss.

With ignorance, the same energy manifests as sadness, anger, rage, and jealousy.

When you dislike someone or something, it only stiffens your heart and this hardness takes long to soften again, trapping you away from true joy. Nothing in the material world can bring lasting contentment. Seeking contentment in the material world only leads to discontentment, and negativity. This negativity eventually peaks, and like a full cloud, it bursts and returns to

the divinity. You cannot escape God whether you take the longer route of negativity or the instant approach of positivity, faith, and contentment.

Secondly, when you know there is someone to guide you, to take care of you, then also your smile does not vanish. Thirdly, when you see that you are here to give, to contribute that also gives you strength to move through those moments when you cannot smile.

Lastly, know that bliss is a conscious practice. Practising bliss is like maintaining hygiene. You can't say cleanliness will happen all by itself. You need to brush your teeth, take a shower, and keep things clean. Similarly, contentment and happiness also need to be practised. But if we've conditioned our mind to be miserable, we remain in that energy only. It's the same energy, and we must decondition it and make our energy radiate bliss and happiness.



DEMOLITION MEN!

Travis Head And Abhishek Sharma Pummel LSG As SRH Chase Down 166-Run Target In 9.4 Overs

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Hyderabad: On a wicket where Lucknow Super Giants batters struggled to score, Travis Head (89*; 30b, 8x4, 8x6) and Abhishek Sharma (75*; 28b, 8x4, 6x6) put on a batting masterclass to power Sunrisers Hyderabad to a crushing 10-wicket victory at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

Chasing a modest 165/4, thanks largely to Ayush Badoni's (55*; 30b, 9x4) and Nicholas Pooran's (48*; 26b, 6x4, 1x6) stand of 99 runs for the fifth wicket, Sunrisers chased down the total in a mere 9.4 overs. Their seventh win propelled them to third spot in the points table.

Head equalled the record for fastest half-century for SRH in 16 balls, joining his partner Abhishek, who had hit a 16-ball half-century against Mumbai Indians here earlier this season. At the other end, Abhishek got his half-century in 19 deliveries.

"I'm lost for words. We've watched that batting on TV but this was unreal. Everything was hitting the middle of the bat. Kudos to their skill, they've worked very hard on their six hitting."

—KL Rahul | LSG CAPTAIN

OPEN AND SHUT CASE! Abhishek Sharma (left) and Travis Head celebrate SRH's speedy win over LSG in Hyderabad on Wednesday



The duo smashed 50 runs in 3.1 overs and 100 runs in 5.4 overs as the Powerplay produced 107/0. Head was at his brutal best, hitting Naveen-ul-Haq for 22 in the fifth over to race to his half-century. In the next over, Abhishek, who was dropped on 24 off Ravi Bishnoi in the 4th over, reached his half ton with a six off Badoni.

None of the Super Giants bowlers made any impression. Krishnaappa Gowtham was the best of the lot with an economy rate of 14.50. All the other bowlers went at over 17 an over!

Abhishek finished off the game at 167/0 with a six off Yash Thakur over extra cover. Earlier, choosing to bat, Super

3 This is SRH's third triumph by a 10-wicket margin in the IPL, one each against Gujarat Lions in Rajkot on April 21, 2016, vs Mumbai Indians in Sharjah on Nov 3, 2020 and against LSG in Hyderabad on May 8, 2024.

167/0 SRH's winning score after 9.4 overs is the highest ever at this stage in an IPL match, zooming past their own 158/4 after 10 overs vs Delhi in Delhi on April 20, 2024.

Giants struggled to get going. Bhuvneshwar Kumar (2/12) removed Quinton de Kock (2) and Marcus Stoinis in successive overs. While Nitish Kumar Reddy took a well-judged catch at backward square leg to dismiss the South African, Sanvir Singh took a brilliant diving catch inches off

the ground at mid-on to get rid of the Australian to reduce the visitors to 21/2 in the fifth over. Bhuvneshwar's tight spell of 2/7 in three overs meant the visitors managed only 27/2 in their first six overs, which is the joint-second lowest powerplay score this season. Krunal Pandya then tried

to switch gears by hitting Jaydev Unadkat for consecutive sixes in the eighth over: Rahul (29) perished in the 10th over of Pat Cummins as they managed 57/3 at the halfway stage.

Birthday boy Cummins ended Krunal's vigil (24 off 21) with a direct throw from mid-off in the 12th over. Badoni breathed life into the Super Giants' innings with a couple of boundaries off Natarajan to reach his half-century in 28 deliveries while Pooran scored 19 off Cummins' final over as the duo added 63 in the last five.

It proved inadequate with the SRH opening duo in such a punishing mood.

HOW THEY STAND

TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
KKR	11	8	3	1.453	16
RR	11	8	3	0.476	16
SRH	12	7	5	0.406	14
CSK	11	6	5	0.700	12
DC	12	6	6	-0.316	12
LSG	12	6	6	-0.769	12
RCB	11	4	7	-0.049	8
PBKS	11	4	7	-0.187	8
MI	12	4	8	-0.212	8
GT	11	4	7	-1.320	8

SCOREBOARD

LSG: KL Rahul c Natarajan b Cummins 29, Q de Kock c Reddy b Bhuvneshwar 2, M Stoinis c Sanvir b Bhuvneshwar 3, K Pandya run out 24, N Pooran not out 48, A Badoni not out 55; **Extras** (lb, w): 3; **4 Total (20 ov; RR: 8.25): 165/4; FoW:** 1-13, 2-21, 3-57, 4-66; **Bowling:** Bhuvneshwar 4-0-12-2, Cummins 4-0-47-1, Shabbaz 2-0-9-0, Vijaykumar 4-0-27-0, Unadkat 2-0-19-0, Natarajan 4-0-50-0

SRH: A Sharma not out 75, T Head not out 89; **Extras** (lb, w): 3; **Total (9.4 ov; RR: 17.27): 167/0; Bowling:** Gowtham 2-0-29-0, Thakur 2-4-0-47-0, Bishnoi 2-0-34-0, Naveen-ul-Haq 2-0-37-0, Badoni 1-0-19-0

Result: SRH won by 10 wickets (with 62 balls remaining)

27/2 LSG's total after the first six overs, the joint-second lowest Powerplay score this season. The lowest is 23/3 by GT vs RCB in Bengaluru on March 4. Punjab had scored 27/3 vs SRH in Mullanpur on April 9.

99* Unbroken partnership between Badoni and Nicholas Pooran, LSG's highest stand for the fifth wicket in the IPL, going past the 87 between Badoni and Deepak Hooda vs Gujarat Titans at Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai on March 28, 2022.

MUMBAI FIRST TEAM TO BE KNOCKED OUT

Following SRH's big win, Mumbai Indians became the first team this season to be eliminated from the playoffs race. MI are currently 9th on the points table and none of the 8,192 possible combinations of match results can end up with them finishing better than 5th on points. They will be able to get to only 12 points if they win their last two games, which won't be enough to make the playoffs.

IMPORTANT TO BOWL ON GOOD LENGTH AT THE DEATH: KULDEEP

New Delhi: Delhi Capitals left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav, who returned match-winning figures of 2/25 against Rajasthan Royals, said his bowling approach to Donovan Ferreira was the key to his side's 20-run win.

Kuldeep gave the twin blows in the crucial 18th over to virtually end RR's hopes chasing down the target of 222. Rajasthan needed 41 from last three overs with the big hitting South African Ferreira at the crease but Kuldeep dismissed him off the first ball of his final over. "I have played against him (Ferreira) in South Africa and I knew he was a backfoot player and wanted to stay a little full and quick and got him out first ball," Kuldeep said. "It is very important to bowl on a good length. That's the main challenge when I bowl in the death overs. I bowled a couple of seam-up deliveries to read what the batters are doing. Just the length



matters for me. That was the plan," he said. Bowling at the death was a concern for DC but skipper Rishabh Pant was a happy man on Tuesday. "As always, Kuldeep delivered. The way our bowlers executed at the back end was the main positive and it was good to see. We'll try to learn from this," Pant said. PTI



IN SEARCH OF LUCK: Punjab Kings' Sam Curran (c) with teammates

Battle for survival as RCB take on Punjab

Dharamshala: Royal Challengers Bengaluru will look for their fourth consecutive victory when they face an unpredictable Punjab Kings here on Thursday. After a horrendous start to the season, RCB have managed to claw their way back. They have the winning momentum on their side, having won their last three games comprehensively. The wins have not only boosted their sagging morale but also taken them to the seventh spot in the points table.

With eight points from 11 games, RCB can still make the playoffs if they win all their remaining three fixtures, although the chances are slim. Punjab Kings too stare at a similar situation. They occupy the eighth spot, having collected eight points from 11 games. However, between

the two, only one team can reach the all-important 14 points mark.

Having beaten PBKS earlier in the season and heading to this clash with three wins on the trot, RCB will feel more confident than the hosts. Virat Kohli remains consistent at the top, while skipper Faf du Plessis broke his string of poor scores with a belligerent knock in the last game.

Will Jacks also impressed with a match-winning century against GT, and Cameron Green showcased his all-round skills with crucial contributions in runs and wickets against Sunrisers Hyderabad. Their bowling department has started clicking with Mohammed Siraj, who is in India's T20 World Cup squad, finally finding his rhythm.

PBKS, on the other hand, will

113 Virat Kohli's only hundred against Punjab, off 50 balls, came in Bengaluru on May 18, 2016. Two other centuries, both by Chris Gayle in Bengaluru, have been scored by RCB against PBKS —117 on May 6, 2015 & 107 on May 6, 2011.

4-17 Piyush Chawla's figures in Dharamshala on May 17, 2011 are the best for Punjab vs RCB.

20.92 Average registered by RCB's No. 4, 5 and 6 batters while aggregating 544 runs in 11 matches, the least by any team for these batting positions this season.

—Stats: Rajesh Kumar

be low on confidence having suffered an inexplicable batting collapse against CSK. The Kings showcased their very best and worst against CSK. Their bowlers were all over the CSK batters but the batting unit choked.

It was another example of how Punjab's season has been this year — unpredictable. They have showcased their potential with away wins over KKR, when they recorded the highest successful run chase in T20s, and CSK. However, they have faced difficulties at home. They have won just one out of five games in Mullanpur, their main home ground. PTI

Samson has Sangakkara's backing as India's No. 1 'keeper-bat for T20 WC

Anindya Chattopadhyay

Hindol.Basu@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Sanju Samson or Rishabh Pant? Who will start as India's No. 1 wicketkeeper-bat in the upcoming T20 World Cup? The situation, at present, is neck and neck, perhaps slightly tilted towards Pant. Being a left-hander in the middle-order with the credentials of a proven match-winner and innovative shot-making make Pant the first choice — as of now.

But Samson is bridging the gap with every innings in the ongoing IPL, the latest one being a swash-buckling 46-ball 86 against Delhi Capitals on Tuesday. The knock didn't land Rajasthan a win, but enhanced Samson's growing reputation with regards to consistency in his batting.

Just going by sheer numbers, Samson has scored 471 runs in the IPL so far at an average of 67.28. His strike-rate of 163.54 is also among the best in the competition.

This isn't one of those seasons where Sanju has started well but withered away as the tournament progressed. Not only has the volume of runs increased, but they've come at more than a fair clip.

After the DC-RR game, Royals head coach Kumar Sangakkara gave further insights into what has gone right for Samson this season. "With Sanju, the biggest thing this season is that he is having a lot of clarity about the way he should



IN THE ZONE: Royals captain Sanju Samson bats as DC counterpart Rishabh Pant looks on in Delhi

focused, there is nothing that he really can't achieve."

The Sri Lankan legend doesn't want to go into the Samson vs Pant debate as of now, but his choice is quite clear. "It's (selecting Samson or Pant) really up to Rahul Dravid and Rohit Sharma and how they see the combination," Sangakkara said. "But Sanju has made his case, so hopefully he'll have a good run in the World Cup."

Most of Samson's runs in the IPL have come at the No. 3 position — a slot that's blocked in the Indian team dynamics. If he plays in the T20 WC, No. 5 might be his given number where he may have to face a lot of spin.

In the IPL, over the years, Sam-

son has been superb in terms of power-hitting against the pacers. This year has been no different. He is striking at 174.03 while scoring 315 runs against the pacemen. But it's his hitting against the spinners that has seen quite an improvement. His overall strike-rate against spin in IPL is 135.8, but this season Samson has scored 156 runs at a strike-rate of 145.79 against the spinners.

"He (Samson) is exceptionally talented against pace and spin. High pace doesn't bother him. Turn doesn't bother him. It's just a case of focusing and trusting the areas that he scores in and really keeping that intent going. He can play any shot in the book. He has got great power to clear the boundary. He is showing how exceptionally gifted he is against spin," Sangakkara reflected.

ter, Scott came back to the co-nancy as the technical director of NBA India Academy. Speaking with TOI after inaugurating the junior national championship in Indore, Arjuna added, "Scott brings with him exceptionally rich experience of 38 years in coaching basketball at the highest levels. As India's head coach from 2012-2015, Scott led the national team to some memorable achievements including defeating Asia's top-ranked team China in 2014. During his tenure he gave our players hope and we see a new India with Scott."

GALLERY

Mongolia shot out for 12, 2nd lowest T20I total

Sano: Seven months after they made their international debut at the Asian Games, Mongolia capped an ignominious milestone when they were bowled out for 12, the second lowest score in T20I history in a match against hosts Japan here on Wednesday. In response to Japan's imposing 217 for 7, Mongolia were folded in 8.2 overs. PTI

ACTION TODAY

CHESS: Champions Tour, 9.45 pm (chess.com youtube); **BASKETBALL:** Celtics vs Cavaliers, 4.30 am (Jiocinema); **CRICKET:** IPL, Bengaluru vs Punjab, 7.30 pm (Star Sports, Jiocinema); **FOOTBALL:** Europa, Semis Leg 2, Atlanta vs Marseille, Leverkusen vs Roma, 12.30 am Friday (Sony).

Paul Stirling to lead Ireland at T20 WC

Dublin: Veteran opening batter Paul Stirling was on Wednesday named Ireland skipper in their 15-member squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup in West Indies and USA. Besides Stirling, the experienced faces in their squad are Andrew Balbirnie and George Dockrell as Ireland begin their campaign against India in their Group A fixture in New York on June 5.

Pakistan, Canada and hosts USA are the three other teams of the group. Ireland's batting lineup features Harry Tector, Lorcan Tucker, Ross Adair, and Curtis Campher. Left-arm seamer Josh Little and Mark Adair will lead the pace attack, which also has the options of Graham Hume, Campher, Barry McCarthy and Craig Young.

Leg-spinner duo of Ben White and all-rounder Gareth Delany will be the two spin options in the side. It will be Ireland's eighth succes-

sive appearance in the competition, having qualified by finishing second in the regional final of the Europe Qualifier, next to Scotland.

Shakib returns to B'desh squad for T20I vs Zim: All-rounder Shakib Al Hasan returned to Bangladesh's T20I squad for the first time in 10 months after the selectors included him for the final two matches against Zimbabwe. Shakib's last appearance was a man-of-the-match performance against Afghanistan in July 2023, when he was captain. An eye problem and a finger injury restricted his appearances after the ODI World Cup last year.

Najmul Hossain Shanto has replaced him as captain in all formats this year. Bangladesh has already clinched the five-match T20I series after taking an unassailable 3-0 lead. The last two matches will be played in Dhaka on Friday and Sunday. AGENCIES

'India picking 4 spinners for WC not surprising, it's their strength'

New Delhi: West Indies pace legend Courtney Walsh is not surprised by India's decision to pick four spinners in their T20 World Cup squad, saying the move aligns with their strengths. India's selectors named Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel and Ravindra Jadeja in their 15-man squad for the marquee event, starting June 1 in the USA and West Indies.

"India picking four spinners I'm not surprised... it seems to be their strength," Walsh said on the sidelines of the launch of the Big Cricket League here. "West Indies have picked three spinners. It's going to be different conditions and everybody has to balance the team," Walsh added.

India skipper Rohit Sharma last week said that he wanted four spinners in the side but did not specifically mention the reason behind the move. It could be because of the slow sluggish wickets



WISE WORDS: Courtney Walsh

in the West Indies or the unusually early starts.

Walsh, regarded as one of the most admired cricketers, feels India has a quality pace-bowling unit to complement their spinners. "India still have quality fast bowlers, most of the teams do, so it will be a very competitive tournament. The majority of the teams have good-quality fast bowlers and spinners.

"It's (the tournament) going to be dominated by the bat possibly. But it is difficult to predict who is going to win

it, difficult to predict which bowler is going to be a stand-out. The teams that execute well will be successful."

West Indies are co-hosting the tournament and former captain Walsh is optimistic about the two-time champions' chances at the T20 World Cup this summer. "I'm expecting them to do very well. It's a nice balanced team and I am very optimistic that they'll play quality cricket. The group is not the easiest but once we reach the super sixes, there's a good chance."

The first bowler to reach 500 Test wickets graced the field from 1984 to 2001. During that period he took 519 scalps from 132 Tests. Asked what advice he'll give to Bumrah, Walsh said, "Stay fit have fun. The more you play the more experienced you get. It's all about managing the injuries well. That will help him become fitter, stronger and better. You can only play if you are fit enough." PTI

Scott back as coach of India basketball team

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Indore: Things are finally getting back on course for Indian basketball. India's most successful basketball coach, American Scott Flemming will soon be back with the national team. The 66-year-old Scott will replace Serbian coach Veselin Matic, who is set to leave the country on May 13.

While announcing the appointment of Scott as the new head coach of the senior men's team, Basketball Federation of India (BFI) president Aadhav Arjuna said, "The tenure of Matic ended recently and he will be going back home. For some months now, we have been in touch with Scott and are happy to appoint him as India's new head coach, again."

In 2015, when Scott decided to leave India, BFI was in the middle of an administrative battle with two factions fighting to stake claim to the federation management. Thereaf-



NEW INNINGS: Scott Flemming

ter, Scott came back to the co-nancy as the technical director of NBA India Academy.

Speaking with TOI after inaugurating the junior national championship in Indore, Arjuna added, "Scott brings with him exceptionally rich experience of 38 years in coaching basketball at the highest levels. As India's head coach from 2012-2015, Scott led the national team to some memorable achievements including defeating Asia's top-ranked team China in 2014. During his tenure he gave our players hope and we see a new India with Scott."

A MATS FINISH

Hummels' Powerful Header Secures Borussia Dortmund's First Final Appearance in 11 Years

Paris: London's calling, but not for Kylian Mbappé.

When Borussia Dortmund's players rushed over to their fans wearing yellow "London 24" T-shirts and joined in the celebrations after knocking out Paris Saint-Germain to reach the Champions League final on Tuesday, Mbappé had long left the field.

Wembley Stadium on June 1 is the final stop on Dortmund's quest for the Champions League trophy, by which time Mbappé will have played his last game for PSG having failed to win the trophy the club's cash-rich Qatari owners so crave.

Goalkeeper Gregor Kobel palmed away Mbappé's low shot, then pushed Mbappé's deflected close-range effort onto the crossbar with a superb one-handed save. The Parc des Princes crowd groaned when midfielder Vitinha's thumping 25-meter strike rattled the woodwork.

Coach Edin Terzic's team will play either record 14-time champion Real Madrid or six-time winner Bayern Munich on June 1 at Wembley Stadium. "Extremely proud. I'm very



3 Hummels is the third-oldest scorer in the semi-finals of the Champions League, aged 35 years 143 days, behind only Ryan Giggs (37 years 148 days) in 2011 and Edin Dzeko (37 years 54 days) in 2023.

5 I've scored far too few Champions League goals in my career, just five. Now is a good time to add to that number. Since the second match of the group stage, we've believed that we can prevail in every game - and I don't see why we shouldn't win at Wembley." —Mats Hummels, PLAYER OF THE MATCH

Central defender Mats Hummels headed Dortmund into the final as the German team won 1-0 at PSG. Moments after Warren Zaire-Emery missed an open goal for PSG, Hummels rose unchallenged to head in Julian Brandt's corner from the left in the 50th minute. Dortmund advanced 2-0 on aggregate and largely contained Mbappé, who is leaving PSG. PSG exerted late pressure.

happy," Terzic said. "We beat a team like PSG two times and we again kept a clean sheet. We started really well and kept them away from the goal."

Dortmund are on course for their second Champions League trophy after winning in 1997 and a third European trophy, having won the now defunct UEFA Cup Winners' Cup in 1966. Dortmund also reached the Champions



YELLOW FEVER: Mats Hummels and his Dortmund teammates celebrate after his goal while a dejected Mbappe walks away

KEY MOMENTS

- 31'** Dembele powers shot wide
- 35'** Donnerumma denies Adeyemi after counter
- 47'** Zaire-Emery hits post
- 50'** Hummels' header doubles Dortmund lead in the tie
- 61'** Nuno Mendes strike smacks woodwork
- 80'** Kobel pushes Mbappe shot round post
- 86'** Mbappe half-volley deflects onto frame of goal
- 88'** Vitinha effort hits underside of crossbar

League final in 2013, losing to Bayern.

"Indescribable. After more than 10 years, I am in the final with Borussia again," said Marco Reus, Dortmund's veteran midfielder who is leaving the team after this season. "How we won the game, no one will ask tomorrow. Shots against the post won't matter tomorrow."

"Efficiency, that's what we were missing," PSG captain Marquinhos said. Mbappé's last home game for PSG — who have already clinched the French league title — will be Sunday against Toulouse, and his last game for the club May 25 in the French Cup final against Lyon. In Lille and not London. AP

SEMIFINAL, 2ND LEG

PSG	0
DORTMUND	1
Hummels 50	
Dortmund win 2-0 on aggregate	

MATCH STATS

PSG	Dortmund	
70	Possession %	30
30	Shots	7
5	On Target	3
12	Corners	4
8	Fouls	6

3 Dortmund have made it to the CL final for the third time, after triumphing in 1997 and runners-up in 2013 (Wembley).

1 PSG have won only one of their seven CL semifinal matches.

24y 157d

PSG starting line-up had an average age of 24 years 157 days, the youngest for a side at this stage of the competition since Arsenal (24y 26d) in 2008/09.

Mbappe shoulders the blame for defeat

Paris: Kylian Mbappe leaned forward with his head bowed and hands on his thighs. Another Champions League dream with Paris Saint-Germain was over, ruined by the ruthless efficiency of a Borussia Dortmund team that stopped him scoring in both legs of their Champions League semifinal.

"We always want to win at PSG, we feel sad," Mbappe said after Tuesday's defeat. "We should have scored. We had the chances to score (and) when you don't, when you're not efficient at both ends, it's difficult to go through."

PSG coach Luis Enrique consoled Mbappe, and then his star striker trudged off the field and toward a new destination next season. Mbappe had starred for Monaco as an 18-year-old sensation when it reached the semifinals of the Champions League — knocking out Dortmund along the way with three goals in the quarterfinals.

He accepted his share of the blame for not being able to reproduce his magic in front of goal, seven years later, as a global superstar with 46 goals for France and the scorer of a hat-trick in a men's World Cup final to become the tournament's top scorer two years ago.

66 To be honest, I think we deserved to win the match. We created 31 shots, hitting the woodwork four times. In the two matches, we hit the woodwork six times but we didn't score a goal. Football is so unfair sometimes." —Luis Enrique | PSG COACH

"IT'S ALMOST SURREAL. I THINK IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS WE DESERVED TO REACH THE FINAL. WE CAME HERE TO CONFRONT A TEAM THAT HAS SO MANY QUALITIES. IT'S THANKS TO TEAM WORK, GRANTED A LITTLE BIT OF LUCK TOO. I'M VERY PROUD OF MY TEAM, MY STAFF, AND THE ENTIRE CLUB!"

—Edin Terzic | DORTMUND COACH

"When things are good, I take all the limelight and when they are not, you have to take the shadow. That's not a problem. The first one who should have scored tonight was me. That's life and we have to move on, me and the team."

—Kylian Mbappe

€6m PSG paid €180 million, a world-record fee for a teenager, to buy Kylian Mbappe from AS Monaco in 2018. Dortmund's starting XI vs PSG only cost them roughly €6 million more than Mbappe's transfer fee, as per @TransferMarkt

"I tried to help my team the best I could. It wasn't enough. When you're talking about efficiency at both ends, I think I'm the first in question," the 25-year-old said. "I'm the one who should score the goals and make the difference. I have no problem with that, the first person who should have scored tonight is me."

PSG took four times as many shots as their opponents did, hitting the woodwork four times. "In decisive Champions League matches, when you're not effective in both boxes, it's difficult to get through to the next round," Mbappe said. "Even more so when we're talking about a final. We're disappointed, but it's not all doom and gloom. We need to build on that and keep working, because I'm sure we'll get there." AGENCIES

ALONSO'S LEVERKUSEN EYE EUROPA FINAL BERTH

Leverkusen: Kabi Alonso's rampaging Bayer Leverkusen will have an additional incentive in Thursday's home second-leg Europa League semi-final against Roma: breaking a 59-year-old European football record.

49 Avoiding defeat will extend their unbeaten run to 49 games - the best mark in European football history.

A Eusebio-inspired Benfica went on a 48-game unbeaten streak between 1963 and 1965. The record has stood since, but Leverkusen have a golden chance of blowing it out of the water. Alonso's side has already overtaken Juventus' 43-match unbeaten run from 2011 to 2012, which was the best of a team in the top five European leagues.

Leverkusen won 2-0 in Rome last week and could progress to the final even with a one-goal loss, but breaking the record would be yet another outstanding achievement in an already brilliant season.

Leverkusen goalkeeper and captain Lukas Hradecky said pursuit of an unbeaten season gave his side "extra motivation". "It's close," said Hradecky, explaining "I can tell my granddaughter and grandson about this." Avoiding defeat will set up a meeting with either Atalanta or Marseille in the Europa League final in Dublin.

THIRD MALAYSIA FOOTBALLER ATTACKED

Milan: Former Malaysia skipper Safiq Rahim became the third footballer to be attacked in the past week after he was threatened with a hammer and his car windscreen smashed by two assailants. Safiq was not injured in the attack late Tuesday in southern Johor state following a training session with Johor Darul Ta'zim, one of Asia's top clubs run by the crown prince of the Johor royal family.

UN declares May 25 as World Football Day: The United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution Tuesday proclaiming May 25 as World Football Day. AGENCIES

'More Indians can make WCC cycle'

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Kolkata: It took years for an Indian to break into the World Chess Championship (WCC) cycle after Viswanathan Anand. And when it happened, we saw three Grandmasters make the Candidates this time. But GM Surya Sekhar Ganguly feels that it was not something unusual, but rather the beginning of a new chess culture in India.

Ganguly, who was in Toronto as a second to GM Vidit Gujrathi, watched D Gukesh emerge as the challenger to World champion Ding Liren by winning the meet.

As Anand said recently, one need not be a tourist but live there (at the highest stage of world chess). Ganguly feels that will be a reality now. "I feel it's just the beginning. I will not be surprised to see more of them or even someone new making the cycle soon," he told TOI on Wednesday after his return to the city.

"I have the good fortune of watching all these youngsters from very close quarters and none of their

achievements really surprises me anymore. They have the personality and character to go the distance. Not only Gukesh or Praggnanandhaa, but Nihal (Sarin) and Arjun (Erigaisi) could have also made the grade this time. They are all so humble, down to earth, eager to learn and focussed that nothing goes to their heads. The way Gukesh made a comeback after the seven-round loss speaks volumes about how they approach challenging situations. It's very difficult to shake them," Ganguly pointed out.

The Bengal boy felt the seeds of this success had been reaped years back when some top chess players like Vishnu Prasanna and RB Ramesh took up coaching.

The multiple national champion is hopeful of seeing an Indian World champion later this year. "On paper, Liren will start as favourites. But will that matter for Gukesh? I will say no. See none of Gukesh, Praggnanandhaa or Vidit were favourites in the Candidates too, but the way they played, anybody could have won the meet."

Not wary of exposing my best: Fulton Focus On Performance & Assessment Of Team During European Leg Of Pro League

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Bengaluru: The stairway walls to the meeting arena of the Indian hockey team at the SAI, South Centre, here are adorned with photographs of India's achievements in the sport over the decades. A photograph of the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics winning team is surrounded by that of the champions from 1952, 1956, the silver-winning team from 1960 in Rome and the Tokyo bronze medalists from 2020.

The wall of fame is the brainchild of men's team chief coach Craig Fulton and is meant to remind players every day about the country's great legacy in the game. "The pictures reflect the legacy of the Indian men's and women's hockey teams. Not many of the younger players know what happened decades ago and we wanted to recreate the timeline from the glory days," said the South African.

Each of the players hoping to be on the flight to Paris later this year will want to make it to that wall. Not an unrealistic ambition but one which demands hard work. Back to training after a 0-5 loss to Australia in an away Test series, the team has been preparing for the most crucial



CRAIG FULTON

phase of the Paris Olympics build-up. Starting May 22, India will play eight FIH Pro League matches in Europe against Argentina, Belgium, Germany, and Great Britain. In the three weeks, Fulton will firm up his squad for the Olympics. With the team departing next week, Fulton reflected on the team's preparations in an exclusive interview with TOI. Excerpts: **Was the series against Australia a reflection of where the team stands?**

The main thing that we need to understand is why we played a Test series against Australia. The primary objective was to get good competition before the Pro League. We could have stayed here, practised and played, but that would not have exposed the weaknesses. Secondly, we did well in the Pro League (India leg) but that is a tournament where the size of the squad is limited. We travelled to Aus-

tralia with a bigger squad to play individual games. From a results point of view, it was disappointing. But considering the objective we set: To find depth in the group if we lost key players, who would be like-like replacements and combinations, we passed muster. **What did you have to come back to work on?**

We needed to sharpen up our counterattack. We had enough chances and created good turnovers in their half and just around the half line to counterattack with some purpose. Our deep defence was good although we conceded a few goals. We learnt a lot about them.

How close are you from firming up your team for Paris? We are very close. We will use the next eight games to try and get as many combinations as possible. We must use the matches smartly. **What will the focus be on in Europe?**

The focus will be on performance and assessment. We want to attach results to it. But if we get a performance and not the desired result, we can live with it because if you don't get the performance right, you are never going to get results. That said, the key is to start winning again because winning solves a lot of problems.

Is playing top teams an ideal preparation for the Olympics?

100%. We cannot have better preparation because if you go with easy teams and then come up against the best (in Paris), what happens then? I'm not wary of exposing my best because who knows what our best is? It is about confidence and the chemistry in the group. It is important to get this Indian team to fly high and be confident in their own identity. **Has the team connected the way you want them to?**

Yes, but it is also cagey before selections. Players are trying to prove that they belong and are worthy of making the cut. Once the selections are done, it is a different dynamic. It is about groups of players connecting.

What are the challenges of picking an Olympics squad?

You can pick the best players, but they don't always work well together. So, the challenge is to select a team with the right amount of quality in every line. You can win with good players, but you can also lose with them. There must be a balance between the soldiers and the finishers. It is about getting the balance and chemistry right wherein the players share a brotherhood that they are willing to die for each other.

Neeraj set to feature in 1st competition at home in three years

New Delhi: Olympic and world champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will compete at home for the first time in three years after confirming participation in the National Federation Cup to be held in Bhubaneswar from May 12 to 15.

The 26-year-old superstar is expected to travel to India from Doha after opening his season in the first leg of the prestigious Diamond League series on May 10.

"As per entries @Neeraj_chopra and Kishore Kumar Jena will compete in domestic competition starting May 12 in Bhubaneswar," the Athletics Federation of India tweeted. Chopra's coach Klaus Bartonietz also confirmed that his ward is taking part in the Bhubaneswar event.

The 28-year-old Kishore Jena, who won a silver in the Hangzhou Asian Games where Chopra won gold, will also be competing in the Doha Diamond League on May 10.

Chopra last took part in a domestic competition at the same event on Mar 17, 2021, when he won a gold with a throw of 87.80m.

Since then, Chopra has won a historic gold in the To-



Neeraj Chopra last took part in a domestic competition at the Federation Cup on Mar 17, 2021, when he won a gold with a throw of 87.80m. Since then, Chopra has won a historic gold in the Tokyo Olympics, became Diamond League champion in 2022, world champion in 2023 and defended Asian Games gold in China.

kyo Olympics, became Diamond League champion in 2022, world champion in 2023 and defended Asian Games gold in China.

He also won three individual legs of Diamond League and claimed a silver in the 2022 World Championships.

He is, however, yet to touch the 90m mark. His personal best and national record is 89.94m. PTI

OLYMPIC TORCH REACHES FRANCE



Huge crowds gathered on Wednesday in the southern French city of Marseille, where a majestic three-mast ship carrying the Olympic torch arrived from Greece on Wednesday. The torch left Athens aboard a ship named Belem, which was first used in 1896, and spent twelve days at sea

Every competition has made me a better boxer: Nikhat

Olympic Debutant To Curb Aggression & Play With Calmer Mindset In Paris

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New Delhi: At a time when Indian boxing is struggling to put together its best contingent for the Paris Olympics, two-time world champion Nikhat Zareen has emerged as the country's best bet for a medal — in the women's 50kg class — at the upcoming Summer Games.

Nikhat, who will be making her Olympic debut in Paris, will be leading the nation's charge alongside Tokyo Games bronze medalist Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) and two other first timers — Preeti Pawar (54kg) and Parveen Hooda (57kg). So far, no Indian male

boxer has qualified for Paris. The World Olympic qualifying tournament from May 25 to June 2 in Thailand will provide the last chance to pugilists to book their berth for Olympics.

With the onus largely on Nikhat and Lovlina to deliver the goods, the 27-year-old Telangana boxer is ready to leave her mark on the world's biggest sporting stage with a changed technique and a much calmer head. The Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medalist reckons that every tournament and bout she has competed in has made her a better boxer and brought a certain level of maturity in her game. "Every bout teaches me a



lot and I try not to repeat the same mistakes. With every competition, I have become a better boxer. Also, a lot calmer inside the ring as well. I have worked on my aggression and how to channelise it according to the game situation. When you waste your energy inside the ring with unnecessary aggression, you get tired a lot faster. So, I display it when it's required but my focus is on staying calm and composed. That's what I have understood after the Asian Games," Nikhat told TOI.

The former junior world champion also talked about making amendments to her

technique. She said she will look to play from a close distance rather than just counter-attacking her opponent in Paris. "I am playing from a close distance these days. I have been a counterattacking boxer but this time I have worked on how to play a close boxing game (narrowing the distance between a boxer and his/her opponent). Also, I will look to win my bouts through unanimous voting and not wait for split decisions. That situation can be really tricky. Like at the Asian Games, I was playing good but due to a little mistake in the semis, I lost due to a split verdict. I don't want to be in such a situation again," she added.

Nikhat informed that she will next compete at the Elorda Cup in Kazakhstan from May 12 to 19 and then move on

to Germany for the Olympic training camp after a brief stay in India. "We went to Türkiye for a preparatory camp where we sparred with local pugilists and boxers from Italy. It was a good experience. Elorda Cup will be our last competition before heading to Paris. So, after competing there, we will come back to India and then leave for Germany for the Olympic camp."

Nikhat rued the fact that no Indian male boxer has so far qualified for the Paris Games and hoped that some of them would be able to win quota places in Thailand. "Being a boxer, I feel sad to see this situation. There's another qualifier coming for which the team will be leaving on Friday. So, it's not the end of the road for our male boxers. Hopefully some of them will qualify," she said.



Travis Head (pic) & Abhishek Sharma post 167 in just 9.4 overs as SRH hammer LSG by 10 wkts to boost play-off hopes, P 21

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HARERA Website: <https://haryanarera.gov.in>
Promoter: M/s DLF Limited
Project Name: DLF Privana West



THANK YOU

We are grateful for your enthusiastic response.
We are Sold Out.



DLF PRIVANA WEST

Sector 76, Gurugram

Artistic rendition

Disclaimer: Licence No. 219 of 2023 dated 25.10.2023 for an area measuring 116.29625 acres, being developed in a phased manner, the current phase being 'DLF Privana West ("Project")' | Project Area: 5.088 Hectares (12.572 acres) at village Shikhopur/ Kherki Daula at Sector 76 & 77, Gurugram, Haryana | Building Plan Approval Memo No: ZP-1895/ PA(DK)/ 2024/ 12245 dated 18-04-2024 for the Project. All information, images and visuals, drawings, plans or sketches shown in this advertisement are only an architect's impression, for representational/illustrative purposes only and not to scale. Nothing contained herein intends to constitute a legal offer and does not form part of any legally binding agreement and/or commitment of any nature. The Promoter endeavours to keep the information up to date and correct, however, makes no representation or warranty for the accuracy or completeness of the information. Recipients/ viewers are advised to exercise their discretion in relying on the information shown/ provided and are requested to verify all the details, including area, amenities, services, terms of sales and payments and other relevant terms independently with the Sales Team/ Promoter, have a thorough understanding of the same and take appropriate advice before concluding any decision for buying any Unit(s) in the Project.

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Actual Image of Cloverleaf flyover



Representative Image

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DLF Privana is located at the heart of all expressways.

LIVE CITY

Amidst an emerging corporate hub and many social avenues.

A NEW CHAPTER IN THE #DLFLIFESTYLE



Representative Image



Representative Image

BREATHE NATURE

Near to ~4046.856 Hectares (~10000 acres) of natural greenery.

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE

Hike the Aravallis or cycle the nearby tracks with like-minded neighbours.

DLF PRIVANA WEST

Sector 76, Gurugram

Call **76776 77677** | <https://www.dlf.in/homes/luxury/privanawest/>

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