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WEATHER

Generally cloudy sky with Possibility of light rain. Maximum and minimum temperatures likely to be around 34 °C and 29 °C respectively.

RAINFALL: NIL	
RELATIVE HUMIDITY	Min. 82 %
Max. 95%	
TEMPERATURE	Min. 29.4°C (+2.2)
Max. 33.0°C (-2.1)	
SUN RISES	SUN SETS
04:52 hrs	18:16 hrs
MOON RISES	MOON SETS
23:33 hrs	10:2 hrs
New Moon on 06 May	

THUMBNAILS



Indian Army Deputy Chief (IS&C) Lieutenant General Rakesh Kapoor lays a wreath at the National War Memorial on the 76th anniversary of UN Peacekeepers Day, in New Delhi on Wednesday. ■ ANI

S&P revises India's outlook from 'stable' to 'positive': Standard & Poor (S&P) on Wednesday announced a revision in the outlook for the Indian economy from 'stable' to 'positive', while affirming the overall rating at 'BBB+'. The agency said that the transfer and convertibility assessment remains 'BBB+'. The positive outlook reflects expectations of sustained policy stability, deepening economic reforms, and high infrastructure investment, which are anticipated to support long-term growth prospects. (P98)

North India on fire

Mungeshpur in Delhi recorded its highest-ever maximum temp in this season so far at 52.9° celsius

NIKHIL VYAS
NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

Severe heat wave conditions prevailed over most parts of Haryana, Chandigarh, Punjab and Delhi on Wednesday, with Mungeshpur in the national capital almost touching 53 degrees Celsius. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Mungeshpur in Delhi recorded its highest-ever maximum temperature in this season so far at 52.9 degrees Celsius, 13 notches above the normal. The maximum temperature recorded in Najafgarh in the national capital was 49.1 degrees Celsius, 9 notches above the normal.

Meanwhile, taking note of the scorching heat in the national capital, Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena has asked the Delhi Development Authority to give three hours paid break to labourers between 12 pm to 3 pm, till the temperature subside below 40 degrees Celsius in the city. Warm night conditions were observed in isolated pockets of Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and East Madhya Pradesh. On Tuesday, the high-



The Met Department said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions prevailed in many parts of West Uttar Pradesh, East Madhya Pradesh, HP and also in some parts of West Madhya Pradesh, East Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan



(L) A woman pours water on her head to cool herself in New Delhi. (R) People walk on Kartavya Path while covering themselves to protect from the scorching heat. ■ ANI

est maximum temperature of 50.5 degrees Celsius was reported at Churu (West Rajasthan) over the country. The IMD has predicted that the ongoing heatwave in Northwest and Central India is expected to reduce gradually from Thursday. "Prevailing heat wave to severe heat wave conditions over Northwest & Central India likely to reduce gradually from 30th May, 2024," the IMD said in its forecast. The Met Department

said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions prevailed in many parts of West Uttar Pradesh, East Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and also in some parts of West Madhya Pradesh, East Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan. Heat wave conditions prevailed in isolated pockets of Jammu, Vidarbha and Chhattisgarh. "Heat wave conditions have been prevailing over Haryana, Chandigarh & Delhi, Rajasthan since 17th and

over Madhya Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh since 18th May, 2024," the IMD said. "Yesterday, maximum temperatures were in the range of 46-50 degrees Celsius in many parts of Northwest India; 42-46 degrees Celsius in many parts of West, Central & East India. These were above normal by 3-6 degrees Celsius over many parts of Northwest India and in some parts of Central & West India. Gradual fall in maximum temperatures

by 3-4 degrees Celsius is very likely over Northwest & Central India during next 3-4 days," the IMD said. "Heat wave to severe heat wave conditions are very likely in most many parts of Punjab, Haryana-Chandigarh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh on 29th and gradual reduction thereafter with heat wave conditions in isolated/some parts till 01st June, 2024," the IMD said. The Met Department said heat wave to severe heat wave conditions are likely to reduce gradually over Northwest & Central India from May 30. The IMD predicted that heat wave to severe heat wave conditions were likely in isolated pockets of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha on 29 & 30 May and isolated heat wave conditions on 31 May & 1 June. Heat wave conditions are very likely in isolated pockets of Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh, Jammu division, Himachal Pradesh on 29th & 30th May, 2024. A severe heatwave continued to prevail in several parts of Rajasthan on Wednesday with Churu in the state recording the maximum temperature of 50.5 degrees Celsius in the last 24 hours, said the IMD.

CPM, Congress BJP's B-team in Bengal: Mamata



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

Trinamul Congress will play a leading role in the INDIA bloc but will never make any understanding with the CPIM and Congress in Bengal as they are BJP's B team, Trinamul Congress chairperson, Mamata Banerjee said on Wednesday. Miss Banerjee was addressing a gathering at Metiabruz in support of Abhishek Banerjee, the party's national general secretary and nominee for the Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha seat. Banerjee, a time MP is contesting from the seat for the third consecutive time. BJP has fielded Abhijit Das. The election for the seat will be held on 1 June.

Earlier, Miss Banerjee held a meeting in favour of Sayoni Ghosh who is contesting from the Jadavpur seat. She said Sayoni's victory is certain and she will work for the people. Miss Banerjee also took part in a roadshow in favour of Sudip Bandyopadhyay, the party's nominee from North Kolkata. The rally started from Netaji's statue at the five-point crossing and ended at Swami Vivekananda's ancestral home. Miss Banerjee who came down heavily on Narendra Modi in the meeting at Metiabruz, said "Such a big liar has no role to play in politics. He has made false statements about Bengal. He said that the Centre had paid money to repair the embankments in South 24 Parganas. This is a blatant lie. He had not paid money to the MGN-REGA workers and stopped payment of the Awas Plus scheme. He comes to Bengal and speaks garbage of lies,"

she said: "A storm is coming that will throw Modi out of power," she said. "You (Modi) call us corrupt, but BJP is the most corrupt political party in the country. Any corrupt person can go to the BJP and come out clean. BJP family is full of corrupt people." Miss Banerjee said "Over the years BJP has tried to divide society by setting one community against the other. If they come to power they will implement a Uniform Civil Code which will take away the freedom of the minorities, SC and ST people," she said adding "Modi has sold this country and if he comes to power he will sell our Constitution." Miss Banerjee said the state government will fight a legal battle against the scrapping of OBC certificates issued after 2011 in the Supreme Court. Miss Banerjee alleged that the CPIM has got oxygen by receiving financial assistance from the BJP. "In Dum Dum CPIM and Baranagar Assembly by-election, CPIM and BJP will transfer each other's vote to defeat Trinamul Congress," she said adding "Trinamul Congress is part and parcel of INDIA bloc but will never make any alliance with Congress and CPIM who are BJP's friends," she said. She said "I know the CPIM very well. I came out of Congress because I understood that Congress would never launch any movement to oust the CPIM in Bengal. So, do not trust the CPIM." She urged the people to vote for Abhishek Banerjee who works sincerely for the development of his constituency. (PHOTO: BISWAJIT GHOSHAL)

MoU to provide eMigrate services through Common Services Centres inked

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on Wednesday among the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), and CSC eGovernance Services India Limited to create a synergy between CSC, Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) & MEA to provide the eMigrate services through CSCs in the country. The eMigrate project is undertaken to assist mainly the blue-collar workers going to Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries. The project was conceptualised to address issues faced by the migrant workers by making the emigration process online seamless and also to bring foreign employers and registered recruitment agents and insurance companies on one common platform aimed at promoting safe and legal migration. Over the years, the number of Indians going abroad for employment has been increasing as well as the contribution of remittances sent by them has been significant. Under this MoU, eMigrate Portal of MEA would be integrated with CSC's portal, to provide following eMigrate services to the citizens through Common Services Centres (CSCs): --Facilitate registration of applicants on eMigrate portal through CSCs; --Facilitation of uploading and processing the required documents for the applicants on eMigrate portal through CSCs; --Facilitate and supporting booking for medical and other services required by migrant workers or applicants registered on eMigrate portal through CSC; and --Creating awareness about eMigrate services amongst citizens across India.

Dynastic politics has ruined Bengal: Modi in Kakdwip

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

At the final leg of the Lok Sabha election, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is campaigning in Bengal. Today is his second day on the trot for holding rallies in the state. He held a rally in Kakdwip in the Mathurapur Lok Sabha constituency today. Modi targeted the Trinamul Congress on several issues, aiming for a "bigger victory" in Bengal. He made clear his stance on polarization, directly stating, "Trinamul is attacking the Constitution for appeasement." He criticized the Trinamul on issues of corruption, OBC certificates and attacks on saints and monks. The Prime Minister said, "Trinamul has only one agenda. They want a cut in everything. Trinamul is tarnishing Bengal's identity and not even sparing the saints. Trinamul



is attacking institutions like ISKCON, Ramakrishna Mission and Bharat Sevashram Sangha. He said, "Trinamul goons are attacking monasteries. Ram Mandir is the centre of our faith. Trinamul people call Ram Mandir impure. Such Trinamul cannot protect Bengal's culture." In the midst of the election atmosphere, the high court has invalidated all OBC certificates issued under the Trinamul regime, making it

a political issue. Bengal's chief minister Mamata Banerjee has clearly stated that she will not abide by this order. The BJP has used this matter as a weapon, with Modi accusing the Trinamul of appeasement. He said at the Mathurapur rally, "Trinamul is attacking the Constitution for appeasement. Our Constitution provides reservations for Dalits and the backward classes. But under Trinamul rule, even these reservations are being looted. OBC certificates are being given to Muslims, taking away the rights of the backward classes. The Calcutta High Court has invalidated these certificates. Trinamul cannot ignore this order. Muslims are lying. They are spreading falsehood. Imagine to what extent they can go for appeasement?" At the Mathurapur rally, Modi warned, "After 4 June, Trinamul's influence will

wane." He predicted a "political earthquake" in the country in the next six months after 4 June. He committed all his power to building a prosperous Bengal. "I have built permanent homes for 4 crore poor people, provided water to 12 crore households, and electricity to all villages. India is now on the path to a developed India. In the next five years, we have to be a decisive force in creating a golden India. Building a developed Bengal is essential for a developed India. This is only possible if you elect MPs who will work for the country. Elect more BJP MPs and send them to Delhi and I promise Bengal will be developed. I will put all my power into it." Modi also criticized dynastic politics, saying, "You have seen a decade of development. Millions of poor people in the country did not have basic

amenities. They died of hunger. Millions did not have a roof over their heads, and women did not have toilets. The biggest tragedy was that there was no effort to solve these problems. Dynastic politics has ruined people. The countries that gained independence with us, where are they now? We have so much youth power, yet we were falling behind. India is now moving forward. The whole world is watching. The whole world is recognizing India's strength." Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday in city arrived at Mayer Bari (Mother's House) in Bagbazar. After spending some time there, he began the roadshow from Shyamabazar. Sources report that although a special seating arrangement was made, the Prime Minister chose to sit on the floor and pray for a few minutes. He then hurriedly ate a small amount of prasada.

UP: 2 killed after SUV in convoy of Brij Bhushan Singh's son rams into bike

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
GONDA, 29 MAY

Police vehicle of BJP candidate from Kaiserganj, Karan Bhushan Singh mowed down three people, leaving two bike-riding youths dead on the spot and one woman seriously injured here on Wednesday. Karan Bhushan Singh is the son of six-time Lok Sabha MP and former Wrestling Federation of India president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh against whom a criminal case was filed by female wrestlers. The condition of the woman injured in the accident is critical and she has been referred to the Gonda medical college. Police here said the accident took place this morning near Baikunth Degree College located at Chhataipurwa on Colonelganj-Huzurpur road when a SUV carrying security personnel hit the



people. After the accident, security personnel of the convoy left the SUV and fled the spot leaving behind the vehicle. As soon as the information was received, a crowd of villagers gathered at the spot and protested on the road. The agitated people also tried to burn down the car. There was a jam on Colonelganj-Huzurpur road for about an hour. After collective efforts of the SDM, Additional Superintendent of Police, CO Colonelganj and CO City and assurance of a lawsuit, the protestors cleared the jam. The police SUV traveling in the convoy of Kaiserganj MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's son and BJP candidate Karan Bhushan Singh crushed to death two bike-riding youths. The deceased were identified as Rehan Khan (21) and Shahzad Khan (20), residents of Nindura, Gonda who died on the spot. Sita Devi (60), a resident of Chhataipurwa, who was walking on the roadside, was also hit.

Patnaik insists 'he is in perfect health', reacts to Modi's 'conspiracy' comment at a poll rally

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 29 MAY

Making a startling charge on Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said several long time associates of chief minister Naveen Patnaik suspect that there may be a conspiracy behind the "sudden" deterioration of the health condition of Odisha CM. Modi addressing poll rallies at Mayurbhanj, Balasore and Kendrapara parliamentary constituencies said the BJP Government, if comes to power in Odisha, will constitute a special committee to ascertain the deterioration of his health in the last one year. Now-a-days, all well-wishers of Naveen Babu (CM Naveen Patnaik) are concerned about his falling health in the last one year. Whenever they meet they discuss Naveen Babu's health. They feel that he is unable to do anything by himself, he said



Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik during a press conference on PM's statement to form a special committee to investigate Patnaik's deteriorating health, in Bhubaneswar. ■ ANI

at the election rallies. The question lies whether there is conspiracy in it. Odisha people have the right to know about it. Is there the involvement of the lobby enjoying power in Odisha in the name of CM Naveen?, said Modi. Hours after the PM's remark on his health, CM

Patnaik dismissed the statement saying that "let me assure the PM that I am in perfect health and I have been campaigning in our state for the last month..." "I understand that the PM, in a public meeting, has stated that I am in bad health and he wants to institute an inquiry into this matter." "If he (PM) was so concerned about my health then all he had to do was pick up a telephone and ring me up and ask me about my health. There are a number of people in the BJP who have been spreading rumours about my health for the last 10 years, CM Patnaik added. Modi's expression of concern on Mr. Patnaik's health came close on the heels of remarks by home minister Amit Shah and Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma pertaining to the poor health of Patnaik. In a video posted on social

media platforms, Patnaik was found shaking hands while speaking at an election meeting. "This is a deeply distressing video. Shri V.K. Pandian ji is even controlling the hand movements of Shri Naveen babu." Assam CM Sarma stated in a post on X yesterday. It's pertinent to note here that Union Home Minister Amit Shah during a poll rally on 21 May targeted Patnaik insinuating towards his falling health by saying that Naveen Patnaik, who is 77 years old, should retire due to his "advanced age and health issues". During the electioneering, BJP has all along raised the emotive Odia pride issue alleging that Patnaik has been held captive by an outsider Tamil Nadu-born bureaucrat-turned-politician VK Pandian. Patnaik has groomed the ex-bureaucrat as his political successor.

TMC's Sudip hopes to score a boundary, while BJP's Roy aims for maiden win

Some media with vested interests have projected Tapas Roy a paper tiger. Roy became a councillor in 1985 from Bowbazar and lost to CPM in 1990

TARUN GOSWAMI
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) may create a dent in some pockets in Kolkata North Lok Sabha seat but it is for certain that Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Trinamul Congress nominee is going to the Lok Sabha for the fourth consecutive time.

Mr Banerjee had defeated Rahul Sinha of BJP by over 96,000 votes in 2019. The election in this seat will be held on 1 June along with eight other constituencies.

BJP has fielded Tapas Roy, who has recently joined the party from Trinamul Congress. He resigned as an MLA from Baranagar seat where by election will be held on 1 June and Trinamul's nominee is Sayantika Banerjee. BJP has fielded Sajal Ghosh and CPM's candidate is Tanmay Bhattacharya.

Congress candidate is Pradip Bhattacharya.

There are seven Assembly seats under Kolkata North Lok Sabha seat. They are Chowringhee, Entally, Belgachia, Jorasanko, Shyampukur,



Manicktala and Kashipur-Belgachia. Trinamul has control over all the Assembly seats.

Some media with vested interests have projected Tapas Roy a paper tiger. Roy became a councillor in 1985 from Bowbazar and lost to CPM in

1990. He was a close aide of Somen Mitra and later left him and joined Trinamul Congress. During the Left Front regime he became an MLA from Vidyasagar seat and was very vocal in the Assembly. As a student leader he was very popular and Chhatra Parishad

had established control over almost all the college unions in north Kolkata. In Kashipur-Belgachia, Shyampukur and Manicktala BJP has pocket votes. But Trinamul's organization is very strong in these areas. Dr Shashi Panja has nurtured



her constituency very well over the past few years. Atin Ghosh, deputy mayor has strong base in his area. Though BJP has pocket votes but it does not have any organization and on the day of election will not be able to mobilize voters.

In Chowringhee, Entally and Jorasanko the non-Bengali Muslim population is strong and they are likely to vote for Trinamul Congress in large numbers.

Sudip Bandyopadhyay has problems with some Trinamul leaders in the local areas but

he has contacts with the clubs. In order to prevent any kind of backstabbing, Abhishek Banerjee is keeping a vigil with his own machinery and any party leader doing sabotage will be booked, said sources. Tapas Roy had problems

with Sudip Bandyopadhyay for a long time. The Enforcement Directorate had raided Roy's house and he left the party on the plea that Trinamul leadership, including party's chairperson, did not keep in touch when he was in trouble.

Roy is banking heavily on Trinamul's organization to sail through. He has contacts in areas surrounding Bowbazar and outside that he does not have any contact with. With such little penetration, he can cause a dent but cannot defeat Sudip Bandyopadhyay whose going to the Parliament for the fourth consecutive time is almost certain.

Mamata Banerjee took part in road shows and addressed gatherings in his support. She took part in a road show from Shyambazar Five Point Crossing to Swami Vivekananda's ancestral house this afternoon a day before the last day of campaign. All the MLAs are backing Bandyopadhyay and Trinamul is waiting to see to what extent he can increase his margin.

Visva-Bharati gets new acting vice-chancellor

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BIRBHUM, 29 MAY

Visva-Bharati University (VBU) got a new acting vice-chancellor today as professor Arabinda Mondal, principal of Palli Sangathan department has been appointed as the new acting VC of Visva-Bharati University. The tenure of professor Sanjoy Kumar Mallick as principal is over and he has to be replaced as per the laws of the central university.

Professor Sanjay Kumar Mallick has taken over the charge from the controversial full-time vice-chancellor professor Bidyut Chakraborty

and since then the situation of Santiniketan has improved and the varsity's relation with the state government has also improved.

Since the past six months professor Sanjay Kumar Mallick has taken over the charge of acting vice-chancellor of Visva-Bharati University and the academic atmosphere inside the campus has also improved a lot during his tenure.

The Union higher education ministry did not extend the term of professor Bidyut Chakraborty who has created a huge stir by placing plaques in the campus after

Unesco tagged Santiniketan as a cultural heritage site.

Later, during the tenure of professor Sanjay Kumar Mallick, the plaques were removed and new plaques with the name of its founder Rabindranath Tagore were restored.

A notification has been released today in which the new acting VC has been appointed with immediate effect.

It is expected that after the Lok Sabha elections are over the search committee will nominate the new full-time vice-chancellor of Visva-Bharati University.

Jadavpur poll watch: A quadrilateral fight makes the seat intriguing

NISHAT NIZAMI
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

Grabbing a bite from his lunch box, Sujit Mondal, an auto driver in Jadavpur hurriedly took charge of his autorickshaw. He was in a rush to catch glimpses of the celebrity candidate who has been fielded from his Lok Sabha seat. A staunch supporter of the ruling party, Mondal was confident of the repetition of 2019 Lok Sabha poll results in Jadavpur which is headed for general elections on 1 June.

Mondal's opinion was echoed by Bhaskar Das, owner of a general store in Baghajatin. "In West Bengal, there's no alternative to TMC," claimed Das. "Saayoni Ghosh didi has campaigned intensely reaching almost every household and hence I feel she would prove to be the right choice of the voters," he added. Asked if he had any reservations about his choicest candidate's availability in needs, he remarked, "She has been actively involved with masses working at ground level with people. I have full faith that she will prove herself as an MP as well."

However, unlike the auto driver, Sujit Mondal, electorate like Srijita Saha, a private school teacher, are looking up to someone more accessible. "It is going to be a tough fight this time. We have seen difficult times during the Covid outbreak or even in the aftermath of Amphan when we needed help badly. Therefore, as an ordinary citizen, I would prefer someone who could be accessible during our



needs," said the woman electorate who felt CPM has fielded a better candidate this time and has decided to vote for him.

Considered as the most prestigious Lok Sabha seat that has had several heavyweights, including Left veteran and former speaker Somnath Chatterjee and chief minister Mamata Banerjee, Jadavpur parliamentary constituency includes seven assembly constituencies containing mixed bags of urban-rural and rich-poor populations. If history is given a closer look, the debutante from Jadavpur seems to be blessed with the beginner's luck. Contesting her first election as a Congress candidate Mamata Banerjee was a slip of a girl in 1984 when she took on formidable CPM nominee Somnath Chatterjee and defeated him. With similar luck, TMC candidates Krishna Bose, Kabir Suman and Sugato Bose tasted victory from Jadavpur on their first appearances.

Known as the Left's bastion for decades, the seat has

been won by TMC since 2009. The ruling party has fielded fresh faces each poll including celebrities without giving a second chance to anyone. In the last Lok Sabha polls, TMC's Mimi Chakraborty had won the seat bagging 6,88,472, which was 47.9 per cent of the total votes. The Bharatiya Janata Party emerged second securing 3,93,233 votes with the CPM running up to the third position.

Sticking to the strategy, the TMC has fielded another celebrity face Saayoni Ghosh this election, who is not a political debutant like her immediate predecessor. Determined to walk on the path of revival with inclusion of fresh and young blood in the party, the Left has fielded Srijan Bhattacharya, who is also the candidate from INDI alliance. The BJP has declared its national executive committee member Anirban Ganguly, who has been associated with popularising the legacy of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, on new research on his



life and times and in widely disseminating the new findings.

Interestingly, both TMC's Saayoni Ghosh and CPM's Srijan Bhattacharya have already tested the waters of electoral politics. While Ghosh lost in Asansol, Bhattacharya tasted defeat at Singur in the 2021 elections.

If the TMC, BJP and INDIA bloc-supported CPM candidates make the contest triangular, the bone in the throat in the form of the Indian Secular Front nominee Nur Alam Khan is to add further competition in the Red-turmed-green bastion.

With a high level academic activities, student unions and the academic excellence of many students, Jadavpur University is a nerve centre of this constituency. The candidates, having connect with it, would be at an advantage. However, unlike Ganguly, both Saayoni Ghosh and Srijan are connected to this university. While Saayoni Ghosh left her graduation course in comparative literature to

devote more time to her film career, Srijan, a post graduate in history, was a leader of the students' wing of his party.

While the TMC candidate was seen stressing on women empowerment wanting to raise concerns on the issue of 'Bengal being deprived' at the Parliament, among the main agenda that the candidates of the opposition were found echoing are enhanced transport facility, better healthcare and education system for the constituency. "The Metro connectivity till Baruipur and Sonarpur has been pending since nobody took it up. Another area of focus would be the completion of 'Jal Jeevan Mission' and more state general hospitals in the constituency," informed BJP's Anirban Ganguly. While Left's Srijan wants to work on the issue of unemployment among the youth, ISF's Nur Alam Khan has plans of enhancing rail connectivity in the suburban pockets of the constituency.

Congress, Left parties will come to power in West Bengal by 2026: Congress leader Pradip Bhattacharya

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 28 MAY

Congress Candidate from Kolkata North Lok Sabha Seat, Pradip Bhattacharya on Tuesday claimed that the Congress and left parties will come to power in Bengal by 2026.

"I will start a movement from North Kolkata... This government in Bengal has done corruption in all ways and it is deep-rooted now... On one hand, my fight is with the BJP and on the other hand, it is with TMC. We have made an alliance with the left parties. Congress party and left parties are fighting together in the whole of Bengal... By 2026, the Congress and the left parties will come to power in Bengal," he told ANI. He also claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadshow in North Kolkata "will have no effect" in the upcoming polls.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday held an

impromptu roadshow in West Bengal's Barasat, where he also addressed a public meeting. PM Modi will also hold a mega roadshow in Kolkata on May 29.

Congress Candidate from Kolkata North Lok Sabha Seat, Pradip Bhattacharya, also claimed that BJP will not get more than 10 seats in the West Bengal Lok Sabha election.

"This time BJP's (performance) will be very bad in Bengal... (BJP's) organisation (ground level) is very weak, what (BJP) says that they will get 30 seats... that is wrong. (BJP) once got 18 seats, that's it, next time they (BJP) will not get more than 10 seats," he said.

Pradip Bhattacharya also claimed that the PM Modi-led BJP government uses the ED and CBI for politically motivated reasons. However, he termed the central agencies inquiry in West Bengal as cor-

rect. "He (referring to PM Modi) uses ED, CBI, but the ED and CBI inquiry in Bengal is for the right reason. What I have seen in India is that the politically motivated BJP government uses ED and CBI," he said. He also said that when the result of the 2024 Lok Sabha election comes, the BJP will not be in power as the country's people will remove the BJP from power.

"June 4, when the results are out, you (BJP) will not be in power, the country's people will remove you (BJP) from power," he said. Responding to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee not attending INDIA bloc meeting on June 1, he said, "I think just to give concession to Modiji, she wanted to show him that I am not going to INDIA, this is a matter of setting, it is a matter of setting of Mamata-Modi," he said.

Siliguri mayor apologises after drinking water turns unsafe

MANAS R BANNERJEE
SILIGURI, 29 MAY

The water provided by Siliguri Municipal Corporation (SMC) for drinking is entirely unfit for human consumption.

According to Siliguri mayor Goutam Deb, citizens are advised to refrain from drinking water until the Corporation issues further instructions.

The mayor, while speaking to the media, expressed regret for providing drinking water that is not suitable for people to drink.

"I apologize to the people of Siliguri," said mayor Goutam Deb.

After receiving a laboratory test report of water samples collected by the public health engineering on 23 May, the SMC made a decision based on the findings from the Pollution Control Board.

The Siliguri mayor reported that the BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) levels in

the water were below average, indicating a breakdown of organic material in the water.

It should be mentioned that numerous individuals experienced stomach issues after drinking the water provided by the SMC in the past two weeks. The issue was brought to attention when a significant number of patients had to urgently seek treatment at Siliguri Hospital and North Bengal Medical College and Hospital (NBMC&H) due to abdominal problems.

In response to the urgent repair of embankments damaged by a flash flood in Sikkim in October 2023, the Teesta Barrage Project authorities halted the supply of raw water from the Teesta. Consequently, the SMC was forced to limit the availability of drinking water.

The PHE, after consulting with the SMC, opted to continue providing drinking water from the Mahananda as a substitute for surface water. The West Bengal Pollu-



tion Control Board's report states that the Mahananda river in West Bengal is highly contaminated.

The PHE is responsible for providing drinking water from its treatment facility in Fulbari, near Siliguri in Jal-

paiguri. This water is supplied to the SMC, NBMC&H, and some rural areas close to Uttarkanya, a branch secretariat.

The inhabitants of the area, who enjoy consuming water from Fulbari treatment



facilities, were forced to discontinue collecting water due to experiencing stomach issues. As a result, they had to purchase bottled water

sourced from underground reserves at the market.

On 9 May, the irrigation and waterways department made the decision to initiate repairs

on the Teesta Barrage project's embankments and other issues. It was also unanimously decided that the provision of untreated water would persist from 25 May. However, due to intense precipitation in the higher catchment areas, the officials were unable to finish the essential repairs within the given timeframe.

The Mayor expressed his hope that the department of irrigation and waterways would begin providing untreated surface water from the river Teesta starting on 2 June.

"The PHE has also gathered water samples from various locations for testing in a laboratory, and the results are currently pending. Due to an unsatisfactory BOD report, the SMC is advising people not to consume the water until further notice. However, it can still be used for other purposes," Mr Deb added.

As per Mr Deb, the SMC will use newspapers and local TV channels to inform the public about the current state of affairs through published notices and broadcasts.

"In order to provide a substitute solution for drinking water, 26 water tanks will be utilized in a rotational manner across 47 wards within the Corporation area. In addition, the population will receive a daily supply of 100,000 new water pouches," Mr Deb added.

Shankar Ghosh, the BJP MLA for Siliguri, expressed unhappiness over the Corporation's actions and suggested that the mayor should have tested the water sample before distributing it to the public. Currently, the people of Siliguri are experiencing a severe shortage of drinking water. The impoverished individuals are forced to gather water from various sources.

THUMBNAILS

Empowering women in Kolkata: Through Gram Mitr & Pragati Mitr programs 20,000+ women are empowered creating menstrual hygiene products working at an Amazon-established four state-of-the-art sustainable sanitary napkin manufacturing units at strategic locations across India - Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai. These units boast a combined production capacity of 1,200 biodegradable sanitary pads per hour.

Mock fire drill at Kavi Subhash carshed: A mock fire drill cum training session for the field staff of Metro Railway was conducted under the supervision of Senior Officers on Tuesday at Kavi Subhash carshed. In this drill, Metro staff were imparted training to douse the flame through simulation of various fire and smoke conditions.

There will not be NRC, CAA or Uniform Civil Code: Abhishek

Mr Banerjee said it will be difficult for the outsiders to understand Bengal's tradition and heritage

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

Trinamul Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee urged the people to give a befitting reply to BJP who has tried hard and soul to divide society by letting loose Hindus against the Muslims and vice versa. He was addressing a mammoth rally at Metiabruz this afternoon. Metiabruz Assembly seat falls under Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha seat. The election in this constituency will be held on 1 June. BJP has fielded Abhijit Das from the seat.

All the seven MLAs in Diamond Harbour Lok Sabha seat belong to Trinamul Congress. Mr Banerjee felt that Metiabruz will give the highest lead in the ongoing gen-



eral election to Diamond Harbour seat to protest against the divisive politics of the BJP. Addressing the gathering Mr Banerjee said, "The BJP has always looked down upon the people of Metiabruz because of their religion. BJP believes in division and so lets loose one brother against the other and one religion against the other. They tried

to create trouble in Metiabruz by playing communal card, but it has failed due to the every vigilant people." Mr Banerjee assured that there will not be NRC, CAA or Uniform Civil Code. "BJP has taken all these measures to take away the rights of the minorities, SC and ST people. In 2019, we said that we would not allow this to be

implanted here and now we repeat what we have said."

Mr Banerjee said it will be difficult for the outsiders to understand Bengal's tradition and heritage. "For generations we have lived peacefully and happily. In Bengal people from different religions, cultures, and faiths take part in each other's religious festivals. We give financial assistance to the Durga Puja clubs and similarly we give assistance to the Masjid committees and the organizers of fairs of the Christian community. We do not ask people to which community, caste or religion they belong to," he said.

He said a Trinamul Congress worker died today while putting up a party flag of sun stroke. "The seven phase election has helped no one except Modi so that he can

go from one place to the other to take part in the election campaign. The poor people have been the worst hit due to the seven phased election, he maintained.

Mr Banerjee said, "The impenetrable darkness is slowly going and the sun is visible and rest assured this weather will change. There is change everywhere and people will vote out Modi as part of this change," he remarked.

He said the ongoing election is "a battle to vote against Modi because if BJP wins they will change the Indian Constitution which is the backbone of our country. The rights of the people will be taken away."

He urged people to vote for Trinamul Congress for uninterrupted development of the areas that fall under his constituency.

Kolkata to turn into virtual fortress in 7th phase of polls on 1 June



AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

Kolkata will turn into a virtual fortress on June 1 when nine Lok Sabha constituencies in West Bengal, including two in Kolkata, will go to polls in the last and seventh phase of the General Elections.

Sources in the office of the West Bengal Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), said 246 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) will be deployed for the two constituencies of Kolkata-Dakshin and Kolkata-Uttar. "In addition to that, 11,500 personnel from Kolkata Police, including those from the armed police units, will be deployed in Kolkata on Saturday," a CEO office insider said.

A total of 599 Quick Response Teams (ORTs) will be deployed in the city on Saturday.

As per the plans of the Election Commission of India (ECI), around 2,000 QRTs will be deployed for all the nine Lok Sabha constituencies combined that will be going for polls on June 1.

Sources said 1,020 companies of CAPF are there in West Bengal already.

As per plans, 978 companies will be deployed for polling duty in the seventh phase, while the remaining will be kept on reserve.

In the seventh phase, the ECI is giving special emphasis on deployment of QRTs to arrest poll-related tension in areas far from the polling stations.

The nine Lok Sabha constituencies that will be going for polls on June 1 include Kolkata Dakshin and Kolkata Uttar in Kolkata, Jadavpur, Jaynagar, Mathurapur and Diamond Harbour in South 24 Parganas and Basirhat, Barasat, and Dum Dum in North 24 Parganas.

Apart from the two seats in Kolkata, the two other constituencies that will be under the scanner of the ECI on Saturday will be Basirhat and Diamond Harbour.

Basirhat will be under the lens because Sandeshkhali is one of the seven Assembly constituencies under it and Diamond Harbour because of its past record of poll-related violence.

SURPRISE CHECK



Paramilitary force personnel check vehicles at Naka Point on Wednesday, ahead of the last phase of Lok Sabha election in Kolkata. SNS

2 BJP cadres electrocuted



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BURDWAN, 29 MAY

Submersible water pump installed by the state to provide drinking water for the pedestrians claimed the life of a villager in Mongalkote PS area in East Burdwan today.

Mrityun Majhi (42), a resident of Joykrishnapur village died instantly when he went to take water from the pump. The pump somehow got electrocuted due to an electrical short-circuit and the person suffered a severe shock the moment he switched on the device. He was the local booth committee president of BJP dur-

ing the last general election.

The water pump was installed under the supervision of the local Joykrishnapur gram panchayat in Mongalkote. The power supply to the pump was hooked from the state's power distribution company's line illegally, the officials said.

Another BJP cadre Madhusudan Ghosh (32) of Indas, Bankura also suffered severe shock of electrocution when he was lifting water with an electrical pump at his house. The cable of the pump had leakage which caused the electrocution, the police said. He died while being shifted to the hospital.

CBI summons Trinamul legislator in Bengal coal scam case

Sources said that Molla's name surfaced in the course of interrogation of some persons in connection with the coal smuggling case.

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has issued summons for interrogation to Trinamul Congress MLA Saikat Molla in connection with the coal smuggling scam in West Bengal.

Molla is an MLA from the Canning-Purba Assembly constituency in South Parganas district.

Sources said the summons was sent to Molla on Tuesday night and was asked to be present at CBI's Nizam Palace in central Kolkata on Wednesday afternoon only.

However, Molla has already communicated to the Central agency about his inability to present for interrogation because of his preoccupation with the ongoing Lok Sabha polls in the state.

Sources said that Molla's name surfaced in the course of interrogation of some persons in connection with the coal smuggling case. This is not the first time that Molla has been summoned or questioned by CBI officials in connection with the case.

In July of 2022, he appeared at the CBI office and was questioned for over eight hours. He was questioned then based on CBI findings that coal smuggled from Asansol in the West Burdwan district was supplied at cheap rates to the mushrooming brick kilns at Canning-Purba where Molla is the legislator.

The CBI officials had been investigating the role of Molla in this entire matter.

Strong room, vote counting centre security scaled up at Serampore, Hooghly constituency



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HOOGHLY, 29 MAY

In order to check the security measures taken towards the strong room and vote counting centre in Serampore and Hooghly LS constituency, the state election department additional CEO Vinod Kumar visited the district today. He was accompanied by district magistrate Mukta Arya and Chandannagar police commissioner Amit P Javalgi. After the assessment of the existing security, certain measures were taken

to further tighten the security at the strong room and vote counting centre.

Promulgation of 144 CrPC for 100 metres from the periphery to prevent assembly of people and parking of vehicles till the date of counting, CAPF patrol in the vicinity of the premises, especially in the evening and night, additional CCTV cameras and view cutters installation, additional points of deployment of SAP to secure the perimeter guard all the time from all sides, were suggested.

ER to roll out real time water level indicator in coaches

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

Passengers availing train journeys would soon be able to get rid of water shortage issues in coaches while travelling. The Eastern Railway is considering conducting trials for IoT-based real time water level indicators in train coaches for generating warning signals well before exhaustion of the water tank.

This system will facilitate quick watering of coaches at next available stations in case the water level of the coach reservoirs reaches the minimum threshold level. According to the ER, the real-time water monitoring system will generate indication reflected through indication lamps in the coaches as well as will send an intimation through SMS/web platform to the person responsible about the water level reach-



ing near threshold so that the needful is done quickly. According to ER, the zonal railways as per the instructions of the Railway Board are now all prepared to conduct trials of the system. This would be done to examine techno economic suitability, efficiency, retro-fitment and ease of maintenance of the system. In Eastern Railway, two depots have been identified for trials of the IoT-based real time water level sensors. The two nominated depots include shorting yard Howrah and Sealdah depot.

Police personnel donate blood at camp

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
HOOGHLY, 29 MAY

Blood donation camps have come to a stop due to prevailing heatwave-like conditions and election code of conduct.

Most blood donation camps are conducted by political parties. They can only resume their blood donation camps after completion of the election process. Most of the social welfare organizations without the assistance from political parties are unable to organize blood donation camps.

Some of the organizations are setting up blood donation camps but due to excessive heat not many blood donors are turning up at camps. The Hooghly district rural police came forward to extend their helping hand and organized a blood donation camp jointly with Arambagh Medical College Hospital in the hospital premises.



More than 65 police personnel donated their blood. On the occasion were present Hooghly district rural police commissioner Kamanasish Sen, additional commissioner Krishanu Roy, Arambagh SDPO Suprabhat Chakraborty, Arambagh IC Rakesh Singh, Arambagh Medical college hospital senior doctor Rama Prasad Roy and other dignitaries.

Kamanasish Sen said the district is facing acute shortage of blood in different blood banks. To execute our social responsibilities towards

the welfare of the society, the Hooghly district rural police organized a blood donation camp jointly with the Arambagh Medical College Hospital. "Our personnel are ready to donate their blood to save lives. However, following the limitations of blood donation at present, only 65 police personnel donated blood. More such camps will be held by different police stations in the district to meet the acute shortage in different blood banks in the district," said Mr Sen.

TMC banks on Kolkata South seat as CPM hopes to increase vote share

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

South Kolkata is one of the safest seats for Trinamul Congress where the party's only concern is to increase the margin of victory of Mala Roy, who has been nominated for the third consecutive time.

Elections in this constituency will be held on 1 June. In 2019 Mrs Roy won the seat by 1.55 lakh votes. BJP has fielded Debashree Roy Chowdhury, who had been elected from Raigunj in 2019 Lok Sabha election. CPM's nominee is Saira Shah Halim.

All the seven constituencies that fall under Kolkata South seat are under Trinamul Congress's control. The Assembly seats are Kasba, Behala Purba, Behala Paschim, Kolkata Port, Rashbehari, Baljunge and Bhawanipur. Miss Mamata Banerjee was elected from the by-election in 2021 from Bhawanipur. South Kolkata is called the fort of Trinamul Congress.



In 1952, it was known as the Calcutta South East constituency and Shyamaprasad Mookerjee was elected from the seat.

In 1967, Ganesh Ghosh, the famous freedom fighter associated with Chittagong Arm Revolt was elected from the seat which came to be known as South Kolkata constituency. Priyaranjan Das Munshi and Bhola Sen were elected from the seat.

In 1991, Mamata Banerjee was elected from the seat and since then it is a Congress and later Trinamul Congress stronghold.

CPM leaders who got defeated from the seat included Biplab Das Gupta, Prasanta Sur, Bharati Mukherjee, Prof Subhankar Chakraborty who was the principal of Asutosh College, Ritabrata Banerjee and Nandini Mukherjee. CPM has changed the face of the can-



didates in every Lok Sabha poll, but failed to create any dent. It is to be seen who stands distant second and third, namely BJP or CPM.

So far as BJP is concerned, it does not have any organizational base in south Kolkata. Mrs Debashree Roy Chowdhury is not a local resident and will take at least five years to understand the area. BJP has virtually given up the battle. The visibility of CPM is

more during the ongoing Lok Sabha election. Most of the local committee offices, once the powerhouse of the party, are closed. Majority of the old timers have retired from politics and the party has failed to attract new faces. Most of the street corner meetings and road shows are flop and the party leaders find it difficult to answer questions raised by the people like if the party is a part of INDIA bloc, then

why is there this fight. Also, many people are asking why the CPM has formed electoral alliance with Congress its long time enemy.

It seems that the CPM will put up a fight and secure the second position. Political experts said in many seats, CPM will get the second position. Mrs Halim is confident of doing well. "People are fed up with the corruption of the state government and the young brigade want a change," she said.

Mala Roy is confident of her victory. "We have worked throughout the year and I feel that my lead will go up. Didi has taken part in road shows and political meetings which have an impact on the electorate. Abhishek Banerjee had held meetings with the leaders to increase the margin," she maintained.

Debashree Roy Chowdhury saw the Modi wave and said, "Wherever I am going people have welcomed me. We are confident to do well in the election," she maintained.

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 29 MAY

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday issued a summons to the husband of a Trinamul Congress legislator for questioning in the school and municipalities recruitment case in West Bengal on June 4, the day of counting and results of the Lok Sabha polls.

Debraj Chakraborty, the husband of Aditi Munshi, the singer-turned-politician and Trinamool Congress MLA from the Rajarhat-Gopalpur Assembly constituency, has been asked to be present at CBI's Nizam Palace office in central Kolkata.

Chakraborty is also a Member (Mayor-in-Council) of Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation (BMC).

However, Chakraborty has communicated to the CBI that

because of his preoccupation with the counting process on that day, he would not be able to be present at Nizam Palace and instead, has sought an alternative day for appearance.

The CBI officials, however, are yet to inform whether they will grant an alternative time at a later date to Chakraborty.

To recall, the CBI sleuths conducted raid and search operations at the residence of Chakraborty in November last year in connection with the school and municipalities' recruitment case. The investigative sleuths also seized some crucial documents, including some mark sheets of teachers' eligibility test (TET), from his residence then.

At a later date last year, Chakraborty also went to Nizam Palace and faced questioning by CBI officials.



Prajwal Revanna may return to India on Friday

He has filed for anticipatory bail to avoid imminent arrest

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY



The accused has filed for anticipatory bail to prevent his imminent arrest in the multiple cases of sexual abuse at the Bangalore Sessions court. Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said Prajwal would be arrested soon after his landing at the Bengaluru Airport. The development came days after Revanna announced

In a video message that he would appear before the SIT on May 31 and fully cooperate in the investigation. Meanwhile, the SIT conducted searches at Prajwal's residence in Hassan on Tuesday which went on till late in the night. "Some incriminating materials have been seized," they said. Revanna is wanted in sex abuse cases in the wake of a pen drive containing his purported obscene videos going viral. After videos and photos allegedly showing MP Prajwal Revanna sexually abusing women circulated in Karnataka, and a woman filed a case against him, he fled to Germany. The news about Revanna's return to India came days after his grandfather Deve Gowda wrote an open letter warning the people against vilifying the family over Prajwal's sex scandal while asking him (his grandson) to surrender. "At this juncture, I can do only one thing. I can issue a stern warning to Prajwal and ask him to return from wherever he is and surrender before the police. He should subject himself to the legal process. This is not a mere appeal, it is a warning that I am issuing," Deve Gowda had written in the letter. Prajwal Revanna, who is seeking a fresh term in the Lok Sabha from Hassan as an NDA candidate, is at the centre of the brazen sexual scandal involving him in the exploitation of hundreds of women in his constituency. He left the country on April 27, a day after voting for the Lok Sabha elections in his constituency.

KTR slams Telangana government

AGENCIES HYDERABAD, 29 MAY

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President KT Rama Rao on Wednesday slammed the Telangana government over the hardships faced by farmers due to a shortage of seeds.

The BRS leader wondered if there was a government in Telangana at all. In his post on 'X', the former minister asked where the chief minister and agriculture minister were.

KTR, as Rama Rao is popularly known, remarked that the Congress leaders know only election campaigns and have no idea of the quantity of seeds required by farmers.

The BRS leader remarked that till yesterday the government was not buying paddy from farmers and today it is unable to sell seeds to them.

He said this demonstrates that governance has completely derailed in the state.

KTR said that the government failed to supply water for irrigation, resulting in withering of crops. He alleged that it lacks vision to supply seeds to farmers.

He alleged that farmers were queuing up for seeds from 4 A.M. but they were not getting seeds even after waiting for 12 hours.

Claiming that during the last 10 years, the BRS government supplied seeds to farmers within 10 minutes, he asked if the present government can't distribute seeds even after 10 hours.

Alleging that farmers were suffering in all districts, he asked how long they will have to face these hardships.

KTR claimed that during the BRS' rule Telangana had emerged as the food provider of the country but under the Congress' rule they are struggling to find food for themselves.

Stating that agriculture was a festival during BRS rule, KTR alleged that it has come to a halt in six months of the Congress' rule.

He warned that if the government failed to wipe the tears of farmers, it would have to face their ire.

Security alert in Kerala as PM arrives on Thursday en route to Kanyakumari

AGENCIES THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 29 MAY

Security has been beefed up in and around the state capital city as Prime Minister Narendra Modi will arrive at the international airport here on Thursday en route to Kanyakumari.

From Thiruvananthapuram International Airport, he will board a helicopter to reach Kanyakumari.

The Prime Minister will meditate for 48 hours at the Dhyan Mandapam -- the same place where Swami Vivekananda meditated for three days. PM Modi will return on June 1 from here.

Given the event, the Kerala Police are leaving nothing to chance and have started combing operations in and around the airport.

Crores deposited into Veena Vijayan's bank account in Abu Dhabi: George

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, 29 MAY

BJP leader Shone George on Wednesday alleged that a substantial amount from the Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd (CMRL)-Exalogic deal was deposited into the Abu Dhabi-based bank account of Kerala Chief Minister Panarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan.

Addressing a press conference here, he said the commission amount was deposited in Abu Dhabi-based Commercial Bank to the account of Exalogic Consulting, Media City, UAE.

He said according to information received, this account was operated by Veena and M Suneesh from 2016 to 2019. Shone further disclosed that a significant sum of money was subsequently transferred to various

accounts in the US. Shone said this information was provided to the ED Special Director in Chennai by him on April 19. Shone further alleged that crores of rupees was transacted through this account and that money from SNC Lavlin Company and PwC Company came into this account.

In this connection, it has been reported that the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) is currently delving into a foreign bank account as part of its inquiry into financial transactions linked to Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd (CMRL) based in Kochi.

The investigation expanded its scope to include an Abu Dhabi-based bank account following indications that two foreign companies had made substantial deposits of Rs 3 crore each in this account. Central agencies

have been closely monitoring this bank account, it is learnt. According to SFIO findings, global consultancy giant PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Canadian firm SNC-Lavalin made multiple deposits into the Abu Dhabi account between 2016 and 2019.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Kochi office reportedly received information about these money transfers about a year ago during its investigation into KLIBF's masala bonds, which allegedly violated the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA). Meanwhile, Shone George has filed a petition in the Kerala High Court stating that crores have reached in Veena Vijayan's company's overseas account and seeking an investigation into it. The Income Tax Interim

Settlement Board (ITISB) had found that Rs 1.72 crore was received by Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan and her company Exalogic during 2017-20 from the mining company, the CMRL, without providing any service to them.

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs on 31 January issued an order handing over the probe into the affairs of Exalogic Solutions, the firm owned by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan's daughter Veena Vijayan, as well as Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd (CMRL) and Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Industrial (KSIDCO) to the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO). A six-member team is authorised to probe the matter, with Deputy Director M Arun Prasad as the investigating officer.

TENDER

EASTERN RAILWAY Abridged e-Tender No. DCPM-GS-ENG-SDAH-04-24-25 (Open Tender in Single Packet System) Date: 24.05.2024. Invitation of offer for Interior, Furnishing, Counter Work & Electrical & Data Cabling of Jorai Branch...

EASTERN RAILWAY Open Tender Notice No.: 18-SDSTE-ASN-2024-25 Dated 27.05.2024. E-Tender is invited by Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer, Eastern Railway, Asansol Division, Station Road, Asansol, Pin-713301 for the following work: Name of Work/Location: "Asansol Division - S&T work in connection with 1) Construction of LHS in lieu of LC gate No. 6/C/E in between in Jagadish Pur Maheshmunda in Madhupur-Giridih section...

EASTERN RAILWAY Tender Notice No. 222-SI/WH-I Dated: 24.05.2024. Following e-Tender is invited online by Sr. Divisional Engineer/II, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, 2nd Floor, DRM Building, Kaizer Street, Sealdah, Kolkata-700014 for the following work: Tender No. TN-35-24-25; Name of the Work: Welding of Rail Joints by Alumino Thermit SKV process including supply of welding portion and supervision under the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer/II/Sealdah in Sealdah Division of Eastern Railway; Tender Value: ₹ 2,05,46,485.00; Cost of Tender Document (non-refundable): NIL; EMD: ₹ 2,52,700.00; Date and Time of Closing of Tender: 21.06.2024 at 15:00 hrs.; Completion Period for the Work: (12) Twelve Months; Date and Time of Opening of Tender is 21.06.2024 at 15:30 hrs. Tender Description and details at www.ireps.gov.in The bidding is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers will be summarily rejected. SDAH-70/2024-25

EASTERN RAILWAY Tender Notice No. 222-SI/WH-I Dated: 24.05.2024. Following e-Tender is invited online by Sr. Divisional Engineer/II, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, 2nd Floor, DRM Building, Kaizer Street, Sealdah, Kolkata-700014 for the following work: Tender No. TN-35-24-25; Name of the Work: Welding of Rail Joints by Alumino Thermit SKV process including supply of welding portion and supervision under the jurisdiction of Sr. Divisional Engineer/II/Sealdah in Sealdah Division of Eastern Railway; Tender Value: ₹ 2,05,46,485.00; Cost of Tender Document (non-refundable): NIL; EMD: ₹ 2,52,700.00; Date and Time of Closing of Tender: 21.06.2024 at 15:00 hrs.; Completion Period for the Work: (12) Twelve Months; Date and Time of Opening of Tender is 21.06.2024 at 15:30 hrs. Tender Description and details at www.ireps.gov.in The bidding is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers will be summarily rejected. SDAH-70/2024-25

EASTERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING E-AUCTION No. COM/DEV/E-Auction/PU/WHW/2022. Date: 27.05.2024. E-Auction is invited by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, 4th floor, Yatri Niwas, near Howrah Station, Howrah-711011 for awarding fresh contract for Operation and Maintenance of Normal Pay & Use Toilet at Ahmadpur Jn. (PF No.-1), Azimganj City, Tarapith Road (Near Circulating Area), Chandannagar (Near PF No.-1 Banded end) and Liliuah (Near Booking Office) Station for 3 (Three) years over Howrah Division. The subject E-Auction is governed as per Railway Board's Freight Marketing Circular No. 11 of 2022 and Commercial Circular No. 14 of 2022. For more details and participation in E-Auction kindly visit the website www.ireps.gov.in through E-Auction Leasing Module. AUCTION CATALOGUE No. PU/WHW-R/2024. (1) Lot No. PU/WHW-AMP-Tol-39-24-1. Station: Ahmadpur (AMP). (2) Lot No. PU/WHW-ACLE-Tol-43-23-1. Station: Azimganj City (ACLE). (3) Lot No. PU/WHW-TFF-Tol-47-24-1. Station: Tarapith Road (TFF). (4) Lot No. PU/WHW-CGR-Tol-33-24-2. Station: Chandannagar (CGR). (5) Lot No. PU/WHW-LLH-Tol-32-24-1. Station: Liliuah (LLH). Auction Date & Time: 10.06.2024 at 12:00 Hrs. HWH-76/2024-25

EASTERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE No. NIT/02/24/31 Dated 28.05.2024. E-Tenders are invited by Principal Chief Materials Manager, Eastern Railway, Fairlie Place, 2nd Floor, 17, Netaji Subhas Road, Kolkata-700001 for supply of the following items: Sr. No.; Tender No.; Description & EMD respectively: (1) 22245349; Troponin I test cartridge for AGT90 FLEX Analyser of Radiometer, PACK OF 160 TESTS; ₹59,140; Tender Opening Date & Time: 12.06.2024, at 13:30 hrs.; (2) 12245069; Cutting Chain for FRM machine; ₹60,180; Tender Opening Date & Time: 14.06.2024 at 13:30 hrs.; (3) 12245210; Procurement of track machine spares; ₹69,700; Tender Opening Date & Time: 18.06.2024 at 13:30 hrs.; (4) 07241083; Procurement of WOOD BASED IMPREGNATED COMPRESSED LAMINATES CHEQUERED DESIGN ON ONE SURFACE TO SIZE: (3350 X810 X10 mm) X (770 X815 mm) X 12 mm to RDSO'S SPECN. NO. C-9407, TYPE - II, (REV. 03 OF FEB 2007) WITH 04 AMENDMENTS-LAST AMENDMENT SLIP No. 04 ISSUED ON JULY-2019 AND WITH CORRIGENDUM NO1 OF JUNE-2015; ₹81,880; (5) 15235200A; Supply, installation and commissioning of EOT CRANE 30 TON etc.; ₹1,40,000; Tender Opening Date & Time: 19.06.2024 at 13:30 hrs. for sl. no. 4 & 5; (6) 05241251; Procurement of HIGH PERFORMANCE ANTI-CORROSION EPOXY COATING (TWO PACK); ₹94,870; (7) 08231307; Procurement of BOTTLE COOLER OF 90 LTRS CAPACITY etc.; ₹0; (8) 21241532; NEW DOORWAY STIFFENER CROSSBAR etc.; ₹5,83,660; Tender Opening Date & Time: 24.06.2024 at 13:30 hrs. for sl. no. 6 to 8; (9) 05241116; Procurement of EPOXY THINNER COMPATIBLE TO EPOXY TOP COAT ELASTIFIED PAINT; ₹0; (10) 10241797; MAIN COMPRESSOR WITH MOTOR; ₹2,47,660; Tender Opening Date: 25.06.2024 at 13:30 hrs. for sl. no. 9 & 10; (11) 05231004; PROCUREMENT OF PAINT ENAMEL SYNTHETIC INTERIOR FINISHING SMOKE GREY; ₹94,540; Tender Opening Date & Time: 26.06.2024 at 13:30 hrs.; (12) 10241124; OIL PUMP WITH MOTOR; ₹86,580; Tender Opening Date & Time: 08.07.2024 at 13:30 hrs.; (13) 10241323; AXLE BOX ASSLY. ₹79,7650; Tender Opening Date & Time: 09.07.2024 at 13:30 hrs. Tender Cost: ₹0. for sl. no. 1 to 13 each. NOTE: All above mentioned tenders are e-tenders and all tenders are requested to submit their bids on-line through the IREPS website at https://www.ireps.gov.in For more details regarding the above mentioned tenders and other supply tenders please visit IREPS website. STORES-15/2024-25

EASTERN RAILWAY LEASING OF PARCEL SPACE OVER HOWRAH DIVISION No. COM/PARCEL/LEASING/Long term e-Auc/WHW/2023/PI-I, Dated: 28.05.2024. E-Auction is invited by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, 4th floor, Yatri Niwas, near Howrah Station, Howrah-711011 for leasing of 11 Nos. of SLRs in 07 passenger carrying trains and 03 Nos. of RTVPs in 03 passenger carrying trains originating from Howrah Division through e-Auction module of IREPS Portal at www.ireps.gov.in Admin Unit/Zone: HOWRAH DIVISION - COMMERCIAL/EASTERN RAILWAY; Auctioning Authority: Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway Howrah; Auction Catalogue No. PCL-HWH-L-24-6B. Auction Type: Close Ended; Auction Start (All Lots): 11.06.2024, 13:00:00. Auction Close Date/Time: 11.06.2024, 15:40:00. Auto Extensions Zone: 120 seconds. Auto Extension Duration: 120 seconds. Initial Cooling Off Period: 30 minutes. Successive Lots Closing Interval: 10 minutes. Maximum Auto Extensions: 10 Times. Details of the e-Auction Catalogue are as follows: Seq. No.; Lot No./Category; Description; Trips/Days; Lot End Date and Time respectively: AA/1; 13033-SLR-F2-HWH-KIR-23-2 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 730; 11.06.2024 at 13:40:00; AA/3; 13063-SLR-F1-HWH-BLGT-23-1 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 522; 11.06.2024 at 13:50:00; AA/4; 13063-SLR-R1-HWH-BLGT-23-1 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 522; 11.06.2024 at 14:00:00; AA/5; 13023-SLR-F2-HWH-GAYA-23-1 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 730; 11.06.2024 at 14:10:00; AA/6; 12353-SLR-F1-HWH-LKU-23-2 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 105; 11.06.2024 at 14:20:00; AA/7; 13033-SLR-F1-HWH-KIR-23-2 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 730; 11.06.2024 at 14:30:00; AA/8; 13043-SLR-F1-HWH-RXL-23-1 (Parcel-SLR); Parcel Space in SLR Coach (Single Compartment); 730; 11.06.2024 at 15:20:00; AB/2; 13031-13032-VP-1-HWH-JY-24-1 (Parcel-Parcel Van); Parcel Space in Parcel Van; 730; 11.06.2024 at 15:30:00; AB/3; 13025-13026-VP-1-HWH-BPL-24-1 (Parcel-Parcel Van); Parcel Space in Parcel Van; 104; 11.06.2024 at 15:40:00; Rate Unit: Per Trip Licensing Fee for Seq. No. AA/1 to AA/11 each & Per Round Trip (Two Way) for Seq. No. AB/1 to AB/3 each. Min. Incr. (%): 0.2 for each. Lot Status: New in draft catalogue. HWH-73/2024-25

EASTERN RAILWAY Abridged e-Tender No. DCPM-GS-ENG-SDAH-03-24-25 (Open Tender in Single Packet System) Date: 24.05.2024. Tender for e-tendering is invited by Dy. Chief Project Manager, Gati Shakti Unit, Engineering, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, 3rd Floor, DRM Building, Kaizer Street, Sealdah, Kolkata-700014 for the following work: Name of the Work: Provision of Road connecting newly constructed Good's Wharf to LC Gate No. 141/SPL at Murshidabad under SSE/Works/BPC in connection with Construction of Loading & Unloading Platform for Development of Goods Shed at Murshidabad in Ranaghat - Ialgaola section; Approx. Value (Rs.): ₹1,91,85,816.00; Cost of Tender Documents: Nil; Earnest Money: ₹2,45,900.00; Completion Period: 06 Months; Date of Opening: 11.06.2024, 15:00 hrs. The tender document and other details can be obtained from the website www.ireps.gov.in The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through the e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer if received shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected. SDAH-68/2024-25

EASTERN RAILWAY Tender No. ELEG-OT-1013-2023-24-R1, ELEG-OT-1087-2023-24-R1; Date: 24.05.2024. The following E-Tender is invited by the Sr. Divisional Engineer (General)/Eastern Railway, Sealdah, 2nd Floor, Remale Control Building, Kolkata-700014 in connection with the following works- SI No.: 1; Tender No.: ELEG-OT-1087-2023-24-R1; Particulars of the Work: Annual Maintenance Contract of 02 (two) nos. PUF paneled Mortuary Chamber (Mortuary Cabinet) for storage of 4 (four) Cadavers (Make -Blue Star) at B.R. Singh Hospital for 03 (Three) years. Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 0.00; Tender Value: ₹ 2,27,104.00/-; Earnest Money: ₹ 4,600.00/-; Completion Period: 36 Months; SI No.: 2; Tender No.: ELEG-OT-1087-2023-24-R1; Particulars of the Work: Annual Maintenance Contract of Passenger Lift (No-1) of capacity 16 passenger (G+5) (Make-M/s ThyssenKrupp, renovated by J.B. Electrical works) at OPD Building, B.R. Singh Hospital under jurisdiction of Sr. SE/G/SDAH-II for 03 (three) years. Cost of Tender Documents: ₹ 0.00/-; Tender Value: ₹ 4,74,624.00/-; Earnest Money: ₹ 9,500.00/-; Completion Period: 36 Months; Tender Publication Date: 24.05.2024; Tender Closing Date & Time: 18.06.2024 at 14:00 Hrs; Tender Bid Opening Date & Time: 18.06.2024 after 14:00 Hrs. Tender Bidding Start Date: 04.06.2024. Details of Tender Notice and Corrigendum issued from time to time are available at website: www.ireps.gov.in SDAH-71/2024-25

Mani Shankar Aiyar's 1962 China war comments spark fresh row

SURYA S PILLAI NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

Kicking up a political row ahead of the last phase of the Lok Sabha polls, senior Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar has said China "allegedly" invaded India in October 1962.

He was speaking at the launch of Kallol Bhattacharjee's book "Nehru's First Recruits" at the Foreign Correspondents Club (FCC) here on Tuesday.

"I was literally Jawaharlal Nehru's last recruit... In October 1962, the Chinese allegedly invaded India. On the day Tawang fell, the foreign press exam began in London. When they were over, I was prominent in the Cambridge Union, and newspapers used to make references to me. So many newspapers linked me with leftist ideologies," he said at the event.

He, however, later sought to clarify his stance, admit-

ting that his choice of the term "alleged" was inappropriate, particularly during an election period.

The Congress distanced itself from the remarks while hitting out at the Narendra Modi government over the 2020 Galwan Valley clashes.

"Mr. Mani Shankar Aiyar has subsequently apologized unreservedly for using the term 'alleged invasion' mistakenly. Allowances must be made for his age. The INC distances itself from his original phraseology," party general secretary Jairam Ramesh said in a post on 'X'.

"The Chinese invasion of India that began on October 20 1962 was for REAL. So too were the Chinese incursions in Ladakh in early May 2020 in which 20 of our soldiers were martyred and the status quo disturbed. The outgoing PM, however, gave a clean chit publicly to the Chinese on June 19th 2020, seriously weakening



our negotiating position. 2000 sq km of territory including Depsang and Demchok remain out of bounds for Indian troops," he added. Aiyar had recently landed up in another controversy over his remarks on Pakistan.

In an interview with a YouTube channel, Chill Pill, posted on April 15, he said India should engage in dialogue with Pakistan as it possessed an atomic bomb.

"India should give respect to Pakistan as it has an atom bomb. If we don't give them respect, they will think of

using an atomic bomb against India," he had said.

Meanwhile, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) tore into the Congress for inculating an "anti-India" mindset.

Addressing a press conference, BJP leader Gaurav Bhatia said, "Mani Shankar Aiyar says that in 1962 China allegedly invaded India. Can this happen without the approval of Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge who are silent? Why this silence? We all know the relationship between India and China. India has been standing strong with pride showing China its place. At this time, this signal by Congress and Mani Shankar Aiyar shows the anti-India mindset of the Congress party..."

The BJP's IT department head, Amit Malviya, also slammed the Congress over Aiyar's remarks. "Mani Shankar Aiyar, speaking at the FCC, during the launch of a book

called Nehru's First Recruits, refers to the Chinese invasion in 1962 as 'alleged'. This is a brazen attempt at revisionism," he said on X.

"Nehru gave up India's claim on permanent seat at the UNSC in favour of the Chinese, Rahul Gandhi signed a secret MoU, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation accepted funds from the Chinese Embassy and published reports recommending market access for Chinese companies, based on them, Sonia Gandhi's UPA opened up Indian market for Chinese goods, hurting MSMEs and now Congress leader Aiyar wants to whitewash the Chinese invasion, post which the Chinese have been in illegal occupation of 38,000 sq km of Indian territory? What explains Congress's love for the Chinese?" he added. The last phase of the crucial general election will be held on June 1 and results will be out on June 4.

Telangana phone tapping: The previous BRS government snooped on high court judges and lawyers also, one of the arrested police officers has revealed during his questioning, said sources on Wednesday. Startling revelations are coming to light in the case on an almost daily basis, shedding light on how the entire operation was orchestrated in the Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) under the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government.

TEMPORARY CANCELLATION OF MAITREE & BANDHAN EXPRESS As requested by Bangladesh Railway, Maitree Express and Bandhan Express will remain temporarily cancelled on the occasion of EID-UL-AZHA celebration in Bangladesh as under: Train No. & Name Dates of Cancellation (JCO) 13107 Dhaka Cantt.-Kolkata Maitree Express From Dhaka Cantt. 14, 16, 18 & 21.06.2024 13110 Dhaka Cantt.-Kolkata Maitree Express From Dhaka Cantt. 15, 19 & 22.06.2024 13108 Kolkata-Dhaka Cantt. Maitree Express From Kolkata 15, 17, 19 & 22.06.2024 13109 Kolkata-Dhaka Cantt. Maitree Express From Kolkata 14, 18 & 21.06.2024 13129 Kolkata-Khulna Bandhan Express From Kolkata 16 & 20.06.2024 13130 Khulna-Kolkata Bandhan Express From Khulna 16 & 20.06.2024 Chief Passenger Transportation Manager EASTERN RAILWAY Follow us at: @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

BJP MLA complains to Amit Shah over death threats and police inaction

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD, 29 MAY

Controversial BJP MLA T Raja Singh has complained to Union home minister Amit Shah about receiving death threats over phone and over lack of action from Telangana police. A staunch Hinduva leader Singh has a number of cases against him for making hate speeches not only in Telangana and

other states as well. He had been incarcerated for a couple months after making derogatory comments against the Prophet two years back.

In his complaint to the DGP of Telangana, a copy of which he sent to the Union home minister Raja Singh wrote, "Once again, today, I have received death threats, from multiple numbers (attaching the screenshot for the same). Unfortunately, this is

not an isolated incident; I have faced similar threats in the past. Despite lodging complaints regarding these threats previously it appears that no action has been taken to address this matter."

He then went on to add, "As a public servant and a responsible citizen, I am deeply troubled by the lack of action taken to ensure my safety and safety of those around me. It is imperative that immediate steps are taken to investigate these threats and apprehend those responsible for making them." He urged Shah to forward his complaint to the DGP for prompt action as well.

The BJP MLA from Goshamahall constituency also submitted a list of nine different mobile numbers from which the calls were made to his phone.

Optional home voting facility marks a paradigm shift in electoral process: ECI

The ECI said this facility has received an enthusiastic response from voters in the ongoing general elections

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

The Election Commission of India (ECI) on Wednesday said the optional home voting facility marks a paradigm shift in the electoral process and has been made available for the first time in the history of India's Lok Sabha elections.

"Facility for voting (through postal ballot) from the comfort of home for senior citizens above 85 years of age and PwDs with 40 per cent benchmark disability has been extended for the first time on pan India basis in general elections. The optional home voting facility marks a paradigm shift in the electoral process and has been made available for the first time in the history of India's general elections," the poll said in a communiqué.

The ECI said this facility has received an enthusiastic response from voters in the ongoing general elections. Elaborating about the



home voting, the poll panel said, "Voting from home takes place with involvement of a full contingent of polling staff

and security personnel with secrecy of voting diligently maintained. Agents of candidates are also allowed to

accompany polling teams to witness the process." To bridge any infrastructural gaps, the ECI said it

ensured that every polling booth is on the ground floor, equipped with assured amenities including ramps, sig-

nages for voters, parking space, separate queues, and volunteers.

"Additionally, ECI's Saksham app has facilitated PwDs for availing various facilities at polling stations like wheelchairs, pick-and-drop and volunteer services. There have been over 1.78 lakh downloads of the app since the announcement of elections," it said.

The ECI said it has also made provisions for braille on EVMs, Braille enabled EPIC, and voter slips to assist visually impaired electors.

Apart from eradicating physical barriers to voting, the poll panel said it also made efforts to address social barriers and stigma surrounding certain vulnerable populations like Transgenders, sex workers, PVTGs to ensure their participation in the election process.

The Lok Sabha elections are being held in seven phases between 19th April and 1st June. The seventh phase of voting is scheduled to take place on 1st June. The results will be declared on 4th June.

Porsche crash case: Shiv Sena (UBT) raises fears over accused doctors' safety

AGENCIES
PUNE, 29 MAY

Shiv Sena (UBT) Deputy Leader Sushma Andhare on Wednesday expressed 'concerns' over the safety of one of the two doctors of the Sassoon General Hospital who were nabbed along with a peon for changing the blood sample of the minor accused in the May 19 Porsche crash.

Andhare said that certain developments are likely to emerge in the coming days in the case which raises questions on the safety of the accused Dr Ajay Taware -- who was nabbed along with Dr Shrihari Halnor.

"Dr Taware is a crucial witness in the Porsche crash case, he knows many things and his safety is important. I shall be making some revelations after the Lok Sabha results as I do not want to overburden the police with many other things," said the SS-UBT leader.

Rubbishing Andhare's contentions, ruling MahaYuti ally Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Shirsat said, "It's not so easy to finish off

anybody" and patted the police "who are doing their job efficiently".

"If they are so concerned, they should approach the Police Commissioner instead of making such baseless claims," said Shirsat dismissively.

Dr Taware and Dr Halnor, besides a peon, Atul Ghatkamble were arrested earlier this week and are in police custody till May 30, for allegations of tampering with the blood report and changing the minor accused's blood sample with that of some other person.

During his interrogation, Dr Taware has reportedly warned that he would not sit quiet and expose all others involved in the sensational case, while police have recovered a bribe amount of Rs 3,00,000 from the two other accused, allegedly paid for services rendered.

Andhare's statement came a day after Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) ally Congress state President Nana Patole demanded the case be handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

FIR registered against Mufti for 'violating' MCC



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, 29 MAY

Police have registered an FIR against former chief minister and PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti for 'violating' the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) during polling for the Anantnag Lok Sabha seat on 25 May when she defied restrictions under Section 144 CrPc by squatting

on the road. The FIR has been registered in the Bijbehara police station of South Kashmir on the basis of a complaint lodged by the assistant returning officer.

Reacting to the registration of the FIR, Mehbooba wrote on X: "Amusing to find an FIR filed against me for apparently flouting MCC. This is the price PDP has paid for speaking

truth to power. Our protest was against GOI in cahoots with the local administration for detaining hundreds of PDP polling agents & workers in the hours leading up to voting. Still not satisfied, the same administration went on to launch Cordons & Search Operations in traditional PDP stronghold areas to terrorise our voters and prevent them from exercising their right to vote. Ulta chor kotwal ko daante".

Mehbooba, who is a candidate for the Anantnag seat, on the polling day staged a dharna along with a large number of her supporters outside the Bijbehara police station demanding release of her polling agents and workers who, she said, were detained just before voting. She also wrote a letter to the Election Commission of India seeking its intervention.

Army commemorates 76th Intl Day of UN Peacekeepers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

The Indian Army commemorated the 76th International Day of United Nations (UN) Peacekeepers on Wednesday, by paying homage to the fallen comrades by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial, New Delhi.

Lt Gen Rakesh Kapoor, Deputy Chief of the Army Staff (Information Systems & Coordination), officials of the United Nations Organisation, Staff from the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of External Affairs laid wreaths. This is the day when in 1948 the first UN Peacekeeping Mission, "UN Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO)" began operations in Palestine.

Each year on this day, the UN and countries across the globe pay rich tributes to the professionalism, dedication and courage of men and women who have served/are



serving in UN Peacekeeping Missions. This day also honours the memory of sacrifices of those who have laid down their lives for the cause of peace.

India has a rich legacy of contribution to UN Peacekeepers operations and is one of the largest contributors of troops. India has contributed services of about 2,87,000 troops to peace-

keeping missions. Indian Army personnel have operated under difficult, challenging terrain and operational conditions and have displayed exemplary courage and valour, to the extent of making the supreme sacrifice to uphold the UN mandates. It is noteworthy that 160 Indian Army soldiers have made the supreme sacrifice to ensure peace across the globe.

Presently, Indian Armed Forces are deployed across nine countries in peacekeeping missions, namely UNDOF, UNFIL, UNTSO, UNFICYP, MONUSCO, UNMISS, UNISFA, MINUSCA and MINURSO.

India has been at the forefront of capacity development for the UN, host nations and partner nations. India has always strived to support UN

initiatives by providing agile and flexible units, peacekeeper training, logistic support, enhancing gender parity and contributing to technological enhancements. India has provided active support for host nation capacity development by providing training, infrastructure development and Civil Military Coordination (CIMIC) activities. In addition, Veterinary Detachments of the Indian Army have displayed noteworthy performance in various UN Missions.

In order to ensure operational efficiency and sustainability of Indian contingents in UN missions, the Indian Army has deployed state-of-the-art equipment and vehicles. These vehicles and equipment are manufactured in India and have successfully withstood the vagaries of difficult terrain, weather and operational conditions in the mission areas.

ECI action against CMO officers is BJP's design: BJD

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 29 MAY

The BJD on Wednesday decried the action taken by the Election Commission of India on two senior IPS officers of Odisha and termed it as a design of the BJP which is facing imminent defeat in the elections.

Kartik Pandian, today said it is unfortunate that the ECI has taken action against some of the officers of the CMO. This is sad and it is as per the design of the BJP which cannot digest imminent defeat in the hands of the BJD and it cannot match the popularity of Naveen Patnaik, he said.

The two against whom action has been taken are outstanding IPS officers of Odisha with a great track record in controlling naxalism risking their lives. They have been awarded by the highest authorities for their



commitment, dedication and sacrifice, state Pandian today.

In a very significant development the Election Commission of India on Tuesday suspended D S Kutey, IPS, special secretary to CM Naveen Patnaik for 'unduly interfering in conduct of election'. His headquarters has been placed

at the Resident Commissioner office at New Delhi.

The order communicated to the CEO, Odisha stated that Kutey has to report by 3 pm on Wednesday.

It also stated that the CEO will provide the Chief Secretary a draft of the charge sheet to be issued to Kutey by 5 pm

of 30 May.

Significantly, the ECI also directed the IG CM Security, Ashish Singh who is on medical leave since 4 May, to be subjected for a detailed medical examination by a special medical board constituted by the Director AIIMS, Bhubaneswar.

The ECI asked the CEO to coordinate and ensure that the board is constituted and a report should reach the ECI by 31 May.

The CEO Odisha in his communication on 27 May had made certain averments indicating undue influence being exercised by Kutey and Singh. This was further corroborated by various inputs received from the field from time to time, stated the ECI.

It may be noted that Ashish Singh had been transferred by the ECI from his post of IG Central Range following petitions filed by the BJP. The state

government had, however, posted him as IG CM Security. Singh had proceeded on leave.

The ECI had also transferred Sujata R Kartikeyan, IAS, secretary Mission Shakti after receiving complaints from the BJP. She has been posted in the finance department.

Speculations in political circles here is that the arrest of MLA Prasant Jagdev, BJP candidate for Khurda assembly seat had led to the action against Kutey.

The ECI has said expeditious investigation under the due process of law shall continue unhindered in the case registered against Jagdev for damaging EVM in a polling booth. BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi held a media conference and released footage from the CCTV camera to allege that Jagdev was not involved in damaging the EVM and that he was framed.

Tribal man kills eight family members, then commits suicide

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHOPAL, 29 MAY

A mentally challenged tribal man, who got married just eight days ago, allegedly hacked to death eight members of his family - including his wife, mother, sister, brother, sister-in-law, nephew and two nieces - and later committed suicide by hanging from a tree in the wee hours of Wednesday in the Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh.

According to the police, the horrific incident occurred in village Bodal Kachar under Mahuljhir police station limit in the Tamia Tehsil of Chhindwara district sometime around 2.30 AM and 3 AM.

The tribal man, Dinesh Gond alias Bhura (27) had got married to Varsha (23) on 21 May.

Chhindwara SP Manish

Khatri said that on Tuesday, Dinesh and Varsha were sleeping in one room of the family's house in the village.

Dinesh's elder brother Shraavan Kumar (35) and his wife Baratobai (30) were sleeping in another room with their kids Krishna (5) and Deepa (1).

Dinesh's mother Siyabai (55), sister Parvati (16) and Shraavan Kumar's third child Sewanti (4) were sleeping in another room.

Police surmise that Dinesh went on a killing spree from around 2.30 AM. He first hacked his wife with an axe.

Then he reached the other room and hacked his brother, sister-in-law, nephew and niece. Finally, he reached the third room and killed his mother, sister and the second niece with the same axe. All the eight died on the spot.

After that, Dinesh tried to

attack a neighbour's child too but, as the villagers had gathered at his house on hearing the screams, Dinesh was not able to succeed. He then fled towards the forest.

On getting information from the villagers, a heavy police force reached the village. The SP also rushed to the spot.

A police search party went into the jungle to look for the absconding Dinesh. Police said they found Dinesh's body hanging from a tree, about 100 metres away from the spot of the incident.

During investigations, some villagers told the police that Dinesh was mentally deranged and was undergoing treatment. Villagers also told police that Dinesh's condition had deteriorated in the past few days, particularly after his marriage.

BJP's charge of mafia raj fails to stick due to decade old empty promises of crackdown

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
BHUBANESWAR, 28 MAY

The BJP's accusations of rampant corruption - rule of land, sand and mining mafia in Odisha and that if voted to power, it will jail all those involved failed to gain traction. During the 2014 and 2019 elections, the BJP had promised of a crackdown but never did so.

Despite public outrage over the mega mining loot and the multi-crore ponzi scam a decade ago, the vow by the PM and Shah to put the guilty in jail remained unfulfilled.

Modi, Shah, and other BJP leaders had said they will hold all culprits accountable, insin-

uating involvement by BJD leaders and certain contractors.

They had publicly raised the coal scam issue and even challenged CM Patnaik to disclose if he had been questioned by the CBI. They had also announced that the CBI will investigate the case of a cargo vessel 'Black Rose' allegedly carrying illegal iron ore when it sunk off Paradip coast.

The Justice M.B. Shah Commission had investigated the mining scam and recommended a CBI inquiry. Similarly, the ponzi scam was handed over to the CBI. However, the expected action did not follow. The mining scam resulted in penalties for a few



miners, while the CBI's investigation, including the interrogation of a CM aide and the seizure of a sensational diary

from agent Subhankar, progressed at a snail's pace.

Post elections, the BJD turned out to be an ally of the

Modi-led central government. There was great bonhomie between the two parties for 10 years. This led to suspicions

and allegations from the Congress of a quid pro quo between the two parties. The Congress accused the BJD of supporting the BJP in parliament on all issues in exchange for central agencies being kept out of Odisha. They also highlighted that a major player in the mining scam had developed strong ties with BJP leaders in Maharashtra and Gujarat.

It is well known in Odisha that the mining lobby has significant political influence, similar to the historical control exerted by the Sal Seed and Kendu leaf lobbies.

In their 2024 election campaign, Modi and Shah accuse the Naveen Patnaik govern-

ment of being controlled by land, sand, and mining mafias. They alleged that a coterie had taken over the Chief Minister's Office and residence.

Despite these charges, the BJP's promises to jail the culprits of the ponzi scam and return money to those who were duped seem to be mere election rhetoric. Historically, post-election realities often see political adversaries working together, allowing culprits to go unpunished.

This election cycle, the BJP narrative has a special focus on the BJD's second-in-command, Kartik Pandian, referred to as the "Tamil babu," blaming him for the mafia rule in the state. The BJP has raised

the pitch of Odia pride and self-identity.

The glorious history of the state is one of the Paika rebellion against the British, the Kalinga War where thousands died fighting the mighty emperor Ashok, moving him to such an extent that he transformed himself to 'Dharma Ashok'. They fought for Odia pride and identity.

This election is a fight for Odia Pride and against the imposition of a Tamil babu on the people and elected representatives of Odisha. Naveen Patnaik has groomed the Tamil babu to be the next CM of the state and people will not tolerate this, says Home Minister Amit Shah.

Dalit factor

With the general election on its last leg, the political landscape is marked by an undercurrent of discontent among Dalit voters. This discontent, emerging starkly in the absence of a concerted opposition campaign, challenges the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s narrative of a "Viksit Bharat" (developed India). Despite the BJP's portrayal of economic progress, many Dalit voters express scepticism and frustration over their economic conditions, revealing significant gaps in the government's development claims. A closer look at the sentiments of Dalit voters in key constituencies in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar reveals a consistent theme of economic hardship. Surveys indicate that less than 10 per cent of Dalit respondents feel their income meets their needs or that their economic situation has improved. Additionally, over 60 per cent believe that economic inequality has worsened, highlighting a critical disconnect between the development narrative and the lived realities of many Dalits. Employment issues underscore the disconnect. With high rates of daily wage labour among Dalit respondents, significant numbers still report being unemployed, particularly among women. This economic strain is compounded by rising prices. Such economic grievances directly challenge the government's claims of inclusive development and question the effectiveness of economic policies. Interestingly, while economic discontent is prevalent, it does not translate into a clear voting preference against the BJP. The concept of "face" or leadership plays a significant role in voter preferences. Many Dalits continue to support Prime Minister Narendra Modi, influenced by his strong national presence and the carefully cultivated image of a decisive, capable leader. This personal appeal of Mr Modi often overshadows broader economic discontent, particularly among Dalit women who are more likely to support him despite facing higher unemployment rates. This paradox highlights a complex electoral dynamic. While economic issues are important, they do not always determine voting behaviour. Mr Modi's leadership persona, bolstered by extensive media coverage, creates a compelling narrative that many voters find appealing. This personal appeal is a crucial factor in the BJP's strategy, enabling Mr Modi to maintain substantial support despite the economic grievances voiced by many Dalits. The role of welfare schemes also adds another layer to this electoral complexity. While access to schemes like free rations and health insurance is notable, it does not uniformly translate into support for the BJP. However, these schemes contribute to the larger narrative of Mr Modi as a benefactor, helping sustain his personal appeal even when economic conditions do not visibly improve. In the context of the election, the discontent among Dalits signifies a significant challenge for the BJP. This dissatisfaction has surfaced organically, without a concerted opposition campaign, pointing to deep-seated economic issues that transcend political narratives. As the election nears its end, it remains to be seen how this discontent will shape the voting behaviour of Dalits and whether the appeal of Mr Modi's leadership can continue to overshadow the pressing economic realities faced by many.

Deficit Dynamics

India's trade data reveals a significant deficit with nine of its top 10 trading partners, including major economies like China, Russia, South Korea, and Hong Kong. While a trade deficit is often viewed through a lens of economic pessimism, it is crucial to understand the complexities behind these numbers before jumping to conclusions about their impact on India's economy. In the fiscal year 2023-24, India's trade deficit with China rose to \$85 billion, with Russia to \$57.2 billion, South Korea to \$14.71 billion, and Hong Kong to \$12.2 billion. Despite these rising deficits, India's overall trade deficit has actually narrowed to \$238.3 billion from \$264.9 billion in the previous year. These figures prompt a closer examination of the underlying factors and the broader economic implications. A trade deficit can be concerning if it signals a lack of competitiveness for India's exports in international markets or an over-reliance on imports. However, not all deficits are created equal. In many cases, especially for a developing economy like India, a trade deficit can reflect a strategic investment in future growth. Importing capital goods, raw materials, and intermediary products can boost domestic manufacturing and export capacity in the long run. For instance, India's deficit with China is partly due to the import of electronic components, machinery, and chemicals, which are critical for India's burgeoning tech and pharmaceutical industries. Similarly, imports from Russia predominantly consist of energy supplies, essential for India's energy security and industrial activity. While these deficits indicate a high volume of imports, they also underscore the integration of the Indian economy into global supply chains, which can enhance productivity and growth. However, there are legitimate concerns regarding sustainability of growing deficits. A large and persistent deficit can exert pressure on the domestic currency, leading to depreciation. This increases the cost of imports, potentially exacerbating the deficit further. Moreover, financing a substantial trade deficit might necessitate borrowing from foreign lenders, raising external debt and depleting foreign exchange reserves. These conditions can signal economic instability to international investors, reducing foreign direct investment and potentially slowing economic growth. To mitigate these risks, India needs a multi-faceted approach. First, boosting exports is essential. This requires improving the competitiveness of Indian goods and services in global markets through innovation, quality enhancement, and better market access. Trade agreements and partnerships can play a pivotal role here. Second, reducing unnecessary imports is crucial. Encouraging the production of high-demand goods domestically can help balance trade. Policies supporting Make in India and similar initiatives are steps in the right direction. Developing domestic industries requires robust infrastructure, ease of doing business, and a favourable regulatory environment. Managing currency and debt levels prudently is vital to avoid the pitfalls of excessive external borrowing. Strategic fiscal and monetary policies can help maintain economic stability while fostering growth. A balanced approach can transform these challenges into drivers of long-term economic resilience and prosperity.

Use of Ethanol

Switching to E100 (100 per cent ethanol) will be faster and easier than switching to both hydrogen-fuelled vehicles and EVs. The main reason is that the current gasoline supply chain and infrastructure can be used for E100. Brazil serves as a good example as the path to making E100 available in India. However, it will not happen on its own. It must be driven by government regulations and enforcement. India needs to make it mandatory that all cars sold from 2030 are capable of running on E100



Today ethanol has found its way into a range of applications from its original application as a beverage (wine and beer). It is used as a fuel, a chemical solvent, a disinfectant (hand sanitizer), in pharmaceuticals, cleaning, production of renewable hydrogen, cosmetics, perfumes, and as a feedstock for the production of chemicals.

The blending of ethanol into gasoline got its foothold in both the United States and Brazil, and both countries are no longer net importers of crude oil. In Brazil E100 sells for a lower price than gasoline and in the United States, both E15 and E85 sell for less than E10 and both have higher-octane numbers than E10. (E10 is the conventional gasoline sold in the United States.)

In the United States, the blending of ethanol into gasoline for use as an automotive fuel began in the 1970s due to high petroleum prices, and growing health and environmental concerns over the use of lead in gasoline created a need for a new source of "octane".

The value of ethanol as a "fuel oxygenate" to control carbon monoxide emissions was recognized, which resulted in increased production in the 1980s and the 1990s.

Ethanol burns cleaner than gasoline and is currently blended into fuel in many countries around the globe, including India. India started blending ethanol in a pilot programme in 2001. In the U.S., the majority of gasoline sold today has a minimum of 10 per cent ethanol.

Today in Brazil all gasoline has a mandatory ethanol blend requirement of 27 per cent (soon to be 30 per cent). Cars in Brazil can switch between any gasoline-ethanol blend up to 100 per cent ethanol.

Blending ethanol into fuel produces a range of benefits. By displacing hydrocarbons like aromatics in gasoline, ethanol reduces toxic air emissions, particulate matter PM2.5, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides, and exhaust hydrocarbons. In many countries, including India, using domestically produced ethanol will reduce imports of the price volatile crude oil.

In addition producing ethanol from corn produces low-cost protein in the form of

DDGS. In general, the cost per unit of protein in DDGS is only 30 per cent of the cost per unit of protein in the grain itself. Lastly, production of ethanol creates jobs in the agricultural and other sectors of the economy. Ethanol provides the foundation for decarbonization of a large portion of the chemicals industry.

The benefits obtained by blending ethanol in fuel are even greater by using E100, 100 per cent ethanol, as an automotive fuel. All of the previously stated benefits of blending ethanol would be multiplied several times over by using E100.

The history of the use of E100 in Brazil has proven that it is an effective and cost-efficient fuel. As demonstrated in Brazil, E100 can be used with some design modifications to the engine to account for the higher oxygen content in the fuel and the slightly higher volume of fuel that must be supplied to the engine. An engine that is properly modified to capitalize on the higher octane of E100, can deliver high power and good mileage.

E100 is a clean burning fuel that does not add any net CO2 to the atmosphere as it is effectively recycling the CO2 present in the atmosphere. Use of clean burning E100 will reduce pollution, including OM 2.5 particulates that choke the lungs of children living in India's cities.

Switching to E100 will be faster and easier than switching to both hydrogen-fuelled vehicles and EVs. The main reason is that the current gasoline supply chain and infrastructure can be used for E100.

Brazil serves as a good example as the path to making E100 available in India. However, it will not happen on its own. Making E100 available will only happen if driven by government regulations and enforcement. India must make it mandatory that all cars sold beginning from 2030 are capable of running on E100.

In many area of the world,

traditional biomass fuels like wood, charcoal, dung and crop residues are used for cooking. These fuels generate harmful smoke particles, especially when used indoors.

The World Health Organization estimates that approximately 1.3 million persons annually die prematurely due to health conditions that arise from exposure to indoor air pollutants from traditional fuels.

Ethanol is a proven alternative to these fuels. Ethanol is an effective clean-burning cooking fuel that reduces emissions of carbon monoxide, particulate matter, and other pollutants.

Ethanol is safer and easier to use, store and transport than biomass fuels. It does not produce smoke, sparks, or ash, and does not require chopping or drying of wood or charcoal. Bioethanol is one of the cooking fuels considered to be clean based on the 2014 WHO guidelines.

The aviation sector creates 13.9 per cent of the emissions from transport, making it the second largest source of transport GHG emissions. Through both government regulations and voluntary commitment, the sector has set ambitious goals to reduce its GHG emissions.

The use of growing proportions of sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) is absolutely required to meet the targets. SAF can be produced from several feedstocks, some of which including used cooking oil are in very limited supply and are insufficient to meet the growing demand for SAF in India and globally.

According to some estimates the global annual demand for SAF is expected to exceed 18 billion liters by 2030. Ethanol-based SAF can meet the growing demand. Using proven technologies, ethanol can be converted to SAF and renewable diesel in a process referred to as ATJ or alcohol-to-jet. In general, it requires 1.7 liters of ethanol to produce 1 liter of SAF.

The production of SAF via the ATJ process will be a driving

force in creating new ethanol demand both in India and globally. Corn-based ethanol provides versatility and flexibility combined with the potential for nearly unlimited feedstocks at a cost-effective price.

When it comes to producing chemicals, ethanol is a foundation chemical for producing a range of renewable chemicals having low carbon intensities. Just as petroleum can be used to produce ethylene from which a range of many important chemicals and polymers are produced, ethanol can be used to produce ethylene world-scale plants. Ethylene is the heart of today's trillion-dollar global petrochemicals market.

Petron Scientech's technology for the conversion of ethanol to ethylene has been in commercial use for over thirty years and provides very efficient energy utilization, low CAPEX, and low OPEX while offering low carbon intensity. As a general rule-of-thumb, each metric ton of ethylene produced from ethanol saves three metric tons of GHG emissions. The ethylene produced from ethanol is a drop-in replacement for petrochemical ethylene with no changes to the downstream process being required. Renewable ethylene can also be used as a refrigerant and as a ripening agent for fruits and vegetables.

Known to exist for over 10,000 plus years, ethanol is a molecule whose true value and growing versatility has only been demonstrated over past few decades. The versatility of ethanol is similar to that of crude oil except for some significant and important differences. Ethanol is sustainable, renewable, and does not depend on imports from volatile areas of the world.

Ethanol can be used to produce vehicle and jet fuels, along with a range of value-added chemicals and polymers. Unlike sugar cane ethanol, corn ethanol production also produces a valuable cost-effective high protein co-product for use as feed.

Ethanol must be a foundational component of India's drive to reduce its GHG emissions with the need to develop new technologies. Use of E100 would help achieve that goal faster. 'Corn Ethanol' will lead to energy security, food security and decarbonization.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Turnout irrelevant

SIR, This refers to the editorial 'Litmus test' (22May). Given the lower voter turnout compared to the previous elections, one cannot draw the conclusion that the initial enthusiasm that characterized Modi's campaign has waned.

Different surveys have claimed that Modi is still the top choice of 52 per cent people. Kerala where BJP is not anywhere in the primary contest saw a low voter turnout like North and West India. There are numerous explanations for the low voter turnout.

The rapid formation and breaking of coalitions have broken the morale of party workers who had until the last election toiled hard to get voters to the polling booth.

The tickets were given to 'outsiders' without taking them into confidence. The opposition has not been able to forge a working alliance, with the rebel fac-

tions of parties such as those led by Sharad Power and Uddhav Thakery joining NDA, thereby dampening the enthusiasm of the voters who could have voted for the opposition.

Rahul Gandhi's yatra has failed to inspire the passion of the voters who are disappointed to see Congress contesting elections on the shoulders of the regional satraps.

Besides, the skyrocketing corruption of leaders, with huge amounts of cash recovered from a Jharkhand minister's associate, and alleged sexual misconduct by former PM HD Deve Gowda's son HD Revanna have shaken the trust of the common people in democracy.

Incidents such as the last-minute withdrawal of the Congress candidate from Indore have broken the morale of the party workers. The turnout does not determine the outcome of

elections.

Despite a drop in turnout of about 6 per cent Indira Gandhi won the election in 1971 hands down, while a jump in voter turnout by 5 per cent in the next general election in 1977 saw her being trounced.

Yours, etc., Sudipta Ghosh, Jangipur, 27 May.

AIR SCARES

SIR, Recently, air travel has created fear such as 39 flamingos dying in an Emirates plane crash, turbulence in the Singapore Airlines flight due to climate change and a fire mishap in an Air India Express plane. Day by day these incidents are increasing. In most cases, the plane makes an emergency landing.

In this context, the Ministry of Civil Aviation should be cautious. Need of the hour is to check the mechanical condition of aircraft thoroughly, application of AI in weather forecast, review bird flying zones, etc.

Yours, etc., Nabnit Panigrahi, Rayagada, 28 May.

ASIAN VOICES

VN's carbon credit market has significant development potential

Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh has issued Directive No. 13/CT-TTg, to enhance management of carbon credits in order to implement the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) programme. The carbon market in Viet Nam will have significant developmental potential. Firstly, Viet Nam, as a developing country, has high production demands, resulting in increased greenhouse gas emissions due to environmentally-unfriendly technologies. Thus, there are considerable opportunities when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the country. Additionally, the geographical location plays a crucial role, as Viet Nam, a tropical country, has more potential for diversifying renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power, compared to other nations.

Moreover, Viet Nam has ample opportunities to attract green financial resources, not only focusing on climate change adaptation and extreme weather phenomena resistance, but also in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, the demand and opportunities for establishing a carbon credit market are closely linked to Directive 13/CT-TTg issued by the Prime Minister. However, it is crucial for ministries, sectors, localities and relevant agencies to evaluate the current status of greenhouse gas emissions, allocate greenhouse gas emission quotas and operate the market smoothly and attractively for investors to engage in carbon credit trading. This is an ambitious goal requiring the involvement of various

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stakeholders, including ministries, sectors, localities, Vietnamese enterprises and support from international organisations, to channel green finance into helping domestic enterprises transition to green. Green capital, with many preferential incentives supporting enterprises, ensures profit recovery and contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, moving towards Viet Nam's stated goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

The most significant challenge currently for Viet Nam is to accurately determine the greenhouse gas emissions of major emitting enterprises, because if we fail in this, it will pose a significant obstacle for State management agencies. Allocation of greenhouse gas emission quotas to enterprises needs to be carried out so that enterprises know and can reduce emissions, creating surplus quotas for carbon credit trading. Therefore, the most crucial task in Viet Nam is to determine the allocation of greenhouse gas emission quotas for domestic enterprises currently in operation and production.

For Vietnamese export enterprises, they must deal with several issues related to trade and export barriers, especially after the European Union introduced the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) in 2023. Therefore, goods in some of the sectors regulated by the European Union, such as iron, steel, cement, fertilisers, hydrogen and electricity, exported to the EU, if they are not taxed in the host country, will also be taxed at Europe's borders, equivalent to nearly US\$100 for a tonne of CO2. Vietnamese enterprises within the global supply chain, with customers in Europe, are at risk of this tax. Apart from the European Union, other countries worldwide like the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia have implemented similar mechanisms. This means Vietnamese enterprises need to equip themselves with knowledge and calculations of greenhouse gas emission intensities per product to avoid trade barriers, thereby enhancing competitiveness and brand recognition.

INDIA SHINES

SIR, Payal Kapadia, 38, has created history by becoming the first Indian film-maker to win the Grand Prix award at the Cannes film festival for *All We Imagine as Light*. This moment will certainly be inked in cinema history. Kapadia, along with three main women champions of her film, Kani Kusruti, Divya Prabha and Chhaya Kadam, posing with the prize has become the shot of the 77th edition of the festival, definitely for Indians. An Indo-French venture, which throws light on the story of two Malayali nurses working in Mumbai, is a big win for Indian cinema. The last time an Indian film was in the competition section was 30 years ago with Shaji N. Karun's *Swaham* in 1994.

India really shined at Cannes this year, with Kolkata's Anasuya Sengupta winning the Best Actress in the Un Certain Regard section for her turn in Konstantin Bojanov's *The Shameless*; British-Indian Karan Kandhari's *Sister Midnight* in the parallel Director's Fortnight selection; FTII student Chidananda S. Naik's short *Snufflowers Were The First Ones To Know* winning the top prize in the LaCinef section, Cannes Classics releasing a renewed *Manthan*, Shyam Benegal's 1976 film, and so on. Kapadia had won the best documentary prize in 2021 and with the Grand Prix prize just three years later, she will inspire young film-makers to come out with their stories, and, hopefully, get the support they deserve.

Yours, etc., Sanjay Chopra, Mohali, 28 May.



A feast for the soul

100 YEARS AGO

OCCASIONAL NOTE

THE figures of India's export and import trade for April are almost identical with those of the same month last year. This can hardly be considered satisfactory; for what is urgently needed is a steady progression upwards from the slump. In the last month here has been a drop in the value of exports amounting to Rs. 1,103 lakhs, and the balance of trade is against this country. Exports, we know, pay for imports, and if the imports are now to be cut down by a tariff, our protectionist economists will doubtless congratulate themselves on having helped to balance the trade budget by reducing its volume. The Tacitean epigram at the expense of those who make a solitude and call it peace might be applied with a difference to the Tariff protectionists who make a slump and call it fair trade.

NEWS ITEMS

SIR MALCOLM HAILEY ASSUMES GOVERNORSHIP OF PUNJAB ON MAY 31

A NOTIFICATION issued by the Political Department, Punjab Government, states that Sir Malcolm Hailey will receive charge of office of Governor of the Punjab from His Excellency Sir Edward Maclagan in the Bombay Civil Secretariat on Saturday, May 31 at 3-30 p.m. Oaths of office and allegiance will be administered to him by the Chief Justice High Court, Bombay, under arrangements to be made by the Bombay Government.

Sir Malcolm and Lady Hailey will leave Colaba Station, Bombay, at 4-0 p.m. on May 31 and arrive at Simla on Monday June 2 at 3-41 p.m., where they will be met by the Commissioner, Ambala Division, Deputy Commissioner of Simla, Officer Commanding Troops, Simla, and Superintendent of Police, Simla. A salute of 17 guns will be fired as His Excellency alights.

Sir Malcolm and Lady Hailey will then motor to Barnes Court where they will be received by members of his Executive Council, Ministers of the Punjab Government, and Ruling Chiefs present.

MILITARY CONTESTS

Good Programme at Bangalore

AT the boxing tournament arranged here by Mr. E. It. Fisher, of Calcutta, there were nine fights on the first night, and all but the light and bantam-weight bouts were four round contests. Corporal Tribe, 5th /6th Dragoons, showed good form in beating Pte. Howell, Wiltshire Regiment. The fight between L/Cpl. McNally (Dragoons) and Private Boisell (Wilt-shires) was very spirited. The men had met three times previously. Boisell won the first; the second resulted in a draw, and the third fought at Kolar was won by McNally. Last night McNally again won with something to spare.

Results: - Light-weight contests:-Pte. Chandler (Beds and Herts) beat Pte. Hickman (Wiltshire Regiment) on points. Pte. White (Wilts) beat Trooper Tomkins (5th/6th Dragoons) on points. Bantam-weights:-Pte. Silvrn (Beds and Herts) knocked out Pte. Morris (Wilts) in the second round Pte. Tucker (Wilts) knocked out Pte. Farrell (Beds and Herts) in the second round. Feather-weights:-Cpl. McNally 5th/6th Dragoons) beat Pte. Boisell (Wilts) on points. Pte. Hughes (Wilts) knocked out Pte. Ward (Beds and Herts) in the second round. Private Wilcox (5th/6th Dragoons) beat Pte. Taylor (Wilts). The referee stopped the light at the end of the third round. Cpl. Penny (Wilts) knocked out Pte. Hope (Wilts) in the third round. Middle-weights:- Cpl. Tribe (5th/6th Dragoons) beat Pte. Howell (Wilts) on points.

COTTON BOARD OF GREATEST SERVICE TO BOMBAY

THE Cotton Contracts Board which was constituted to exercise control over the operations of the cotton trade in 1918 has just terminated its activities, and its assets are now vested in the East India Cotton Association, Limited, for the benefit of the cotton trade of the city of Bombay.

The Government, in a resolution highly commends the useful work done by the Cotton Contracts Board during its existence as it was of the greatest service to the commercial life of Bombay under the guidance of Mr. G. Wiles, I.C.S. The Governor-in-Council also acknowledges the services rendered to the Board by Mr. G. H. Cowan, I.C.S., during his chairmanship and by Sir Purshotamdas Tliakurdas as a member of the Board.

BASAB DASGUPTA

Participation in a celebration of the "Rabindra Jayanti" (Tagore's birthday) a couple of weeks ago prompted me to think about Tagore songs and write this essay.

If you are born in West Bengal, especially in Kolkata, you cannot escape Tagore songs. I was no exception and grew up listening to hundreds of Tagore songs even when I did not want to. Whether it was a college reunion function, a would-be bride demonstrating her singing skill to an entourage from the groom's house, a musical festival of any kind or background music in a movie, Tagore songs were the automatic choice.

I must confess that although I liked the lyrics, I was not a fan of Tagore songs mainly because of the slow, monotonous and similar sounding tunes. The use of musical instruments was very limited, reportedly because of restrictions imposed by the Viswa Bharati University because they owned rights to all these songs at the time. There was no song which aroused a feeling of unbridled joy or intense passion or an urge to get up and dance. I got hooked on Bollywood songs during my teenage years and the choice of musical genres was limitless when I came to the US.

I never understood the obsession of Bengalis with Tagore songs. It is so blatant and obvious that people from other parts of India make fun of the lack of diversity in our musical taste. For a long time, I believed that the reason for this obsession was Tagore receiving the Nobel Prize and the Knighthood (which he subsequently relinquished) for his work in the era of British rule when such global recognition of native talents was unheard



of Bengalis were so proud of his international fame that they accepted him as the master and the one to follow no matter what he wrote. Also, traditional puritanical mindsets precluded them from listening to Bollywood songs because of perceived lewdness and opportunities for listening to Western or other foreign music were very limited.

It is only recently, in my late life, that I started to appreciate the reason behind this Tagore-mania. I believe that it has more to do with the volume and variety of messages of his work than the music itself. Tagore reportedly wrote and composed music for 2,232 songs (according to Wikipedia). He wrote songs for virtually every occasion and every emotion that a Bengali person goes through in his/her life. By contrast, the Beatles who also composed songs for a variety of circumstances have only 188 original songs.

As a result, regardless of the situation you are in, physically, emotionally or geographically, you can find a

Tagore song you can identify with. Of course, the slow tempo of the song resonates with the chords inside our Bengali hearts. I do like many Tagore songs and have analyzed them to understand why I like them.

My most favorite one is "Tui phele eschhis kare mon monre amar, tai janam gelo shanti peli na re". It is a perfect description of emotions of an immigrant Bengali growing old in this country and moves me like no other Tagore song. Of course, I knew that I left behind my family, friends, neighbours and familiar things when I came to the US, but there was always hope for something better. Now in old age, I look behind and realize that there was nothing significantly better and I will never be able to regain what I left behind; but I cannot put my fingers around who or what that was. Was it the soft soil with green rice fields, was it the monsoon season or was it a part of my soul? I will never attain that bliss I was hoping for. The lyrics capture this sentiment perfectly.

Another of my favorites is "Jhara pata go, Ami tomari dale". This song is a perfect metaphor for my thoughts at the present age. I have enjoyed my life - the joy and the sorrow; and now the time has come to leave the branch of the "tree" that kept me grounded, wearing a saffron-coloured outfit, and being blown away in the wind.

I love music and find it to be the medium for expressing romantic feelings. Whenever I developed a fondness for a woman, I could only say my thoughts silently in my heart, using the lyrics and tune of a song, even when the woman had no idea about my emotions and was not probably that crazy about music. Tagore said it perfectly, "Ami tomari sange bendhechi amar pran...tumi jano na".

I remember whenever I was sad during my teenage years, I would just listen to "Baje koruno sure", simply to weep silently because it gave me a cathartic cleansing.

My thought of divorce is reflected in the song, "amar e path tomar pather anek doore". What can express my infatuation with American women better than the line, "Ami chinigo chini tomare ogo bideshini"? On numerous occasions in my life, I had to make decisions about some tasks going against the recommendations and preferences of others; I just remembered the line, "jodi tor dak shume keu na ase". Then there are songs with messages of hope and optimism amid pain and misery as in, "Ananda dhara bohiche bhubane".

I can probably think of more examples. However, my point is not that I can correlate almost all of my life experiences with lyrics of a Tagore song. I can probably do that with Bollywood or Beatles songs as well. My point is that Tagore has composed so many songs that it is not just me, but every Bengali who can identify with a

song regardless of his/her state of mind: joy, sadness, romance, spirituality, patriotism, enjoyment of nature, love for children, travel and so on. This is why he is universally popular with almost all Bengalis, regardless of their social status, educational level, age etc.

An analogy comes to mind. You are part of a large group planning a meal at a restaurant. You may prefer Indian food because of your upbringing and may want to go to an Indian restaurant. A friend of yours may prefer a French restaurant. Some may like Mexican food and so on. Now imagine a restaurant offering all kinds of food imaginable in one place. So, there will be no argument; everyone in the group will agree to go to this restaurant and enjoy the meal. Moreover, if you are planning to throw a party with catered food, you will probably go to the owner of this restaurant to supply food because you know that no one will then complain about the food. Also, whenever you are feeling hungry, you are likely to go to this restaurant because you know that you will find something you like there.

Yes, Tagore songs provide that smorgasbord of food for the soul. I wish that Tagore songs would be translated into multiple languages which would be recorded with an assortment of musical instruments. Some compositions could even be changed a little bit to increase the pace of the song. It has already started to happen. An example is the song "Piya bole, piya bole" from the Bollywood movie "Parineeta". Perhaps someday music of all of India and not just Bengali music will belong to Tagore.

(The writer, a physicist who worked in industry and academia, is a Bengali settled in America.)

US actions pushing China and Russia closer

MALEEHA LODHI

With election politics dictating current US foreign policy moves, Washington's actions are driving China and Russia much closer in a strengthened strategic partnership. The unintended consequences of American policies were laid bare by the outcome of the recent meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Beijing.

This was Putin's first overseas visit after he secured a fifth term as president. It took place against the backdrop of tough US warnings to China not to support Russia's war effort in Ukraine, where Russian forces are reported to be advancing in an offensive in the northeast. Washington imposed sanctions earlier this month on several Chinese companies for allegedly supplying Russia with components for military use. This happened immediately after Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Beijing, where he raised US concerns about China's military dealings with Russia. This met with a sharp response from Chinese officials, who dismissed US accusations as "groundless". Foreign Minister Wang Yi shot back, saying "China is neither the creator of the Ukraine crisis nor a party to it".

Subsequently, the Biden administration significantly raised tariffs on Chinese imports including electric vehicles, computer chips and medical products in a bid to woo blue-collar voters in America's swing states, where the president is trailing his rival, Donald Trump. This added to a growing stream of US trade restrictions which Beijing sees as aimed at containing



China and thwarting its economic progress. Predictably, the latest curbs provoked a furious response from Chinese officials.

The wide-ranging joint statement issued during Putin's visit directed strong words at the US. It accused Washington of following a policy of "dual containment" towards China and Russia and engaging in "hegemonic behaviour." "The United States," it said "still thinks in terms of the Cold War and is guided by the logic of bloc confrontation putting the security of 'narrow groups' above regional security and stability, which creates a security threat for all countries in the region." The statement criticised America's Indo-Pacific strategy and also denounced US missile deployments around the world that "pose a direct security threat to China and Russia". Both pledged to counter America's "destructive and hostile course" that they cast as undermining global peace and stability.

The lengthy, comprehensive statement also listed the steps the two countries planned to take to solidify military ties and scale up economic relations while identifying other areas of cooperation for a "new era of partnership". Both restated support for the other's core interest. Russia reiterated its recognition of Taiwan as an "inalienable" part of China. China joined the Russian critique of Nato activities in Europe. The statement also expressed their shared view on North Korea. Conspicuous by its absence was any Chinese endorsement of Russia's military intervention in Ukraine.

In fact, China has adopted a 'neutral' position on the Ukraine conflict and offered to be a mediator in the crisis. From the outset, it had misgivings about Russia's 2022 invasion. It often communicated these to Moscow and occasionally even publicly voiced them in a veiled manner. In the meeting between Xi and Putin

on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in 2022, the Chinese leader conveyed his reservations over escalation of the Ukraine crisis. Putin later acknowledged that "concerns and questions" were raised by the Chinese president. China's repeated calls for a ceasefire and negotiations for a political solution reflects its strong preference for a speedy conclusion to the war. Last year, it also offered a 12-point plan for a political settlement of the Ukraine crisis.

But hostile US actions and its trade and tech war with China have only aligned Beijing more closely with Russia and relegated differences with Moscow on Ukraine and other issues to the background. To be sure, China-Russia interests do not converge on many issues especially as China, as a rising global power, has nothing to gain by upending or destabilising the international system, while Russia has few compunctions to act responsibly. Moreover, they confront different challenges and have different stakes in global stability.

US threats of sanctions against Chinese banks and companies engaged in transactions that can aid Russia's military machine have apparently made Beijing somewhat cautious. Nevertheless, Beijing has responded strongly to US allegations that it is supporting Putin's war by supplying critical weapon components. It has countered these charges by insisting it is not supplying lethal arms and it "prudently handles the export of dual-use items in accordance with laws and regulations". Mounting US pressure on this count has led Beijing to

rebuff Washington by strengthening its military relations with Russia. Their deepening strategic cooperation has in turn perturbed Western nations.

Uneasy China may be with Putin's Ukraine adventure, but what the war has done is to significantly deepen its economic ties with Russia and tied the economies of the two countries more closely. For Russia, facing Western economic sanctions, growing economic relations with China have enabled it to mitigate the impact of Western financial and trade curbs. In 2023, two-way trade between them reached a record high of \$240 billion. The bulk of this trade is conducted in rubles and renminbi.

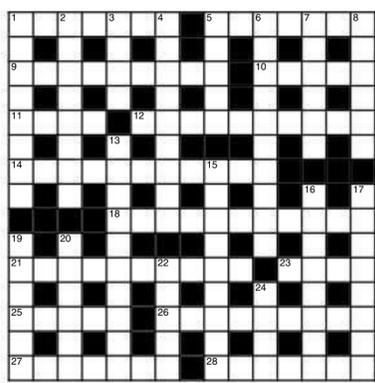
Last year, Russia also became China's top source of oil supply, overtaking Saudi Arabia, providing discounted, cheaper crude. China is Russia's biggest trading partner, exporting a range of products from cars and machinery to electronics.

Both countries face pressure and sanctions — on different grounds — from the US in an increasingly coercive and punitive approach, even if Western actions against Russia are of a different order. This has created a greater incentive and common interest for China and Russia to join forces to resist US pressure. While there will be limits to the Sino-Russian relationship over time because the interests of the two countries don't converge on many counts, for now, US policies have ensured they will maintain a close alignment to counter Washington's pressure.

Dawn/ANN.

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CREAMY ABUDHABI
U F I G A U L F
SHRINK RESISTANT
E E E T T E
DREAM TEDDY BEAR

ACROSS

- 1 Vocal encouragement for a Eurasian statesman (7)
5 MacGuffin in Citizen Kane got out of bed and returned call (7)
9 Recovered soldiers made an allegation (9)
10 Occasional drinker arrived, then left (5)
11 Present writer adopts son (4)
12 Pieces composed by partner in particular (10)
14 One devastated without sex, following a particular philosophy (11)

- 18 That university in Nice, unfortunately, is fake (11)
21 Tactless, corpulent monarch? (10)
23 Lecherous boxing champion (4)
25 A lot of children ponder morbidly (5)
26 I get 11 per cent off (9)
27 Instrument this French alto carries in case (7)
28 Very old chief meets foreign agents from the east (7)

DOWN

- 1 Left in denial after losing case over drug (8)

- 2 Participant in your descent or ascent, oddly (8)
3 Place with Mormons making do with one husband (4)
4 Mad as a Turk, mother admitted illustrating Hindu text (4,5)
5 High spot when Miss Jones stripped off (5)
6 Curt and concise but lacking nothing, somehow more to the point (10)
7 Dickensian beadle, beginning to behave like Uriah Heep? (6)
8 Stalls of French poet's works (6)

- 13 I deal with basic training in general (10)
15 European wild cat, chasing off bugs doing the backstroke? (9)
16 Greek character stays erect when aroused, and that's not all (2,6)
17 Angry for the most part being grabbed by a jerk? That's puzzling! (8)
19 A little clique became a province (6)
20 Constitutional state, initially being linked with Scandinavia (6)
22 Sanction lifted on a divided land (5)
24 Heroic subject having to give way to English (4)

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

THUMBNAILS

Dabur announced expansion: Ayurveda Company Dabur India Ltd announced the expansion of its Hajmola portfolio with the launch of 'Hajmola Mr Aam', a flavour which goes very well with the chatpata taste of Hajmola. The company has also roped in Bollywood Heart-throb Kartik Aryan as the Face of the brand.

ITC Hotels expands in Rajasthan: ITC Hotels recently signed a management agreement with Jaipur based Dangayach Group, for a property under brand Stori, in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. Stori by ITC Hotels, Jaisalmer is set to be a 119-key resort located towards the east of the city on Jodhpur-Jaisalmer Road.

LinkedIn is so 'cringe' it will make your toenails curl: Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk on Wednesday attacked Microsoft-owned largest professional network LinkedIn, saying this platform is "so cringe it will make your toenails curl", as the billionaire aims to bring job search on his X platform.

Market continues losing streak

The Nifty 50 opened at 22,762.75, and closed 183 points, or 0.80pc, down at 22,704.70

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

The benchmark indices continued their losing streak on Wednesday for the fourth consecutive session amid selling seen in the oil & gas, IT, realty, and banking names.

The Nifty 50 opened at 22,762.75, and closed 183 points, or 0.80%, down at 22,704.70. The index hit an intraday low of 22,685.45.

Sensex opened at 74,826.94, and closed with a loss of 668 points, or 0.89%, at 74,502.90. It fell as much as 716 points in the intraday session to 74,454.55.

In terms of sectors, the Banking and financial stocks suffered significantly with the Nifty Bank index fell 1.30%, while the Financial Services index declined 1.65%.

Nifty Private Bank was down 1.36%, Oil & Gas by 1.01%, IT by 1%, Realty by 0.90%, FMCG by 0.54% and PSU Bank by 0.49%.



Mid and smallcap indices outperformed the benchmarks with the BSE Midcap index dropped 0.38%, while the Smallcap index rose 0.23%.

The overall market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms dropped to nearly Rs 415 lakh crore against nearly Rs 417 lakh crore in the previous session.

On Nifty 50, the shares of HDFC Life Insurance Company (2.90%), SBI Life Insurance Company (2.53%) and Tech Mahindra (2.27%) closed

as the top losers. On the gaining side were the shares of Hindalco (3.52%), Divi's Labs (1.72%) and Power Grid (1.29%).

Adani Group, led by Gautam Adani, boosted stakes in Adani Enterprises and Adani Green Energy in May before a planned fundraising.

Promoter entities purchased 72.70 lakh shares of Adani Enterprises, valued at Rs 2,162 crore, and 1.39 crore shares of Adani Green Energy, valued at Rs 2,507 crore,

in multiple transactions between May 10 and May 23, as per NSE data.

Shares of several shipping companies jumped up to 10% on high volumes with triggers including order wins and March quarter results. Mazagon led the pack as its robust fourth-quarter results prompted investors to buy.

The much-talked Suzlon Energy Limited shared trading over 4% higher at Rs 46 apiece by a 551.25-megawatt wind power project for the Aditya Birla Group in Gujarat and Rajasthan and Nuvama initiating coverage with a 'buy' call on the counter citing positive growth prospects.

Experts believed that the market is reeling in the clutches of bears ahead of the Lok Sabha election outcome. The volatility will remain high due to election-related jitters, a lack of fresh cues, weak global signals, and concerns over geopolitical tensions keep market sentiment fragile.

RBI imposes business restrictions on ECL Finance, Edelweiss ARC

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

The Reserve Bank of India on Wednesday imposed business restrictions on two supervised entities belonging to the Edelweiss Group, namely ECL Finance Ltd (ECL), and Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (EARCL).

The central bank has directed the ECL to cease and desist, with immediate effect, from undertaking any structured transactions in respect of its wholesale exposures, other than repayment and/or closure of accounts in its normal course of business.

The central bank has directed the ECL to cease and desist, with immediate effect, from undertaking any structured transactions in respect of its wholesale exposures, other than repayment and/or closure of accounts in its normal course of business. It instructed the EARCL to cease and desist from acquisition of financial assets including security receipts (SRs) and reorganising the existing SRs into senior and subordinate tranches. These moves were taken in exercise of its powers under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI) and the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934.

The RBI said that the

action is based on material concerns observed during the course of supervisory examinations, essentially arising out of conduct of the group entities acting in concert, by entering into a series of structured transactions for evergreening stressed exposures of ECL, using the platform of EARCL and connected AIFs, thereby circumventing applicable regulations.

Incorrect valuation of SRs was also observed in both ECL and EARCL. Apart from the above, in ECL, supervisory observations included submission of incorrect details of its eligible book debts to its lenders for computation of drawing power, non-compliance with loan to value norms for lending against shares, incorrect reporting to Central Repository for Information on Large Credits system (CRILC) and non-adherence to Know Your Customer (KYC) guidelines.

ECL, by taking over loans from non-lender entities of the group, allowed itself to be used as a conduit to circumvent regulations which

permit ARCs to acquire financial assets only from banks and Financial Institutions.

In EARCL, other violations included not placing the Reserve Bank's supervisory letter issued after the previous inspection for 2021-22 before the Board, non-compliance with regulations pertaining to settlement of loans and sharing of non-public information of its clients with group entities, the RBI said.

Instead of taking meaningful remedial action to rectify the said deficiencies, it was observed that the group entities were resorting to new ways to circumvent regulations, it added. Over the last few months, the Reserve Bank has been engaging with the senior management of the captioned entities and their statutory auditors, but no meaningful corrective action has been evidenced so far, necessitating the imposition of business restrictions.

Further, both the companies have been directed to strengthen their assurance functions to ensure regulatory compliance in letter and spirit at all times.

S&P revises India's outlook from 'stable' to 'positive', affirms overall rating at BBB-

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

The Standard & Poor (S&P) on Wednesday announced a revision in the outlook for the Indian economy from 'stable' to 'positive', while affirming the overall rating at 'BBB-'. The agency said the transfer and convertibility assessment remains 'BBB+'.

The positive outlook reflects expectations of sustained policy stability, deepening economic reforms, and high infrastructure investment, which are anticipated to support long-term growth prospects.

"Coupled with cautious fiscal and monetary policies, these factors could diminish the government's elevated debt and interest burden, bolstering economic resilience and potentially leading to a higher rating within the next 24 months," S&P said.



Further, as the country is witnessing the largest democratic elections, which will go for its seventh and last phase of voting on June 1 and declare the results on June 4, S&P highlighted, "Regardless of the election outcome, we expect broad continuity in economic reforms and fiscal policies."

Last year in May, S&P Global Ratings upheld India's sovereign rating at 'BBB-' for the long term and 'A-3' for the short term, maintaining a stable outlook.

At that time, the rating agency highlighted sound economic fundamentals expected to support growth over the following two to three years,

despite concerns over weak fiscal performance and low gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

On a further upside scenario for India, S&P said that it may raise the ratings if the country's fiscal deficits narrow meaningfully such that the net change in general government debt falls below 7% of GDP on a structural basis.

"The protracted rise in public investment in infrastructure will lift economic growth dynamism that, combined with fiscal adjustments, could alleviate India's weak public finances."

"We expect sound economic fundamentals to underpin the growth momentum over the next two to three years," S&P said in a statement.

"We may raise the ratings if India's fiscal deficits narrow meaningfully such that the net change in general gov-

ernment debt falls below 7% of GDP on a structural basis," it said.

It added that sustained public investment in infrastructure, combined with fiscal adjustments, could improve India's weak public finances. Additionally, a notable improvement in the central bank's monetary policy effectiveness and credibility, resulting in lower inflation rates, could also prompt a ratings upgrade.

Additionally, the agency expressed expectations of continued economic reforms and fiscal policies, regardless of the outcome of upcoming elections.

S&P also warned that India's outlook may be revised to 'stable' if there was a decline in political commitment to maintaining sustainable public finances, indicating a weakening of the country's institutional capacity.

Nasscom Foundation-State Street set to empower PwDs with digital skills

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE KOLKATA, 29 MAY

Arun Kumar is a differently-abled person from one of the far-flung districts in the country. He was facing constant setbacks while pursuing his education and looking for employment opportunities. His efforts were often met with sympathy rather than genuine job offers, making him frustrated with his situation. He, somehow, got to know about the Nasscom Foundation-State Street programme and got himself enrolled for the 'Certificate in English Communication and IT' (SCIET) course. He started actively participating in discussions, clearing doubts, and engaging in debates, quizzes, and tests. It did not take long for him to get a job as an intern in the production department in a fairly decent organization, earning Rs 15,000 a month, this job has helped ease his family's financial burden. Arun Kumar is not alone. He is just a case in point. There are many such examples.

In an age of digital transformation, ensuring inclusivity and equal opportunity is of paramount importance. And the Nasscom Foundation-State Street project aims at empowering differently-abled individuals with essential skills and certifications for today's workforce.

"As high as 64 per cent of PwDs (persons with disabilities) in India remain jobless, with a higher employment rate among disabled men than women as per a report of the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on PwDs. It is crucial to train and skill PwDs, creating opportunities for them to join the workforce. The success of our program, in collaboration with State Street, highlights the transformative power of inclusive education and skill development. By equipping differently-abled individuals with essential digital and soft skills, we have not only bridged significant gaps but also opened new pathways to economic independence," said Nidhi Bhasin, CEO, Nasscom Foundation.

Nasscom Foundation-State Street's mission is clear: to bridge the gap between aspiration and achievement, and foster sustainable livelihoods with dignity and respect. Rooted in compassion and social justice, their goal is to redefine capability and potential in employment.

Interestingly, a study from the National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled People (NCPED) reveals that only 0.05 per cent of employees in multinational corporations are PwDs, even though government entities are required to allocate 3 per cent of jobs to them, yet only 0.54 per cent actually achieve this representation.

Paytm, Adani Group call report of Gautam Adani buying stake in Paytm as 'speculative'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

Parent company of Paytm, One97 Communications, and Adani Group called the report as 'speculative' that stated Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani is considering acquiring a stake in Paytm's parent company One97 Communications.

"We hereby clarify that the above-mentioned news item is speculative and the company is not engaged in any discussions in this regard. We have always made and will continue to make disclosures in compliance with our obligations under the Sebi (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015," One97 Communications said in a statement. A media report stated that Gautam Adani is planning to acquire a stake in One97 Communications, and that the founder chairman, and managing director of One97 Communications, Vijay Shekhar Sharma met with Adani at his office in Ahmedabad on Tuesday to finalise the contours of a deal. Adani Group has also clarified on the media report, and said "Categorically deny this baseless

This could potentially result in a reduction of 5,000-6,300 employees.

speculation, it is totally false and untrue".

The report also said that Adani is engaging with West Asian funds to attract them as investors in One97 Communications, the company that pioneered mobile payments in India.

Vijay Shekhar Sharma holds around 19 per cent in One97 Communications, valued at Rs 4,218 crore. His direct stake in Paytm is 9 per cent, while an additional 10 per cent is held through Resilient Asset Management, a foreign entity. Recently, reports have highlighted that in light of mounting losses, Paytm has initiated an employee cost reduction plan targeting to save Rs 400-500 crore.

This could potentially result in a reduction of 5,000-6,300 employees.

On January 31, the RBI imposed business restrictions on the Paytm Payments Bank (PPBL) citing repeated violations of norms and non-compliance with multiple rules.

HDFC Bank to stop SMS service for low value transactions

The HDFC Bank informed its customers that it will stop sending SMS alerts for any UPI spend below Rs 100 or receipt of money less than Rs 500. Notably the bank said that the move will come into action from June 25. The private lender said it will stop sending SMS alerts for any UPI spend below Rs 100 or receipt of money less than Rs 500. However, it said that the email alert for all transactions will continue to be delivered, and also said that the customers should update their primary email to receive all notifications. The decision is based on feedback on low-value transactions, the bank said, as the apps through which the UPI transaction is carried out send an alert as well.

Change of Name

I, Rishav Goenka (Old Name) S/o. Bimal Kumar Goenka, residing at 26, Ritchie Road, P.S.: Ballygunge, Kolkata - 700 019, West Bengal shall henceforth be known as Rishab Goenka (New Name) as declared before the Ld. First Class Judicial Magistrate Alipore Court, Kolkata vide affidavit no 31801 dated 20.05.2024. Rishav Goenka and Rishab Goenka both are same and identical person.

India witnesses highest FII outflows in Asia at USD 2.89 billion in May

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

In May so far, the Indian equity markets experienced the highest outflows in Asia with foreign institutional investors (FIIs) withdrawing funds to the tune of USD 2.89 billion.

Notably, this marks the highest monthly FII outflow since January 2024.

In terms of the other Asian countries, Indonesia witnessed \$700 million in selling, Vietnam \$415 million,



Thailand around \$210 million, and the Philippines around \$58 million in equity markets.

However, among buyers, FIIs purchased \$7.59 billion in Japan, \$6.26 billion in Tai-

wan, \$1.44 billion in South Korea, and \$542 million in Malaysia's equity markets.

Sensex rose by 0.9%, and Nifty by 1.25% so far in May. Across Asia, Hang Seng surged

by 5.8%, Kospi by 1.1%, Jakarta by 0.3%, while Shanghai declined by 2%.

Topix index and Nikkei in Japan advanced by 1% and 1.2%, respectively. Experts believe that the election outcome will likely prompt FIIs to reinvest in India, particularly if there's a clear majority for the current government.

In the year so far, in the Indian market, FIIs have sold Rs 119,612 crore worth of shares while the DIIs have bought Rs 197,484 crore.

Classified

CHANGE OF NAME

I, SUBAS Chandra Sarkar, S/o. Amulya Sarkar, R/o. 187, A.P.C. Roy Road, Kolkata-700051, declare that my Voter ID in Bengali Subhas and my son's S.F. & H.S. Admit Card and Pass Certificate wrongly recorded as Subhas Sarkar, henceforth vide Affidavit No. 68, dated: 16-04-2024 before Notary Public at Alipur Judges' Court "Subas Chandra Sarkar" and "Subhas Sarkar" is same and identical person accordingly.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Indrani Satadru Bose, Wife of Satadru Bose, residing at 35, Diamond Harbour Road, Sakherbari, P. O. Purba Barisha, P. S. - Thakurpukur, Kolkata - 700008, 24 Parganas (S), shall henceforth be known as Indrani Bose as declared before the First Class Judicial Magistrate Alipore Court, West Bengal, 24 Parganas (South) vide Affidavit number 23859 dated 15th April, 2024. Indrani Satadru Bose and Indrani Bose both are the same and identical person.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Satadru Bose, father of Hrihaan Satadru Bose, residing at 35, Diamond Harbour Road, Behala, Police Station - Thakurpukur, Kolkata - 700008, do hereby confirm that Hrihaan Satadru Bose alias Hrihaan Bose is same and identical person as per declaration before the First Class Judicial Magistrate Alipore Court, West Bengal, 24 Parganas (S) vide Affidavit Number 23860 dated 15th April, 2024. Henceforth Hrihaan Satadru Bose will be known as Hrihaan Bose on all places.

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This notice is hereby given to all concerned that my clients are willing to purchase the Premises No. 1, Pratap Ghosh Lane, P.S.: Girish Park, Kolkata-700007. That my clients have been informed by the owners that the two Original Deeds of Conveyance dated 12th day of June, 1986, which were registered at the office of the Registrar of Assurances at Calcutta being No. 8228 for the year 1986 in the name of Smt. Narbadi Debi Harlalka and being No. 8230 for the year 1986 in the name of the Asha Harlalka have been lost and/or misplaced from the owner's custody.

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- B.Sc. in Medical Lab Technology
- B.Sc. in Patient Care Management
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WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY SPOKESMAN JOHN KIRBY AT A PRESS BRIEF

Israel strikes Rafah again killing at least 37 Palestinians

Israel's assault on Rafah, launched on 6 May, spurred more than 1 million people to flee the city

ASSOCIATED PRESS DEIR AL-BALAH, 29 MAY

Israeli shelling and airstrikes killed at least 37 people, most of them sheltering in tents, outside the southern Gaza city of Rafah overnight and on Tuesday — pummeling the same area where strikes triggered a deadly fire days earlier in a camp for displaced Palestinians — according to wit-

nesses, emergency workers and hospital officials.

The tent camp inferno has drawn widespread international outrage, including from some of Israel's closest allies, over the military's expanding offensive into Rafah. And in a sign of Israel's growing isolation on the world stage, Spain, Norway and Ireland formally recognized a Palestinian state on Tuesday.



The Israeli military suggested Sunday's blaze in the tent camp may have been caused by secondary explosions, possibly from Palestinian militants' weapons.

The results of Israel's initial probe into the fire were issued Tuesday, with military spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari saying the cause of the fire was still under investigation but that the Israeli munitions used — targeting what the army said was a position with two senior Hamas militants — were too small to be the source.

The strike or the subsequent fire could also have

ignited fuel, cooking gas canisters or other materials in the camp. The blaze killed 45 Palestinians, according to Gaza health officials' count. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the fire was the result of a "tragic mishap."

Israel's assault on Rafah, launched May 6, spurred more than 1 million people to flee the city, the U.N. agency helping Palestinian

refugees said Tuesday. Most were already displaced multiple times in the nearly eight-month war between Israel and Hamas. Families are now scattered across makeshift tent camps and other war-ravaged areas.

The strikes over the past few days have hit areas west of Rafah, where the military had not ordered civilians to evacuate. Israeli ground troops and tanks have been operating

in eastern Rafah, in central parts of the city, and along the Gaza-Egypt border.

Shelling late Monday and early Tuesday hit Rafah's western Tel al-Sultan district, killing at least 16 people, the Palestinian Civil Defense and the Palestinian Red Crescent said. Seven of the dead were in tents next to a U.N. facility about about 200 meters (yards) from the site of Sunday's fire.

Macron urges a green light for Ukraine to strike targets inside Russia with Western weapons

ASSOCIATED PRESS PARIS, 29 MAY

Western countries should let Ukraine strike military bases inside Russia with the sophisticated long-range weapons they are providing to Kyiv, French President Emmanuel Macron said, pressuring his allies in the most recent sign of a potentially significant policy shift that could help change the complexion of the war.

The question of whether to allow Ukraine to hit targets on Russian soil with Western-supplied weaponry has been a delicate issue since the Kremlin's full-scale invasion of its neighbor in February 2022.

Western leaders have mostly shrunk from taking the step because it runs the risk



of provoking Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has repeatedly warned that the West's direct involvement could put the world on a path to nuclear conflict.

But the war has been going Russia's way recently as the Kremlin's forces have exploited Ukrainian shortages in

grid. Kyiv is facing its hardest test of the war, and untying its hands on long-range weapons could spur a fightback and upset the Kremlin.

Macron said France's position is that "we think we must allow (Ukraine) to neutralize the (Russian) military sites from which the missiles are fired."

"If we tell (the Ukrainians) you do not have the right to reach the point from which the missiles are fired, we are in fact telling them that we are delivering weapons to you but you cannot defend yourself," Macron said late Tuesday on an official visit to Germany.

His remarks came a day after NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg urged the alliance's members to lift some of the restrictions on Ukraine's use of Western weapons.

troops and ammunition after a lengthy delay in U.S. military aid and Western Europe's inadequate military production slowed crucial deliveries to the battlefield.

Russian missiles and bombs have smashed into Ukrainian military positions and civilian areas, including the power

North Korea sends balloons filled with waste into the South

AGENCIES SEOUL, 29 MAY

Waste and propaganda are raining down across the Korean peninsula.

It's not the cross-border barrage South Koreans have been fearing, but the country's military said Wednesday that its nuclear-armed neighbor had launched more than 200 balloons across the border overnight carrying trash, bottles, old batteries, leaflets, fertilizer and other waste.



The balloons were found primarily in the border provinces of Gyeonggi and Gangwon, but were also seen hundreds of miles south in South Gyeongsang. South Korea sent out a

government emergency disaster alert urging citizens to refrain from touching the objects and to report any more incidents to the military. Response teams were dispatched to identify what exactly was in the balloons, which confirmed the inclusion of fertilizers.

South Korea's defense ministry told NBC News that no human waste was found, but said that North Korea did send human waste via balloon in 2016.

North Korea often uses

human faeces as fertilizer. Photographs released by the South Korean military showed inflated balloons anchored with plastic bags full with garbage.

Other images appeared to show trash scattered around collapsed balloons, with the word "excrement" written on a bag in one photograph.

According to the Yonhap news agency, this is the largest number of balloons from North Korea since similar incidents between 2016 and 2018.

Jury in Trump's hush money case will begin deliberations after hearing instructions from judge

ASSOCIATED PRESS NEW YORK, 29 MAY

Jurors in Donald Trump's hush money trial are expected to begin deliberations Wednesday after receiving instructions from the judge on the law and the factors they may consider as they strive to reach a verdict in the first criminal case against a former American president.

The deliberations follow a marathon day of closing arguments in which a Manhattan prosecutor accused Trump of trying to "hoodwink" voters in the 2016 presidential election by participating in a hush money scheme meant to stifle embarrassing stories he feared would torpedo his campaign.

"This case, at its core, is about a conspiracy and a cover-up," prosecutor Joshua Steinberg told jurors during summations that stretched from early afternoon into the evening.

Trump's lawyer, by contrast, branded the star prosecution witness as the "greatest liar of all time" as he proclaimed his client innocent of all charges and pressed the panel for an across-the-board acquittal.

The lawyers' dueling accounts, wildly divergent in their assessments of witness credibility, Trump's culpability and the strength of evidence, offered both sides one final chance to score points with the jury as it prepares to embark upon the momentous and historically unprecedented task of deciding whether to convict the presumptive Republican presidential nominee ahead of the November election.

Trump faces 34 felony counts of falsifying business records, charges punishable by up to four years in prison. He has pleaded not guilty and denied wrongdoing. It's unclear whether prosecutors would seek imprisonment in the event of a conviction, or if the judge would impose that punishment.

Jurors will have the option of convicting Trump of all



counts, acquitting him of all counts, or delivering a mixed verdict in which he is found guilty of some charges and not others. If they deadlock after several days of deliberations and are unable to reach a unanimous verdict, Judge Juan M. Merchan may declare a mistrial.

The trial featured allegations that Trump and his allies conspired to stifle potentially embarrassing stories during the 2016 presidential campaign through hush money payments, including to a porn actor who alleged that she and Trump had sex a decade earlier. His lawyer Todd Blanche told jurors that neither the actor, Stormy Daniels, nor the Trump attorney who paid her, Michael Cohen, can be trusted.

"President Trump is innocent. He did not commit any crimes, and the district attorney has not met their burden of proof, period," Blanche said. With the start of deliberations just hours away, Trump posted on his social media network Wednesday morning before leaving Trump Tower for the courthouse, making another all-caps rant about the trial, the judge and Cohen.

He called it a "Kangaroo Court" and falsely claimed that the judge barred him from defending himself by claiming that his alleged actions were taken on the advice of his then-lawyer, Cohen. Trump's lawyers in March notified the court that they would not rely on that defense.

REGULATION OF TRAINS FOR NON-INTERLOCKING WORK OVER EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

In connection with doubling work in Muzaffarpur-Paniahwa section of Samastipur Division over East Central Railway, Before Pre Non-Interlocking, Pre Non-Interlocking, Non-Interlocking & Post Non-Interlocking work will be undertaken from 28.05.2024 to 21.06.2024 at Chanpatia & Kumarbagh stations. Consequently, following trains will be regulated as under:

- Regulation of train : 09451 Gandhidham-Bhagalpur Special train (JCO 31.05.2024) will be regulated for 02 hours between Gorakhpur Cantt & Narkatiaganj stations.
- Rescheduling of trains : (1) 15052 Gorakhpur-Kolkata Purvanchal Express (JCO 06.06.2024) will be rescheduled by 01 hour. (2) 09452 Bhagalpur-Gandhidham Special (JCO 03.06.2024) will be rescheduled by 01 hour and this train (JCO 10.06.2024 & 17.06.2024) will be rescheduled by 02 hours.
- Diversion of trains : (1) 09451 Gandhidham-Bhagalpur Special (JCO 07.06.2024 & 14.06.2024) and (2) 15052 Gorakhpur-Kolkata Purvanchal Express (JCO 13.06.2024) both trains will be diverted via Narkatiaganj-Sikta-Raxaul-Sitamari-Muzaffarpur instead of its scheduled route Narkatiaganj-Bapudham Mothari-Muzaffarpur. Inconvenience is regretted.

Chief Passenger Transportation Manager

Eastern Railway
Follow us at: @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

'WALK-IN INTERVIEW' FOR ENGAGEMENT OF CONTRACTUAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS FOR ADRA DIVISION, S. E. RAILWAY

No. SER/P-ADA/GAZ/SeI/269/CMP/2024/Pt-II Dated : 28.05.2024
Employment Notice No. 02/24 (Med.)/Pt-II/CMP-2024
South Eastern Railway, Adra Division, Govt. of India, Ministry of Railways shall conduct a "Walk-in-Interview" for engagement of 11 (Eleven) (UR-05, SC-02, ST-01 & OBC-03) Medical Practitioners on full time contractual basis for Divisional Railway Hospital/Adra and Health Units at Adra (North), Bankura, Purulia, Bhaga, Bhojudih, Mahuda, Bumpur, Anara, Chandil, Garbeta & Bokaro Steel City with remuneration of (i) Rs. 95,000/- p.m. (for 1st year) & Rs. 1,05,000/- p.m. (for 2nd year onwards) for the Specialist Doctors preference Medicine, Orthopaedics, Anesthesia, Pathology and ENT specialists in the requisite field, (ii) Rs. 75,000/- p.m. for General Duty Medical Officer and (iii) Rs. 75,000/- p.m. for Retired Govt. Doctors (Railway/Central/State) subject to the condition that Contractual Remuneration + Pension drawn by retired doctor should not exceed the Last Pay Drawn at the time of retirement. The 'Walk-in-Interview' shall be held on 18.06.2024 at 11.30 hrs. in the chamber of the Senior Divisional Personnel Officer, South Eastern Railway, Adra, P.O. Adra, Dist. Purulia, PIN-723121 (West Bengal). The date of closing of application for CMP selection through online is 13.06.2024 at 18.00 hrs. Desirous candidates may visit website www.ser.indianrailways.gov.in (go to Division -> Adra -> Department -> Personnel -> Notification) for details. Moreover, corrigendum or addendum or cancellation, if any, shall be published on the above website only. The interested Retired Government Medical Officers of Central/State Government or candidates from "Open Market" may submit scanned and signed copy of their application along with bio-data duly filled/signed in the enclosed format along with requisite documents/certificates as mentioned in the application through e-mail on the email address serpoadra@gmail.com Please follow our website periodically. Willing candidates may appear for "Walk-in-Interview" at the above time and venue.

Divisional Railway Manager(P)/Adra
South Eastern Railway
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TP SOUTHERN ODISHA DISTRIBUTION LIMITED TPSODL
(Procurement Department)
BPR North Star Building,
2nd Floor, Khodasingi, Berhampur, Odisha-760010
NOTICE INVITING TENDER Dt.: 30.05.2024
TP Southern Odisha Distribution Ltd. invites tender from eligible vendors for following:

Sl. No.	Tender Description	NIT Number	EMD (Rs.)	Tender Fee inclusive of GST (Rs.)	Last date and time of Payment of Tender Fee
1	Rate Contract for SITC of Industrial Routers at TPSODL	TPSODL/OT/2024-25/014	2 Lacs	5,000	08.06.2024; 18:00 Hrs.

For detailed tender, please visit Tender Section on TPSODL website https://www.tpsouthernodisha.com

EASTERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING E-AUCTION
No. COMP/Parcel/Leasing/Long term e-AUC/HWH/2023/Pt-I, Date: 27.05.2024. E-Auction is invited by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, 4th floor, Yatri Niwas, near Howrah Station, Howrah-711011 for Leasing of parcel space of 03 Nos. of SLRs in 03 passenger carrying trains originating from Howrah Division. (1) Railway Administration invites e-Auction for 03 Nos. of SLRs in 03 passenger carrying trains originating from Howrah Division for two years through e-Auction module of IREPS website. (2) Non-transferable Auction catalogue containing detailed terms and conditions are available at www.ireps.gov.in. The bidding for the instant e-Auction is to be submitted through e-Auction module on www.ireps.gov.in. For participation in e-Auction process, one time Registration of merchant through e-Auction module in website www.ireps.gov.in is mandatory. Merchants are also required to take digital signature of Class-III. AUCTION CATALOGUE No. PCL-HWH-L-24-6A; Train Number : 03 Nos. of SLRs in 03 passenger carrying trains; Auction Start Date & Time : 10.06.2024 at 13.00 Hrs. HWH-74/2024-25
Tender Notice is also available at websites : www.e.in.indianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in
Follow us at: @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
e-tender is invited on behalf of the President of India for the under mentioned work. S.No. (1), e-Tender No. : ECR-CAO-C-S-ETEM-02-24. Name of work : Design of Broad Gauge Ballastless track including proof checking, supply installation, testing and commissioning in between Kheraundh to Jamundaha stations in Tunnels No. 1 to 4 (Total 04 nos of Tunnels) (Approx total length 1.226KM) with all other ancillary works in connection with construction of New BG Line between Tialya to Kodema under the jurisdiction of Dy. CE/Construction/Dhanbad (Bihar). (2) Approx. cost of the work in (Rs.): 13,73,90,212.34 (3) Cost of tender form in (Rs.): 0.00 (4) Earnest money in (Rs.): 837000.00. Period of work completion : 06 (Six) Months. (5) Date and time for closing of tender : 18.06.2024 at 15:30 hrs. Any e-tenders which is sent by Post/Courier/Fax or by hand will not be accepted. All such manual submission of tender even if it is on firm's letter pad or received in time will not be accepted. The above e-tender document alongwith full information is available on website http://www.ireps.gov.in. Note: In case of any discrepancies found in tender notice, English version will be final. Tenderers are requested to visit the website http://www.ireps.gov.in at least 15 days before last date of closing, for latest corrigendum/corrections etc in connection with this e-tender. Any Change/addendum/corrigendum will be published on IREPS website only.
CAO/Con/South, MHX, Patna PR/0361/CONS/Engg./T/24-25/44

TPWODL
TP WESTERN ODISHA DISTRIBUTION LIMITED
(A Joint Venture of Tata Power and Government of Odisha)
Corporate Office : Burla, Dist.-Sambalpur (Odisha)-768017
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
T.N No. TPWODL/IA/O/SITC/ 09 Date. 30.05.2024
TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited, invites tender quotations (in 2 part bidding) from eligible vendors for the following package :
Supply, Erection, Installation, Testing & commissioning of 2 Nos. 33/11 KV PSS on "Turnkey Contract basis" for TPWODL.
Interested bidders to submit Tender Participation Fee and Authorization Letter through email on or before 07th Jun 2024, 15:00Hrs, after which the link from e-Tender system shall be shared.
For detailed tender documents of the above-mentioned tender, please visit Tender section on website www.tpwesternodisha.com. Further details for participating in tender is given in the tender document.
All future correspondence regarding the tender, bid submission, date extension etc. will take place with the participating bidders only through E-Tender system.
Sd/- Chief-Contracts and Stores

e-Auction Notice for Leasing of SLR/ LVPH
e-Auction Notice No. : LEASE-KGP-2024-05 Date : 29.05.2024
e-Auctions are invited by Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur Division for and on behalf of the President, Union of India for the following work : Name of Work : Leasing of SLR/LVPHs for a period of 02 (Two) years for transportation of parcels in the trains which are notified in the https://www.ireps.gov.in/website.
(1) Category : Parcel. Catalogue No. : LEASE-KGP-2024-05. Date of Auction : 12.06.2024. Auction Start Time : 12.00 hrs. Auction Closing Time : 16.00 hrs.
Interested parties and contractors to take note of this and go through the website as mentioned above for details of the trains and related information about the e-Auction notice. For enquiries/clarifications, if any, please contact the office of the undersigned.
Place : Kharagpur Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Date : 29.05.2024 Kharagpur
South Eastern Railway (PR-200)
We serve with a smile

EASTERN RAILWAY
e-Auction Notice
No. C8-GMU-SMU-ASN-2024, Asansol, Dated: 28.05.2024. Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Asansol Division, Station Road, Asansol, Pin-713301 invites Open e-Auction through IREPS portal website www.ireps.gov.in for provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering stalls over Asansol Division. Details of which are as under:- (1) Auction Catalogue No. : Catg-SMU-24-8; Seq. No., Lot No./Category & Description of Work respectively:- AA/1; Catg-ASN-SMU-84-24-2; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall at Asansol Railway station on PF No. 3-4 in between Sitting Bench No. 197-200 & 201-204 for a period of 05 (Five) years under Special Minor Unit (SMU). Reserved for Scheduled Caste (SC) earmarked for Women; E-Auctions Date/Time : 08.06.2024 at 13:00 hrs.; (2) Auction Catalogue No. : Catg-GMU-24-8; Seq. No., Lot No./Category & Description of Work respectively:- AA/2; Catg-ASN-OYR-GMU-22-23-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall 10x6' (60 Sq. Ft.) at Waria Railway Station (Category E) on Platform No. 1-2 under General Minor Unit for a period of 05 years. AA/3; Catg-ASN-KJME-GMU-15-24-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall 10x6' (60 Sq. Ft.) at Kajragram Railway Station (Category E) on Platform No. 1 near Platform Shed of Andai end under General Minor Unit for a period of 05 years. Earmarked for Women. AA/4; Catg-ASN-UKA-GMU-14-24-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall 10x6' (60 Sq. Ft.) at Ukha Railway Station (Category E) on platform No. 1 near Platform shed of Sainthia end under General Minor Unit for a period of 05 years. AA/5; Catg-ASN-GMU-23-24-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall 10x6' (60 Sq. Ft.) at Waria Railway Station (Category E) on Platform No. 1-2 under General Minor Unit for a period of 05 years. AA/6; Catg-ASN-DUMK-GMU-75-23-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall 10x6' (60 Sq. Ft.) at Dumka Railway Station (Category E) on Platform No. 2-3, near Foot Over Bridge under Platform shed under General Minor Unit for a period of 05 years. AA/7; Catg-ASN-CAM-GMU-66-24-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall (Size 6x10' = 60 Sq. Ft.) at Chhota Ambona (Category E) Railway Station on UP Platform for the period of 05 (Five) years. AA/8; Catg-ASN-CAM-GMU-67-24-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall (Size 6x10' = 60 Sq. Ft.) at Chhota Ambona (Category E) Railway Station on Down Platform for the period of 05 (Five) years. AA/9; Catg-ASN-MNAE-GMU-16-24-1; Provision of Catering Services through Modular Catering Stall 10x6' = (60 Sq. Ft.) at Mankar Railway Station (Category E) on Platform No. 1-2 under General Minor Unit for a period of 05 years. E-Auctions Date/Time : 12.06.2024 at 12:00 hrs. for Seq. No. AA/1 to AA/9 each. All prospective bidders are advised to visit the website www.ireps.gov.in for full details and to participate against the above mentioned e-Auction as per scheduled given. ASN-60/2024-25
Tender Notice is also available at websites : www.e.in.indianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in
Follow us at: @EasternRailway @easternrailwayheadquarter

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice No. JHS-N-W-23-24 Date:- 27.05.2024
Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/Jhansi, DRI's office, Jhansi, for and on behalf of President of India invite open Tender through on Line (E-Tender) for the following work:
Approx Cost: Rs. 195,52073.68 Earnest Money: Rs. 247800/-
Description of work: Reliability improvement work by providing axle counters in flood prone track, rusty rail track along with loop line/siding track under jurisdiction of ADST/AR section of Jhansi Division.
Cost of Tender Form: Nil. Opening of tender: 20.06.2024 Time 15.00. Completion period from issue of letter of acceptance: 09 Months. Tender on line can be submitted upto 15.00 hrs. on 20.06.2024. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in. (NORTH CENTRAL RLY/JHANSI DIVISION-S AND T) 921/24(K)
@CPONCR @northcentralrailway North central railways www.nccr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Procurement Tender Notice No.-E.T.D./C.N.B./2024-25/07 Date: 24.05.2024
On behalf of the President of India, The Senior Materials Manager, E.T.D./Kanpur invites the following e-procurement tender.

Sl. No.	Tender No.	Description	Qty.
1	57245088	Set of copper joint tube copper sleeve each of length 15mm, tolerance plus minus 5 percent conforming to IS - 191 as per annexure-A. One Set consist of 04 items total Qty - 21,000 Nos.	1 Set.
2	57241093	STRIKER CASTING WEAR PLATE AS PER DRG. No. A-4/2004/CNB/1921/5061/CB-ALT-B. It is used for CBC housing in WAG-7/WAP-4 loco.	200 Nos.
3	57245074	CABLE LUG 185.0M20 CU VZN as per CLW SPECIFICATION No. CLW/ES/3/0130/N.	100 Nos.
4	57245087	Relay for control Electronic OFF/ Safety relay control electronics ON/Relay Temp control Electronics (Pos no 126.5, 126.6, 211) as per CLW Specn. No. CLW/ES/3/0066 AR-B. One set consists of 4 items, 4 Nos as per scope of supply given below: 1)Relay for control electronics OFF (Pos No. 126.5), Nominal value 10A, 800V DC-110V DC, Qty 1 No. 2) Relay temperature control electronics (Pos No. 211) Nominal value 10A, 800V DC-110V DC, Qty 1 No. 3) Safety relay control electronics ON (Pos No. 126.6) Nominal value 10A, 800V DC-110V DC, Qty 1 No. 4) Accessories for safety relay control electronics ON 2 No., 2NC Qty 1 No.	50 Set.
5	57245070	Plug DO 5P/14 coupler 5 pin Temperature Sensor coupler ABB Part Number-HBTB415399P0022 & as per CLW Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0124 Alt-O or latest.	25 Nos.
6	57245102	KNUCKLE FOR TIGHT LOCK COUPLER H-TYPE CBC ASSEMBLY FOR WAP-7 LOCOMOTIVE PART NO-H50BE TO DRAWING NO C-50675 OF MECONWAY & TORELY. (ITEM SHOULD BE INTERCHANGEABLE WITH FAS MAKE H-TYPE TIGHT LOCK COUPLER).	14 Nos.
7	57245100	Stainless Steel (SS) Coupling Socket Housing for 500A Interverhucal copper panel as per RDSO Specification No. RDSO/PESPEC/AC/IO/7 (Rev-01) 2013 for WAP-7 locos. Material to be procured from RDSO approved sources only.	30 Nos.
8	57245105	KI band snap on terminal socket size 2.5 sqmm with insulation with metal reinforcement to cat no KI-5748 conforming to CLW spec no CLW/ES/0/0643 Alt-C.	5000 Nos.
9	57245093	Test bench for Contractor Filter ON/OFF and Adaption. Single phase primary current injection test set along with operational and timing check feature, (Bench specifically designed for Contractor Type I/jas per specification attached).	1 Nos.
10	57245073	Cable lug 120 sq.mm, type 12M/12 CVVZN of ABB ID No. 3EHP470026P3012 as per CLW Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0130/N or latest.	300 Nos.
11	57245101	SINGLE COIL (RECTANGULAR SECTION) SPRING WASHER M-24 IS-3063/1972 AS PER DRG. No. M-24 IS-3063/1972 OR LATEST.	2500 Nos.
12	58235269	SET OF TUNGSTEN CARBIDE TIP DEAD CENTER IN MT-4, MT-6, MT-8 TAPER. ONE SET CONSIST OF 03 NOS. AS EACH FROM MT-4, MT-5, MT-6. MAKE: TURNOX, L&T, ABB OR SIMILAR	03 Set.
13	58245047	STAINLESS STEEL BAR TURNING TOOL HOLDER SET DIAMETER 20MM. ONE SET CONSISTING OF 03 NOS. 4 TOOL HOLDERS. (1-LEFT HAND, 2- RIGHT HAND, 3- V-TYPE TOOL HOLDER	4 Set.

Tender Opening Date: 13.06.2024 for each tender, EMD: Nil for each tender. Note: 1. The Complete information about E-Procurement Tender are available on IREPS website i.e. http://www.ireps.gov.in. 2. Bids other than in the form of E-bids shall not be accepted against above tenders for this purpose vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with class III digital signature certificate issued by CCA and IT act 2000. 3. Rules entered into financial rate page is duly signed digitally signature shall only be considered rates and any other financial entry in any other form/letter had if attached by vendor shall be original straight way ignore and shall not be considered. 913/24(K)
@CPONCR @northcentralrailway North central railways www.nccr.indianrailways.gov.in



There is no government and democracy in Bihar, but only the bureaucracy. The CM is so weak that no one listens to him even regarding the timings of school... The infrastructure of schools in Bihar is not good. But, there is nothing in the CM's hands.

BIHAR FORMER DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER TEJASHWI YADAV AFTER SEVERAL STUDENTS FAINTED IN SCHOOLS AT DIFFERENT PLACES IN BIHAR

India will be run by Baba Saheb's Constitution: Yogi Adityanath

He accused Congress and the INDIA bloc of repeatedly undermining the Constitution

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE GORAKHPUR, 29 MAY

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accused the Congress and the INDIA bloc of mocking the Constitution and attempting to divide minorities, particularly Muslims, by infringing on the reservations meant for the SC, ST, and OBC communities.



Before leaving Gorakhpur to address public meetings on Wednesday morning, the chief minister reiterated that the nation would adhere to the Constitution drafted by Baba Saheb Ambedkar rather than personal or Sharia law. He accused the Congress and the Samajwadi Party of trying to mislead the public

anticipating their impending defeat in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. "They (the Opposition) won't succeed. The people of India are well-informed, they will re-elect the Modi Government with an overwhelming majority," he asserted, noting growing sentiment among the populace to support 'Jo Ram Ko Laye

Accusing Congress and the "Indi alliance" of repeatedly undermining the Constitution, CM Yogi Adityanath pointed out that shortly after India gained independence, the Congress government, defying Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar, forcibly included Article 370 in the Constitution. He said, "The numerous amendments made by Congress to the Constitution are well-known. The party's first government itself attempted to suppress free expression. Later, the Congress government imposed emergency in the country in 1975, in a bid to throttle the Constitution."

"Baba Saheb Ambedkar consistently opposed religion-based reservations. Despite this, Congress per-

sistently attempted to infringe on the reservations allotted to SC, ST, and OBC communities to divert portions to minorities, particularly Muslims," he added.

In this context, he recalled a statement of Dr Manmohan Singh where the former Prime Minister purportedly asserted that Muslims have the first right to the country's resources. "The UPa constituted the Justice Ranganath Mishra Committee and the Justice Rajendra Sachar Committee to reallocate SC, ST, and OBC reservations."

Yogi also cited instances where the Congress governments in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka divided OBC reservations to benefit Muslims.

INDI alliance has no PM face, only corruption, says Amit Shah

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE MAHARAJGANJ, 29 MAY

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said the Indi Alliance does not have the PM's post and there was only corruption.

"If you look at the faces of this INDI alliance, you will see only corruption," he said. Addressing an election meeting at Jawahar Lal Nehru PG College Sports Ground in Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh to support Union Minister and BJP candidate Pankaj Choudhury, Shah took a jibe at the Opposition for not having a face for the PM's post. "PM Narendra Modi did a great job during Corona whereas the Congress has worked to divide this country," he said.

Shah alleged that the leaders of this INDI alliance, which he alleged had committed a scam of Rs 12 lakh crore, had



opened fire on the kar sevaks in Ayodhya.

He said Congress kept people waiting for the Ram temple for 70 years, but PM Modi honoured the faith of the people by building a grand Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Questioning the public, the Home Minister said "Whether the country would be safe in the hands of Congress, which is afraid of Pakistan's atom bomb, or in the hands of PM Narendra Modi,

who is giving a befitting reply to Pakistan? It is for all of you to decide."

Shah said that on June 4 (Counting day of general elections), the BJP will work to cross 400.

"The BJP is already ahead with a majority in just five phases. It is going to cross 400 in the sixth and seventh phase. The Congress will be wiped out in the country. Rahul Baba of Congress will be reduced to 40 seats and the second 'cycle' (SP symbol) of second 'prince' (SP chief Akhilesh Yadav) will be reduced to four," he claimed.

He alleged that the leaders of INDI alliance were involved in corruption. "Till date, PM Modi has not been accused of even a single penny of corruption. PM Modi has worked to take the country forward. That is the main reason, the people of the country are again going to form the BJP government," he pointed out.

'Mafias and criminals now hiding behind BJP'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE ROBERTSGANJ, 29 MAY

Samajwadi Party President Akhilesh Yadav alleged that mafias and criminals are hiding behind the BJP.



Without naming Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, he recalled two days ago, while he was claiming to eliminate mafias on the stage, the entire mafia was sitting right behind him.

"Today, the mafias of Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Chandauli, and Varanasi are hiding behind BJP. Sonbhadra has never seen such loot in the past. A district that produces the maximum electricity is not getting enough electricity for its residents," he charged.

Addressing an election meeting here in support of

stitution. Samajwadi people are working continuously while BJP people are interested in only showing dreams."

He said the people of the country have made up their minds to change the government of those who are out to change the Constitution. "You have to save Baba Saheb's Constitution. The government sent Tribal Chief Minister Hemant Soren to jail after in a false case to scare the tribal people away from voting little knowing that the people here, who are the descendants of Lord Birsa Munda, are not afraid of anyone," he said.

Akhilesh Yadav said the constantly growing heat is no match to the heat generated by the election against the BJP.

Only PDM can guide backward Dalits and Muslims: Owaisi

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE VARANASI, 29 MAY

Alleging that the condition of Muslims after 2014 is the same as that of Jews during Hitler's time, AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi asserted that only the PDM (Pichhda, Dalit, and Muslim) can guide backward Dalits and Muslims.



Owaisi, along with Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) Pallavi Patel, was addressing a public meeting at Azhari Maidan located in Rebri Pond here, on Tuesday night. The AIMIM chief said the leader should come from among us. We are just casting votes and doing nothing. "The BJP is winning because the BSP, SP, and Congress are weak. Now, you have a choice as a PDM candidate,"

he added. He said whenever there is oppression and atrocities on this deprived community, big political parties maintain silence. Therefore, only those who raise their voice on the issue can remove the BJP from power and give them their rights.

Speaking on the occasion, Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) leader Pallavi Patel said the BJP, which came to power in

want 100 per cent votes of Muslims, but show you thumb in the name of share.

Taking a jibe at the food grains distributed among 80 crore people by the Centre, Pallavi Patel said hardworking farmers and labourers were turned into beggars in the BJP regime. "The struggle will be taken forward by going among the public on the issues of employment, education and medicine. The system will be changed only by capturing the power."

PDM candidate Gagan Prakash Yadav said there is a wrestling match going on between the BJP and Congress candidates in the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency.

AIMIM state president Shaukat Ali and Apna Dal (Kamerawadi) state president CL Patel were present.

NHRC orders Assam govt to expedite probe into Arunachal native's death

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE ITANAGAR, 29 MAY

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Assam government to fast-track the investigation into the death of Lokhi Wangsu, a native of Arunachal Pradesh, who was allegedly fatally shot by personnel of the Assam Forest Battalion.

The incident occurred in the Towang reserved forest area on September 18, 2023, while Wangsu was looking for his missing domestic cow.

The NHRC has instructed the Superintendent of Police, Dibrugarh division, to submit a status report within two months.

Despite receiving an updated status report from the SP in February, crucial documents such as the ballistic and viscera reports from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) in Assam are still awaited.

In a report submitted on November 16, 2023, the Dibrugarh SP informed the commission that two FIRs had been registered based on information provided by the range forest officer.

The NHRC expressed concern over the indifferent attitude of Assam's Environment & Forest Additional Chief Secretary and the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest towards its directives. Underscoring the seriousness of the matter, the commission noted that no report had been received from the forest department despite previous reminders.

Tripura's power supply to Bangladesh will continue

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE AGARTALA, 29 MAY

The Tripura government has stated it will continue to supply power to Bangladesh and that the discontinuation of power supply to the neighbouring country will only be considered if the state encounters a severe power crisis. This decision comes despite the Bangladesh government's outstanding dues, which have now exceeded Rs 150 crore.



rently, Bangladesh is receiving an average of 90 MW of power from Tripura.

During a press conference on Tuesday, Ratan Lal Nath, a senior official, reaffirmed that TSECL will continue to honour the power purchase agreement (PPA). He emphasised that the issue of discontinuing power supply would only be considered if Tripura faces

an acute power crisis.

Debasish Sarkar, the Managing Director of TSECL, highlighted the financial strain caused by the overdue payments from BPDB. The pending bill has now surpassed Rs 150 crore. Sarkar noted that efforts are underway to resolve this financial issue and ensure that BPDB settles its dues. Over the past year,

Bangladeshi authorities have struggled with timely payments, leading to a substantial increase in the outstanding amounts owed to Tripura.

This financial strain has complicated the power supply arrangement, with TSECL having reported a decline in power generation from Tripura-based plants by 60 to 70 megawatts.

Consequently, TSECL has had to procure electricity from external sources to meet its obligations. Minister Ratan Lal Nath also underscored that cutting the power supply to Bangladesh at this juncture could negatively impact trade relations between the two countries. He pointed out that such a move would not only affect the power supply but could also have broader economic repercussions.

Cyclone Remal: Death toll rises to 28 in Mizoram; rescue operations on

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE AIZAWL, 29 MAY

The death toll from a devastating stone quarry collapse and landslides in the aftermath of cyclone Remal in Mizoram has risen to 28, as rescue operations continue in a desperate bid to locate any remaining survivors.



The tragedy, which has deeply impacted the Melthum area and its surroundings, has prompted a large-scale response involving multiple rescue teams. The catastrophe occurred at the Melthum quarry in the outskirts of capital town Aizawl, where the collapse has claimed 14 lives.

Additionally, another 14

fatalities have been reported from neighbouring regions, which have experienced severe landslides triggered by Cyclone Remal. These landslides have compounded the disaster, causing widespread devastation and complicating rescue efforts. Authorities have resumed search operations in the affected areas, working tirelessly to recover bodies

and potentially find survivors. The rescue mission involves the state disaster response team, paramilitary forces, members of the Young Mizos Association, and local volunteers.

These teams are navigating challenging conditions, including unstable terrain and ongoing weather-related obstacles, to carry out their life-saving work. Mizoram Chief Minister Lalduhoma has been actively involved in overseeing the rescue operations. On Tuesday, he visited the site of the landslide, offering words of encouragement and assurance to the affected communities.

LEISURE

10 MINUTE CROSSWORD

Crossword grid with numbers 1-23 and solutions to yesterday's crossword.

SOLUTIONS TO YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD
ACROSS: 10 Iona, 11 Shoulder, 12 Needless, 13 Relent, 14 Climb, 15 SMS message, 16 Whittish horse, 17 Converse, 18 European language, 19 Hernia support, 20 Banish, 21 Idea, 22 Needleless, 23 Relent, 24 Accent used in '77', 25 Military fabric colour, 26 Instance, 27 Blood vessel, 28 SMS message, 29 Cash-iron, 30 Iona, 31 Shoulder, 32 Spinach, 33 Lockjaw, 34 Demigog, 35 Evil, 36 Agnit, 37 Spout, 38 Cushty, 39 A paltry sum of money (Informal), 40 Location, 41 Wearing away, 42 Become ill again, 43 Humble, 44 Choose, 45 Anon, 46 Anon, 47 Bent, 48 Eyed, 49 Udulele, 50 Reader, 51 Euphoria, 52 Lockjaw, 53 Demigog, 54 Evil, 55 Agnit, 56 Spout, 57 Cushty, 58 A paltry sum of money (Informal), 59 Location, 60 Wearing away, 61 Become ill again, 62 Humble, 63 Choose, 64 Anon, 65 Anon, 66 Bent, 67 Eyed, 68 Udulele, 69 Reader, 70 Euphoria, 71 Lockjaw, 72 Demigog, 73 Evil, 74 Agnit, 75 Spout, 76 Cushty, 77 A paltry sum of money (Informal), 78 Location, 79 Wearing away, 80 Become ill again, 81 Humble, 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Recounting a harrowing attack and a resolute recovery

SOMDATTA MANDAL

"At a quarter to eleven on August 12, 2022, on a sunny Friday morning in upstate New York, I was attacked and almost killed by a young man with a knife just after I came out on stage at the amphitheater in Chautauqua to talk about the importance of keeping writers safe from harm."

This very powerful first-person narration is how Salman Rushdie begins his latest book of memoirs called *Knife*, published just a couple of months ago. Winner of the Booker Prize and the Booker of Bookers award 25 years later for his novel *Midnight's Children*, several of his fifteen novels were shortlisted for the Booker Prize. Rushdie also has a collection of short stories, a memoir, a work of reportage, and three collections of essays to his credit. But he is specifically remembered for the fatwa declared by Ayatollah Khomeini on the charge of blasphemy after the publication of *The Satanic Verses* more than thirty years ago. But in spite of living for three decades in asylum because he was not safe in his own country, the vendetta and violence took their ultimate toll on 12 August 2022, when an unidentified man attempted to murder him on stage with a knife where he had gone to participate in a week of events at the Chautauqua Institution in upstate New York titled "More Than Shelter: Redefining the American Home."

This horrific act of violence shook the literary world and beyond. Now, one and a half years after the incident, and in unforgettable detail, Rushdie writes this memoir where he relives the traumatic events of that day and its aftermath, as well as his journey towards physical recovery and the healing that was made possible by the love and support of his present African American wife Eliza, his family, his army of doctors and physical therapists, and his community of readers worldwide.

Dedicating the book to the men and women who saved his life, the text is neatly divided into two parts, each containing four sections. Part I, titled "The Angel of Death" begins with the chapter called 'Knife.' Describing that beautiful August morning in detail, Rushdie tells us how violence came running at him and his reality fell apart. It was perhaps not very surprising that, in the few seconds available to him, he didn't know what to do. So, he narrates the rest of the incidents in the form of a collage, with bits of memory pieced together with other eyewitnesses and news reports. The audience

members also acted according to their best nature, and so that morning he "experienced both the worst and the best of human nature, almost simultaneously." Rushdie concludes this chapter by informing his readers that he no longer felt the slightest urge to defend *The Satanic Verses* or himself. "Let me say this right up front: I am proud of the work I've done, and that very much includes *The Satanic Verses*." The only problem was that the incident of his attempted murder dragged "that" novel back into the narrative of scandal.

The second chapter 'Eliza' gives us details of how Rushdie met the African American poet Rachel Eliza Griffiths, entirely unknown to him, through Mr Norman Mailer and how their friendship grew stronger day by day, leading them to get secretly married, realising that it was a relationship not of competitiveness but of total mutual support. They showed that even in this attention-addicted time, it was still possible for two people to lead, pretty openly, a happily private life until the knife incident changed everything. Section three, titled 'Hamot', comprises Rushdie's detailed description of how he spent eighteen days in the extreme-trauma ward of the hospital but also how being able to do a few simple everyday things for himself lifted his spirits greatly. After eighteen days there, it was time for him to go.

In the fourth section titled 'Rehab', Rushdie tells us about the optimism that flooded through him. During his sleepless nights at the rehab, he often thought a lot about *The Knife* as an idea. Talking about different occasions when the knife is used, he realises that the knife is a tool and acquires meaning from the use we make of it. It is morally neutral, and it is the misuse of knives that is immoral. Then he states that language was also a knife for him, and he would use it to fight back. Apart from the rehab of the body, there is also the rehab of the mind and spirit. The chapter ends with his period of rehab being over, and after more than six weeks in two hospitals, he could return to the world.

Part II, titled "The Angel of Life" is also divided into four sections and shows how, in the end, Rushdie found the strength to stand up again. The first section titled 'Homecoming' begins with him describing his plan to leave Rusk at 3 a.m. as quietly as possible and to get back to his home through the empty night city to avoid any watching eyes. It was a profound emotional experience, and he felt "100 percent better and healthier immediately.

I was home." He felt that he had emerged from the long tunnel of hospital visits and had been returned to the general population. Here he made a resolution that instead of remaining a mere victim, he would answer violence with art: "Hello, world, we were saying. We're back, and after our encounter with hatred, we're celebrating the survival of love. After the angel of death, the angel of life."

The sixth chapter, 'The A.' is how he addresses his assassin, and it is really Rushdie at his imaginative best. In it, he has recorded a detailed conversation that never occurred between himself and "a man I met for only twenty-seven seconds of my life." After bringing in several intertextual references about other writers and situations, in the fourth and final session of his imaginative conversation, Rushdie states, "You don't know me. You'll never know me." After the imagined conversation is over, he no longer has the energy to imagine the assassin, just as he never had the ability to imagine him.

At the beginning of the next section called 'Second Chance,' Rushdie states that as he recovered from his wounds, both physical and psychological, he was far from sure that he would emerge from the experience stronger. He was just happy to be emerging from the experience alive. But the big news for him anyway was that, after half a year of nothingness, the writing juices had indeed started to flow again. But it was hard for him to write about post-traumatic stress disorder at any time, especially when his hand felt like it was "inside a glove" and "the eye... is an absence with an immensely powerful presence." He went for a ten-day visit to London, and by the time he returned to New York, he thought it was pretty clear that it was what his second chance at life should concentrate on: love and work. But there were also various Muslim voices celebrating what had happened to him. So he ruminates at length on how, apart from private pleasures, he had to combat the argument that had bedeviled his life—the argument about God. He had never felt the need for religious faith to help him comprehend and deal with the world, and so he declares, "My godlessness remains intact. That isn't going to change in this second-chance life."

The title of the final section, 'Closure?' ends with a query mark. In it, he writes that his own anger faded, and it felt trivial when set beside the anger of the planet. He understood that three things had happened that had helped

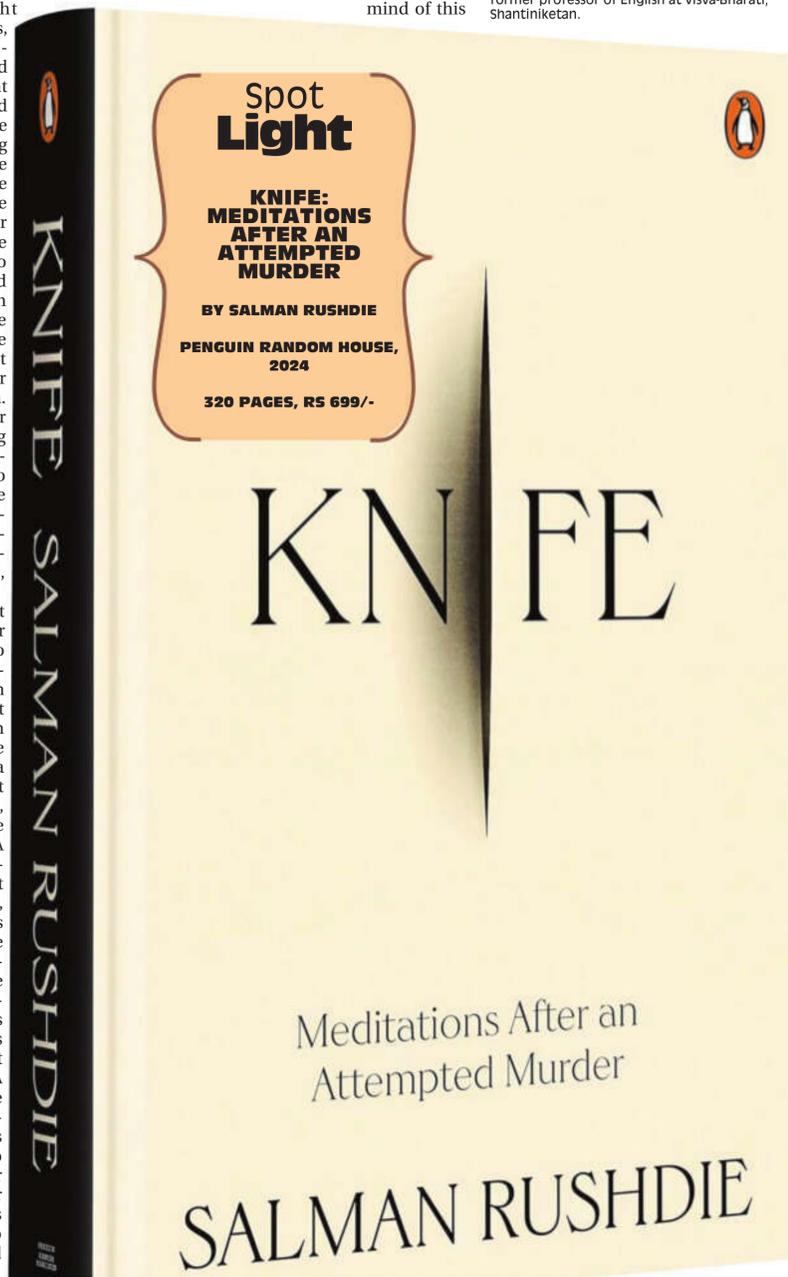
him on his journey towards coming to terms with what had happened. The first was the passage of time, and though time might not heal all wounds, it definitely deadened the pain, and his nightmares went away. The second was therapy, and the third was the writing of this book. These things did not give him "closure" and he felt he was no longer certain that he wanted or needed to confront and address the A. in open court. He writes that the "Samuel Beckett moment" no longer felt essential to him. Overall, this memoir is a moving reminder of literature's capacity to make sense of the unthinkable, an intimate and life-affirming meditation on life, loss, love, and art.

The simple yet very appealing cover of the book adds to its USP and establishes once again what an excellent storyteller Salman Rushdie is. His fame might have waned a little with his last few publications, especially since Joseph Anton: A Memoir did not create much impact upon the readers, but *Knife* has brought back the powerful and erudite Rushdie as he has risen phoenix-like from the ashes and revealed his erudition without being parochial. A page-turner, the book is really a collector's item and is recommended to the common reader as well, even for those who find his writing to be too high-brow and full

of intertextual references. They will have no problem understanding the 'free-associative way' in which the mind of this

75-year-old writer works even today.

The reviewer is critic and translator, and former professor of English at Visva-Bharati, Shantiniketan.



The 'why' of Bharat Jodo Yatra

DOLA MITRA

"From Kashmir to Kanyakumari" goes the saying. Literally, it denotes a route that stretches from India's northernmost tip high in the cold, snowy mountains all the way down to its southernmost point, the sunny confluence where three seas, including, of course, an ocean, flow into each other. Figuratively, the phrase has always been used to suggest a kind of comprehensiveness.

So when Rahul Gandhi decided to embark on a journey of this 4,000-kilometre-long stretch, that too on foot, less than two years before the general elections, clearly he was making a point. The Congress leader, who has been mercilessly mocked by detractors as a "Pappu" or "simpleton" who lacked the maturity to lead India's oldest political party, far less the country, in spite of being the great grandson of Jawaharlal Nehru, the grandson of Indira Gandhi, and the son of Rajiv Gandhi, was making a point that he would walk through every nook and cranny of this land armed with nothing but this simplicity and this humility. He would reach out to the common people of this land, who too were essentially simple and humble, and hear their stories.

And if the authors of the new book, "Bharat Jodo Yatra: Rahul Gandhi's Epic March," published by HarperCollins this year, are to be believed, he came out a winner, with hundreds and thousands of people thronging the sidelines of the route through which he passed, arriving from different parts of the country, over and above the hundreds and thousands of people, party leaders and cadres, civil society groups, and others who registered to be a part of the "pilgrimage."

Edited by Pushparaj Deshpande

and Ruchira Chaturvedi and with a foreword by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, the book is a compilation of over thirty short and, needless to say, sweet essays, all written by people who took part in the journey, either having covered the entire stretch along with Rahul or having walked part of the way. It begins with a piece from Rahul himself.

"Last year, I spent 145 days walking across the land I call home," he writes. "I started at the edge of the sea (in Kanyakumari) and walked through heat, dust and rain, through forest, hills and towns, until I reached the soft snow of my beloved Kashmir. Many people along the way asked me, Why are you doing this? Even today, they ask: Why? What were you looking for? What did you find?"

I wanted to understand the thing I loved. The thing for which I was ready to give up everything, including my life. The thing that could make me take so much pain and abuse for so many years. I wanted to know precisely what it was that I loved. Was it this land? The Mountains? The Sea? Was it a person? Was it people or a set of ideas? But there was something else. I also wanted to find out what sort of heart was mine that I allowed it to be captured in this way."

From Rahul Gandhi's essay, we learn that he was used to running eight to ten kilometres per day since his childhood, so he did not think that walking 25 kilometres per day, which is the distance he would have to cover in order to finish the journey within the stipulated time, would pose difficulties. However, when the journey actually took off on 7 September 2022, within a few days, an old knee injury reared its ugly head.

He remembered the pain. He remembered being in tears as he sat

alone in his makeshift "container" accommodation and thought, "How was I ever going to walk nearly 4,000 kilometers?" Not afraid to expose his own vulnerability, his essay is reflective of honesty, which is refreshing in a politician, a clan increasingly associated with doublespeak. Not only did he complete the journey, he addressed hundreds of meetings along the way, spoke to thousands of people who visited him, sometimes one-on-one, sometimes in groups, and picked up hundreds and thousands of followers. The authors of the book called this journey a spiritual pilgrimage, in which the main message was to carry "love" everywhere. Indeed, nothing else can explain this almost miraculous achievement.

Though ostensibly about a journey, the essays in this book actually recreate a heartwarming image of the man named Rahul Gandhi, who has emerged in the avatar of an ideal leader, who has eschewed the arrogance of being a leader, and who is without greed for power or need for position.

The authors reiterate time and again that this was not an election-related roadshow or a cross-country campaign for votes. In fact, in his essay, Professor Ajay Gudavorthy delineates the need for political leaders to practice selfless service for the people long before the idea of power or winning elections ought to enter their thoughts. Calling current electoral politics exactly the opposite, the other essayists point out that Rahul has emerged as the leader who is free of the agenda of a single-minded pursuit of power at any cost.

In his essay, Darshan Mondkar asks Rahul what his thoughts are if he does happen to get votes as a result of such selfless pilgrimages of love. Rahul

replies, "That is not the reason why I am walking, but if yes, why not?" The idea is that for a leader to govern well, he would need to know his people first."

While the essays are overwhelmingly about Rahul, which often becomes repetitive with all the authors penning their thoughts and observations about this honest, disarmingly down-to-earth and simple man, who is full of depth and is devoid of the arrogance that has been attributed to him, and who is the ideal leader material, the stories are also fascinating narratives detailing side stories from the journey and even the logistical arrangements that had to be made for such an arduous, not to mention mobile, journey. Often, these descriptions are humorous. I especially enjoyed Professor Mukulika Banerjee's account of her experience:

"I spent two days and two nights with the Yatra, and the journey began as soon as I alighted at the Sawai Madhopur train station. A young doctor, one of the young Yatris, had come to town to collect medicine which was needed at the camp but was stranded and needed to get back to the camp about twenty kilometers away. As I chatted during the lift I was able to offer him, I had asked him the many questions I arrived with." While most of these admittedly pertained to the philosophical, ideological and intellectual, her comic timing in

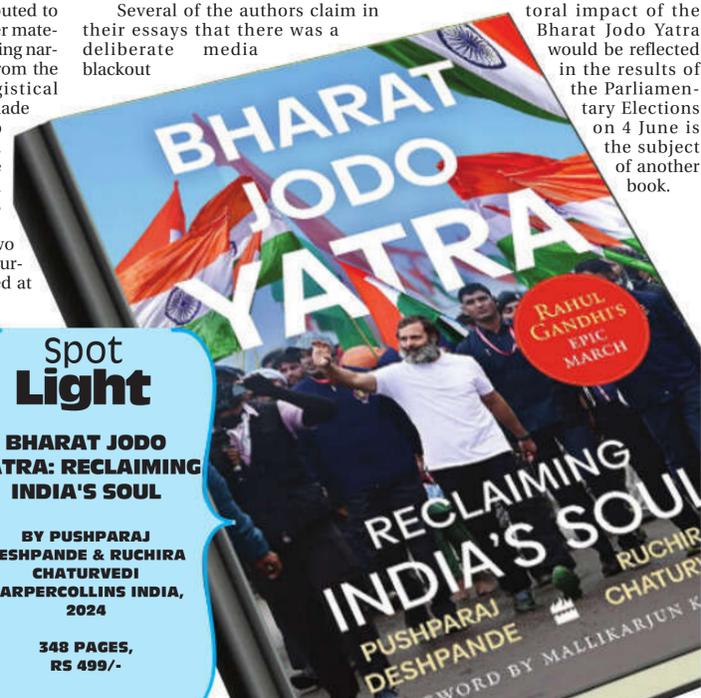
switching to the observations in the mobile washrooms was hilarious. "The food was rather excellent (perhaps to maintain morale), but the sorry state of the washrooms was dampener. It made for a reliable conversation starter, though, and sociological explanations abounded, including the plausible one that too many were 'Western style' which hundreds of Yatris had never encountered before and did not know how to use."

Several of the authors claim in their essays that there was a deliberate media blackout

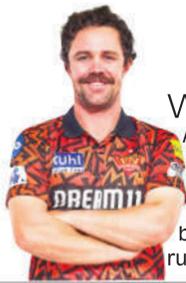
and the Yatra was not given its due coverage in the national media, though social media and local media in the states had a deluge of stories and videos.

However, considering that (as it comes through from reading this book), Rahul Gandhi's aim was to spread and receive love—a truly touching thought and a reassuring one in a possible future leader—he achieved it.

Whether the electoral impact of the Bharat Jodo Yatra would be reflected in the results of the Parliamentary Elections on 4 June is the subject of another book.



Spot Light
BHARAT JODO YATRA: RECLAIMING INDIA'S SOUL
BY PUSHPARAJ DESHPANDE & RUCHIRA CHATURVEDI
HARPERCOLLINS INDIA, 2024
348 PAGES, RS 499/-



WHENEVER HE PERFORMS, WE WIN

Abhishek Sharma has been one of the highlights of the 2024 IPL season. It was his exploits with opening partner Travis Head that made SRH the highest-scoring team in the season. The young all-rounder smashed 42 sixes through the course of the tournament which saw him top the chart for most sixes in a tournament followed by Heinrich Klassen and Virat Kohli ties at 38. The opening batsman amassed 484 runs at a blistering strike rate of 204.22 through the course of the tournament.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

THUMBNAILS

FC Barcelona appoint Hansi Flick as head coach on a two-year contract: Spanish giant FC Barcelona have announced the appointment of Hansi Flick as the new head coach of the football club replacing the outgoing Xavi Hernandez. The German international has signed a two-year deal till the end of the 2025/26 season. "FC Barcelona and Hansi Flick have reached an agreement for the German to become men's first team football coach until June 30, 2026. By bringing Hansi Flick as the head coach, FC Barcelona have chosen a man well known for his teams' high pressing, intense and daring style of play which has brought him great success at the club level and international level, winning pretty much all there is to win in the world of football," read the statement posted by the club on their website.

T20 WC: Kohli a doubtful starter for June 1 warm-up tie against Bangladesh?

There has been no official update on Kohli's travel status from the BCCI yet, although sources confirmed that the former India skipper is set to fly out in the next couple of days

TRIDIB BAPARNASH NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

Virat Kohli could be a doubtful starter for India's lone warm-up fixture ahead of the ICC men's T20 World Cup, against Bangladesh on June 1 at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, as the star batter is the only one yet to join the squad that underwent their first training session after reaching New York City. There has been no official update on Kohli's travel status from the BCCI yet, although sources confirmed that the former India skipper is set to fly out in the next couple of days. However, it remains to be seen whether

the 35-year-old features in the warm-up match, depending on the gap between him landing and the game.

Meanwhile, the rest of the members of the squad, whose teams were involved in the Indian Premier League (IPL) playoffs, along with Hardik Pandya, have joined the first batch of players who left for the US after their respective IPL franchises were eliminated from the race to the playoffs.

Soham Desai, the team's strength and conditioning coach provided an idea of the routine being followed by the players, who have all been part of the grind at IPL 2024 over the past couple of months and are easing into match-readiness.



"Eased into our routines here, the idea was to just get used to the time zone," Desai said in a video posted by the BCCI on social media.

"We've not yet played cricket. We've come here for a team activity today. Hopefully it will be good. The weather is really good. So

looking forward," pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah said. In the video, the players could be seen warming up, doing some basic strength-

and-conditioning exercises, along with some drills with a football.

"They have been away for two-and-a-half months from us (the national team setup). Just getting them together to know where they stand, what needs to be done before the World Cup was the goal," Desai said of the Tuesday session.

"(The) goal is to spend 45 minutes to an hour there on the park to again get going. We want to see them move. We want to see them run so that we can put enough plans in place for each guy to be ready for the first game," he added.

Hardik, who took a short break after the IPL before joining the national team,

expressed his excitement on the prospects of playing in a new part of the world and spoke on "the good vibe", while Ravindra Jadeja was expecting to have "super, super fun", and Suryakumar Yadav felt the first day out "was amazing".

India's first game at the T20 World Cup will be on June 5, against Ireland, followed by group-stage fixtures against Pakistan on June 9, USA on June 12, and Canada on June 15. The first three games will be played in New York and the last in Lauderhill, Florida.

After conclusion of the group stage, the Super Eight fixtures, semi-finals, and final will be played in the West Indies.

Nitu determined to bounce back from setbacks of missing Hangzhou, Paris squads



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

2023 World Champion boxer Nitu Ghanghas is determined to bounce back hard after failing to make it to the Paris Olympics in the 54 kg division, a weight category where she is developing more power and adding skills to keep her reputation as a feisty fighter intact.

Hailing from the hotbed of Indian boxing — Bhiwani — the 23-year-old Nitu is spending quality time training at the Bhiwani Boxing Club with her eyes on the Los Angeles Olympics in July 2028.

An ardent fan of London Olympics bronze medalist MC Mary Kom, Nitu is considered a potential successor to the Manipuri legend. The 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games champion in 48kg class, isn't losing her sleep after missing the Hangzhou Asian Games and subsequently the Paris Olympics, but the setbacks have made her more deter-

year and my coach Jagdish Singh is prepping me for it. I am confident that I have the mettle to make it to Los Angeles Olympics in 2028," said Nitu.

"I am from Bhiwani Boxing Club and I have a legacy to take forward. Vijender Singh's Beijing Olympics was a massive trigger for girls like us to play boxing. In our village (Dhanana), it was unthinkable for a girl to play sport. But it was my father (Jai Bhagawan) who backed me up regardless of the fact that even our closest relatives thought we were crazy because I was going to take up boxing," Nitu Ghanghas narrated during a podcast, adding that her family faced severe financial crisis when she was learning the ropes of boxing in Bhiwani.

Having excelled in the 48 kg class, a weight division that once exclusively belonged to Mary Kom, Nitu wants to emulate her idol. "I grew up watching her and it was my dream to fight Mary didi. That opportunity did come (Commonwealth Games 2022 trials) but Mary Kom had to withdraw due to a knee injury after a minute into the opening round. I really wanted a full fight, so it was a bit disappointing," said Nitu, who is a natural left-handed boxer like Mary.

With age on her side and known for her aggressive style, Nitu remains among India's top women boxers. With greater exposure and intense training, the Haryana girl is expected to grab the headlines once again once Paris Olympics are over.

Chirag, Satwik lose BMF Super750 tournament



HARPAL SINGH BEDI NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

Chirag and Satwik, world No. 1 in the current world badminton rankings and the top seeds, lost 22-20, 21-18 to the 34th-ranked Danish pair of Daniel Lundgaard and Mads Vestergaard in 47 minutes. This was the first time the two pairings had met on the BWF World Tour. Chirag-Satwik, on the hunt for their third title of the year after clinching the French and Thailand Open, began slowly and fell 9-4 behind early on.

The Indian mounted a spirited fightback to turn the tables and took a 21-18 lead. The Danish team stayed calm under pressure to save two game points and took the lead. The second game also saw the two teams go neck-to-neck until 16-all before Lundgaard and Vestergaard broke away right at the end to produce a shocking result.

The Danes will face off against the People's Republic of China's He Ji Ting and Ren Xiang Yu, who won the

Thailand Masters together earlier this year and made the German Open final, in the second round.

Chirag-Satwik's upset summed up what was a disappointing opening day for Indian shuttlers at the Singapore Indoor Stadium.

In women's singles, Aakarshi Kashyap bowed out after losing to Thailand's Pornnipha Choiekwong 21-19, 22-20 in a closely-fought match. World No. 29 Priyanshu Rajawat also went down fighting against the 18th-ranked Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong China by a 23-21, 21-19 scoreline in men's singles.

Rutaparna and Swetaparna Panda stretched their women's doubles clash against Chinese Taipei's Chang Ching Hui and Yang Ching Tun to three games before eventually going down 21-12, 12-21, 21-13 in women's doubles.

Ashith Surya-Amrutha Pramuthesh's mixed doubles campaign wrapped up following a 21-8, 21-17 defeat at the hands of Hong Kong China's Lee Chun Hei Regional-Ng Ts Yau.

IPL form absolutely irrelevant: Khawaja backs off-colour Maxwell



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

Australia's Test opener Usman Khawaja termed Glenn Maxwell's diminishing returns with the bat from the recently-concluded Indian Premier League as "absolutely irrelevant" as the all-rounder prepares for the upcoming ICC men's T20 World Cup in the US and the West Indies, starting June 1.

Representing the Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), that ended as the fourth best team in the season, Maxwell endured a forgettable campaign with the bat, scoring just 52 runs from 10 matches.

However, his Aussie teammate Khawaja feels that the all-rounder is an experienced campaigner and backed him to bounce back in time dur-

ing Australia's T20 WC campaign.

"The IPL form absolutely irrelevant. Maxy's proven himself time and time again. Any player who's performed over a long period of time understands that you can't perform well every time you go out there," Khawaja said to the West Australian.

"You take a few risks, particularly if you bat in the middle order, and T20 cricket's not easy. But (for this tournament) if he gets one good innings, he's away. It doesn't matter what's happened in the past. He's not going to change his game and nor should he. Just keep going. He'll find it," he added.

Maxwell is currently on a break along with Pat Cummins, Travis Head, Marcus Stoinis, Mitchell Starc, Cameron Green

after the gruelling IPL 2024 campaign which saw Maxwell's RCB team knocked out after the Eliminator in Ahmedabad with the batter falling for a duck. The six players are expected to join the national team for the T20 World Cup in a day or two.

Meanwhile, on Tuesday, a nine-man Australia made light work of Namibia in their opening T20 World Cup warm-up match, led by an impressive new-ball spell from Josh Hazlewood, during which four members of their backroom staff helped make up the numbers.

At one stage there were four substitutes on the field for Australia comprising head coach Andrew McDonald, assistants Brad Hodge and Andre Borovec plus national selector George Bailey, Borovec, who is fielding coach, and Bailey were the first-choice subs when play began.

Despite the setbacks, the 2021 T20 World Cup champions chased down Namibia's total of 119/9 in a dominant fashion inside 10 overs with a quickfire unbeaten half century from David Warner (54).

Australia's next warm up match is against co-hosts West Indies on May 31 and they will open their T20 World Cup campaign on June 6 against Oman. They will then take on archrivals England on June 8, followed by a match against Namibia on June 12 and then end the group stage commitments with an encounter against Scotland on June 16.

Will Jacks praises Kohli's 100 percent intensity against every ball

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, 29 MAY

England all-rounder Will Jacks has praised star India batter and Royal Challengers Bengaluru teammate Virat Kohli's intensity during training and opened up on his partnership with him during the match against Gujarat Titans in the recently-concluded Indian Premier League.

In eight matches for RCB during his debut season, Jacks scored 230 runs at an average of 32.85 and a strike rate of over 175, with a century and fifty. His highest score during the tournament was an unbeaten 100 besides taking a couple of wickets with his part-time off-spin.

Jacks' moment of fame came during the April 28 match against the Titans, when he unleashed carnage with the willow, to slam a 41-ball 100, leaving Kohli at the other end in awe of his power-hitting skills.

Chasing 201 to win, Jacks consumed 31 balls for his first fifty and within a span of the



next 10 deliveries raced to his maiden IPL ton with the help of four fours and 10 glorious sixes, and more importantly added 166 runs in the partnership with Kohli to help the RCB register a win.

Terming Virat as a "very good role model", Jacks felt youngsters need to copy his style of doing the hard yards in and day out.

"I think, firstly his attitude towards training. Every day is a day to get better. And that was really obvious. Some guys say it's harder to do that

but with him, it was very obvious. And the way he goes into the game. Every ball, 100 per cent intensity," Jacks said.

"When I batted with him in a chase, it was how he picked out how to do the chase. It was not just going ball by ball, looking ahead, really to see where he could plan and take risks at a certain time."

"He has done it for such a long time and I can appreciate that as a young guy who often does not want to

do the hard yards, but you see him doing it and want to copy that," he added.

Jacks, who has represented England in two Tests, seven ODIs, and 12 T20Is, is now hoping to carry on the momentum into the ICC men's T20 World Cup starting June 1 in the West Indies and the US.

The Englishmen are placed in Group B with rivals Australia, Scotland, Namibia and Oman. England will start their campaign against Scotland on June 4.

French Open: Tsitsipas quells Altmaier fightback to reach third round

AGENCIES PARIS, 29 MAY

The 2021 Roland Garros finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece encountered some anxious moments but found a way to reach the third round in Paris for the sixth time, beating a resilient Daniel Altmaier under the roof on Court Suzanne Lenglen in the French Open here on Wednesday.

In a hard-fought second-round men's singles match, Tsitsipas overcame his 25-year-old German opponent 6-3, 6-2, 6-7(2), 6-4 in two hours and 45 minutes.

Just as he did in his opening-round match, a 7-6(7), 6-4, 6-1 victory over talented Hungarian Marton Fucsovics, Tsitsipas was out of the gates fast against Altmaier, taking charge of the run of play from the first ball.

Tsitsipas broke in the fourth game of set one and dropped just six points on serve in the opening set. The Greek then



pegged the accelerator, reeling off five games from 5-2 in the opener to lead 6-3, 4-0. He jumped to a two-sets-to-love lead in just about an hour. But just when it looked like he would romp to a straight-sets win, the German mount-

ed a comeback, posing significant challenges for Tsitsipas.

Just three days after defeating Laslo Djere in the longest match of the first round (5:04), Altmaier surged to life in the third set, summoning his very best to throw Tsitsipas off the

victory trail. The 83rd-ranked Altmaier, who took out then-world No. 8 Matteo Berrettini to reach the round of 16 in the 2020 French Open, struck gold in the third-set tiebreak, playing a series of breathtaking points to claim the stanza.

In the fourth set, the struggle continued, a trade of breaks leaving the antagonists on serve at 4-4, before Tsitsipas kicked into overdrive and powered through the finish line, finally dashing Altmaier's hopes in two hours and 43 minutes.

With a 15-3 record on his favourite surface in 2024 (49-12 since the start of 2022), 2024 Monte-Carlo champion Tsitsipas has once again emerged as a threat to make a deep run in Paris. Add in the fact that he's a former finalist who has made the second week in each of his last five appearances on the Parisian clay and you'd be remiss not to consider the Greek as a candidate to lift the Coupe des Mousquetaires next Sunday.