# THE ASIAN AGE

NATION 3

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



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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#### www.asianage.com



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

#### **Court junks Kejriwal** bail plea, extends his **custody till June 19**

New Delhi: In yet another setback to Delhi 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 Baweia 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". 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. 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 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 Wedn-esday due to bad weather. Sources said the chances of survival for the missing trekkers appear

Full report on Page 4

#### COUNTERPOINT



Are you a candidate? I am an investor!



■ 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**

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 meeting, Mr Modi posted on a mig, Mr Mour posted off a social media platform, "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 bargaining 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

 $\begin{array}{ccc} ministers \ of \ state. \\ The \ JD(U) \ has \ also \\ thrown \ its \ hat \ in \ the \ ring \end{array}$ 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 brass and the top leadership of alliance partners.

BJP-led NDA through the



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 back as the kingmaker. told the media, "We contested the election togeth"Honouring the mandate 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 all strive to ensure that our country continues to prosper and emerge as a global leader," posted Mr Naidu after the meeting.

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 government at the earliest.

The resolution adopted in the NDA meeting stated that the "government will continue working for

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

New Delhi, June 5: 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

"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

#### **Biden congratulates Modi on poll victory**

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.

# 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 govern-Addressing the gather-

ing 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 Preamble to our Constitution and to its many provisions for economic, social and politi-

cal justice. Thanking the INDIA ers, the president partners, Congress president added, "I welcome all INDIA bloc partners. We fought well, fought unitedly and fought resolute-



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

Speaking with the of hate." The Or Mr Kharge said, "We held has dec discussions for two hours about the current political situation. We have received many suggestions...the constituents of the INDIA bloc thank the people of India... People have given a befitting reply to the BJP's politics

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 govern-

ment at the Centre. In a joint statement, the INDIA bloc expressed

Turn to Page 4

# BJP's Bihar chief targeted by JD-U

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

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 tenbetween Choudhary and Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar could lead to significant 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.



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

**SOURCES REVEALED** that long-standing tensions between Samrat Choudhary and Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar could lead to significant changes within the BJP

for the state. Speaking to a TV channel, JDU) state. operation channel, Juo, 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.

It was learnt that the Bihar CM did not meet Mr

his residence Tuesday to congratulate him for the JD(U)'s spectacular performance in the Lok Sabha polls. The JD(U) won 12 Lok Sabha berths from Bihar. A senior party leader from the state said the "rift" 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 "constant interference" of a particular BJP minister in the Bihar Cabinet. It

was learnt that some of the bureaucrats had

Turn to Page 4

**TMC MP urges Sebi: Probe** market spike-exit poll link

'Rally & crash look manipulated'

AGE CORRESPONDENT 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 manipulation through exit polls, specifically India roday-Axis MyIndia, which allegedly "massively inflated" the seat numbers for the BJP-led

"In Bengal, they predicted 26-31 seats for the BJP which actually got just 12 seats. That's an

exaggeration of a whopping 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 June 4 by short selling. Have also asked to investigate whether any 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 perfor-

mance 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 Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Opposition Labour Party leader Keir 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

next leader.
Mr Sunak tried to boost his centre-right party's dismal outlook by urging voters to back the stability of continued Conservative government. Sir Keir Starmer hoped to cement his status as the favourite by arguing that Britain

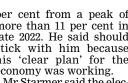






Rishi Sunak Keir Starmer desperately needs change. Both acknowledged the UK's many problems, from fraying public services to a broken immigration system. But neither could say outright, when asked, where the money would

come from to fix them.
Mr Sunak stressed his stewardship of the economy, which has seen inflation fall to just over two



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.

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



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

#### **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 Bharadwai 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

#### 5 labourers hurt in **Noida wall collapse**

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

#### **DELHI METRO BHAVAN IS NOW CARBON NEUTRAL**

treated in a hospital and no

casualty was reported so far.

We are looking into the mat-

ter," the police said.

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. Delhi has fixed process, it votes for BJP in LS polls: Pathak

# **AAP: Victory margins narrow** in Delhi, Opp performed well

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 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

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 coun-

try is above the party, Mr Pathak said, "We joined the INDIA alliance with 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 conspiracies was that the people of the country rejected them. The AAP fought with full strength and 3 candidates became MPs from Punjab, while we had a very close contest on 2-3



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

AAP leader said.

Lok Sabha polls.

Punjab by winning 92

seats out of 117 and form-

ing the government. But

the party could not repeat

the same performance in

the recently concluded

"We have performed much better than the last

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

we have succeeded in our

"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

The AAP leader asserted

that this election was not

about the Aam Aadmi

Party but the INDIA bloc.

good results," he said.

– PRITAM BANDYOPADHYAY

"I want to thank all the volunteers of the AAP. The way they struggled even in such heat and such difficult conditions is quite amazing. Delhi has a fixed process, it votes for the BJP in the Lok Sabha elections and votes for AAP and other parties in the Vidhan Sabha elections. Delhi stuck to its electoral practice this time too, but the margin of his victory which used to be in lakhs has reduced considerably this time. It was clear that the public was completely ready to change him," he added.

Addressing the media, he said, "In the last polls, we had won one seat and our vote share was 7 per cent. But this time, we won three seats and had a close fight for two others. We had aimed for more seats but our vote share has increased."

"BJP put in all its efforts. Even after that, it could not get a majority. On the other hand, the INDIA bloc fought the elections in such adverse conditions and performed

#### **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, so well. For us, our counthe Northwest Delhi contry is more important than our party. We fought stituency recorded the highest number of such the elections together votes at 8,984, the Election with strength. Our party Commission data shows. is strong and is ready to In the constituency, BJP's fight for the country," the Yogender Chandoliya won by a margin of 2,90,849 The AAP had swept the votes against Congress 2022 Assembly polls in 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

### court junks bail petition **AGE CORRESPONDENT** NEW DELHI, JUNE 5 Kejriwal's wife, Raghav

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Arvind Kejriwal's wife Sunita Kejriwal and AAP

MP Raghav Chadha on

Wednesday met him in Tihar Jail, official sources

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 fam-

ily members for five min-

utes daily on phone. A jail

source also said the Delhi

CM on Tuesday watched

results on television in

Sabha election

chief minister

NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

Setback to Kejriwal as

In yet another setback to Delhi 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

During the hearing on Saturday,

Enforcement Directorate (ED) had opposed the application, saying he campaigned throughout the Lok Sabha elections but "now when he has to 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 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 granted by the Supreme Court. The top court had on May

meet him in Tihar Jail

According to jail officials, Mr Kejriwal, a diabetic patient, has been looked after by two doctors and given insulin

Mr Kejriwal surrendered at the Tihar Jail after his interim bail granted by the Supreme Court in the excise policylinked money laundering case ended on June 1. He was granted the relief for campaigning in the Lok Sabha elections.

Before surrendering on Sunday, he had paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at the Raj Ghat, offered prayers at the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place and addressed AAP leaders and workers at the party office.

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

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.

in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab,

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 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

#### **Delhi-Toronto flight gets hoax** bomb threat

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, JUNE 5** 

Panic gripped an Air Canada Toronto-bound flight after the Indira Gandhi International Airport here received an email claiming 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 10.50 pm on Tuesday stating that a bomb had been planted in the Delhi-Toronto Air Canada flight, the officials said.

"Following standard security protocols, a thorough inspection was conducted and nothing suspicious was found," a senior police officer said. Legal action in the matter is being taken, he

AGE CORRESPONDENT

The Delhi University has

excelled in various indica-

tors, ranking among the top 22 per cent universities globally.

Out of the nine indica-

tors, DU featured promi-

nently among 270 institu-



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

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 social media. One of the videos showed the hospital building engulfed in flames and thick plumes of smoke rising in the sky.

The call regarding the fire at Eye7 Chaudhary Eye Centre on Ring Road was received at 11.30 am and 12 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. Later, more fire tenders were pressed into service, officials said. They said those inside

Technology (MIT) retained

the top rank globally for the 13th time, according to

the QS World University

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-

Ranking 2025.

ties in the world while the occasion, Delhi University

Massachusetts Institute of vice-chancellor



tal in Lajpat Nagar on New Delhi on Wednesday.

the 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

DU leads among India's varsities in QS Ranking

MIT retains top rank for 13th time, IIT-Bombay climbs to 118, IIT-Delhi is 150th

**OUT OF** the nine indi-

prominently among 270

institutions in four cate-

gories globally-44th in

220th in sustainability,

tation, and 269th in

employer reputation

cators, DU featured

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

top 10 institutions, DU dis-

played the most significant

The University of Delhi

ranked 328th in the QS World University Ranking

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.

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

#### space for party office, says HC AGE CORRESPONDENT THE AAP is seeking NEW DELHI, JUNE 5 allotment of space for

**AAP** entitled to

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.

Prasad said "pressure" or non-availability of house in the general pool cannot be a reason for rejection of the request. The fact that there is a

Subramonium

Justice

huge pressure cannot be the only reason for the respondents to deny the petitioner (AAP) its right to be allotted an accommodation from the GPRA for setting up its party office," 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

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. entitlement as
The judge said that if Centre's policy.

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. ought to be temporarily

the AAP's representation is rejected by the Centre, the party can take appropriate steps.
The AAP had moved

allotted to it.

the court last year seeking a piece of land in the national capital for the construction of its office on account of being recognised as a national party or allotment of a housing unit on a licence basis for the time being.

The petition seeking allotment of land to the AAP is pending in the high court.
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 infrastructure.

The Arvind Kejriwalled party has said in the court that since the land has been allotted by the authorities for the construction of office premises to all other national 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

#### tions in four categories globally—44th in employ-ment outcomes, 220th in sustainability, 225th in acadue to the faculty memanalyst, demic reputation, and 269th quarelli Symonds (QS), the bers and students of the in employer reputation. University of Delhi stood university and their The Indian Institutes of important contribution to out for the employability of Technology (IITs) in Bombay and Delhi are its graduates. the academic environment Congratulating the stuand nation building.' Reflecting on this achiamong the top 150 universidents and teachers on the

Yogesh

from Hindon Airport August 1 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.

The airline said it is the first airline to operate from two airports in the National Capital Region.

Air India Express will operate two daily-direct 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 & spiritual destinations in Pra-desh,

Uttarakhand, Himac-hal

Pradesh and Haryana can

AI Express announces flights

gating traffic congestion in the NCR," the airline said in a statement.

evement, Mr Singh empha-

sised that among India's

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

employment outcomes, 2025, improving from its 2023 ranking of 407. Boasting 46 universities 225th in academic repuin this edition of the rank-

ings, the Indian higher education system is the seventh most represented gl-Singh said, "DU is constantly moving forward obally and the third in Asia, trailing only Japan (49 universities) and China (Mainland) (71 universi-

India has one more university within the top 150 rankings—IIT-Delhi (150th). There are two more entries in the world's top

New Delhi, June 5: Delhi

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 pollu-

tion, Mr Rai said while

participating in a tree

plantation event in Civil

Lines here to mark the day.

country, including Delhi,

is facing a severe heat-

'This time, the entire

400 with the University of Delhi (ranked 328th) and Anna University (ranked 383rd) making their debut in this tier.

"India's employment outcomes score is 10 points below the global average of 23.8, reflecting the need to bridge the gap between job requirements and graduates' skills and to create more opportunities for new graduates.

"Additionally, India's sustainability score is also about 10 points below the global average and highlights the need to prioritise and strengthen sustainability initiatives within the higher education system,' a senior QS official said.

wave. People in Delhi

should plant as many

trees as possible on the rooftops of their houses.

This will help reduce both

pollution and the heatwave," a statement quoted Mr Rai as saying. Highlighting the Delhi

government's ongoing tree

plantation campaign, the

minister noted that the

city's green cover has expanded to 23.06 per cent,

up from 20 per cent in 2013.

He also mentioned that

the government achieved

its goal of planting 2 crore

saplings ahead of sched-



ule, within four years. "Public participation is essential for a better and pollution-free environment," he emphasised, urging residents to refrain from polluting and to discourage others from doing

Mr Rai announced plans for a meeting with all greening agencies to intensify the campaign further once the Model Code of Conduct ends.

The Delhi government also aims to create city forests to offer natural spaces for residents and educate future generations about environmental conservation, it said.

Mr Rai reiterated the importance of increasing the green belt, especially given the extreme heat and pollution challenges.

### **Tamang to take oath**

as Sikkim CM June 9

Gangtok: The Sikkim 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

#### **MP's best-ever** vote share for BJP

alongside the LS polls. - PTI

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 mar-gin 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

#### **'SAMAJWADIS SUCCEEDED IN** STOPPING BJP'

national level. - PTI

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 "succeeded" 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 Yadav politics and gave

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 Mulayam 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

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

'Poll verdict result of individual candidates' delivery'

AGE CORRESPONDENT **NEW DELHI, JUNE 5** 

Insisting that challenges give him strength, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday told his Cabinet colleagues that one should always seek lessons from challenges. Chairing the last meeting of the outgoing Union Cabinet, which recommended the dissolution of the 17th Lok Sabha, the Prime Minister also said that it was BJP patriarch late Atal Behari Vajpayee, from whom he learnt to take on challenges. Later, President Droupadi Murmu dissolved the 17th Lok Sabha on the advice of Cabinet.

Prime Minister Modi called on President Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan and tendered his resignation along with the Union council of minis-

ters.
"The President accepted resignation and ested the Prime Minister and the Union council of ministers to PRESIDENT MURMU

accepted after Prime Minister Modi tendered her his resignation along with the council of ministers and requested the PM and his council of ministers to continue in office till the new government is formed

continue in office till the new government formed," the Parit the Rashtrapati Bhawan said.

Sources said that Mr Modi told his Cabinet colleagues that one should always seek lessons from challenges. With the BJP lacking numbers on its own and dependent on alliance partners, mainly in Parliament and policy decisions, the PM, sources said, told the Cabinet colleagues that a new narrative is now being created by the Opposition, and that it will be a difficult situation for the new gov-

"This is not the first time that there is going to

be a coalition government. We should not take these narratives seriously, and rather work together for the nation's interest. Challenges give me strength, more strength to work for the nation," Mr Modi said in the meeting.

The Prime Minister sources said, also told the Union Cabinet ministers that victory and loss are part of life; but what is more important is that 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

#### Lok Sabha Poll **HOW THE STATES VOTED** seats Outcome 2024 J&K (5) Ladakh (1) Himachal (4) Uttarakhand (5) 12 RJD 4 JKNC 2 JD (U) BJP BJP 12 Cong 3 Cong LJP (RV) 5 Others 4 Ind U.P. (80) AGP 37 Arunachal (2) BIP 33 Haryana (10) Nagaland (1) Cong Cong Sikkim (1) RLD Cong Others 2 SKM Delhi (7) Manipur (2) Rajasthan (25) Cong 14 Cong Mizoram (1) M.P. (29) Others ZPM BJP Gujarat (26) Meghalaya (2) 25 Cong 1 Cong VOTPP Odisha Maharashtra (48) West Bengal (42) 20 13 Cong Trinamool BIP BJP Cong JMM Cong Cong SHS (UBT) Cong NCP (SP) **AJSUP** Chhattisgarh (11) NCP Kerala (20) Cong 2 Andhra (25) **IUML** DMK 22 CPM 2 TDP 16 CPM 17 4 9 MDMK 1 YSRCP BJP KEC 2 BIP 3 IUML 1 Cong Cong ■ A&N Islands: BJP ■ Chandigarh: Cong ■ DNH and Daman & Diu (2): BJP and Ind ■ Lakshadweep: Cong ■ Puducherry: Cong (Figures in brackets indicate total seats in the state)

# Prez hosts dinner for Modi, Central ministers' council

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-president Jagdeep Dhankhar and Lok Sabha Speaker 'President Droupadi

Murmu hosted a dinner for the outgoing Union Council of Ministers, led Prime Minister @narendramodi, 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

'Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the President today and tendered his resignation along with the Council of Ministers," an official statement said.

The BJP-led National

**AKSHAYA KUMAR SAHOO** 

registering

thumping victory in both

Lok Sabha and Assembly

polls in the state, the

BJP's state unit of Odisha appears to be on

The party, while cele-

brating the victory across

the state, is also making

all preparations for for-

mation of the new gov-

Speaking to the media

ernment in the state.

cloud nine now.

**BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 5** 

(NDA) won a majority in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections.

While the NDA is comfortably above the majority mark of 272 in the 543member Lok Sabha, the BJP, which won 240 seats, has fallen short of the magic number for the first time since 2014.

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 coalition government. NDA MPs will meet on

June 7 to formally elect Modi as their leader and the alliance leaders will then meet the President to submit their letters of support, former Bihar minister founder Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) Ram Manjhi said after

In a related develop-ment, the President dissolved the current Lok Sabha on the advice of the PM-led Cabinet.

people had tremendous faith in PM Modi and

they voted for a change in

who were fighting the

elections, as they were fed

up with the corrupt governance of the BJD. The

election was to restore

'Odia Asmita', culture

and tradition. The people

trusted the BJP's assur-

ances, and the new gov-

ernment will certainly

work for them. People

"It was Odisha people

the state.

attending the meeting.

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

# Maha fiasco: Fadnavis offers to quit as dy CM

**SONU SHRIVASTAVA** 

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

The BJP leader's remark 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 meet-

ing 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 party. "I am fully taking

Bhawan, where

senior leaders of

his party had

arrived a few

minutes before,

and offered his

Patnaik resignation letter.

Mr Patnaik resigned

from the CM post, follow-

ing his party Biju Janata

Dal's (BJD) drubbing in

the Odisha Assembly

polls, the result of which

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

Divide in Mahayuti

heavy defeat in polls

out in open after

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



AGE CORRESPONDENT

Odisha chief minister

Wednesday met governor

Raghubar Das here at Rai

Bhawan and tendered his

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

Patnaik on

BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 5

Naveen

**Patnaik resigns from CM post** 

Naveen

MUMBAL JUNE 5

Following heavy defeat in 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 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 "humiliating defeat", he

said. "Our alliance partners didn't work for us and their "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 contribute to the party's cause. "Most of the Assembly segments falling under the Shirur Lok Sabha constituency have NCP MLAs, but they did not work for

ing to his defeat," he said. The Shirur seat in the Pune district was won by NCP(SP) candidate Amol Kolhe, who defeated NCP nominee

the party's candidate, lead-

Shivajirao Adhalrao-Patil. 'The pre-poll survey 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 the Shinde group said.

#### on Wednesday, the BJP have rejected the idea of a president of Odisha unit non-Odia CM and voted Prime Minister Narendra Naveen Niwas — in a carannounced cade and reached the Raj Tuesday. Modi,"Mr Samal said. ■ TN CM focuses on Dravidian model of govt and exposing of BJP's true colour

'BJP board will pick CM candidate in Odisha'

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-tak-

ing ceremony for the

party's CM on June 10. "The selection of CM

candidate will be based

on the criteria set by

Manmohan Samal said for the BJP," said Samal. To a query on who will

# '40 out of 40': Stalin's INDIA campaign bears fruit

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 "Narpathum Namadhe" (all 40 are ours

- meaning the 40 constituencies). The alliance winning all the 40 seats is a source of strength for the INDIA front in the just-concluded 2024 LS elections.

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

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 strat-

egy 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 and assigned 50 per cent of the 40 constituencies of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry to them. Constituencies that were cakewalks were assigned

tively tougher.

paign, Mr Stalin planned and announced the schedule of the campaign. He motivated the members of the DMK and allies to understand the importance of winning the parto the allies. The DMK liamentary elections. Further, he issued stateleaders and cadre were made to contest in conments and letters in the stituencies that were relapress and media creating interest among the party Leading up to the cammembers.

M.K. Stalin

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 Magalir Kalaignar Urimai Scheme, providing ₹1,000 every month to 1.5 crore women. Schemes like "Pudhumai

Pen, Tamizh Pudhalvan,

Naan Mudhalvan and

emphasis on education

Other people-friendly schemes of the chief minister include "Makkaludan Mudhalvar, ister Makkalai Maruthuvam 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 Breakfast Scheme" laid and dividing the people of

#### 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 Aiit Pawar faction rubbished 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 loyal-

Jamkhed constituency, said 18 to 19 MLAs from the Ajit's party are in touch with the party chief or him. "Another 12 MLAs from the Ajit Pawar faction are in contact with the BJP. It will be revealed soon what these 12 MLAs are going to do. Those who joined the

ty towards Sharad Pawar.

Earlier in the day, Rohit

who is an MLA from Karjat-

government (for their personal interest), are now coming back to us in view of their future prospects. They should be given second preference," he said.
The NCP leader said that

there are many MLAs who did not speak against the NCP founder. "Due to pressure, these MLAs have joined the government. There is no problem taking them back in our fold. But those, who have hit below the belt, should not be allowed to join the party,' he added.









Minister's

#### 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 congrat-ulate everyone. We are providing plants to devotees as prasad from our nursery," Mr Garg said. — PTI

### **9 Maoists arrested**

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

#### **32 diarrhoea cases** in HP dist, total 242

15, it said. — PTI

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

sent to the Hamirpur Medical

samples were collected by

the health department and

College for analysis. — PTI

# 'Historic' polls, ties growing: Biden greets Modi

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

Congratulations to PM Narendra Modi

and the NDA on their victory, and the

nearly 650 million voters in

this historic election. The friend-

ship between our nations is only

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 "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

growing as we unlock a shared future of unlimited potential. — Joe Biden, US President Vladimir Putin also spoke the largest exercise in democracy in human histoon Wednesday to PM Modi We commend Indian on phone and congratulatvoters, poll workers, civil ed him on the electoral success. The Russian President also said that society, and journalists for commitment and contributions to this "reflects the support of India's democratic processthe 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 develop-

ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific region." US secretary of state Antony Blinken also extended his congratulations to PM

ment to promote prosperi-

ty and innovation, address

the climate crisis, and

President

ing the strategic ties between both nations.

at least 60 global leaders had congratulated PM and said he looked forward friendship and regional cooperation in the interest of peace, security and pros-perity". It may be noted

President Ukranian

Till Wednesday evening,

Modi, who replied to several messages on social media platform X. After Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu congratulated him, the PM thanked him "enhancing India-Israel that Israel is currently involved in a conflict in Gaza that has lasted more than eight months.
Mr Modi also thanked

Volodymyr Zelenskyy for his congratulatory message 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 con-

# Meloni, Zelenskyy, other global heads congratulate PM on win

AGE CORRESPONDENT NEW DELHI, JUNE 5

Italian Prime Minister Georgia Meloni, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and even neighbouring nation Maldives' 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 President Volodymyr Zelenskyy 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 successful holding of 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 countries. 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 Modi, "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.'

#### **Speculation** in C'garh's Bijapur 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

It may be noted that foreign leaders from India's neighbourhood had attended the previous two swearing-in ceremonies 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

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 Tuesday

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 been virtually in deep freeze since 2016 due to India-Pakistan tensions.



ment of the country and

strengthening of its inter-

Emmanuel Macron too

congratulated Mr Modi

and referred to him as a

'dear friend" while pledg-

ing to continue strengthen-

President

Moscow said.

French

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

■ Law to keep them from attending proceedings

# 2 jailed MPs in new LS can take oath after nod from authorities

AGE CORRESPONDENT

Two newly elected Lok Sabha candidates — radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh and Sheikh Abdul Rashid, currently lodged in prison on terror charges, are giving rise to an unusual situation for the 18th Lok Sabha to be formed in the 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,

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 financing. Singh was arrested in April 2023 under the National



Amritpal Sheikh Abdul Singh

Security Act and sent to the Dibrugarh prison in

Explaining the legalities involved, the former Lok Sabha secretary general PDT Achari emphasised the importance of following the constitutional provisions in such cases.

"Being sworn in as a Member of Parliament is a constitutional right, but because they are currently in prison, Engineer Rashid and Singh must permission from authorities to be escorted to Parliament for the oath-taking ceremony," he said.

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.

He further noted that after they have taken oath, they will write to the Speaker, informing him or her about their inability to attend the House. The Speaker will then refer their requests to the Committee on House Absence of Members.

The committee will recommend whether member should allowed to remain absent from House proceedings or not. The Speaker then will put the recommendation to vote in the House.

### Gen. Pande visits Thal Sena Bhavan work site

Complex to be completed by 2025

**Modi launches plantation** 

drive on environment day

AGE CORRESPONDENT

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-

AGE CORRESPONDENT

"World Environment

Day", PM Narendra Modi

on Wednesday launched a

tree plantation campaign

by planting a sapling at the

Buddha Jayanti Park in

Under the campaign, "Ek

Ped Maa Ke Naam", mil-

lions of trees will be plant-

ed across the country. Mr

Modi urged all to con-

tribute in making our

informed that in the last

decade, India has under-

taken numerous collective

efforts, which have led to

better

the national capital.

**NEW DELHI, JUNE 5** 

ence to the highest engineering standards.
The various green ini-

tiatives and the best engineering practices which have been adopted in the project were highlighted to include transplantation of 476 fully grown trees, compensatory plantation of 5790 trees to increase the green cover, use of environmental friendly construction material to include Fly Ash Bricks, Ashcrete Cement, Recycle Wood, and Peri Formwork among others.

Post construction the Thal Sena Bhawan aims to be a Net Zero Building Compost Plant, Sewage Treatment Plant, Solar Panel and Electric Vehicle charging facilities to promote clean

increased forest cover

across the nation. He said, "This is great for our quest

towards sustainable devel

opment." On X, Mr Modi 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

happy that in the last

decade, India has under-

taken collective efforts

increased forest cover across the nation," he said.

have led to

"It would make people

mother.'

which

#### 12 in Karni Sena chief's murder case AMRESH SRIVASTAVA

**NIA charges** 

NEW DELHI/IAIPUR. IUNE F

Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday filed a chargesheet against 12 accused, including Canada-based designated terrorist Goldy Barar and several prominent gangsters, involved in the gruesome murder of Karni Sena chief Sukhdev Gogamedi in Rajasthan in December

In its chargesheet filed before the NIA special court, Jaipur, the Central agency has charged all the 12 identified accused, belonging to Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab, under various sections of the IPC, Arms Act and the UAPA.

The Central anti-terror probe agency investigations have revealed that the notorious terrorist-gangster syndi-

c a t e was behind the killing of Gogamedi, who was shot dead in the living room of his house in Snyam Nagar colony in

Moving swiftly with its probe into the case, the NIA had arrested eight persons involvement in the conspiracy Gogamedi.

Four others are still absconding, including gangsters Mahendra 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

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

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

by the BJP to do its political surveys, it was a conflict of interest on the part of the agency to be working for the BJP while also participating in exit polls without a clear and unequivocal disclosure of a glaring conflict of inter-

est.
"Investors made massive profits on June 3 after the markets rose on the back of exit poll results. However, on June 4, investors suffered losses of over ₹31-lakh crores.

"In the interest of protecting investors, it is important to determine if 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 manipulation 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 given the fact that Axis will the BJP, India Today and Axis MyIndia," the letter said.

### 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 for ministerial berths and portfolios have begun circulating in JD(U) corri-

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 indus-

While both Mr Tyagi and Ms Anand 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 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.

#### 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, leader Nationalist 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'

■ Continued from Page 1 gratitude towards the people of India for the "overwhelm-

ing 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 chief Akhilesh Yaday, NCP(SP) chief Sharad Pawar, TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee, AAP MP Sanjay Singh, JMM leader Kalpana Soren, NC leader Omar Abdullah and Left leaders Sitaram Yechury and Mr Raja, amongst others, attended the INDIĂ 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 Karnataka. 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 rescuers 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 decisions 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 negotiator 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

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

to no purpose. Even when a bit of patience and 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

### 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 ideological 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 spiritual 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 seats to the INDIA bloc was the DMK's ability to substantially transfer the 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 ministry 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.

#### THE ASIAN AGE

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THE ASIAN AGE office is located at:

New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi-110002. Phone:

Published and Printed on behalf of and for

Deccan Chronicle Holdings Limited, Jawaharlal Nehru National Youth Centre, 219 Deen Dayal Upadhyay Marg, New Delhi 110 002 at BFL Infotech Ltd., C-9, Sector-III, Noida -201301.

▶ London: Quickmarsh Ltd, 8th Floor, Block 2, Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London, SE1 7NQ. RNI Registration number: 57290/94



# Pyrrhic win: Will hubris make way for humility?



Mohan Guruswamy

rime Minister larendra Modi von 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 Closer to our times and

nearer home we have the turn of events after the of Gangwana 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 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 formations committed to the letter and spirit of the Constitution. The Hindi-Hindutva phalanx that 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, Rahul Gandhi won in Rae Bareli by over 3.9 lakh votes after being humiliated in another Gandhi family bailiwick, Amethi, 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 truths, but failed to

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 diamonds 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 the big and visible, but what is the national benefit?

Similarly, Mr Modi highlighted the sprucedup and long-nosed Vande

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?

climb has been driven by

such exaggerations, but

the results this week tell

us that the bubble has

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 dimin-

ished 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, Naren-

dra Modi too has been cut

to size. The BJP, which

despite the malign influ-

ence of the RSS, used to

have a vigorous inner-

party democracy with debate and discussions

animating it, had been sti-

fled for a decade. Mr Modi

ran it by diktat along with

callow aides, but can no

longer continue to do so.

The party now knows that the path is fraught

about-turn

bunch of faceless and

been pricked.

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 zipping by in a plush Vande Bharat Express? I wrote here on April 19

that I don't see the Modi

with consequences. express going much further than the halfway mark. But the electronic may not revert back to the days of Atal Behari Vajmedia's relentless barpayee and L.K. Advani, but the days of Modi-Shah rage of Modi positivism and their flood of concoctwill become the days of ed polls cooked Mr Modi's Mr Modi and Mr Shah with Nitin Gadkari, goose by making over 400 the new norm. Mr Modi himself contributed to the Rajnath Singh and others high expectations by down his hubris with imperiously dismissing humility? The new NDA will now Rahul Gandhi to less than fifty. He accorded the be heavily dependent on same gracelessness to Akhilesh Yadav, M.K. Stalin, Mamata Banerjee the two most notorious political artists on the national stage — Nitish Kumar and N. Chandrababu Naiand Tejashwi Yadav. They all fought back and whittled him down. In the du. Both have raged and last 82 days, Mr Modi criss-crossed the country railed against Narendra Modi individually till the in his IAF Boeing 777 airrecent past. The arithcraft address 206 rallies, metical balance (JDU 12, making people like me TDP 16) requires them to wonder if the country was function in tandem to upset the BJP applecart. running on autopilot? No political leader any-It is difficult to see political events that will align where in the world spent so much time their actions, but they campaigning as Mr Modi did in a decade. A will constantly be breathing down Mr Modi's neck. leader's post is akin to a pulpit which is meant to That might force Mr Modi to become a more conciliatory person. Which preach, convince and motivate. Mr Modi instead used his platform might not be an entirely bad thing for the govermostly to hurl political nance of India? invective on his opponents and rivals. When he spoke of achievements, he hugely exaggerated. In the end more voters saw

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

#### **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, ts and reforms. Ir 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.

**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 constitutions the Kelia scheme 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

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.

him than

#### 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 ques-

tioning 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.











through



#### SHORT TAKES

#### **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 portrait 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 re-lated 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

However, the appeals court in Florence on Wednesday returned 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 ransom that victimised foul 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. In its filing on Tuesday, the FTC said the case involves "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.

# Spain company preparing Kyiv tanks hacked

Madrid, June 5: Santa Barbará 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 sys-

They said the company decided to temporarily disconnect its website until an ongoing investigation concluded. "The company'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 responsi bility 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-missiles against websites in russophobic Spain," the group, which often directs such actions against countries which support Ukraine, wrote on Telegram on Tuesday.

Nato said last month that Russia was behind an intensifying campaign of hybrid attacks on com panies 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

#### BIDEN TO MEET WITH ZELENSKYY IN FRANCE

symbol of Russian mili-

tary valour.

 US President Joe Biden will meet with Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy 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



Leopard tanks for delivery to the Ukrainian Army, according to the defence ministry. — Reuters

# Drill: US bomber flies over Korea

Seoul, June 5: The United OURING THE training, States flew a long-range B-1B bomber over the 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 B-1B aircraft, the second US bomber temporarily deployed over the Korean Peninsula this year.

The exercise was meant to demonstrate the US security commitment to South Korea and strengthen the allies' joint defence posture, according to the South Korean defence ministry. During the training, the B-1B dropped Joint 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.

It said South Korean fighter jets also conductthe B-1B dropped Joint 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 fighter jets, bombers and drones can use JDAMs. and the munitions are among the weapons systems the United States has been providing to Ukraine to help it fight

Russia's invasion.

North Korea is extremely sensitive to drills using bunker-buster bombs, which could threaten its leadership and complex web of underground military tunnels and structures. North Korea has previously responded to the flights of powerful US aircraft in South Korea with its own missile tests. — AP

# 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 Palestinian 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 residential 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 respiratory damage.'

The armed wings Hamas and Islamic Jihad said they had fought gun hattles 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



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 displaced 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 destruction 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

# 'Death to Arabs': Israeli nationalists

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 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. But the annual march, seen as provocative by Palestinians, could ignite broader unrest, as it did

three years ago, when it helped set off an 11-day war in Gaza. Marchers co-nvening outside the Dam-ascus Gate, a central gathering place for Palestinians in east Jerusalem, chanted anti-Arab and anti-Islamic slogans. -AP

#### **COURT APPROVES TEMPORARY BAN ON AL JAZEERA**

Jerusalem, June 5: An Israeli court on Wednes-day upheld a 35-day ban on Al Jazeera operations in Israel imposed by the government on national security grounds and a minister said he hoped to extend the ban for another 45 days when it runs out on Saturday.

Israeli authorities raided a Jerusalem hotel room 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, accusing the broadcaster of encouraging hostilities against Israel.

Al Jazeera rejected the accusations as a "dangerous and ridiculous lie" that put its journalists at Wednesday's court ruling retroactively approved a 35-day ban until June 8

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 Al Jazeera.

#### 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 culture 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.

Kodwa, 54, is a member 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.

was killed.

the ANC's internal

#### German AfD politician stabbed • AfD member Heinrich Koch was attacked with a cutter knife after con-

**Berlin, June 5:** A local candidate 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 AfD member Heinrich

Koch was attacked with a cutter knife after confronting the suspect who was tearing down election posters near a town square, the party said. Police said the 25-vear-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

demonstration in which a policeman was killed, at a 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

fronting 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 doubled since 2019, according 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 25year-old originally from Afghanistan injured six



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

### Gunman fires shots at **US** embassy in Beirut

**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

hospital for treatment. soldiers 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

# 1.5° C target limit may be breached by 2028: WMO

his stomach, but the in-

**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

#### **GUTERRES FOR 'WINDFALL' TAX ON** PROFITS OF FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES

New York, June 5: UN secretary general Antonio Guterres called on Wednesday for a "windfall" tax on profits of fossil fuel companies to help pay for the fight against global warming, decrying them as the "godfathers of climate chaos."

that the average global temperatures over that entire five-year span could

In a bare-knuckled speech timed for World Environment Day, Guterres who has spoken out about the threat of climate change — said that carbon dioxide emissions must fall 9 per cent each year to 2030 for the 1.5° target to be kept alive.

top 1.5° C, a rise from just under a one-in-three chance projected for the 2023-

# Stay on execution of 5 Pak ex-Navy officers

stayed the execution of 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

Islamabad, June 5: A top officers after they were court in Islamabad has arrested in 2016 in conne 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

# PIO astronaut Sunita Williams flies to space for 3rd time

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 wh-

ile 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 president 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



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

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

Moscow, June 5: A 59-yearold Russian cosmonaut has become the first person to spend 1,000 days in Russian space space, agency Roscosmos said on Wednesday.

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

His current trip to the



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

# quick

INDICATORS		%
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
* As of 8:30 PM IST		

#### **KEC International** secures orders worth ₹1,000 cr

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 contantiy 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.

# Exports, jobs in services sector increase in May

**MADHUSUDAN SAHOO** 

India exports grew at a record pace and job creation rose to a 21-month high in services sector activity in May, according 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 mark separating growth from contraction for the 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

"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.

On the price front, Das also said that cost pressures ticked up in May led by higher raw material and labour costs. "Like for output, new orders rose at a substantial pace, but were slowest in the calendar year-to-date, even as fierce competition and extreme heat across the



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

growth," Das said.

"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 survey 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 revisions due to demand strength and productivity gains, several firms indicated having taken on

"Not only did employment rise markedly, but also to the greatest extent since August 2022, the survey said. Outstanding business volumes rose at the quickest pace in nearly three-and-a-half years,' the survey noted, adding that the overall level of positive sentiment climbed to an eight-month high.

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

RBI governor Shaktikthe decisions taken by rate (repo) as inflation concern.

vailing 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

FY25, it added. -PTI

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.

anta Das will announce Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Friday. Experts are of the view that the central bank is unlikely to cut the benchmark interest still remains a matter of

The MPC may also refrain from rate cut as economic growth is picking up, notwithstanding the elevated repo rate of 6.5 per cent pre-

is likely to be shallow"

It also said CPI-based retail inflation is expected 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 beginning Oct. till the end of

# **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 capitalisation 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 slightly above its longte-

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,

FMCG STOCKS are

tion outcome as rural

demand is set to get a

boost both from good

as new government's

seeing traction post elec-

monsoon forecast as well

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

NDA is forming the government for the 3rd consecutive term, going ahead the narrative around government formation and RBI monetary policy 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 portfolio 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 after ₹3,318.98 crore sold on

# 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 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 business measures, and gradual fiscal consolidation.

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

assessment of country's 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. — PTI

# Govt to focus on policy continuity

Singapore, June 5: The new government will deliver policy continuity with some change, without detailing any possible changes, CEA said.

India's closer-than-expected election should increase the prospect of productive reforms, the chief economic adviser (CEA). Nageswaran, said on Wednesday, while the fundamental drivers of growth remain largely

**GLOBAL DEBT RISING** 

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

**RAPIDLY, SAYS UN** 

**INDUSTRY BODY** 

**SANGEETHA G** 

CHENNAI, JUNE 5

• THE ELECTION

outcome increases the probability of some of these factor market reforms happening, rather than lowering it, because it creates avenues for dialogue.

independent of ment policy.

The government's chief adviser, V Nageswaran, economic

India needs an economic

and democratic course

correction and a strong opposition will force the

government to change co-

urse, said former RBI gov-

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

"The Indian voter has

ernor Raghuram Rajan.

CHENNAI, JUNE 5

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 conference nostea Nomura in Singapore.

"I would even say that election outcome increases the probability

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

production. "The supply inirastructure improvements that have happened - they are for real and they will continue." he said.

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.

AI SUPPORT

were similarly

on the legacy of past successes and outcomes. Krishnan, speaking on sidelines of a Software Technology Park of India event, said the ministry of electronics and information technology (Meity)

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

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

#### **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

has a number of initiatives which have been planned and are in the works and those will be taken up once the new

have in the organisation in terms of...institutional memory continues.

### **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 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 individual can hold debt securities worth up to ₹2 lakh and other than debt securities 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

iPhone maker infusing its Siri digital assistant with Al

combined at any point of

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 maximum annual maintenance 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 portfolio value exceeds ₹10 lakh then BDSA should automatically be converted into a regular demat account.

# Tesla to spend \$3–4 bn to buy Nvidia hardware

Texas (US), June 5: Tesla 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 a post on X.

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 told Nvidia to prioritise shipments of artificial

intelligence processors to

his companies X, formally

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



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



• THE DEAL gives OpenAl access to hundreds of millions of Apple users, incl-uding ones that might have been hesitant to try ChatGPT otherwise.

Apple, the arrangement is likely a "short- to medibrings the company the um-term relationship" for technology of the AI era, a Apple, said Dag Kittlaus, a chatbot with eerily powertech veteran who cofounded and ran the Siri business before it was ful abilities that it can pair with its own services. acquired by Apple. "But Apple has been developing a host of AI features, you can bet that they will including ones that run on its devices and others that require cloud computing. It's also infusing its Siri cies here. The digital assistant with AI.

be working hard building out their own competen-WWDC keynote address, delivered by chief executive officer Tim Cook on June 10, is seen as

Apple's biggest sales pitch

in years. The company has 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 quarters.

The two companies haven't disclosed the deal publicly 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 with knowledge of the situation. Bloomberg











But company's own chat-

The OpenAI partnership

bot isn't yet up to snuff.









#### **SHORT SINGLES**

#### 'India-Pak game is a battle of nerves'

Shahid Afridi sees the India-Pakistan contest as an equiva-lent 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

"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

# Pak's Wasim to

miss opening tie
All-rounder Imad Wasim will
Amiss 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 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.

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

#### 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

England's target was revised to 109 runs needed off 10 overs via the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method as Ireland kept the opposition bowlers under the pump for the majority of the contest.

Michael Jones made a 30-ball 45 not out with two sixes and four fours while George Munsey hit an unbeaten 41 not out off 31 balls with as many boundaries to lead the charge for their side.

A passing shower right after the toss left a wet spot on the pitch which forced a delay of 20 minutes, while the longest break came right after the powerplay.

# 

# 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

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

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 par-tisan 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 midd off log enimer. 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

Earlier, Indian bowlers were right on target, pin-ning down rival batsmen and cramping them for space regularly. Hardik Pandya was the most successful, taking three wickets while conceding 27 runs in his four overs - he was also on a hat-trick.

Dallas (United States),

June 5: Max O'Dowd hit

an unbeaten half-century

to steer the Netherlands to

a six-wicket victory over

Nepal in their T20 World Cup Group 'D' clash on

Set a target of 107 to win, O'Dowd anchored the

Netherlands' run chase

with 54 off 48 balls to see

the Dutch over the line at

The Netherlands fin-

ished on 109/4 off 18.4

overs, with Bas de Leede

hitting the winning runs

Grand

Stadium in Dallas.

Prairie

Tuesday.



Tector during their T20 World Cup match at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York on Wednesday.

35. figures that were somehow spoilt in his last over in which he conceded 16 runs. Axar Patel and Mohammed Siraj took a

wicket apiece. 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

O'DOWD STEERS DUTCH PAST NEPAL

with a boundary to seal

O'Dowd with 22 runs while Sybrand

Engelbrecht was the only

other Netherlands bats-

ble figures with 14.

man to make it into dou-

Nepal, meanwhile, were

left ruing a trio of dropped catches that

might have turned the

game had they gone to

hand, including skipper

The Netherlands' mod-

Rohit Paudel's missed chance to get rid of

O'Dowd in the 18th over.

victory

men's doubles quarterfi-nals here on Wednesday. The pair won 7-6 (3), 5-7,

6-1 at Court Suzanne

Bopanna and Ebden took

one hour and four min-

utes to complete their win

over the Belgium duo,

seeded 10th in the year's

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

— Agencies

second Grand Slam.

Lenglen.

Vikram Singh supported

best with 2 for 6 in three 26 in 14 balls. He also hit overs. Arshdeep got 2 for two fours and a couple of Arshdeep struck again,

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

est victory target had been set up by a disci-plined bowling display which restricted Nepal to

After losing the toss,

Nepal's batsmen strug-

gled to get to grips with

moist, overcast conditions

after being put into bat fol-

lowing a slight delay of

play caused by a wet out-

"The conditions while

batting were really challenging. Netherlands bowled really well," Nepal

captain Paudel said.

106 all out.

Sharma

not lose any further wickets though and crawled to 26 by the end of the Powerplay period. Skipper Pandya and his Mumbai Indians captain struck with the fifth ball, knock-

tnis time ripping through opener Andy Balbirnie to disturb his stumps. Ireland 9 for 2. They did introduced

ing back Lorcan Tucker's

Nepal: Kushal Bhurtel Ibw b van Beek 7. Aasif Sheikh c Kingma

b Pringle 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 O. Gulsan Jha b van Beek 14. Karan KC c Kingma

b de Leede 17, Sagar Dhakal not out O, Abinash Bohara c & b van Beek O. 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

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 (lb-1, nb-1) 2. Total (for 4 wickets in 18.4

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.

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

### **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 (lb-5, pb-1 w-2) 15 Text (all out in 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, Shivan 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 beauty 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 oroken courtesy Bumrah thunderbolt that crashed into

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 nush for a second run on a free hit to be run out with

four more overs left in the **SCOREBOARD** 

# Oz chase history, Pak up for USA

Bridgetown (Bar-bados), June 5: With the World Test Championship mace and the 50-over World Cup trophy already in their bag, Australia will look to hit the ground running in their quest to become the first team to simultaneously hold all three world titles when they take on Oman in their T20 World Cup opener here.

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 home soil.

However, Australia have no dearth of match-winners in their squad, starting 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 World Cup final.

Australia might experiment in the group stage to find their best XI.

The ever-reliable trio of retirement. Mitchell Starc,

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

other match.

While on paper, the
Babar Azam-led side
looks the outright
favourite to win the clash,
Pakistan's recent form 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



### **ROHIT TRIED TO GET DRAVID** TO STAY ON AS INDIA COACH

New York, June 5: India my time with him. I'm captain Rohit 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 his last act as coach.

Dravid's contract runs out at the end of the month and he will not reapply for the job, after almost three years in charge.

"I've enjoyed every bit of it, working with him," Rohit, who has played under and with Dravid for India. He added: "I tried con-

vincing him to stay, but obviously there are a lot of things that he needs to look after as well.

"I've personally enjoyed

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

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

lot of great determination 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

# Paolini sinks Rybakina

**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 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

second set but had to regroup after former Wimbledon champion Rybakina rallied to take the match to a deciding

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 Open.

**BOPANNA-EBDEN SAIL INTO SEMIFINALS** 

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

#### SINDHU LOSES IN FIRST ROUND OF **INDONESIA OPEN** Ebden sailed into the semifinals with a comfort-Belgium's Sander Gille and Joran Vliegen in the

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

tler took an hour and 10 minutes to beat the Commonwealth Games gold-medallist.

maiden loss to Wen-chi. The Taiwanese shutqualifiers for the first

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

Kolkata, June 5: Emotions will run high when the talismanic Sunil Chhetri leads India out one last time in a crucial FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Kuwait 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



conference in Kolkata on Wednesday.

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

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 cat-Championships.