

NATION 3

DMK chief Stalin focused on Dravidian model that helped party win all 39 TN LS seats

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WORLD 6

Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams flies to space for a third time

DELHI AGE 16

'Cheating & extortion charges against Sunny Deol by producer Sourav Gupta totally baseless'



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Axar Patel with Rohit Sharma during the T20 World Cup against Ireland in New York on Wednesday. India beat -APIreland by 8 wickets. Report on Page 8

Court iunks Keiriwal bail plea, extends his custody till June 19

New Delhi: In yet another setback to Delhi chief minis-ter Arvind Kejriwal, a city court on Wednesday dismissed his application for interim bail on medical grounds in the money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja directed the Tihar jail authorities to take care of his medical needs in judicial custody. The judge also extended Mr Kejriwal's judicial custody till June 19. The court is scheduled to take up on June 7 his application seeking default bail in the case. The ED had opposed the plea, saying he campaigned throughout the polls but "now when he has to surrender, he suddenly claims to be ill". Full report on Page 2

BJP board will decide

next Odisha CM soon

Bhubaneswar: Amid speculations over who would be the next CM of Odisha. state BJP president Manmohan Samal said on Wednesday the party's parliamentary board will take a

NDA MPs to meet Prez Fri TDP lobbies for Speaker post Modi to take oath for 3rd term Sat; **TDP, JD-U seek plum Cabinet slots**

YOJNA GUSAI NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

official. Narendra Modi has been unanimously chosen as the leader of the NDA and is all set to form the government for the third consecutive time. The swearingin ceremony is expected to be held on Saturday. At the NDA meet on Wednesday, the TDP and the JD(U) categorically reaffirmed that they stand firm with the NDA. After the alliance meet-ing, Mr Modi posted on a "Met our valued NDA partners. Ours is an alliance that will further national progress and ful-fil regional aspirations. We will serve the 140crore people of India and work towards building a

Viksit Bharat." On June 7, the NDA MPs will meet President Droupadi Murmu and stake their claim to form the government. Speculation is rife that both the TDP and the JD(U) are reportedly bar-gaining hard for plum ministries in the new government. While the allies and the BJP are tight-lipped about Cabinet berths and portfolios, sources revealed that the TDP is bargaining for the Speaker's post, three Cabinet berths and two

ministers of state. The JD(U) has also thrown its hat in the ring and was reportedly eyeing for three Cabinet berths and special category status (SCS) for Bihar. The Shinde Sena and the LJP are reportedly asking for two Cabinet berths each. However, decisions on portfolios will only be taken by the BJP top



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu, JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar and Shiv Sena (Shinde) supremo Eknath Shinde during a meeting at 7, Lok Kalyan Marg in New Delhi on Wednesday. – PTI



President Droupadi Murmu speaks at a dinner hosted by her for the outgoing Union council of ministers at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday. - PTI

THE BJP-LED NDA pushed through the majority mark of 272 in the Lok Sabha by win-ning 293 seats. The BJP won 240 seats on its own, 32 seats less than a simple majority.

majority mark of 272 in the Lok Sabha by winning 293 seats. The BJP won 240 seats on its own, 32 seats less than a simple majority. The TDP won 16 of the 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh and the JD(U) won 12 of the 40 seats in Bihar.

After the meeting, Mr Naidu, who is yet again

Special dinner by Prez for outgoing Union council of ministers, Modi

New Delhi, June 5: President Droupadi Murmu hosted a dinner on Wednesday for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the outgoing council of ministers at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here. The event was also attended by vice-presi-dent Jagdeep Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla.

"President Droupadi Murmu hosted a dinner for the outgoing Union council of ministers, led by Prime Minister @narendramodi, at Rashtrapati Bhavan," the President's office

said in a post on X. Earlier in the day, Mr Modi tendered his resignation to the President, who accepted it and asked him to continue till the new government assumes office.

"The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, met the President today and tendered his resignation along with the council of ministers," an official statement - PTI More on Page 3 said.

Biden congratulates Modi on poll victory

all strive to ensure that our country continues to prosper and emerge as a global leader," posted Mr Naidu after the meeting. New Delhi: US President Joe Biden on Wednesday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the NDA for their victory in the LS polls. He also said the friendship between both countries is growing as both sides unlock a shared future of unlimited potential. More on Page 4



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge with Sonia Gandhi, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, CPI(M)'s Sitaram Yechury, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav and others after the INDIA bloc leaders' meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday. — PRITAM BANDYOPADHY. - PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

Kharge: INDIA to fight BJP govt, won't stake claim now

Will take steps to oust Modi at right time: Opp.

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

A day after the Lok Sabha results, the INDIA bloc leaders met in the national capital at the residence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge. The Opposition bloc has decided not to stake a claim to form the next government

Addressing the gathering of leaders in his opening remark, Mr Kharge said, "The INDIA bloc welcomes all parties that share its fundamental commitment to the values enshrined in the Preamble to our Constitution and to its many provisions for eco-nomic, social and political justice.

Thanking the INDIA ers, the president partners, bloc Congress president added, "I welcome all INDIA bloc partners. We fought well, fought unit-

edly and fought resolute-

AGE CORRESPONDENT

TMC MP urges Sebi: Probe

market spike-exit poll link

'Rally & crash look manipulated'



Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra arrive for the INDIA bloc meeting in New Delhi on Wednesday. – ASIAN AGE

Speaking with the of hate." media after the meeting, Mr Kharge said, "We held has dec discussions for two hours about the current political situation. We have received many suggestions...the constituents of

exaggeration of a whop-ping 116-158 per cent. This is way beyond any standard margin of error. On the back of exit polls, stock markets

spiked massively on

Monday. And after the

results yesterday, the

markets crashed to an unprecedented level. I

have asked Sebi to investigate if there are

entities that booked profits through selling on June 3 and made even more profits on

The Opposition alliance has decided to adopt a wait-and-watch approach. CPI leader D. Raja also said that the INDIA bloc is not going to stake a claim to form the governthe INDIA bloc thank the ment at the Centre. people of India... People have given a befitting reply to the BJP's politics In a joint statement, the INDIA bloc expressed **Turn to Page 4**

decision on it in a day or two and the new CM would take oath on June 10. Full report on Page 3

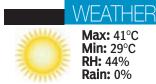
5 trekkers on way to U'khand lake die

Dehradun: Five trekkers on their way to Sahastratal in Uttarakhand died, while four were reported missing when the rescuers abandoned their operation on Wednesday due to bad weather. Sources said the chances of survival for the missing trekkers appear bleak. Full report on Page 4

COUNTERPOINT



Are you a candidate? I am an investor!



Forecast: Cloudy

ASTROGUIDE

Krodhi: Uttarayana Tithi: Vaishakha Bahula Amavasya till 6.10 pm Star: Rohini till 8.19 pm Varjyam: 12.38 pm to 2.10 pm Durmuhurtam: 10.05 am to 10.57 am; 3.17 pm to 4.09 pm Rahukalam: 12 pm to 1.30 pm SUNSET TODAY 7.17 PM SUNRISE TOMORROW 5.23 AM **MOONRISE TOMORROW 5.38 AM** MOONSET TODAY 7.25 PM

brass and the top leadership of alliance partners. BJP-led NDA through the pushed

back as the kingmaker, told the media, "We contested the election togeth-er. We are with NDA."

in the NDA meeting stated that the "government will continue working for Turn to Page 4

"Honouring the man-date given by the people

of our country, all the

NDA partners unani-mously endorsed Mr Modi as our coalition

leader at a meeting held

in Delhi today. Under his

able leadership, we shall

It is learnt that during

the meeting, Mr Kumar told the Prime Minister,

'Jaldi kijiye (act fast)"

He was reportedly asking

Mr Modi to form the gov-

The resolution adopted

ernment at the earliest.

BJP's Bihar chief targeted by JD-U

■ Nitish to press for special status ■ JD-U eyes railways, agriculture

SANJAY BASAK NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

The first casualty of the BJP's strategic alliance with the JD(U) appears to be the party's Bihar unit president Samrat Choudhary. Mr Choudhary also holds the position of deputy chief minister of Bihar. Sources revealed that long-standing ten-sions between Mr Choudhary and Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar could lead to sig-nificant changes within the BJP. The simmering rift has intensified speculation about a potential organisational reshuffle

in the state, with pressure mounting on the BJP to address the discord.

Starmer sparred Tuesday

over tax, the cost of living

and the country's creaking health system in an

inconclusive televised debate ahead of a July 4

election expected to make

one of them the country's

Mr Sunak tried to boost

his centre-right party's dismal outlook by urging

voters to back the stability

next leader.



Samrat Choudhary

With the Assembly elections due in April-May 2025 in Bihar, the JD(U) will now mount pressure on the Centre for special package and special category status (SSC) for the state. Pressure could also be mounted for reducing Central taxes levied on Bihar. JD(U) national secretary K.C. Tyagi on Wednesday made it clear that the JD(U) was firm on getting the special status



for the state. Speaking to a TV channel, JDU) channel, JDC, channel, JDC, Arvind spokesperson Nishad went on record saying that "special status for Bihar has been a long-standing demand." He said: "When Narendra Modi takes the oath as Prime Minister for the third time, the people of Bihar expect a special package.3

It was learnt that the Bihar CM did not meet Mr

Choudhary, who went to his residence Tuesday to congratulate him for the JD(U)'s spectacular performance in the LokSabha polls. The JD(U)won 12 Lok Sabha berths from Bihar. A senior party leader from the state between Mr Kumar and Mr Choudhury "is known to all in the state". It was also revealed that just before the Lok Sabha elections, Mr Kumar met Prime Minister Narendra Modi as he was somewhat "upset" over the "con-stant interference" of a

was learnt that some of the bureaucrats had

Turn to Page 4

NEW DELHI, JUNE 5 Trinamul Congress member of Parliament Saket Gokhale has written to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) demanding an investigation into stock market manipulasaid the "rift" tion through exit polls, specifically India Today-Axis MyIndia, which allegedly "mas-sively inflated" the seat numbers for the BJP-led NDA. particular BJP minister in the Bihar Cabinet. It

June 4 by short selling. "In Bengal, they pre-Have also asked to investigate whether any dicted 26-31 seats for the BJP which actually got just 12 seats. That's an of these entities have **Turn to Page 4**

Fadnavis offers to resign after LS poll debacle in Maharashtra

SONU SHRIVASTAVA MUMBAI, JUNE 5

A day after the drubbing in Lok Sabha elections, senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday requested the BJP leadership to relieve him from the post of the Maharashtra deputy chief minister stating that he is responsible for the poor performance in the state. Mr Fadnavis said that

he wants to work for the party organisation for the Maharashtra Assembly election in the next three

to four months. The BJP leader's remark came in the backdrop of lacklustre performance in the state, where the saffron party's tally dropped drastically from 23 seats in 2019 to just nine seats in the Lok Sabha election of this year.

Mr Fadnavis held a meeting at the party's state headquarter with the members of the state election management committee and core committee to analyse the party's poor performance in the Lok Sabha polls.

'I take full responsibility for the setback the BJP suffered in Maharashtra. Now I want to focus on assembly elections and that is why I am going to request the BJP's top leadership to relieve me from my responsibility in the government and give me a chance to work full time in the party," Mr Fadnavis said.

More on Page 3

Sunak, Starmer clash over taxes, NHS, cost of living in TV debate **London, June 5:** British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Opposition Labour Party leader Keir



Rishi Sunak Keir Starmer desperately needs change. Both acknowledged the UK's many problems, from fraying public services to a broken immigration sys-tem. But neither could say outright, when asked, where the money would

come from to fix them. Mr Sunak stressed his of continued Conservative government. Sir Keir Starmer hoped to cement stewardship of the econohis status as the favourite my, which has seen inflaby arguing that Britain tion fall to just over two

per cent from a peak of more than 11 per cent in late 2022. He said should stick with him because his 'clear plan' for the economy was working.

Mr Starmer said the election was a choice between more 'chaos and division' with the Conservatives and 'turning the page and rebuilding with Labour.'

Polls currently give centre-left Labour a double-digit lead. To win, Mr Starmer must persuade voters who previously backed the Tories that Labour can be trusted with the UK's economy, borders and security. -AP



Netherlands troops take part in a ceremony on the beach at Arromanches-les-Bains, northwestern France, on Wednesday. The ceremony is a part of the 'D-Day' commemorations marking the 80th anniversary of the World War II Allied landings in — ΔFP Normandy.

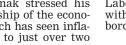












IN BRIFE

Bharadwaj asks CS

for report on desilting New Delhi: In view of approaching the monsoon season in the capital city, Delhi urban development minister Saurabh Bharadwaj on Wednesday wrote to the chief secretary seeking the status of the desilting of various drains within seven days of time frame. Reminding the waterlogging situation in the national capital of the last monsoon, Delhi minister in his letter expressed disappointment over the laxity in the preparedness ahead of the forthcoming monsoon. "You being the Head of bureaucracy in Delhi should be proactive in such important matters. It has been 15 days since I asked for the status report but neither have you submitted the status report nor have you sent any response to my U.O. Note This is unexpected from a senior IAS officer. You are, therefore, directed to submit the desired information by tomorrow i.e. 06.06.2024 evening so that all Departments meeting could be convened in this regard and departments can be given further direction", reads the letter.

Man shot at by 2

bike-borne assailants

New Delhi: A man was shot at by two bike borne assailants in Delhi's Old Seemapuri area, an official said on Wednesday, adding that they have identified two accused and further manhunt has been initiated to nab them. Sharing the details, the police said that on Wednesday, at 12:30 a.m. a police control room (PCR) call was received regarding firing in B- Block Old Seemapuri following which a police team rushed to the spot. Upon reaching the spot, the injured identified as Kaif, was already shifted to GTB hospital. "Kaif stated that he along with his friends Irfan and Suhail were sitting in the street ,suddenly two boys on a bike came there and started hurling abuses and started firing," said deputy commissioner of police (Shahdara) Surendra Choudhary, The DCP said that one of the bullets hit Kaif near his shoulder

5 labourers hurt in Noida wall collapse

Gurgaon: Five labourers were injured after a seven feet wall of a rented accommodation collapsed in sector

Delhi has fixed process, it votes for BJP in LS polls: Pathak **AAP: Victory margins narrow** in Delhi, Opp performed well

AVINASH PRABHAKAR NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

A day after the AAP-Congress alliance drew a blank in Delhi with the BJP registering a clean sweep, the AAP on on Wednesday said the victory margins were narrow this time even though the city once again preferred to elect the saffron party in the general election as it has been doing since

2014 AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sandeep Pathak said, "The INDIA bloc performed quite well despite the circumstances against them. In Delhi, the victory margins were narrow this time. Voters here prefer to vote for BJP in Lok Sabha polls and for AAP and other parties in Vidhan Sabha elections. They stuck to that pattern this time also. Asserting that the counseats".

elections and votes for

AAP and other parties in

the Vidhan Sabha elec-

tions. Delhi stuck to its

electoral practice this time too, but the margin of

his victory which used to

considerably this time. It

Addressing the media,

he said, "In the last polls,

we had won one seat and

our vote share was 7 per

close fight for two others.

We had aimed for more

seats but our vote share

INDIA bloc fought the

has increased."

try is above the party, Mr Pathak said, "We joined the INDIA alliance with was completely ready to change him," he added. this feeling and we put our heart and soul into making the alliance win. We worked harder than our capacity. Before this election, the BJP had challenged to destroy the AAP by breaking it. BJP put many of our leaders including chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in jail. The result of all these con-"BJP put in all its efforts. Even after that, it spiracies was that the people of the country rejected could not get a majority. On the other hand, the them. The AAP fought with full strength and 3 candidates became MPs elections in such adverse conditions and performed from Punjab, while we had

a very close contest on 2-3

Delhi-Toronto

bomb threat

NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

(IGI)

The

said.

flight gets hoax

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Panic gripped an Air

Canada Toronto-bound flight after the Indira

Gandhi International

received an email claim-

ing a bomb had been

planted on the airplane,

officials said on Wednesday. The threat

turned out to be a hoax.

International Airport Limited (DIAL) office

received an email at

Airport here



Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva with the party's victorious candidates in the Lok Sabha elections – PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

so well. For us, our coun-"I want to thank all the volunteers of the AAP. try is more important than our party. We fought the elections together The way they struggled even in such heat and such with strength. Our party difficult conditions is is strong and is ready to quite amazing. Delhi has a fight for the country," the fixed process, it votes for the BJP in the Lok Sabha AAP leader said.

The AAP had swept the 2022 Assembly polls in Punjab by winning 92 seats out of 117 and forming the government. But the party could not repeat the same performance in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls.

be in lakhs has reduced "We have performed much better than the last was clear that the public Lok Sabha elections. If you compare the results of the Lok Sabha elections with the results of the Assembly elections, we have got fewer votes, but cent. But this time, we won three seats and had a we have succeeded in our goal.

"Our aim was to stop the BJP. We stopped BJP in Punjab and Chandigarh. We have achieved our aim. We will work even harder in the future and bring good results," he said. The AAP leader asserted

that this election was not about the Aam Aadmi Party but the INDIA bloc.

Nota secures highest votes in **N-W Delhi seat**

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

Of the 45,554 'None of the Above' (Nota) votes cast in the seven city seats in the Lok Sabha elections, the Northwest Delhi constituency recorded the highest number of such votes at 8,984, the Election Commission data shows. In the constituency, BJP's Yogender Chandoliya won by a margin of 2,90,849 votes against Congress Udit Raj.

This election, however, saw a negligible dip in the total number of Nota votes to 45,554 from 45,629 in 2019.

The lowest count of Nota votes were cast in the New Delhi constituency where BJP's Bansuri Swaraj was pitted against AAP's Somnath Bharti. A total of 4,813 voters in the constituency opted for this option.

The Nota option gives voters the choice to reject all candidates in the fray. It was incorporated into the electronic voting machine (EVM) in September 2013 following

a Supreme Court verdict. In the Chandni Chowk constituency, where BJP's Praveen Khandelwal won with a lead of 89,325 votes, 5,563 electors opted for NOTA.

Setback to Kejriwal as court junks bail petition

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

In yet another setback to Delĥi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, a city court on Wednesday dismissed his application for interim bail on medical grounds in the money laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. Special judge Kaveri Baweja directed the Tihar Jail authorities to take care of his medical needs

in judicial custody. The judge also extended Mr Kejriwal's judicial custody till June 19. The court is scheduled to take up on June 7 his application seeking default bail in the case.

During the hearing on Saturday, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had opposed the application, saying he campaigned throughout the Lok Sabha elections but "now when he has to surrender, he suddenly claims to be ill."

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener surrendered on Sunday at the Tihar Jail as the tenure of his interim bail granted by the Supreme Court expired on June 1.

The case relates to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi governnow-scrapped ment's excise policy for 2021-22. The judge had observed that the application was for the grant of interim bail on medical grounds and not for the extension of the interim bail grant-

ed by the Supreme Court. The top court had on May Kejriwal's wife, Raghav meet him in Tihar Jail AGE CORRESPONDENT his cell.

daily.

NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal and AAP MP Raghav Chadha on Wednesday met him in Tihar Jail, official sources said.

after his interim bail granted by the Supreme Both were allowed to meet the AAP chief in the visitors' room at 1 pm for half an hour as per the jail rules, the sources said. As per the rules, two visitors can meet an inmate twice a week in a prison. A prisoner is also allowed to talk to his family members for five minutes daily on phone. A jail source also said the Delhi CM on Tuesday watched Sabha election Lok results on television in

10 granted 21-day interim bail to the chief minister to enable him to campaign during the Lok Sabha polls. It had directed him to surrender on June 2, a day after the last phase of the seven-phase poll was over. Mr Kejriwal campaigned in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Delhi, and Maharashtra after being released on interim bail.

During the hearing of his application, Mr Kejriwal's counsel told the court that he was ill and needed treatment.

The ED's counsel opposed the application, citing his campaign during the Lok Sabha polls and his "sudden" claim

about being ill. The ED alleged that Mr Kejriwal wanted 'cheat" the court. "If any tests are required, we'll provide all facilities

According to jail offi-

cials, Mr Kejriwal, a dia-

betic patient, has been looked after by two doc-

tors and given insulin

Mr Kejriwal surren-dered at the Tihar Jail

Court in the excise policy-

linked money laundering

case ended on June 1. He

was granted the relief for

campaigning in the Lok

Before surrendering on

Sunday, he had paid hom-

age to Mahatma Gandhi at

the Raj Ghat, offered prayers at the Hanuman temple in Connaught

Place and addressed AAP

leaders and workers at the

Sabha elections.

party office.

in jail. If required we will take (Kejriwal) to AIIMS or any hospital," it said.

Seeking relief, Mr Kejriwal's counsel told the court that despite his ill health, the AAP leader campaigned because that was the purpose for which the interim bail was grant-

ed by the Supreme Court. The court has, meanwhile, sought the ED's response by June 7 on the AAP chief's other application seeking regular bail in the case.

Fire engulfs eye hosp at Lajpat Nagar

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

A major fire broke out at a private eye hospital for children in Southeast Delhi's Lajpat Nagar area on Wednesday, officials said.

No one was injured in the incident, a Delhi Fire Services (DFS) official said. The police said it is suspected that a short circuit in an air conditioner on the ground floor of the two-storey building caused the fire.

Several videos of the hospital fire are doing the rounds on the

ing in the sky.



behind the building were damaged in the fire. All machines and furniture on both floors of the hospital were gutted in the fire, he said.

Fire officials said the building did not require a no-objection certificate as its height is below nine metres. Fire officials said the building did not require a no-objection certificate as its height is below nine metres.

The police said that they have a registered a case under relevant sections and started the probe to ascertain the actual cause of the fire

AAP entitled to space for party office, says HC

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

The Delhi high court on Wednesday said the AAP is entitled to space for a party office like other political parties and asked the Centre to take a decision on the issue within six weeks.

allotment of space for its office by the Centre on account of it being recognised as a national party. The party's counsel had argued that a unit on DDU Marg, which is presently with one of its city ministers

THE AAP is seeking

82 area on Wednesday, police said. The injured were admitted to a civil hospital and the police are investigating the matter, they added. According to the police, the incident took place at around 6:20 pm when around 5 labourers were taking a bath near the wall when it collapsed and they got buried under deb ris. People nearby started to rescue the labourers and informed the police, they said. "The injured are being treated in a hospital and no casualty was reported so far. We are looking into the matter," the police said.

DELHI METRO BHAVAN IS NOW CARBON NEUTRAL

New Delhi: The DMRC headquarters, Metro Bhavan, in central Delhi received carbon neutral certification on the World Environment Day. Metro Bhavan received this certification from Earthood, a world's leading validation and verification company in the carbon market. The DMRC said the milestone follows the earlier certification of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation's staff quarters in Nodia sector-50 as carbon neutral. As per the statement, it is a significant step in the organisation's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint and combating climate change. In line with the government's target to achieve net zero emissions by 2070, the DMRC continues to work for carbon neutrality, it stated. The certification of Metro Bhawan as carbon neutral for the fiscal year 2023-24 under the Public Accountability Standard (PAS) 2060 is a testament to these efforts, the statement added. "The DMRC has effectively reduced all greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated from Metro Bhawan through various innovative and ecofriendly initiatives," the DMRC said in the statement.

10.50 pm on Tuesday stating that a bomb had been planted in the Delhi-Toronto Air Canada flight, the officials said.

"Following standard The call regarding the security protocols, a thorfire at Eye7 Chaudhary Eye ough inspection was con-Centre on Ring Road was ducted and nothing susreceived at 11.30 am and 12 picious was found." a fire tenders were rushed to senior police officer said. the spot. Later, more fire Legal action in the tenders were pressed into matter is being taken, he service, officials said. They said those inside

Delhi

social media. One of the videos showed the hospital building engulfed in flames and

thick plumes of smoke risthe hospital rushed out as soon as the fire broke out. Deputy chief fire officer S.K. Dua said a total of 20 fire tenders were deployed to douse the fire, which was controlled by 1.10 pm. The raging flames spread to a cafeteria located on the third floor of an adjacent building but they were

Firefighters douse a fire which broke out at an eye hospital in Lajpat Nagar on New Delhi on Wednesday. - PTI

soon brought under control by firefighters, he said. Another officer said a cooling operation was underway at the spot. All machines and furniture on both floors of the hospital were gutted in the fire, he said. The officer said three

motorcycles parked

Last month, a massive blaze at a hospital in Vivek Vihar killed six newborns The Delhi government has directed all state-run and private health facilities to conduct a fire audit, even as several safety lapses have come to light at the five-bed neonatal centre in Vivek Vihar with police also investigating why 27 oxygen cylinders were kept there

Justice Subramonium ought to be temporarily Prasad said "pressure" or non-availability of allotted to it. house in the general pool cannot be a reason for rejection of the request.

national capital for the construction of its office "The fact that there is a on account of being huge pressure cannot be recognised as a national the only reason for the party or allotment of a respondents to deny the housing unit on a licence petitioner (AAP) its right basis for the time being. The petition seeking to be allotted an accommodation from the GPRA for allotment of land to the setting up its party office," AAP is pending in the

In March, the Supreme

Court had granted the

AAP time till June 15 to

vacate its Rouse Avenue

office after noting that the

land was allotted to the

Delhi high court for expanding judicial infra-

The Arvind Kejriwal-led

party has said in the

court that since the land

has been allotted by the

authorities for the con-

struction of office prem-

ises to all other national

high court.

structure.

the court said in its order. The court said, "They are entitled to a house from the general pool. Mere pressure or nonavailability is no reason to reject because pressure is always there and houses have always been allotted to political parties.'

The AAP is seeking allotment of space for its office by the Centre on account of it being recognised as a national party. Considering that the

AAP needs to vacate its current office in Rouse Avenue by June 15, the party's counsel had argued that a unit on DDU Marg, which is presently with one of its city ministers, ought to be temporarily allotted to it.

Justice Prasad, however, said the party cannot claim entitlement to the DDU Marg property.

The judge said that if the AAP's representation is rejected by the Centre, the party can take appro-

Nameof

parties in central locations in New Delhi, it is incumbent upon them to ensure that a similar allotment is also made to it in accordance with its entitlement as per the Centre's policy. The Central govern ment lawyer had opposed the petition and said AAP was offered land in the Saket area in 2014 for its offices but the same was not accepted and, cur-

priate steps. The AAP had moved

rently, allotting a housing unit from the pool was not feasible due to acute shortage and the property

the court last year seek-ing a piece of land in the be given to it. at DDU Marg also cannot NORTHERN RAILWAY 7.00 NOTICE INVITING TENDER 30-Elect-28-T-2024-25-E3 work and its Electrical work in connection with (i) Electrical sub-estimate for augmentation of hostel building at electric training center Ghaziabad. (ii) Construction of T&P room, Kitchen & stores in first

floor above Drug s	floor above Drug store in the section of SSE/W/TH under ADEN/E-III				
Approx cost of the works in :-	Rs. 39.93 lacs				
Address of the office :-	Sr. Divit Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.				
Earnest Money :-	Rs. 79900.00				
Date & time of submission of ter	nder :- 28.06.2024, 12.00 Hrs.				
Opening of tender :-	28.06.2024, 12.00 Hrs.				
Website & notice board :-	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divi. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi. 1679/2024				
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE					

MIT retains top rank for 13th time, IIT-Bombay climbs to 118, IIT-Delhi is 150th AGE CORRESPONDENT Technology (MIT) retained NEW DELHI, JUNE 5 the top rank globally for

tors, ranking among the top 22 per cent universi-ties globally.

Out of the nine indicators, DU featured prominently among 270 institutions in four categories globally—44th in employ-ment outcomes, 220th in sustainability, 225th in academic reputation, and 269th in employer reputation.

The Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in Bombay and Delhi are among the top 150 universi-Massachusetts Institute of vice-chancellor

OUT OF the nine indicators, DU featured the 13th time, according to

DU leads among India's varsities in QS Ranking

prominently among 270 the QS World University institutions in four categories globally-44th in employment outcomes, 220th in sustainability, 225th in academic reputation, and 269th in

employer reputation Singh said, "DU is constantly moving forward due to the faculty members and students of the university and their important contribution to the academic environment and nation building.'

Reflecting on this achievement, Mr Singh emphasised that among India's top 10 institutions, DU dis-400 with the University of Delhi (ranked 328th) and played the most significant Anna University (ranked progress The University of Delhi 383rd) making their debut

ranked 328th in the QS World University Ranking in this tier. outcomes score is 10 points below the global 2025, improving from its 2023 ranking of 407. Boasting 46 universities average of 23.8, reflecting

in this edition of the rankings, the Indian higher education system is the seventh most represented globally and the third in Asia, trailing only Japan (49

universities) and China (Mainland) (71 universities) India has one more uni-

lights the need to prioritise versity within the top 150 and strengthen sustainabilrankings—IIT-Delhi ity initiatives within the (150th). There are two more higher education system, entries in the world's top a senior QS official said.

Rai urges rooftop plantation to combat heat, air pollution

environment minister Gopal Rai on Wednesday urged residents to combat the severe heat wave and pollution gripping the city by planting trees on their rooftops on the occasion of World Environment Day. Planting trees on rooftops can help mitigate the impact of heat and pollution, Mr Rai said while participat-ing in a tree plantation event in Civil Lines here to mark the day.

should plant as many trees as possible on the rooftops of their houses. This will help reduce both pollution and the cent, up from 20 per cent

'This time, the entire

AI Express announces flights from Hindon Airport August 1

Air India Express will

operate two daily-direct

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

Air India Express on Wednesday announced operations from Hindon Airport, Ghaziabad, with 28 weekly direct flights connecting Bengaluru, Goa, and Kolkata. Flight operations will commence from August 1, 2024. & spiritual destinations in The airline said it is the Uttar Uttarakhand, Himac-hal

first airline to operate from two airports in the Pradesh and Haryana can National Capital Region.

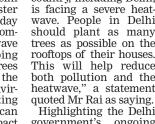
flights from Bengaluru and a daily direct flight each from Kolkata and Goa to Hindon. "Guests travelling from these cities to Central, North and East Delhi, as well as other destinations in the National Capital Region, as well as a host of tourist

Pra-desh,

now conveniently access these flights, while mitigating traffic congestion in the NCR," the airline said in a statement.

Air India Express is operating over 280 flights a week from Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) in New Delhi. Operating from Hindon Airport, ensuring enhanced connectivity to and from other cities in Western UP, Uttarakhand and Haryana

New Delhi, June 5: Delhi country, including Delhi



"India's

employment

the need to bridge the gap

between job requirements

and graduates' skills and

to create more opportuni-

"Additionally, India's sus-

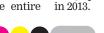
tainability score is also

about 10 points below the

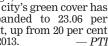
global average and high-

ties for new graduates.









heatwave," a statement quoted Mr Rai as saying. Highlighting the Delhi government's ongoing tree plantation campaign, Mr Rai noted that the city's green cover has expanded to 23.06 per





Ranking 2025. While IIT-Bombay climbed from 149 last year to 118, up by 31 ranks, IIT Delhi improved its rank by 47 points to bag the 150th

position globally. According to the coveted ranking published by the London-based higher edu-Quaccation analyst, quarelli Symonds (QS), the University of Delhi stood out for the employability of its graduates.

Congratulating the students and teachers on the ties in the world while the occasion, Delhi University Yogesh



SHORT TAKES

Tamang to take oath

as Sikkim CM June 9

Gangtok: The Sikkim Krantikari Morcha supremo Prem Singh Tamang on Wednesday said he would take oath as the chief minister of the state for the second term on June 9. The swearing-in ceremony of Mr Tamang and his Cabinet will be held at Paljor Stadium in the state capital Gangtok. "The swearing ceremony of the new council of ministers will take place on June 9 at Paljor Stadium, as it had happened five years ago," he told a media outlet here. A large number of people from various parts of Sikkim as well as SKM cadres are expected to attend the programme, he said. Mr Tamang, who spearheaded the ruling SKM's landslide victory in the Assembly polls and the lone Lok Sabha seat in Sikkim, thanked the people for reposing faith in the party yet again. SKM won 31 of the 32 Assembly seats in the polls which occurred alongside the LS polls. - PTI

MP's best-ever

vote share for BJP

Bhopal: The BJP has achieved many firsts in the 2024 general election in Madhya Pradesh. Besides winning all the 29 seats in the state, in a first for the party, the BJP has also secured the best-ever vote share and registered the highest average victory margin in the polls. The party got a vote share of 59.24 per cent in the just-concluded Lok Sabha polls. "This is the best-ever vote share secured by any party in any general election in Madhya Pradesh so far. This is one of the many firsts the saffron party has achieved in the recently held LS polls," state BJP secretary Rajneesh Agrawal told this newspaper on Wednesday. The party has been recording growth in its vote share in the last three LS polls. In the 2019 and 2014 LS polls in Madhya Pradesh, it secured vote shares of 58 per cent and 54.08 per cent, respectively

Didi will meet new TMC MPs on June 8

Kolkata: West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee called a meeting of newly elected Lok Sabha MPs of TMC on Saturday, party sources said. The TMC maintained its dominance in the state as Ms Banerjee led her party to a resounding victory by bagging 29 of the 42 Lok Sabha seats. whereas the principal Opposition BJF was down to 12 and the Congress to one seat. "The party supremo has convened a meeting of our newly elected MPs on Saturday. During the meeting, the political situation will be discussed," a TMC leader said. Ms Banerjee had walked out of the INDIA bloc in West Bengal in January, but asserted that the TMC would continue to be part of the Opposition alliance at the national level. - PTI

No anti-incumbency at **Centre-level, says Modi**

'Poll verdict result of individual candidates' delivery'

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

President

of Cabinet.

the

requested

Insisting that challenges give him strength, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday told his Cabinet colleagues that one should always seek lessons from challenges. office till the new Chairing the last meeting of the outgoing Union Cabinet. which recommended the dissolution of new government formed," the Part the 17th Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister also said that it was BJP patriarch Bhawan said. Sources said that Mr Modi told his Cabinet collate Atal Behari Vajpayee, from whom he learnt to

leagues that one should take on challenges. Later, Droupadi always seek lessons from Murmu dissolved the 17th challenges. With the BJP Lok Sabha on the advice lacking numbers on its own and dependent on Prime Minister Modi called on President Murmu at Rashtrapati alliance partners, mainly in Parliament and policy decisions, the PM, sources Bhavan and tendered his said, told the Cabinet colleagues that a new narraresignation along with the Union council of ministive is now being created ters. "The President accepted by the Opposition, and e President and resignation and the Prime that it will be a difficult situation for the new gov-

ernment. 'This is not the first Minister and the Union time that there is going to council of ministers to

(NDA) won a majority in

Lok Sabha elections.

the recently concluded

While the NDA is com-

fortably above the majori-

ty mark of 272 in the 543-

member Lok Sabha, the

BJP, which won 240 seats,

has fallen short of the

Meanwhile, Mr Modi

has been unanimously

elected as the NDA leader

during a meeting of the

alliance here, thus paving

the way for him to take

oath for a third straight

term as the head of the

NDA MPs will meet on

June 7 to formally elect

then meet the President

minister

and

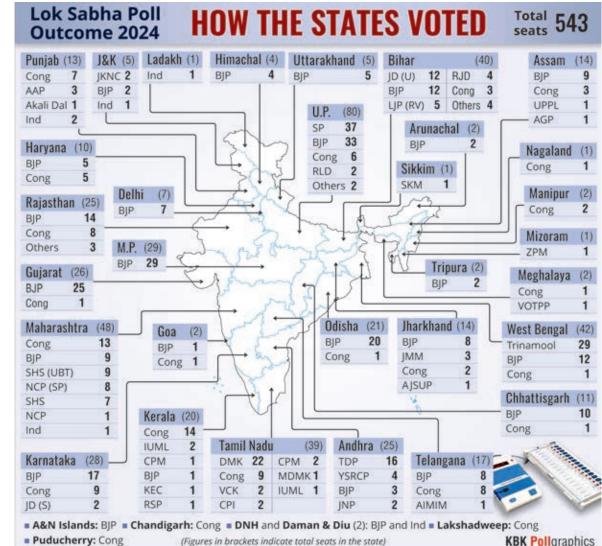
the

Jitan

coalition government.

PRESIDENT MURMU be a coalition government. We should not take accepted after Prime these narratives seriously, Minister Modi tendered and rather work together her his resignation along for the nation's interest. with the council of min-Challenges give me strength, more strength to isters and requested the work for the nation," Mr PM and his council of Modi said in the meeting. ministers to continue in The Prime Minister sources said, also told the government is formed Union Cabinet ministers that victory and loss are continue in office till the part of life; but what is more important is that is

the Rashtrapati one should not forget his aim of working for the national interest. In a message to BJP leaders over the party's performance in the Lok Sabha polls, Mr Modi said there was no anti-incumbency at the Central government level, but it was against individual candidates over several issues. It has been learnt that the LS poll results were also discussed during the Cabinet meeting, which was followed by a meeting of the council of ministers. The term of the current 17th Lok Sabha ends on June 16.



Taking responsibility of poll debacle, want to strengthen BJP for Maha polls'

Prez hosts dinner for Modi, Central ministers' council

Delhi, New June President Droupadi Murmu hosted a dinner on Wednesday for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the outgoing council ministers at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here. The event was also attended by vice-presi-dent Jagdeep Dhankhar magic number for the first time since 2014. and Lok Sabha Speaker

Om Birla. 'President Droupadi Murmu hosted a dinner for the outgoing Union Council of Ministers, led Minister Prime @narendramodi, at Rashtrapati Bhavan," the @narendramodi, President's office said in

a post on "X" Earlier in the day, Mr Modi tendered his resig-Modi as their leader and the alliance leaders will nation to the President, who accepted it and asked to submit their letters of him to continue till the support, former Bihar new government assumes chief

founder office. of 'Prime Hindustani Minister Awam Narendra Modi met the Morcha (Secular) President today and ten-Ram Manjhi said after dered his resignation attending the meeting. In a related develop-ment, the President disalong with the Council of Ministers," an official solved the current Lok statement said. The BJP-led National Sabha on the advice of the Alliance PM-led Cabinet. Democratic

Maha fiasco: Fadnavis offers to quit as dy CM SONU SHRIVASTAVA to four months. The BJP leader's remark MUMBAI, JUNE 5

A day after the drubbing in Lok Sabha elections, senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday requested the BJP leadership to relieve him from the post of the Maharashtra deputy chief minister, stating that he is responsible for the poor performance in the state. Mr Fadnavis said he wants to work for the party organisation for Maharashtra Assembly election in the next three

came in the wake of the lacklustre performance in the state, where the saffron party's tally dropped drastically from 23 seats in 2019 to just nine seats in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections.

Mr Fadnavis held a meeting at the party state headquarter with the members of the state election management committee and core committee to analyse the BJP's poor performance in the LS polls. After a more than two



Devendra Fadnavis

hours long meeting, the BJP leader told the reporters that he was taking full responsibility for the poll debacle of the party. "I am fully taking

Bhawan, where

senior leaders of

the responsibility for the the people in order to debacle of the party in Maharashtra as I am leading the BJP.... I am going to request the party leadership to relinquish me from the government and give me an opportunity to work full time for the party organisation.... I will also meet the party leadership in this regard," he said. The BJP leader admitted

that he needs to take corrective measures for the upcoming Assembly election. "We will chalk out new strategies along with our party leaders and go to obtain the trust of the people," Mr Fadnavis said. Citing the causes of the the performance, he said that they failed to counter the Opposition's narrative

that the BJP wants to change the Constitution. 'Besides this, there are multiple reasons for the debacle. These reasons include our inability to assess anti-incumbency against our candidates. Due to some delay related onion export policy, we have faced a setback in the onion belt," he said.

Divide in Mahayuti out in open after heavy defeat in polls

to us

BHAGWAN PARAB MUMBAL JUNE 5 Following heavy defeat in said. "Our alliance partners didn't work for us and their votes were not transferred

"Whatever votes we got (in

Baramati) was due to Ajit

Pawar's individual efforts. Anybody will feel upset with this defeat," he added.

Mr Mitkari also claimed

internal sabotage by saying

that NCP MLAs from the

Shirur seat did not con-

tribute to the party's cause. "Most of the Assembly

segments falling under the

Shirur Lok Sabha con-

stituency have NCP MLAs,

but they did not work for

the party's candidate, lead-

The Shirur seat in the

Pune district was won by

NCP(SP) candidate Amol

Shivajirao

ing to his defeat," he said.

'SAMAJWADIS SUCCEEDED IN STOPPING BJP'

Kannauj (UP), June 5: A day after his party's impressive show in the Lok Sabha elections. Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday said the aim of the "Samajwadis" was to stop the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Uttar Pradesh

and they "succeed-ed" in it. Talking to reporters here after taking the victory certificate, the Samajwadi Party (SP) chief said. " thank the people of

Kannauj, who sup-Akhilesh ported positive politics and gave

Yadav

the samajwadis another chance." "The aim of samajwadis was to stop the BJP and they succeeded in this fight," he said. This was possible as the party followed the path shown by party founder Mulavam Singh Yaday, Mr Yaday said, adding that the SP emerged as the largest party in the Lok Sabha polls in Uttar Pradesh. "People have given votes in the hope to save the Constitution, reservation and democracy and remove those doing negative politics," he said. The SP, which leads the INDIA bloc in UP. alone got 37 seats this time. becoming the single largest party in the politically crucial state. The BJP suffered heavy losses, managing to win 33 seats. - PTI



Shiv Sena(UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray meets supporters in Mumbai on Wednesday.

'BJP board will pick CM candidate in Odisha'

AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 5

registering

After

cloud nine now.

ernment in the state.

people had tremendous faith in PM Modi and they voted for a change in thumping victory in both the state.

"It was Odisha people Lok Sabha and Assembly who were fighting the polls in the state, the BJP's state unit of Odisha appears to be on elections, as they were fed up with the corrupt gov-ernance of the BJD. The The party, while celeelection was to restore brating the victory across 'Odia Asmita', culture the state, is also making and tradition. The people trusted the BJP's assurall preparations for formation of the new govances, and the new government will certainly Speaking to the media work for them. People on Wednesday, the BJP have rejected the idea of a president of Odisha unit non-Odia CM and voted

Manmohan Samal said for the BJP," said Samal. To a query on who will be the next chief minister of the state, Mr Manmohan said the party's parliamentary board will take a decision on the matter in the next one or two days. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier announced the date for the oath-taking ceremony for the

party's CM on June 10. "The selection of CM candidate will be based on the criteria set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi,"Mr Samal said.

Patnaik resigns from CM post AGE CORRESPONDENT BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 5

Odisha chief minister Patnaik on

the was cade and reached the Raj Tuesday.

the Lok Sabha polls, the knives are out in the Mahayuti alliance with the Ajit Pawar's NCP accusing its alliance partners — the BJP and the Eknath Shindeled Shiv Sena — of noncooperation Maharashtra during the elections. The Shinde group, too, blamed the prepoll survey done by the BJP for the defeat.

Baramati was a prestige seat for the NCP, where party chief Ajit Pawar had fielded his wife Sunetra against his cousin Supriya Sule, the daughter of NCP(SP) head Sharad Pawar. The contest was expected to be close, but Ms Sule scored thumping victory, defeating Ms Sunetra by

the BJP was the focal point in the actual allotment of seats. Many seats were changed because of it, which led to defeats,' Sanjay Shirsat, an MLA of "humiliating defeat", he the Shinde group said.

TN CM focuses on Dravidian model of govt and exposing of BJP's true colour '40 out of 40': Stalin's INDIA campaign bears fruit

M.K. Stalin

elections.

AGE CORRESPONDENT CHENNAI, JUNE 5

Tamil Nadu chief minister M.K. Stalin spear-headed a landslide victory, winning all the 39 constituencies in the state and the one seat in Puducherry along with the allies of the DMK with the clarion call in Tamil "Narpathum Namadhe" (all 40 are ours ious - meaning the 40 constituencies). The alliance winning all the 40 seats is a source of strength for the INDIA front in the Tamil just-concluded 2024 LS

elections. In fact, even before the announcement of the elections, it was Mr Stalin who united all the Opposition parties at the national level and formed the INDIA coalition

against the BJP and laid the foundation for the

resounding victory of the alliance at the national level today. He constantly encouraged the coalition parties to work unitedly. He had an election strategy in place a year before the commencement of the elections and he presided over a meeting of electoral agents in varconstituencies

across Tamil Nadu. He met his Tamil Nadu allies paign, Mr Stalin planned and assigned 50 per cent and announced the schedule of the campaign. He of the 40 constituencies of Nadu and motivated the members of Puducherry to them. the DMK and allies to Constituencies that were understand the imporcakewalks were assigned to the allies. The DMK tance of winning the parliamentary Further, he issued stateleaders and cadre were made to contest in conments and letters in the stituencies that were relapress and media creating tively tougher. interest among the party Leading up to the cammembers.

Then he plunged into election tours and rallies. Mr Stalin reiterated his vision to save India and the rights of the people, which largely contributed to the victory of the INDIA bloc. There were two parts to

the campaign. One spoke of the Dravidian model of government, highlighted by the DMK credo: "We do what we say, we say what we do". According to it, Mr Stalin implemented the Vidiyal Payanam Scheme and the Magalir Kalaignar Urimai Scheme, providing ₹1,000 every month to 1.5 crore women. Schemes like "Pudhumai Pen, Tamizh Pudhalvan, Naan Mudhalvan and Minister's Chief Breakfast Scheme" laid emphasis on education

for children. Other people-friendly schemes of the chief minister include "Makkaludan Mudhalvar, ister Makkalai Thed Maruthuvam and

Inniyur Kaapom Nammai Kaakum 48". The second part of his campaign was to show the true colours of the BJP. He said the BJP government had failed to fulfil any of its election promises, including setting up the Madurai AIIMS. He told the people that the BJP had trampled upon the values of a democray, socialism and equality enshrined in the Constitution.

In addition, he drew attention to BJP promoting religious chauvinism and dividing the people of India.



Kolhe, who defeated NCP nominee Adhalrao-Patil. 'The pre-poll survey by over 1.5 lakh votes. NCP leader Amol Mitkari said the BJP and the Shinde-led Sena did not work for Ms Sunetra's victory. Calling Baramati a

19 Ajit camp MLAs in contact with Pawar senior, claims kin

AGE CORRESPONDENT MUMBAI, JUNE 5

Pawar's grand Sharad nephew Rohit Pawar on Wednesday claimed that 19 MLAs from the Ajit Pawar faction are in contact with the senior Pawar.

He said it will be Sharad Pawar's decision whether to bring them back in the party or not. However, the Ajit Pawar faction rub-bished the claim. Its senior leader Chhagan Bhujbal said though the party did not get expect the recent LS poll result, everyone will

work harder for the state Assembly elections. Rohit Pawar's remark

came a day after the LS election result, in which his party won eight seats in Maharashtra. An insider in NCP (SP) said that Rohit Pawar's claim has substance. By the end of June, many MLAs of Ajit Pawar's NCP would shift their loyalty towards Sharad Pawar. Earlier in the day, Rohit

who is an MLA from Karjat-Jamkhed constituency, said 18 to 19 MLAs from the Ajit's party are in touch with the party chief or him.

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Sr. No	Equipment/ Item Name	Original Bid	Revised Bid Submission Date		Revised Bid Opening Date	Deptt. Name
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All	other details shall	remain the	same.	Pr	ofessor In-C	harge (EP)





resignation, marking the end of his illustrious career of 24 years as chief minister of a state. At 11.33 pm, Mr Patnaik left his residence Naveen Niwas — in a car-

his party had arrived a few minutes before, and offered his Naveen Patnaik resignation letter. Mr Patnaik resigned from the CM post, follow-

ing his party Biju Janata Dal's (BJD) drubbing in Odisha Assembly polls, the result of which announced

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pq

SHORT TAKES Plants as 'prasad' at **Vaishno Devi shrine**

Jammu: Devotees visiting the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine will now get a plant as a "prasad", the shrine board said on Wednesday. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) launched a new initiative under which they will offer plants to pilgrims from a newly established nursery "Vaishnavi Vatika" The nursery was launched by Board's CEO Anshul Garg in Katra, the base camp of the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine, on the occasion of the World Envir-onment Day. Situated in the Trikuta hills of Reasi district, the Mata Vaishno Devi cave shrine is one of the most revered sites in Jammu and Kashmir, attracting nearly one crore devotees annually. Mr Garg highlighted the board's ongoing commitment to ecological preservation, including water conservation, afforestation, and water treatment efforts. "I congratulate everyone. We are providing plants to devotees as prasad from our nursery," Mr Garg said. – PTI

9 Maoists arrested in C'garh's Bijapur

Bijapur: Nine Naxalites, 5 of them allegedly involved in triggering an IED blast targeting the car of a police official last month, have been arrested from two places in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said on Wednesday. While five Naxalites were arrested from Mandem-Kuprel villages under Farsegarh police station, 4 others were held from Madded police station, the police said. All the arrested cadres were involved in incidents of murder, planting an IED to target security personnel, extorting illegal levy and putting up Maoist posters, it said. Those held from Farsegarh, identified as Guddu Kumma, Budhu Kumma, Suresh Oyam, Vinod Korsa and Munna Kumma, were allegedly involved in triggering an IED blast targeting a car in which 2 cops were travelling in Farsegarh on May 15, it said. - PTI

32 diarrhoea cases in HP dist, total 242

Hamirpur: Thirty-two fresh cases of diarrhoea were reported in five villages in Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur, taking the total number of patients in the district to 242, an official said on Wednesday. Diarrhoea has spread to 12 villages in five gram panchayats - Lambloo, Bafrin, Chamned, Gasota and Pandher — having a population of around 4,550. Chief medical officer Dr. R.K. Agnihotri said 32 fresh cases of diarrhoea were detected till Tuesday night, taking the total number of patients in Hamirpur district to 242. While 103 patients were discharged after medication. 14 are hospitalised and 125 are taking treatment at home, he said. Agnihotri said six water samples were collected by the health department and sent to the Hamirpur Medical College for analysis. - PTI

'Historic' polls, ties growing: Biden greets Modi

Putin speaks to PM, Macron congratulates 'dear friend', vows continued ties

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

United States President Joe Biden on Wednesday congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the NDA poll victory while describing the Indian elec-tions as "historic". He added that the friendship between the two nations is growing. Taking to social media platform X, Mr Biden said, "Congratul-ations to PM Narendra Modi and the NDA on their victory, and the nearly 650 million voters in this historic election. The friendship between our nations is only growing as we unlock a shared future of unlimited potential.' In a separate statement,

the US state department said, "The United States congratulates PM Modi and the NDA... With approximately 650 million voters casting their ballots over the past six weeks, these elections represent

Speculation over foreign heads at PM oath function AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

The government is considering inviting foreign leaders once again to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who is poised to soon begin a third term in office.

It may be noted that foreign leaders from India's neighbourhood had attended the previous two swearing-in cer-emonies of PM Modi in 2014 and 2019.

The presence of for-eign leaders at the forthcoming third swearingin ceremony likely to take place on Saturday is understood to be under active consideration and preparations may already have begun as there are just three days to go if the ceremony takes place on Saturday evening. The govern-ment is also apparently confident that foreign leaders will attend the ceremony even if invited at such short notice. The election results were declared just on

Congratulations to PM Narendra Modi and the NDA on their victory, and the nearly 650 million voters in this historic election. The friendship between our nations is only growing as we unlock a shared future of unlimited potential. - Joe Biden, US President

the largest exercise in democracy in human histoon Wednesday to PM Modi We commend Indian on phone and congratulatry. voters, poll workers, civil ed him on the electoral sucsociety, and journalists for commitment and their contributions to vital India's democratic process-Blinken also extended his congratulations to PM Modi.

Russian

the political course pures and institutions. We look sued by the Indian leaderforward to continuing to ship, recognition of the further our partnership with the Indian governresults achieved in the socio-economic development to promote prosperiment of the country and ty and innovation, address strengthening of its interthe climate crisis, and national Moscow said. ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region." US secretary of state Antony French

Emmanuel Macron too congratulated Mr Modi and referred to him as a 'dear friend" while pledg-President ing to continue strengthen-

ing the strategic ties

between both nations. Till Wednesday evening, at least 60 global leaders had congratulated PM Modi, who replied to several messages on social media platform X. After Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu congratulated him, the PM thanked him Vladimir Putin also spoke and said he looked forward "enhancing India-Israel friendship and regional cooperation in the interest cess. The Russian President also said that of peace, security and pros-perity". It may be noted this "reflects the support of that Israel is currently involved in a conflict in Gaza that has lasted more

than eight months. Mr Modi also thanked Ukranian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for his congratulatory mes-sage and said India "will continue to support peace, security and prosperity for everyone in the region", an obvious reference to ongoing global efforts to resolve Russia-Ukraine conflict



authority",

President

People wade through a waterlogged street after rain at Chandmari area in Guwahati on Wednesday.

Law to keep them from attending proceedings 2 jailed MPs in new LS can take oath after nod from authorities

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5 Two newly elected Lok

Sabha candidates — radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Sheikh Abdul Rashid, currently lodged in prison on terror charges, are giving Security Act and sent to rise to an unusual situation for the 18th Lok the Dibrugarh prison in Sabha to be formed in the Assam coming days. While the law will keep them from attending the proceedings of the new House, they do have the constitutional right to take oath as Members of Parliament, the Constitution expert said. Sheikh Abdul Rashid, also known as Engineer Rashid, has been lodged in Tihar jail since August 9, 2019, on charges of terror seek financing. Singh was arrested in April 2023 under the National

BJP's Bihar chief

targeted by JD-U

■ Continued from Page 1 complained to Mr Kumar of this BJP

minister's "interference" at various lev-

Meanwhile, the names of candidates

indicated that the JD(U) "will remain

part of the NDA", party functionaries

indicated that "everything will depend

on relations between both the parties".

On the issue of the JD(U)'s terms with

Once they have taken the oath, they will have to to prison, he return

added. To further explain the legalities, Mr Achari cited Article 101(4) of the Constitution which deals with the absence of members from both Houses of Parliament without prior sanction of the Chair.

Meloni, Zelenskyy, other global heads congratulate PM on win

the successful holding of

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and even neighbouring nation Maldives' President Mohamed Muizzu were among the foreign leaders who issued congratulatory messages to PM Narendra Modi who is expected to soon assume office for the third term in power. Leaders of neighbouring nations Bhutan, Nepal and SL had already congratulated PM Modi late on Tuesday evening. Ukrainian Preside Volodymyr Zelenskyy President who has been persuading India to attend the Peace Summit to be held in mid-June in Switzerland to resolve the Russia-Ukraine conflict — said. "I welcome

the world's largest democratic elections in India. Congratulations to PM Modi for the third consecutive victory in India's parliamentary elections. I wish the people of India peace and prosperity, and I hope for continued cooperation between our coun-tries. India and Ukraine share common values and a rich history. May our partnership continue to thrive... Everyone n the world recognises the sig-nificance and weight of India's role in global affairs. It is critical that we all work together to ensure a just peace for all nations. In this regard, we also look forward to seeing India attend the Peace Summit.' Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu, per-ceived to be a pro-China

leader who is now trying to mend fences with New Delhi, said, "Congratulati-ons to PM Modi on the success for the third consecutive term. I look forward to working together to advance our shared interests in pursuit of shared prosperity and stability for

our two countries." Italian PM Giorgia Meloni, who shares a strong camaraderie with Mr Modi, said "Congratulations @narendramodi on the victory and my warmest wishes for good work. Certain that we will continue to work together to strengthen the friendship that unites Italy and India and consolidate cooperation on the various issues that bind us, for the wellbeing of our nations and our people.'

NIA charges

Sena chief's

murder case

AMRESH SRIVASTAVA

The

NEW DELHI/IAIPUR, IUNE 5

National

Gogamedi in

12 in Karni

Gen. Pande visits Thal Sena Bhavan work site Complex to be completed by 2025 AGE CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

chief Indian Army General Manoj Pande, on Wednesday visited the under construction Thal Sena Bhawan (GRIHA 4) building in Delhi building in Delhi Cantonment to oversee the progress. Army chief also inaugurated a stateof-the-art living barrack for troops in Delhi Cantonment.

Thal Sena Bhawan, a cornerstone project aimed at modernising infrastructure for the Indian Army, has been under construction since 15th March 2023.

The construction is scheduled to be completed by June 2025. Gen Pande was updated on the state of construction which is progressing as per schedule and adher-

Modi launches plantation drive on environment day

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, JUNE 5**

increased forest cover across the nation. He said. "This is great for our quest towards sustainable devel opment." On X, Mr Modi Jaipur. said, "Today, on World Environment Day, delight to start a campaign, 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam'. I call upon everyone, in India and around the world, to plant a tree in the coming days as a tribute to your mother.' "It would make people happy that in the last decade, India has underand taken collective efforts have led to which increased forest cover across the nation," he said.

ence to the highest engi-neering standards. The various green ini-

tiatives and the best engi-Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday filed a chargesheet against 12 accused, neering practices which have been adopted in the project were highlighted to include transplantation of 476 fully grown including Canada-based trees, compensatory plandesignated terrorist tation of 5790 trees to Goldy Barar and several prominent gangsters, involved in the grueincrease the green cover, use of environmental some murder of Karni Sena chief Sukhdev friendly construction material to include Fly Ash Bricks, Ashcrete Singh Cement, Recycle Wood, Rajasthan in December and Peri Formwork 2023In its chargesheet filed before the NIA special court, Jaipur, the Central agency has among others.

Post construction the Thal Sena Bhawan aims to be a Net Zero Building as it will have its own Compost Plant, Sewage Treatment Plant, Solar Panel and Electric Vehicle charging facilities to promote clean energy.

UAPA. The Central anti-terror probe agency investigations have revealed that the notorious terrorist-gangster syndic a t e was behind the killing of Gogamedi, who was shot dead in the living room of his house in Shyam Nagar colony in

charged all the 12 identi-

fied accused, belonging

to Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab, under various sections of the

IPC, Arms Act and the



ruesday It may be recalled that in 2014, PM Modi had invited leaders of South Asian eight-nation grouping South Asian association for regional cooperation (Saarc) for his (first) swearing-in ceremony including the then Pakistan prime minister Nawaz Sharif. It may however be recalled that Saarc has virtually been deep freeze since 2016 due to India-Pakistan tensions.

He further noted that Explaining the legalities after they have taken oath, they will write to the involved, the former Lok Sabha secretary general Speaker, informing him or PDT Achari emphasised the importance of followher about their inability to attend the House. The Speaker will then refer ing the constitutional provisions in such cases. their requests to the Ćommittee on House

"Being sworn in as a Member of Parliament is Absence of Members. The committee will reca constitutional right, but ommend whether because they are currently in prison, Engineer Rashid and Singh must member should allowed to remain absent permission from from House proceedings authorities to be escorted or not. The Speaker then to Parliament for the oathwill put the recommendataking ceremony," he said. tion to vote in the House.

Rashid

"World Environment On Day", PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday launched a tree plantation campaign by planting a sapling at the Buddha Jayanti Park in the national capital. Under the campaign, "Ek

Ped Maa Ke Naam", millions of trees will be planted across the country. Mr Modi urged all to contribute in making our better planet informed that in the last decade, India has under-taken numerous collective efforts, which have led to probe into the case, the NIA had arrested eight their persons for involvement in the conspiracy to Gogamedi.

Moving swiftly with its

Four others are still absconding, including gangsters Mahendra gangsters Ravataram Kumar, Swami alias Rohit Godara, and Virendra Charan, as well as Satwinder Singh alias Goldy Barar.

TMC: Probe market spike-exit poll link

■ Continued from Page 1 direct or indirect links with the BJP or with pollsters like Axis MyIndia," said Mr Gokhale in a post on X.

"The exit polls were clearly manipulated to rally the stock market. Lakĥs of crores of investors' money were later wiped off on June 4 crashed." markets

'There must be an investigation to determine if pollsters like Axis MyIndia intentionally inflated the exit polls for

the BJP.' "This "This is important because Axis MyIndia also had the BJP as a client. The investigation must also determine whether the BJP and any poll agencies have made crores by manipulating stock markets the through exit polls," he added

In his letter to Sebi chief Madhabai Puri Buch, Mr Gokhale said serious questions pertain to intentional stock market manipulation through engineered election exit n merits investig polls. which thorough ation.

given the fact that Axis

My India was also hired by the BJP to do its political surveys, it was a conflict of interest on the

polls without a clear and unequivocal disclosure of

important to determine if the India Today-Axis MyIndia polls were rigged or intentionally skewed in favour of the BJP-led NDA, which led to the unprecedented rally in the markets on June 3. An intentionally skewed exit poll will clearly mean there was massive stock market done... It merits investigation to see which are the entities or investors that made massive gains on June 3 on the back of exit polls and whether they

have links with the BJP, He further said that Axis MyIndia," the letter said.

part of the agency to be working for the BJP while also participating in exit

a glaring conflict of interest. "Investors made mas-

sive profits on June 3 after the markets rose on the back of exit poll results. However, on June crores.

manipulation

for ministerial berths and portfolios have begun circulating in JD(U) corridors. The names of Sanjay Jha, Lallan Singh, Kaushendra Kumar and Lovely Anand were doing the rounds for Cabinet berths. Sources said that besides railways, the JD(U) could also be eveing agriculture and heavy industries. While both Mr Tyagi and Ms Anand

4, investors suffered losses of over ₹31-lakh "In the interest of pro-tecting investors, it is

the INDIA bloc, a party functionary noted that Mr Kumar was on "good terms" with most of the INDIA allies, including Mr Rahul Gandhi. However, the JD(U) is not the only BJP ally from Bihar which was eyeing Cabinet berths in Mr Modi's government. Sources revealed that LJP chief Chirag Paswan could seek two Cabinet berths, one for himself and the other for Ms Shambhavi Choudhary, who became

the youngest MP of India after she won the Lok Sabha elections on a LJP ticket from Samastipur. Shambhavi's father, Choudhary, is a minister in the Nitish Kumar cabinet. Mr Paswan met Mr Kumar Wednesday morning apparently to "congratulate and seek blessings". Hindustani Awam Morcha chief Jiten Manjhi, who won from Gaya, could also

seek a Cabinet berth for himself.



Ashok

Modi to take oath for 3rd term on Sat

Continued from Page 1

all-round development for the country" and the NDA "remained committed to working for the country's women, poor, youth and farmers under the Prime Minister Modi's leadership." The resolution further maintained that "after a very long gap, almost six decades, the people of India have chosen a strong leadership with full majority for the third consecutive time...

Other alliance partners, including Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde, LJP(R) leader Chirag Nationalist Paswan Congress Party leader Praful Patel, Apna Dal's Anupriya Patel, RLD's Jayant Chaudhary, AGP's Atul Bora, HAM's Jitan Ram Manjhi, Jan Sena's Pawan Kalyan and AJSU's Sudesh Mahto, were among those who attended the meeting.

Union ministers Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh also attended the meeting.

In a separate development, BJP sources claimed that about 10Independent MPs, including from Daman and Diu, have approached the party's top brass to pledge their support to the NDA.

'INDIA to fight BJP govt, won't stake claim now'

the

be

Continued from Page 1 gratitude towards the people of India for the "overwhelming support".

"The people's mandate has given a befitting reply to the BJP and their politics of hate, corruption and deprivation. This is a political and moral defeat of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," the state-

ment said. "This is a mandate in defence of the Constitution of India and against price rise, unemployment and the crony capitalism of the Modi government. The INDIA bloc will continue to fight against the fas-cist rule of the BJP led by Mr Modi. We will take appropriate steps at the appropriate time to realise the people's desire not to be ruled by the BJP's

government," it added. Senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi were present at the meeting. DMK chief and Tamil Nadu

chief minister M.K. Stalin, SP Yadav, Akhilesh chief NCP(SP) chief Sharad Pawar, TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee, AAP MP Sanjay Singh, JMM leader Kalpana Soren, NC leader Omar Abdullah and Left leaders Sitanam Yoshuw and Mu Baia Sitaram Yechury and Mr Raja, amongst others, attended the INDIA bloc meeting.



5 on trek to U'khand lake dead, 13 rescued

4 missing, ops called off due to weather

PRITHVIRAJ SINGH DEHRADUN, JUNE 5

Five trekkers from Bengaluru, who lost their way and were stranded at Sahastratal in Uttarakhand, died while four were missing when the rescuers abandoned their operation on Wednesday due to bad weather. However, as per sources, chances of their survival look bleak. Thirteen trekkers were rescued safely from the alpine lake, situated at an altitude of 4,400 metres in the upper Himalayan region, by the SDRF and other agencies engaged in the operation.

A 22-member group that included 18 people from included Karnataka. one from Maharashtra and three local guides set off on an expedition on May 29 from the Himalayan View Trekking Agency's premises at Maneri, 90 km from Dehradun, but lost its way two days back on June 3 while coming back to the starting point.

Uttarkashi DM Meharban Singh Bisht informed that one of the three guides, Rajesh Thakur, informed the district administration that the trekking team, flagged off from Maneri on May 29, was to return by June 7.

-

13 TREKKERS were rescued safely from the alpine lake, situated at an altitude of 4,400 metres in the upper Himalayan region, by the SDRF and other agencies engaged in the op.

However, while returning to Sahastratal from the last camp on June 3, the team lost its way due to bad weather and was left stranded. As per Mr Bisht, trekking agency informed of deaths of four member of group and requested an rescue of the 13 stranded members.

"Following this a six-member high altitude teams of the SDRF was set off on a rescue operation on Wednesday morning. The res-cuers recovered dead bodies of five trekkers and managed to locate the stranded trekkers. Eleven of them were rescued and airlifted to safely by late Wednesday afternoon, while two others were returning to safety with another guide from the Kushalkalyan base camp to Silla village near Maneri with the help of another local guide. Eight of them were later airlifted to Dehradun, while three were taken to the Bhatwadi area at a safe place," informed the Uttarkashi DM.



THE ASIAN AGE

6 JUNE 2024

Can Modi transition into a good coalition leader?

rime Minister Narendra Modi's promise that there will be big deci-sions in his third term at South Block and that he will go on a hot pursuit of corruption should warm the hearts of his followers but he will come across impediments that he, as chief minister of Gujarat for three terms and as Prime Minister for two, has never faced in his mission. One may attribute these to the compulsions of democracy or coalition dharma but it will now require all the skills of a seasoned nego-tiator to steer his government down the road towards his stated goals.

Few today will deny that the first two editions of the Modi government have been marked by the cavalier attitude of the executive to treat the legislature as a rubber stamp. Important bills were moved in the House on a few hours' notice with members of Parliament having little clue on what they were going to debate and legislate upon. Opposition voices in Parliament and parliamentary panels — which act as mini-Houses were smothered. Government negotiators were seen repeatedly requesting leaders of the agitating farming community on the changes they need in the now-scrapped laws that sought to regulate the agriculture sector but to no purpose. Even when a bit of patience and

Few today will deny that the first two editions of the Narendra Modi government have been marked by the cavalier attitude of the executive to treat the legislature as a rubber stamp

the willingness to hear them out would have saved the government the blushes, not to mention several lives. That the BJP leadership was not willing to accede to the demands of its thenally, the Shiromani Akali Dal, exposes its inability to meaningfully engage stakeholders. But the BJP was able to go on a solo cruise on such important measures, thanks to its numerical strength in the Lower House. Now that it has fallen short of a majority, it would need to revisit its methods.

The Modi government's so-called crusade against corruption in its last term was marked by its abuse of both laws and law enforcement

agencies. The Prevention of Money Laundering Act, a draconian piece of legislation originally intended at reining in the drug mafia with impossible bail conditions, was flung at political leaders even as courts were left wondering what evidence was there against the defendants. It showed not the commitment to hunt down the corrupt but a compulsion to intimidate opponents and dissidents.

Mr Modi, however, was right when he said that dealing with the "menace of corruption is a complex task" due to increasing political greed and technology will be an important tool in this mission of ending corruption. An honest attempt to strike at the roots of graft will enable the government to allocate more resources for development and welfare schemes aimed at the weaker sections of society. But it remains to be seen if Modi 3.0 will walk the talk on these counts.

DMK's Stalin walks tall

he centre of power in Chennai and Tamil Nadu has always been Fort St George. And in modern days, the state itself has become an ideo-logical fortress that projects and protects certain values like social justice and women empowerment.

Standing tall in the bastion of social values is M.K. Stalin who promised a 40-0 (39 + one Pondy seat) verdict from the people for the INDIA bloc and delivered it in style despite the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's most strenuous efforts to woo the state in multiple visits, including for a spiri-tual stint at meditation before the Lok Sabha poll results were declared.

The national BJP was able to even breach Kerala, a perennial battlefield between the Congress-led UDF and the communists' LDF, where the popular actor Suresh Gopi won a seat, besides dominating Karnataka, steamrolling Andhra in alliance with Mr Chandrababu Naidu and Mr Pawan Kalyan and sharing the spoils in Telangana where only months ago Congress came to power.

If Tamil Nadu was the symbolic gateway to the south, its doors were firmly shut by the DMK to forces considered external to the Dravidian heartland, including in 2019 when the AIADMK, in a poll pact with the BJP then, won one seat to stop a clean sweep for DMK.

The biggest factor in the stunning performance of the contribution of 40 eats to the INDIA bloc was the DMI s ability to sub

TUBLOUE **Pyrrhic win: Will hubris** make way for humility?

FIRST TELL ME YOU WILL NEVER DO A U-TURN, NITISHJI



rime Minister larendra Modi won an electoral victory on June 4, which can at best be described as a pyrrhic victory. This term owes its origin to King Pyrrhus of Epirus, whose army suffered irreplaceable losses while defeating the Romans in the Battle of Asculum in 279 BC.

Subhani

Closer to our times and nearer home we have the turn of events after the of Gangwana Battle between the armies of the Marwar Rathores and the combined forces of Jaipur and its Mughal overlord led by Jai Singh in 1741. In this battle, the imperial army of over 40,000 massed in a field at Kunchagaon near Pushkar, with its fabled artillery guns lined up to force terms on the rulers of Jodhpur and Nagaur. As it happened, it fell upon Bakht Singh of and his numbering about a thousand, to take on the imperial forces. But that didn't deter Bakht Singh and his horsemen charged into the massed imperial forces and quickly punched through Jai Singh's gun line. The Rathores rode through the Jaipur army, cutting down thousands of men. They lost most of their men but the huge toll extracted demoralised the Mughal forces. After this victory, the imperial army soon disintegrated. Jai Singh never recovered his elan and died two years later. The BJP-led NDA might have won the 2024 elections but its apparently inexorable march towards establishing a Hindutva theocracy was halted by the combined for-

threatened to overrun the

federal character of India

has been weakened. Most

of all in its Gangetic heartland, where the BJP led by the Modi-Yogi Adityanath "double engine" train has been derailed by the youthful and educated duo of Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi. The results also cut Mr Modi down to a more realistic size. He won in Varanasi in 2019 by 4.93 lakh votes, only to have it whit-tled down to 1.52 lakhs this week. Ironically, Ra-

hul Gandhi won in Rae Bareli by over 3.9 lakh votes after being humiliated in another Gan-dhi family bailiwick, Am-ethi, in 2019. This represents a telling

reversal of fortunes. Mr Modi is irrevocably on the decline with both biological and historical times against him. His swagger at the BJP's "vic-"meeting was visibly contrived and forced. He tried to weave his oratorical magic with his usual mix of hyperbole and halfbut failed to truths, enthuse the faithful. For instance, he claimed to have made India the world's second largest manufacturer of mobile phones. The truth in this is only skin deep. India now assembles ₹4.4 lakh crores of mobile phones but the value addition is only 16 per cent, while manufactures China more than six times that with a value addition of almost 100 per cent. India exports as much dia-monds and jewellery by its value addition is even lesser. India exports even more petroleum products (over \$70 billion), mostly from the Reliance refinery in Jamnagar, but its value addition, hence the contribution to the national economy, is a thin sliver. These numbers are due to Mr Modi's focus on mations committed to the letter and spirit of the Constitution. The Hindithe big and visible, but what is the national Hindutva phalanx that benefit? Similarly, Mr Modi highlighted the sprucedup and long-nosed Vande

The days of Modi-Shah will become the days of Mr Modi and Mr Shah with Nitin Gadkari, Rajnath Singh and others speaking up. It might tone down his hubris with humility?

Bharat Express trains, but over 95 per cent of pas-sengers still travel in crowded and grimy trains piled up on each other, usually without minimal facilities. But he tried to convince people that their lives had improved. The perceived standard of living is a relative concept. How does a passenger in a typical second-class bogie view the passenger zip-ping by in a plush Vande Bharat Express?

I wrote here on April 19 that I don't see the Modi express going much further than the halfway mark. But the electronic media's relentless barrage of Modi positivism and their flood of concocted polls cooked Mr Modi's goose by making over 400 the new norm. Mr Modi himself contributed to the high expectations by imperiously dismissing Rahul Gandhi to less than fifty. He accorded the same gracelessness to Akhilesh Yadav, M.K. Stalin, Mamata Banerjee Tejashwi Yadav. and They all fought back and whittled him down. In the last 82 days, Mr Modi criss-crossed the country in his IAF Boeing 777 aircraft address 206 rallies, making people like me wonder if the country was running on autopilot? No political leader anywhere in the world spent so much time campaigning as Mr Modi did in a decade. A leader's post is akin to a pulpit which is meant to preach, convince and motivate. Mr Modi instead used his platform mostly to hurl political invective on his opponents and rivals. When he spoke of achievements, he hugely exaggerated. In the end more voters saw through him than

believers.

Modi's political climb has been driven by such exaggerations, but the results this week tell us that the bubble has been pricked.

By its own estimations, the Modi-led BJP fell short of its declared goal by over 150 seats (Ab ki Baar Char Sau Paar). The BJP seat tallies diminished in all its dominant states and increased only in Odisha and Telangana. The BJP is still the largest party in Parliament, but it has been cut to size. Inside the party, Narendra Modi too has been cut to size. The BJP, which despite the malign influence of the RSS, used to have a vigorous innerparty democracy with debate and discussions animating it, had been stifled for a decade. Mr Modi ran it by diktat along with bunch of faceless and callow aides, but can no longer continue to do so. The party now knows that the path is fraught with consequences. may not revert back to the days of Atal Behari Vajpayee and L.K. Advani, but the days of Modi-Shah will become the days of Mr Modi and Mr Shah

LETTERS **THANKS, CITIZENS**

The 2024 election results should not be misinterpreted as a historic triumph for the ruling party. Instead, the more remarkable narrative is the resurgence of the Opposition, which clawed its way back from a position of severe disadvantage. The Congress nearly doubled its number of Lok Sabha seats. The BJP's failure to secure 400 seats is a significant moral setback. It is Prime Minister Modi's polarising campaign that fell short, as voters, especially in rural areas, prioritised issues like inflation and unemployment. Their moral discerning signifies progress towards a healthier democracy.

Vishal Mayur Bengaluru

VOLATILE MARKETS

UPHEAVALS in India, South Africa and Mexico have significantly influenced their respective economies. Following India's elections, equity markets declined nearly six per cent, contrasting starkly with the record highs of the previous day. This unexpected outcome has fuelled concerns about the future trajectory of welfare measures, rts and reforms. Ir infrastructure n South Africa, the rand's depreciation persisted due to unforeseen election results hinting at a challenging coalition government, resulting in a 1.3 per cent decline in the rand over the week. Mexico witnessed a drop of almost five per cent in its peso value, potentially marking its worst month since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.



votes of its cadre base to alliance partners in the Congress (9 +1 Pondy), CPM(I) (2), CPI (2), VCK (2), MDMK (1) and IUML (1).

Had INDIA been able to wrest power, Mr Stalin would still have been content to stay at home as one of the most powerful regional chieftains though his wish list in ministries may have been long, including the finance min-istry berth for one of his colleagues. A steadfast ally of the Congress since his father M. Karunanidhi switched out of the A.B. Vajpayee BJP+ alliance to UPA in 2004, Stalin has been the staunchest ally projecting Congress as the head of the Opposition.

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ht tone down his hubris with humility?

with Nitin Gadkari,

Rajnath Singh and others

The new NDA will now be heavily dependent on the two most notorious political about-turn artists on the national stage — Nitish Kumar and N. Chandrababu Naidu. Both have raged and railed against Narendra Modi individually till the recent past. The arithmetical balance (JDU 12, TDP 16) requires them to function in tandem to upset the BJP applecart. It is difficult to see political events that will align their actions, but they will constantly be breathing down Mr Modi's neck. That might force Mr Modi to become a more concil-iatory person. Which might not be an entirely bad thing for the governance of India?

The writer, a policy analyst studying economic and security issues, held senior positions in government and industry. Amarjeet Kumar Hazaribagh

WHY THE DELAY?

WITH VOTING by EVMs, there is no reason why there should have been such a long delay in declaring the final results of the elections. In the earlier elections, the results were out by late afternoon. But this time it took late evening for the Election Commission to come up with the final tally. The EC needs to explain the reason for the delay. Some parties have alleged that this was a deliberate attempt to delay the results. Even during polling similar allegations were made of slowing down the voting process. The EC must clear all doubts so that the public's confidence in the entire electoral process does not suffer. Anthony Henriques

Mumbai

Dilip Cherian **Dilli Ka Babu**

Saurabh Garg to lead statistics ministry for 1 yr after retirement

aurabh Garg, senior IAS officer and secretary of the department of social justice and empowerment, has been appointed as secretary of the ministry of statistics and programme implementa-tion. Notably, Mr Garg will continue to serve in this capacity for one year beyond his retirement on July 31. He will also take on the role of secretary to the National Statistical Commission.

Interestingly, observers have pointed out that Mr Garg's new appointment follows on the heels of the similar appointment of P.K. Tripathi as the secretary to the Lokpal of India till superannuation and thereafter on a two-year contract. Is this a new trend?

An accomplished economist, Mr Garg's academic credentials are impressive, having studied economics at Johns Hopkins University, besides IIM Ahmedabad and IIT Delhi. The Odisha cadre officer is known for his contributions to policy and programme implementation, particularly his role in con-contuctivity the Kolic achemic in Odisha ceptualising the Kalia scheme in Odisha. This initiative provides crucial support to small farmers and sharecroppers and has, notably, served as a model for the national PM Kisan scheme. Most conspicuously, Mr Garg was a major force behind the direct

-

transfer scheme during his tenure as CEO of the Unique Identification Authority of India. The move has caused some murmurs in Delhi's babu corridors, and while the immediate motive is unclear, time will eventually reveal how the transition unfolds. But one thing is clear: Mr Garg's continued service after retirement suggests a recognition of his valuable experience and a desire for continuity in leadership.

KEY BABU RESHUFFLE WITH AN EYE ON THE FUTURE

In a major shake-up, right in the middle of a busy, busy election, the Central government announced key appointments at the joint secretary level, signalling a strategic shift in leadership. This bureaucratic overhaul included the empanelment of 26 IAS officers from the 1995 to 1999 batches as additional secretaries

Among the notable appointments, Ajay Bhadoo is currently serving at the Election Commission of India (EC), V. Seshadri, formerly with the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), is leading the Telangana chief minister's office (CMO) and Syed Ali Murtaza Rizvi is heading Telangana's energy department. This sudden wave of appointments has

sparked speculation about the continuity and stability of the current New Delhi establishment. But this may be just a hint of more sweeping changes to come in the days ahead. Sources have informed DKB that the government may soon release another list of appointments, even as speculation is rife that some key figures in the Modi Sarkar may continue in their posts. While by the time you read this, the new government will be announced, these actions reveal the confidence that the Modi sarkar has in returning to power. So, despite the busy election period, it has ensured that some key aspects of administration are not overlooked.

THE CURIOUS CASE OF **ELECTION-YEAR RAIDS**

In the run-up to the general elections, a dozen IAS and IPS officers have found themselves under the scrutiny of the mighty Enforcement Directorate (ED) and other investigative agencies in various corruptionrelated cases. Allegations range from corruption to money laundering, and some raids have been criticised as politically motivated. Recently, a 2002-batch Jharkhand cadre IAS officer was summoned by the ED for questioning in a money laundering case.

+

Similarly, a 2003-batch IAS Chhattisgarh cadre IAS officer was arrested by the ED, with investigations revealing his pivotal role in orchestrating a liquor syndicate's activities in the state.

In another instance, at least five IPS officers in Chhattisgarh are under the Anti-Corruption Bureau's scanner for their alleged involvement in the Mahadev betting app case. In another high-profile case, the ED raided the premises of a former Union secretary DPIIT, following a CBI case that led to a money-laundering investigation.

These raids and arrests during an election year raise questions about the motivations behind the timing and broader implications for governance. It's not lost on anyone that some of these officers are in Opposition-ruled states. Are these actions then purely in the interest of justice, or is there an element of political vendetta? The answer might remain elusive, and it only adds another layer of intrigue to the already complex world of Indian politics.

Love them, hate them ignore them at national peril, is the babu guarantee and Dilip's belief. Share significant babu escapades dilipcherian@hotmail.com.













INDIAN COUPLE DROWNS AT LANKA BEACH

Colombo, June 5: An Indian couple on holiday with their family drowned while at a sea beach near Hambantota in southern Sri Lanka, police said on Wednesday.

The deceased were identified as a 35-year-old male and a 33-year-old female, both Indian nationals, and according to preliminary investigations, the victims were a married couple.

The tragic incident occurred on Tuesday. The couple were paying a visit to Sri Lanka and was with their family at Kirinda Beach, news portal Adaderana.lk reported.

BANKNOTES WITH CHARLES PICTURE ROLLED OUT IN UK

London, June 5: People have been queuing on Wednesday outside the Bank of England's headquarters in London and at post offices around the UK to get their hands on the first UK banknotes featuring the portr-ait of King Charles III.

The portrait of the king will appear on all four banknotes issued by the Bank of England 5, 10, 20 and 50 pounds — with no other alterations to the existing designs. The notes will coexist alongside those featuring his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, whom he succeeded as monarch.

ITALIAN COURT CONVICTS KNOX OF SLANDER

Florence, June 5: An Italian court found American Amanda Knox guilty of slander on Wednesday and handed her a threeyear jail sentence in a case related to the murder of her British flatmate in 2017.

Knox, who spent four years in jail for the killing of British student Meredith Kercher before the conviction was annulled in 2015, had returned to Italy hoping to clear her name in the last legal case against her over the affair.

However, the appeals court in Florence on Wednesday retur-ned the same verdict.

FILIPINO COPS ARRESTED FOR TOURIST KIDNAP

Manila, June 5: Four police officers assigned in the Philippine capital region have been arrested for kidnapping for

Spain company preparing Kyiv tanks hacked

Madrid, June 5: Santa Barbara Systems, a General Dynamics subsidiary in Spain that is refurbishing Leopard tanks for delivery to Ukraine, suf-fered a cyberattack on its website, a pro-Russia hacker group said.

A spokesperson for General Dynamics confirmed that the defence contrac-tor's Spanish unit had been targeted in an attempted cyberattack "that

was detected immediately and has not compromised any of the company's systems' They said the company decided to temporarily disconnect its website until an ongoing investigation concluded. "The compan-y's sensitive data remains well-protected," the spok-

esperson added. Ā spokesperson for General Dynamics in Germany said all of the compa-ny's operations in Europe were running normally. The NoName hacking

group claimed responsibility for the distributed denial-of-service (DDoS) attack via the *Telegram* messaging service.

These types of attacks direct high volumes of internet traffic towards targeted servers to knock them offline. "We sent our DDoS-mis-

siles against websites in russophobic Spain," the group, which often directs such actions against countries which support Ukraine, wrote on *Teleg*ram on Tuesday.

Nato said last month that Russia was behind an intensifying campaign of hybrid attacks on companies and infrastructure in member states.

However, Russia dismissed the accusation as "misinformation". Santa Barbara assemb-

les heavy vehicles such as Leopard tanks and artillery equipment for the Spanish army and has been involved in refurbi-shing Spain's mothballed

RUSSIA FLAYS U.S. THREATS U.S.-RUSSIAN CITIZEN JAILED FOR 3.5 YEARS A man with dual US-Russian nationality was sentenced by a Russian court on Wednesday to three-and-a-half years in prison on charges of "rehabilitating Nazism". Yuri Malev was arrested

last December over social media posts in which he was alleged to have denigrated the Saint George's ribbon, a symbol of Russian military valour.

BIDEN TO MEET WITH ZELENSKYY IN FRANCE • US President Joe Biden will meet with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensk-

yy in Normandy, France, this week and then again at the G7 meeting in Italy to discuss Kyiv's fight against Russia, the White House said.

KREMLIN SAYS U.S. IS BLACKMAILING CHINA The Kremlin on Wednesday described comments by US treasury secretary Janet Yellen that Washington would not tolerate China increasing its exports of

"dual-use" goods to Russia, and would respond with sanctions, as 'blackmail".



Leopard tanks for delive ry to the Ukrainian Army, according to the de-fence ministry. — *Reuters*

Drill: US bomber flies over Korea

Seoul, June 5: The United • DURING THE training, States flew a long-range the B-1B dropped Joint

Israel steps up Gaza attack amid renewed truce efforts

Rights groups accuse Israel of hitting Lebanon with white phosphorus

Cairo, Beirut, June 5: Israel announced a new military campaign against Hamas in central Gaza on Wednesday and Palestini-an medics said airstrikes there had killed dozens of people ahead of talks between US and Qatari mediators to try to finalise a ceasefire deal.

A global human rights group accused Israel of using white phosphorus incendiary shells on resi-dential buildings in at least five towns and villages in conflict-hit southern Lebanon, possibly harming civilians and violating international law, in a report published on Wednesday. Human Rights Watch said in its report that there was no evidence of burn injuries due to white phosphorus in Leba-non, but that researchers had "heard accounts indi-cating possible respirato-

ry damage.' The armed wings Hamas and Islamic Jihad said they had fought gun battles with Israeli forces in areas throughout the enclave and fired anti-tank rockets and shells as the two sides sought the upper hand amid pressure to lay down their arms. At least 44 Palestinians

have been killed in Israeli military strikes in central Gaza Štrip areas since Tuesday, health officials in

S. AFRICA MIN. **ARRESTED OVER BRIBERY CHARGE**

Johannesburg, June 5: A South African Cabinet minister who is a senior member of the African National Congress was arrested and appeared in court on Wednesday over allegations of bribery, just as his party was meeting for talks to work out a way forward for the country after an election deadlock.

Sports, arts and cult-ure minister Zizi Kodwa faces charges of taking bribes of around \$90.000. according to police. He appeared in a courtroom in Johannesburg alongside another suspect in the case. Kodwa said he intended to plead not guilty to the charges.



A shell that appears to be white phosphorus fired by the Israeli artillery explodes over a house in al-Bustan, a Lebanese village along the border with Israel.

the enclave said. "The sounds of bombardment didn't stop all night," said Aya, 30, a displa-ced woman in Deir Al-Balah. Two children were among the dead laid out on Wednesday. Mourners said they had been killed along with their mother, who had been unable to leave when others in the neighbourhood did. "This is not war, it is de-

struction that words are unable to express," said their father Abu Mohammed Abu Saif. The Israeli military said

jets were hitting Hamas militant targets in central Gaza. - Agencies

German AfD politician stabbed

Berlin, June 5: A local can-didate for Germany's right-wing Alternative for Germany (AfD) party has been injured in a knife attack, the party and police said on Wednesday, the second such incident in

the city of Mannheim days after a police officer was killed. AfD member Heinrich

Koch was attacked with a cutter knife after confronting the suspect who was tearing down election posters near a town squa-re, the party said. Police said the 25-year-old suspect was detained and, showing clear signs of mental illness, was taken to a psychiatric hospital.

It comes days after the attack at an anti-Islam

• AfD member Heinrich Koch was attacked with a cutter knife after confronting the suspect.

juries were not life-threatening, the party said. AfD co-chief Alice Weidel told Reuters the attack was a 'shocking act that leaves you stunned"

The party has sought to portray the attack as part of a targeted campaign by left-wing extremists against AfD members. However, police said there was no concrete evidence that the suspect knew that he was attacking an AfD politician. Verbal and physical attacks on politicians in Germany have more than do-

ubled since 2019. accordi-

Israeli nationalists

some stoking surging wartime tensions by chanting Death to Arabs"

Jerusalem, the emotional heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, has nted anti-Arab been mostly calm throu- Islamic slogans.

war in Gaza. Marchers co-nvening outside the Dam-ascus Gate, a central gathering place for Palestinians in east Jerusalem, cha-

risk nted anti-Arab and anti-

Tel Aviv District Court Judge Shai Yaniv said he had been provided with evidence, which he did not specify, of a long-standing and close relationship between the Palestinian Islamist group Hamas and Qatari-backed broadcaster

used by Al Jazeera as its office on May 5 and said they were shutting the operation down for the duration of the Gaza war, 'Death to Arabs': accusing the broadcaster of encouraging hostilities against Israel.

Al Jazeera rejected the accusations as a "danger-ous and ridiculous lie" that put its journalists at ghout the Israel-Hamas Wednesday's court war. But the annual marruling retroactively appro-ved a 35-day ban until ch, seen as provocative by Palestinians, could ignite June 8 broader unrest, as it did three years ago, when it helped set off an 11-day

Al Jazeera. - Reuters

pa

COURT APPROVES

TEMPORARY BAN

Jerusalem, June 5: An

Israeli court on Wednes-day upheld a 35-day ban on

Al Jazeera operations in Israel imposed by the gov-

ernment on national secu-

rity grounds and a minis-

ter said he hoped to extend

the ban for another 45

days when it runs out on

Israeli authorities raid-

ed a Jerusalem hotel room

Saturday.

ON AL JAZEERA



Lebanese soldiers speak to a motorcyclist as they stand guard on a road that leads to the US Embassy in Beirut, on Wednesday.

Gunman fires shots at US embassy in Beirut hospital for treatment.

Jerusalem, June 5: Thousands of mostly ultranationalist Israelis were taking part in an annual march through a sensitive Palestinian area of Jerusalem on Wednesday, with

ansom that victimised four foreign tourists, officials said on Wednesday.

Two of the officers onboard motorcycles flagged down a luxury car carrying three Chinese and a Malaysian over the weekend, while their armed civilian cohorts handcuffed and dragged the four tourists into a van. Two of the Chinese managed to escape and notified authorities, police said. The remaining captives were beaten by the kidnappers.

META WITHHELD INFO ON INSTA, WA DEALS: FTC

Washington, June 5: Meta Platforms Inc. withheld information from federal regulators during their original reviews of the Instagram and WhatsApp acquisitions, the US Federal Trade Commission said in a court filing as part of a lawsuit seeking to break up the social networking giant.

The company formerly known as Facebook bought photosharing app Instagram in 2012 and the messaging app Whats-App in 2014. Both transactions were scrutinised by the FTC at the time before they closed -Instagram as part of an in-depth review and WhatsApp with a simple 30-day one.

In the years since, the agency has faced significant criticism for allowing the deals to move forward. In 2020, the antitrust agency sued Meta alleging that it monopolised the personal social networking market by buying up emerging rivals.

Meta is seeking to have the case thrown out before a trial. arguing that it has invested billions in the apps and that the FTC shouldn't be able to renege on its prior approval of the mergers. În its filing on Tuesd-ay, the FTC said the case in-volves "information Meta had in its files and did not provide' during the original reviews.

"At Meta's request the FTC undertook only a limited review" of the deals, the agency said. "The FTC now has available vastly more evidence, including pre-acquisition documents Meta did not provide in 2012 and 2014.

B-IB bomber over Korean Peninsula on Wednesday for its first precision-guided bombing drill with South Korea in seven years, the South said Wednesday. The drill — seen as a show of force against North Korea — comes as tensions are rising over the North's recent launches of rubbish-carrying balloons toward South Korea and other provocations. Wednesday's training involved other advanced US and South Korean fighter jets as well as the

Peninsula this year.

security commitment to

South Korea and streng-

then the allies' joint defe-

nce posture, according to

ministry. During the tra-

ining, the B-1B dropped

Joint Direct Attack Mun-

itions while being escort-

drill for a US bomber

since 2017, a ministry

fighter jets also conduct-

statement said.

the Direct Attack Munitions while being escorted by South Korean jets, the first such bombing drill for a US bomber since 2017, a ministry statement said.

ed live-firing exercises to demonstrate the country's readiness to punish North Korea if provoked. The JDAM bombs inclu-"bunker-busters." JDAM is a guidance sys tem that converts unguided, conventional bombs into more precise, GPS-guided weapons. All US B-1B aircraft, the second US bomber temporarily deployed over the Korean fighter jets, bombers and drones can use JDAMs, and the munitions are The exercise was meant to demonstrate the US

among the weapons systems the United States has been providing to Ukraine to help it fight Russia's invasion. North Korea is extreme-

the South Korean defence ly sensitive to drills using bunker-buster bombs, which could threaten its leadership and complex web ed by South Korean jets, the first such bombing of underground military tunnels and structures. North Korea has previously responded to the flights of powerful US aircraft It said South Korean in South Korea with its own missile tests. -AP

National Working Committee, which met on Tuesday as the party discusses how it might form a government after losing its 30-year majority in a poll last week.

demonstration in which a Kodwa, 54, is a member policeman was killed, at a the ANC's internal time when the number of assaults and abuse against politicians across the spe-ctrum has surged ahead of hotly contested elections. Koch needed stitches in his head and had a cut in -APhis stomach, but the in-

ng to government data, as the country gears up for European and local elections in three states. The AfD is expected to perform strongly in the polls. The knife attack by a 25-

year-old originally from Afghanistan injured six people. - Reuters

1.5° C target limit may be breached by 2028: WMO **GUTERRES FOR 'WINDFALL' TAX ON**

Geneva, June 5: The UN weather agency is predicting an 80 per cent chance that average global temperatures will surpass the 1.5 Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) target laid out in the landmark Paris climate accord within the next

five years. The World Meteorological Organisation said on Wednesday that the global mean near-surface temperature for each year from 2024 to 2028 is expected to range between 1.1 and 1.9° Celsius hotter than at the start of the industrial era. It also estimated that there's nearly a one-in-two

PROFITS OF FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES New York, June 5: UN sec-In a bare-knuckled speeretary general Antonio ch timed for World Envir-Guterres called on Wedne-sday for a "windfall" tax onment Day, Guterres who has spoken out about on profits of fossil fuel the threat of climate chacompanies to help pay for nge - said that carbon dioxide emissions must the fight against global warming, decrying them fall 9 per cent each year to

2030 for the 1.5° target to

-AP

top 1.5° C, a rise from just chance — 47 per cent that the average global under a one-in-three chatemperatures over that nce projected for the 2023entire five-year span could 2027 span. -AF

be kept alive.

Beirut, June 5: A gunman fired shots at the US embassy in Lebanon on Wednesday and was wounded in an exchange of fire with troops, the Lebanese Army said.

The Army said the attacker, a Syrian national, was detained and taken to

The soldiers were searching through the area for other gunmen. The US embassy said small arms fire was reported near its entrance in the morning but that the facility and staff were safe — Reuters

Stay on execution of 5 Pak ex-Navy officers

Islamabad, June 5: A top officers after they were court in Islamabad has arrested in 2016 in connestayed the execution of five former Pakistan Navy officers previously sentenced to death by a military court in connection with the 2014 Navy Dockyard attack case.

Islamabad High Court (IHC) Judge Babar Sattar on Tuesday issued the written order for the hearing held a day earlier on the request of Navy officers who said they were not provided legal assistance during the general court-martial order, Dawn News reported.

The Navy Tribunal had

sentenced the five Navv

ction with the Navy Dockvard attack case. They were found guilty of the attack and conspiracy against the Navy leadership. The Navy Dockyard in Karachi was attacked in September 2014. The responsibility for the attack was claimed by the banned militant outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan.

According to the statement issued by the Pakistan Navy at that time, two militants and one Navy personnel were killed in the attack. It also said that four attackers were also arrested.

The launch marks the beginning of the Nasa-Boeing Starliner Crew Flight Test: Boeing SCRIPTING | HISTORY PIO astronaut Sunita Williams flies to space for 3rd time

as the "godfathers of cli-mate chaos."

Houston, June 5: Indianorigin astronaut Sunita Williams flew to space for the third time on Wednesday along with a colleague, scripting history as the first members aboard Boeing's Starliner spacecraft on a 25-hour flight to the International Space Station. Boeing's Crew Flight Test mission carrying Williams, and Butch Wilmore lifted off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida after multiple delays. Williams, 58, is the pilot for the flight test while Wilmore, 61, is the com-

mander of the mission. The launch marks the beginning of the Nasa-Boeing Starliner Crew Flight Test (CFT), Boeing said. "This crew flight test represents the beginning of a new era of space exploration as we watch astronauts Wilmore and Williams put Boeing's Starliner through its paces on the way to the International Space Station," said Boeing Defence, Space & Security pres-ident and CEO Ted Colbert. "This is a great start. We look forward to getting the astronauts safely to

the space station and back home," Colbert said. Wilmore and Williams are also the first to be launched on an Atlas V rocket and are currently experiencing microgravity on their way to the space station. They will conduct flight test objectives, including manually flying Starliner.

Along with the two crew members, Starliner is carrying about 345 km of cargo. Once docked to the ISS, Wilmore and Williams will spend about a week on station before returning to Earth. -PTI



Nasa astronauts Suni Williams, left, and Butch Wilmore pose for a photo. – AP

RUSSIAN COSMONAUT BECOMES FIRST PERSON TO SPEND 1K DAYS IN SPACE

Moscow, June 5: A 59-yearold Russian cosmonaut has become the first perspace, Wednesday.

His current trip to the



Oleg Kononenko

ISS began on September 15, 2023, when he launched alongside Nasa astronaut Loral O'Hara and compatriot Nikolai Chub. -AP



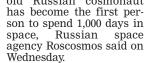












Oleg Kononenko achieved the milestone on Tuesd-ay, having made five journeys to the International Space Station dating back

to 2008.





NDA is forming the gov-

ernment for the 3rd con-

secutive term, going



INDICATO	RS	%
Sensex	74,382.24	3.20
Nifty 50	22,620.35	3.36
S&P 500*	5,317.01	0.49
Dollar (₹)	83.37	0.20
Pound Sterling (₹)	106.53	0.07
Euro (₹)	90.67	0.16
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	72,197 ▲ 200	0.28
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	77.62	0.13
IN 10-Yr bond yield	7.030	-0.003
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	4.328	-0.008

KEC International secures orders worth ₹1,000 cr

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Infrastructure company KEC International on Wednesday said it has secured new orders worth over ₹1,000 crore in the domestic market. The orders include residential projects in northern and southern India from renowned real estate developers. "We are pleased with the new orders in our civil business, including our largest order in the residential segment," Vimal Kejriwal, MD and CEO of KEC International, said.



Jeep launches Meridian X special edition

Jeep, the American car brand, on Wednesday introduced the Jeep Meridian X special edition in the Indian market priced at ₹29.99 lakh at pan India showroom. The refreshed SUV gets minor cosmetic enha-ncements along with additional features. "The Jeep Meridian X reflects our dedication to con-

Exports, jobs in services sector increase in May

THE SURVEY showed

productivity gains, and

reported the growth.

However, the upturn

was somewhat ham-

pered by competitive

and price pressures.

"One area that improved

substantially in May was

new export orders, with growth climbing to the

fastest seen since the inception of the series in

September 2014," the sur-

vey noted. The survey also said that

cost pressures intensified

in May. Panel members,

however, said that on

materials and labour rose

-- while some companies suggested that additional

labour costs stemmed

from overtime payments

and upward salary revi-

sions due to demand strength and productivity

gains, several firms indi-

cated having taken on

extra staff.

growth," Das said.

that rising sales,

demand strength

MADHUSUDAN SAHOO NEW DELHI, JUNE 5



to a private survey. As per the May data, the robust increases in new business intakes continued to underpin output growth across India's service economy, though the seasonally adjusted HSBC India services business activity index fell to 60.2 in May from 60.8 a month earlier.

The sector also remained above the 50 also mark separating growth from contraction for the 34th straight month, according to the survey.

The survey showed that rising sales, productivity gains, and demand strength reported the growth. However, the upturn was somewhat hampered by competitive and price pressures

"India's service activity rose at a slightly softer pace in May, with domestic new orders easing slightly, but remaining robust, implying strong demand conditions and successful advertising," said Maitreyi Das, Global economist at HSBC.

"Not only did employ-On the price front, Das also said that cost presment rise markedly, but sures ticked up in May led also to the greatest extent by higher raw material and labour costs. "Like for since August 2022, the survey said. Outstanding business volumes rose at output, new orders rose at a substantial pace, but the quickest pace in nearwere slowest in the calenly three-and-a-half years,' dar year-to-date, even as the survey noted, adding that the overall level of fierce competition and positive sentiment climb-ed to an eight-month high. extreme heat across the

dampened

INTEREST RATE: RBI'S PANEL STARTS 3-DAY DISCUSSIONS

Mumbai, June 5: The rate-setting panel of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday started its three-day deliberations to decide the next monetary policy amid expectations of continuation of the current interest rate.

RBI governor Shaktikanta Das will announce the decisions taken by Monetary Policy Com-mittee (MPC) on Friday. Experts are of the view that the central bank is unlikely to cut the benchmark interest rate (repo) as inflation still remains a matter of concern.

The MPC may also refrain from rate cut as economic growth is picking up, notwithsta-nding the elevated repo rate of 6.5 per cent prevailing since Feb. 2023. The central bank last hiked repo rate to 6.5 per cent in February 2023 and since then it has maintained status

quo 7 times in a row. According to a SBI research paper, the RBI needs to continue the current stance of withdrawal of acco-mmodation. The report titled 'Prelude to MPC Meeting' expects RBI to cut repo rate in third quarter of the current fiscal and "such rate cut cycle is likely to be shallow" It also said CPI-based retail inflation is expec-ted to remain close to 5 per cent in May and decline thereafter to 3 per cent in July. Inflation is expected to stay below 5 per cent begin-ning Oct. till the end of FY25, it added. -PTI

Markets on recovery path after meltdown

BSE's m-cap rose to over ₹408 lakh crore from over ₹394.8 lakh crore

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, JUNE 5

Market recovered more than half of previous session's loss as new government formation by NDA alliance partners seemed to be progressing smoothly without any hiccup. The Sensex gained 2,303.19 points or 3.20 per

cent to close at 74,382.24 while Nifty-50 closed at 22,620.35 up 735.85 points or 3.36 per cent. BSE's market capitalisa-tion rose to over ₹408.06

lakh crore from over ₹394.83 lakh crore in the previous session, a notional gain of 13.23 lakh crore for market investors.

On a broad basis buying all the sectoral indices gained between 2 to 5 per cent. Leading gainers included bank, auto,

FMCG and metals. FMCG stocks are seeing traction post election outcome as rural demand is set to get a boost both from good monsoon forecast as well as new government's expected shift of focus towards social economics. "The prospects of a better monsoon and potential policy shifts towards social economics could further enhance rural demand. The sector's valuation is

• FMCG STOCKS are seeing traction post election outcome as rural demand is set to get a boost both from good monsoon forecast as well as new government's expected shift of focus towards social economics.

> rm average, and re-rating is anticipated to continue due to these multiple positive developments," said Vincent KA, analyst, Geojit Financial Services.

The broader market also recovered partially with the BSE mid-cap index up 4.41 per cent and BSE small-cap index up 2.93 per cent. "Domestic

equities rebounded sharply as the sentiments got a boost post reconfirmation that

ahead the narrative around government formation and RBI monetary policy would take the centre stage in near term," said Siddhartha Khemka, head - Retail Research. Motilal Oswal Financial Services. Market experienced some volatility in the first one and half hours of trading followed by steady rise as the day progressed. However, the worrying factor is that foreign port-

folio investors were net sellers of equities worth ₹5,656.26 crore after ₹12,436.22 crore sold in the previous session. Domestic institutions turned net buyers by ₹4,555.08 crore ₹3,318.98 crore sold on

slightly above its longte-Tuesday. India's growth outlook to remain intact

New Delhi, June 5: The BJP losing its outright majority and now having to rely on allies to form a government may delay more far-reaching elements of economic and fiscal reforms like land and labour and impede progress on fiscal consolidation, global rating agencies said on Wednesday. Fitch Ratings and Moody's Ratings in separate notes spoke about the implication of BJP losing its majority. "It appears the BJP-led NDA is likely to form the next government, returning Prime

Minister Modi for a third term, but with a weakened majority that could pose challenges for the more ambitious elements of the government's reform agenda," Fitch said. Moody's said it expects

policy continuity, especially with regards to budgetary emphasis on infrastructure spending and boosting domestic manufacturing, to support robust economic growth. "However, the NDA's relatively slim margin of victory may delay more farreaching economic and fiscal reforms that could

COUNTRY'S

ECONOMIC strength incorporates real gross domestic product growth of around 7 per cent over three-year period between FY24 through FY26.

impede progress on fiscal consolidation," Moody's. Fitch too expected policy continuity to persist despite a slimmer majority. It expected the government to retain its focus on capex push, ease of doing busi-ness measures, and gradual fiscal consolidation.

"We expect strong medium-term growth outlook to remain intact, underpinned by the government capex drive and improved corporate and bank balance sheets," it added.

after

"Our assessment of country's economic strength incorporates real GDP growth of around 7 per cent over three-year period between FY24 through FY26, while factoring potential upside over the medium-term resulting from improvements in productivity, Moody's said. — PT

Govt to focus on policy continuity

Singapore, June 5: The • THE ELECTION

new government will deliver policy continuity with some change, withoutcome increases the probability of some of these factor market out detailing any possible reforms happening, rather than lowering it, India's closer-than-expected election should increa-

because it creates se the prospect of producavenues for dialogue. tive reforms, the chief independent of govern-

SANGEETHA G

ernor Raghuram Rajan.

"The Indian voter has

spoken. And what a wise

decision! This is a win for

Indian democracy and a

win for the Indian econo-

my. Regardless of what

happens over the next few

days, we will have a strong

opposition that forces the

government to change

course," Rajan wrote in

said many tricky reforms were in state government hands and he viewed them as more likely to progress. "In some cases the responsibility is disproportionately on state governments, sub-national governments," he said, addressing an investor

Spend more on education: Rajan

-

his LinkedIn account.

growth, although seem-

ingly high compared with

other countries, has not

been large enough, or

taken place in the right

sectors, to create enough

good jobs. India is still a

young country, and over

ten million youth start

economic

India's

of some of these factor market reforms happening, rather than lowering it, because it creates avenues for dialogue and consensus building.'

The factor market refers to land, energy, labour and other inputs in economic "The supply production.

looking for work every year. When China and

young and poor, they

employed their growing labour force and conse-

quently grew faster than

"Education and training

are exactly the sorts of

services the government should be spending more

on. Doing so would enhan-

ce the quality of India's

human capital. Services

exports have flourished

without much help from

the government. But the

state could do far more to

improve the human capi-

tal of Indians," he added.

were similarly

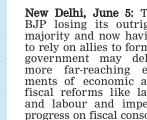
MEITY HAS PLANS TO TAKE UP SLEW OF **INITIATIVES: OFFICIAL**

New Delhi. June 5: IT secretary S Krishnan on Wednesday said that Meity will take up a slew of new initiatives as planned, while building on the legacy of past successes and outcomes.

Sebi to enhance thresholds for basic demat accounts

New Delhi, June 5: Capital markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday proposed to enhance the threshold for the basic service demat account (BSDA) to ₹10 lakh from the current ₹2





tantiy innovate and elevate the driving experiences for our customers," Kumar Priyesh, brand director, Jeep India, said.

NPCI to help Peru with UPI-like payments system

NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL) and the Reserve Bank of Peru have announced a partnership to enable UPI-like real-time payments system in the Peru. The Peru is first country in South America to adopt the globally Unified Payment Interface (UPI) technology, NIPL said. NPCI International CEO Ritesh Shukla said this partnership aims to strengthen Peru's financial infrastructure, to foster economic growth.

CIL contributed ₹9,560 crore to exchequer in FY24

State-owned Coal India Ltd (CIL) contribution to the government's exchequer touched ₹9,560.28 crore in the April-May period of the ongoing fiscal. CIL paid ₹9,777.64 crore to the government exchequer in the year-ago period, according to provisional figures of the coal ministry. Total levies paid to the government in May went up to ₹4,763.20 crore from ₹4,716.5 crore paid in the corresponding month of FY23.

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economic adviser (CEA). Nageswaran, Anantha said on Wednesday, while the fundamental drivers

economic of growth remain largely Anantha

ment policy. The government's chief adviser, V Nageswaran,

conference hosted Nomura in Singapore. "I would even say that election outcome the increases the probability

by improvements that have happened - they are for real and they will continue." he said.

Korea

India is today.

inirastructure Krishnan, speaking on sidelines of a Software - Reuters

Technology Park of India event, said the ministry of electronics and information technology (Meity) has a number of initiatives which have been planned and are in the works and those will be taken up once the new government is in place.

To a question on whether the work on digital personal data protec-tion (DPDP) rules and shaping Digital India legislation framework will continue at speed, Krishnan said, "the legacy in terms of what we have in the organisation in terms of...institutional memory continues.

Asked in particular about the status of the proposed Digital India legislation, he said, "We will see how we structure it...it is too premature to hazard a guess on what shape it takes." — PTI

lakh in a bid to boost the participation of retail investors in the securities market.

A basic service demat account. or BSDA, is a more basic version of a regular demat account. The facility was introduced by Sebi in 2012 for reducing the burden of demat charges on investors with small portfolios. At present, an individ-

ual can hold debt securities worth up to ₹2 lakh and other than debt secumaximum annual mainterities worth up to ₹2 lakh in a single demat account to be eligible for BSDA.

In order to further boost participation in the securities market and to facilitate ease of doing investments, the facility of BDSA has been comprehensively reviewed, it said. The regulator proposed that the value of securities held in the demat account should not exceed ₹10 lakh for debt and other than debt securities

time. Listing out eligibility criteria, Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said an individual needs to have only one demat account where he/she is the sole or first holder and the individual needs to have only one BSDA in his/her name across all depositories. Additionally, SEBI has proposed to review the

nance charges for BSDA. For portfolio values up to ₹4 lakh, Sebi has proposed that annual maintenance charge for a BDSA should be nil and for portfolio values of between over ₹4 lakh and up to ₹10 lakh, the charges should be ₹100. However, if port-folio value exceeds ₹10 lakh then BDSA should automatically be converted into a regular demat account. - PTI

iPhone maker infusing its Siri digital assistant with Al **AI** SUPPORT Apple forges deal with OpenAI

> Altman's OpenAI, the generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) start-up, and Apple, racing to catch up in the AI area, have forged a partnership to integrate OpenAI's ChatG-PT into the iPhone's operating system. Altman is unlikely to

take the stage at Apple's annual developer conference, the agreement will be a key focus of Apple's Developers Worldwide Conference next week and it shows just how much the power in Silicon

Valley has shifted over the past few years. The deal gives OpenAI access to hundreds of millions of Apple users, including ones that might have been hesitant to try ChatGPT otherwise. For

Apple, the arrangement brings the company the technology of the AI era, a chatbot with eerily powerful abilities that it can pair with its own services. Apple has been developing a host of AI features, including ones that run on its devices and others that require cloud computing. It's also infusing its Siri digital assistant with AI. But company's own chatbot isn't yet up to snuff.

The OpenAI partnership

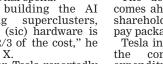
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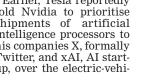
hundreds of millions incl-uding ones that ChatGPT otherwise.

quarters. The two is likely a "short- to medipublicly yet, and terms of arrangement aren't clear. Apple remains in talks with Google about using Gemini in its devices, the iPhone maker reached an agreement with OpenAI first. In the end, Apple may offer a number of third-party chatbots, but

it's negotiating the deals on a case-by-case basis, according to the people Cook on June 10, is seen as with knowledge of the sit-Apple's biggest sales pitch uation. Bloomberg

told Nvidia to prioritise shipments of artificial intelligence processors to his companies X, formally Twitter, and xAI, AI startup, over the electric-vehi-







will likely spend between \$3 billion and \$4 billion on its purchases of chip company Nvidia's hardware this year, chief executive officer Elon Musk said in

Musk also said that out of the \$10 billion in artificial intelligence-related capital expenditure this year, around half would be internal spend.

"For building the AI training superclusters, NVidia (sic) hardware is about 2/3 of the cost," he said on X. Earlier, Tesla reportedly





a post on X.

cle maker.

The development also comes ahead of a crucial shareholder vote on his pay package at Tesla.

Tesla in April reiterated the company capital expenditure forecast of more than \$10 billion this year and said it had expected capex to be between \$8 billion and \$10 billion in each of the following years. — *Reuters*

California, June 5: Sam



cies here.

The

to convince consumers, developers and investors that it can thrive in the AI era. And there's added pressure because Apple's existing business is stagnant, with revenue declining in five of the past six companies haven't disclosed the deal

in years. The company has

um-term relationship" for Apple, said Dag Kittlaus, a tech veteran who cofounded and ran the Siri business before it was acquired by Apple. "But you can bet that they will be working hard building out their own competen-WWDC keynote address, delivered by chief executive officer Tim

1 combined at any point of



INDUSTRY BODY

Global public debt contin-

ues to increase rapidly. driven by cascading cris-

es as well as the sluggish

and uneven performance

resources towards servicing this debt relative to

revenues compared to a decade ago, finds the UN's trade and development

In 2023, public debt,

comprising domestic and

external general govern-

ment debt. reached \$ 97

trillion, up by \$5.6 trillion

Public debt in develop-

ing countries is rising at

twice the rate of that in

developed countries and

in 2023 touched \$29 tril-

lion, accounting for 30 per

cent of the global total.

This is a substantial

increase from a 16 per

Among the developing

countries, China has the

highest level of debt at

\$14,773 billion followed by

India with \$2,956 billion.

Brazil has a public debt of

In the developing world, external public debt serv-

ice requirements remain

high, reaching \$365 bil-

cent share in 2010.

\$1,841 billion

lion in 2022.

body, UNCTAD.

from 2022

of the global economy. Governments are now allocating twice as much

SANGEETHA G

CHENNAI, JUNE 5

changes, CEA said.

country

CHENNAI, JUNE 5 India needs an economic and democratic course **GLOBAL DEBT RISING** correction and a strong opposition will force the government to change co-**RAPIDLY, SAYS UN** urse, said former RBI gov-



SHORT SINGLES

'India-Pak game is a battle of nerves'

Shahid Afridi sees the India-Pakistan contest as an equivalent to the hugely popular 'Super Bowl' in USA and reckons whichever team handles nerves better will come out on top in the T20 World Cup contest in New York on June 9.

The last time the two teams played at the T20 World Cup, it turned out to be a game for the ages with Virat Kohli pulling off a special win for India.

"For those Americans discovering the tournament, they should know that Pakistan's game against India is like our Super Bowl," Afridi, who is the T20 World Cup ambassador, told ICC.

"I used to absolutely love playing India and I really believe it is the biggest rivalry in sport. When I played in those games, I got a lot of love and respect from the Indian fans and it means so much to both sides.

"Against India, it is about handling the pressure of the occasion. There is so much talent in both teams, they just need to put it together on the day. That will be the case in that game and in the tournament overall. The team that can hold its nerve will come out on top.

Pak's Wasim to miss opening tie

All-rounder Imad Wasim will miss Pakistan's T20 World Cup opener against USA on Thursday

due to a persistent side strain, said captain Babar Azam. Babar said Wasim has still not completely recovered from his side strain and the left-arm spinner is under becaustion under observation.

"The medical staff is monitoring him and he will be available for the remaining matches in the World Cup," Babar told the media here. The seasoned T20 specialist

Wasim was brought out of retirement two months back with the World Cup view. The selectors felt that his style of bowling would suit the slow nature of pitches in the Americas.

Along with Wasim, left-arm spinner Mohammed Amir too was picked for the ICC showpiece but they have been used sparingly in the series against New Zealand, Ireland and England in the run-up to the tournament.

'They (pitches) appear good for pace bowlers and we have a very good pace attack so the pitches seem good for us," said Babar.

RE Bridgetown (Bar-bados), June 5: With the World Test Championship mace and the 50-over World Cup trophy already in their

Blues come out all guns blazing in World Cup opener

MOSES KONDETY NEW YORK, JUNE 5

It was a mismatch. Ireland were on the field alright but nowhere near India who blew them away to begin their T20 World Cup campaign with an eight-wicket victory at the County Cricket Nassau International here Stadium on Wednesday.

With a lowly 96 to chase, the Blues rocked big time to finish the task in just 12.2 overs.

Captain Rohit Sharma (52 in 37 balls) warmed up to the big occasion quite well as he played some splendid strokes around the wicket that fetched him four boundaries and three soaring sixes which were lapped up by the partisan crowd in Blue jerseys. Two of those maximums came off left-arm pacer Josh Little's successive balls in the ninth over. Later, a scorching bound-ary off Mark Adair brought up his 30th T20 half-century. Soon, Rohit retired hurt after being hit on the arm, perhaps to conserve his energy for

conserve his energy for the bigger games ahead. With six needed, Suryakumar Yadav (2) tired to finish it with a big hit but only managed to hole out to George Dockrell midway through the field off log spinore the field off leg-spinner Ben White. However, Rishabh Pant (36 not out in 26 balls, 3x4, 2x6) com-pleted the job in similar style as he sent fast bowler Barry McCarthy over the pavilion with a switch hit to set off celebrations in the stands.

Virat Kohli (1) fell cheaply. After facing three dot balls from Mark Adair in the third over he got restless and jumped out of the crease to play an expansive drive, only to slice a catch to Ben White at third 35, figures that were somehow spoilt in his last over man. Earlier, Indian bowlers in which he conceded 16 were right on target, pin-ning down rival batsmen runs. Axar Patel and Mohammed Siraj took a and cramping them for wicket apiece. space regularly. Hardik Pandya was the most successful, taking three wickets while conceding 27 runs in his four overs - he



Jasprit Bumrah (right) celebrates after taking the wicket of Ireland batter Harry Tector during their T20 World Cup match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York on Wednesday.

best with 2 for 6 in three 26 in 14 balls. He also hit third over. Five balls later, overs. Arshdeep got 2 for two fours and a couple of Arshdeep struck again, this time ripping through

ing back Lorcan Tucker's

SCOREBOARD

Ireland: Andy Balbirnie b Arshdeep Singh 5, Paul Stirling c Pant b Arshdeep Singh 2. Lorcan Tucker b Pandya 10, Harry Tector c Kohli b Bumrah 4, Curtis Campher c Pant b Pandya 12, Campner c Pant b Pandya 12, George Dockrell c Bumrah b Mohammed Siraj 3, Gareth Delany run out 26, Mark Adair c Dube b Pandya 3, Barry McCarthy c & b Patel 0, Josh Little b Bumrah 14, Ben White not out 2, Extras (Ib-5, ch 1 w 0.15, Table all out is nb-1, w-9) 15. Total (all out in 16 overs) 96.

Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-9, 3-28, 4-36, 5-44, 6-46, 7-49, 8-50, 9-77.

Bowling: Arshdeep Singh 4-0-35-2, Mohammed Siraj 3-0-13-1, Jasprit Bumrah 3-1-6-2, Hardik Pandya 4-1-27-3, Axar Patel 1-0-3-1, Ravindra Jadeja 1-0-7-0.

India: Rohit Sharma retired hurt 52, Virat Kohli c White b Adair 1, Rishabh Pant not out 36, Suryakumar Yadav c Dockrell b White 2, Shivam Dube not out 0. Extras (w-6) 6. Total (for 2 wickets in 12.2 overs) 97.

Fall of wickets: 1-22, 1-76, 2-

Bowling: Mark Adair 4-0-27-1, Josh Little 4-0-42-0, Barry McCarthy 2.2-0-18-0, Curtis Campher 1-0-4-0, Ben White 1-0-6-1.

middle stump with a beau-ty that cut right back into the right hander.

Harry Tector, Curtis Campher, George Dockrell, Mark Adair and Barry McCarthy fell in a heap as Ireland slumped from 28 for 3 in the seventh over to 50 for 8 in the 12th, a triple figure score look-

ing far out of reach. That's when top-scorer Delany got together with Gujarat Titans player Little to raise some runs. Their 27-run partnership for the ninth wicket was instrumental in Ireland inching closer to the 100run mark. That stand was

Oz chase history, Pak up for USA

bag, Australia will look to

hit the ground running in

their quest to become the

first team to simultane-ously hold all three world titles when they take on Oman in their T20 World

To accomplish the feat,

the former champions will rely on their wealth of experience, with sever-

al of Australia's greatest

modern-era players, preparing for their final farewell in international

colours. The T20 trophy evaded Australia for the longest

time but the maiden title

in 2021 changed that.

However, a year later, they failed to progress from the league stage on

However, Australia have

no dearth of match-win-

ners in their squad, start-

ing from newly-appointed skipper Mitchell Marsh.

The all-rounder will be a

key factor batting at No.3.

Travis Head has been in

red-hot form and was the side's star performer in the WTC final and ODI

Australia might experi-

ment in the group stage to

Starc,

Pat

World Cup final.

find their best XI.

Mitchell

home soil.

Cup opener here.

Cummins and Josh Hazlewood will run the

pace unit. Oman lost their opening game after against Namibia. While they did commendable job with the ball by taking the match into the Super Over, the batters will have to be more responsible if they want to pull off an upset win over the mighty Australians.

PAK LOOK TO PUT OFF FIELD DRAMA BEHIND

Last edition's runners up Pakistan will take on co-hosts USA in the day's

while on paper, the Babar Azam-led side looks the outright favourite to win the clash, Pakistan's recent form suggests that it might not be a cake walk.

Pakistan lost a T20 International in Ireland and then suffered a 0-2 defeat in England this week, not the ideal result before a global event. Before that, they drew 2-2 at home with a New Zealand side that was missing many of its World Cup squad mem-bers. The run-up to the marquee event has been chaotic to say the least with change in captaincy, shuffling of the top-order and players coming out of The ever-reliable trio of retirement. -PTI



Babar emphasised that they have no issues with the facilities being offered to the team at the venues in the USA.

Scots, English share points

Intermittent rain forced abandonment of the T20 World Cup clash between England and Scotland here on Tuesday with both teams sharing a point each. Rain arrived right at the innings break once again after having already truncated the game to a 10overs-per-side affair, with Scotland reaching 90 for no loss in the first half. England's target was revised to 109 runs needed off 10 overs via Duckworth-Lewis-Stern the method as Ireland kept the opposition bowlers under the pump for the majority of the contest.

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Ireland were all over the place, falling like pins against the powerhouses. Their batting card presented a sorry picture with No. 7 Gareth Delany Jasprit Bumrah was next being the top-scorer with

They began well though. Captain Paul Stirling leapt out of the crease to play a fine stroke off Arshdeep through the cover. That was the flattery before deceit. The Irish skipper soon perished as he tried to hit the same bowler out of the ground, only to sky a catch to wicketkeeper Pant on the first ball of the

opener Andy Balbirnie to disturb his stumps. Ireland 9 for 2. They did not lose any further wickets though and crawled to 26 by the end of the Powerplay period. Skipper Sharma introduced Pandya and his Mumbai Indians captain struck with the fifth ball, knock-

oroken courtesy Bumrah thunderbolt that into Little's crashed stumps.

Delany then put on a 19-run stand for the last wicket with No. 11 Ben White before losing his wicket in bizarre fashion, trying to push for a second run on a free hit to be run out with four more overs left in the innings.

ROHIT TRIED TO GET DRAVID TO STAY ON AS INDIA COACH

New York, June 5: India my time with him. I'm captain Ŕohit Sharma said on Tuesday that he had unsuccessfully tried to get Rahul Dravid to stay on as coach, hailing him as "a big role model". Dravid said ahead of India's opening match at the T20 World Cup against Ireland in New York on Wednesday that

the tournament would be

Dravid's contract runs

out at the end of the month and he will not

reapply for the job, after

almost three years in

He added: "I tried con-

vincing him to stay, but obviously there are a lot

of things that he needs to

"I've personally enjoyed

look after as well.

his last act as coach.

charge.

for India.

sure the rest of the guys will say the same. It's been great working with him.

India have failed to win a global trophy under Dravid but Rohit was nevertheless full of praise for the 51-year-old former national skipper.

"Such a big role model for all of us," Rohit said. "Growing up we watched him play and we know what he's achieved personally as a player and what he's done for the

team over the years. He added: "He's shown a "I've enjoyed every bit of lot of great determinait, working with him," Rohit, who has played under and with Dravid tion throughout his career, and that's something that when he came here as a coach, I wanted

to learn from him. "It's been very fruitful." Dravid took over the team from Ravi Shastri after the 2021 T20 World Cup.

O'DOWD STEERS DUTCH PAST NEPAL

Dallas (United States), June 5: Max O'Dowd hit victory. an unbeaten half-century O'Dowd with 22 runs while Sybrand to steer the Netherlands to a six-wicket victory over Engelbrecht was the only Nepal in their T20 World Cup Group 'D' clash on other Netherlands bats-Tuesday. Set a target of 107 to win.

was also on a hat-trick.

ble figures with 14. O'Dowd anchored the Netherlands' run chase Nepal, meanwhile, were left ruing a trio of dropped catches that with 54 off 48 balls to see the Dutch over the line at might have turned the Prairie Grand game had they gone to Stadium in Dallas. hand, including skipper The Netherlands fin-shed on 109/4 off 18.4

Rohit Paudel's missed chance to get rid of overs, with Bas de Leede O'Dowd in the 18th over. The Netherlands' modhitting the winning runs

with a boundary to seal est victory target had been set up by a disci-plined bowling display which restricted Nepal to Vikram Singh supported 106 all out.

After losing the toss, Nepal's batsmen strugman to make it into dougled to get to grips with moist. overcast conditions after being put into bat following a slight delay of play caused by a wet outfield.

"The conditions while batting were really challenging. Netherlands bowled really well," Nepal captain Paudel said. - AFP

SCOREBOARD

Nepal: Kushal Bhurtel Ibw b van Beek 7. Aasif Sheikh c Kingma 4, Anil Sah c van Beek b Pringle 11, Rohit Paudel c O'Dowd b Pringle 35. Kushal Malla c O'Dowd b van Meekeren 9. Dipendra Singh Airee c van Beek b de Leede 1, Sompal Kami b van Meekeren 0. Gulsan Jha b van Beek 14. Karan KC c Kingma b de Leede 17, Sagar Dhakal not out 0, Abinash Bohara c & b van Beek 0. Extras (lb-4, w-4) 8. **Total (all out in 19.2 overs) 106.** Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-15, 3-40, 4-52, 5-53, 6-66, 7-84, 8-106, 9-

Bowling: Vivian Kingma 4-0-23-0, Tim Pringle 4-0-20-3, Logan van Beek 3.2-0-18-3, Paul van Meekeren 4-0-19-2, Bas de Leede 4-1-22-2.

Netherlands: Michael Levitt c Airee b Sompal Kami 1, Max O'Dowd not out 54, Vikramjit Singh Ibw b Airee 22, Sybrand Engelbrecht run out 14, Scott Edwards b Bohara 5, Bas de Leede not out 11. Extras (Ib-1, nb-1) 2. Total (for 4 wickets in 18.4 overs) 109.

Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-43, 3-71, 4-80,

Bowling: Karan KC 3-0-17-0, Sompal Kami 4-0-18-1, Gulsan Jha 2-0-17-0, Dipendra Singh Airee 2-0-6-1, Abinash Bohara 3.4-0-29-1, Sagar Dhakal 4-0-21-0.

Paolini sinks Rybakina

ished

Paris, June 5: Italy's Jasmine Paolini reached her first Grand Slam semifinal at the French Open on Wednesday after dumping out fourth seed Elena Rybakina 6-2, 4-6, 6-

Paolini, seeded 12th, is enjoying the best season of her career at the age of 28 and will play two-time Australian Open champion Aryna Sabalenka or 17year-old Mirra Andreeva for a spot in the final.

"It's an unbelievable feeling," said Paolini, who Open. had never previously made it past the second round at any Grand Slam until this year.

She had two points for a 5-3 lead on her serve in the

regroup after former Wimbledon champion Rybakina rallied to take the match to a deciding set.

She had won a total of four matches in 16 Grand Slam appearances before advancing to the fourth round of the Australian Open in January.

Now she is two wins away in her unlikely quest to emulate compatriot Francesca Schiavone, who won the 2010 French

BOPANNA-EBDEN SAIL INTO SEMIFINALS

The second seeded Indo-Australian duo of Rohan Bopanna and Matthew

second set but had to Ebden sailed into the semifinals with a comfortable victory over Belgium's Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen in the men's doubles quarterfi-nals here on Wednesday. The pair won 7-6 (3), 5-7,

6-1 at Court Suzanne Lenglen. Bopanna and Ebden took one hour and four min-

utes to complete their win over the Belgium duo, seeded 10th in the year's second Grand Slam. It hasn't been a easy

road to the quarterfinals for the duo of Bopanna and Ebden as they played three-setters in their first and third round matches too.

— Agencies

SINDHU LOSES IN FIRST ROUND OF **INDONESIA OPEN**

Jakarta, June 5: India's ace shuttler P. V. Sindhu went down to Hsu Wenchi of Chinese Taipei in the first round of the Indonesia Open on Wednesday, making a stunning early exit from the BWF Super 1000 tournament. A two-time Olympic medallist and a former world champion, Sindhu lost the women's singles contest 15-21, 21-15, 14-21, which was her maiden loss to Wen-chi. The Taiwanese shuttler took an hour and 10 minutes to beat the Commonwealth Games gold-medallist. -PT

Chhetri's last dance in India's must-win match vs Kuwait

Kolkata, June 5: Emotions will run high when the tal-0 ismanic Sunil Chhetri leads India out one last IN FIRE time in a crucial FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Kuwait 0 here on Thursday, hoping to propel his team into the next round as a parting gift after dominating the national football landscape for 19 years.

The 39-year-old Chhetri will hang his boots at the end of this match and would like to ensure that the team enters the final-18 stage of the World Cup qualifiers for the first time.



Sunil Chhetri at a press conference in Kolkata on Wednesday. - PTI

The top two teams from nine groups of four teams each will go on to make the third stage. This round will decide FIFA's increased allocation of eight World Cup berths

for Asia. It will be a little far-fetched to imagine India in the 2026 World Cup in North America. but a win over Kuwait will take the team into the unchartered territory of being up against the best of Asia in at least 10

matches. That would also translate into some quality friendly games.

Occupying the second spot behind Qatar (12 points) in Group A with four points from four games, India are ahead of Afghanistan on goal difference and Kuwait, who have three points. -PTI

POWERLIFTER SANDEEP HANDED 10-YEAR BAN

New Delhi, June 5: The Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) of the NADA has suspended powerlifter Sandeep Kaur for 10 years, one of the longest ban periods handed by the committee, for her second doping offence as well as for using multiple prohibited drugs which constituted aggravating circumstances.

The 31-year-old Punjab powerlifter received eight years ban for her second doping offence - the first being in 2019 (tested positive for Stanozolol) - and additional two years after her sample was found to contain multiple banned substances. Kaur had returned to competition in August last year after serving the four-year ban for her first doping offence and she finished third in the 69kg open category in the National Championships. -PTI