



DON'T NEED MUCH ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN VARANASI: EAM

P10



SUNAK VOWS TO BRING BACK MANDATORY NATIONAL SERVICE

P9



KTR ACCUSES T'GANA GOVT OF ₹1,000 CR SCAM IN RICE PROCUREMENT

P4



PV SINDHU COMES UP SHORT

P12

WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky. Rain/thundershower with one or two intense spells (2-3 cm/hr) with Strong surface wind (70-80 kmph) very likely towards evening. Maximum and minimum temperatures likely to be around 30 °C and 25 °C respectively.

RAINFALL: 23.9 mm

RELATIVE HUMIDITY

Max. 98 % Min. 68 %

TEMPERATURE

Max: 31.2°C (-3.9) Min: 26.8°C (-0.4)

SUN RISES SUN SETS

04:53 hrs 18:15 hrs

MOON RISES MOON SETS

21:10 hrs 06:53 hrs

New Moon on 06 June

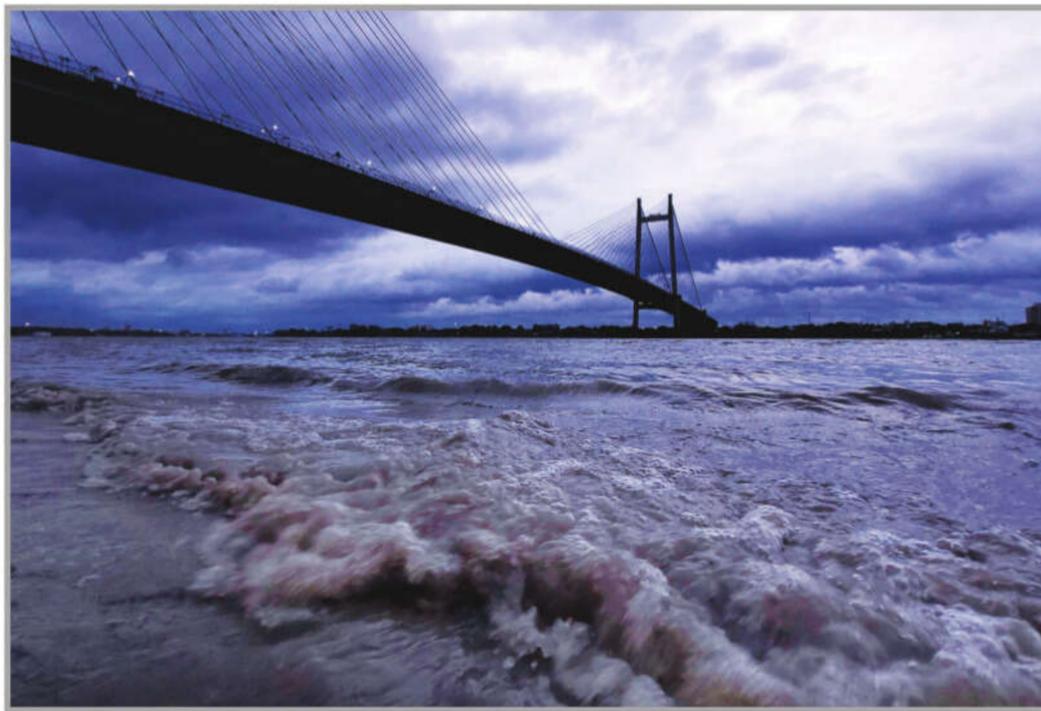
THUMBNAILS



Sunrisers Hyderabad's captain Pat Cummins and Kolkata Knight Riders' captain Shreyas Iyer pose for a picture with the IPL 2024 trophy ahead of the IPL 2024 final, at MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. **ANI**

Army chief Gen Pande gets one month extension: The Appointments Committee of Cabinet on Sunday approved the extension in service of Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Manoj C Pande for a period of one month, beyond his normal age of superannuation on May 31 i.e. up to June 30, an official announcement said.

REMAM LOOMS



Dark clouds hover over Vidyasagar Setu as Cyclone Remam approaches, in Kolkata on Sunday. As India Meteorological Department sounded the alarm over a cyclonic storm 'Remam', IMD scientist Somenath Dutta said it is likely to intensify into a severe cyclonic storm and cross between Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal coasts around 26 May midnight. As the clock for the cyclone Remam landfall ticked closer, the city got drenched with a rainfall of 13.5mm till 4.30pm. At 2.30pm, the system was situated 160 km southeast of Sagar Islands, 190 km south-southeast of Canning, 160 km of Khepupara (Bangladesh) and 220 km south of Mongla in Bangladesh with wind speed of 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph prevailing around the cyclone centre. The storm, as per the forecast received till 6pm, was expected to move nearly northwards, intensify further and cross Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal coasts between Sagar Island and Khepupara, close to southwest of Mongla around 11pm as a severe cyclonic storm with maximum sustained wind speed of 110-120 kmph gusting to 135 kmph. With the cyclone heading towards land, the Kolkata Municipal Corporation braced for the upcoming cyclone. **(PAGE 3)**

CM: We will scrap CAA, NRC & UCC

CM reiterated that INDIA bloc is coming to Delhi



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

Trinamul Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee today urged the people not to vote for the BJP, which has not paid the dues of Bengal deliberately. "We have been deprived deliberately. The job card holders of the MGNREGA scheme did not get their dues. We have paid the money to 59 lakh workers. They have not paid the money under the Awas Plus scheme. We will pay the first instalment to the people by 31 December," she said.

She reiterated that the INDIA bloc is coming to Delhi. "Once we come to power, we will scrap the CAA, NRC and Uniform Civil Code that have been made just to divide people. They believe only in division. They believe in oppression. We, on the contrary, believe in inclusiveness. We love all and respect all."

Miss Banerjee said, "From some corners, notices have been generated asking the people living in the colonies to suspend construction. As the Land Reforms Minister, I have not issued the notice. It must have been issued by an officer having allegiance to CPIM." Coming down heavily on the CPIM, she said, "For 34 years, the CPIM oppressed people. Now, their cadres have joined the BJP to unleash terror. In Sonachura yesterday, in some booths, they did not allow our polling agents to sit. I will take the necessary steps," she said.

She said the BJP has bought the media, which did not show the terror unleashed by the BJP and CPIM. "If we had created trouble, the media would have shown this throughout the day. Now, they are quiet as they show incidents that the BJP instructs them to show."

Miss Banerjee said CPIM had brought all the chit funds, including Sarada. "We were arrested, and the CPIM leaders were never touched. They have so much audacity that they want to topple the Bengal government," she said.

She urged Trinamul leaders to work together, and if anyone is engaged in anti-party activities, stringent action will be taken against the person. "Work together and ensure the victory of Saayoni," she told her party leaders and workers.

Six newborns charred to death in Delhi hospital fire

AGRAJ PRATAP SINGH
NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

In a heart-wrenching tragedy, six infants were burnt alive in a devastating blaze that engulfed Baby Care New Born Hospital in the Vivek Vihar area of East Delhi.

According to the police, at the time of the incident, which took place late on Saturday night, there were 12 newborn babies at the medical facility. Of them, six infants could be rescued from the building inferno. A child was already dead prior to the incident while six died after the fire broke out in the building and five are currently admitted to another hospital and are being treated. The seven bodies of the deceased infants were sent to the nearby GTB Hospital for postmortem, the police added.

An inquiry has been initiated by the police into the matter while appropriate legal action is being taken against the owner of the facility by the Delhi Police.

The call about the fire initially landed at the Police Control Room (PCR) at 11:30



pm prompting immediate action by local authorities, including the SHO and ACP of Vivek Vihar. The rescued infants were relocated at East Delhi Advanced NICU Hospital for treatment for special care.

The rescue operation was carried out with the help of locals and a team of Shaheed Bhagat Singh Seva Dal, including Jitender Singh Shunty, a local social activist and politician, who reached the spot with their ambulances. The infants were retrieved by the rescuers using ladders to reach out to them from back of the ill-fated building on fire with the help of the locals who had come forward for the rescue mission risking their own lives, local sources added. According to the locals, who witnessed the ghastly incident, it started with the sounds of blast jolting them out of sleep.

PM Modi hails UP chief minister Yogi for his fight against mafia

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
MIRZAPUR/MAU, 26 MAY

Accusing the Samajwadi Party (SP) of running a mafia raj during its governance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleged that the mafia had become a vote bank for the party.

Addressing an election rally in Majhwan in Mirzapur in favour of Apna Dal candidate Anupriya Patel from Mirzapur, Rinki Kol candidate from Robertganj, and Shrawan Kumar Gaur, a candidate for Duddhi (Sombhadra) assembly-by-election on Sunday, the prime minister hailed Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for his deterrent action against the mafia. He said, "Yogi Adityanath has embarked on the cleansing campaign against the mafia in Uttar Pradesh taking a cue from my Swachhta Abhiyan. Such was the determination of the chief minister that the mafia is all but vanished from the scene."

Lauding the efforts of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath



in UP in this direction, he said the state government is about to accomplish the 'cleansing' campaign with great courage. During the SP rule, the public used to be scared of these criminals but today, under the BJP Government, it's the mafia's turn to shiver in fear.

He pointed out that the SP has fielded Yadav candidates from the family (of Akhilesh Yadav, SP chief) in UP. "The Samajwadi Party has never followed the rule of law. The mafia was a vote bank for them. These people can go to any length to appease the vote bank. They want to encroach on the quota of SC/ST and OBC and give their share to Muslims," he added. Mr Modi further said, "In its 2012 assembly man-

ifesto, the SP had promised to give quota to Muslims. I belong to the most backward caste and know the pain. The court prevented them from doing so because the constitution does not allow quota on the basis of religion," he said.

The PM said that the SP-Congress alliance is dedicated to the vote bank while "Modi is dedicated to the interests of the poor, Dalits and backward classes".

He alleged that the INDI Alliance is extremely communal, casteist, and family-based which wants to stab Baba Saheb in the back by implementing reservations on a religious basis. Modi said with the power of each and every vote of the people, on the one hand, Shri Ram temple is being built in Ayodhya, while on the other the grand Dham of Vindhya Vasini is also being built rapidly.

He said the Hindu month of Jyestha was auspicious because the Tuesdays in this month are meant for paying obeisance to Lord Hanuman.

Swati Maliwal alleges rape & death threats

NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal on Sunday said that she has been receiving rape and death threats after a "character assassination" campaign allegedly orchestrated by party leaders and volunteers.

She said that the situation escalated after the YouTube channel of Swati Maliwal posted a one-sided video against her. "After the leaders and volunteers of my party, i.e., AAP orchestrated a campaign of character assassination, victim shaming, and fanning of emotions against me, I have been getting rape and death threats. This got further exacerbated when YouTube channel of Swati Maliwal posted a one-sided video against me," Maliwal wrote on X (formerly Twitter) on Sunday.

Maliwal accused the party leadership of trying to intimidate her into withdrawing her complaint. She expressed disappointment with the party leadership that despite her efforts to contact him and share her side of the story, he ignored her calls and messages.

Centre issues directions for blocking incoming international spoofed calls

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

The government on Sunday said it has issued directions for blocking incoming international spoofed calls displaying Indian mobile numbers.

"It has been reported that fraudsters are making international spoofed calls displaying Indian mobile numbers to Indian citizens and committing cyber-crime and financial frauds.

These calls appear to be originating within India but being made by the cyber-criminals from abroad by manipulating the calling line identity (CLI). Such international spoofed calls have been misused in recent cases of fake digital arrests, FedEx scams, drugs/narcotics in courier, impersonation as government and police officials, dis-

connections of mobile numbers by DoT/TRAI officials, etc," an official release said.

Therefore, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) have devised a system to identify and block such incoming international spoofed calls from reaching any Indian telecom subscriber.

Now directions have been issued to the TSPs for blocking of such incoming international spoofed calls.

The incoming international spoofed calls with Indian landline numbers are being already blocked by the TSPs as per the directions issued by the DoT.

As safety and security of the users is an integral part of vision of Digital India, the DoT has already taken many initiatives including citizen-centric Sanchar Saathi portal (<https://sancharsaathi.gov.in/>) to protect telecom users.

"Despite best efforts, there may still be some fraudsters who succeed through other means."

"For such calls, you can help everybody by reporting such suspected fraud communications at the Chakshu facility on Sanchar Saathi," the press release added.

Gamezone fire: ₹99 scheme led people to death trap

AGENCIES
RAJKOT, 26 MAY

As the death toll in fire tragedy at the Gamezone amusement park in Rajkot reached 35, it has emerged that the administrators took advantage of the weekend and launched a Rs 99 scheme, drastically reducing the entry fee from Rs 500 to lure the visitors.

Sources said this ill-fated decision, driven by profit, pushed people into a death trap. According to sources, the Gamezone saw an overwhelming crowd due to the Rs 99 scheme. The entry fee was slashed from Rs 500 to Rs 99 to attract more holiday and weekend visitors. As a result, approximately 300 people had thronged the Gamezone when the fire broke out.

It has come to light that the Gamezone management did not obtain a Fire No



Gujarat Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi takes stock of the situation at the TRP Game Zone in Rajkot on Sunday. **ANI**

Objection Certificate (NOC). To avoid municipal approvals, the Gamezone was set up in a shed, and a three-story facility was launched after only acquiring a ride certificate. The officials responsible for issuing these certificates are now absconding.

The fire reportedly started due to a welding spark on a ladder. With only one staircase available, people on the second and third floors were trapped, leading to a higher

casualty rate. The fire spread rapidly due to the structure and materials used in the Gamezone.

The Gamezone featured rubber and resin flooring, thermocol sheet partitions, and over a thousand tyres around the car zone, creating a highly flammable environment. Additionally, 1500 litres of diesel stored on-site exacerbated the fire, causing it to become fierce and uncontrollable, the sources added.

35 dead, investigations reveal management's negligence

AGENCIES
RAJKOT, 26 MAY

Investigations into the TRP game zone tragedy in Gujarat's Rajkot that claimed 35 lives have revealed that the incident happened due to its management's negligence.

The investigations revealed that the TRP game zone had been operating illegally in a residential area for four years without the necessary No Objection Certificate (NOC). The amusement park was set up in a flimsy shed-like structure to bypass regulatory approvals, the sources said.

Despite this, the sources shared that the facility continued to attract visitors, oblivious to the lurking dangers. Rajkot Additional Collector Chetan Gandhi did not

respond to the media, while Executive Engineer of the Mechanical Department C. C. Patel has disappeared and is not responding to calls.

The Road and Building Department officials are also untraceable, and the officers responsible for issuing the stability certificate are missing. It was found that the game zone managers had expanded the facility to three stories by obtaining a ride certificate.

The sources added that they secured permission from the police for the amusement park and sought approval for rides from the mechanical branch, sidestepping comprehensive safety evaluations.

Questions have been raised about the management and safety protocols at the Gamezone.

'BJP wants to topple the current elected govt of WB'

The election in Basirhat Lok Sabha seat will be held on 1 June

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

Trinamul Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee urged the people of Basirhat to give a befitting reply to the saffron party that had lowered the prestige of the people of Bengal before the country.

He was addressing a gathering at Baduria this afternoon. The area falls under the Basirhat Lok Sabha seat. The Trinamul Congress has fielded Haji Nurul Islam, while the BJP has fielded Rekha Patra. Trinamul Congress had won the seat by a huge margin in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The election in Basirhat Lok Sabha seat will be held on 1 June, along with Barasat, Kolkata South and North, Dum Dum, Jadavpur, Mathurapur, Jaynagar and Diamond Harbour.

Mr Banerjee said that on 4 May a video clip was released



that showed how the BJP leaders had hatched a conspiracy to defame Trinamul leaders in the area. The mandal president of the BJP, Gangadhar Kayal, was heard saying that the women of Sandeshkhali had not been abused or raped, and the whole plot was engineered just to defame Trinamul. "Just

think of the mentality of the BJP. They can stoop down to any level just to win an election. They have lowered the prestige of Bengal in the eyes of the entire country, so do not forgive them. Defeat them handsomely in the election. The election here will be held on 1 June and ensure that our candidate Nurul wins by more

than 3.5 lakh votes." Mr Banerjee reiterated that he would win the Diamond Harbour seat by more than 4 lakh votes.

Throwing a challenge to Rekha Patra, the BJP candidate from the seat, Mr Banerjee said, "I challenge you to ask any of your leaders from Delhi who come here to take part in a debate to tell the people what

work the Centre has done in the past 10 years; you fix up the date and time, and rest assured, I will score 10 goals," he maintained.

Coming down heavily on Narendra Modi and Amit Shah, he said, "Just think of their audacity. They want 35 seats with the intention of toppling an elected government in Bengal. They are not talking about development. Their sole purpose is to topple the government. I assure you that it will not be easy. The people of Bengal will defeat you in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls in such a way that you will not dare come here and speak lies in the future."

He instructed the party leaders and workers to stand by the people and give them essential relief. "We are always with you. You may not find us in good times, but in times of need, rest assured that our party leaders and workers will be by your side," he said.

Before seventh phase, PM Modi to visit Sarada Maa's house

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is slated to meet a select few monks from different religious organizations at Sarada Maa's house in Bagbazar on 28 May.

After holding a public meeting in Baruiipur, the Prime Minister will go to Bagbazar as per the schedule. The Prime Minister is returning to the state with a two-day programme ahead of the seventh phase of voting. According to sources, the Prime Minister will not be doing a roadshow in south Kolkata. He is scheduled to visit Sarada Maa's house in Bagbazar around 5 p.m. on 28 May. The PM's schedule indicates that he will stay at Sarada Bhavan for about 40 minutes.

According to sources, the Prime Minister is supposed to meet a few monks at the venue in Bagbazar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will have only one roadshow in Kolkata. On 28-29 May, the Prime Minister will hold three political meetings and a road-



show. He will hold one meeting in North 24-Parganas and two meetings in South 24-Parganas. On 28 May, the Prime Minister will hold a political meeting at Ashoknagar in North 24-Parganas from 2.30 p.m. Later that day, he will hold a meeting in Baruiipur, South 24-Parganas from 4 p.m. PM Modi's possible visit at Bagbazar Sarada Maa's is being considered as political one after thousands of monks and devotees on Friday descended on the streets of Kolkata

in protest against the remarks by chief minister Mamata Banerjee directed at certain religious orders and monks. The monks walked barefoot from the house of Sarada Maa's house in Bagbazar area of north Kolkata to the house of Swami Vivekananda located on Shimla Street.

During an election rally in Hooghly district, the chief minister had commented against religious orders like Bharat Sevashram Sangha, Ramakrishna Mission and ISKCON.

Pedong in Kalimpong gets first cancer screening centre

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 26 MAY

A Cancer Screening Centre (CSC) was inaugurated yesterday under the auspices of the Chhabi Sahayog Foundation (CSF) of Navi Mumbai at Topkhana in Pedong in Kalimpong district, amidst a large gathering of local dignitaries and residents.

Inaugurating the centre, noted hill educationist Dr GSYonzone, former principal of Kalimpong College, and Partha Roy, the National General Secretary of CSF, said that the centre will go a long way in diagnosing and treating cancer in the region.

Roy dwelt at length on the various cancer care activities of the Chhabi Foundation ever since it was established five years ago.

"The activities include early screening of people of different age groups, providing food and lodging facilities for long-distance patients, financial help and mental health counselling and most

Stressing the need to generate awareness among the people, Dr Yonzone said that the hill region can definitely be made a cancer-free zone if everyone takes the cancer issue seriously

importantly, raising awareness among the people on how to prevent cancer from occurring," Mr Roy said.

According to him, the foundation has successfully treated hundreds of people and also helped cure those suffering. It has also established branches in Maharashtra, Delhi, Manipur, West Bengal, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Jharkhand and Assam.

Assuring full assistance and cooperation in taking the Pedong centre forward, Mr Roy said that the first activity of the foundation would be to organise a cancer screening test during the forth-

coming months of September-October 2024, for which the local Kalimpong District Committee would have to come up with the necessary logistics.

According to Dr Yonzone, the Pedong centre has been made possible with "extraordinary initiatives" taken by Sarvasri Vivek Choubey, Chewang Bhutia, Chandra Rai, Amrita Sharma, Rajen Thapa and others who were instrumental in maintaining contact with Mumbai and also in organising the event at Pedong, the first of its kind in the hill region.

Stressing the need to generate awareness among the people, Dr Yonzone said that the hill region can definitely be made a cancer-free zone if everyone takes the cancer issue seriously.

"Prevention is better than cure should be our aim. The Pedong centre now needs full-time trained staff to deal with the various aspects related to cancer treatment," he said.

TAKING COVER



Commuters pass on a road amid rain as Cyclone Remal approaches, in Kolkata on Sunday. ■ ANI

West Bengal: BSF arrest smuggler with 89 gold biscuits worth ₹ 12 crore on India-Bangladesh Border

AGENCIES
NORTH 24 PARGANAS, 26 MAY

The Border Security Force (BSF) seized 89 gold biscuits valued at Rs 12 crore from the India-Bangladesh border of North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal during the sixth phase voting of the Lok Sabha polls on May 25.

According to an official release, the Vigilant personnel of Border outpost Gunarmath, 05 Battalion under South Bengal Frontier, conducted a special operation in village Haldarpada in the area of the Border outpost and recovered 89 gold biscuits of different sizes from the house of Alok Paul (name changed) when the smuggler, after smuggling this gold con-



signment from Bangladesh to India, was hiding it in his home before further delivery.

"The total weight of the seized gold is 16.067 Kgs and the estimated market value is

Rs 12 crore," the release said.

According to AK Arya, DIG and spokesperson of South Bengal Frontier, "On May 25, the Jawans of border outpost Gunarmath received infor-

mation about a very big consignment of gold in a house in the border village Haldarpada. As soon as the information was obtained, a special operation was launched under which the said suspicious house of the village was cordoned off from all sides. After this, the house was searched in the presence of dignitaries of the village. During the search, Alok Paul (name changed) was caught with the consignment of gold which he had hidden in a cloth belt in his house."

On May 25, 2024, at around 12:40 pm, the same smuggler had given him 89 Gold Biscuits and Bricks of different shapes & sizes to hide in the house. He further said that he has already spent one month in jail for gold smuggling and his case is still going on in Bangaon Court.

The arrested smuggler and the seized gold consignment have been handed over to the Director of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Kolkata for further legal proceedings.

"He assured that he would pay him Rs 400 every day to

keep his gold consignment hidden at home. For which he agreed and involved in this work. After this, the unknown smuggler kept bringing consignments of gold to his house," the release added.

During interrogation, Alok Paul revealed that in the last week of March 2024, he came in contact with a gold smuggler from Bangladesh.

"He assured that he would pay him Rs 400 every day to

Northeast Frontier Railway converts 60 trains with 95 rakes to modern LHB rakes

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
SILIGURI, 26 MAY

Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR), in its constant endeavour to make train journeys a safer and more secure mode of transportation, has adopted technically advanced measures to prevent unforeseen incidents on trains.

As an initiative, NFR came up with the conversion of its ICF (Integral Coach Factory) coaches to Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches in trains to provide better travel and comfortable journey experiences without compromising safety.

These coaches consist of technical advancements like the Fire and Smoke Detection System (FSDS), the Fire

Detection and Suppression System (FDSS), as well as aspiration-type smoke detectors and an aerosol-based fire detection system, said Chief Public Relations Officer Sabyasachi De.

According to him, during 2023-24, 10 pairs of long-distance trains operating through important routes were converted to LHB rakes, replacing the existing conventional rakes.

"As of now, a total of 60 trains with 95 rakes operating under NFR have been converted to modern LHB rakes. LHB rakes are equipped with a modern hydraulic shock absorber and an improved suspension system, which ensures greater riding comfort for the passengers compared to

conventional rakes," Mr De said, adding, "LHB coaches are manufactured with anti-collision technology that causes fewer fatalities during accidents." Each coach also has an 'Advanced Pneumatic Disc Brake System' for efficient braking at higher speeds.

Notably, at present, NFR is operating 912 numbers of AC coaches and 822 numbers of Sleeper Class coaches, along with 129 numbers of luggage vans and 67 numbers of pantry cars with LHB models.

The conversion of old ICF coaches into LHB coaches is one such safety drive that Indian Railways aims to provide enhanced safety and next-level comfort to its commuters.

Conspirator may have escaped to US: Bangladesh detective chief to collaborate with Interpol to probe MP Anar murder case

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

In a significant development in the investigation of the murder case of Bangladesh Member of Parliament (MP) Anwarul Azim Anar, chief of the Bangladesh Detective Department, Harun-or-Rashid, revealed that the main conspirator, Akhtaruzzaman, may have fled from Kathmandu to the US via Dubai.

Harun-or-Rashid also spoke about the plans to collaborate with Interpol and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to intensify efforts in apprehending the suspect.

Bone-chilling details surrounding the murder of the member of parliament from Bangladesh, who had been missing since May 13 just a day after his arrival in Kolkata

came to the fore. According to the findings, the MP was allegedly killed in a Kolkata apartment, where his body was chopped and then proceeded to dispose of the remains by packaging them in multiple plastic bags.

To probe the matter, a team of Bangladeshi detectives has arrived in India.

"The main conspirator Akhtaruzzaman may have escaped from Kathmandu to the US via Dubai... We are trying to trace him through Interpol. We will go to the CID office. We will have a meeting with the officers of CID. We will try to interrogate the arrested accused so that we can get more information," he told reporters upon landing at Kolkata airport on Sunday.

"We just landed here. You all know that in our criminal Act, there is a section called

Extra-Territorial Offence, which means that if an individual commits a crime outside Bangladesh, we, under this Extra-Territorial Offence section, can investigate those crimes," said Harun-or-Rashid.

Addressing the press, he elaborated on the complexities of the case, stating, "You all know one of our popular parliamentarians Anwarul Azim Anar was heinously murdered and his body was cut into pieces. The mastermind of this murder, the beneficiary and those who executed the plans, all are Bangladeshi. The murder plot was planned in Bangladesh. Now our main work is to take forward the investigation."

Harun-or-Rashid outlined the objectives of their visit to India, emphasising the importance of examining the crime scene and analysing CCTV



footage. He also highlighted the cooperation between Kolkata Police and Bangladesh

Police, emphasising the exchange of crucial information between the two agencies.

"We will go to the CID office. We will have a meeting with the officers of CID. We will try to interrogate the arrested accused so that we can get more information," Harun-or-Rashid added, emphasising their commitment to gathering vital evidence to progress the investigation.

Notably, according to the West Bengal Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Anar was smothered and killed in a flat in Kolkata and his body was chopped and minced to destroy his identity.

The CID team too has launched a search operation to find the body parts of the Bangladeshi MP.

The CID said that they had arrested one of the suspects in the case, a Mumbai-based butcher who confessed during interrogation that he had taken off all the skin from

the Bangladeshi MP's body, chopped it up and minced the cut parts in a bid to destroy its identity.

Police said, "The assailants brought a butcher named Jihad (alias Siam) who was living in Mumbai illegally for many years. Two months ago, he was brought to Kolkata by an American citizen of Bangladesh origin, Akhtaruzzaman Shaheen. This Shaheen is the mastermind of this planned heinous murder."

The accused Shaheen confessed that, on the orders of Akhtaruzzaman, he along with four other Bangladeshi nationals had smothered and killed Anwarul Azim Anar in a flat, police said.

"Then they removed all the flesh from the body in the flat and minced it to destroy his identity and then they put everything in a polythene

packs. They also chopped the bones into small pieces. They then took those packets out of the flat and dropped them around Kolkata and surrounding areas using different modes of transport," the police said in a statement on Thursday.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) was formed to investigate the killing of a Bangladeshi MP.

Earlier this week, Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan in a news conference in Dhaka said that Anar, a three-time Awami League MP was killed in Kolkata.

Speaking to reporters at his residence on Wednesday, the minister said that Bangladesh Police have arrested three persons in this connection, reported Bangladesh Newspaper Daily Star.

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**
Appointment of Vice-Chancellor of Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University (A Central University)

Applications are invited for the post of Vice-Chancellor of Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University. The Vice-Chancellor, being the academic as well as administrative head, is expected to be:

- A person possessing the highest level of competence, integrity, morals and institutional commitment.
- A distinguished academician, with a minimum of 10 years' experience as Professor in a University or 10 years' experience in a reputed research and/or academic administrative organisation with proof of having demonstrated academic leadership.
- Preferably not more than 65 years of age as on the closing date of receipt of applications of this advertisement.

Salary and Service Conditions

- The post carries a pay of Rs. 2,10,000/- (Fixed) per month with Special Allowance of Rs. 11,250/- and other usual allowances.
- The terms and conditions of the services will be those as set forth in the Act, Statutes and Ordinances of the University.

Procedure for appointment

- Appointment will be made from a panel of names recommended by a Committee constituted under the provisions of Act of the University.
- The advertisement is available on the websites <http://www.education.gov.in> and <https://www.hnbgu.ac.in>.
- Candidates are required to "APPLY ONLINE ONLY" on the Ministry of Education SAMARTH portal as per the link given below:
<https://vcrec.samarth.ac.in/index.php/>
- The above link will be active from 27.05.2024 10:00 Hours to 26.06.2024, 17:00 Hours.

CBC 21201/12/0001/2425

Cyclone Remal: Rain lashes parts of city ahead of landfall

At 2.30pm, the system was situated 160 km southeast of Sagar Islands

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

As the clock for the cyclone 'Remal' landfall ticked closer, the city got drenched with a rainfall of 13.5mm till 4.30pm. At 2.30pm, the system was situated 160 km southeast of Sagar Islands, 190 km south-southeast of Canning, 160 km of Khepupara (Bangladesh) and 220 km south of Mongla in Bangladesh with wind speed of 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph prevailing around the cyclone centre. The storm, as per the forecast received till 6pm, was expected to move nearly northwards, intensify further and cross Bangladesh and adjoining West Bengal coasts between Sagar Island and Khepupara, close to southwest of Mongla around 11pm as a severe cyclonic storm with maximum sustained wind speed of 110-120 kmph gusting to 135 kmph.

With the cyclone heading towards land, the Kolkata Municipal Corporation braced for the upcoming cyclone. For monitoring the situation, the civic body opened a control room and cancelled the holiday for its staff. The Drainage department decided

The Drainage department decided to deploy manpower at all its block gates. It also kept two pick up vans on standby for rushing to the hospital in case of injuries or any mishaps

ed to deploy manpower at all its block gates. It also kept two pick up vans on standby for rushing to the hospital in case of injuries or any mishaps. Manpower was also deployed at every borough to address issues of power cuts in any wards. According to the member-mayor-in-council for Drainage Tarak Singh, electrical contractors responsible for responding to issues of power supply were also alerted.

Like the KMC, the Eastern Railway and the Kolkata metro Railway also geared up for the cyclone. The city metro ran truncated services between Mahanayak Uttam Kumar and Dakshineswar in Blue Line were operated considering the inclement weather. Likewise, the Eastern Railway opened helpline numbers at Howrah and Sealdah for emergency assistance. The helpline



Commuters pass on a road amid rain as Cyclone Remal approaches, in Kolkata on Sunday. ■ ANI

numbers at Sealdah are- 033- 23508794 (DOT) and 033- 23833326 while that of Howrah is 033-26413660.

Airport operations suspended for 21hrs



A deserted view of the Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport as flight operations were suspended due to cyclone Remal, in Kolkata on Sunday. ■ SNS

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

The NSCBI Airport authorities have suspended flight operations for 21 hours from noon today as a measure of caution in view of high winds and heavy rain as cyclone Remal is predicted to make landfall on the Bengal-Bangladesh coast around midnight today.

Around 394 flights, 54 of them international, were cancelled from this noon. Around 63,000 passengers were affected. However, sources said that airlines will refund them. Airport authorities said that most of the flights flew out before noon but the parked planes will be anchored. According to the weather department, a deep depression has formed in the east-central Bay of Bengal. It is gaining strength and moving northwards towards the land.

The weather department reports that this deep depression is likely to intensify into a cyclone, at which point it will be named Remal. According to Somnath Dutta, deputy director of the Alipore Meteorological Department, Remal may make landfall on Sunday night with wind speeds ranging from 110 to 120 kilometers per hour, temporarily increasing to 135 kilometers per hour. It is expected to hit between Sagar Island in India and Khepupara in Bangladesh. Due to the impact the cyclone,

rain is forecast in almost all districts of south Bengal.

A red alert has been issued for Kolkata, Howrah, Hooghly, North and South 24-Parganas and East Midnapore on Sunday. Very heavy rainfall is expected in these six districts, with more than 20 centimeters of rain possible. In the two 24 Parganas, wind speeds may reach 110 to 120 kilometers per hour, temporarily increasing to 130 kilometers per hour.

In Kolkata and the remaining four districts, wind speeds may reach 70 to 80 kilometers per hour, gusting up to 90 kilometers per hour. An orange alert has been issued for West Midnapore, East Burdwan, and Nadia, where heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected, along with wind speeds of 34 to 45 kilometers per hour.

Heavy rainfall is also expected in the remaining southern districts with a yellow alert issued by the weather department. In this situation, Kolkata airport authorities have decided to suspend flight operations. Even overflights, planes that fly between east and west over Kolkata airspace are being deviating by up to 240km to avoid strong swirling winds that could rock aircrafts. The ATC at Kolkata airport will guide planes flying over the city. Contingency measures have been drawn up with alternative routes for flights.

ON POLL TRAIL



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate from South Kolkata constituency Debasree Chaudhuri waves to the supporters during an election campaign for the Lok Sabha polls, in Kolkata on Sunday. ■ ANI

More than 26 shelter houses set up to accommodate people from low lying areas

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HOOGHLY, 26 MAY

Considering the escalating intensity of Cyclone Remal, accompanied by heavy to very heavy rainfall and its disastrous impact on common people, particularly those living in low-lying areas and along the Hooghly river bank and other rivers in the district, the district administration has established over 26 shelter houses to accommodate residents who have relocated from their unsafe homes and shelters.

The district administration has given special attention to the Balagarh, Chinsurah-Mogra, and Serampore-Uttarpara sub-divisions due to the significant portion of the Hooghly river bank that falls with-

Helpline numbers have been issued for the common people to get in contact with the administration to seek any kind of assistance

in these areas. A large segment of the population living below the poverty line resides along this riverbank in unsafe houses and shelters. Special warnings have been issued to residents in apartments and houses very close to the Hooghly riverbank, as all three sub-divisions face the threat of severe riverbank erosion. The prevailing high tide, combined with heavy to very heavy rainfall and the high-inten-

sity cyclone, is expected to cause dangerously turbulent river currents, exacerbating riverbank erosion and posing a significant threat to nearby residential areas.

A coordination chain is being maintained with PWD, irrigation and electricity. Their nodal officers will monitor the entire changing situation from the control rooms set up at different places in the district. Tree cutters, fire-fighting systems, speed boats, NDRF, civil defence, civil volunteers and police administration are kept on high alert to meet any kind of emergency.

Helpline numbers have been issued for the common people to get in contact with the administration to seek any kind of assistance.

SC to hear on Monday BJP's plea against Calcutta HC order restraining publications of ads against TMC

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

The Supreme Court is slated to hear on Monday the plea filed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) against a Calcutta High Court order restraining the saffron party from publication of "derogatory" and "offending" advertisements against the Trinamool Congress (TMC).

As per the cause list published on the apex court website, a vacation bench of Justices JK Maheshwari and KV Vishwanathan will take up the matter for hearing on May 27.

Earlier on Friday, the special leave petition was mentioned before a vacation bench presided over by Justice Bela M Trivedi for directions seeking urgent listing. After much persuasion, Justice Trivedi-led Bench said it would consider listing the matter.

In an order passed this week, Calcutta High passed an ex-parte injunction prohibiting the publication of advertisements which squarely violate the political rights of Trinamool and its functionaries.

A bench of Justice Sabyasachi Bhattacharyya of

the high court said that the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) prohibits all participants in the election process from criticism of other parties or their workers based on unverified allegations or distortion.

It said that the Election Commission of India "grossly failed" to address, in due time, the complaints raised by the ruling Trinamool Congress.

"Accordingly, respondent no. 2 (BJP) is hereby restrained from further continuing with the publication of the offending advertisements... till June 04, 2024, or until further

order, whichever is earlier. The respondent no. 2 is further restrained from publishing advertisements in any form of media which is violative of the MCC issued by the ECI during the aforesaid period," the HC order said.

The special leave petition filed before the Supreme Court stated that the high court "erred" by granting an interim injunction based on the purported violation of MCC without taking into consideration that the issue was pending before the ECI, which has the authority to take appropriate action against any political party.

CPI(M) candidate barred from campaigning near CM's residence

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

Tension gripped the Kalighat area on Sunday after the police disallowed campaigning by CPI(M) candidate from Kolkata-Dakshin Saira Shah Halim in a locality adjacent to the residence of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

After Halim, the niece of iconic Indian actor Naseeruddin Shah, reached the locality associated with her party activists and leaders for cam-



panying, she saw guardrail barricades being raised by the city police to prevent them from campaigning.

When she questioned the police about the reasons behind the prohibition, the

latter replied that as Section 144 CrPC is imposed in that area, the assembly of five or more persons is prohibited.

The CPI(M) candidate then moderated her plans slightly and informed the police that instead of regular campaigning, she would distribute campaign leaflets at the shops and residences in the locality.

When the police even refused to permit that, her supporters fumed and started protesting by raising slogans. Some of them tried to

break through the barricades which resulted in a scuffle with the police.

Police were of the view that without prior permission of the higher authorities, any kind of campaigning could not be conducted in that area.

Kolkata-Dakshin will be going for polls in the last and seventh phase on June 1.

Halim is married to a city-based medical practitioner Fuad Halim, who is the son of former West Bengal Assembly Speaker late Hasim Abdul Halim.

Section 144 imposed in casual, high-handed manner: West Bengal Governor

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 26 MAY

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose said in a letter posted on 'X' that the prohibitory orders imposed under Section 144 by the Kolkata Police have been promulgated in "a casual, high-handed manner," he added.

The Governor said that the order passed on May 22 should be placed before the Council of Ministers for its consideration as per Article 167 (c) of the Constitution.

"The present order proceeds on an illegal footing as it terms such impositions of S.144 CrPC as a matter of routine. This prima facie indicates that there was no application of mind on the part of the competent authority and that the present order was issued in a 'routine' manner sans any sort of consideration," the Governor said in a letter.

"It is appalling that the present order issued under



S.144 CrPC for such a long duration and which undoubtedly deprives the common man of his liberty and places fetters on his free movement has been promulgated in such a casual, high-handed manner," he added.

Governor Bose said that an order imposing Section 144 CrPC has the effect of curtailing the liberty of the citizenry and such orders cannot be issued as per the

whims and fancies of the authorities concerned.

"It is trite that there must be a reasonable nexus between the threat contemplated and the measure that is sought to be imposed," the Governor said adding that it is incumbent upon the competent authority to arrive at a decision objectively after taking into consideration all relevant material.

The Governor said that the

Kolkata Police has reportedly cited credible inputs about likely violent demonstrations on a large scale disturbing public tranquillity and breach of peace in areas falling under Kolkata's Bowbazar Police Station, Hare Street Police Station and Headquarters Traffic Guard, which is from KC Das Crossing towards Victoria House and its vicinity including Bentinck Street, from May 28 to July 26.

Earlier on Saturday, West Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar said that Kolkata Police has imposed Section 144 of CrPC in Central Kolkata to hamper Prime Minister Narendra Modi's rally, scheduled to take place in Kolkata on May 28 and induce fear in the people.

"Kolkata police have clamped section 144 and said that it's routine. I think it has been implemented to hamper the Prime Minister's rally and to induce fear in the people," Majumdar told reporters in Kolkata.



KTR accuses T'gana govt of ₹1,000 crore scam in rice procurement

He accused CM Revanth Reddy and minister Uttam Kumar Reddy of being involved in the scam

AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 26 MAY

Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) working president K. T. Rama Rao has accused the Congress-led Telangana government of Rs 1,000 crore paddy lifting and rice procurement scam.



He demanded Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and civil supplies minister Uttam Kumar Reddy to clear themselves of the allegations. He challenged them to initiate a judicial inquiry with a sitting judge.

He accused CM Revanth Reddy and minister Uttam Kumar Reddy of being implicated in the scam in the civil supply department. Addressing a news conference at BRS central office, Telangana Bhavan in Hyderabad, KTR accused the Congress party of looting the government exchequer.

He claimed that the civil supplies department, under the supervision of Uttam Kumar Reddy and Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, awarded tenders to four compa-

nies to lift paddy from rice millers in the state. He accused both the Chief Minister and the minister of constituting a committee, issuing guidelines, and calling for tenders -- all on January 25 itself. "The government showed no urgency in fulfilling electoral promises, but it swiftly awarded these tenders dubiously in one day with jet speed," the BRS leader remarked. He alleged that the Congress government was looting government funds in the name of global tenders for 35 lakh metric tons of paddy. He noted that local rice millers were ready to pur-

chase the same paddy for Rs 2,100 per quintal, but the government sold it at prices ranging from Rs 1,885 to 2,007 per quintal to companies like Kendriya Bhandar, LG Industries, Hindustan Company, and NACAF, who secured the tenders by quoting lower rates. KTR further accused these four companies of black-mailing local rice millers, demanding Rs 2,230 per quintal, which is Rs 200 more than their tendered rates, leading to Rs 800 crore scam. He pointed out that according to the tender agreement, these companies had no right to demand money instead of

paddy from the rice millers. He stated that these companies failed to lift the paddy within the stipulated 90-day period, which ended on May 23, and they sought an extension from the government, which is under positive consideration. He accused the government of trying to extend the period to fleece more money from the millers instead of taking action against the companies for violating tender conditions.

KTR demanded that the government release a white paper detailing how much paddy had been lifted and address the allegations of money collection from millers instead of paddy. He criticised the government for its silence on this multi-crore scam for over two weeks. KTR also faulted the government policy for tendering fine and raw paddy at the same price.

He criticised the government for purchasing fine rice at Rs 15 more per kilogram than the market price. He noted that the BRS government, under KCR, had introduced fine rice for school and hostel students as a humane initiative, but the Congress government was exploiting this noble cause for corruption. Even today, new fine rice is priced at around Rs 42 per kilogram in the market, while the government is paying Rs 57 per kilogram to companies. He highlighted that the same four companies involved in the dubious paddy lifting tenders were also awarded tenders for buying fine rice, raising public doubts. These companies quoted the nearly same rate in tenders, blatantly rigging the process, KTR said. KTR reminded that the erstwhile government used procured paddy for fine rice supply, securing better quality fine rice at just Rs 35 per kilogram. He accused the government under Revanth Reddy and Uttam Kumar Reddy of engaging in a Rs 300 crore scam in fine rice procurement by procuring 2.20 lakh metric tons. He demanded the immediate cancellation of tender awarding letters for fine rice procurement from these shady companies.

Indian Navy initiates preparatory actions to deal with Cyclone Remal



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

The Indian Navy has initiated preparatory actions, following existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), to mount a credible Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) response in the aftermath of Cyclone Remal.

The cyclone is anticipated to cross the coast on the intervening night of 26/27 May. The situation is being closely monitored at Naval Headquarters, with comprehensive preparatory actions being undertaken by the Headquarters, Eastern Naval Command, the Ministry of Defence

said. Cyclone Remal, which is expected to intensify into a severe cyclone, is forecasted to make landfall between Sagar Island, West Bengal and Khepupara, Bangladesh. In preparation, the Indian Navy has readied two ships equipped with HADR and medical supplies for immediate deployment to ensure the safety and welfare of the affected populace. Additionally, Indian Naval aviation assets, including Sea King and Chetak helicopters as well as Dornier aircraft, are on standby for rapid response. Specialised diving teams with equipment have been sta-

tioned in Kolkata to provide prompt assistance. Further diving teams with necessary equipment are on standby in Visakhapatnam, prepared for quick deployment if needed. Two Flood Relief Teams (FRTs), along with HADR and medical supplies, are being positioned in Kolkata. In addition, two FRTs each from Visakhapatnam and Chilka are ready and on standby for deployment at short notice. "The Indian Navy remains vigilant and is closely monitoring the evolving situation to provide immediate and effective assistance in the wake of Cyclone Remal," the MoD added.

Telangana bans gutkha, pan masala containing tobacco & nicotine



AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 26 MAY

Telangana Commissioner of Food Safety has prohibited the manufacturing and sale of gutkha and pan masala containing tobacco and nicotine.

The Commissioner issued a notification prohibiting the manufacturing, storage, distribution, transportation and sale of gutkha and pan masala which contain tobacco and nicotine for a period of one

year. "In exercise of the powers conferred under clause (a) of Sub-section (2) of Section 30 of Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 read with 2, 3, 4 of Food Safety and Standards (prohibition and restriction on sales) Regulation 2011 and in the interest of public health, Telangana State hereby prohibits the manufacture, storage, distribution, transportation and sale of gutkha and pan masala which contains tobacco and nicotine as an ingredient," reads the notification.

It said that the gutkha and pan masala which are packed in sachets, pouches or packages, stand banned in the entire state of Telangana for a period of one year with effect from May 24, 2024.

Since the inception of Telangana in 2014, gutkha has been banned in the state. The ban was upheld by the Telangana High Court in November 2021. The ban was challenged by gutkha manufacturers in the Supreme Court which in March 2022 stayed the notification banning it.

In September 2022, the High Court restrained authorities from taking punitive action against manufacturers and sellers till the Supreme Court stay is in operation. The state issued a notification in January 2023 banning gutkha but this was also stayed by the Supreme Court.

Smartphone theft, smuggling gang busted in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD, 26 MAY

Hyderabad Police have busted an international smartphone theft and smuggling gang and apprehended 31 accused including a Sudanese national.

The sleuths of Commissioner's Task Force, South, East and South-East Zone Teams along with local police seized 713 smartphones, two computers and one laptop, total worth Rs 2 crore.

According to S. Rashmi Perumal, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Commissioner's Task Force, Hyderabad, a spate of mobile phone snatchings has been seen in recent days in the process of which robberies, extortions and even a murder have taken place. AGENCIES

TN govt cautions people against fake int'l job offers



AGENCIES CHENNAI, 26 MAY

The Tamil Nadu government has cautioned people against fake international job offers and also warned recruitment agencies against sending people abroad for fake jobs.

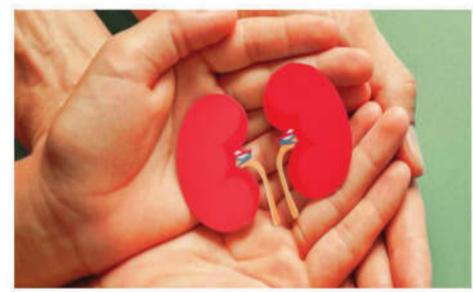
The Non-Resident Tamils Welfare Department has said that stringent legal action

would be taken against such agencies. The department said that there were reports of several people being sent to Cambodia, Thailand and Myanmar on tourist visas under the guise of IT and software jobs. The department cautioned the people that these people are being employed for illegal online activities.

The department said that people, after reaching these countries, who refuse to do illegal online work are subjected to torture including administering electric shocks. The department said that it had already rescued 83 Tamil people from the racket after receiving complaints. It added that these fake jobs are mostly in digital sales and

customer support services. "Many dubious companies are duping people in the name of crypto-currency. Mostly call centres are behind these fake jobs," the department said. The department said that agents based in Dubai, Bangkok, Singapore and India are recruiting people from across the country. "Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Laos and Thailand is one of the major hubs of such illegal and fraudulent companies. Some recruits were even taken as hostages and forced to work under tough mental and physical conditions," the department said. The department said that those convicted of human trafficking crimes have been sentenced upto 18 years in Laos. "Tamil people are requested to be extremely cautious and verify the recruiting agents as well as of any company before taking up the job offer," the department said.

Forced to sell kidney, tribal woman files complaint against husband in Kerala



AGENCIES THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 26 MAY

A tribal woman from Kelakam in Kannur district of Kerala approached the police, stating that her husband and a middleman were forcing her to sell her kidney. In her complaint, she said that she

was offered Rs 9 lakh for selling her kidney.

The woman said that her husband and the middleman named Benni had both donated their kidneys earlier and are now acting as middlemen.

She said that a few days ago, Benni had tried to force her to sell her kidney after

calling her to Kochi, saying that her husband was admitted to the hospital and was in serious condition.

The woman said that Benni has lured several tribal people of Kannur into organ trade and that he was giving a pittance to the donors while he was taking a large chunk of the money. With the arrest of Sabith Nasar in Kochi on May 19, the kidney racket in Kerala is getting exposed with complaints of kidney sales coming from different parts of the state. Peravoor DSP Ashraf Thengalakkandiyl, while speaking to IANS, said: "Police have recorded the statement of the woman and are conducting a detailed probe on the basis of her complaint."

Kerala: IMD predicts heavy rain till 29 May, issues yellow alert

AGENCIES THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 26 MAY

The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on Sunday predicted that heavy rains will continue in Kerala till May 29 and also issued a 'yellow alert' in Pathanamthitta, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Ernakulam districts.

The IMD said that thunderstorms accompanied by gusty winds reaching speeds of 30-40 kmph are likely to occur in some places in Kerala on Sunday.

IMD has warned the fishermen not to venture into the sea till further notice. "Those living in coastal areas are advised to move to other safer places," the IMD said. The Kerala State Disaster Management Author-

ity (KSDMA) also informed the fishermen to keep their fishing vessels and mechanised boats safe in the respective harbours to prevent them from drifting away into the sea. The IMD said that the state will continue to witness heavy rains till May 29 due to the low-pressure area formed over the southeast Arabian Sea. At least 13 people have lost their lives in Kerala due to the incessant rains which has also hit normal life. Around 230 people are staying in relief camps due to the water logging and inundation, leading to damage to the homes. Rains have been lashing Kerala for the past week and several houses were damaged and roads inundated leading to traffic disruptions.

TN likely to announce special Kuruvai package after Lok Sabha poll results

AGENCIES CHENNAI, 26 MAY

Tamil Nadu government is likely to announce the special 'Kuruvai' package for farmers in delta districts of the state.

This follows the demand by farmer associations and political parties that the farmers of the region will have to depend on groundwater as the water level in Mettur dam have gone down drastically.

The Kuruvai package includes 45 kg of urea, 50kg of diammonium phosphate and 25 kg of potash per acre at no cost.

R. Muthuraman, leader of the Tiruchi farmers movement, while speaking to IANS, said: "The water level in Mettur dam has gone down drastically as there are no rains in



Karnataka and hence farmers of this region will have to depend on groundwater. If the government announces the Kuruvai package at the earliest, then we will have the confidence to commence cultivation." Farmers also demand a free and regular supply of electricity to pump sets and quality

paddy seeds for better crop. N. Veerasekaran, state secretary of Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS), while speaking to IANS, said: "A large number of farmers in the Delta region are dependent on groundwater now as the Mettur dam opening will be delayed. The government should bring out a special package that would help farmers." He also said that in addition to the Kuruvai special package, timely loans are also important for the sustenance of the farmers. It may be recalled that in 2023, the Kuruvai package was announced for 6,500 acres of paddy farming and Tamil Nadu Agricultural Department is likely to increase the area of cultivation in the 2024 Kuruvai package.

Stage set for by-election to Telangana MLC seat

AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 26 MAY

The stage is set for the by-election to the Telangana Legislative Council from the Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda graduates' constituency on Monday.

A total of 4.63 lakh graduates are eligible to cast their votes in this constituency spread over 34 assembly segments in the undivided districts of Warangal, Khammam and Nalgonda. The Election Commission of India has made elaborate arrangements for peaceful conduct of the polling.

The vacancy arose after Palla Rajeshwar Reddy of BRS resigned following his election to the Assembly from the Jangaon constituency in the

Assembly elections held in November 2023.

Though there are 52 candidates in the fray, the main contest is among Congress, Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidates. Coming close on the heels of the Lok Sabha elections, the by-election is witnessing a bitter contest among the main players.

For ruling Congress, it is a prestige battle as it is going all out to demonstrate that it continues to enjoy the support of graduates. Jobs for unemployed youth was one of the key promises of the party in Assembly elections and the party tried to assure the voters that it is committed to filling two lakh vacancies by the end of 2024.

The ruling Congress party, which has 33 out of the 34 MLAs in the graduates' constituency, is confident of wresting the seat from BRS.

It has fielded Chintapanu Naveen alias Teenmaar Mallanna, who had contested as an independent and finished second in the election for MLC seat held two years ago. He is locked in a three-cornered contest with Rakesh Reddy of BRS and G. Permemder Reddy of BJP.

Premender Reddy had secured fourth place in the 2021 poll as BJP candidate. Interestingly, the main candidates were all once friends in the BJP. Rakesh Reddy quit BJP to join BRS just before the Assembly elections after he was denied a tick-



et from the Warangal constituency. Teenmaar Mallanna had also quit the BJP to join Congress just before the Assembly polls. Mallanna runs a YouTube channel considered highly critical of BRS chief KCR and

his family. He was arrested for his alleged derogatory posts and comments against KCR when BRS was in power.

In 2021, Telangana Jana Samiti (TJS) president and academician M. Kodandaram also contested the poll from this MLC constituency but fin-

ished third. In the recent Assembly elections, Kodandaram backed the Congress party and the latter rewarded him by nominating him to the Legislative Council under the Governor's quota.

The Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) and TJS have declared their support to the Congress candidate. The CPI-M has said its main objective is to defeat the BJP. The party called upon its cadres, supporters and sympathisers to vote for the Congress candidate. Ministers and key leaders of the ruling Congress party participated in the campaign in support of Teenmaar Mallanna.

The Congress leaders told the voters that the government is working sincerely to solve the problems of the unemployed youth by taking steps to provide them with jobs. BRS working president K. T. Rama Rao and senior leader T. Harish Rao addressed meetings in support of party candidate Rakesh Reddy. The BRS leaders appealed to graduate voters to elect Rakesh Reddy so that he could raise people's voices in the Legislative Council.

At every meeting, Rama Rao asks voters if they want to elect a highly educated Rakesh Reddy, who returned to India from the US to serve people or a 'blackmailer'. He was attacking Teenmaar Mallanna for allegedly resorting to blackmailing in the guise of

journalism. Union minister and state BJP president G. Kishan Reddy, MP K. Laxman, former minister Eatala Rajender and other leaders addressed several meetings to campaign for Permemder Reddy. Rama Rao and Harish Rao have highlighted the failures of the Congress government during the last six months. People are fed up seeing the misrule of Congress in a short span of six months. Both the BRS and BJP leaders slammed Congress for its failure to implement the six guarantees given in Assembly elections. Meanwhile, the Election Commission has asked collectors to grant special casual leave to employees for the by-election.

CM Patel takes stock of Rajkot gaming zone fire incident

Home Minister Sanghavi also met the injured at Rajkot's Giriraj Hospital

AGENCIES RAJKOT, 26 MAY

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel along with Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi inspected the Rajkot TRP gaming zone on Sunday where a massive fire claimed the lives of 27 people, including children.

Visuals from the spot showed the Chief Minister and the Home Minister taking stock of the area along with their team.

Security personnel have also been deployed at the Civil Hospital in Rajkot where those who were injured in yesterday's fire incident have been admitted.

Chief Minister Patel and Home Minister Sanghavi also met the injured at Rajkot's Giriraj Hospital.

Earlier, Gujarat Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi took stock of the area where the massive fire broke out inside a gaming zone and said that one person is still missing after the trag-



ic incident.

"Our first priority is that... as per the information we have, one person is still missing and it is our responsibility to look for the person. We are deploying maximum teams for that..." Sanghavi told reporters.

Sanghavi also informed that all officials have been instructed to be present at the Collector's office by 3 am and he will also be sitting in the Collector's office.

"A very sad incident took place at Rajkot, many family members lost their loved ones and many children have also died in the incident... SIT has

been instructed to start the investigation by 3 am... all officials of those depts under which the responsibility of game zone construction lies, have been instructed to be present at the Collector's office by 3 am today. All types of investigations will begin today itself and soon action will be taken to serve justice. After doing the inspection here I will be sitting in the Collector's office," Harsh Sanghavi had said.

Meanwhile, two people, including the owner and manager of the TRP game zone in Rajkot, have been taken to a police station for interrogation.

Gaming zones in Vadodara to stay shut: All gaming zones in Vadodara have been temporarily closed after the Rajkot fire incident that claimed the lives of 35 people, including children.

"After yesterday's fire incident in Rajkot, all 8-9 game zones in Vadodara were inspected. 15 days back we inspected the game zones and asked them to fulfil the compliances. Yesterday night experts from different departments like the mechanical department, electrical department, and civil department came to investigate. Those gaming zones that seemed unsafe were asked to take requisite steps to ensure their safety. All game zones in Vadodara were safe earlier and now further safety has been ensured," Chief Fire Officer Parth Brahmabhatt said speaking to a news agency on Sunday.

"Our priority is that... as per the information we have, one person is still missing and it is our responsibility to look for the person. We are deploying maximum teams for that..." Sanghavi told reporters.

"The game zones will be closed till further orders come."

On preventive measures that may be taken to prevent such tragedies in future, the fire officer said, "We will be guiding them further to ensure that such incidents do not take place."

A massive fire broke out at a gaming zone in Gujarat's Rajkot city on May 25 evening resulting in the loss of lives including children.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel along with Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi inspected the Rajkot TRP gaming zone on Sunday. The duo also met the injured at Rajkot's Giriraj Hospital.

Earlier, Gujarat Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi took stock of the area where the massive fire broke out.

"Our priority is that... as per the information we have, one person is still missing and it is our responsibility to look for the person. We are deploying maximum teams for that..." Sanghavi told reporters.

PM Modi winning 310 seat in first five phases of LS polls, remaining phases for 400+: Shah

AGENCIES KARAKAT, 26 MAY

Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressed a rally in Bihar's Karakat on Sunday, and claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has crossed 310 marks in the five phases of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections and that the remaining two phases are meant for the party to cross more 400 seats.

"Yesterday, six phases of Lok Sabha elections were completed. I have the report on the five phases of elections. In just five phases of elections, PM Modi will be winning 310 seats and forming the government. The sixth and seventh phases are for crossing 400 seats," Shah said.

The BJP has set a steep target of winning more than 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections along with its National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners.

Urging people to vote for the NDA candidate Upendra Kushwaha (Rashtriya Lok Samta Party) from the Karakat parliamentary seat, Shah said, "Are you ready to make Narendra Modi the Prime Minister for the third time?"

Press the button beside Kushwa Singh and you will be voting for PM Modi. Every vote polled in favour of Kushwa Singh will help PM Modi be the Prime Minister."

Shah also accused INDIA block members of being involved in scams worth Rs 12 lakh crore, and said, "This fight is tremendous. On the one hand, you have the INDI alliance that has committed scams of more than Rs 12 lakh crore. On the other hand, there is PM Modi who has not engaged in scams worth even Rs 1 throughout his public life."

Pointing out the differences between PM Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in terms of their wealth, the Union Minister said, "On the one hand, there is Rahul Gandhi who was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and on the other hand, there is someone from the extremely backward community who used to sell tea, our Narendra Modi."

Taking a dig at Rahul Gandhi, Shah said that while the former goes on foreign trips as the heat increases in the country, Prime Minister Modi does not take breaks

and celebrates Diwali with soldiers at the border.

"On one hand, there is Rahul Gandhi who goes on vacation abroad when the weather becomes hot, and on the other hand, there is PM Modi who has worked throughout the year for 23 years and does not take rest even on Diwali but goes to celebrate the festival with soldiers at the border and eats sweets with them. Are Biharis with those who practice corruption or with those who are with Narendra Modi?" Shah said.

It is for general information that I, Md Aman Momin, S/O Azad Akela, R/o Vill- Amrity, PO- Amrity, Malda, PIN: 732208, West Bengal, India, I declare that Name of My Mother has been wrongly written as RUMI BIBI in My Passport Number 57817485. The actual name of My Mother is RUMI KHATUN, which will be amended accordingly.

Be it known to all that my Client had entered into an agreement for the purchase of Residential Flat No.3 on the First Floor together with an open car parking space together with undivided, proportionate, indivisible and inalienable rights in the land at Municipal Premises No.8, Dr. Koteries Sarani, Police Station New Alipore, within Ward No. 81 of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation, PIN-700053, District South 24 Parganas with Seema Agarwala, Jyoti Kotriwal, Jyoti Kedia, Aditya Verdhnan & Agarwala Akash Agarwala, claiming to be owners. Any person or entity having/ claiming any right, title, interest, claim or demand whatsoever in respect of or affecting the said property or the proposed transaction with my Client in any manner whatsoever is called upon to intimate the same in writing along with documents/ evidence in support thereof, within 10 (ten) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which the same, if any, shall be deemed to have abandoned, waived, disclaimed and/or given up irrevocably.

Lucknow Police begin probe into video showing man being thrown off terrace



AGENCIES LUCKNOW, 26 MAY

The Lucknow Police have launched a probe after a video showing a group of assailants throwing a man from the terrace of a building reportedly due to a money

In the video, five assailants, three identified as Amit, Gautam and Ankur, can be seen picking up the man and throwing him from the terrace on the first floor of the building with the intention of killing him.

Two of the accused then proceed to kick him, after which the others join in and start beating the man.

A passer-by is seen trying to help, but the physical assault of the man continues unabated.

The Uttar Pradesh Police and Lucknow Police replied to a tweet which tagged the two in the post.

The Uttar Pradesh Police asked the Lucknow Police to "please take the necessary legal action". In response, the Lucknow Police said a case was registered at the Madeyanj police station and action has been initiated.

dispute, went viral on social media.

When the man survived the fall, the accused people beat and kicked him.

The footage of the incident, which occurred in the city's Madeyanj area, was captured by a neighbour.

Congress abused PM Modi 150 times: Shaina NC on Kharge's 'poison' remarks on PM Modi

AGENCIES MUMBAI, 26 MAY

BJP leader Shaina NC slammed Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge for his remark drawing parallels between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and poison. She said that the remarks showed that the Congress has no vision for India.

"Look at the audacity of the Congress party, they have abused the Prime Minister, 150 times. To say that he is poisonous, to say that in 2047 he will not be there. Let me make a prediction to the Congress... post 4th June, you (Congress) won't be there," Shaina told ANI.

"The fact is that if you can reduce yourself to such poor commentary, it shows you have no vision plan for this country and voters of India



will dismiss you as a defuncted regional party," she added.

Earlier on Friday, while addressing a press conference in Karnataka's Kalaburagi on Friday, Kharge said, "Maa Ganga has called him (PM Modi). He is talking about 2047 plans... 2047 tak shaaswat bhi rahenge agar (if he stays alive till 2047). Sometimes he goes diving in sea, sometimes he takes dips in Ganga waters, sometimes he goes

into caves, sometimes he meditates alone. I don't know, maybe he will get the fruits of all this 'tapasya'."

"I believe that if you work then you get to fill your stomach. If you do good work, then the results will be good. If you commit bad things, bad results will be there. If somebody does bad things and still gets good things, that's upto them. If I say this is poison and don't touch it, and if you still insist on licking it, then what will be the result? Modi is like that," he added. Earlier in April last year, Kharge was caught in a similar row amid the high-decibel campaign for the Karnataka Assembly elections. During a public rally in the state, the Congress chief likened PM Modi to a "poisonous snake", drawing a sharp reaction from the BJP.

Kharge later issued a clarification saying his remark wasn't directed at the Prime Minister but at the BJP and its "divisive" ideology.

J&K records 58pc polling, highest turnout in 35 years



SP SHARMA JAMMU, 26 MAY

Political parties in Jammu and Kashmir are interpreting the high polling percentage of the Lok Sabha election in their own way as the 35 year record has been broken with an upswing of 58.11% voting in the five constituencies where the election concluded in phases yesterday.

J&K was witnessing low polling since 1989 when terrorism broke out and the Pakistan backed terrorists and separatists made it a routine to call for poll boycott particularly in the Kashmir valley. Their boycott call was generally not accepted in the Jammu region.

The authorities skipped the elections in J&K in 1991 because of turmoil created by terrorists.

It is after many elections that not a single polling booth in Kashmir has reported zero voting.

The last highest voter turnout in J&K was 49.58% in 2014. The lowest polling of 29.93% was witnessed in 1989. Anantnag, which has been

J&K was witnessing low polling since 1989 when terrorism broke out and the Pakistan backed terrorists and separatists made it a routine to call for poll boycott particularly in the Kashmir valley.

the epicenter of terrorism, yesterday recorded 53% polling against 8.96% in 2019.

During the peak of terrorism, the gunmen would dare people in Kashmir to defy their poll boycott call and get rewarded.

But during this election, kin of top terrorist commanders were seen in the serpentine queues waiting for their turn to cast their vote in Shopian and Anantnag districts of South Kashmir.

Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist Junaid Reshi's father Mushtaq Ahmad Reshi reportedly voted at a polling booth in Beminapora in Shopian. A former separatist Mukhtar Waza was also seen casting his vote.

Since eruption of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the highest ever poll percentage in the Anantnag Parliamen-

tary Constituency, was recorded in 1996 with 50.02%. Hence the poll percentage of 53% this time is highest in the last 35 years, said Chief Electoral Officer, Pandurang K Pole.

This election was conducted without any boycott calls or intimidation, exhibiting voters' unwavering belief in the power of ballot.

INDIA Alliance failing to reach any seat sharing in J&K led to the National Conference (NC) and PDP contest the election against each other. The Congress supported Omar Abdullah and two other NC candidates in the three seats of the valley.

However, the NC and PDP supported Congress candidates contesting against the BJP on the two Lok Sabha seats in Jammu.

BJP, which has made abrogation of Article 370 one of the

main poll issues elsewhere in the country, did not field its candidates on any of the three seats in Kashmir.

The BJP chief of the UT, Ravinder Raina attributed the 'bumper polling' to peace, prosperity and large scale development that has taken place in J&K under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

However, the BJP was supporting the Apni Party can-

didates in Anantnag and Srinagar. The party also supported the People's Conference chief Sajad Lone in Baramulla. BJP leaders of J&K and also from other states campaigned for these candidates and more so in the Anantnag-Rajouri constituency where the government recently granted Scheduled Tribe status and 10% reservation in jobs to the Pahari community.

The NC supporters believe that against their candidate Mian Altaf, who is the spiritual leader of the Gujjar community, the pre-election sop to the Pahari community might not help the BJP backed Zafar Iqbal Manhas of the Apni Party. Similarly, counter claims are being made for the Baramulla seat where the NC leader Omar Abdullah faced People's Conference chief Sajad Lone.

SBI STRESSED ASSETS MANAGEMENT BRANCH - I, KOLKATA E-AUCTION NOTICE

'Nagaland House', 8th Floor, 11 & 13 Shakespeare Sarani, Kolkata - 700071
Ph: 033-22803098, Fax: 033-22810622, E-mail: sbi.04151@sbi.co.in

Authorised Officer's Details: Name: Shri Gunadhar Saha, e-mail ID: cfo1.04151@sbi.co.in, Mobile No: 9619712118

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES (UNDER PHYSICAL POSSESSION)

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso rule 8(6) read with 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002- M/s Sree Maa Sarada Ores & Forging India Private Limited.

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION : DATE : 14.06.2024

TIME : 300 MINUTES FROM 11.00 A.M. TO 4.00 P.M., WITH UNLIMITED EXTENSIONS OF 10 MINUTES FOR EACH BID. Interested bidder may deposit Pre-Bid EMD with MSTC before the close of e-Auction. Credit of Pre-bid EMD shall be given to the bidder only after receipt of payment in MSTC's Bank account and updation of such information in the e-auction website. This may take some time as per banking process and hence bidders, in their own interest, are advised to submit the pre-bid EMD amount well in advance to avoid any last minute problem.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of State Bank of India, the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on 14.06.2024 at 11.00 a.m. to 04:00 p.m. through website <https://www.mstccommerce.com/auctionhome/bapi/index.jsp> for recovery of Rs. 145,45,45,670.41 (Rupees One Hundred Forty Five Crore Forty Five Lakh Forty Five Thousand Six Hundred Seventy And Paise Forty One Only) as on 30.09.2014 plus interest and cost thereafter due to the secured creditor from Sree Maa Sarada Ores & Forgings India Private Limited (Borrower) and Sri Kaushik Das and Smt. Shelly Das (Personal Guarantors) and Angstrom Steel Forging Private Limited, Sree Maa Sarada Fabrication & Engg Private Limited and Rama Krishna Techno & Engg Private Limited (Corporate Guarantors).

Details of Reserve Price of the Property and the Earnest Money to be deposited are furnished below:

Sl. No.	Description of Property/ Asset	a) Reserve Price	b) EMD	c) BID Incremental Amount
1.	Commercial Flat measuring 951 sq. ft. at 'Damodar Apartment' 3rd Floor, Mouza- Baitikuri, Howrah-Amta Road, Howrah-711113 in the name of Sri Kaushik Das. (Type of Possession: Physical) (Property ID - SBIN200002084027) Date and time of Property Inspection : 10.06.2023 02:00 P.M. to 04:00 P.M.	a) Rs. 19,00,000.00 b) Rs. 1,90,000.00 c) Rs. 10,000.00		

SEARCH FOR PROPERTY

Bank Website: URL: https://bank.sbi	E-Auction Website URL: https://bapi.in/ Property ID - SBIN200002084027	Property Location	Photographs	Videos

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in State Bank of India, the Secured Creditor website <https://sbi.co.in/web/sbi-in-the-news/auction-notices/sarfaesi-and-others>, <https://www.mstccommerce.com/auctionhome/bapi/index.jsp>

Date : 27.05.2024 Place : Kolkata Authorised Officer State Bank of India

PUBLIC NOTICE

PROCLAMATION OF SALE
(Under Order XXI, Rule 66)
IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI
(ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION)
O.M.P. (EFA) (COMM.) NO. 6 OF 2016.

Dalich Sankyo Company, Limited ... Decree Holder

Malvinder Mohan Singh & Ors. ... Judgment Debtors

To, The public at large

(1) Notice is hereby given that, under rule 64 of Order XXI of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, an order dated 21 March 2024 has been passed by this Court for the sale of the attached property being an Agricultural Land measuring 5 Bighas 16 Biswas bearing Kharsa No. 1580 min (5-16) situated at Village Asola, Tehsil Saket, New Delhi 110074 owned by Bindas Realtors Private Limited, as more specifically specified in Schedule I, towards partial satisfaction of the claim of the Decree Holder in the captioned execution proceedings, aggregating to INR 48,95,42,83,347.30 including interest as on 21 March 2024.

(2) The sale of the attached property being an Agricultural Land as specified in the Schedule I will be held by public auction. The date and time of inspection of the attached property by prospective buyers is 18 June 2024 to 21 June 2024 between 10 AM IST to 4 PM IST.

(3) The public auction of the attached property will be held on 22 June 2024 between 10:30 AM IST to 2 PM IST at the Meeting Room, The Electric Room, The Lohi Hotel, Lohi Road, New Delhi, Delhi 110003, and the liabilities and claims attaching to the said property, so far as they have been ascertained, are those specified in the schedule.

(4) In the absence of any order of postponement, the sale will be held by the Court Commissioner on 22 June 2024 between 10:30 AM IST to 2 PM IST at the Meeting Room, The Electric Room, The Lohi Hotel, Lohi Road, New Delhi, Delhi 110003. In the event, however, of the debt above specified and of the costs of the sale being tendered or paid by the Judgment Debtors, the sale will be stopped.

(5) At the sale the public generally are invited to bid, either personally or by duly authorized agent. No bid by, or on behalf of, the Judgment Debtors, however, will be accepted, nor will any sale to them be valid without the express permission of the Court previously given. The following are the further:

Conditions of sale

(a) The particulars specified in the schedule below have been stated to the best of the information of the Court, but the Court will not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation.

(b) After the confirmation of sale by the Court, the person declared to be the purchaser shall upfront and immediately upon declaration pay a deposit of 25% of the reserved price or the amount of purchase-money to the court commissioner by way of a pay order in favour of the Registrar General of the High Court of Delhi, and in default of such deposit, the attached property, as specified in the annexed Schedule I, shall forthwith be put up again for auction and resold in terms of Order XXI Rule 84(1).

(c) The balance amount of the purchase-money shall be paid by the successful purchaser before the Court closes on the 15th day after the sale of the property, exclusive of such day, or if the 15th day be a Sunday or other holiday, then on the first office day after the 15th day.

(d) In default of payment of the balance of purchase-money within the period allowed, the property shall be re-sold after the issue of a fresh notification of sale. The defaulting purchaser shall forfeit all claim to the property or to any part of the sum for which it may be subsequently sold. The deposit of the defaulting purchaser, after defraying the expenses of the sale, shall stand forfeited to the High Court of Delhi for the benefit of the Decree Holder.

SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY	
Number of lot	One
Description of property to be sold, with the name of each owner where there are more Judgment Debtors than one	Agricultural land measuring 5 Bighas 16 Biswas bearing Kharsa No. 1580 min (5-16) situated at Village Asola, Tehsil Saket, New Delhi 110074. The land is presently owned by M/s Bindas Realtors Private Limited.
The revenue assessed upon the estate or part of the estate, if the property to be sold is an estate or a part of an estate paying revenue to Government.	Not applicable
Details of any encumbrances to which the property is liable	Nil
Claims, if any, which have been put forward to the property and any other known particulars bearing on its nature and value	Nil.
The value of the property as per the valuation report submitted by SDM, Saket (moderated by the Court Commissioner, reference para no.8 of the report)	(a) INR 11,38,39,200/-
The value of the property as per the valuation report submitted by Independent Valuer appointed by Court Commissioner	(b) INR 13,06,80,000/-
The value of the property as stated by the Decree Holder	(c) INR 12,08,30,000/-
The value of the property as stated by the Judgment Debtors	XXX
The value of the property as Proposed by Court Commissioner	(a) + (b) + (c) = INR 12,17,83,000/-

(NAROTTAM KAUSHAL)
Court Commissioner/Former Principal District & Sessions Judge
Mobile No.-9910384683, E-mail: narottam.kaushal@gmail.com

The Statesman

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Tax Justice

The recent proposal from the Paris-based World Inequality Lab to impose a crorepati tax on India's ultra-rich has reignited the debate over wealth inequality and its societal impact. According to their findings, the top 0.04 per cent of Indian adults, those possessing net wealth exceeding Rs 10 crore, hold an astonishing 25 per cent of the nation's total wealth. This stark concentration of wealth at the top underscores a deeply entrenched economic disparity that continues to widen. India's economic landscape is marked by stark contrasts. On one side, there is a burgeoning class of billionaires whose fortunes have swelled, even amid global economic downturns. On the other, millions struggle to make ends meet, with the median adult holding a mere Rs 4.3 lakh in wealth and the bottom 50 per cent owning just 6.4 per cent of the country's total wealth. Such disparities are not just numbers. They have real-world consequences, including in terms of access to quality education, healthcare, and opportunities for social mobility. The proposed wealth and inheritance taxes, targeting only the very wealthy, aim to bridge this chasm. By taxing net wealth exceeding Rs 10 crore at 2 per cent annually and imposing a 33 per cent inheritance tax on estates of similar value, the plan promises to generate significant revenue ~ up to 2.73 per cent of GDP. These funds could be transformative, potentially doubling public spending on education, which has languished at 2.9 per cent of GDP, far below the 6 per cent target set by the National Education Policy, 2020.

Critics of wealth taxes often argue that such measures could stifle economic growth and discourage investment. However, proponents counter that the extreme concentration of wealth at the top actually undermines broader economic vitality. When vast resources are held by a minuscule fraction of the population, it limits overall consumption, investment in diverse sectors, and innovation driven by a broader base of participants. Moreover, the proposed taxes would affect only 0.04 per cent of adults, leaving the vast majority untouched while addressing the skewed distribution of wealth. An important dimension of this debate is the intersection of economic and social inequalities, particularly the role of caste. The report highlights that India's billionaires are predominantly from upper-caste backgrounds, with Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes significantly under-represented. This suggests that wealth concentration is not just an economic issue but also a social one, perpetuating historical injustices and limiting the socio-economic mobility of marginalised groups. Any proposal for such a tax would require careful consideration and robust democratic debate. Key questions include how to ensure compliance, the potential impact on capital flight, and how best to use the generated revenue to maximise public benefit. Transparency and accountability in the deployment of these funds would be crucial to gaining public trust and ensuring that the taxes achieve their intended goals. The debate this proposal sparks is essential for a nation striving for inclusive growth and equity.

Technology, rights

An overlooked aspect of this election is the starkly different approach of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress in the realms of technology and human rights. This divergence is not merely academic but could have implications for the country's socio-economic fabric and its governance ethos. The BJP's manifesto is heavily tech-centric, envisioning a future where technology is the linchpin of development. Under the chapter 'Modi ki Guarantee for Technology and Innovations,' the BJP outlines an ambitious agenda to harness cutting-edge technologies across various sectors. From leveraging AI for language preservation to employing drones in fisheries, the party's commitment to technological innovation is evident. Initiatives like expanding 5G and pioneering 6G technologies, advancing Graphene-based programmes, and embarking on the National Quantum Mission underscore a vision of India as a global tech powerhouse. However, this aggressive push for technology raises critical concerns about the absence of a parallel emphasis on rights and privacy. The BJP's manifesto, while expansive on technological solutions, remains conspicuously silent on how these advancements will safeguard citizens' privacy and rights. In an era where data privacy is paramount, this omission is significant. The manifesto does not articulate how the existing data protection laws will be enforced or improved to protect individuals' privacy amid the tech boom. This gap is troubling, as it suggests a potential oversight in balancing technological progress with essential civil liberties.

In stark contrast, the Congress manifesto takes a more measured approach, focusing heavily on a rights-based framework. While it acknowledges the importance of technology in driving economic growth and job creation, its primary emphasis is on protecting and enhancing human rights. The Congress promises to uphold intellectual property rights, enforce the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, and ensure the legal protection of gig workers and domestic help. Furthermore, the party aims to amend the Digital Personal Data Protection Act to prevent governmental overreach and censorship. This approach by Congress suggests a commitment to socio-economic equity and legal safeguards although it can never be guaranteed that technological advancements will not eclipse rights of individuals. The party's manifesto underscores the importance of addressing systemic issues such as discrimination against women and protecting the rights of religious minorities, aiming to foster an inclusive society. The divergence in these manifestos reflects broader ideological differences between the two parties. The BJP's techno-solution approach is forward-looking, but risks overshadowing critical human rights issues. Congress's rights-centric agenda, although less technologically ambitious, lays stress on legal and social frameworks. For India, the path forward must balance these two approaches. Technological advancements are undoubtedly crucial for economic growth and global competitiveness. However, these must be pursued without compromising on the protection of individual rights and privacy. A balanced strategy that integrates technological innovation with robust rights-based safeguards will ensure sustainable and inclusive development.

Development Ideas

Development should be viewed as a journey to achieve freedom. It is a process of generation and realization of new opportunities. Sustained development, however, is a continuous process. Needless to say, imparting proper education is a deliberate, spontaneous, process. It enlarges abilities. Social goals and social content of education appear to be equally important. Freedom of education alone can ultimately bring human freedom and total development



The qualitative indicators of development as conceived by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are unique. Monitoring development over time is important in order to improve the lifestyles of the common people. Some typical qualitative indicators are literacy, mortality and morbidity rates, income etc. Consequently, development with a human face and pragmatic analysis of broader dimensions of human well-being circumvent the policy makers.

The UNDP over the years has focused on inter-relationships between human development and human rights. It analyses the impact of growth, economic structures, human rights development and reiterates that elimination of poverty should be addressed as a basic entitlement of human rights and definitely should not be perceived as an act of charity. The value of the Human Development Index (HDI), as well as its relevance and importance are well recognized. Consequently the human poverty index (HPI) emerges as a powerful instrument for conceptual understanding and embracing sustainable development.

Recognizing the poverty of choices and opportunities implies that poverty must be addressed in all its dimensions, not income alone, despite the fact that a lot can be achieved in human development by utilizing income. It is absolutely essential that income should not dictate the value of the HDI. The HDI index has been criticized on a number of grounds. For example it failed to include any ecological considerations including environment, exclusively pin-pointing on national performance and ranking and not paying cognizance to development from a global perspective. The imperfections of the HDI index and its shortcomings like other composite indices evoke many pertinent questions including its transformation and evolution as well as its distillation and refinement.

Advocating equal rights for women and children has been and will continue to be an important factor underlying this evolution. The assessment of perceived satisfaction and dissatisfaction has proven to be useful. Administrative records do not always give correct results. On the contrary, statistics supplied by nodal agencies are likely to be inaccurate.

For example, in education, one of the most commonly used indicators derived from administrative statistics, namely school enrolment, doesn't mention dropouts. The claim of 100 per cent literacy in some districts of West Bengal, echoed by the leaders of the CPI-M during their almost three and half decades of rule was not only inaccurate but ludicrous. It is unfortunate that this important indicator of development is inflated purposely so that figures give wrong ideas.

Another indicator is the proportion of households with at least one literate member. Most developed countries which have had compulsory education do not necessarily measure literacy. Similarly few hospital beds or limited availability of health care centres per 10,000 population is an indicator of lack of minimum infrastructure, because of geographical maldistribution of health care centers that are inaccessible to the lower income group.

However, the UNDP ignores the essential needs of human beings such as harmony and happiness while considering the HDI. Expansion of health, education and income, according to UNDP, would enable human beings to be more developed. Surely income and health may be attributed as a powerful instrument of development. Good incomes can combat inequality of opportunities in many respects. Generation of income is good and perhaps a driving force to improve the quality of life to a certain extent. At the same time, effective and meaningful use of income seems to be more important, particularly in the field of education which would ultimately bring social harmony and happiness.

The classical ideas of development as perceived by Aristotle, Karl Marx and John Stuart Mill are significant even today. The terms development and freedom are common. However, careful consideration would reveal the intricacy of the two words. Development for whom? What is freedom?

There certainly exist various types of freedom, like freedom of speech, freedom to write and express views and ideas, free-

dom of thought. Political and civil freedom is part of human freedom. But there appears to be lack of freedom affecting millions in our country. Labour bondage is an example.

The ruling parties are vociferously highlighting the profound success of development issues and performance which is supported by reports and statistical data. On the other hand, the opposition describes all this as propaganda, and an illusion of development. It asks whether development in various sectors can be measured only by citing statistics. The real test is the fulfillment of basic needs with regard to food, housing, clothing, health care, education and employment opportunities. Be that as it may, the citizens of India have been watching various development projects initiated by the union and the state governments, aimed at welfare of the common people, for several years.

Appeasing the rural electorate during presentation of the annual budget proves to be ineffective in bringing development in the true sense of the term. At the same time elimination of corruption would appear to be a prudent step in marching ahead for the development of a nation. Distribution of resources to the unprivileged; sagacious consideration of economic growth, and measures for creating job opportunities are equally important.

Development should be viewed as a journey to achieve freedom. It is a process of generation and realization of new opportunities. Sustained development, however, is a continuous process. Needless to say, imparting proper education is a deliberate, spontaneous, process. It enlarges abilities. Social goals and social content of education appear to be equally important. Freedom of education alone can ultimately bring human freedom and total development.

It is a glorious journey from untruth to truth, from darkness to light, from ignorance to consciousness. Freedom through education is necessary in our country with 424 million illiterates. Around 35 million children, aged between six and 10, do not

even attend school, and about 40 per cent drop out before reaching class five. In tertiary education, the enrollment is six per cent only. If advancement of human freedom is our main object and means for total development, it is imperative that we should re-examine our education policy, particularly for rural and backward sections. It is absolutely imperative to initiate qualitative improvements in the field of education, right from the primary to higher education level immediately, if real nation building development is our aim.

Rural reconstruction as perceived by Tagore has great relevance even today, despite the 'smart cities' concept. According to Tagore, rural reconstruction was nothing but national development, and this area should be given the utmost priority in a nation building venture. His novel, Gora, published about a century ago, is worth recalling. Gora, an educated city-born young man and brought up in a cultured society, had horrifying experiences in the village.

Tagore wanted the welfare of the rural poor not by prodding mere literacy but by nurturing and widening their minds to give strength and consciousness in all possible directions. According to Tagore, reading and writing is a secondary question, communication from heart to heart is what matters more. He reiterated that without restoration of a balance between city and village, no development was possible. Cities have their function of maintaining wealth and knowledge in concentrated forms, but they should not be centers of irrigation; they should gather in order to distribute. They should be like lamp posts; the light must transcend their own limits.

'The religion of man' written by Tagore in 1931 is unique and extremely relevant even today. The dissolute, disorderly, unregulated, bohemian intelligence of people with profound learning is dangerous indeed, and a matter of graver concern than people without literacy. The human must transcend from self to self-sacrifice for others, be compassionate and tender, possess profound sympathy for the destitute, and must unite the heart with the entire living and non-living materials of the environment. Such development is difficult to perceive and presumably cannot be measured by any mathematical index.



PARTHASARATHI CHAKRABORTY

The writer, a former Reader in Chemistry, Presidency College, Kolkata was associated with the UCC and UNICEF

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Laws for the affluent

SIR, Apropos the news report on the 'Porsche Crash' (Page 5, May 25), the cancellation of bail granted to the minor son of a real estate mogul in Pune, who killed two IT Engineers with his reckless driving of a luxury car without license, shows that public opinion is still alive and kicking in India. Though the police may deny providing special treatment, the facts speak otherwise.

The 17-year old aspiring Formula 1 champion was granted bail by the Juvenile Justice Board within 15 hours of the heinous crime, with the condition that 'he write a stirring essay on 'Road Safety', which with the resources at his command, he could have easily got written by a ghost writer. However, the public is well aware that this is the maximum

one can expect from the system that is heavily loaded in favour of the rich, powerful and the politically connected.

Already efforts are on to pressurise the family's driver, accompanying the boy to admit that he was the one at the wheel at the time of the accident.

Even if the juvenile is treated as an adult and tried, as demanded in some quarters, we can expect him to be soon out on bail, represented by a battery of high profile lawyers arguing eloquently before the courts that 'showing him leniency would be akin to showing indulgence to the innocence and ingenuousness of childhood!'

As for the VIP father, who allowed his new high-end car, without even a license plate, to be

driven by his inebriated teen son, he too may triumphantly return to business after paying a fine, with the public, with its proverbially short memory, moving on to more sensational events of which there is no dearth in this country.

Yours, etc., V. Jayaraman, Chennai, 25 May.

DECISIVE STEPS

SIR, This refers to your editorial "Baramulla wakens" (23 May). Kashmir has been the bone of contention between India and Pakistan since partition.

This long-standing problem demands a political solution, not a military one. The Baramulla turnout has confirmed that the electorate of the valley is now ready to take part in the progress of the nation leaving behind militancy, though an absence of violence does hardly equate with

peace. India needs to be fully alert. Now it can be said that the abrogation of article 370 was a step in the right direction. The valley has now started its journey with decisive steps. India should

remain optimistic but must not allow any foreign interference in Kashmir. Any cross-border threat must be firmly dealt with.

Yours, etc., Aranya Sanyal, Siliguri, 23 May.

UNQUALIFIED?

SIR, The Association for Democratic Reforms has released some statistics from the Lok Sabha elections: 8360 candidates contesting and of them 121 candidates are illiterate.

The Lok Sabha is the highest legislative body of the country. It is shocking to know even after 75 years of independence, there are 121 uneducated candidates in the fray. The minimum age limit for standing in the Lok Sabha is 25 but there is no upper limit. So even today candidates up to 90 years of age can stand for election. If an illiterate candidate is elected to the Lok Sabha, how will he participate in the work, read rules and documents or participate meaningfully in discussions? In the 17th Lok Sabha, one MP was illiterate. There should be some minimum educational qualification for Lok Sabha elections. In addition, 359 candidates have studied up to class 5 and 647 candidates have passed class 8.

Yours, etc., Shantaram Wagh, Pune, 24.

A MEMBER OF THE ANN ASIA NEWS NETWORK

ASIAN VOICES

Cross-border trade

The Yoon Suk Yeol administration's embarrassing backtracking of its hastily formulated policy plan to block consumers from directly buying cross-border items ~ mostly from China ~ has sparked a wave of criticism, raising questions about its administrative capabilities, as well as its ulterior motives regarding the country's safety certification system, which is saddled with some critical issues.

Lee Jeong-won, second vice minister of the Office for Government Policy Coordination, said in a briefing in Seoul that it is "not true" that the government had intended to carry out a "preemptive ban on all direct purchases of 80 types of items," and that such a comprehensive measure would be "physically and legally impossible."

Lee said the ban would be imposed only on items that are found to be hazardous based on a safety test, apologizing for confusing the public.

The government's changed stance came just three days after it announced Thursday its controversial plan targeting 80 types of items bought directly from overseas.

Despite Lee's official apology and clarification during Sunday's briefing, however, it seems the government had initially announced an impossible plan in the first place.

In a statement released Thursday, the government stated that 80 types of items directly purchased overseas would be banned if they did not carry the country's Korea Certification (KC) safety mark, including 34 types of

The Korea Herald

goods for children such as toys and strollers and 34 types of electrical and household products.

The KC safety mark is required for officially imported products before being circulated in the domestic market, but goods that consumers directly buy from overseas have been free from the otherwise mandatory certification.

Predictably, the government's plan unveiled on Thursday touched off a firestorm of protests and complaints. On many online discussion forums, those who often buy overseas items slammed the measure, saying that it is too comprehensive in a way that limits their choice.

Even political heavyweights such as Han Dong-hoon, former interim chair of the ruling People Power Party, criticized the plan as "overly restrictive" on Facebook on Saturday.

Enforcing a sudden ban on direct purchases of foreign goods is not a simple matter. After all, South Korea's consumers spent a total of 6.76 trillion won (\$4.99 billion) on cross-border shopping last year, partly spurred by the strong marketing of Chinese e-commerce platforms such as AliExpress and Temu.

The Korea Customs Service has so far around 24 million personal customs clearance codes that are needed for the import declaration of personal items, and customs officials are now processing some 460,000 directly purchased items on a daily basis. This reality suggests the majority of Korea's consumers have already directly purchased goods from other countries.

A main reason for buying items from China and other countries is cheaper prices. According to the Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Trade, directly purchased items from foreign sellers are 23.3 percent cheaper on average than officially imported goods. In addition, mobile platforms including AliExpress make it easier to browse and order items.

As cross-border shopping is now a significant part of life for Korea's consumers, there are safety issues that must be addressed. Some of the items turned out to contain carcinogenic materials, with certain toys for children tainted with harmful substances such as humidifier disinfectant.

OCCASIONAL NOTE

The Egyptian Chamber of Deputies, which has just been discussing the question whether a foreigner ought or ought not to command the army, is an interesting assembly; thoroughly good-natured, according to the correspondent of the Times, but inclined to noisiness. In order to counteract this tendency, the President has two bells which he employs with a view to the restoration of order. The first is an ordinary call bell, which is usually adequate to bring deputies to a sense of the proprieties; but should this misfire, for any reason, the President has in reserve a powerful electric bell which almost invariably proves effective. At times, however, even this instrument fails to answer the purpose, and a still more drastic device is about to be installed, namely, an electric gong of the type used for fire-alarms. The gradation appears to resemble the thoughtful contrivance said to have been attached to an American car some years ago with a view to the regulation of speed. A white light was displayed at twenty miles an hour and a red light at thirty, while at forty and upwards a musical box under the seat ground out the well-known hymn tune, "Brief life is here our portion."

NEWS ITEMS

IMPERIAL INSTITUTE

SCHEME FOR FUTURE CONTROL

A Bill, introduced by Lord Arnold for the purpose of reconstituting the Imperial Institute and amalgamating the Imperial Mineral Resources Bureau with it, provides that the trustees of the Institute shall henceforth consist of the Lord President of the Council, the First Commissioner of the Treasury, the Secretaries of State for the Colonies and India, the President of the Board of Trade, and the Secretary of the Overseas Department, the last named being the responsible Minister.

The Board of Governors is to consist of the responsible Minister, one representative each from India, the Dominions, the Treasury, the Board of Trade the Colonial Office the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Scientific Research, and not more than ten representative of scientific and commercial interests, including not fewer than three ex-Governors of the Imperial Mineral Resources Bureau. The appointments are to be for three years, Reuter

MAILS FROM HOME

Bombay, May 17.
The outward P and O. mail steamer Kaiser-i-Hind with mails from London of May 8 arrived at Aden on Sunday morning, and left the same evening. She is due in Bombay on Friday next.
The outward P and O. mail steamer Mooltan with mails from London of May 15 left Marseilles at 7 a. m. on Saturday.

Bombay, May 17.
The Homeward P and O. Mail steamer China with mails from Bombay of May 3 arrived at Marseilles on May 16. Passengers travelling by the P and O. special train were due to arrive in London on Saturday evening. The mails left by the mail special and are expected to be delivered in London on Monday morning.
The P and O. mail steamer Maedonia which left Bombay on April 26 arrived in London on May 16.

PARTH'S VICTORY IN JUBILEE HANDICAP

The Jubilee Handicap result and betting was as follows:—Parth (9—2), 1; Verdict (3—1), 2; Soldumeno (6—1), 3; Won by a short head, the same distance separating second and third. Place betting was evens Verdict, 7—4, Soldumeno; Parth proportionate.

On settling down, Waywood led from Soldumeno, followed by Clochnaben, Verdict and Twelve Pointer, Turning into the straight Waywood still Command from Soldumeno, followed by Parth, Twelve Pointer and Verdict. A furlong from home Parth was in front, and in a desperate finish held Verdict at bay. Marvex was the only one of the published list of probabilities that did not go.—Reuter.

U. S. BEAT FRANCE IN OLYMPIC GAMES

The United States team defeated France in the final of the Olympic Rugby by 17 points to 3.

The United States, whose victory upset all calculations, scored the first try four minutes from the start, and after that had the best of the game. They played a very hard game and the lighter Frenchmen did not like their hard tackling.

Two Frenchmen were incapacitated and one was badly shaken and the team became demoralised towards the end. The Americans showed superior speed, weight and dash. The French forwards played well, but the backs failed to pierce the American defence.—Reuter's

A time for the world to take stock of dangers

BHARAT DOGRA

With the kind of weapons that are used commonly in modern warfare, all wars have become extremely destructive. Thus, sincere efforts must be made to avoid all conflicts.

The destructive possibilities increase manifold and the risks for humanity become intolerably high when the possibilities of any confrontation between the biggest military powers arise. These powers have arsenals of nuclear weapons as well as other destructive weapons. Any possibility of a clash between the USA and Russia, or between NATO and Russia, is fearsome as the two sides together have close to 11,000 nuclear weapons in their arsenal. If even 5 to 10 per cent of these weapons get used, the world comes very close to annihilation. Ninety nine per cent of humanity and 100 per cent of other forms of life have no role in the creation of this extremely high risk, but they are threatened by this.

Is this risk real or imaginary, based on facts or highly exaggerated?

The most disturbing news of recent times is that the risk has increased. This risk for humanity and all forms of life can be broken down to two factors. Firstly, what is the possibility that there will be a direct confrontation between the biggest military powers in the near future? Secondly, what is the possibility of nuclear weapons being used in such a confrontation?

While there are several potential flashpoints, the risk is the highest in the context of the escalation of the Ukraine conflict. Recent developments have increased the risks.

Ukraine has faced several serious reverses in the battlefield. This can either lead to a higher desire for seeking early peace to avoid further harm, or it could lead to mobilizing for a bigger war. The response of Ukraine will depend on its powerful supporters in NATO. Several important NATO members have already responded that they



are willing to increase their military support for Ukraine in two important ways.

Firstly, they are willing to send their own soldiers to Ukraine. This was first stated by President Macron of France without attracting much support from other NATO members. But subsequently there has been more support from some other NATO members. One statement that has attracted much attention recently was reported by the New York Times on May 16 (news report titled 'NATO considers sending trainers to Ukraine'). This report quoted General Charles Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as stating that NATO trainers will eventually be sent to Ukraine and that deployment of NATO trainers seemed inevitable. The newspaper said that such a move could draw the US and Europe more directly into a war with Russia.

Another barrier that is being crossed in terms of military support for Ukraine by NATO member coun-

tries is that increasingly not only are longer-range weapon systems being supplied, but it is being much more openly stated that there is no condition that these cannot be used for attacking mainland Russia.

Clearly this is dangerous escalation and the possibility of direct confrontation between Russia and NATO increases very significantly with this.

The second important question that needs to be considered is that if the possibility of a direct confrontation between Russia and NATO has increased, has the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in such a confrontation also increased?

At present, Ukraine side has been weakened very considerably in military terms. But we can visualize a different situation with NATO member countries sending soldiers and trainers and supplying deadly long-range attack weapons. Russia will increasingly feel that it faces an existential threat and in such a situation, the Russian nuclear doctrine provides for

the use of nuclear weapons. However there is an equal possibility that when NATO senses this possibility, it may choose to establish its advantage by making the first nuclear weapon strike/strikes. Hence the possibility of both sides starting a nuclear war exists, and once it starts no one knows where it will end. While Europe is likely to suffer the most devastation, the entire world can suffer very adverse impacts of radiation. If a large number of nuclear weapons are used, this can herald a 'nuclear winter' threatening all life on the planet.

Precisely because the dangers are so extreme, most people believe that the situation will never be allowed to escalate to such an extent by top leaders. But the fact remains that the situation has already been allowed to deteriorate and the world's confidence is badly shaken.

Besides, one should also consider the possibility that dangerous situations can spin out of control unintentionally.

Of course, Ukraine is not the only flashpoint. There are other flashpoints like the Middle-east and the possibility of a USA led conflict with China.

Hence the situation is a very dangerous one and the best possible efforts should be made to minimize the possibilities of a nuclear war and World War 3. The world's statesmen, individuals who command respect, should come together to counsel de-escalation of tensions. They should set up an international non-partisan team for closely and carefully monitoring the changing situation, issuing timely warnings and suggesting remedial actions.

In the slightly longer-term, the non-partisan peace and disarmament movement should be strengthened worldwide as only this can give us true hope for a safer and more peaceful world.

(The writer is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril and a Day in 2071.)

IT CAME TO MIND | MANISH NANDY

A man called Patrick

I visited the Patrick Pearse Museum yesterday. Dublin has its surprises.

I had not planned to visit the museum but a friend graciously drove me there. It is a tiny museum with a limited number of exhibits. Most tourist websites don't even mention it.

Who was Patrick Pearse? He was a young man with a consuming interest in poetry and literature. His father was a self-educated stonemason and his mother came from an Irish family that cherished the Irish language, Gaelic. Patrick too imbibed their love of Gaelic and joined the Gaelic League whose mission was to revive a language that the British rulers had tried to suppress — 'the badge of a beaten race'. He wrote lyrical poems, a large number of stories and essays and even an allegorical play.

Several of Patrick's essays were on the subject of education. Patrick believed, as I do, that much of education was a waste, if not actually pernicious. It teaches students to be docile and subservient instead of bold, curious and questioning. So, to give his ideas a practical edge, Patrick started an innovative school, St Enda's, where students would be taught both English and Gaelic and encouraged to be probing and independent alike. Given scarce resources, he commandeered the services of his brother Willie, his sisters Margaret and Mary, and his mother, and strove to teach students



illustration by : Debabrata Chakrabarty

to develop an independent spirit and genuine loyalty to their land.

These were the two great loves of Patrick Pearse, literature and education, and I felt an instinctive bond with the man as I walked through the museum in his honour.

And then, like a thunderclap, I came across this revealing poem on the museum wall that spoke of the force that tore Patrick from his two supreme attachments. Called Renun-

ciation, the poem says:

I blinded my eyes and I closed my ears,
I hardened my heart and smothered my desire.
Why did this young man choose to abandon his two loves?
I have turned my face to this road before me
To the deed that I see and the death I shall die.
Patrick had painfully decided

that he had to defer his earnest passions for the greater task that lay ahead of him. To rid his country of the vicious colonial rule that made a mockery of all progress. The British stranglehold of his country was the evil that had to be ended first before he could turn to his personal priorities. He realized the price he might have to pay. But he was ready to renounce his loves for what he called the 'greater adventure.'

Patrick joined the secret Irish Republican Brotherhood, dedicated to the overthrow of British rule and achievement of Irish freedom. Swiftly, he rose to its Supreme Council and began to plan for a military uprising, convinced that London did not intend a peaceful transfer of power. On 24 April 1916 he led the rebels to take over the General Post Office and made it the rebellion headquarters; the fighting began. It was a fierce battle, with heavy loss of lives and property. It was also an unequal battle, given the British empire's might.

When Patrick and his Irish soldiers surrendered after a week, the British commanding officer Maxwell decided to be ruthless. He arrested 3,500, including 80 women, half of whom were sent to camps in England. He intended to court-martial and shoot a large number but stopped only when the country's revulsion made it politically unrealistic. Patrick,

only 36, was the first victim. In the notorious Kilmainham jail, a firing squad of three tore him to bits.

Patrick wasn't even allowed to see his mother as the last act. He could only leave behind a heart-rending letter for her, which I read in the museum. His family was not allowed to have his body. On Maxwell's recommendation, Prime Minister Asquith gave orders for his remains to be buried in the Arbor Hill prison.

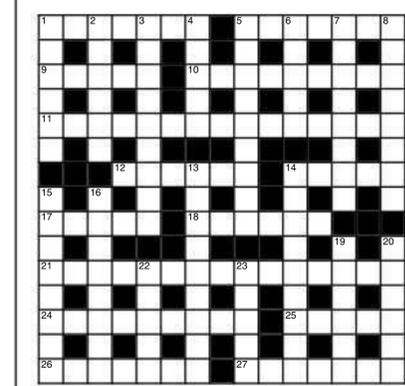
Patrick's supreme sacrifice was not in vain. The Irish public, which had misgivings about a violent rebellion, saw the British ruthlessness in shooting the young rebels indiscriminately after a show trial. They turned bitterly averse to British rule. The seeds of the ultimate termination of Britain's colonial domination had been sown. The man who loved poetry and drama and abandoned it all to fight for his motherland had poured what he had poetically called 'the red wine of the battlefield' for what he believed to be more important.

Patrick's beloved school, St Enda's, is now a museum that tells his story. The street carries his name. In the afternoon light, I walked back to the car bowed by the weight of his brave and tragic choice.

(The writer is a US-based international development advisor and had worked with the World Bank. He can be reached at mnandy@gmail.com)

CROSSWORD

NO-292792



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

HANGOUT WASHINGTON
O E L A H A C A
RACED SIEGFRIED
A T E M E E E G
CHAINMAIL GORSE
E R N U T
LINE SMOKABLE
N G E U R E
SERGEANT DEAR
M B W S F
OCHRE DEEPWATER
T E A T I I S A
HEARTHROUGH LEARN
E R E T H C I C
RIED ARMY SPONDEE

ACROSS

- Pavarotti's OK in an opera house (7)
- A bit of help: one across is a house (7)
- City sandwich shop that's hot inside (5)
- Alien on film set, flipping good on camera (9)
- Layoffs at lab not fixed, pretend management (7,8)
- Tiny couple twists at the end of dance (6)
- Go over teacher's negative feedback (5)
- Spent nothing out, presumably (3,2)
- Watch part of victory

DOWN

- Position in which half of Russian jets take off (3-3)
- Stretchy hose only sprayed neighbours
- turning bloody (6)
- With one weak card, holding busted flush; going 17 on that? (7,8)
- Water for shower artist stored remotely? (4-5)
- Bishop abandons tall ladies in low dome (5)
- Cover point, he catches Cook (7)
- Seeing father on telly, moan in front of him (7)
- borders (6)
- Fake barrier doesn't open (9)
- _ora B_? Completing it would be smart (5)
- When kids knock, greeting tiny one in the middle (9)
- Coming soon, time when the earth cools (5)
- Burning dinner, daughter cuts very hot potato (8)
- Face covered in spots, son not caring (8)
- New locum changed drug, accepted reluctantly (9)
- Decontamination caught scrawny rat (9)
- Risk rows again holding up fuel production line (8)
- Cycling loses its attraction, maybe hailstones pepper ground (8)
- Lodging suit finally after libel spread (6)
- Antique silver Eros lady displayed in odd locations (3-3)
- Newspaper covers one aspect (5)
- Region of Pluto in darkness with sun going down (5)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)



CMYK

New supply of homes up to ₹60 lakh decline 38pc across eight major cities

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 20 MAY

A recent report has revealed that the new supply of affordable homes, priced up to Rs 60 lakh each, declined 38% across eight major cities. Real estate data analytic firm PropEquity said that in the January-March this year, the supply declined to 33,420 units, with builders focusing on developing luxury flats.

The report attributed the fall in new supply to sharp rise in land and construction costs, which has made development of affordable housing projects less profitable or unviable.

These eight cities are, Delhi-NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Pune and Ahmedabad, the report said.

In the same period last year, January-March, new supply of affordable homes was 53,818 units.

PropEquity data showed that the new supply in this price category fell 20% during the 2023 calendar year and the declining trend continued in the first quarter of this year as well.

"The number of affordable housing units launched in the top eight cities of the country has seen a significant decline. In 2023, only 179,103 units priced under Rs 60 lakh were launched, a drop of 20 per cent compared to 2022, wherein 224,141 units were launched," Samir Jasuja, CEO and MD of PropEquity, said.

This trend is expected to continue in 2024, he added. "Several factors are contributing to this decline.

Rising real estate prices (up to 50-100 per cent in some cities over the past two years) and increasing construction costs are making affordable housing projects less profitable for developers," Jasuja said.

Additionally, he said, the post-pandemic demand for larger homes is pushing developers towards mid-range and luxury segments, which offer higher margins. The data highlighted that the new supply of homes priced up to Rs 60 lakh declined in MMR to 15,202 units during January-March, from 22,642 units in the year-ago period.

Market likely to have positive bias in coming week

Sensex and Nifty concluded Friday's trading day near their all-time highs at 75,410 and 22,957 points

AGENCIES NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

The Indian benchmark indices are expected to witness a gradual upward movement in the coming week after the strong performance last week, which closed on a flyer, say market analysts.

Both the Sensex and Nifty concluded Friday's trading day near their all-time highs at 75,410 and 22,957 points respectively.

Meanwhile, the broader indices showed mixed performance, with midcaps gaining about 1 per cent while smallcaps ended in the red.

According to the experts, investors will keep an eye on the final phase of elections, global cues, and the final phase of the earnings season in the upcoming week, starting on Monday.

Globally, trends are mixed; the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) has sharply retreated from its record high, while the tech-heavy NASDAQ and the broader S&P 500 are still



showing resilience and inching higher.

In the weekly note, Ajit Mishra, SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd., expected the Nifty to move towards the 23,150-23,400 range soon.

"While all key sectors are contributing to the rally, banking and IT still have significant upside potential, and their participation could drive the index to much higher levels, Mishra added.

He further recommends continuing a stock-specific trading approach, with a preference for large-cap and large mid-cap stocks for short-term trades.

the previous ten to twenty years. Anticipations are that the market capitalisation of the BSE and NSE would reach USD 10 trillion by 2030, with India projected to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027.

"This is a landmark moment in the Indian capital market as the Sensex crossed all time high of 75,300, all the way up from 24,000 when the Prime Minister (PM Modi) took office. The record growth in investor wealth and stock market valuation is supported by strong economic fundamental and progressive government policies," said Vijay Kalantri, President of All India Association of Industries (AIAI) and Chairman MVRDC World Trade Centre. Ruchit Jain, Lead Research of 5paasa.com, advised traders to trade with a positive bias and look for buying opportunities on any declines. "INDIA VIX continues to remain high due to the event (elections results) ahead, but it should start cooling off if the actual event outcome does not deviate much from the expectations, he added.

In the two week the Sensex has jumped 3,500 points. Analysts believe that market returns are consistent with

9 of top-10 most-valued firms add over ₹1.85 trillion m-cap

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

In the last week (May 20-24), nine of the top-10 most-valued firms together added Rs 1,85,320.49 crore in market valuation.

Reliance Industries retained the title of the most-valued firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, SBI, LIC, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, and ITC.

Out of these, Reliance Industries Ltd and HDFC Bank grabbed the maximum gains, in line with a rally in equities.

From these top-10 most-valued firms, only ITC emerged as the laggard. The market valuation of ITC declined Rs 436.97 crore to Rs 5,44,458.70 crore.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries jumped Rs 61,398.65 crore to reach Rs 20,02,509.35 crore while HDFC Bank added Rs 38,966.07 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 11,53,129.36 crore.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) rallied Rs



35,135.36 crore to Rs 6,51,348.26 crore, and Bharti Airtel's mcap zoomed Rs 22,921.42 crore to Rs 7,87,838.71 crore. Hindustan Unilever climbed Rs 9,985.76 crore to Rs 5,56,829.63 crore.

The mcap of Infosys went up Rs 8,821.99 crore to Rs 6,08,198.38 crore and that of State Bank of India (SBI) soared Rs 6,916.57 crore to Rs 7,39,493.34 crore.

ICICI Bank added Rs 903.31 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 7,95,307.82 crore and the mcap of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) climbed Rs 271.36 crore to Rs 13,93,235.05

crore. Further this week, the Sensex and Nifty hit fresh milestones with buying across the sectors and ease in FII selling.

The Nifty50 index rose 455.1 points or 2.02 per cent to close at 22,957.10 after hitting a new high of 23,026.40, while BSE Sensex also touched a fresh high of 75,636.5 and finished 1,404.45 points (1.90 per cent) higher at 75,410.39.

BSE Small-cap index ended on a flat note, the Mid-cap index rose 1 per cent and the Large-cap index added 2 per cent.

FPIs pull out massive ₹22,000 crore from equities amid election uncertainty

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

Amid the uncertainty surrounding the outcome of the Lok Sabha elections and out-performance of Chinese markets, the foreign investors have pulled out a massive Rs 22,000 crore from Indian equities so far this month.

As per the data available with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) witnessed a net outflow of Rs 22,047 crore from equities this month, till May 24.

Experts have believed that going forward, as clarity emerges on the election front, the FPIs are likely to buy in India, since they cannot afford to miss the post-election results rally.

Notably, a net outflow of over Rs 8,700 crore was seen in the entire April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

Earlier, FPIs made a net investment of Rs 35,098 crore in March and Rs 1,539 crore in February.



On the other hand, FPIs invested Rs 2,009 crore in the debt market during the period under review.

Prior to this outflow, the foreign investors had put in Rs 13,602 crore in March, Rs 22,419 crore in February, Rs 19,836 crore in January.

This inflow was driven by the upcoming inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index. Overall, FPIs have with-

IOC, GAIL, ONGC slapped with fines for failing to meet listing requirements for 4th time

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

For the fourth straight quarter, the state-owned oil and gas giants including Indian Oil, ONGC and GAIL (India) Ltd have been slapped with fines for failing to meet listing requirements of having the requisite number of directors on their boards.

As per the regulatory filings, the stock exchanges have imposed a cumulative fine of Rs 34 lakh on oil refining and fuel marketing giants Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), explorers Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL), gas utility GAIL, and refiner Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) for not meeting the listing requirement in the January-March quarter.

Further, the companies also detailed the fines imposed by the BSE and NSE for either not having the requisite num-



ber of independent directors or the mandated women director in the quarter ended March 31, 2024.

However, they were quick to point out that the appointment of directors was done by the government and they had no role in it.

In separate filings, the IOC, HPCL, BPCL, GAIL, OIL and MRPL said they have been slapped with a fine of Rs 536,900 each for the fourth quarter. ONGC faced a fine

of the company during the quarter ended March 31, 2024 was not due to any negligence/default by the company."

HPCL and BPCL made similar statements, while GAIL said appointments are outside the purview/control of company management. OIL said it has requested the ministry for appointment of independent directors.

MRPL said it has been continuously following up with the ministry for appointment of requisite number of independent directors on the board and the same has been under active consideration.

The companies had faced fines for the same reason the previous three quarters as well.

As per the listing norms, there is a requirement for companies to have independent directors in the same proportion as executive or functional directors. They are also required to have at least one woman director on the board.

Realty reality: Hyderabad luxury developer eyes Eastern & Central Indian markets

RITVIK MUKHERJEE KOLKATA, 26 MAY

An electronics engineer, by training, he went on to become a trailblazer in the intricacies of civil engineering, drawing inspiration from the observation that housing infrastructure lacked innovation, quality, and true luxury.

Before founding Navanaami, for almost a decade, he had had a roller-coaster journey exploring various entrepreneurial avenues and establishing various businesses, ranging from food processing, infrastructure, IT and agricultural inputs. And then, he, many in real estate circles, believe, disrupted the real estate landscape in Hyderabad and subsequently in Banga-

lore, by launching trend-setting luxury segment villas in the state capital, pioneering a segment that has since become a hallmark of Navanaami.

Speaking to The Statesman, exclusively, Naveen Gadde, the Founder & Managing Director of Navanaami, spells out his future plans including that of entering the eastern

and central Indian markets.

Q: Let me start with your ambitious luxury project-Megaleio in Hyderabad....

Naveen: Spread over 4.1 acre Megaleio would be in the lap of the nature, surrounded by a 1200 acre of greenery and amidst protected waterbodies Himayat Sagar and



Osman Sagar. Megaleio enjoys most unique location in Appa junction Peerancheru with just 20 mts off RG International airport. With 50 floors and 150 opulent exquisite residences, Megaleio's iconic towers will be visible from the airoort, making the architectural marvel a modern day outlook. With sustainability at its core, it will be a net zero building.

Q: How did Navanaami's journey start in 2005 and with what vision did you start this?

Naveen: It was floated in 2005. A first generation entrepreneur, I had quickly gauged the conventional, formula-driven approach taken-on by most developers. In founding Navanaami, I always wanted to depart from mediocrity in the emerging property projects in the region, and envisioned to redefine the real estate landscape in Hyderabad by infusing transparency, innovation, and sustainabil-

Q: Navanaami is known for its unique value proposition. Could you elaborate on what sets Navanaami and its projects apart from other real estate developers in the region?

Naveen: Navanaami's unique value proposition lies in its thoughtful approach and emphasis on functionality. The organization believes in departing from existing conventions and formula designing to adopting a more functional approach to real estate and developing designs with purpose. In the real estate landscape, which is marked by delays and under-delivery on promises, Navanaami projects have focussed on adhering to stringent quality measures and have consistently ensured on delivery on timelines and commitments to its customers. Over the years, the company has formed strategic partnerships with organizations like DesignHaus, Arup, Tierra, HBA and Elliot James, etc. to deliver the highest value and quality of experience to its customers. Beyond adhering to Vaastu principles, Navanaami's projects resonate with nature and sustainability. The company's projects have received green building certification (IGBC), showcasing a commitment to environmental responsibility. Navanaami's projects stand out for their careful design, functionality, and consideration for the well-being of its residents.

Q: As you mentioned, Navanaami has successfully completed 10 luxury projects worth over Rs 1000 crore. Could you highlight some key projects and their impact on the real estate landscape in Hyderabad and Bangalore?

Naveen: Navanaami is deeply committed to sustainability, evident in its projects having green building certification (IGBC). Its projects have begun incorporating rainwater harvesting and rooftop solar measures. The company has been harnessing approximately 2 MW of solar power, 1 MW from its commercial project and 1 MW from two other villa communities.

Naveen: Navanaami launched its first premium Hyderabad Metro Development Authority project in 2005 and began building its first residential apartment in 2009. The organization expanded to Bangalore in 2016 and completed 1 million square feet in 2019. It forayed into developing commercial real estate with first IT/ITES building in 2020, building premium grade A office space EON Hyderabad. Valued at over Rs 1000 crore, these ventures have left an indelible mark on the real estate panorama in Hyderabad and Bangalore. Navanaami's key projects include ultra-luxury, Mallikharjuna Krinss Villas project, which boasts of 47 villas seamlessly integrated with nature. It is currently invested in constructing its flagship, ultra-luxury residential project, Navanaami's Megaleio in Hyderabad. It has built premium boutique residences Lavender, Platina, and Willow Greens. Over the years, Navanaami has pushed boundaries to redefine standards for opulent living, setting new benchmarks along the way.

Q: Sustainability seems to be a key focus for Navanaami. How does the company integrate sustainability into its projects?

Naveen: Navanaami is deeply committed to sustainability, evident in its projects having green building certification (IGBC). Its projects have begun incorporating rainwater harvesting and rooftop solar measures. The company has been harnessing approximately 2 MW of solar power, 1 MW from its commercial project and 1 MW from two other villa communities.

Classified

CHANGE OF NAME	CHANGE OF NAME	The Statesman CLASSIFIED	CLASSIFIED AGENTS
CHANGE OF NAME I, Ritomitra Bhattacharya, D/o. Rajainarayan Bhattacharya, born on 14.7.2003, residing in Lokenath Villa, Flat - D1, Block - B, 254, M. G. Road, Near Haridevpur 4C Bus Stand, P. S. - Haridevpur, South 24 Parganas, Kolkata-700082, West Bengal, DO HEREBY SOLEMNLY AFFIRM AND DECLARE THAT Ritomitra Bhattacharya (new) and Ritamitra Bhattacharya (old) is one, same and identical person vide affidavit dated 27.03.2024 before the M.M. Court, Calcutta.	I, CHAND Mohan Dutta, S/o. Late Subal Chandra Dutta, R/o. 233, Bagmari Road, P.O.: Kankurgachi, P.S.: Manicktala, Kolkata-700054, declared that Chand Mohan Dutta, Prasanta Kumar Dutta and Prasanta Dutta are the same and identical person vide affidavit before Metropolitan Magistrate, Calcutta dated 19-01-2024.	TO BOOK AN ADVERTISEMENT PLEASE CALL 98307 80924 (SHUBHRO DEV MITRA) 98308 74087 033 4801 8471	Location Name of the Agency Ph. No. Bally, Howrah RINKU AD AGENCY 9831833485 Barasat, 24 Pgs EXPART AD AGENCY 9674701788 Berhampore, BHUMI 9434202655 Murshidabad 7719227747 Burdwan Town S.M. ENTERPRISE 9232462019 9434474356 Kolkata GARGI AD POINT 9903714080 Krishnanagar, Nadia TYPE CORNER 9474334978 Durganagar, Kol-79 JYOTI ADVERTISING 9330767416 Station Road SOUMYA ADVT. & 9002895353 Habra MKTG. AGENCY 8910849432 DumDum Cantonment CGS MEDIA CONSULTANTS 9674564069 Gorabazar, Kolkata Naihati RTA ADVERTISING 9830562233 4, Chowringhee Lane AD ESSENCE 891050242 Kolkata-16 9831993375 Belghoria AZURE ASSOCIATES 9874884554 Kolkata-700056 9903363200
I, SUKUMAR Dolui, son of Late Sarbashwar Dolui, as per the affidavit before 1st Class Judicial Magistrate at Barasat Court dated 21-05-24 declare that, I, Sukumar Dolui and Kanu Dolui is the same and one identical person in all aspects.	I, PRABIR Mazumder, S/o. Prashanta Majumder, residing at 11, Shantinagar Bally, Howrah-711227 shall henceforth be known as Prabir Majumder as declared before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate Howrah Court vide Affidavit No. 4357 dated 18-5-2024 Prabir Mazumder & Prabir Majumder both are same & identical person.	The Statesman CLASSIFIED TO BOOK AN ADVERTISEMENT PLEASE CALL 98308 74087 98303 02169	



No jail for those refusing Tory national service plans

JAMES CLEVERLY UK HOME SECRETARY

WEATHER

Table with 3 columns: CITY, MAX(°C), MIN(°C). Rows include SINGAPORE, HONG KONG, TOKYO, LONDON, DUBAI, SAN FRANCISCO, NEW YORK, MOSCOW.

S= sunny, CL= clear, H=hazy, R= rainy...

Pakistan affirms support for 'One China' policy amidst Taiwan issue

Beijing considers Taiwan part of its territory and has threatened force to control it

AGENCIES ISLAMABAD, 26 MAY

In a recent post on social media Shehbaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, reiterated Islamabad's unwavering support for China's stance on Taiwan.



China on Friday warned the dead end for those who engage in 'Taiwan independence', and to connive support for 'Taiwan independence' will only backfire.

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British PM Sunak vows to bring back mandatory national service

AGENCIES LONDON, 26 MAY



British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday, unveiled his first new policy before "snap elections", saying that his Conservative Party will bring back mandatory national service for 18-year-old Britons, which has been dubbed "desperate" by the opposing Labour Party, reported Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

The national service would require young people to either join the military full-time or volunteer one weekend a month in community service.

After the party's plan to bring back mandatory national service, Sunak said that he believed the service would help young people learn "real-world skills, do new things and contribute to their community and our country", as well as fostering "national spirit".

Sunak shared a video message on X, emphasizing that Britain today faces a future that is more dangerous and more divided, adding that one of the problems in their society is that they don't have the opportunities that young people deserve.

"We have so much to be proud of in Britain. But one of the problems in our society is that we have generations

of young people who don't have the opportunities they deserve. Britain today faces a future that is more dangerous and more divided," he said.

Moreover, PM Sunak slammed the opposition Labour Party and its leader Keir Starmer, saying that they don't have a clear plan, adding that they would not take the bold action.

"Uncertain times call for a clear plan and bold action to chart a course to a secure future. Our plan will ensure new generations and our country meet the challenges of the uncertain world. Keir Starmer and Labour don't have a clear plan and won't take the bold action to navigate to a more secure future," he said in his post.

The UK Prime Minister highlighted that since democratic values are under threat, the Conservative Party will introduce a bold new model of national service for 18-year-olds.

"There's no doubt how democratic values are under threat.

Sirens sound in Tel Aviv for the first time in months as Hamas says it fired rockets from Gaza

AGENCIES GAZA STRIP, 26 MAY

Rocket sirens sounded across central Israel, including in Tel Aviv, for the first time in months on Sunday, as Hamas claimed to have fired a barrage of rockets from Gaza.

The militants have continued to fire projectiles at communities around Gaza more than seven months into the war but have not fired longer-range rockets in months. There were no immediate reports of casualties or damage from the latest barrage.

Earlier on Sunday, aid trucks entered Gaza from southern Israel through a new agreement to bypass the Rafah crossing with Egypt after Israeli forces seized the Palestinian side of it earlier this month. But was unclear if humanitarian groups would



be able to access the aid because of ongoing fighting in the area.

Egypt refuses to reopen its side of the Rafah crossing until control of the Gaza side is handed back to Palestinians. It agreed to temporarily divert traffic through Israel's Kerem Shalom crossing, Gaza's main cargo terminal, after a call between U.S. President Joe Biden and Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi.

But that crossing has been

largely inaccessible because of fighting linked to Israel's offensive in the nearby city of Rafah. Israel says it has allowed hundreds of trucks to enter, but United Nations agencies say it is usually too dangerous to retrieve the aid on the other side.

The war between Israel and Hamas, now in its eighth month, has killed nearly 36,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials. Around 80% of the popula-

tion's 2.3 million people have fled their homes, severe hunger is widespread and U.N. officials say parts of the territory are experiencing famine.

Hamas triggered the war with its Oct. 7 attack into Israel, in which Palestinian militants killed some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and seized some 250 hostages. Hamas is still holding some 100 hostages and the remains of around 30 others after most of the rest were released during a cease-fire last year.

Hamas claimed to have captured an Israeli soldier during fighting in northern Gaza and released video late Saturday showing a wounded man being dragged through a tunnel. The Israeli military denied any of its soldiers had been captured, and Hamas did not provide any other evidence to substantiate its claim.

In a separate development, the Israeli military said it had detained a suspect over a widely circulated video in which a man dressed as an Israeli soldier threatens mutiny. In the video, the man said tens of thousands of soldiers were ready to disobey Defense Minister Yoav Gallant over his suggestion that Palestinians should govern Gaza after the war and pledged loyalty to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu alone.

It was not clear if the man was on active duty, or when or where the video was made. Yair Netanyahu, the prime minister's son, had shared the video on social media, sparking criticism from political opponents. The prime minister's office released a brief statement condemning all forms of military subordination.

Zelensky says Ukraine has taken back control in areas of Kharkiv region, aerial attacks continue

AGENCIES KYIV, 26 MAY

Ukrainian forces have secured "combat control" of areas where Russian troops entered the northeastern Kharkiv region earlier this month, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Meanwhile, two people were killed Saturday in an aerial attack on the city of Kharkiv, which is the region's capital, according to local officials.

Kharkiv is about 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the Russian border. Moscow's troops have in recent weeks captured villages in the area as part of a broad push, and analysts say they may be trying to get within artillery range of the city. Ukrainian authorities have evacuated more than 11,000 people from the region since the start of the offensive on May

10. "Our soldiers have now managed to take combat control of the border area where the Russian occupiers entered," Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address on Friday evening.

Zelenskyy's comments appeared to be at odds with those made by Russian officials.

Viktor Vodolatskiy, a member of Russia's lower house of parliament, said Russian forces now controlled more than half of the town of Vovchansk, 3 miles (5 kilometers) inside the border,

Russian state news agency Tass reported Friday.

TENDER WEST BENGAL STATE UNIVERSITY Barasat, Kolkata-700 126 Ph.D. Course 2024 For "Notification for admission to Ph.D. Courses in June 2024 in different subjects". Please refer to the Website: www.wbsubregistration.org or https://wbsu.ac.in Sd/- Registrar (Officiating)

UN migration agency estimates more than 670 killed in Papua New Guinea landslide

AGENCIES MELBOURNE, 26 MAY

The International Organization for Migration on Sunday increased its estimate of the death toll from a massive landslide in Papua New Guinea to more than 670 as emergency responders and traumatized relatives gave up hope that any survivors will now be found.

Serhan Aktoprak, the chief of the U.N. migration agency's mission in the South Pacific island nation, said the revised death toll was based on calculations by Yambali village and Enga provincial officials that more than 150 homes had been buried by Friday's landslide. The previous estimate had been 60 homes.

"They are estimating that more than 670 people (are) under the soil at the moment,"



Aktoprak told The Associated Press.

Local officials had initially put the death toll on Friday at 100 or more. Only five bodies and a leg of a sixth victim had been recovered by Sunday, when an excavator donated by a local builder became the first piece of mechanical earth-moving equipment to join the recovery effort.

Relief crews were moving survivors to safer ground on Sunday as tons of unstable earth and tribal warfare, which is rife in the Papua New Guinea Highlands, threatened the rescue effort.

Around 250 additional houses have been condemned since the landslide because of still-shifting ground, leaving an estimated 1,250 people homeless, officials said.

The national government meanwhile is considering whether it needs to officially request more international support.

Crews have given up hope of finding survivors under earth and rubble 6 to 8 meters (20 to 26 feet) deep.

"People are coming to terms with this so there is a serious level of grieving and mourning," Aktoprak said.

He said the new estimated death toll was "not solid" because it was based on the average size of the region's families per household. He would not speculate on the possibility that the actual toll could be higher.

South Africa's 4 big political parties begin final weekend of campaigning ahead of election

AGENCIES JOHANNESBURG, 26 MAY

South Africa's four main political parties began the final weekend of campaigning Saturday before a possibly pivotal election that could bring the country's most important change in three decades.

Supporters of the African National Congress, which has been in the government ever since the end of white minority rule in 1994, gathered at a soccer stadium in Johannesburg to hear a speech by party leader and South African President Cyril Ramaphosa.

The ANC is under unprecedented pressure to retain its parliamentary majority in Africa's most advanced country. Having seen its popularity steadily decline over the last two decades, Wednesday's election could be a landmark moment when the party once

led by Nelson Mandela drops below 50% of the national vote for the first time, although it's still widely expected to win the largest share.

Several polls have the ANC's support at less than 50%, raising the possibility that it will have to form a national coalition. That would also be a first for South Africa's young democracy, which was only established 30 years ago with the first all-race vote that officially ended the apartheid system of racial segregation.

As thousands of supporters in the ANC's black, green and gold colors attended its last major rally before the election, Ramaphosa recognized some of the grievances of South Africans, which include high levels of poverty and unemployment that mainly affect the country's Black majority.

"We have a plan to get

more South Africans to work," Ramaphosa said. "Throughout this campaign, in the homes of our people, in the workplaces, in the streets of our townships and villages, so many of our people told us of their struggles to find work and provide for their families."

The main opposition Democratic Alliance party had a rally in Cape Town, South Africa's second-biggest city and its stronghold. Party leader John Steenhuisen made a speech while supporters in the DA's blue colors held up blue umbrellas.

NASA launches small climate satellite to study earth's poles

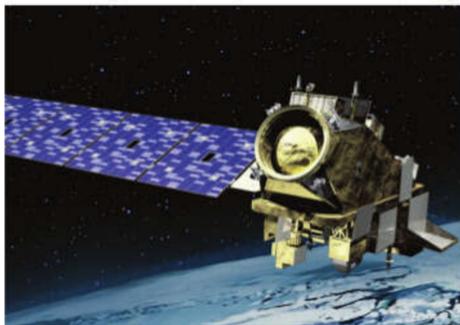
AGENCIES NEW ZEALAND, 26 MAY

The first of a pair of climate satellites designed to study heat emissions at Earth's poles for NASA is in orbit after lifting off atop Rocket Lab's Electron rocket from the company's Launch Complex 1 in Mahia, New Zealand at 7:41 pm NZST (3:41 am EDT) on Saturday, NASA informed in a press release.

The agency's PREFIRE (Polar Radiant Energy in the Far-Infrared Experiment) mission consists of two shoebox-size cube satellites, or CubeSats, that will measure the amount of heat Earth radiates into space from two of the coldest, most remote

regions on the planet. Data from the PREFIRE mission will help researchers better predict how Earth's ice, seas, and weather will change in a warming world.

"NASA's innovative PREFIRE mission will fill a gap in our understanding of the Earth system - providing our scientists a detailed picture of how Earth's polar regions influence how much energy our planet absorbs and releases," said Karen St Germain, director of NASA's Earth Science Division in Washington.



change in the coming years -- crucial information to farmers tracking changes in weather and water, fishing fleets working in changing

seas, and coastal communities building resilience," he added.

Ground controllers successfully established com-

munications with the CubeSat at 8:48 EDT. The second PREFIRE CubeSat will set off on its own Electron rocket from Launch Complex 1 in the coming days. Following a 30-day checkout period during which engineers and scientists will make sure both CubeSats are working normally, the mission is expected to operate for 10 months, according to NASA.

At the heart of the PREFIRE mission is Earth's energy budget - the balance between incoming heat energy from the Sun and the outgoing heat given off by the planet. The difference between the two is what determines the planet's temperature and climate.

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY TENDER NOTICE No. ICF/EL/Cons/2024-25 Date: 27.05.2024 For and on behalf of the President of India, The Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer / Maintenance/Shell, Integral Coach Factory, invites E-Tender for the following works.

INTEGRAL COACH FACTORY TENDER NOTICE No. ICF/EL/Cons/2024-25 Date: 27.05.2024 For and on behalf of the President of India, The Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer / Maintenance/Shell, Integral Coach Factory, invites E-Tender for the following works.

Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., TENDER No., OPEN TENDER FILE REFERENCE No., NAME OF THE WORKS, QUANTITY, DATE & TIME OF TENDER CLOSING & OPENING. Rows include COMPLETE TIG WELDING AND GRINDING OF FRAME WORK ON SIDEWALL, ASSEMBLY AND TIG WELDING OF DETAILS OF SIDEWALL FRAME WORK, TIG WELDING OF DIFFERENT VARIANTS OF SHELLS AT LHB DIVISION, ASSEMBLY AND WELDING OF WELDING PARTS ON SIDEWALL FOR LWACCN COACHES (WET LEASING) AT ICF/CHENNAI, ASSEMBLY AND TIG WELDING OF DETAILS OF SIDEWALL FRAME WORK, ASSEMBLY OF SIDEWALL AND CARLINE AT JIG, AND WELDING OF DETAILS OF SIDEWALL AT SIDEWALL ACCEPTANCE STAND FOR DIFFERENT VARIANTS OF VANDE BHARAT TRAIN SET, ASSEMBLY AND WELDING OF WELDING PARTS AND ALL OTHER DETAILS ITEMS OF ROOF AT ROOF ACCEPTANCE STAND (TRESTLE) IN SPOT WELDED ROOF FROM WET LEASING MACHINE, ASSEMBLY AND WELDING OF STAND ACTIVITIES & FINISHING ACTIVITIES AND ONLY FINISHING ACTIVITIES OF DIFFERENT VARIANTS OF LHB SHELLS AT ICF, CHENNAI

BJP crossed 400 seats in sixth phase itself: Yogi

Varanasi will go to polls in the final and seventh phase of general elections on 1 June

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE VARANASI, 26 MAY

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath appealed to the people of Kashi to break all previous records of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's victory in elections by supporting him overwhelmingly this time.

Varanasi will go to polls in the final and seventh phase of general elections on 1 June.

Addressing a public meeting at Assi Ghat Varanasi on Saturday night, CM Adityanath claimed that the NDA has already passed the target of 400 seats following the conclusion of the sixth phase of Lok Sabha elections.

Prior to the rally, the CM visited Assi Ghat boarding a cruise from Namoo Ghat and participated in the Ganga



Aarti. He also paid obeisance at the Kashi Vishwanath temple, Annapurna temple and Kotwal of Kashi Baba Kal Bhairav.

The CM said that PM Modi would win with record votes, adding that the message sent from Kashi will be to work to bring the concept of Ram Rajya in the country. Notably,

elections were held on 14 seats in Uttar Pradesh and 58 seats in the country in the sixth phase on Saturday.

"The people of Kashi take pride in telling current and future generations that they witnessed the end of a 500-year wait. Having elected PM Modi to Parliament, they can proudly declare that they

have restored the glory of Ayodhya, India, and Sanatan Dharma. While PM Modi brings honor and virtue, the dark deeds of Congress are evident to all. These people have consistently opposed Sanatan Dharma and the Ram Mandir," he said. Adityanath said before 2014, Kashi suffered neglect and anarchy and had become a hub for terrorist activities.

"Mafia and criminal elements dominated, creating an identity crisis for the people. However, in 2014, Kashi elected Narendra Modi, the world's most popular politician and architect of a better India, as its public representative. Today, in the new Uttar Pradesh of the new India, Kashi appears grand and divine." He said that when Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was to be started, PM Modi had brought a shovel to the Assi Ghat. "The cleanliness program he started has become

a movement today. The ghats of Kashi are considered to be the most beautiful spiritual and cultural ghats in the world," he remarked.

"PM Modi started many works to give recognition to Kashi. The vision of uninterrupted and clean Ganga that he has realized is going to give a new life to the followers of Sanatan Dharma, the people of Uttar Pradesh and India. There is four-lane connectivity all around in Kashi. Kashi International Airport is considered to be the busiest airport in the country. The country's largest ropeway is constructed in Kashi. The temples of Kashi are rejuvenated," he stated.

The CM remarked that Baba Vishwanath was also awaiting the arrival of the devotee Modi, knowing that with his presence, Kashi Vishwanath Dham would appear divine and grand.

Manipur: Army averts major incident, three IEDs defused



AGENCIES IMPHAL, 26 MAY

In a significant success, alert soldiers of the Indian Army foiled a major incident by effectively diffusing three big Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) in Manipur on Sunday, officials said.

Defence spokesman Lt Col Amit Shukla said that the Army soldiers, during a routine area domination and surveillance operation in Imphal East district, noticed three powerful IEDs on the road connecting Nongdam Tangkhul and Eiham

Tangkhul villages near Maphou Dam.

"The three IEDs were placed along the road. Army columns acted swiftly and cordoned off the area. Subsequently, a bomb disposal squad arrived at the location and diffused the IEDs safely, thereby preventing potential loss of life and injury to locals," Lt Col Shukla said.

"The security forces remain steadfast and committed to the safety of citizens in the state of Manipur," he stated.

Senior Manipur Police official said that search operations and area domination were

conducted by security forces in the fringe and vulnerable areas of hill and valley districts. Strict security measures are taken up in all vulnerable locations and security convoys are provided in sensitive stretches in order to ensure free and safe movement of the vehicles, he said.

A total of 125 nakas/check-points were installed in different districts of ethnic violence-hit Manipur and Police detained 132 persons on Saturday in connection with violations of law in different districts of the state.

IMD issues heat wave warning in Assam amid record temperatures

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE GUWAHATI, 26 MAY

India Meteorological Department has issued a heat wave warning in Assam as the state recorded its highest temperature at 40.1 degrees on Saturday, which is the highest since 1960.

The weather department said that in the capital town Guwahati, the temperature has gone up by more than 8 degrees centigrade during this summer.

However, the IMD has indicated that the city is likely to experience relief from May 26, with temperatures expected to drop to around



30 degrees Celsius.

The Met department said that parts of Northeast India may also witness extremely heavy rainfall due to the impact of cyclone Remal on May 27 and 28.

As per the IMD, along

with West Bengal, other Northeastern states like Tripura, Assam, Nagaland and Manipur may witness rainfall and strong winds.

Tripura's regional meteorological centre also warned against adverse weather con-

ditions starting from May 26.

Cyclonic pressure over the Bay of Bengal has intensified, with Cyclone Remal expected to make landfall between the coasts of West Bengal and Bangladesh at midnight on May 26, according to the IMD.

The weather department predicted extremely heavy rainfall in the coastal districts of West Bengal and northern Odisha on May 26 and 27.

Parts of Northeast India may also witness extremely heavy rainfall due to the impact of Remal on May 27 and 28.

Don't need much election campaign in Varanasi, people proud of India's global stature under PM Modi: Jaishankar

AGENCIES VARANASI, 26 MAY

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday exuded confidence in BJP's victory in Varanasi, saying that much election campaigning was not required here and that the people here were proud of India's global stature under the leadership of PM Modi.

While speaking to a news agency in Varanasi, Jaishankar expressed his observation that the people of the city have exhibited a strong desire to delve into India's foreign policy, indicating their pride in the country's trajectory under PM Modi's governance.

"I have experienced this in this election campaign



that people wish to know more about the country's foreign policy. They feel proud of where PM Modi has taken this country," Jaishankar said.

He highlighted the Modi government's tradition of seeking feedback from citi-

zens, reflecting a commitment to participatory governance. "It's the Modi government's tradition to ask for feedback from people... We don't need to do much election campaign here in Varanasi," he added.

"We celebrated G20 like a festival in about 60 cities across the country... I think tourism will definitely increase here in the coming days... We want to promote Kashi. We want to create its international image," he also said.

Jaishankar's schedule in Varanasi included interactions with educators and intellectuals, where he emphasised the pivotal role of education in shaping India's future.

During a session titled

"Empowerment with Education for Better Tomorrow" at a local school, Jaishankar delved into the multifaceted dimensions of education, emphasising its relevance in a modern, technological era and a globalised world.

He further stressed the importance of education in fostering inclusivity and nurturing India's civilisational power, a sentiment resonating deeply in the ancient city of Kashi.

Reflecting on Varanasi's unique position, Jaishankar noted the city's minimal need for extensive election campaigning, attributing it to the populace's inherent pride in India's achievements on the global stage.

Three workers trapped in illegal rat-hole mine in Patkai hill of Assam

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE GUWAHATI, 26 MAY

Three workers have been trapped in an illegal rat-hole mine in the Patkai Hills of Tinsukia district, Assam.

Rescue operations are ongoing to free the workers from the mine. Among the three, one is from Nepal and the other two are from Meghalaya, officials said on Sunday.

The workers were extracting illegal coal from the rat-hole mine when a landslide occurred, trapping them inside at 12.30 am.

The Ledo-Margherita region, approximately 571 km from the capital Guwahati, is

rich in coal reserves located in the foothills of Patkai.

Concern over illegal coal mining in the northeastern region has been previously raised by various groups.

At least six labourers were killed in an accident inside an abandoned coal mine in Meghalaya in 2021.

The incident has revived long-standing questions surrounding coal mining in the Northeast, questions that were heightened by a tragedy in the East Jaintia Hills two years earlier.

On December 13, 2018, 15 miners died when an illegal rat-hole mine in Ksan was flooded by water from the nearby

Lytein river.

Following the accident, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) fined the state government Rs 100 crore for illegal coal mining. Coal found in Meghalaya and other parts of the Northeast is high in sulfur, posing a significant environmental threat. However, it is prized for its low-ash content, which is lower than other Indian coals, making it more efficient for industries such as power generation. According to reports, coal from Meghalaya is primarily sent to other northeastern states and northern non-coal-producing states like Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Rajasthan.

11 pilgrims on way to Purnagiri die in road accident in UP

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE SHAHJAHANPUR, 26 MAY

In a horrific road accident in Khutar town of Shahjahanpur district, a gravel-laden dumper collided with a Volvo bus parked outside a dhaba and overturned over it.

In the accident on Saturday night on Khutar-Gola Road, 11 pilgrims sitting in the bus were killed and 25 were injured, police confirmed on Sunday. The pilgrims were on their way to Purnagiri temple in Uttarakhand.

The condition of the many injured was reported to be critical.

Shahjahanpur SP Ashok Kumar Meena said that around 11 pm, they received infor-



mation that a truck had collided with a parked bus in Khutar police station area. The bus was going to Purnagiri in Uttarakhand with pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh's Sitapur district. Some devotees were sitting inside the bus and some were having food inside the dhaba at the time of the accident. The truck went out of control and over-

turned on the bus.

Around 80 people living in villages Bada Jatha and Chhotajatha of Kamalpur police station area of Sitapur had left for Purnagiri darshan in a Volvo

bus on Saturday night. The bus stopped at a dhaba near the town on the Khutar-Gola road.

After getting off the bus, some people went to eat while many people remained sitting inside. At around 10:30 pm, the accident took place.

The gravel in the dumper also got inside the bus. There was a lot of chaos after the accident. The reason behind the accident is believed to be the dumper driver losing control of his steering wheel. The dumper driver could not be traced after the accident.

Among the deceased, some were identified as Somvati (45), Chutki, Ajit (16), Pramod Kumar, Meena Devi (30), Shivshanker, Suman (36) and Aditya (10).

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Macabre (6)
- 4 Naked (4)
- 7 People seeking love (6,6)
- 9 Middle Eastern country (5)
- 10 Far off (7)
- 11 Cut of beef (3-3)
- 13 Rather (4,2)
- 15 Insulting (7)
- 18 Consumed (5)
- 20 Roman general and statesman (6,6)
- 21 Stalk (4)
- 22 Tenfold (5)

DOWN

- 1 Warm ocean current (4,6)
- 2 Archery target ring (5)
- 3 Cradle song (7)
- 4 Pulses (5)
- 5 Withdraw (7)
- 6 Scold (5)
- 8 Hospital employee (5,5)
- 12 Bunch of flowers (7)
- 14 Intimidate (7)
- 15 Unintimidated (5)
- 17 Broad pelvic bone (5)
- 19 Elephants' teeth (5)

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Rye
- 3 Took (Right hook)
- 7 Envelop
- 8 Bliss
- 10 Tune
- 11 Fragment
- 13 Penalty area
- 16 Ancestor
- 18 Pecs
- 20 Scrub
- 21 Archaic
- 23 Dose
- 24 Nod

DOWN

- 1 Revenge
- 2 Emet
- 3 Toboggan
- 4 Olive
- 5 Newt
- 6 Operational
- 9 Sett
- 12 Passable
- 14 Emerald
- 15 Bass
- 17 Cargo
- 19 Sick
- 22 Can

By arrangement with The Independent Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required

BEEBLE BAILEY/Mort Walker

JOIN THE ARMY! SEE THE WORLD! BLOW THINGS UP!

RED EYE/Bill Yates & Mel Casson

HOLD IT! NO SQUAW OF MINE IS GOING TO CARRY WOOD THAT WAY!

AFTER THIS, MAKE TWO TRIPS!... CARRYING A BIG LOAD LIKE THAT YOU COULD HURT YOURSELF!

AND ME

DADDY DAZE/John Kovaloski

BA BA? WHAT WOULD I THINK OF YOU BEING A GRAFFITI ARTIST?

WELL, GRAFFITI HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED AS A LEGITIMATE ART FORM.

BUT THIS ISN'T ABOUT THE FUTURE, IS IT? IT'S ABOUT THE PRESENT ISN'T IT?

AND THAT'S WHY YOUR BEDROOM DOOR LOOKS LIKE IT BELONGS IN A MAXIMUM-SECURITY PRISON.

NEED TO KNOW

Ambulance
FD Block Association (Amb) 9830452536, 9830181286
Happy Calculators 24400160
City Point Nurses Centre 2567-4113, 9831142623
People's Relief Committee 2288-4943/9444

24 hrs Medical Oxygen Delivery
BOC India Ltd. 9831277777

Blood Banks
Ashok Laboratory 24720333
Central Blood Bank 23510619

Life Care 2284-6940
Peoples Blood Bank 2455-5164/5557
RK Mission Seva Pratishthan 2475-3636/39

Police/Fire
Laibazar (Police Control Room) 22143230
S. P. (North 24-Pgns) 25423005
S. P. (South 24-Pgns) 2479-3333/1311
Bhawani Bhawan 24791761/9, 24791933
Fire Service Station Salt Lake: 2357-5293;

Howrah 2666-8111; Behala 2497-6285

Civic Services
Kolkata Municipal Corporation: 2286-1000
Water: 2543-1602

Calcutta Telephones
Changed Number Announcement: 1951, 1952, 1953

Taxi Refusal
SMS 575756: Complaint and registration

Police Toll Free No. 1073
Transport Deptt. No. 6451-6718

CESC Fault Reporting
1912 and 4403-1912

Trains
Howrah Station Old Complex 1331/1332 (Auto Telephone Numbers), 1310, 2638-7412/2542/2581 (manual).
Sealdah: 2350-3335/3337
Shalimar Station: 2668-1121, Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway: 139.

SCRABBLE BRAND GRAMS

PAR SCORE 120-130 by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

WORDS

BOUNDED, PROGRAM, AHIMSAA, THEMES

PAR SCORE 140-150

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

WORDS

BOUNDED, PROGRAM, AHIMSAA, THEMES

SUDOKU Concepts Sudoku

By Dave Green

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

Difficulty Level ★★

answer to previous puzzle

Sudoku is a number placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that no row, no column and no 3x3 box contains the same number. The difficulty level increases through the week.

Campaigning for justice to Assam locals

NAVA THAKURIA

For decades, Assam has been in the national and international media for a pertinent issue of illegal migration that is taking away its resources from the original inhabitants, but it has now degraded to another level where the locals need to safeguard its safety and security from those suspected Bangladeshi origins. Two recent incidents shocked the indigenous people, where the accused turned out to be suspected Bangladeshi Muslims physically targeting the locals in Dudhnoi and Mangaldoi localities. The police have already arrested some of the accused individuals, and more breakthroughs are expected in the next few days. Meanwhile, many organisations, more precisely the Patriotic People's Front Assam (PPFA) and the Prabajan Virodhi Manch (PVM), have issued separate statements demanding stringent actions against those criminals under the law of the land.

Expressing shock and dismay over the horrible Dudhnoi incident, where two teenage girls (belonging to the Bodo community) were gang-raped and a youth was killed by a group of suspected Bangladeshis, the PPFA, a forum of nationalist citizens in north-east India, urged Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who also holds the state home portfolio, to take personal interest in delivering justice to the victim families as early as possible. The forum also extended its moral support to the All Bodo Students' Union, All Rabha Students' Union, Sutradhar Students' Union, Barman Kachari Students' Union, All Bodo Women's Welfare Federation, etc. for their serious concern over the brutal incident and demand for justice. They also raised voices for compensating the family of one Hiranmay with Rs 20 lakh and those of each teenage rape survivor with Rs 5 lakh.

Both the tribal girls were raped by three suspected Islamists on their return from a function on 3 May 2024. Later, they were abandoned at the roadside by the perpetrators. The next day, the concerned families lodged a complaint at the police station. Meanwhile, on the night of 5 May, a team of village defence party (VDP) members went to confront a suspect in the incident, where a group of goons attacked



the team with sharp weapons. VDP member Hiranmay Khakhlaris sustained serious injuries, and he was rushed to a nearby hospital. Hiranmay, also from the Bodo community, was later shifted to a private hospital in Guwahati, but he succumbed to injuries on 17 May. Soon after his death, the police picked up two other individuals in connection with the murder. Moreover, three people were arrested in connection with the rape incident.

An influential anti-influx body, PVM, highlighted the incident of Mangaldoi in Darrang district of central Assam, where two local residents were physically assaulted by a group of vendors of Bangladeshi origin on 24 April. According to the PVM statement, Jiten Deka went to sell his vegetable produce in the daily market controlled by

the Mangaldoi municipal board, where he was obstructed and later beaten up severely by those vendors. Deka's son Sasanka came to his assistance, and he was also beaten up badly by them, following which Sasanka had to be admitted to Mangaldoi Civil Hospital. Deka's wife lodged a complaint at Mangaldoi police station on the same day, but no action was taken. Later, when a group of villagers organised a protest demonstration, the complaint was registered on 4 May, and one person was arrested.

"The entire incident was captured on mobile video, and it went viral on social media. Various Guwahati-based satellite news channels also broadcast it. The video clearly showed several people beating and chasing both the father and son, but only one person has been arrested. Even the Mangal-

doi municipal board did not take any action against those vendors," said PVM convener Upamanyu Hazarika, adding that a representative was sent to the municipal board chairperson Nirmali Devi and pushed for cancelling the licences of those offending vendors and prohibiting them from selling their produce in the market. Hazarika, a Supreme Court lawyer, also led a group of PVM members to approach Darrang superintendent of police Prakash Sonowal on 17 May to demand legal action against those offenders.

"Until and unless the National Register of Citizens (NRC) Assam draft's re-verification is carried out, 80 lakh Bangladeshis detected as foreigners will safeguard the rights of indigenous people on land, jobs, trade, etc. Assam will head towards

becoming a Bangladeshi majority state very soon," lamented Hazarika, who chaired a commission appointed by the Supreme Court in 2015 to review the trend of illegal Bangladeshi migrants to Assam. Speaking about the final NRC draft, which was made public on 31 August 2019, Hazarika claimed that it had only helped many Bangladeshi families to enrol their names in the list. He termed the NRC, which excluded only 19 lakh migrants from the list of genuine Indian citizens, a failure to the six-year-long Assam agitation and an insult to the sacrifice made by 855 Assamese martyrs. Hazarika even criticised the Assam government for showing insincerity in re-verifying the NRC draft for all the years.

Earlier, the PPFA also urged the government to take pragmatic initia-

tives to verify the draft NRC with the base year, which is applicable to the entire nation, and punish those guilty of fraud and money laundering during the NRC update process. It's shocking that Assam cannot deport illegal migrants with the all-India cut-off date (19 July 1948) only because of the historic Assam Accord, which agreed to accept the Bangladeshi migrants who entered the state (not other parts of northeast India) on or before 21 March 1971. Arguing that a particular state, for any reason, cannot have a different year to identify illegal migrants from the national one, the forum demands the issue be debated in Parliament for a final resolution.

It also expressed concern that the former NRC Assam coordinator, Hitesh Devsarma, publicly stated that the draft included millions of illegal citizens with the help of software tampering engineered by his predecessor, Prateek Hajela. Devsarma even lodged two official complaints against Hajela during his tenure, but none of these FIRs were entertained. Rather, Hajela was allowed to leave Assam with a voluntary retirement initiative. More shamefully, many part-time workers in the NRC updating process are yet to get their full legal payments. Nearly 6,000 local data entry operators (DEOs) are still deprived of their payments as defined by the country's basic minimum wages.

The NRC authority spent a sum of Rs 1600 crore in the four-year-long process, where these DEOs worked with nearly 50,000 government employees. The system integrator (Wipro Limited) was authorised to supply DEOs, but it allegedly engaged sub-contractors and paid the DEOs only Rs 5,500 (to 9,100) each every month, where it received Rs 14,500 (to 17,500) per month per DEO. Many DEOs approached the state labour commissioner and even hit the street demanding their outstanding (which may be Rs 100 crore in total), but nothing happened. The PPFA insisted that, for the greed of some vested interests (including a few senior television journalists who propagated the draft as a final and sacred one), those DEOs must not be deprived of their legal dues.

The writer is a Guwahati-based special representative of The Statesman

Fostering governance with women empowerment in Meghalaya

RAKHEE BHATTACHARYA

Women's empowerment in the matrilineal society of Meghalaya sounds hilarious. This tribal state traditionally confers a special position, dominant voice, and greater role to its women in the social hierarchy, and no special effort is needed to make them aware of their rights as they are automatically placed in an honoured and privileged position. Yet, recently, when the state appointed a 1992 batch Khasi woman IPS officer, Idashisha Nongrang, as the first woman Director General of Police (DGP), it rejuvenated huge enthusiasm to be seen as 'historic'. On her appointment, the state's chief minister, Conrad Sangma, mentioned that by 'breaking barriers and making history, she becomes the first tribal lady from our state to hold this position, a moment of immense pride for all of us'. About three years earlier, a similar 'history' was created with the appointment of another Khasi woman IAS officer of the 1989 batch as the first woman chief secretary of Meghalaya, which attracted exciting reports likewise.

The question arises: why should these appointments of women in the highest positions be 'historic' in a state like Meghalaya, which uniquely provides authority and position through the female line? Women here are expected to be in an advantageous position to negotiate for such positions of equality not only through competence and the Constitution but also along with the command of their traditional lineage. In fact, this unique setup could have been a niche for Meghalaya to become the forerunner of the gender equality model way back in 1971, when it became a full-fledged state of India. Meghalaya, however, had to wait for 50 long years to celebrate this moment of women's empowerment in the highest governance position! Men in this tribal state draw immense power from traditional hierarchy and customary laws and enjoy sole authority on the issues of governance, politics and statecraft, while women are restrained only to certain social and economic participa-

tions. They are largely subdued and marginalised in the case of power sharing.

Interestingly, such traditional practices were seen as 'valuable' and were highlighted for preservation in India's Constitution in the early post-independence period, and a unique Sixth Schedule mechanism gives space to such traditional customary laws and rights. Over time, this remained uncontested, dominant, and thrived through strong patriarchal prejudice. It also upholds a model of self-governance in the tribal areas through the institutional mechanism of the Autonomous District Council (ADC), which ensures and acts as 'bridges of governance' between the state and traditional institutions. This arrangement has not only protected such an age-old system without any contestation but has actually strengthened it without much alteration or amendment. Many times, it blurred the distinction between traditional space and modern statecraft, failing any transformation. It rather influences tribalism as a dominant force in most of the modern institutions of the state, manifesting in an exclusionary and undemocratic approach towards women's empowerment.

Women's rights are therefore entrapped within the age-old matrilineal system. Khasi traditional governance, for example, is largely practised in the space called Dorbar Shnong (village-level governance), which is highly male-centric and provides all political governance arms to the Khasi male community. The name Gaon Bura (the Headman) itself makes it amply clear that the head position of Dorbar Shnong is the privilege of a male member. Women are forbidden to attend any discourse and are not permitted to hold any office position, leaving aside the head position. It is intriguing to note that Meghalaya is one of the unique states of the North East where an overlapping arrangement of Dorbar Shnong, ADC, and modern statecraft allows and protects tribal patriarchy without much resistance or debate. As the Dorbar Shnong governance structure vehemently denies women participation in any decision-making bod-

ies, it perpetually existed without any woman representation. As women's voices were raised against this extreme, unequal system, the Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council (KHADC) nodded to induct two women into the 30-member executive committee of Dorbar Shnong in 2023. However, nothing has been concretized till now. At the ADC level, however, there have been a handful of female representatives elected or nominated in the past more than seven decades. In its inaugural election in 1952, Mrs Lariarn Shullai was nominated as a member of the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills Autonomous District Council, and after two decades in 1972, two more women, Mrs Louisiana Brosila Larnin and Mrs Etrice Syiern, were elected to the ADC. In 1984, Maysalin War was elected to the KHADC, and again, after a gap of two decades, Mrs Irin Lyngdoh was elected in 2004. She, along with Mrs Grace Mary Kharhuri and Mrs Teilinia Thangkiew, were chosen as members of KHADC in 2009 and finally became elected members in 2014. Similarly, in the Legislative Assembly of Meghalaya, women's participation has always been minimal.

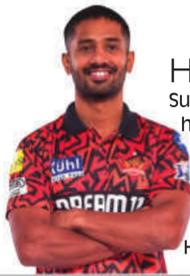
A very interesting study made by two scholars, Daphisha Marbaniang and N. Singh, of the Lovely Professional University in 2023 shows women's participation in the political institutions of Meghalaya since the pre-independence period. Women of this tribal area were given the right to vote and participate in the Assam Legislative Assembly under the Government of India Act 1935 by reserving seats from the Shillong constituency. In 1937, the first Khasi woman, Mavis Dunn, was elected, served in this Assembly, and became the Cabinet Minister in the North-Eastern provinces for the period of 1939 to 1941. However, after independence, women were again pushed back to the margin, and in 1970, the 41-member Autonomous State of Meghalaya existed without any female representation. In 1971, Meghalaya became a full-fledged state under the North-Eastern Areas (Reorganization) Act, and in the first general election in 1972, out of the 60 members of the

Meghalaya Assembly, one elected Garo woman, Ms Precylina R. Marak, became the sole representative voice. Within the gap of four decades, the 2013 Meghalaya Legislative Assembly found three more elected women representatives in Meghalaya. Currently, Mazel Ampareen Lyngdoh is the sole female cabinet minister in Meghalaya. These sheer numbers reveal how the women in this tribal-matrilineal state remained utterly neglected in its political discourse, but ironically, they did not shy away from loudly welcoming the women's reservation bill, earmarking 33 per cent seats across the lower house and state legislature.

It should be noted further that women in this state who are denied their rights never shy away from taking responsibility for social and resource management issues. In 2001, Meghalaya marked Women Empowerment Year and displayed the multiple roles and responsibilities of women in this state. Over time, various women's organisations contributed directly to their participation in the public sphere as civil society actors and indirectly to their representation in politics, proving their readiness to participate equally in the political and governance systems. Unfortunately, the regimes responded with deep injustice by not recognising their rights and competence. In this context, Idashisha Nongrang's appointment as DGP Meghalaya undoubtedly throws a ray of hope. It transcends the boundaries of tribalism and tradition, acknowledges women as equal citizens, and shows faith in her ability to deliver. This is a breath of fresh air in the matrilineal world of patriarchy, which essentially embraces a cosmetic approach to women's empowerment. Such a traditional hierarchy in Meghalaya is tightly wrapped in time. With changing realities, it needs to be contested vigorously for transformation towards more inclusive political and governance reforms and to make the unique system of matrilineal relevant for woman empowerment in Meghalaya.

The writer is professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi





HAD TO WAIT FOR MY OPPORTUNITY
Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) batter Rahul Tripathi said it was tough since he had to wait for his opportunity to come in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024. Sunrisers Hyderabad will lock horns against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the final match of the IPL 2024 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday. Rahul played 5 matches for the Sunrisers in the IPL 2024, scoring 156 runs at a strike rate of 152.94. He hammered 17 fours and 6 sixes in the ongoing season.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

ECB missed trick, playing in IPL better preparation than facing Pak, says Vaughan: Former England captain Michael Vaughan opined that playing in IPL would have served English players "better preparations for the T20 World Cup than playing against Pakistan" after the hoist of players returned home from the cash-rich league. Will Jacks, Phil Salt, and Jos Butler were among the players who ended their IPL campaign before the play-offs and returned home to participate in the four-match home series against Pakistan. "I think you're going to miss the trick by sending all their players home. You know, I think Will Jacks, Phil Salt, Jos Butler, in particular, playing in the IPL in the eliminators, pressure, crowd, expectation. I would argue that playing here is better preparation than playing a T20 game against Pakistan," said Vaughan on the Club Praire Fire Podcast. After the culmination of the series against Pakistan, England will head for the T20 pinnacle in the West Indies and the USA, starting on June 1 (local time). The defending champions will not play any warm-up match and will take on Scotland in their opening match on June 4. The first game of the series was called off due to rain while in the second match, England sealed a 23-run win in Edgbaston on Saturday to take a 1-0 lead.

Sindhu fails to end title drought, loses to Chinese rival

It was Sindhu's first BWF World Tour final since Spain Masters in April 2023



HARPAL RPAL SINGH BEDI
NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

It turned out to be a case of being so near yet so far for Olympic medalist PV Sindhu who offered a heartbreaking loss in the final at the Malaysia Masters badminton in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday. Sindhu, 15th in the badminton world rankings, lost to China's Wang Zhi Yi, the world No. 7, 21-16, 5-21, 16-21 in the title decider at the Axiata Arena.

The loss means Sindhu's title drought on the BWF World Tour continues. The former world champion's last win on tour came at the Singapore Open in July, where Sindhu, incidentally, had defeated Wang Zhi Yi in the final to lift the crown. Playing in her first BWF World Tour final since the Spain Masters in April last year, Sindhu went toe-to-toe with second seed Wang in the opening stages. After the mid-game break, though, the Indian badminton player swiftly shifted gears to take the lead.



In sharp contrast to how the opening game ended, the second game saw the Chinese shuttler dominate. Wang Zhi Yi, who won the Indonesia Masters 2024 title earlier this year, was on top of her Indian opponent throughout and allowed Sindhu just five points before making the scoreline 1-1.

After the one-sided second game, Sindhu needed a strong response and the Paris 2024 Olympics-bound Indian shuttler found one to take a commanding eight-point lead heading into the mid-game break. The momentum, however, changed again. Wang took the next five points to reduce

the deficit before drawing level at 13-all. From there on, the Chinese shuttler was in the driver's seat as she wrapped up the encounter in one hour and 19 minutes to win her second title of the year. This was Sindhu's second loss to Wang in four meetings.

Amul Milk. Always Fresh.
180 days shelf life
No need to boil
Anytime, anywhere

KKR all-rounder Narine needs 18 runs to become first-ever IPL player to register this unique record

AGENCIES
CHENNAI, 26 MAY

Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) all-rounder Sunil Narine needs 18 runs to become the first-ever Indian Premier League (IPL) player to score 500-plus runs and take 15 wickets in a single season of the tournament.



Gambhir. In the ongoing season of the IPL 2024, Narine has bagged 16 wickets at an economy rate of 6.90 after playing.

After playing 13 matches in the IPL 2024, the Caribbean all-rounder has scored 482 runs at a strike rate of 179.85. In the 17th season of the IPL, Narine showcased a stunning performance as an opener and needs only 18 runs to cross the 500-run mark. The 35-year-old will also have the chance to become the fourth KKR player to score 500 runs in an IPL season after Robin Uthappa, Andre Russell, and Gautam

KKR finished the league stage on the top of the points table with nine wins, three losses and two no results, giving them 20 points. They earned a direct spot in the final by defeating SRH in the qualifier one. SRH got a second shot at the title in qualifier two against Rajasthan Royals (RR) and they made the most of it by defeating the 'Men in Pink' by 36 runs.

Manchester United stun Premier League champs Man City, win FA Cup for 13th time



AGENCIES
LONDON, 26 MAY

English giants Manchester United stunned four-time Premier League winner Manchester City 2-1 in the final of the FA Cup to win the prestigious title for the 13th time at Wembley Stadium on Saturday. Manchester United emerged winner and will now enter the Europa League next season, as a reward for winning English football's most famous knockout competition for the first time since 2016. First-half goals from two United Academy graduates, Alejandro Garnacho and Kobbie Mainoo, in the 30th and 39th minutes respectively put the Reds in control of the showpiece occasion. Although City substitute Jeremy Doku pulled one goal back for the Premier League champions in the 87th minute United could not be denied and

went on to win the title. Pep Guardiola's men, who were eyeing what would have been a historic back-to-back double, dominated the second half with Erling Haaland hitting the bar and Kyle Walker denied by a stunning save from Andre Onana. Substitute Jeremy Doku, who made a superb impact, then deservedly struck six minutes from time to set up a grandstand finish. But Erik ten Hag's men defended valiantly through the remainder of the game to see out a triumph that some pundits had thought unlikely in the build-up. City came into the game seeking to make more ground, while United were trying to secure a tangible reward for a disappointing season. If anything, the pre-match atmosphere and build-up were even more loud and passionate than 12 months ago

as these two age-old rivals locked horns on the biggest stage once again. There may have been no 12-second goal drama this time around, unlike Ilkay Gundogan's stunning opener in 2023, but just as 12 months ago there was a frantic action-packed start. First Kyle Walker needed to be aware that Erling Haaland was sent flying in the box through a challenge by Lisandro Martinez but referee Andrew Madley adjudged no foul with VAR upholding that view. While the victory brought Manchester United a 13th FA Cup title, it also seems to have revived the tenure of manager Erik ten Hag, who was being considered a "dead man walking" by many analysts. He may now get to lead the club in the next season, at least for the first few months of the new season and in the Europa Cup.

Pro Women Hockey league: India loses 1-2 to Belgium

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 26 MAY

Formidable Belgium handed India yet another defeat in the FIH Hockey Pro League as they beat the visitors 2-1 at Antwerp. Ambre Ballenghien (15') and Vanessa Blockmans (20') got on the scoresheet for the hosts while Sangita Kumari (34') scored for India. Belgium began the game with a full-court press, making it difficult for India to play out from the back.



However, the Indian endured the initial pressure and began dominating possession, while Belgium continued to press, looking for a chance to score on the counterattack. The pressure resulted in a penalty corner for Belgium, and Ambre Ballenghien stepped up to power the ball past Savita in goal, putting her team ahead as the first quarter drew to a close. In the second quarter, Belgium employed the same tactic while India attempted to stitch a few passes together in the rival's half. Five minutes into the quarter, Belgium's high press resulted in another penalty corner, and Vanessa Blockmans pounced on Louise Versavel's deflected shot to score the second goal. India reacted to the goal through Salima Tete, who turned on a sixpence in mid-

field, blazed to the right corner, and unleashed a rocket on goal, which was saved by Belgian keeper Elodie Picard. The visitors struggled to play out of their half as Belgium continued to close down their passing lanes, forcing the Indian defense into a scramble to keep it 2-0 heading into halftime. Belgium further intensified the pressure in the third quarter. However, Jyoti bypassed the press to find Deepika, whose forward pass deflected to Sangita Kumari in the circle. She flashed it into Elodie Picard's goal to bring India back into the game. After the goal, India occasionally started to beat the Belgian press, but Belgium was quick to threaten the defense. They won the ball high up the pitch and forced Savita into action. Delphine Marien remained a constant threat down the right wing for Belgium, but the Indian defense stood firm, and the quarter

ended 2-1 in Belgium's favour. The final quarter saw India turn over the ball in their half, but Belgium failed to capitalize. The game became stretched as both teams looked to score quickly towards the end. India created a chance to score through Deepika, but her shot was saved, and Sangita snatched the chance to score from the deflection but was not able to convert it. Savita had to stay alert in goal as the Belgian forwards constantly won the ball and threatened to use it. With five minutes left in the quarter, Belgium earned a penalty corner, but the ball sailed wide of the post. India grew into the game, pushing ahead in search of an equalizer. Deepika was handed a chance to score in the final moments, but the Belgian defense rushed to subdue the chaos in front of the goal and sealed a 2-1 victory over India.

SRH skipper Pat Cummins one win away to achieve MS Dhoni's elusive feat



AGENCIES
CHENNAI, 26 MAY

Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) skipper Pat Cummins will get a chance to create history and equal MS Dhoni's record of winning both the ODI World Cup and the Indian Premier League (IPL) in a single cricket season as captain. On Sunday, Pat Cummins led Sunrisers Hyderabad will take on Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in the final match of the IPL 2024 at MA Chidambaram Stadium here. Dhoni won the ODI World Cup in 2011 and also the IPL title in the same season. On the other hand, Cummins led Australia to win the recently concluded 2023 ODI World



Cup and will captain the Hyderabad-based franchise in the IPL 2024 final. Dhoni won five IPL titles with the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in the 2010, 2011, 2018, 2021, and 2023 seasons. While Cummins won one IPL title in 2014 with the Knight Riders. KKR finished the league stage on the top of the points table with nine wins, three losses and two no results, giving them 20 points. They earned a direct spot in the final by defeating SRH in the qualifier one. SRH got a second shot at the title in qualifier two against Rajasthan Royals (RR) and they made the most of it by defeating the 'Men in Pink' by 36 runs.

Neeraj Chopra pulls out of Ostrava Golden Spike with muscle injury, to attend event as guest

AGENCIES
Ostrava, 26 May

Olympic gold medallist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has pulled out of the upcoming Ostrava Golden Spike 2024 athletics meet, World Athletics Continental Tour Gold label event, due to an adductor muscle injury sustained during training two weeks ago. However, the 26-year-old is scheduled to attend the event as a guest which starts on May 28. "The javelin throw at Ostrava Golden Spike promises a great experience. The organisers did note a message from



the Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra. Due to an injury that he sustained in training two weeks ago (adductor muscle), he will not be able to throw in Ostrava, but he will arrive at the event as a guest," the organisers of the event said

in a statement on Saturday. In Neeraj's absence, Germany's Julian Weber will take part in the competition. The European champion achieved his third-best performance of the year with a throw of 88.37m in Dessau, Germany

on Friday. The home favourite Jakob Vadlejch will face a tough battle from Weber to defend his title. He won the last year's competition with a modest throw of 81.93m. The Indian thrower started his season at the Doha Diamond League and finished second with his best throw of 88.36m. Earlier this month, Neeraj participated in India for the first time in three years at the National Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships in Bhubaneswar, where he won the gold with an effort of 82.27m.

'It's disappointing', says Bangladesh captain Shanto after T20I series loss to USA

AGENCIES
HOUSTON, 26 MAY

Bangladesh defeated the USA by 10 wickets in the third and final T20I but finished the series 2-1 after suffering defeats in the first two matches. Captain Najmul Hossain Shanto said the result was disappointing but it gave them a chance to adapt to the conditions ahead of the T20 World Cup. USA are the co-hosts of the T20 showpiece along with the West Indies that starts on June 1 (June 2 as per Indian Standard time). In the third T20I on Sat-



urday, pacer Mustafizur Rahman's exceptional 6-10 figures allowed them to restrict the USA for 109/9 in 20 overs. Tanzid Hasan's unbeaten half-century (58*) coupled with opener Saumya Sarkar's 28-ball 43 not out handed the visitors a 10-wicket win in 11.4 overs. "Boys showed a lot of character and everyone executed their plans. It's very disappointing to lose the series, we

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did not play well, to be honest. But to finish on a high today will help us ahead of the World Cup. We know the conditions and how it will be and we are looking forward," Shanto said in the post-match presentation. Mustafizur was adjudged Player of the Match as well as Player of the Series for bagging 10 wickets in three games. The left-arm pacer said his

variations yielded results for him in the series. "Very happy with the way I bowled. I tried a lot of variations and mixed it up. Feeling really good for winning these awards," he said. Bangladesh will now take on the USA and India in the two warm-up matches before locking horns with Sri Lanka in their T20 World Cup opener on June 7 (June 8 as per IST).