

COMMANDER

Swachata Badhao, Tandrusti Badhe

WARRANTY

5 YEARS

Slim Hide Flush Tank Kahan...?

Space Saving

Badi Todfod + Deewaar Ko Leakage Se Bachayen

EXPRESS NETWORK



RAMOJI RAO, WHO REVOLUTIONISED MEDIA INDUSTRY, DIES AT 87 [PAGE 8](#)

Finance to states, depts: Use arbitration only in disputes under ₹10 crore

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

UNDERLINING THAT the arbitration processes are expensive and time-consuming, and that there are “perceptions of wrong-doing including collusion” about arbitrators, the Union Finance Ministry has recommended restricting arbitration clauses in government contracts to disputes of less than ₹10 crore.

“Arbitration as a method of dispute resolution should not be routinely or automatically included in procurement contracts/tenders, especially in large contracts,” said a June 3 office memorandum by the Department of Expenditure’s Procurement Policy Division.

The memorandum has been circulated to all ministries in the government of India, including the departments of public enterprises and financial services, and to all states as well.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

THE WORLD



ISRAEL RESCUES 4 HOSTAGES IN GAZA, AIRSTRIKES KILL 210 [PAGE 10](#)

SPORT



SUNDAY SHOWDOWN: INDIA TAKE ON PAK [PAGE 15](#)

TALKS CONTINUE ON portfolios for allies

SHIVRAJ, KHATTAR, BOMMAI, DEB: Former CMs may get new roles

BJP-RSS LEADERS DISCUSS way ahead on party leadership

Taking oath today



Preparations at Rashtrapati Bhavan Saturday for the swearing in of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister. *PTI*

Stage set, Modi to send list of ministers before oath-taking ceremony

LIZ MATHEW & JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE Narendra Modi, set to take oath for the third consecutive term Sunday as the head of an NDA government, is expected to hand over the list of Ministers in his council a few hours ahead of the swearing-in ceremony, scheduled for 7.15 pm at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The BJP, 32 seats below the majority mark, will need the support of its allies, especially Telugu Desam Party and Janata Dal (United). Indeed, top BJP

MEET TEAMS NAIDU, NITISH: THE TWO PILLARS OF NDA [PAGE 7](#)

leaders, including Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh, along with party national president J P Nadda, have been in consultations with TDP’s Chandrababu Naidu, JD-U’s Nitish Kumar, and Shiv Sena’s Eknath Shinde, to work out how best to accommodate them in the Council of Ministers.

The final decision is, of course, with the Prime Minister-designate but sources said the BJP is **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Hasina arrives; Muizzu confirms visit, says ties in right direction

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

BANGLADESH PRIME Minister Sheikh Hasina arrived in Delhi Saturday, being the first of the seven foreign leaders to reach India to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi for his third term.

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu also confirmed his visit as he accepted the invitation, which was personally delivered by the Indian High Commissioner in Male.

In a statement issued by the President’s office, Muizzu said he looked forward to working with **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

UCC, delimitation and quota: Day before, TDP flags ‘discussion’ points

BJP stand on removing Muslim quota is if it’s on its own, not in coalition: Lokesh

SREENIVAS JANYALA
HYDERABAD, JUNE 8

THE TELUGU Desam Party will ensure that decisions on contentious issues such as delimitation and the Uniform Civil Code are not taken unilaterally, nor would the reservation of any community be taken away, party leader and N Chandrababu Naidu’s son N Lokesh Naidu has told *The Indian Express*.

Speaking a day before the new government is sworn-in, with TDP as the NDA’s second



TDP leader N Lokesh Naidu

largest constituent with 16 MPs, Lokesh, speaking about the 4 per cent Muslim reservation in his state, said the community has nothing to worry about.

“TDP has always been and will remain a secular party. No one’s quota would be taken **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

UStounding victory

Amul We back winners!

daCunha/AB/954

Centre and state are not meeting public expectations, admits Manipur CM Biren

‘Central forces must actively help state’

RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

ACKNOWLEDGING THAT the state and the Centre have not met the “expectations” of the public in Manipur, state Chief Minister N Biren Singh said this was reflected in the BJP’s defeat there in the just concluded Lok Sabha elections. Accepting responsibility for that defeat — Congress won both seats — he said, in an interview to *The Indian Express*, that it was time for him to work with “even more conviction.”

This was the first election that the ethnic violence broke out in the state a year ago in May 2023. The

P6

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW

N BIREN SINGH
MANIPUR CHIEF MINISTER

Inner Manipur constituency was won by Congress’s Angomcha Bimol Akojiam, a professor from Delhi’s Jawaharlal Nehru University, who defeated his BJP rival; the Outer Manipur reserved **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

Manipur’s Jiribam on edge as mob torches houses, govt offices

Over 230 people in district flee homes

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
IMPHAL, JUNE 8

ETHNIC TENSIONS escalated in Manipur’s Jiribam district, bordering Assam, on Saturday after a mob of armed miscreants torched several houses and some government offices, including two police outposts and a forest beat office.

Over 230 people from Mongbung, Lamlai Khunou, and surrounding villages fled their homes and are currently taking **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**



Security forces evacuate residents from Jiribam *Express*

Parliament will no longer be muzzled and stifled: Sonia



(From left) Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal and Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi on Saturday. *Amit Mehra*

ASAD REHMAN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

AS THE Narendra Modi government prepares to begin its third term, senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi Saturday launched a strong attack on it, and said that a stronger Opposition now means Parliament will no longer “be muzzled and stifled as it has been over the past 10 years”.

She asked the newly elected Congress MPs to be “to be watchful, vigilant and proactive” in holding the Prime Minister and his new government “accountable”.

Addressing party MPs after her re-election as the Congress Parliamentary Party chairperson, Sonia said: “No longer can and should Parliament be bulldozed like it has been for a decade now. No longer will the writ of the ruling establishment be permitted to disrupt Parliament, whimsically mistreat members or push through legislation without due **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

BUOYED CONG ASKS RAHUL TO BE LOP, HE SAYS WILL DECIDE SOON [PAGE 6](#)

EXPLAINED

E

Asserting their new numbers

SONIA GANDHI’s remarks underline the Congress’s resolve to play the role of an aggressive Opposition, challenging the government every step of the way in Parliament, the composition of which will be completely different this time given that the BJP does not have majority on its own.

As Naveen bows out, selfies and a pep talk to leaders: ‘Will be around for you’

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

SUJIT BISOI
BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 8

HOURS AFTER offering his resignation following his party’s defeat in the recently concluded Assembly polls, a video of Biju Janata Dal president Naveen Patnaik appeared on social media in which the outgoing chief minister is heard addressing a small group of party workers. In

the video, Patnaik asks BJD workers to own the work the BJD government did and not be “ashamed” of the loss.

As Patnaik bows out after an unprecedented 24-year reign as Chief Minister, amid swirling questions about the future of the party and its leadership, the 77-year-old has been gracious in defeat.

Over the last few days since the BJD’s loss, Patnaik has been meeting a steady stream of party candidates — both winners and those who lost — gamely posing with them for selfies, “motivating them not to get discouraged” and assuring them that he would be around for them.

“The (former) CM told us what the government has done in 24 years and motivated us to keep working. He said he would be there for us and lead us from the front. He has given us directions on what to do and what not to do,” BJD’s organisational secretary Pranab Prakash Das told *The Indian Express* after his meeting with Patnaik.

Of the 147 seats in the Odisha Assembly, the BJP won 78, reducing the BJD to 51, down from the

113 seats it won in 2019. Patnaik himself lost from Kantabanji, his first loss since his electoral debut in 1997, while registering a narrow win in Hinjili.

However, Patnaik’s former private secretary and confidant V K Pandian, the Tamil Nadu-born ex-IAS officer who became the focal point of the BJP’s attacks this election, was absent from the proceedings. Considered to be Patnaik’s “shadow” for the last couple of years, the former civil servant has been missing in action since the election results, not accompanying the former



BJD chief Naveen Patnaik addresses party leaders on Thursday *Xj@Naveen_Odisha*

CM even when he went to Raj Bhawan on Wednesday to tender his resignation.

Amid growing voices of dissent within the party over Pandian’s growing influence and “sidelining” of senior party leaders in the party, Patnaik has formed a committee to look into the reasons for the BJD’s poll debacle.

On Saturday, in an interview to *PTI* and *ANI* that was released by the BJD media cell, Patnaik defended Pandian, calling the criticism against him “unfortunate” and that as an officer, he

did “excellent work”.

In the last 10 years, Pandian has “helped with two cyclones and the Covid-19 epidemic in the state...He is a person of integrity and honesty and should be remembered for all that,” Patnaik said.

On a question on his successor, Patnaik said, “I have always clearly said about my successor... it’s not Mr Pandian and I repeat it again — that the people of Odisha will decide my successor.”

According to party sources, at the recent meetings with Patnaik, **CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

‘Lynching’ of 2 cattle transporters: FIR filed, special team to probe

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
RAIPUR, JUNE 8

THE RAIPUR police have registered a suo motu FIR for culpable homicide not amounting to murder and murder attempt against unknown persons in a case of alleged mob lynching in Arang area on Friday. A special team has been formed to probe the death of two cattle transporters found dead after allegedly being chased by unidentified people, the police said.

The FIR was registered based on information provided by a relative of the victims. Speaking to The Indian Express over phone, the relative said the incident happened around 2 am on Friday when three men — Guddu Khan, 35, Chand Miya Khan, 23, and Saddam Qureshi, 23 — were transporting cattle between Mahasamund and Raipur districts. They had entered Arang in Raipur district when a mob waylaid them, burst their truck’s tyre and started beating them on the Mahanadi bridge, he said.

While Guddu and Chand died, Saddam is battling for his life at a private hospital in Raipur. Saddam and Chand were cousins and residents of Saharanpur district of UP. Guddu hailed from UP’s Shamli district.

Pinarayi calls bishop ‘ignorant’ over critical remark; Opp hits out

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
JUNE 8

KERALA CHIEF Minister Pinarayi Vijayan is under fire from the Congress and the BJP for allegedly dubbing a bishop “an ignoramus among priests” for citing “anti-incumbency” as the reason for the drubbing of the Left Front in Lok Sabha elections. The CPI(M)-led LDF lost 19 out of 20 LS seats in Kerala. Jacobite Church bishop Coorilos Geevarghese said on Facebook that the government’s poor performance had led to the rout.

Referring to the LDF’s landslide win in the 2021 Assembly polls, the bishop said, “Flood and pandemic will not always come to the (government’s) rescue. People will not fall for the kit politics.” Bishop Coorilos was talking about the food kits distributed by the Kerala government during the pandemic period. The Pinarayi government’s performance during the devastating floods of 2018 and the Covid-19 days were seen as one of the reasons for the Left retaining power in the state Assembly.

Bishop Coorilos is known for his pro-Left comments on social media platforms.

Himachal: Chinese national held near India-China border

SAURABH PARASHAR
SHIMLA, JUNE 8

Police in Himachal Pradesh Saturday said they are investigating how a 34-year old Chinese national managed to reach Sumdo village, near the India-China border in the state’s Kinnaur district, without obtaining a Protected Area Permit (PAP). Yudong Guo, 34, was accompanied by a woman from Maharashtra and had reached Sumdo, a protected area, via

The relative said he received a call from Chand around 2 am and from Saddam around 3 am, both saying a mob was beating them up.

“Qureshi(Saddam) was a helper. He called and kept the phone in his pocket. He was screaming that his hands and legs were broken. He was pleading with the attackers to have mercy on him, give him some water,” the relative said. “We could also hear some men asking him ‘kahan se laaye ho... chhodenge nahi (where did you bring it (cattle) from... we will not spare you),” he said.

“Before this, Chand called briefly. He said their vehicle had been waylaid and they were being attacked. Then someone snatched his phone... We kept calling Chand’s number but he didn’t answer the phone. Around 5 am, a police officer picked up the call and said he was dead. We had no idea what work they had gone for. We just knew Chand was a driver,” he said.

On Saturday, SSP, Raipur, Santosh Singh said a 14-member special team has been formed to ensure a detailed investigation into the case. “Based on our investigation so far, we have registered an FIR under Section 304 (culpable homicide), 307 (murder attempt) and 34 (act done with common intention) of IPC,” he said.



Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan

On Friday, while releasing the government’s progress report of the last three years, Pinarayi said, “A priest said that it was the floods that brought this government to power and don’t expect another flood. His words show that there are ignoramus people among priests,” said the CM.

Opposition leader and Congress MLA V D Satheesan said: “Vijayan is still arrogant to dub all those who criticise him as ignoramus. The Chief Minister’s reaction to a critical view on the election result is unbecoming of this stature. Vijayan cannot tolerate criticism.”

BJP state chief K Surendran said: “Muslim cleric body SAMASTHA president Jifri Muthukoya Thangal and SAMASTHA mouthpiece Suprabhatam have criticised the state government after the election results. The Chief Minister has not reacted to that. But he has termed the bishop as an ignorant person. This shows his double standards towards Muslims and Christians.”

Dubling. He was carrying documents showing that he was married to the woman, police said. The court of the Chief Judicial Magistrate at Reckong Peo in Kinnaur remanded Yudong in police custody till June 10.

It is being ascertained if Yudong reached Sumdo by mistake. Kinnaur SP Shrishti Pandey said: “The foreign national was not carrying a PAP when he was apprehended. It is mandatory for foreign nationals. The PAP is different from Inner-Line Permits, which is issued to Indians.”

FROM PAGE ONE Modi to send Council list before oath-taking

FULL REPORTS ON
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likely to retain the crucial portfolios of Home, Finance, Defence and External Affairs, all part of the Cabinet Committee on Security. Education and Culture, two ministries shaped by the party’s ideological imperatives, are also likely to stay with the BJP.

The overarching message, a senior BJP leader said, is to signal that although the BJP is 32 seats below the majority mark, this is not a “weak, defensive government.”

Naidu left for Andhra Pradesh Saturday because of the death of celebrated media baron Ramoji Rao and is expected to be back in New Delhi Sunday.

The view in the BJP is that on top of Naidu’s priority list is “adequate financial support” for Andhra Pradesh from the Centre and that may also play a role in the Ministerial berths he gets. Sources

said the TDP, the largest ally with 16 MPs, could get at least two positions in the Council of Ministers while Pawan Kalyan’s Jana Sena (which has two MPs) may be offered one.

Among names that are doing the rounds as the possible ministers are Srikakulam MP K Ram Mohan Naidu; Guntur MP Chandra Shekhar Pemmasani; and Chittoor MP Daggumalla Prasada Rao.

The MPs, when contacted Saturday evening, said they have not yet got any “calls” regarding the Sunday ceremony.

The JD-U is also likely to have at least three of its leaders in the new government. LJP-Paswan’s Chirag Paswan is expected to be a Cabinet minister. “Bihar will have a good presence in the new government. Both allies performed impressively,” said a party leader.

The JD-U won 12 seats and Paswan’s party bagged five. Bihar also goes to Assembly polls next year. The BJP leadership is keen to see that Maharashtra, another poll-bound state where Assembly elections are due later this year, is also well-represented. The coalition has fared poorly in Maharashtra: Shiv Sena (Shinde) won seven seats, NCP (Ajit Pawar) got one while the BJP could manage only 12 from the total of 48 seats in the state.

However, with the Opposition INDIA bloc showing signs of a strong revival in the state, the BJP does not want its allies to be “politically vulnerable” ahead of the state polls, sources said.

Sources also said Amit Shah and Rajnath Singh are very likely to continue in “crucial” ministries and some new faces could be from former CMs Shivraj Singh

Chouhan, Manohar Lal Khattar, Biplob Kumar Deb and Basavaraj Bommai.

In parallel, the BJP is also exploring ways to expand the NDA’s footprint and feelers are being sent to some Independents. Of the seven Independents, one MP, Vishal Prakashbabu Patil from Sangli, has joined with the INDIA bloc. Party leaders are also in touch with the MPs from regional parties including the YSRCP, which has four MPs. Also, BJP and RSS leaders have discussed changes in the BJP leadership with incumbent party chief J P Nadda’s extended term ending this month.

The discussions about the succession plan within the party came up in the marathon meeting at PM Modi’s residence on Saturday, party sources said. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the RSS.

• Hasina arrives; Muizzu confirms visit, says ties in right direction

Prime Minister Modi to further strengthen the ties with India, noting that Maldives-India relations is “heading in the positive direction”. This is an important signal to New Delhi, that Male was keen to repair the ties that had suffered a setback since Muizzu rode to power last year over the anti-India plank. This is the first time that Muizzu, who had even referred to India as a bully, has positively assessed the bilateral relationship.

Seychelles Vice President Ahmed Afif also arrived Saturday, while remaining leaders from Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives and Mauritius will be arriving Sunday.

The Ministry of External Affairs issued a statement Saturday confirming the names of the leaders attending the ceremony. “The swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Council of Ministers following the General Elections 2024 is scheduled on 09 June 2024. On the occasion, leaders from India’s neighbourhood and Indian Ocean region have been cordially invited as distinguished guests,” it said. “President of Sri Lanka, Ranil Wickremesinghe; President of Maldives, Mohamed Muizzu; Vice-President of Seychelles, Ahmed Afif; Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina; Prime Minister of Mauritius, Pravind

Kumar Jugnauth; Prime Minister of Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’; and Prime Minister of Bhutan, Tshering Tobgay, have accepted the invitation to attend.”

Apart from participating in the swearing-in ceremony, the ministry said the leaders will attend a banquet hosted by President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan Sunday evening.

Bangladesh Prime Minister Hasina and Seychelles Vice president Afif were welcomed by Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs Muktesh Pardeshi, and other senior officials from the Indian government and Bangladesh High Commission.

“First distinguished guest sets foot in New Delhi for the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister and Council of Ministers. PM Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh warmly received by Secy (CPV & OIA) at mukteshpardeshi as she arrived in New Delhi. This visit of one of our most valued partners will further strengthen - close and deep-rooted bonds of friendship,” the MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a post on X.

In the previous two times when Bangladesh was invited for the swearing-in ceremony in 2014 and 2019, Hasina could not come due to prior commitments. In 2014, she had sent Bangladesh parliament’s Speaker Shirin

Shermin Chaudhury and in 2019, Bangladesh President Abdul Hamid had attended the ceremony. So, this is the first time Hasina is attending Modi’s swearing-in ceremony.

Hasina had visited India last in September 2023, when she came as a leader of the guest country invited to India’s G20 Presidency.

She is expected to meet Prime Minister Modi on Sunday and Monday and leave for Dhaka Monday evening.

Hasina is also likely to meet the Gandhi family, as sources said that schedule is being worked out. While she had not been able to meet the Gandhis during her last visit in September 2023 during the G20 summit, she had met Congress leader Sonia Gandhi, her daughter Priyanka Gandhi and former PM Manmohan Singh in the October 2019 visit.

In Male, the Maldives President’s office said that Muizzu has accepted the invitation to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

“Munu Mahawar, High Commissioner of the Republic of India to the Republic of Maldives, presented the letter of invitation to the President during a courtesy call at the President’s Office. At the call, the High Commissioner extended greetings from Prime Minister Modi, stating that the Prime Minister is looking forward

to having the President attend this momentous ceremony marking his third swearing-in as Prime Minister of India. The President expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister for the invitation, adding that he would be honored to attend this historic event,” the Maldives President’s office said.

“He also stated that he looks forward to working with the Prime Minister to further strengthen the close relations with India, noting that Maldives-India relations is heading in the positive direction, as would be demonstrated by this visit. The President thanked the High Commissioner for personally delivering the invitation,” it said.

The Ministry of External Affairs said the visit of the leaders to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Modi for his third consecutive term is in keeping with the highest priority accorded by India to its ‘Neighbourhood First’ policy and ‘SAGAR’ vision.

Modi had invited SAARC leaders in 2014 and BIMSTEC leaders in 2019. Leaders from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Myanmar are not part of the list of leaders this time. While India has strained ties with Pakistan, there are no diplomatic ties with the Taliban regime, and Myanmar’s military-ruled junta is battling a crisis at home, as it is fighting with opposition groups.

• As Naveen bows out, selfies and a pep talk

BJD leaders have unanimously sought direct access to him and removal of the “invisible barrier” between them.

As he emerged from his meeting with Patnaik at Naveen Niwas in Bhubaneswar on June 6, senior leader Prafulla Samal, when asked about Pandian’s absence from the post-poll meetings, said, “What matters is the presence of Naveen Babu, no one else.” Six-time MLA Samal lost the Bhadrak Assembly seat to debutant Sitansu Sekhar Mohapatra of the BJP.

Maheesh Sahu, another senior BJD leader, said Pandian was a “general worker of the party like all of us, who was only assigned to look after the government’s schemes”.

On Pandian’s absence from the recent meetings, BJD organisational secretary Das said it was the former chief minister’s prerogative to decide who to call for meetings.

Since the loss, there have been questions about how Patnaik — who, until the recent loss, had served for five straight terms and hadn’t lost a single election since his Lok Sabha debut in 1998 — will reconcile with sitting in the Opposition benches.

• Manipur’s Jiribam on edge, mob torches houses

refuge in two relief camps at the Jiribam district headquarters. To bring the situation under control, a large contingent of state police was flown to the district using an Indian Air Force helicopter early Saturday.

The latest round of violence erupted in the district Thursday after a 59-year-old man, identified as Soibam Saratkumar Singh, was found dead, with his body bearing signs of injuries made by a sharp object. The mob rampage that followed prompted the Jiribam administration to impose prohibitory orders under CrPC Section 144.

Jiribam lies on the westernmost side of Manipur, about 220 kilometres from the state’s capital Imphal. It borders Assam’s Cachar district.

As violence escalated,

• TDP flags ‘discussion’ points

away by us. No one should be worried about that. BJP’s stance that it would remove religion-based quota is if that party comes to power on its own, not when it is a coalition government. I want to assure that the TDP will not withdraw the quota of any community. Chandrababu Naidu has always maintained that socially and economically backward communities, irrespective of religion or caste, should get benefits in order to tackle poverty, and that will continue,” he said.

During campaigning, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said the Congress tried to extend reservation on the basis of religion and give it to Muslims. Speaking in Rajasthan, he had said that as soon as the Congress formed the government at the Centre in 2004, one of its first tasks was “reducing the SC/ST reservation in Andhra Pradesh” and giving it to Muslims.

“This was a pilot project which the Congress wanted to try in the entire country. Between 2004 and 2010, the Congress tried to implement Muslim reservation in Andhra Pradesh four times but due to legal hurdles and the awareness of the Supreme Court, it could not fulfil its intention. ... In 2011, the Congress tried to implement it throughout the country,” he had claimed.

On the hot-button issue of delimitation that the BJP is proposing to carry out by 2026, Lokesh said that the TDP will ensure decisions are not taken in isolation and that interests and representation of not only Andhra Pradesh but other states, too, are kept in mind. “Issues like delimitation, Uniform Civil Code, etc will be discussed at length and resolved amicably. We will sit together with partners across the table and try to achieve a consensus on all these issues. There is a lot to discuss,” he said.

In an interview to *The Indian Express* before the results, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, when asked what’s expected on delimitation if the NDA gets a third term, had said, “We have already said that there will be no injustice with the South after delimitation. We have to discover ways.” He had added that delimitation would not be deferred.

On the issue of granting Special Category Status (SCS) to Andhra Pradesh, Lokesh said that though the TDP joined the

NDA unconditionally, they will keep the interests of the state and its people in mind.

“Our priority is to create 20 lakh jobs as promised in the manifesto and bring investments. SCS will definitely help in this and we will discuss all these issues in the coming days and meet the new finance commission. Right now, our support to the NDA and Prime Minister Narendra Modi is unconditional because the country needs a strong leader like him,” Lokesh said.

He also said that Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister-designate Chandrababu Naidu had sought a report from the Director General of Police (DGP) on whether Pegasus was used to allegedly tap the phones belonging to the father-son duo by the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy regime.

Lokesh said he and his father were targeted twice and that they received alerts on their mobile phones. “I have been targeted twice, once during my Yuva Galam yatra in March 2023 and once this April during campaigning. We both received alerts from Apple. We suspect that Pegasus was used by the Jagan government to tap our phones,” Lokesh said.

According to Lokesh, there were indications that the previous government acquired Pegasus off the books and operated it from a location outside the state.

“We want to know from where it was procured and from which location it was operated and who all were targeted,” he said. Lokesh said that as it became clear that it was losing, the Jagan government destroyed evidence in some offices. He said that a police inquiry will reveal what has been erased.

His allegations come against the backdrop of the phone tapping case during the Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS) regime in Telangana, where some officials of the Special Intelligence Bureau (SIB) led by then SIB DIG Prabhakar Rao allegedly tapped the phones and conducted electronic surveillance on opposition political leaders and activists.

According to police sources, former Deputy Commissioner of Police (Task Force, Hyderabad City) P Radhakrishnan Rao has confessed to his involvement in the tapping of phones by some officers in the Telangana SIB when the BRS government was in power.

Asked how he would like the Centre to intervene, he said, “The working style (has to change). Central forces (here in Manipur) must actively support the state government’s initiatives and help convince the original tribal people that the (state) government is not against them, but is targeting outsiders who came after 1961.”

Even though he takes responsibility for the defeat in the Lok Sabha polls, Singh is firm on remaining CM. Asked if he would now resign, said: “No. Some have tried to break me and my state. My job is to legally punish them. My team knows the issues faced by indigenous Manipuris, including Nagas. This is the time to work with more conviction... If I leave, their path is clear. Why should we give in to enemies?”

Asked if he anticipates a change in the Centre’s handling of the Manipur situation in the wake of the increased importance of allies in the current composition of the NDA government, he said, “I don’t think there will be any changes. The (state) government’s actions, like identifying illegal migrants and deportation, are under constitutional provisions. If you heard their speeches in Parliament, (Chandrababu) Naidu ji and Nitish Kumar ji have shown strong support for Modi ji. They trust him completely, which strengthens NDA. There will be no division or differences.”

Singh said that now the Lok Sabha elections are over, he’s hopeful that after government formation, the central leadership would intervene to solve Manipur’s issues.

Manipur’s newly-elected Congress MP, Bimol Akojiam, appealed for restraint.

“To restore peace, we should be careful of the forces at play and not succumb to any plots to sustain the violence,” Akojiam, the MP-elect from the Inner Manipur seat, said.

Akojiam said he had spoken to Jiribam district administration to ensure both lives and property are safeguarded. He also wondered if an “ethnic exclusivist agenda” was at play.

Meanwhile, a villager at Lamlai Khunou, who’s currently staying at a relief camp in Chingdong Leikai Primary School in Jiribam, said residents of her village had been on high alert after there were reports of violence Wednesday night. Her family was forced to flee their

home Thursday as violence escalated, she said, adding that they were eventually rescued by the Assam Rifles.

Sources from the district said the arson in parts of the district went on from midnight Thursday until Saturday morning. Over 70 buildings had allegedly been torches.

Several people are currently taking shelter in the district’s multipurpose sports complex and Chindong Leikai school.

Manipur has been on the edge since 3 May last year, when ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kukis-Zomis first erupted. Over 200 people have been killed in the violence and over 50,000 displaced.

Unlike the sporadic violence in the rest of the state, Jiribam had been relatively calm until now.

• Finance to states, depts: Use arbitration only in disputes under ₹10 crore

The new set of recommendations come even as there is an increased push from the judiciary in favour of arbitration and to make India one of the top international destinations for commercial arbitration. Arbitration is no longer an “alternative”, CJI DY Chandrachud had said addressing the UK Supreme Court on June 6. “It is in fact the preferred method of seeking commercial justice,” he had said. He said it was time for countries like India to create and promote a culture of commercial arbitration.

In its memorandum, the Department of Expenditure said, “The process of arbitration itself takes a long time and is not as quick as envisaged, besides being very expensive too. The reduced formality, combined with

the binding nature of decisions, has often led to wrong decisions on facts and improper application of the law.”

The directive also said the arbitral process which is “intended to be final with very limited further recourse, is also exposed, particularly in matters of high financial value, to perceptions of wrongdoing including collusion.”

Top government lawyers have also been advocating arbitration. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said Saturday at the London International Disputes Week that the architecture of the Arbitration Act has checks and balances to prevent deviations from the rule of law.

Anirudh Krishnan, partner at AK law Chambers, a law firm that specialises in arbitration, told *The*

Sunday Express that excluding arbitration on the basis of a perceived concern over the quality of the regime would amount to missing the wood for the trees. “The solution would be to further improve an arbitration regime which has already seen considerable improvement post 2015,” he said.

However, two big setbacks for the government in arbitrations — the Antrix Corporation case and the Delhi Metro case — have raised concerns within the bureaucracy. In a protracted litigation involving ISRO’s commercial arm Antrix, an arbitration process had awarded \$562 million in damages along with interest in favour of Bengaluru-based Devas Multimedia. To enforce the award, Devas attempted to liquidate assets of Air India, then the national

carrier, in foreign jurisdictions.

In April, an extraordinary Supreme Court ruling ensured the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation did not have to pay nearly ₹8,000 crore arbitral award in 2017 to the Delhi Airport Metro Express Pvt Ltd, an Anil-Ambani owned Reliance Infrastructure firm.

Arbitrations are governed under the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 which was enacted as a solution for moving commercial litigation away from overburdened courts.

“Adjudication by the courts is a remedy which always exists wherever there is no arbitration clause. However, another alternative to arbitration is mediation, which is a process whereby parties attempt to reach an amicable settlement of their dispute with

the assistance of a third person (mediator) who does not have the authority to impose a settlement upon the parties to a dispute,” the Department of Expenditure memorandum said. Under mediation, both parties will have to reach a mutual agreement, failing which the case goes to trial.

“While it is very encouraging to see the government prioritise mediation, it cannot be at the cost of arbitration. The mediation process does not guarantee a resolution and disputes will then have to go to courts. Dealing with high-stakes commercial matters in overburdened courts is why arbitration was developed in the first place. The move, now, is in effect one step forward, two steps back, in India’s efforts to foster a favourable environment for resolution of commercial disputes,” said Raghu Seth, Counsel at AZB & Partners.

Two *Caravan* reporters asked to join probe in 2020 case against them

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

TWO JOURNALISTS working with *The Caravan* magazine have been asked to join the investigation in connection with an FIR registered against them by a resident of Northeast Delhi in 2020.

On August 11, 2020, a complaint was filed by the magazine's reporter Prabhjit Singh (50), alleging he and two of his colleagues, including a woman, were assaulted by unknown persons when they were reporting on the communal riots that broke out in Northeast Delhi in February that year. As per police, another complaint was received the same day — against the three *Caravan* staffers — by a woman, accusing them of molestation, misbehavior and beating up her husband, apart from inciting religious enmity.

According to police, the woman's statement was recorded under section 164 CrPC in court, during which she reiterated her allegations. Police said the three have been booked under IPC sections 323, 354, 153A, and 34.

The magazine, in a statement Saturday, however alleged its reporters were "subjected to communal slurs and threatened with murder" and "the woman reporter was sexually harassed".

According to police, Singh was served a notice on June 3 this year, asking him to join the probe on June 7, which he did. The woman reporter, police said, was also served a notice, and is yet to join the investigation. "Fresh efforts are being made to have her join the investigation as soon as possible. Further investigation is in progress," said DCP, Northeast, Joy Tirkey.

PM swearing-in: Several Central Delhi roads to be closed today

New Delhi: Traffic restrictions and diversions will be in place on several roads, including those around the Rashtrapati Bhavan, in view of the prime minister's swearing-in ceremony on Sunday, according to a Delhi Police advisory.

To ensure smooth traffic management in the vicinity of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, Sansad Marg (between the Transport Bhavan and the T-point on Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Marg), North Avenue Road, South Avenue Road, Kushak Road, Rajaji Marg, Krishna Menon Marg, Talkatora Road and Pt. Pant Marg will be closed from 2 pm to 11 pm, and only pedestrian movement will be allowed, the advisory said.

No vehicle will be allowed to halt or park on Imtiaz Khan Marg, Rakab Ganj Road, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Marg, Pandit Pant Marg and Talkatora Road, it said.

General entry for people is not allowed. DTC buses will not be allowed to ply on the roads around the Rashtrapati Bhavan, the advisory said. PTI

FOUR ARRESTED

On her way to market, woman shot at near Dwarka e-way, critical

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GURGAON, JUNE 8

A 34-YEAR-OLD woman, a mother of two, was shot at while on her way to a neighbourhood market on her scooter near Dwarka Expressway in Gurgaon on Friday night, police said Saturday.

Police said the woman, estranged from her husband for the past few years, was in a relationship with one of the accused who wanted to get rid of her.

Four persons, including the main accused Nitish Bharadwaj, who is a lawyer, were arrested on Saturday, said Gurgaon police spokesperson ASI Sandeep.

The woman, Pallavi Sharma, is admitted to a hospital in Sector 100 where her condition is said to be serious.

Sharma, who hails from Punjab's Mohali, used to work as a beautician but was currently unemployed, said police. She has been living with her children, aged 12 and seven, at a residential society in sector 99.

Around 9.30 pm on Friday, as she set out from home, two men followed her on a bike and shot at her, said police.

Besides Bharadwaj, who is

Police said the woman was in a relationship with one of the accused, a lawyer, who wanted to get rid of her.

from Vishnu Garden, the other accused include Gulshan Thakur, Raja, and Banti who are residents of Jyoti Park, Saraswati Enclave and Pataudi Chowk, respectively.

"During questioning, the other accused told police that Bharadwaj was involved in planning the attack. Sharma first approached Bharadwaj for help a few years ago after being assaulted by her husband. They soon got into a relationship. However, of late, Bharadwaj had started to grow distant from her and wanted to end the relationship. Sharma, though, was keen on continuing it and hence, was bothering him," said the ASI.

"Irked by her behaviour, Bharadwaj made a plan to murder her. Earlier, he had also attempted to stage an accident to kill her but failed. Later, he conspired with Gulshan through another associate to execute the murder. Gulshan

provided Raja and Banti with a motorcycle and weapons to carry out the attack," he added.

The police team at Rajendra Park police station on Friday received information from the control room that a woman had been shot at near a petrol pump on the Dwarka Expressway.

"Upon reaching the scene of the crime, the police found that the injured woman had already been taken to a nearby hospital for treatment. The police secured the crime scene and called over the forensics team for inspection. The victim's scooter and slippers were retrieved as per procedure," said ASI Sandeep. "For further investigation, the police team went to the hospital but the injured woman was not in a condition to provide a statement. On Saturday, her father arrived at the hospital and filed a written complaint. Investigation into the allegations is underway," he added.

A senior police officer said that the woman separated from her husband around four years ago and had been living with her two sons ever since.

An FIR has been registered under IPC section 307 (attempt to murder) and relevant sections of the Arms Act following the complaint by her father, Rajkumar.

At councillors' meeting, AAP calls for need to strengthen party at grassroots level

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

AFTER A similar huddle with its senior leadership earlier this week, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Saturday held a meeting of party's councillors to review the results of the Lok Sabha elections and decide the future course of action.

The first such meeting after the Lok Sabha elections, and with the Assembly polls slated next year, the party said the leadership decided to take steps to strengthen the organisation at the grassroots level.

AAP National General Secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak, Delhi Convener Gopal Rai, AAP MCD in-charge Durgesh Pathak, Mayor Shelly Oberoi, Deputy Mayor Aaley Mohammad Iqbal, and MCD Leader of the House Mukesh Kumar Goel among some MLAs were also present at the meeting.

"There was a discussion about the Lok Sabha elections results. The kind of mandate the people of the country have given... the people have certainly formed Modi ji's government, but his pride has been completely shattered," Pathak said.

He added that a report on the ward-level elections was also discussed in the meeting following which it was decided that the party's organisation "needs more strengthening at the grassroots level."

‘Haryana not releasing Delhi’s share of water through Munak canal’

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

HITTING OUT at the Haryana government once again, Delhi Water Minister Atishi Saturday alleged that the state was releasing less water through the Munak Canal — one of the primary sources of potable water for the Capital — and accused it of doing "dirty politics".

On its part, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), terming the situation a "water emergency" arising out of the AAP-Delhi government's "mismanagement", demanded that a special session of the Delhi Assembly be convened to discuss the problem and find a solution.

Following an inspection of two sub-canals fed by the Munak Canal in Northwest Delhi's Bawana, Atishi alleged that Delhi should ideally receive 1,050 cusecs of water per day but was receiving just 840 cusecs. "Delhi is completely dependent on the Yamuna for water for domestic use. The water we use at our homes comes from 7 water treatment plants; water in these plants comes from the Wazirabad Barrage and two sub-canals of Munak Canal, CLC (carrier line channel) and DSB (Delhi sub-branch)," she said.



Water Minister Atishi

"Never has it happened in the history of Delhi that less than 1,000 cusecs of water has come to Delhi from the Munak Canal. But yesterday, this quantity was reduced to only 840 cusecs... this will affect the production of all the seven water treatment plants of Delhi..." she alleged, adding that the water problem in Delhi was likely to become "even more serious in the next 2 days."

Hitting out at the minister, the opposition's chief whip in the Delhi Assembly, Ajay Mahawar, wrote to Speaker Ram Niwas Goel asking him to convene a special session of the Assembly over the issue. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva challenged Atishi to an open debate with the Haryana government and the Delhi BJP or to call an all-party meeting regarding water supply.

CH. CHARAN SINGH UNIVERSITY CAMPUS, MEERUT
(NAAC ACCREDITED with A++ Grade)
SIR CHHOTU RAM INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY (SCRIET), IET, DCA & IBS
REGISTRATION/ADMISSION FOR SESSION 2024-25
B.Tech./M.Tech./MCA/B.Sc. (Hons)CS/ BBA/MBA/BBA(HA)/MBA(HA)
Online Registrations/Admissions in B.Tech. (First year and Lateral Entry) in (AG, CH, CS, EC, EI, IT & ME), M.Tech. (CSE, ECE), MCA, B.Sc. (Hons.) CS, BBA, MBA, BBA(HA) & MBA(HA) in University campus are open. For more details visit official web portals www.ccsuniversity.ac.in/scriet, <https://www.ccsuniversity.ac.in/admission.php> or www.ccsuforms.in or contact: 7579685819, 7579685826, 7579685832
Registrar

Model Hospital Bapunagar
Employees' State Insurance Corporation
(Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India)
Near Hardasnagar Police Chowky, Rajiv Nagar, Bapunagar, Ahmedabad-380024 (ISO 9001:2015 Certified) Phone: 079-22772587 Email: ms-bapunagar@esic.nic.in Website: www.esic.nic.in
ADVERTISEMENT NO. 02/2024
WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR RECRUITMENT OF DOCTORS ON CONTRACT BASIS
Rolling advertisement for Recruitment through Walk-in-interview will be held at ESIC Model Hospital Bapunagar, Ahmedabad in the chamber of Medical Superintendent on 27.06.2024 and 28.06.2024 from 09:30 AM onwards for following posts:

Post	Speciality / No. of Posts
Senior Residents (Under 3 Years Residency Scheme)	General Surgery-03, Orthopaedics-02, Paediatrics-02, Neonatology-02, Medicine-01, Anaesthesia-02, Microbiology-01, Radiology-01
Senior Residents against GDMO (03 Year)	Medicine-02, Obs & Gynae-01, Orthopaedics-01, Anaesthesia-01, Casualty-01
Full / Part Time Specialists	Psychiatrics-01, Orthopaedics-01, Pulmonology Medicine-01, Radiology-01, Cardiology-01

Interested candidates may visit ESIC website in www.esic.gov.in & www.bapunagarghospital.esic.gov.in under tab 'Recruitment' for schedule, detailed vacancy position, terms & conditions and application form.
-Sd/-
MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT

सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया Central Bank of India
Regional Office, B-Block, Mauryalok Complex, Patna-800001
POSSESSION NOTICE [UNDER RULE 8 (1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002]
Notice is hereby given under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Act), 2002 (54 of 2002), and in exercise of the power conferred under sub-section (12) of section 13 read with [rule 3] of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule 2002. The Authorized Officer issued a Demand Notice on the dates noted against account as mentioned herein after, calling them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the under noted borrower/guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sec. 13(4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules on the date mentioned against account. The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of Central Bank of India for the amount and interest thereon mentioned against account herein below.
The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section (13) of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Sl. No.	Branch	Name of Borrower/ Guarantor	Description of immovable property	Date of Demand Notice Under 13(2)	Date of Symbolic Possession	Amount Outstanding
1.	LOHIA NAGAR	M/s Shital Copy Udhog, Prop: Smt. Seema Devi	Name of the Mortgagor : Sri Arun Kumar Singh, Address of the Mortgagor : S/o Late Jagdish Singh, Vill.: Mahamadpur, Kothiya, PS: Didarganj, Patna, Full particulars of Property : Vacant Plot with Boundary Wall, Sale Deed No. 446 dated 19.01.2019, Address: Vill.: Mahamadpur, Kothiya, PS: Didarganj, Patna, Mauza : Mahamadpur Bharatpur under PS Malsalami, Patna, Tauzi No.: 17, Thana No.: 35, Khata No.: 164, Survey Plot No.: 93 (P), Town & District: Patna, Total area : 15 katha, Boundary as per Deed:- North: Anil Singh, South: Rajkiya Kanya High School and Jay Ram Singh, East: Road and Rajkiya Kanya High School (Jalla), West: Baidyanath Gope.	16.08.2023	06.06.2024	Rs. 61,28,741/- + (Interest and other charges) (Rupees Sixty One Lakh Twenty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Forty One only + interest and other charges).
2.	HANUMAN NAGAR	M/s Himalya Traders, Prop: Arvind Kumar, S/o Late Mudrika Lal	Name of the Mortgagor : Sri Arvind Kumar, S/o Late Mudrika Lal & Sri Kunal Kumar, S/o Late Mudrika Lal, Address of the Mortgagor : Bazar Pragan, Bazaar Samiti, Sandalpur, Patna, Full particulars of Property : Sale Deed No. 17514 dated 18.05.2013, Address: Mauza : Guptaipur Tola, Mohalla: Jaganpura, PS: Phulwarisharif at present PS: Ramkrishna Nagar, Dist.: Patna, Tauzi No.: 131, Thana No.: 26, Khata No.: 112, Nagarpalika & Khesra No.: 516 (P), Town & District: Patna, Total area : 1250 Sq.Ft., Boundary as per Deed:- North: Rasta, South: Shyam Naran Ram, East: Niz, West: Hal Khadirar.	06.11.2020	06.06.2024	Rs. 17,33,587/- + (Interest and other charges) (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Thirty Three Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Seven only + interest and other charges).
3.	RAJENDRA NAGAR	Mrs. Siyamati Devi and Mr. Ranjan Kumar S/o Sri Kailash Mahto	All that part and parcel of Immovable Property (Land/Building) in the name of Smt. Siyamati Devi W/o Sri kailash Mahto, Deed No. : Sale Deed No. 3609 dated 27.08.1990, Area: 775 Sqft, Location: Mauza : Sandalpur, P.S: Sultanganj, Dist.: Patna, Property Details: Tauzi No.: 303, Khata No.: 286, C S Plot No.: 71, Thana No.: 11, Circle No.: 49, M.S. Plot No.: 1836, Boundary:- North: Vendor, South: Nala, East: Vendor, West: Shushil Kumar Agarwal and Nala.	31.07.2023	07.06.2024	Rs. 6,30,237/- + (Interest and other charges) (Rupees Six Lakh Thirty Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Seven only + Interest and other charges).

Date : 08.06.2024
Place : Patna
Authorised officer
CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

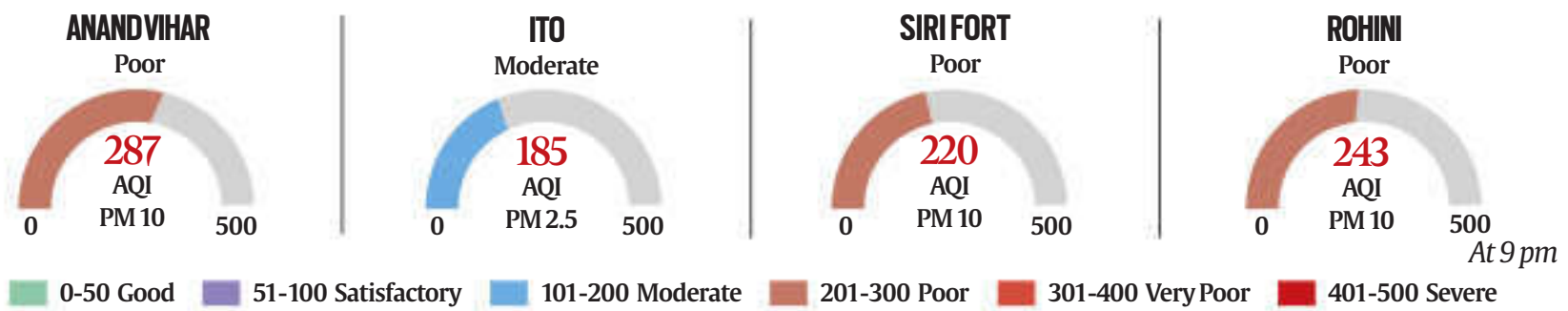
यूनियन बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया Union Bank of India
(A Govt of India Undertaking)
ASSET RECOVERY BRANCH PATNA
1st Floor, Steel House, Near S K Puri Police Check Post, Boring Road, Patna-800001
Email : arb.patna@unionbankofindia.bank
15 Days SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (Appendix IV A)
E-auction Sale Notice for sale of immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and proviso to the rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, The Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India Asset Recovery Branch (ARB), The Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on **26.06.2024** for recovery of **Rs. 1,78,98,088.14** (Rupees One Crore Seventy Eight Lakh Ninety Eight Thousand Eighty Eight and paise fourteen only) as on 29-02-2024 with further interest and cost. due to the Union Bank of India ARB Branch, the Secured Creditor from **M/s Bunni Fashion, Proprietor - Sri Amit Kumar, S/o Sri Shrawan Kumar Thakur, At- Fardo Gola Road, Bhagwanpur, Distt-Muzaffarpur, Bihar-842002, Proprietor - Sri Amit Kumar, Proprietor of M/s Bunni Fashion, S/o Sri Shrawan Kumar Thakur, R/o Pathahi Roop, Muzaffarpur Bihar-843113, Guarantor - Sri Prashant Kumar, S/o Sri Vinay Kumar Thakur, R/o Khaurana Dih, Muzaffarpur Bihar-843113, Guarantor / Mortgagor - Sri Satish Kumar, S/o Late Siyaram Thakur, R/o Patahi Roop, PS - Sadar, Muzaffarpur, Bihar-843113.** The reserve price will be **Rs. 99,00,000/-** (Rupees Ninety Nine Lakh only) and earnest money deposit will be **Rs. 9,90,000/-** (Rupees Nine Lakh Ninety Thousand only) with bid increment of Rs.10,000/-
Description of Property :- All that piece and parcel of land and Building in the name of **Sri Satish Kumar Thakur, S/o Late Siyaram Thakur, Situated at Mauza - Patahi Roop, Ward / Taluka - Muradpur Dullah, Muzaffarpur, Bihar Bearing Khata No.-1027, Khesra No. - 4352 admeasuring 22 Decimal Boundary- North - Sumangal Thakur, South - Sarwan Kumar Thakur, East - Paras Thakur, West - Pakki Road.**
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx>/<https://www.msstcecommerce.com>
Date: 31.05.2024 **Place: Patna** **Authorised Officer**

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Brief Description of Property :- Land and Building Bearing Plot No R-6 Measuring 100 Sq Yds Out of Khasra No. 82/17 min, Situated in Revenue Estate of Village-Hastail Delhi Area Abadi Known as Colony R-Block Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059, and **Boundary - North - Gali, South - Other's Property, East - Road 19ft Wide West - Other Property**
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx>/<https://www.msstcecommerce.com>
Date: 31.05.2024 **Place: Patna** **Authorised Officer**

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Description of Property :- All that piece and parcel of land and building in the name of Smt. Manju Soni W/o Sri Shailendra Kumar situated at Chhota Telpa, Ps-Chhapra, Distt-Saran bearing khata No.-455, Khesra No-762, Ward/Taluka-05 806, Tauzi No.-4314 Thana No 288, Area-3.122 decimal and **Boundary - North - Nij Yogendra Pd & Others, South - 4 FT Road then Rudal Rai, East - 4 ft Road, West - Md Khalil Miyan**
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx>/<https://www.msstcecommerce.com>
Date: 31.05.2024 **Place: Patna** **Authorised Officer**

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15 Days SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (Appendix IV A)
E-auction Sale Notice for sale of immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and proviso to the rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, The Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Union Bank of India** the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on **26.06.2024** for recovery of **Rs 66,11,583.76** (Rupees Sixty Six Lakh Eleven Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Three and Paise Seventy Six Only) as on **31.10.2022** with further interest, cost & expenses due to Union Bank of India **Asset Recovery Branch**, The Secured Creditor from Borrower, Co-Applcant and Guarantor - **1) The Borrower/s - 1a) M/s Sipada Foods Solutions Pvt Ltd**, Plot No. B-28(P), Industrial Area, Donar, Darbhanga, Bihar-846004. Also At:18 kitab Bhawan Road, North S K Puri, Near Boring Road, Patna, Bihar-800001, **1b) Mr. Binit Kumar** S/o Late Sh. Rabi Bhushan Prasad, Flat 602, Tower 10 to close South Nirwan Country, Sector 50, to South City-2, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018, **1c) Mrs. Bipasha Kumar** W/o Mr. Binit Kumar, Flat 602, Tower 10 to close South Nirwan Country, Sector 50, South City-2, Gurgaon, Haryana-122018, **1d) Mr. Satya Priya Madhu** S/o Late Devendra Prasad Sinha, Narayani, West Boring Canal Road, Patna, Bihar, 800001, **1e) Mr. Kaushlendra Narayan Shrivastava, S/o Late Devendra Prasad Sinha, Belwagani, Near Imbarni Post Office, Darbhanga, Bihar, 846001,1f) Mr. Brajendra Narayan Bhanu, S/o Late Devendra Prasad Sinha, Kansi, Simri, Singhwara, Darbhanga, Bihar, 847123**
The reserve price will be **Proper 1 - Rs. 84,92,000/-** and earnest money deposit will be **Rs. 8,49,200/-** and **Proper 2 - Rs. 16,00,000/-** and earnest money deposit will be **Rs. 1,60,000/-** with bid increment of Rs.10,000/-
Brief description of Property :- Property-1 - All that piece and parcel of Land and Building admeasuring an area of 37 Decimal situated at Khata No. 25(Old) 598 (New), Khesra No. 3585(Old) 4201(New), 3587(Old), 3588(Old), 4203(New), Mauza-Simri, Thana No.106, P.S-Simri, Anchal- Singhwara, Darbhanga, Bihar in the name of Mr. Satyapriya Madhu, Mr. Kaushlendra Narayan Shrivastava & Mr. Brajendra Narayan Bhanu.
Property-2 - All that piece and parcel of Leasehold Land admeasuring an area of 4000 sq ft situated at plot no. B-28(P), Industrial Area Donar, Thana No. 503, P.S & Anchal- Sadar Darbhanga, Village-Malpatti, Pragana-Purabhbhigo, Darbhanga, Bihar, lease in the name of the Company
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx>/<https://www.msstcecommerce.com>
Date: 31.05.2024 **Place: Patna** **Authorised Officer**

यूनियन बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया Union Bank of India
(A Govt of India Undertaking)
ASSET RECOVERY BRANCH PATNA
1st Floor, Steel House, Near S K Puri Police Check Post, Boring Road, Patna-800001
Email : arb.patna@unionbankofindia.bank
15 Days SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY (Appendix IV A)
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Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, The Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Union Bank of India Asset Recovery Branch (ARB), The Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" on **26.06.2024** for recovery of **Rs. 4,07,91,132.87** (Rupees Four Crore Seven Lacs Ninety One Thousand One Hundred Thirty Two & Paise Eighty Seven only) as on **30.04.2017** with further interest, costs and charges due to Union Bank of India ARB Branch, the Secured Creditor from Borrower/s : **M/s Aashi Agrotech Pvt. Ltd.**, 2B-5, Bhanu Kutir, Near Arya Samaj Mandir Road, RPS More, Danapur, Patna - 801503, **M/s Aashi Agrotech Pvt. Ltd., Lalganj Sehra, Palli Ganj, Patna - 801110 Co obligant/ Director/s Guarantor/s : Mr. Avinash Kumar, S/o Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary, 2B-5, Bhanu Kutir, Near Arya Samaj Mandir Road, RPS More, Danapur, Patna - 801503, Mr. Avinash Kumar, 2B-5, Bhanu Kutir, Near Arya Samaj Mandir Road, RPS More, Danapur, Patna - 801503, Mr. Ranjan Kumar, S/o Mr. Surendra Pratap Singh, 3, Satori Lalganj Sehra, Paliganj, Patna - 801110, Mrs. Indu Kumari, W/o Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary, 30, Vill- Patori, Post- Patori Vasant, Dist.- Darbhanga - 802301, Mrs. Fulmayia Singh, W/o Late Virendra Pratap Singh, 4, Satori Lalganj Sehra, Paliganj, Patna - 801110, Mr. Arun Kumar, S/o Mr. Surendra Prasad Singh, Chhota Gohinandpur, Subhashnagar, PS - Govindpur, Dist- East Singhbhum, Jharkhand - 803001, Mr. Bijendra Kumar, S/o Late Virendra Prasad Singh, Lalganj Sehra, Paliganj, Patna - 801110
Legal Heirs of Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary (Guarantor)
Mr. Abhishesh Kumar, S/o Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary, 2B-5, Bhanu Kutir, Near Arya Samaj Mandir Road, RPS More, Danapur, Patna - 801503, Mr. Avinash Kumar, S/o Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary, 2B-5, Bhanu Kutir, Near Arya Samaj Mandir Road, RPS More, Danapur, Patna - 801503, Mrs. Indu Kumari, W/o Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary, 30, Vill- Patori, Post- Patori Vasant, Dist.- Darbhanga - 802301, Mrs. Geetanjali Rani D/o Late Abhay Nandan Chaudhary, 30, Vill- Patori, Post- Patori Vasant, Dist.- Darbhanga - 802301
The reserve price will be **Rs. 27,00,000/-** (Rupees Twenty Seven Lakh only) and earnest money deposit will be **Rs. 2,70,000/-** (Rupees Two Lakh Seventy Thousand only) with bid increment of Rs.10,000/-
Description of movable Property :- Hypothecation of Plant and machinery of Rice mill with all the available equipment's situated at Mauza Lalganj Sehra, PS Paliganj, Thana No. 282, Tauzi No. 4563, Khata No. 296, S. Plot No. 1625
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Union Bank of India's website i.e. <https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/auction-property/view-auction-property.aspx>/<https://www.msstcecommerce.com>
Date: 31.05.2024 **Place: Patna** **Authorised Officer****



SKYWATCH
June 9
Partly cloudy sky. Strong surface winds (speed 25-35 kmph), occasionally gusty during the day.
MAX: 43 3°C above normal
MIN: 30 2.4°C above normal

CNG PIPELINE LEAK CAUSED BLAZE, COMPRESSOR EXPLODED; FACTORY OWNERS ARRESTED

3 workers killed in fire at Narela agro plant

UPASIKA SINGHAL & PRAGYNESH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

IT WAS around 3 am on Saturday. Around 10 men, working the last shift, were roasting pulses over a burner on the second floor of a factory. Next to them, a CNG pipeline had been leaking gas. Within minutes, a fire broke out and a compressor used to peel pulses exploded — the impact was so strong that one side of the factory was destroyed, flinging rubble and steel across the road. Three men were killed in the incident.

The four-storey factory, Shyam Kripa Foods Pvt Ltd, was an agro-processing plant manufacturing grain mill products, starches and starch products, and prepared animal feed. Located in H Block, DSIIDC, Industrial Area in Narela, it employed around 30 men. They worked in three shifts, with 8-10 workers in each. They lived on the top floor.

The Delhi Police received a call about the blaze at its control room around 3.30 am. The Delhi Fire Services said 16 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. It took the firemen almost 12 hours to fully douse the fire and pull out nine men, said officials.

Police said three workers — Shyam (24), Ram Singh (30), and Beerpal (42) — were declared dead on arrival at Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra Hospital. Six others were referred to Safdarjung Hospital for treatment.

DCP (Outer-North) Ravi Kumar Singh said the factory owners, Ankit Gupta and Vinay Gupta, were arrested. They were bailed out later. A case under IPC sections 285 (negligent conduct involving fire or combustible matter), 287 (negligent conduct with machinery), 337 (causes injury to another person by acting in a rash or negligent way that endangers human life or the safety of others), and 304A (causing death by negligence) has been registered against them.

Mohit Singh (38), a friend of the factory owners who had come to see the damage later in the day, said: “The workers began fleeing as the fire soon consumed a transformer beside the building, causing an explosion of sparks.”

Lal Bahadur, a worker, was among those who escaped. “By



The four-storey factory, Shyam Kripa Foods Pvt Ltd, is located in the DSIIDC Industrial Area in Narela. PTI

the time I was out, the whole building was burning. All my money, clothes and belongings got burnt as I lived with the workers on the top floor,” said the 35-year-old who had come to work at the factory from UP’s Auraiya. He seemed to regret his decision to leave home when he said, “I’ve been working here for six months. They paid me Rs 14,500. But I can’t risk my life for just this much money. No one can say what can happen in such factories.”

Bahadur and another worker Vinod explained that the building had a basement, a ground floor, and three floors above it.

While the basement was used to store pulses, the ground floor was where they were packed. The first floor contained three machines — one used to heat the pulses to loosen their peels; another to oil them for easy peeling and to give them a shine; and the third to peel the husks. They said the second floor contained the air compressor used to clean the pulses properly and a large storage space for the bulk.

The top floor was where the workers lived, along with a machine that sorted the lentils by quality and another that winnowed the husks. The whole building was connected by one narrow staircase. It had one gate to enter and exit the building.

According to the DCP, while the factory had an MCD licence, it did not have a fire NOC.

The MCD, in its response to the incident, said the factory had a factory licence which was renewed in 2022 and was valid till March 31, 2025.

Pinto Kumar, a security supervisor for a factory nearby, pointed out the serious lack of safety in the industrial plants in Narela. “... Things like compressors should be placed at a distance from workers... Transformers are at the entrance of every factory. The danger it poses is huge. You go to any factory, there is no assembling point for any worker in case there is an accident or emergency. If there is an assembling space, it is being used as a godown,” he said.

‘I have a 6-year-old girl... who is going to support us now?’

UPASIKA SINGHAL & PRAGYNESH
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

REKHA DEVI (30) stood stock still in the middle of Narela Industrial Area police station’s courtyard on Saturday evening. Hours earlier, her husband, Ram Singh (30), who worked as a supervisor in an agro-processing factory close by was among three men who died in a fire that consumed the building.

“I got to know at 5 am... I rushed here as soon as I could,” she said. Devi lives in Auraiya, around 400 km from Delhi. “We were married for nine years... I have a six-year-old daughter... who’s going to support us now?” she said, her voice cracking.

Ram’s elder brother Shyam (32) couldn’t bring himself to look at the charred body. He said he asked someone else from his family to identify it. “We went to Babu Jagjivan Ram hospital to get the post-mortem done. The body was released but they told us to get a file from police, approving it. I’ve been here since the morning, waiting for them to give it to me,” he said.

Beerpal, an engineer, also died in the fire. His sister-in-law Preeti (27) said: “I got a call at 8 am and the person on the other end told me that Beerpal ji was very sick... I came to the factory and was told he had died.”

She was accompanied by her nephew and Beerpal’s oldest son, Ashish (24), who works as a truck driver in Nangloi. “I heard about the fire from my cousin who works in a factory near my father’s... I went to SHRC Hospital... they showed me his body... They told me it would be released tomorrow. I have to take him home... I don’t know how I’ll do it,” he said.

Ashish said his father had worked for the factory for over 20 years as an engineer: “In a way, he helped set up the factory... all the



Fire tenders outside the factory, Saturday. PTI

machines were fitted by him, he looked after them... he built the machines too...” “He was flung out of the building because of the explosion...,” he said.

Kuldeep Rathore, brother of the third victim Shyam (24), sat on the steps just in front of the Superintendent. He, along with his other brother Monu, were also waiting for the body.

“I got a call at 3.30 am that my brother was admitted to the hospital after the fire. When I got there, I was sent to the police station. Since then, I have been here. They have not shown me the body yet... They say I will get it tomorrow at Babu Jagjivan Ram Hospital at 9 am,” cried Kuldeep, who works at a brass tap-making company in Anand Vihar.

Shyam operated a machine used for cleaning pulses at the factory.

Monu, who works in the cable industry in Ghaziabad, alleged both police and owners were ignoring the family. “... Police are asking us to wait. The owners’ relatives are telling us they are with us. They are also saying it’s not their mistake... they are blaming the victims. They are saying my brother was standing outside the building, watching it burn and that’s when something happened and he died. Why will my brother stand outside? He was in the factory,” he said.



Police and locals near burnt shops after a massive fire broke out in the Shaheen Bagh area, Saturday evening. PTI

3 eateries, several flats gutted in blaze at Shaheen Bagh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

THREE RESTAURANTS were gutted as were two shops and a number of flats after a massive fire broke out in Southeast Delhi’s Shaheen Bagh area on Saturday evening, officials said. No casualty was reported in the accident that took place on 40 Feet Road, which houses several eateries, according to officials of the Delhi Fire Service (DFS).

The fire was reported at 5.44 pm outside Zaika restaurant on 40 Feet Road in Shaheen Bagh.

Police said the fire seemed to have sparked from electric wires outside the eatery. The intensity of the fire was such that it soon spread to the restaurant and its neighbouring eateries and shops.

Fire engines faced delays in

arriving at the site due to the narrow lanes, which allowed the blaze to spread rapidly. It took 18 fire tenders to control the blaze after one-and-a-half hours.

Several videos on social media showed buildings engulfed in flames and locals fleeing to safety. The exact cause of the fire is still under investigation, and a case is being registered, said police.

Shaheen Bagh Residents’ Welfare Association member Riyaz said they immediately informed the local police after one of the restaurants caught fire.

Station officer from DFS, Praveen Kumar, said no LPG cylinder blast or any other incident took place, otherwise, the damage could have been greater.

A local shopkeeper, Zubair Siddiqi, said, “Had it (the fire) been controlled in time, this massive loss could have been averted.” (WITH PTI INPUTS)

Noida: Short circuit in AC sparks fire at high-rise flat

Noida: A short circuit in an air conditioner sparked a fire at an apartment in a high-rise group housing society in Noida Saturday night, officials said.

No one was hurt in the incident that took place around 8.45 pm on the 11th floor apartment in Supertech Capetown Society in Sector 74, they said. “The fire broke out due to a short circuit in

an AC installed in the balcony. The fire was extinguished by the society’s fire safety mechanism and personnel before fire tenders arrived,” Chief Fire Officer Pradeep Kumar Choubey told PTI.

In its advisory issued recently to prevent such mishaps, Noida Police said fire and electrical audits are crucial in preventing accidents. PTI

HARDLOOK

Why 2.73L govt school kids are out of class

An ‘early warning system’ meant to flag absenteeism among students found that illness, moving back to the village were the top reasons cited

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

ON NOVEMBER 20 last year, twin girls in Class VI stopped coming to school. They were enrolled in a government school in Southwest Delhi. When annual exams were held in February and March, the two didn’t show up. They did not return when the new academic session began in April. They had not taken a school-leaving certificate either.

When their class teacher followed up on them, she found they had returned to Palamu in Jharkhand, where the family is from. Their names were struck off from the school’s rolls in April. Their father, who works a housekeeping job at a hotel in Mahipalpur said his daughters were now enrolled in a government school in Palamu.

Like the two girls, over 2.73 lakh children enrolled in Delhi government schools in the previous academic year did not return to school after a period of absence, going by data from the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR).

Out of them, more girls than boys did not return to school.

An ‘early warning system’ of the DCPCR meant to flag absenteeism among students found that 6,67,732 students in Delhi government schools were absent for seven consecutive days or 20 out of 30 working days from April 2023 to February 22, 2024 — most of the 2023-24 academic year. This is around 39% of the total enrollment of 17.03

lakh students in 1,070 Delhi government schools in 2023-24. More boys (3,48,193) were found to be absent than girls (3,19,539)

Out of these, the DCPCR intervened in around 75% of detected instances or cases of 5,04,068 students — it sent an SMS to parents or guardians, made phone calls and left interactive voice response (IVR) calls, and raised “tickets for resolution by DCPCR divisions”. With these interventions, 2,92,013 students were brought back to class.

Of the total absentees, however, data shows that only around 59% of students returned to school — 3,94,206 students were recorded as having returned to school, either with or without intervention.

This leaves 2,73,526 students who did not return. More girls — 1,55,955 students, or 57% of the total — were among them.

Absenteeism was flagged among students of all classes, from nursery to class 12. The largest number of students who did not return were in class 9 — as many as 65,524. Nursery classes had the lowest number of absentee students — 635 (see box).

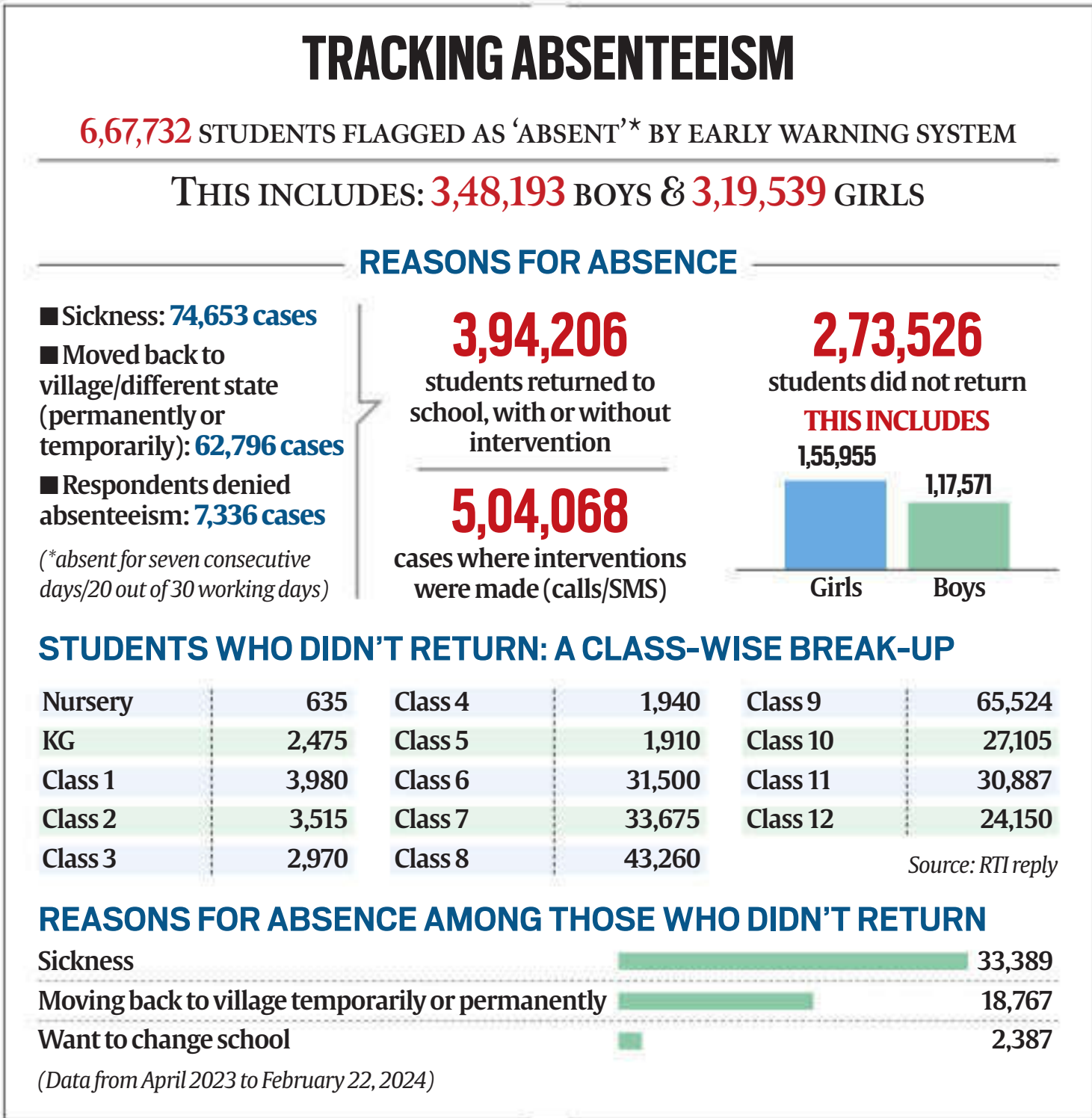
The DCPCR has provided details on the early warning system in response to three requests for information filed in February, March, and April under the Right to Information (RTI) Act.

Why were the students absent?

The early warning system tracks a total of 22 reasons for absenteeism — sickness, child marriage, substance abuse, child



Out of the 2.73 lakh children, more girls than boys did not return to school. Archive



labour, “move back to village”, bullying or physical abuse, “sexual offences or sexually inappropriate behaviour towards the student”, denial of resources like books or uniforms, and “corporal punishment.”

Among those who didn’t return, the largest reason for absenteeism was ‘sickness’ — a total of 33,389 students. This was followed by ‘moving back to village temporarily or permanently’ with 18,767 cases.

Even among the total number of over 6 lakh cases flagged by the system, the biggest reason for absenteeism was ‘sickness’, with around 74,653 students identifying this as a reason. The second biggest reason was “moving back to a village or different state (permanently or temporarily) — 62,796 students. In around 7,336 cases, the respondents have denied absenteeism, according to the DCPCR.

Teachers say ‘long absentees’, like the twin girls from Jharkhand, who may return to their hometowns temporarily or permanently are not uncommon.

The girls’ father moved to Delhi in 2020 for work. “People were running away during the Covid pandemic, and I came here. I used to work in Goa before this,” he said.

He said the children returned (to Palamu) five to six months ago. “They are now studying in a government school there. We had no difficulty in getting admission... a relative is a teacher there.”

On why they left, he said: “*Majboori thi* (we were compelled)... my wife and son were also working here. They lost their jobs. His wife was working at a textile shop and with only one earning member in the family, the entire family could no longer live in Delhi.

“Rent, expenses for food... I earn only around Rs 10,000 to Rs

15,000 a month from my house-keeping job. Rent here was around Rs 7,000, and with other bills like electricity, it would come up to Rs 9,000. How can one person support a family of five by themselves? If a job is confirmed, they will come back here,” he said.

He added: “*Gaav mein zyada zameen toh hain nahi* (we don’t have much land in the village)... but the good thing is that their education can continue there when it becomes difficult here. They also get ration there.”

A teacher from the Southwest Delhi school who spoke to the father said he had asked if the children could be enrolled in the school again if they returned. “Their class teacher was in touch with the family. The girls had joined only in the 2023-24 academic year. Their names, which were struck off, can be revived without much difficulty if they return. Many parents with kids enrolled in the school are from parts of UP, Bihar, Jharkhand, MP... and are hotel staff, people working at the airport,” she said.

She said she did not know of any calls being made to the parents through the DCPCR’s early warning system in this case. “At the school level, we do follow-ups for students who are absent without prior leave applications,” she added.

Other reasons for absenteeism have also been found. A list of 53 cases provided earlier this year by a DCPCR official on ‘home visits’ initiated by the Commission in 2023 included an instance of a 16-year-old who was married off in March last year, and two cases of students who’ve been absent from school since they have been working.

The challenges

The ‘early warning system’ was launched in March 2022. It

uses the Directorate of Education’s (DoE) online attendance tracking system to flag absent students with the understanding that “students’ long or frequent absence from school is a sign of adversity.”

Schools marking attendance online is key to the running of the system.

A call centre hired by the DCPCR handles calls made to guardians, and flags cases that can’t be resolved over the phone to the DCPCR’s divisions.

Murari Jha, a ‘mentor teacher’ with the DoE, said, “It is a usual affair that parents shift from Delhi... they either lose their job or get another job and move. Even in board classes where schools make efforts to ensure that students registered for the exams appear for it, there are instances where teachers try to get students to come back to Delhi to take the exam. It points to the volatile socio-economic environment in which these children live — jobs are unstable, parents might have jobs here only for a few months, and they have no option but to go back to their hometowns.”

Out of the students who did not return to school, 51,255 were in classes X and XII.

A teacher at a government school in Okhla said, “Students who move often change their contact numbers and it becomes difficult to reach out again... there are cases where parents shift to their hometowns for a year or two and might return later. There are cases we have heard of where parents have separated, and the mother must move back to the hometown. In schools in Delhi, it is a largely comfortable school life, but the problem is often at home. During Covid, some parents were forced to leave jobs and had financial problems, and may have had to return.”



सुशासन और समग्र विकास

निर्भीक, अनवरत, अनथक और उदार नेतृत्व
के साथ विकसित भारत के संकल्प के पूर्णता की शपथ



श्री विष्णु देव साय
माननीय मुख्यमंत्री, छत्तीसगढ़

सबका साथ-सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास और सबका प्रयास

और सभी न्यूज़ पेपर मैगजीन प्राप्त करने के लिए सर्वप्रथम इस टेलीग्राम ग्रुप को ज्वाइन करें नीचे दिए लंकि पर क्लिक करके ज्वाइन टेलीग्राम

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6 VERDICT 2024



Buoyed Congress asks Rahul to lead Opp in LS, he says will decide soon

ASAD REHMAN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

THE MEETING of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) Saturday unfolded according to the script. Jubilant at the party's better-than-expected showing in the Lok Sabha elections, the CWC was effusive in praise of Rahul Gandhi — as also Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra — and “unanimously” passed a resolution asking Rahul to take up the post of Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha.

The mood in the CWC was buoyant. Although the party could not reach three digits, the committee felt the election verdict had “infused new life” into the party and signalled its “overall revival and rejuvenation”. While there were green shoots of revival in many states, the leadership was concerned about the party’s disastrous performance in some of the states, especially Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Delhi and party-ruled Himachal Pradesh.

Party president Kharge, it was decided, will set up a committee to look into the reasons for rout in some states and suggest steps to address the shortcomings. Sources said some of the state Congress chiefs could be replaced soon. As expected, the meeting saw leader after leader asking Rahul to lead the party from the front in Lok Sabha and take up the post of LoP which it would get after a decade.

And as is his wont, Rahul told



Congress leaders Ambika Soni, Sonia Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and KC Venugopal during the Congress Working Committee meeting in New Delhi. Amit Mehra

the CWC that he will take a decision very soon. Kharge, too, told Rahul that he should take up the post since the CWC has passed a resolution and, in a lighter vein, added that he would take disciplinary action if he does not heed to the CWC’s decision.

“During this election, we raised so many burning issues — unemployment, price rise, Agniveer issue, women and social justice issues. These issues need to be raised in a greater manner inside Parliament also. Rahul ji is the best person to lead this campaign inside Parliament. This is the CWC view,” AICC general secretary (Organisation) K C Venugopal said after the meeting.

“The entire CWC feels that in the current scenario of Indian politics for a better and strong vigilant Opposition, those who want to protect the Constitution also, should be safe under the leader-

ship of Rahul Gandhi ji as a Leader of Opposition,” he said.

There is also pressure on Rahul not to vacate the Rae Bareilly seat in view of the shift in mood in UP and the Hindi heartland. While the Congress has won six seats in UP, its ally SP bagged 37. Besides, the Congress has made gains in Bihar, Rajasthan and Haryana.

Sources said he is thinking about vacating Wayanad, which re-elected him for the second time, but has not taken a final decision. The CWC reiterated that the Lok Sabha election verdict was a decisive rejection of BJP’s style and substance of governance.

“The verdict of the people is not just a political loss but a personal and moral defeat for the PM who sought the mandate in his name and ran a campaign anchored in lies, hate, prejudice, divisiveness and extreme bigotry. The verdict of the people is clearly

against the undermining of democracy and democratic institutions that has taken place since 2014,” the CWC resolution said.

The CWC meeting was largely self-congratulatory. It also singled out the Gandhis and Kharge for praise. It said they at Rahul “designed” and led were “historic turning points in our nation’s politics and instilled hope and confidence in lakhs of our workers and crores of our voters” and his election campaign was single-minded and sharp, and more than any other individual it was he who made the protection of the Constitution the central issue in the 2024 elections.

Incidentally, the CWC noted that the INDIA bloc parties “performed exceedingly well” in several states, among them UP, West Bengal, TN and Maharashtra. In West Bengal, the TMC won 29 of 42 seats.

EXPLAINED Why he may accept

IT IS to be seen whether Rahul Gandhi will refuse the offer. He shied away from the LoP post in 2019 but the situation is different now. Party leaders believe he has examples like Akhilesh Yadav and Tejashwi Yadav, who burnished their standing by taking up LoP posts in Assemblies after defeats.

Addressing reporters after the meeting, Venugopal and Jairam Ramesh said the CWC felt that revival of the party had begun.

Kharge said the verdict was against the dictatorial and anti-democratic ways of the BJP. “It is a decisive rejection of the politics of the last 10 years. It is rejection of the politics of divisiveness, hate and polarisation,” he said. Kharge said the Congress’s tally increased in seats “dominated by SC, ST, OBC, and minority voters as well as in rural areas”.

Meanwhile, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav will be the party’s leader in the Lok Sabha, the formalities for which will be completed in New Delhi. Yadav will resign from the UP Assembly, where he is the Leader of Opposition, a senior party leader said on Saturday. Yadav won from the Kannauj constituency.

‘As CM, I must take full responsibility for (Manipur) loss in Lok Sabha elections’



THE EXPRESS

INTERVIEW

WITH
N BIREN SINGH
MANIPUR CM

IN HIS first interview since facing a significant electoral loss in the Lok Sabha elections, Manipur CM N BIREN SINGH spoke to RITIKA CHOPRA about why he feels the BJP lost to Congress in the state, what needs to change in the future, and whether the changed equations within the NDA would affect the Centre’s approach towards him and his government in the state. Edited excerpts:

This was the first election you faced since the violence erupted in Manipur. What do you think of the message delivered by the voters?

In the last year, due to the complexity of the violence, neither the state nor Central government has been able to take strong actions against the groups on both sides. This has led to dissatisfaction among the valley people with both governments (in the state and at the Centre). Although law and order is a state issue, the Central forces play a key role here, yet we are not meeting public expectations. This is why we lost in the valley. In the outer areas, similar sentiments exist. Resolving the issues in Manipur is complex, many don’t understand the core problems. Identifying and addressing these core issues is key to solving the violence.

Isn’t this also a verdict against you?

Why not? As CM, I must take full responsibility. Some agencies see this (the violence) as a fight between two ethnic communities, but I don’t. We began identifying and deporting illegal migrants, launched a war on drugs in 2018, destroying poppy plantations. Indigenous tribes are our citizens, but somebody is trying to misinterpret that we are against them. This sparked the violence.

You’re referring to ‘somebody’ and outsiders, but this vote was cast by the citizens, not outsiders...

They (outsiders) have injected venom and instigated the Kukis to strike against the Meiteis. The valley people were endorsing the actions of the government. It’s only the outsiders involved, like the drug mafia. Those who came from outside have power and have instigated the tribal Kuki people, leading to retaliation from the valley people. In the election, the valley people denied our mandate because they expected the state and Central governments to punish the illegal immigrants, which we failed to do. Since the violence started, both governments have not acted actively against the culprits. But this will improve.

But this was a democratic

UP debacle: Team Yogi meets, CM asks ministers to shun ‘VIP culture’

BHUPENDRA PANDEY
LUCKNOW, JUNE 8

A DAY after his return from New Delhi, Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath Saturday convened a meeting of his council of ministers and held one-to-one interactions with many of them over the outcome of the responsibilities given to each of them.

While issuing fresh directives, including ‘dos and don’ts’, the CM asserted that “VIP culture” is “completely unacceptable” and all public representatives should shun this. Adityanath emphasised that every public representative should stay alert in ensuring that none of their activities are found to be affected by VIP culture.

All the ministers have been directed to spend considerable time on the field, connect with the common public, listen to their complaints and issues and ensure that these are promptly resolved. Adityanath also told the ministers that major issues brought to their notice should immediately be conveyed to the CMO, which he said would “respond promptly with full support.”

For the meeting at the Lok Bhavan in Lucknow, the CM had called all his 55 colleagues in the council of ministers, including 21 Cabinet ministers. All of them, with the exception of Deputy



Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath during a meeting with ministers in Lucknow on Saturday. Express

Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak attended the meeting. While Maurya is in New Delhi, Pathak was in Rishikesh on Saturday.

Sources also claimed that the CM had recently received reports pointing out that many of the ministers, MLAs, MLCs who were given responsibilities of seats in various regions and districts did not travel there, citing “heat-wave-like conditions”. Thus, the reports added, a chunk of the party workers too remained at election offices or their homes.

The CM said during the meeting that the BJP campaign, even in high profile seats such as Varanasi, was unsatisfactory which led to the relatively victory margin despite several senior

But will he go to Manipur?

If he doesn’t come, he spoke well in Parliament and Lal Quila about Manipur. But nobody listened. The Prime Minister has spoken twice.

But that doesn’t seem to have made a difference...

No, no, no. Nobody was listening to the Prime Minister. We tried to convince the public by showing videos of what he said. From that time, slowly, we did get support in Imphal and Manipur. Otherwise, social media was flooded with negative news. That’s the situation.

How do you expect BJP’s dependence on allies this time to affect the Centre’s approach to handling Manipur violence?

I don’t think there will be any changes. The government’s actions, like identifying illegal migrants and deportation, are under constitutional provisions. (Chandrababu) Naiduji and Nitish Kumarji have shown strong support for Modiji. They trust him completely, which strengthens NDA with no division or differences.

Since you have taken responsibility for the verdict, will you step down as CM?

No. Some have tried to break me and the state. My job is to legally punish them. My team and I know best the issues faced by indigenous Manipuris, including Nagas. This is the time to work with more conviction.

So stepping down is out of the question?

Yes. They want to remove me because I identified illegal migrants and fought the drug mafia. If I leave, their path will be clear. Why should we give in to enemies?

BJP has lost many seats outside of Manipur too. Why do you think that has happened?

It is dirty politics. Innocent people have been misled by false promises made by the Congress. They have promised huge sums of money into people’s accounts, which is impossible. This led to a lower tally. But tell me, shall we surrender the defence budget, Ayushman Bharat budget (to offer money to people)?

Here in Manipur they made false promises of separate administration. We cannot talk about the division of India. In Manipur too, how can they talk about division of Manipur? It is impossible.

Did the 400-paar slogan work against the BJP?

A party has targets for itself. There is nothing wrong with that.

TMC says won’t attend oath-taking, Cong weighs its options



West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, KOLKATA, JUNE 8

HAVING CALLED the Lok Sabha election verdict a political, moral and personal defeat of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Congress is unlikely to attend his swearing-in ceremony Sunday.

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC leader Mamata Banerjee, meanwhile, said she was yet to receive an invitation although she made it clear that the party won’t attend the ceremony even if invited.

Sources said Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge received a call from the government inviting him to the oath-taking ceremony but the party will take a decision Sunday after talking to INDIA bloc allies.

The Congress had attended Modi’s swearing-in event in 2019. Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and then Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad had represented the party at the event.

Earlier in the day, Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal said the party was yet to receive invitations. “Only international leaders have been sent invitations. So far, our leaders have not got invitations. When INDIA bloc leaders get an invitation, we will consider it,” said Ramesh.

In Kolkata, Banerjee said Saturday that the NDA government was being formed “undemocratically and unconstitutionally” and that her party would not be attending the swearing-in ceremony.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with the TMC’s newly elected MPs at her Kalighat residence, Banerjee said, “We haven’t received an invitation (to the swearing-in ceremony) yet. Even if we get an invitation, we will not attend the ceremony.”

All set at Rashtrapati Bhavan: Red carpet rolled out for 9,000 guests, heads of State

DIVYA A
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

RED CARPETS, chairs with leather upholstery, water fridges and mist fans — the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan is all set for the grand swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi and his Council of Ministers Sunday, which will be attended by around 9,000 guests, including heads of State.

The 2-hour-long function starts at 7.15 pm. Heads of states from neighbouring countries and the Indian Ocean region, who have been invited as distinguished guests, will be seated in the front rows. The seven foreign leaders are President of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe; President of Maldives Mohamed Muizzu; Vice-President of Seychelles Ahmed Afif; Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina; Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth; Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’; and Bhutan Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay.

Since there were complaints regarding unavailability of cold water during the 2019 swearing-in ceremony, rows of water fridges and mist fans have been installed this time keeping in mind the heatwave. The guests are supposed to remain seated for around four hours due to security protocol and VIP arrivals.

Each distinguished guest will



The Kartavya Path on the eve of the swearing-in ceremony. Tashi Tobgyal

be accompanied by ministerial colleagues and family members, who will be accorded a prime place as per protocol. The leaders will also attend a special banquet which will be hosted by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan later in the evening.

Cabinet ministers, who will also be sworn in after the PM, will also be seated on priority. Senior BJP, NDA leaders and diplomats from various countries, who have been invited, will witness the event from the front rows.

Interestingly, there are likely to be several special invitees, including shramjeevis who have contributed to the construction of the New Parliament Building or

other prime projects. Surekha Yadav, the first woman loco pilot of the Vande Bharat Express is among the 10 loco pilots invited for the ceremony. According to sources, representatives of the transgender community and beneficiaries of various central government’s welfare schemes are also likely to attend the event.

According to sources, the scale of the event is more or less the same as that in 2019 when leaders of BIMSTEC countries attended Modi’s swearing-in ceremony. In 2014, when Modi took oath as the PM for the first time, SAARC leaders had attended the ceremony.

The President’s office commu-

Mahayuti can sweep state polls with little effort, says Fadnavis

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
MUMBAI, JUNE 8

WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING that the political arithmetic went wrong leading to poor score of the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis Saturday exuded confidence that a course correction and reworked strategy would help them sweep Assembly polls in Maharashtra.

Fadnavis was addressing a meeting of BJP MLAs and office-bearers at Vasant Smruti Bhawan in Dadar in Mumbai. “Despite winning just nine seats, BJP has taken a decisive lead in 71 Assembly constituencies. Another six seats belong to our associate which makes our tally to 76 seats. Along with our alliance partners Shiv Sena led by CM Eknath Shinde and NCP led by Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, the



Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis in Mumbai on Saturday. Ganesh Shirsekar

win in a total 17 Lok Sabha seats translate into 130 Assembly seats. Which means Mahayuti is ahead in 130 out of total 288 seats in Assembly,” he said.

“A little effort to enhance our poll percentage by 3.5 will help us sweep the Assembly polls,” he said. “If each of our three constituents add-up 1.5 to 2 per cent,

we will be comfortably above our opponents. Even if we look at BJP’s vote share, it has dropped by just 1.5 in 2024 compared to 2019 polls,” he said.

Fadnavis, who had offered to resign, held a meeting with senior BJP leader Amit Shah in Delhi Thursday and Friday. He has been advised against rushing resignation. According to Fadnavis, “Along with retaining the Mahayuti’s vote share of 43.6 per cent, we just need 3.5 per cent more to defeat the rival Maha Vikas Aghadi.”

“While we focused on fighting just three parties — Congress, NCP (SP) and Shiv Sena (UBT) in the Lok Sabha polls, there was a fourth party aggressively in the field whose plank was reservation. Unfortunately, we overlooked this player or fell short in effectively countering it through planned strategy,” he said.

Jarange begins fast: ‘Will field candidates in Assembly polls’

Pune: Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil Saturday once again began his fast unto death in Antarwali-Saraati village in Jalna district, demanding a quota for the community. He threatened to field candidates belonging to all castes and religions and vowed to defeat a few candidates who he named.

“Politics is not my way and I am not interested in it. My only demand is to help Maratha community get a quota. Till then, I will continue my fast. The government should immediately implement the law regarding ‘sage-soyre’ and distribute caste certificates. If our demand is not accepted, we will field candidates belonging to all caste and religions and will name the candidates we intend to defeat,” Jarange told reporters. **ENS**

7 VERDICT 2024



Teams Naidu, Nitish: 2 pillars of NDA

First-timers, veterans, political heirs and YSRCP turncoats among TDP MPs

SREENIVAS JANYALA & NIKHILA HENRY
HYDERABAD, NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

THE CHANDRABABU Naidu-led TDP swept the simultaneous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, storming back to power in the state. Fighting these polls in alliance with the BJP and the Pawan Kalyan-led JSP, the TDP bagged 16 Lok Sabha seats of the 17 it contested, emerging as a key player on national stage. Here is a lowdown on all the newly-elected TDP MPs, who are set to play a crucial role in the new NDA dispensation at the Centre.



KINJARAPU RAMMOHAN NAIDU

KINJARAPU RAMMOHAN Naidu has won for the third consecutive time from the Srikakulam constituency in north Andhra Pradesh, this time against Tilak Perada of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) with a margin of 3.2 lakh votes. The 36-year-old MBA is the national general secretary of the TDP and was its floor leader in the outgoing Lok Sabha. His father, K Yerran Naidu, was a senior party leader and a former MLA and MP, who was a Union minister in the United Front government between 1996 and 1998.



KALISETTI APPALANAIDU

KALISETTI APPALA NAIDU was a surprise last minute pick by Chandrababu Naidu as the TDP's candidate from the Vizianagaram seat. The 50-year-old leader has an LLB degree and is a former journalist who joined the TDP 25 years ago. He was elected to the Ponduru Agricultural Marketing Committee.

In 2004, he was made a member of the TDP's Human Resource Development Wing and made in-charge of TDP's North Andhra training institute for the TDP cadres in Vizianagaram. He imparted training to cadres on basic governance issues. This was his electoral debut, in which he won against Bellana Chandrashekar of the YSRCP by 2.4 lakh votes.



SRIBHARAT MATHUKUMILI

SRIBHARAT MATHUKUMILI, 35, the president of the Visakhapatnam-based Gandhi Institute of Technology and Management (deemed university). He won from the Visakhapatnam Lok Sabha seat, which marked his first electoral win. In 2019, he had lost to YSRCP's MVV Satyanarayana. This time, he defeated Botcha Jhansi, wife of former minister Botcha Satyanarayana.



G M HARISH BALAYOGI

THE 33-YEAR-OLD TDP leader

G M Harish Balayogi is the son of former Lok Sabha Speaker late GMC Balayogi. In the current polls, he tested his luck for the second time from the Amalapuram (SC) Lok Sabha seat. In 2019, he lost to YSRCP's candidate. This time, he defeated the YSRCP's heavyweight R Varaprasad Rao.



PUTTA MAHESH KUMAR

ELECTED FOR the first time from the Eluru constituency, Putta Mahesh Kumar, 36, is a businessman. He is the son of Sudhakar Yadav, TDP leader and MLA from Mydukur, who has served as the chairman of board of trustees of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. Putta Mahesh won against Karumuri Sunil Kumar of the YSRCP.



KESINENI SIVANATH

POPULARLY KNOWN as Kesineni Chinni, Kesineni Sivanath is the brother of Kesinani Srinivas, former two-time TDP MP from the same Vijayawada seat that he bagged now. Srinivas, popularly known as Nani, had quit TDP over differences with Chandrababu Naidu and joined YSRCP which fielded him in current polls. However, making his debut on the TDP ticket, Sivanath trounced his brother Srinivas.



DR CHANDRA SEKHAR PEMMASANI

THE 48-YEAR-OLD doctor, Dr Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani, is one of the richest contestants, with his family owning total assets worth over Rs 5,785 crore. Hailing from Burripalem village of Tenali his family have been supporters of the TDP for a long time. Contesting from the Guntur seat, he won against Kilari Vekata Rosaiah of the YSRCP.



LAVU SRIKRISHNA DEVARAYALU

LAVU SRIKRISHNA Devarayalu was first elected from Narasaolet seat on the YSRCP ticket in 2019. However, he later fell out with YSRCP leadership. Ahead of 2024 polls, he switched to the TDP. He won for the second time from the seat now by defeating YSRCP's Anil Kumar Poluboina. His seat had seen post-poll violence, with YSRCP leaders accusing him of taking favours from the police on poll day. He has denied all charges.



TENNETI KRISHNA PRASAD

THE TDP'S WINNING candidate from the Bapatla (SC) constituency, Tenneti Krishna Prasad is former IPS officer and Telangana Director General of Police (DGP). He joined the BJP last July but the TDP gave him the ticket for this poll debut. He defeated Nandigam Suresh

Babu of the YSRCP with a margin of 2.08 lakh votes.

Prasad previously served as the chairperson of the Telangana Road Safety Authority and the Additional DG of Railways and Road Safety. He runs an NGO called the Krishna Prasad Foundation. It worked to mobilise medical equipment at the peak of the pandemic, working with the American India Foundation to procure and donate medical equipment to hospitals.



MAGUNTA SREENIVASULU REDDY

THE FOUR-TIME MP from Ongole, Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy, had been with the YSRCP but quit the party after his son Raghava Reddy got embroiled in the Delhi excise policy case. He then joined the TDP.

Raghava Reddy turned approver in the Delhi excise policy case after which Srinivasulu was given the ticket by the TDP.

the Anantapur parliamentary seat for the first time, beating Malagundla Sankar Narayana of the YSRCP by 1.8 lakh votes.



B K PARTHASARATHI

THE 64-YEAR-OLD B K Parthasarathi is a two-time TDP MLA from Penukonda and a veteran TDP leader, who got the party ticket from the Hindupur seat despite the ally BJP's bid to claim the seat. The TTD board member went on to beat J Shanthan of the YSRCP by 1.3 lakh votes.



VEMIREDDY PRABHAKAR REDDY

VEMIREDDY PRABHAKAR REDDY is the founder of the VPR Mining Infra Private Limited. He had joined the YSRCP and was elected to the Rajya Sabha in



Prime Minister-designate Narendra Modi with TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. File

The Magunta family owns Balaji Distilleries and two other companies, and has been in the liquor business for over seven decades. He won against Chevireddy Bhaskar Reddy of the YSRCP by 50,199 votes.



DR BYREDDY SHABARI

DR BYREDDY SHABARI has been elected from the Nandyal seat as a TDP candidate for the first time. However, her father Rajashekara Reddy had quit the TDP to found the Rayalaseema Parirakshana Samithi in order to fight for a separate Rayalaseema state.

The granddaughter of Seshasayana Reddy, who was a three-time MLA and also served as an MLC, Byreddy Shabari is the only woman MP of the TDP now. She defeated Pocha Brahmananda Reddy of the YSRCP by 1.1 lakh votes.



AMBICA LAKSHMI NARAYANA VALMIKI

AMBICA LAKSHMINARAYANA VALMIKI is a local TDP leader in Anantapur district and has been elected on its ticket from

March 2018. He quit the YSRCP ahead of the 2024 elections after sensing that he would not get the Lok Sabha ticket.

He then crossed over to the TDP, which fielded him the Nellore seat, where he defeated senior YSRCP leader Vijaysai Reddy by 2.4 lakh votes.



DAGGUMALLA PRASADA RAO

DAGGUMALLA PRASADA Rao is a director of Radhey Constructions Private Limited. He is a former IRS officer. Yet another first-time winner, Rao defeated the YSRCP's N Reddeppa by 2.2 lakh votes in the Chittoor (SC) constituency.



BASTIPATI NAGARAJU PANCHALINGALA

ANOTHER FIRST-TIME winner, Bastipati Nagaraju Panchalingala trounced B Y Ramaiah of the YSRCP in the Kurnool seat by 1.1 lakh votes.

He once worked as a government college lecturer before entering politics in 2021, joining the BJP. He later joined the TDP fold.

JD(U) MPs a mix of old hands, ministerial aspirants, EBC, OBC and upper castes

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, JUNE 8

THE NITISH Kumar-led JD(U) has proved to be a game-changer for the NDA in Bihar. CM Nitish Kumar, who was being written off ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, has returned to the centre stage of national politics, with his party bagging 12 seats of 16 it contested in Bihar. With the BJP falling short of the simple majority mark of 272, it will have to lean heavily on its NDA partners, especially key allies like the JD(U) and the TDP, to steer its government at the Centre. A look at the 12 new JD(U) MPs, who are expected to play a significant role in the ruling camp now.



RAJIV RANJAN SINGH

THE 69-YEAR-old four-time MP, Rajiv Ranjan Singh, popularly known as Lalan Singh, has won from the Munger constituency.

Shahnawaz Hussain had lost to the RJD's Shailesh Kumar or Bulo Mandal from the Gangota community.

Ajay Mandal, who was perceived to have faced "anti-incumbency", banked on the Modi factor to sail through.



GIRIDHARI YADAV

ONE OF THE two Yadav MPs of JD(U), Giridhari Yadav, 61, has won from the Banka seat for the third time. He had earlier represented the Katoria Assembly seat twice and the Belhar Assembly constituency once.

Yadav had been in the news for his refusal to file his questions online for the proceedings in the outgoing Lok Sabha, saying he was not conversant with computers and would have to give his password to his aide for posting questions. He then requested for an option to send questions manually. Yadav played up the Modi card to get better of his RJD

reently been the chairperson of the Bihar Legislative Council.

The four-time MLC, Thakur has also been a minister in the Bihar government. Known for his managerial and administrative skills, he is among the pioneers of the Bihar Diwas, starting the event during Nitish's second term as CM. Thakur was the only Lok Sabha candidate who was alerted about his candidature six months in advance, after the JD(U) denied the ticket to sitting MP Sunil Kumar Pintu.



LOVELY ANAND

LOVELY ANAND, 57, had been a former Vaishali MP besides being a two-time MLA. This time, she won from the Sheohar constituency.

Lovely, wife of former MP Anand Mohan, had first hit the headlines in 1994 when she defeated Congress heavyweight Kishori Sinha. Her political career suffered after her husband was jailed and later convicted in the G Krishnaiah mob lynching case. Belonging to the upper caste, Lovely got the JD(U) ticket from Sheohar only after the BJP denied its ticket to sitting MP Rama Devi. By getting the Anand Mohan family back into its fold, the JD(U) saw the consolidation of a section of upper caste votes in its favour this time.

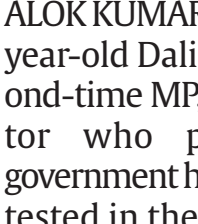


VIJAYLAKSHMI DEVI

THE 61-YEAR-OLD OBC Kushwaha leader, Vijayalakshmi Devi, was a surprise JD(U) candidate from the Siwan Lok Sabha constituency. The JD(U) nominated Vijayalakshmi – wife of MLA Ramesh Kushwaha, once an active member of the CPI(M/L) Liberation, who was till recently in Upendra Kushwaha's Rashtriya Lok Morcha – instead of repeating its sitting upper caste Rajput MP Kavita Singh from the seat.

Though Vijayalakshmi faced a tough fight from Independent candidate Hina Sahab, the wife of former Siwan MP Mohammed Shahabuddin, she managed to win in a triangular contest in which the RJD's Awadh Bihar Choudhary finished third.

Kumar became active in politics in his teens, when his father formed an association to take on dacoits in West Champaran region. His political stock has risen further as JD(U)'s another Kushwaha leader, Santosh Kumar, was defeated in Purnia seat. The JD(U) may give Sunil key responsibility this time. He is believed to be an aspirant for an MoS berth.



ALOK KUMAR SUMAN

ALOK KUMAR SUMAN, the 67-year-old Dalit leader and second-time MP, is an MBBS doctor who practised at a government hospital till he contested in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, and won.

He has now won for the second consecutive time from the Gopalganj seat – the home turf of Lalu Prasad – on the JD(U) ticket.

Suman had risen from a very humble background, having also worked as a child labourer.

The Gopalganj constituency became a reserved seat after the previous delimitation. By retaining his seat, Suman has reinforced Nitish's Mahadalit constituency.



KAUSHLENDRA KUMAR

COMING FROM the OBC Kurmi community, Kaushlendra Kumar, 65, a small-time JD(U) worker, had sprung a surprise by getting the party's ticket from the prestigious Nalanda seat for the first time in 2009. Having now won the seat for the fourth time, the low-profile MP has ensured that Nalanda – Nitish Kumar's home constituency with a large OBC Kurmi population – continues to be among the JD(U)'s "safest seats".

The son of a farmer, Kaushlendra has always taken up issues related to agriculture. This time, he beat Sandeep Saurabh of the CPI(M/L), although the sharp fall in his victory margin has alarmed the JD(U).



DINESH CHANDRA YADAV

ELECTED AS THE Lok Sabha MP for the fifth time – and now for the second time from Madhepura – Dinesh Chandra Yadav, 72, is a veteran socialist, who has dominated politics of the Kosi region for the last 25 years. He has also represented the Khagaria seat and erstwhile Saharsa constituency in the past. One of the prominent Yadav leaders in the JD(U), Dinesh Chandra, who emerged from the JP movement, is known to have kept his focus on national politics.



DILESHWAR KAMAIT

THE 78-YEAR-OLD prominent EBC leader from the Kosi region, Dileshwar Kamait, is now a second-time MP from Supaul, which has a dominant EBC population. Kamat, who was an officer with the Indian Railways, had joined politics after his retirement from the government job in 2008.

He represented the Triveniganj Assembly segment for the JD(U) in 2010. He had also contested, unsuccessfully, from the Supaul Lok Sabha seat in 2014.

As Bihar has a sizable EBC Kamat population, Dileshwar has remained an important JD(U) figure. From the group of EBC MPs, either he or Rampreet Mandal or Ramnath Thakur (Rajya Sabha MP) may get a ministerial berth in the NDA government 3.0.



RAMPREET MANDAL

BELONGING TO the EBC Dhanuk community, Rampreet Mandal, 68, is a key EBC leader of the JD(U). Mandal, who first became an MP in 2019 from Jhunjharpur – which has a sizable EBC population – has retained the seat in this election. He is also in contention for a central ministerial portfolio.

He made news some years ago by demanding a Sita temple in Sitamarhi on the lines of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

BJP allies should oppose hate agenda: Jamaat

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI HIND (JIH), a socio-religious organisation, Saturday called Lok Sabha elections a mandate against "hate and divisive politics", and said that it was the responsibility of BJP allies including JD(U) and TDP to oppose BJP's divisive agenda and injustice to any section of country. It said that all political parties have the responsibility to understand the message of the mandate and

do their introspection.

Speaking to reporters, JIH chief Syed Sadatullah Husaini said the new government is of the NDA bloc and not of the BJP alone. "TDP and JD(U) in their manifesto have spoken about inclusive policies, justice for all and opposing divisive agenda... They should oppose BJP's divisive agenda," Husaini said.

Referring to the poll results in UP, he said "BJP's loss is the message against communal hate speeches, bulldozer politics and divisive politics"

"People in Maharashtra have

given a strong message against 'jod-tod ki siyasat', breaking of Opposition parties and misuse of ED," he said. "The ruling party has got another chance to form a government but with a strong warning. The PM, his cabinet and the ruling party should understand that and introspect," he said.

Citing Delhi where Congress-AAP alliance lost elections to BJP, Husaini said that in many areas there was a significant disconnect between the opposition candidates and voters.

He also said that the result in

Faizabad (of which Ayodhya is a part) where the Samajwadi Party defeated the BJP has shown that people rejected BJP's "mandir-masjid politics".

JIH vice-president Mohammed Saleem Engineer said the representation of Muslims in new Lok Sabha was only 4.4%, which he said, should be improved. Vice-president Malik Motasim Khan, citing BSP MP Kunwar Danish Ali's suspension, said that "quality representation with freedom for the MPs to express their opinions" was more important.

Dangerous if BJP keeps Speaker post: AAP

LALMANI VERMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

FLAGGING THE possibility of horse-trading and violation of Constitutional provisions, AAP MP Sanjay Singh said Saturday that a BJP Speaker in the new Lok Sabha would be "dangerous for parliamentary traditions". The post, he said, should be held by the TDP, the NDA's second biggest member with 16 MPs.

Singh's remarks came a day before the NDA was set to form



Sanjay Singh in Lucknow, Saturday. PTI

government at the Centre for a third straight term. BJP, 32 seats below majority mark, will need the support of its allies, especially Andhra Pradesh CM-designate Chandrababu Naidu's TDP and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar's JD(U).

"Never in the Parliamentary history of the country were more

than 150 MPs suspended, but the BJP did it... So, if the Speaker is from BJP, bills will be passed in arbitrary manner by violating the Constitution, parties like TDP, JD(U) and other small parties will be broken and forced to join (the BJP). BJP has a history of that," Singh, a Rajya Sabha member the party's in-charge for UP, told reporters in Lucknow.

AAP, an INDIA bloc member, won three Lok Sabha seats from Punjab.

Calling the Speaker's post the new NDA government's "first

test", Singh said he and his party believe that if the post remained with the BJP, then MPs "who raise their voice will be thrown out of the House".

"If the Speaker will be from TDP and not from the BJP, the threat of breaking parties from NDA and (Opp) INDIA (bloc) both will be contained," he claimed. Singh said the INDIA bloc will wait for the BJP's decision on the Speaker's selection, but suggested the alliance discuss their moves should the BJP retain the post.

epaper.indianexpress.com

Across
THE AISLE



PCHIDAMBARAM

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and all the men and women merely players. They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts.” — *William Shakespeare*

WHEN YOU read this column on June 9, 2024, Mr Narendra Modi would be the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India for the third time — but it will not be the same Mr Modi. It will be Exit, Mr Modi, the authoritarian prime minister of a single-party government and Enter, Mr Modi, the prime minister of a coalition of many parties with barely a 20-seat majority (of which TDP has 16 MPs and JDU 12 MPs). It will be a wholly new experience for him. Mr Modi did not prepare for this role in his nearly 55 years of public life as a *pracharak*, general secretary of BJP, chief minister of Gujarat and prime minister of India. He will play in a game with which he is unfamiliar.

DEMOCRACY
PARTIALLY RESTORED

In the just concluded Lok Sabha elections, the people of India achieved many things that were considered nearly impossible until a few weeks ago:

- the two Houses will be run according to the Rules and the consensus of the House, and not at the discretion of the Presiding Officer and the Leader of the House;

The people have spoken. They value freedom, right to speech and expression, right to privacy, and right to protest. The government must give up its penchant for filing spurious cases for 'sedition' and 'defamation'. 'Encounter' and 'bulldozer justice' must be abandoned (a lesson especially to **Mr Adityanath**, chief minister of U.P.). The Ram Temple is beyond politics and should never again be invoked for political purposes...

“All the world’s a stage ...

- the composition of the various House Committees will be more balanced and the Chairs more evenly distributed among the political parties;
- there will be a recognized Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha with a sufficient number of MPs in the Opposition;
- the Constitution of India cannot be amended unless there is a consensus among the Treasury benches and the Opposition benches in Parliament;
- meetings of the Cabinet or the Council of Ministers will no longer be a formal endorsement of decisions taken by the prime minister and, in many cases, already implemented — for example, the Cabinet will no more be only 'informed' of a drastic step like demonetization;
- the rights of states will be acknowledged and better safeguarded;
- devolution of funds to the states and allocation of funds to ministries/departments and schemes will be less arbitrary and to the satisfaction of the constituent parties of the coalition;
- the prime minister may be obliged to be present in the Houses more often, answer questions and participate in important debates.

LEARNING FROM
MANDATE

The people have spoken. They value freedom, right to speech and expression, right to privacy, and right to protest. The

government must give up its penchant for filing spurious cases for 'sedition' and 'defamation'. 'Encounter' and 'bulldozer justice' must be abandoned (a lesson especially to **Mr Adityanath**, chief minister of U.P.). The Ram Temple is beyond politics and should never again be invoked for political purposes (ask 77-year old **Mr Awadhesh Prasad** of Samajwadi Party elected from Faizabad constituency and **Mr Saket Misra**, son of Mr Nripendra Misra, former principal secretary to prime minister and Head of the Temple Construction Trust, defeated in Shravasti constituency). The people want a truly free media: no more manufactured exit polls; no more doting (and boring) coverage of every twitch of the eyebrow of the prime minister; no more questions tailored to pre-scripted answers; and no more obedient reading from the hand-outs of ED and CBI. The people want regional parties to be true to their core beliefs and not show one face in Delhi and another face in the state capital. Such parties will be punished as in the cases of AGP, SAD, JJP, BRS and JD(S) or severely warned as in the cases of BJD and YSRCP. There is a lesson for TDP and JDU.

OPPOSITION MUST
PRESS AGENDA

The Opposition has an opportunity, after 10 years, to behave like a parliamentary opposition. It must press its agenda inside Parliament and outside. Here are

some ideas that captured the imagination of the people and elected a number of I.N.D.I.A. bloc candidates:

- conduct a socio-economic and caste survey.
- implement forthwith the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act and provide one-third reservation for women in elected legislatures beginning 2025.
- implement a minimum wage of Rs 400 per day for every kind of employment, including under MGNREGS.
- appoint a permanent commission on agricultural indebtedness and waive agricultural debt according to its recommendations.
- fill the 30 lakh vacancies in the government and government-controlled bodies.
- modify, if necessary, and implement forthwith the Apprentices Act to compel every qualified business establishment to appoint apprentices and share the burden of stipends.
- scrap the *Agniveer* scheme.
- suspend the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act until its constitutionality is decided by the Supreme Court.
- bring the investigation agencies (CBI, ED, NIA, SFO, NCB, etc.) under the oversight of a joint parliamentary committee.

A NEW GAME

A new game will begin on June 9. New players will be in the forefront. Watch the exits and entrances.

Fifth
COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

Twitter @tavleen_singh



We deserve
better leaders

THE REAL winner in this Lok Sabha election was democracy. And, personally I could not be more delighted. On both sides of the divide was a campaign that sought to diminish democracy. From the INDIA lot we never heard the end of how unfair the election was and how the Election Commission and the EVMs were going to ensure another spectacular victory for Narendra Modi. He for his part campaigned as if he was no ordinary politician seeking a mandate, but a man sent by God to save India. The choice before voters was to choose between bad and worse.

On the evening of the results when the Prime Minister appeared, as he usually does, to address his party workers at BJP headquarters, they went through the usual motions of garlanding him in a massive garland of orchids. And, showering him with rose petals as he walked to the stage and he himself tried to pretend that he had made history by becoming only the second man to win a third consecutive term. But there was something in his body language that had changed. He seemed diminished as did Amit Shah and J P Nadda as they sat behind him on the stage trying to look cheerful.

The shock of what happened was so great that the BJP's vicious social media trolls were momentarily speechless. And party spokesmen who appeared on TV seemed chastened and humbled. This is good. The BJP was flying too high and there was too much talk of one nation, one leader, one people from Modi who should know that this kind of talk is alright in an autocracy but not in a democracy. Hopefully, when he gets sworn in for the third time this evening, he will remember that he did not really win.

If, on the other side, we had a choice between real leaders, it would have been heartening. But what we have is a collection of what Prashant Kishor calls 'potted plants' because they have all inherited their political careers from Daddy or Mummy. They are an uninspiring bunch. And, too filled with grievances that seek always to demean Indian democracy. Rahul Gandhi has been saying for months on international public platforms that democracy is dead in India. And there has been that endless whining about EVM manipulation which ended as soon as they discovered that they had done better than expected.

What this election has proved is that the voters of India are wiser than our leaders. They deserve better. They deserve leaders who do not try to divide them into categories of caste, and they deserve better than being told by BJP leaders that Muslims are a plague that must be eradicated. In his second term in office Modi showed that he was more interested in projecting himself as India's saviour than in saving India. Somehow everything that he did was always about him. It was because of him that 80 crore Indians were being given free rations every month. It was because of him that people were being given houses and clean drinking water (not quite true yet) and because of him that rural Indians now had toilets in their homes.

His problem was that he surrounded himself with sycophantic ministers who lied to him about what was really being done. They did not tell him that at the bottom of the pyramid were millions of desperately poor Indians who struggled to find two meals a day and did not understand why instead of someone bothering to help them there were huge amounts of money being spent on roads, airports and the mighty temple in Ayodhya. These are things that appeal to middle class Indians and rich Indians, but the problem is that to win an election with a full majority you need the support of those at the bottom who have nothing.

In the many analyses I have read of the election results I have not heard anyone mention the migrants who were forced to walk home for hundreds of kilometres because of Modi's sudden and brutal lockdown. I have not heard anyone mention that horrible COVID summer when people were dying in hospitals because there was not enough oxygen. Or that the Government of India had failed to order the vaccinations that were needed for us to protect us from the pandemic. Modi is a skilled politician, so he managed to turn this to his advantage by offering free vaccinations on a massive scale with his photo on the certificates. Polls done by powerful magazines all report that people believe that the vaccination programme was the best thing that the Modi government did.

Which people? That really is the question. If those people had been polled who had to bury their dead in the sands of the Ganga, they may not have said that dealing with COVID was a huge success. When he gets sworn in for the third time as prime minister Modi would do well to remember the real people of this country. He would do well to remember a few other things. He must stop making everything into a Hindu-Muslim issue — it has not worked. And he must step out of the circle of sycophants that surrounds him and remember that he is not a Messiah but an ordinary politician. If he does, he could be a better prime minister this time than he has been.

INDIA must now safeguard
the Constitution for Bahujans

Dalitality
SURESH MANE



IN THE recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, the world witnessed BJP's victory. The party relied on well-organised strategies, electoral bonds and a "Godi" media campaign to cross the 400-seat mark. The "400 Paar" slogan was overloaded by the aggressive Hindutva nationalism demolishing the fabric of secular India. In contrast, when it announced "Save Constitution, Save Democracy", INDIA bloc went back to Dr Ambedkar's socio-political discourse, which includes redistribution of national resources. INDIA bloc parties also carried copies of the Constitution.

Also raised was the slogan of "jitni *abadi utna haq* (rights should be proportionate to communities' population)". It was first coined by Kanshi Ram, the man who redefined Ambedkarite-Bahujan politics nationally. This was a well-designed plan by the INDIA bloc for two reasons: To safeguard India's Constitutionalism and democracy, and to regain the lost political space among the Bahujans since upper caste votes had been completely monopolised by the BJP.

Apart from burning issues like unemployment, inflation, agrarian crisis, rural distress, etc., the slogan of 'Save Constitution, Save Democracy' had a nationwide impact on non-Hindutva Bahujan voters. At the cost of the marginalisation of their political voices, like the BSP, it resulted in their en masse voting for the INDIA bloc. In fact, INDIA bloc's campaign reminded us that the Bahujan agenda was missing since Ambedkar's death in 1956 and Kanshi Ram's ill health in 2003. In 2000, when the Vajpayee government proposed a review of the Constitution, Kanshi Ram asked the government to clarify which parts required a review and the reasons behind it.

Sensing an "anti-Constitutional" intent, he took to the streets, arranged nationwide jeep marches, directed his MPs to stall the functioning of Parliament, and also conducted seminars and people's parliaments across India. His efforts led to the closure of the Constitution review project. His message 24 years ago was clear: save the Constitution, which is "Ambedkar's heritage". He also never relied on other parties

to defend or protect the Constitution.

In fact, Bahujans voting for INDIA bloc is in contrast to the radical discourse of Jyotirao Phule, Ambedkar, Kanshi Ram and others. Ambedkar's first political move before the Southborough Commission in 1919 was the demand for the right to vote and a separate representation electorate. His warning in the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949 — that "the downtrodden classes are tired of being governed" — speaks volumes about the strength of political power. Against this backdrop, how the Bahujans will secure their share in the national wealth is a million-dollar question.

The track record of governments is not encouraging. Then there are some political parties in the INDIA bloc with feudal-casteist mindsets and a history of anti-Constitutional culture. These parties have refused to acknowledge Ambedkar's contribution to the constitutional revolution. Still, putting national needs above all and keeping their agenda of acquiring political power in cold storage for the time being, the Bahujans wholeheartedly voted to save democracy. Now, it is now the duty of the INDIA bloc to rise to the challenge.

Missionary activists and Bahujan youth now have a few choices. They should heed Ambedkar's warnings — that "you need a power to destroy the power on the other side" and "political power is the master key" — to resolve the manifold structural problems of the Bahujans. This was taken further by Kanshi Ram's slogan of "Vote *hamara, raj tumhara? Nahi chalega, nahi chalega* (Our vote, your rule? This will not do)". Both Ambedkar and Kanshi Ram advised people to wage a relentless struggle to regain lost rights and to not depend on others for their rights, share and welfare.

Nearly all Bahujan revolts in India were to reconstruct Indian society. Therefore, political power was a weapon to achieve that and not the ultimate goal. If we have to achieve a complete transformation of society by establishing liberty, equality, fraternity and justice, how long is the movement going to depend on other political parties? The Bahujans love the Constitution and are proud of it. They consider it the only protective umbrella over Ambedkar. However, they hardly make any consistent efforts to become the executives of the Constitution.

Suresh Mane is the president of the Bahujan Republican Socialist Party and the former BSP general secretary
Suraj Yengde, author of 'Caste Matters', curates Dalitality, has returned to Harvard University

history
HEADLINE
CHAKSHUROY



IN THE recently concluded general elections, voters did not give the Bharatiya Janata Party a complete majority. The BJP, with its 240 Lok Sabha seats, is forming the government along with its coalition partners of the National Democratic Alliance.

Coalitions at the national level came to public attention in 1977 when Morarji Desai formed the first non-Congress coalition government. His government, a testament to the evolving political landscape, included ministers like Charan Singh, L K Advani, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Biju Patnaik, Parkash Singh Badal, George Fernandes and Shanti Bhushan.

Unbridled ambition, political machinations and factionalism marred the tenure of the Morarji government. Law minister Bhushan recounted how bad things had become by 1978. He wrote, "I was convinced that if the prime minister was waiting for the death of his two senior most colleagues and one of them in turn was waiting for the death of the prime minister, it was impossible for such a government to last." The Morarji government fell in 1979, having lasted over two years.

A coalition government involves more than one political party or individuals working together, sometimes with differing viewpoints. Looking back, we find that 1977 was not the country's first brush with a national coalition. The 1946 interim government just before Independence and the first government formed after Independence in 1947 were both coalitions.

The 1946 interim government was responsible for steering India to independence. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was at the helm of this government. It had Congress stalwarts Vallabhbhai Patel (Home), Rajendra Prasad (Food and Agriculture) and Jagjivan Ram (Labour). The government also had Sardar Baldev Singh (Defence) from the Akali Dal and experts like John Matthai (Finance), a well-regarded economist. Cooverji Hormusji Bhabha (Commerce), a Parsi businessman with interests in banking and insurance companies, enriched the government with his insights.

However, selecting these ministers (known as members) was sometimes controversial. For example, Maulana Azad and Vallabhbhai Patel disagreed on including Bhabha. Azad felt that Bhabha was not a leader or a true representative of the Parsi community. When the Muslim League decided to join the interim government, Patel

When Nehru headed a
national coalition govt



Jawaharlal Nehru with members of the interim government in 1946. Wikipedia

and Azad differed on Congress's offering of the Finance portfolio to the League.

Azad believed that losing control of a critical portfolio would create difficulties for the government. The League accepted the offer, and Liaquat Ali Khan took charge of the Finance portfolio from Matthai. According to Azad, when Liaquat became the Finance Member, he obtained the keys to the Government and not even a chaprasi could be appointed without his approval.

BEYOND POLITICAL
AFFILIATIONS

Nehru followed the coalition template in independent India's first council of ministers. He repeated over half of the interim government ministers and brought in new ministers such as Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (Health) and NV Gadgil (Works, Mines and Power). Nehru became the Prime Minister and Patel the Deputy PM. Historian Ramachandra Guha wrote that in putting together this Cabinet, Nehru followed the advice of Mahatma Gandhi and reached beyond Congress to include the best minds, regardless of political affiliations. As a result, not being a Congressman was not a bar to joining the Cabinet. It led to additions like Dr B R Ambedkar (Law), businessman RK Shanmukham Chetty (Finance), and Dr Syama Prasad Mukherjee (Industry and Supply) of the Jan Sangh.

In his book *The Government and Politics of India*, Prof Morris Jones highlighted, "The chosen fortress-holders of 1947 included many with little or no connection with Congress. It was a coalition government in

two senses. First and foremost, it contained a strikingly careful selection of representatives of communities and regions ... Secondly, it was a policy coalition also, though not by virtue of containing a balance of opinions: on the contrary, the non-Congress opinions represented was all (with the possible exception of Ambedkar) in some sense markedly conservative."

This first Cabinet faced overwhelming challenges. Lesser-known Cabinet members like Bhabha contributed extensively to pressing issues like the refugee crisis and technical ones like the framing of the company law. Matthai, who lost two opportunities to handle the Finance portfolio, finally took charge of the ministry in 1948 and guided the nation through a difficult period.

The coalition government also underwent a churn. In 1948, Chetty, the first finance minister, resigned under a cloud after his ministry dropped the names of some individuals who had to be investigated by Income Tax authorities. Later, Mukherjee (1950) and Ambedkar (1951) resigned due to policy differences.

Mukherjee resigned because he disagreed with the government's approach to the treatment of Hindus in Pakistan, especially in East Bengal. Explaining his resignation (in this context), he said, "It is a mighty task ... and between the Government and its critics there will always be ample room for co-operation in facing a problem which concerns the peace and happiness of millions of people and of the advancement of the entire nation."

The writer looks at issues through a legislative lens and works at PRS Legislative Research

She
SAID

PRACHI
BANSAL



WE WERE nearing the end of semester for my third-year undergraduate students of economics. One lecture on gender inequality in India was pending in an elective course I teach, titled 'Economics of Poverty and Inequality'. I began my preparation by collecting various statistics on the usual metrics on women: low workforce participation, gender wage gap, etc.

Since these were well-known issues, I realised that I was cooking a boring lecture. While researching for new dimensions of gender inequality, I found a book titled *Data feminism*. The book provided thought-provoking examples of how data science has been used to "discriminate, police, and surveil". The few pages I read changed the di-

AI is sexist. Here's how

rection of my lecture completely.

I remember an article published long back on how large language models, aka a type of Artificial Intelligence (AI), can be sexist. However, since this information was publicly available, I assumed that this sexism would not be easy to capture and would have been corrected in updated versions of these AI tools. Boy, was I wrong.

In front of my students, I gave a prompt to ChatGPT to generate letters of recommendation for two students, one male and one female, but both with equal marks (35 out of 40) in my class on poverty and inequality. When I got the two letters, I realised why a recruiter would pick the male candidate over the female one. The male student was described using adjectives like "confident", "outstanding", "technical", whereas the female student was described as "good for collaborative activities", "cor-

dial", "good asset to the company", "empathetic" and "compassionate". This demonstration generated a furious reaction from the class. Their very own trusted AI, whose help they very often took to draft emails, polish their assignments or resumes or applications for jobs or college was biased.

After the lecture, I generated a couple more prompts that evening. I asked ChatGPT to recommend jobs for my students. While posts recommended for male students included financial analyst, investment banker, data analyst, market research analyst and policy analyst, women students were seen as a better fit as financial planners, development consultants and environment economists. Multiple experiments showed that ChatGPT thought the men were overwhelmingly suited for jobs that require rigour in quantitative subjects, mathematics, finance and the like but in-

vestment banking or financial analysis did not figure in the top-five jobs for a female graduate in economics.

These results give us food for thought: start writing your own emails, resumes and assignments. Your friend, AI, might generate a bias and make your drafts less proficient. AI-assisted writing takes away the personal relationships we have with our words, vocabulary and language. It makes every piece of writing formal, simpler and standard. The "craft" in the craft of writing, which comes from the hands of craftsmen (or women) is completely lost in the process. Encouraging students to read and write is critical these days, when all writing can be mass-produced.

We, the teachers, can start small. Discourage each email written using AI. Back in the 2000s, when I was in school, SMS language had become popular. "Pls"

replaced "please", and every other term became abbreviated. It was caught easily and corrected by our teachers. While universities are deploying plagiarism tools to check the use of AI in writing and docking students' grades, it is important to understand that the bias generated by AI goes unchecked despite this exercise. We need to embrace the imperfection in written drafts and applications so that a student is not forced to make their work look more "formal" with the help of these AI tools. Looks like it's time to shift gears and make sure we don't lose the craft of writing, as we have lost the habit of reading with time.

Prachi Bansal is an assistant professor, Jindal School of Government and Public Policy, O P Jindal Global University, Sonapat
National Editor Shalini Langer curates the 'She Said' column

TAX, BUSINESS POLICY REFORMS TO FIND PLACE AMONG PROMISES
TORIES TO RELEASE ELECTION MANIFESTO NEXT WEEK
Britain's Conservative Party will publish its election manifesto next week, Conservative politician Penny Mordaunt said in a BBC television debate on Friday. "You have already heard some announcements and you'll see more in our manifesto next week. We have got to cut people's taxes and we have got to alleviate burdens on business," said Mordaunt.
REUTERS

RAID TOOK PLACE IN RESIDENTIAL LOCALITY, CAPTIVES HIDDEN AMONG CIVILIANS: ISRAEL

Israel rescues four hostages in Gaza raid; Hamas says strikes in same area killed 210

All 4 kidnapped by Hamas during October 7 attack

MAAYAN LUBELL & NIDAL AL-MUGHRABI
JERUSALEM, CAIRO, JUNE 8

ISRAELI FORCES rescued four hostages held by Hamas since October in a raid in Gaza Saturday while over 200 Palestinians were killed in airstrikes in the same area, according to Hamas officials, in one of the bloodiest Israeli assaults of the war.

It was not immediately clear if the hostage rescue and the Israeli air assault were part of the same operation but both took place in central Gaza's al-Nuseirat, a densely built-up and often embattled area in the eight-month-old war between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian territory's ruling Islamist group. An Israeli military spokesperson said the hostage rescue operation unfolded under fire in the heart of a residential neighbourhood, where he said Hamas had been hiding captives among Gaza civilians under guard by armed militants.

Israeli forces returned fire, including with airstrikes, added the spokesperson, Rear Admiral



Aftermath of the Israeli bombing in Nuseirat refugee camp; and (right) Shlomi Ziv, rescued from Gaza, with family members



Reuters

Daniel Hagari. An Israeli special forces commander was killed during the operation, a police statement said. Israel named the rescued hostages as Noa Argamani, 26, Almog Meir Jan, 22, Andrey Kozlov, 27, and Shlomi Ziv, 41. They were taken to hospital for medical checks and were in good health, the military said. In another video, speaking on the phone with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Argamani said, "I am very moved. I haven't heard Hebrew for so long." They were all kidnapped from the Nova music festival during a

raid by Hamas-led Palestinian militants on Israeli towns and villages near Gaza on Oct. 7, which precipitated the devastating war in the Hamas-run enclave. Nuseirat camp attacks A different picture unfolded back in Gaza, where Palestinian health ministry officials and local medics said that an Israeli military assault in Nuseirat had killed many including women and children. The Hamas-run government media office in Gaza said later the death toll had risen to at least 210 Palestinians with many more wounded, after medics

and health officials gave earlier tolls of up to 100 dead. There was no immediate confirmation of the highest figure from Gaza's health ministry. Social media footage that Reuters could not immediately verify showed bodies spilling en-trails onto bloodstained streets. "It was like a horror movie but this was a real massacre. Israeli drones and warplanes fired all night randomly at people's houses and at people who tried to flee the area," said Ziad, 45, a paramedic and resident of Nuseirat. The bombardment focused

on a local marketplace and the al-Awda mosque, he told Reuters. "To free four, Israel killed dozens of innocent civilians," he said. Nuseirat, a historic Palestinian refugee camp, has been subjected to heavy Israeli bombing during the war and there has also been fierce ground fighting in its eastern areas. The Gaza war shows no signs of slowing even as Israel's chief ally the United States presses for a ceasefire and a deal that would free the remaining hostages held by Hamas in exchange for releases of Palestinians imprisoned in Israel. REUTERS

Ukrainian drone attacks in areas held by Russia kill 28: Officials

French-made bomb, US-made missiles used in strike, says Russia



A residential building damaged in overnight Ukrainian shelling on Friday in Luhansk. Reuters

SUSIE BLANN & ELISE MORTON
KYIV, JUNE 8

RUSSIA-INSTALLED officials in the partially occupied Ukrainian regions of Kherson and Luhansk said Ukrainian attacks left at least 28 people dead as Russia and Ukraine continued to exchange drone attacks overnight into Saturday.

missile attack on the regional capital, also called Luhansk. Russian state news agency Interfax cited regional authorities as saying this brought the death toll to six. Pasechnik also said 60 people were wounded in the attack. Pasechnik declared Saturday a day of mourning in the region

Ukraine did not comment on either assault. Meanwhile, drone attacks between Russia and Ukraine persisted.

Ukraine launched a barrage of drones across Russian territory overnight Friday, Russia's Defence Ministry said Saturday. Twenty-five drones were reportedly destroyed over Russia's southern Kuban and Astrakhan regions, the western Tula region, and the Crimean peninsula.

On Saturday morning, officials said air defences for the first time shot down for Ukrainian drones over the North Ossetia region in the North Caucasus, some 900 km (560 miles) east of the front line in Ukraine's partially occupied Zaporizhzhia region.

Russia's Ministry of Defence said that one drone had been destroyed, whereas regional Gov. Sergei Menyailo reported three downed drones over the region. Menyailo said that the target was a military airfield. AP

BRIEFLY



Kate, Princess of Wales

UNITED KINGDOM Princess Kate apologises for missing King's birthday parade

London: Kate, Britain's Princess of Wales who is undergoing preventative chemotherapy for cancer, has written to an army regiment to apologise for missing a military parade on Saturday, adding that she hoped to be back very soon. "I am very sorry that I'm unable (to) take the salute at this year's Colonel's Review," Kate wrote in a letter to the head of the Irish Guards. "I do hope that I am able to represent you all very soon," she wrote. REUTERS

MALAYSIA Govt defends sea nomads' eviction citing security

Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian authorities defended their decision to evict hundreds of sea nomads from their homes off the coast of Sabah state this week, saying it was aimed at boosting security and combating cross-border crime. More than 500 people from the Bajau Laut, a stateless seafaring community saw their homes demolished or burned. REUTERS

PAKISTAN 15 militants held in Pak Punjab

Lahore: As many as 15 terrorists from banned militant outfits have been arrested by police in Punjab province of Pakistan, an official said on Saturday. "15 terrorists belonging to Daesh (ISIS), Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi were arrested. The terrorists wanted to target important installations in Punjab," officials said. PTI

TWO DAYS BEFORE EU POLLS IN DENMARK

Danish PM attacked in Copenhagen, slightly injured but safe: Office

REUTERS
COPENHAGEN, JUNE 8

DENMARK'S PRIME Minister Mette Frederiksen has suffered a light whiplash injury after she was assaulted by a man in central Copenhagen on Friday, her office said in a statement on Saturday. "Apart from that, the Prime Minister is safe and sound, but she is shocked by the incident," it said, adding that Frederiksen had been taken to hospital for a check-up following the incident late Friday. All the Prime Minister's official events on Saturday have been cancelled, her office said. Danish police said on Saturday a 39-year-old man appeared in front of a judge for preliminary questioning, and was sentenced on Saturday to 12 days in custody in relation to an assault on the prime minister. "In light of the fact that the accused has no con-



Denmark Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen. File

nection to Denmark, there is a risk of escape," the judge said. Frederiksen was able to walk away and had no outward signs of harm after the assault, a witness of the incident told Reuters. Copenhagen police said it did not think that the man, who has denied wrongdoing, was politically motivated in his act. The assault comes two days before Danes head to the polls in the European Union election.

Thai ex-PM says ready to face royal insult charges

Bangkok: Former Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said on Saturday he was ready to face charges of insulting the monarchy that mark a setback to a political heavyweight whose allies are currently in government. The complaint, lodged by the royalist military that ousted the government of his sister Yingluck Shinawatra, stems from an inter-

view he gave to foreign media in 2015. Thaksin said he would meet prosecutors on June 18, but he wasn't concerned about the case and was ready to fight it. "It's nothing. The case is baseless," he said. Thaksin, 74, denies wrongdoing and has repeatedly pledged loyalty to the crown, whose criticism is forbidden under Thailand's lese-majeste law. REUTERS



French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron with US President Joe Biden and his wife Jill Biden at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris on Saturday. Reuters

Biden discusses Ukraine, Gaza wars with Macron in Paris meet

JEFF MASON & JOHN IRISH
PARIS, JUNE 8

FRESH FROM commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day, French President Emmanuel Macron welcomed US President Joe Biden in Paris on Saturday for a state visit that included talks about the Middle East, Ukraine and trade. The two countries will work harder to prevent a regional escalation from Israel's war with militant group Hamas in Gaza and focus on calming tensions between Israel and Hezbollah, Macron told reporters at the Elysee presidential palace. Both welcomed the rescue by Israel of four hostages held by Hamas since October. "We

won't stop working until all the hostages come home and a ceasefire is reached," Biden said. The Saturday visit began with a ceremony at the iconic Arc de Triomphe, where the leaders paid their respects at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Biden and Macron share a warm relationship despite past tensions over a submarine deal with Australia. Biden hosted Macron at the White House in 2022. Beyond Ukraine, trade issues between the two sides of the Atlantic loomed large, especially over the US Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden signed into law in August 2022. European officials see it as a protectionist move that siphons off investments from EU companies.

EXPLAINED Macron's subtle jab at Trump

Macron praised Biden for bringing the "clarity and loyalty of a partner that loves and respects the Europeans." It appeared to be a subtle criticism of ex-President Donald Trump, whose "America First" foreign policy has shaken European leaders.

"We really wish to move towards a resynchronisation of our economies... in terms of regulation and in terms of investment levels," Macron said. REUTERS

CANS BRANDED WITH PATRIOTIC MACHISMO BECOME AN ESSENTIAL ANTIDOTE TO STRESSES OF WAR

Energy drinks rejuvenate Ukraine's soldiers — and its economy

JEFFREY GETTLEMAN
KYIV, JUNE 8

ON A sunny morning, deep in the forests of western Ukraine where the war barely reaches, 16,000 cans of a new energy drink, Volia, rolled off the assembly line every hour at the Morshynska beverage factory. Several hundred miles east, driving toward the front line, the sweating coolers at the mini-marts and gas stations are loaded with Volia and an array of other energy drinks: Burn, Monster, Non Stop, Hell, Pit Bull and of course the eye-widening veteran of them all, Red Bull.

By the time one reaches the trenches, where thousands of troops are dug in, trying to survive, the supremacy is complete: Ukrainian soldiers will pass up coffee, Coke, even water in favor of the liquid jolt they need to keep going. "In the morning, when I wake up, I drink an energy drink. When I head out on patrol, I drink an energy drink. Before an attack, I drink an energy drink," said one Ukrainian soldier who identified himself by his call sign, Psycho, according to military protocol. "Let me explain something as a reconnaissance person," Psycho continued. "When you have to walk three, four or seven kilometers. And you're carrying 40 kilo-

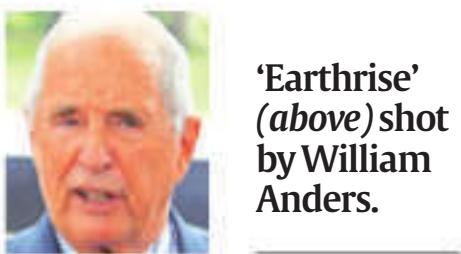


Soldiers near the front line in eastern Ukraine buy energy drinks and soda from a shop. NYT

grams of gear. And you're covered in sweat. And you haven't eaten much or slept in three days. If you don't drink this stuff, where are going to get the energy for that final push?" Ukraine is in the throes of its hardest moment since the early months of Russia's full-scale invasion more than two years ago, and its forces are struggling in face of sustained assaults across the 600-mile front. Depleted and exhausted, frontline troops are hooked on a growing constellation of highly caffeinated, shrewdly marketed energy drinks, some specially made for this war. Sales are surging. Energy

drinks have become one of the few bright spots in the Ukrainian economy. New varieties and crazy flavors keep appearing — cotton candy, cactus, even cannabis — with names like Jungle, Boost and Stalker. You see the cans everywhere. Tucked into ammo vests. Jangling around backpacks with bullets. On the back of tanks. Crushed empties piled in trenches next to dead Russians. Ukrainian companies market these drinks to appeal to frontline troops and the fighting spirit they embody, giving them camouflage labels or patriotic mottos and names such as Volia, which means, loosely — there's no direct

translation — freedom and will. "We wanted a slice of the action," said Marco Tkachuk, the chief executive of IDS Ukraine, the owner of the Morshynska bottling plant and Volia brand. Even with the economy suffering and millions of Ukrainians having fled the country, the sale of energy drinks in Ukraine has surged nearly 50% since the start of the war, according to industry surveys. Individual soldiers, their units and civilian volunteers who bring essentials to the front line are buying truckloads. Some beverage makers like IDS Ukraine provide it for free. And a Ukrainian supply chain has swung into action to move it. NYT



'Earthrise' (above) shot by William Anders.

member of the third group of astronauts. He did not go into space until Dec. 21, 1968, when Apollo 8 lifted off on the first crewed mission to leave Earth orbit and travel 386,000 km) to the moon.

ECONOMY

INVESTOR EXUBERANCE IN RISKY SEGMENTS CONTINUES DESPITE SEBI'S RED FLAGS

Rally in small, mid-cap stocks raises concerns over valuations, bubble

HITESH VYAS
MUMBAI, JUNE 8

THE SHARP rally in stock prices of small and mid-cap companies, compared to the benchmark index, the Sensex, over the last couple of months, have raised concerns around stretched valuations and building up of a bubble in the segment.

This comes in line with Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch's statement in March this year where she clearly spoke about a possible bubble in the small and mid-cap segment, which could potentially hurt retail investors. While her statement led to an immediate correction, stock prices across indices have surged again, and more so in the small and mid-cap segment, indicating that irrational exuberance among investors in risky segments continues despite the regulator's red flags.

So far in the current financial year, small and mid-cap stocks have witnessed a sharp rally, with the BSE Small cap gaining 12.89 per cent and the BSE Mid cap rising 12.18 per cent. Against this, the Sensex has risen by 4 per cent in the period. Market analysts have pointed to this surge as irrational exuberance on account of high liquidity. They have also suggested that investors should move their investments from small and mid-cap segments to large caps.

"We are advising investors to

BSE SMALL CAP, MID CAP VS SENSEX

TABLE 1

Time period	Returns (% change)		
	Sensex	BSE Small cap	BSE Mid cap
Jan 1, 24-Mar 7, 2024	2.6	5	8
Mar 7 -Mar 28 2024	-0.63	-3	-1
April 1 -June 7, 2024	4.13	12.89	12.18

TABLE 2

	Returns (% change)		
	Sensex	BSE PSU	BSE CPSE
June 7, '23-June 7, '24	21.45	94.08	111.67

Source: BSE Website

book profit in mid cap and small caps and to invest in large caps," said C J George, Founder & Managing Director, Geojit Financial Services.

Meenakshi Dawar, Fund Manager – Equity Investments, Nippon India Mutual Fund, said that investors should not sell their small and mid-cap stocks at this point because there is definitely a growth momentum, but one needs to be cautious as valuation at the entry point is reasonably high.

She said if a new investor is getting lured by higher returns made in the last 2-3 years and investing in small and mid-cap segments, then it would be a risky strategy.

"A lot of liquidity is chasing these (small and mid-cap) stocks, due to which they have moved up. When investors have made money in a segment, they tend to put fresh money in the same space. That's normal investor psy-

chology," according to market analyst Ambareesh Baliga.

On March 11, 2024, the Sebi Chairperson had warned of a potential bubble in small and mid-cap space, which upon bursting, can impact retail investors the most. "Some people call it a bubble; some may call it a froth. It may not be appropriate to allow that bubble to keep building because if it keeps building, then when it bursts... by definition bubbles burst, and when they burst, they impact investors adversely, which is not a good thing," Buch said when asked about higher valuations of mid and small-cap stocks.

The BSE small and mid-cap indices which were up 5 per cent and 8 per cent respectively prior (between January 1 and March 7) to the regulator's warning, fell 3 per cent and 1 per cent respectively post (March 7 – March 28) the commentary. In comparison, the Sensex remained stable, de-

clining just 0.63 per cent.

"With a strong catch-up by small and mid-caps in the last couple of months, we still believe the margin of safety in valuations for these segments at current levels has reduced compared to that available in large caps," said Neeraj Chadawar, Head - Fundamental and Quantitative Research, Axis Securities.

With this view, the broader market may see some time correction in certain pockets in the near term, and flows will likely shift to large caps, he said. In March, Buch also flagged price manipulation in the initial public offering (IPO) of small and medium enterprises (SME) and trading in such stocks.

According to Baliga, in the SME segment, which has seen a large number of IPOs in the last few months, there are concerns about compliances. "There is a possibility of more frauds (in the SME segment) coming into light. If you look at their valuations, most of the stocks have become multi-bagger...not because they were too underpriced...," Baliga said. Concerns over valuation of PSU stocks

In the last one year, the BSE PSU and BSE CPSE indices have outperformed the Sensex. While the BSE PSU has risen 94.08 per cent, the BSE CPSE increased by 111.67 per cent, against a gain of 21.45 per cent in the Sensex.

Analysts said that around four to five years back the PSU segment was written off, but it has now become the most

favoured one. They have also raised concerns over higher valuations of these stocks despite low profitability.

Former finance secretary Subhash Chandra Garg said out of the 78 listed PSEs, there are a few companies such as MTNL that have been making big losses, losing turnover and don't have viable and growing businesses, but their share prices have run up high. "How can any such stocks justify a price rise of 8-10 times in the last four years? Nothing can justify such behaviour. Fundamentals and future business prospects don't justify this. It has to be either a high dose of irrational exuberance or there might be some plain manipulation, taking advantage of the low floating stocks. That is one set of concerns," he said.

Market participants said that stock prices of PSUs also soared after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during a speech in the Parliament in August last year, urged investors to invest in PSUs such as Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and LIC, which have been criticised by the Opposition.

"PM Modi also said on the floor of the Parliament that you buy government shares. It was a nudge and traders just took the cue, and the stock price of PSUs went up," HDFC Securities Head of Retail Research Deepak Jasani said. He said currently the PSU prices have gone above fair values and are expected to remain there till there is some change in the demand-supply situation.

CRUDE WATCH

OIL PRICES SLIP

New York: Oil prices edged down on Friday and posted a third straight weekly loss as investors weighed OPEC+ reassurances against the latest US jobs data that lowered expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates soon. **REUTERS**

‘India features in top 3 target markets for London Gatwick Airport’



TWO YEARS ago, London and the United Kingdom's (UK's) second-busiest airport London Gatwick had no flights to India. Today, it has 24 weekly Air India flights to four Indian cities, with a fifth city—Bengaluru—scheduled to be added in August. With Indian carriers—mainly Air India and IndiGo—on a network and fleet expansion spree with a focus on international connectivity, London Gatwick is positioning itself as the airport of choice when it comes to direct flights between the UK and India.

According to London Gatwick Airport's Chief Commercial Officer JONATHAN POLLARD, the airport offers a hard-to-resist value proposition to carriers—50 per cent lower airport costs than the larger but slot-constrained London Heathrow Airport, and additional room for flexibility in airline contracts. In an interaction with SUKALP SHARMA, Pollard talks about India's emergence as a key focus market for London Gatwick and the road ahead. Edited excerpts:

Air India recently announced a Bengaluru-Gatwick service from August 18. Are you in talks with the airline on increasing frequencies on existing routes as well as connecting more Indian airports to London Gatwick?

Definitely. We would love them to operate three times as much as they do now. We currently have 24 frequencies a week across four routes (Kochi, Amritsar, Ahmedabad, and Goa) with Air India. I think a consistent issue across the whole industry, which Campbell Wilson (Air India CEO) also suggested, is shortage of aircraft. There are lots of airlines that would be doing a lot more than what they are doing if they had more aircraft.

We know Air India is very happy with the programme of flights from Gatwick currently. There is a shared belief on both sides that there is much more that can be done and will be done. You might see additional frequencies on some of those routes. You might see bigger aircraft in the coming years. And of course, we would expect more Indian cities to be connected with Gatwick.

What is London Gatwick's view of the Indian market and what are your expectations in terms of traffic to and from India in

the years to come?

The very fact that we are meeting here in Delhi is testament to the size of the market opportunity that we see in India. We look at every market around the world and India absolutely features in our top three target markets. The reason is that we can see a lot of growth opportunities. If you look at the massive aircraft orders by Air India and IndiGo, I think it is hard to look anywhere else in the world.

From our perspective, we know that we are very well placed to serve this developing market. If you went to Gatwick two years ago, we had no capacity going to India. Now, India represents 5 per cent of our long-haul network. It has improved 30 per cent versus last year, and we expect that to grow significantly...I think it is perfectly feasible to see a tripling of our network to India within the next 10 years.

Have you started conversations with IndiGo, given that it will start inducting the wide body Airbus A350 aircraft starting 2027, which will give the airline the range to fly to London?

We have had conversations with IndiGo for many years now. We speak to every prospective carrier that is in a market that is of interest to us. So, we also

spoke to SpiceJet, for example. We will speak to anyone that has the theoretical capability (to operate flights between India and the UK). We are more interested in the market. The airlines that operate the market are still an important consideration, but it is second to the market opportunity and demand potential.

What about UK-based carriers like British Airways and Virgin Atlantic? Do you expect them to launch flights connecting London Gatwick with Indian cities?

Yes. We believe that India would be the kind of market they (UK-based airlines) would be interested in. The market opportunity is huge not just for Indian carriers but for British airlines as well, so it is both ways...Trade between the two countries is growing and there is a huge Indian diaspora living in the UK. So, the demand credentials between the two markets are massive...I think there is every possibility that it (UK airlines operating flights to India from Gatwick) could happen.

What is the cost advantage that Gatwick offers airlines vis-à-vis the larger London Heathrow airport?

Massive advantage. On average, we are 50 per cent cheaper than Heathrow in terms of airport costs—what the airline pays the airport to operate there. At Heathrow, there is a single fixed tariff, so all airlines pay the same. But we have more flexibility and we can put in place specific contracts that are individual to each airline. That means we can offer different incentives to airlines and profile the costs better...You don't get that at Heathrow, and we are 50 per cent cheaper. One way to attract the airlines is to offer them a lower cost, and that is a good lever for us to get airlines interested.

What would you say is Gatwick's USP vis-à-vis other London area airports—Heathrow and Stansted?

Versus Heathrow, I think we are better connected to all of the key destinations in London...We have a better rail connection to those places. A lot of the Heathrow passengers are travelling from the Gatwick catchment. So, where we are actually geographically placed is nearer to where a lot of people want to travel. **FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com**

BRIEFLY

Bajaj Housing Finance files for ₹7,000-cr IPO

New Delhi: Bajaj Housing Finance has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 7,000 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The proposed IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares of up to Rs 4,000 crore and an offer for sale of equity shares worth Rs 3,000 crore by parent Bajaj Finance, according to the DRHP. **PTI**

CCI proposes amendments to general rules

New Delhi: Fair trade regulator Competition Commission of India (CCI) has sought stakeholder comments on the proposed amendments to the CCI (General) Regulations, 2009, following recent changes to the Competition Act. The amendments came from the Competition (Amendment) Act, 2023, which introduced new provisions and updating the existing ones in the Competition Act, 2002. **PTI**

Display assembly of mobiles to attract 10% duty

New Delhi: The CBIC on Friday listed out parts or components, such as touch panel, cover glass, and LED backlight, which constitute the display assembly of a mobile phone and will attract a 10 per cent import duty. **PTI**

Looking forward to doing exciting work in India: Elon Musk

New York: Tech billionaire Elon Musk has said he is looking forward to his companies doing "exciting work" in India, as he congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his election victory. "Congratulations @narendramodi on your victory in the world's largest democratic elections! Looking forward to my companies doing exciting work in India," Musk, 52, said in a post on X on Friday. **PTI**

Consumers expect rise in spending over next one year, says RBI survey

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, JUNE 8

INDIAN CONSUMERS expect a higher rise in spending over the next one year, with an increase in both essential and non-essential items, according to the latest survey of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Consumer confidence for the current period paused on its uptrend as sentiments on all parameters, except spending, recorded some moderations in the latest survey round, the RBI's Consumer Confidence Survey (CCS) showed.



File

The current situation index (CSI) moderated to 97.1 in May 2024 from 98.5 two months ago.

"For the year ahead, consumer confidence remained at

an elevated level in the optimistic terrain though it declined, albeit marginally, due to relatively tempered sentiments on the general economic situation and employment prospects," the survey showed.

The future expectations index (FEI) stood at 124.8 in May 2024 (125.2 in the previous survey round).

CSI and FEI are compiled on the basis of net responses on the economic situation, income, spending, employment and the price level for the current period (as compared with one year ago) and a year ahead, respectively. The survey was conducted dur-

GROWTH OF OVER 200% FROM 2.1 LAKH IN 2022-23: EPFO

Over 6.6 lakh pensioners used facial recognition tech for life certificates

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

MORE THAN 6.6 lakh pensioners made use of the 'Facial Authentication Technology' in 2023-24 to verify their digital life certificates (DLCs) for pension provided under the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), a rise of over 200 per cent from 2.1 lakh in 2022-23, data released by Ministry of Labour and Employment on Saturday showed.

"Since its launch at EPFO, Facial Authentication Technology based DLCs have been submitted by 2.1 lakh pensioners in 2022-23, which rose to 6.6 lakh in 2023-24 which reflects a growth of 200 per cent year-on-year in the use of this technology. It is also noteworthy

that the 6.6 lakh FAT based DLCs in 2023-24 comprise almost 10 per cent of the total DLCs received during the year," the statement said.

Overall, around 60 lakh digital life certificates were received from the pensioners during the financial year 2023-24, it said. EPFO has more than 78 lakh pensioners, who are required to submit a life certificate every year for continuation of the pension being paid to them.

Earlier they had to go to banks to submit physical life certificates. The EPFO introduced digital life certificate (DLC) for its pensioners in 2015 and DLCs based on biometric authentication are accepted from the EPS pensioners on a physical visit to the branch of any bank, post office, Common Service Centre or an EPFO office as the fingerprint iris capture devices are available there.

The Face Authentication Technology (FAT) was developed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) under which face recognition technology is used as proof of life certificate. The authentication is carried out against UIDAI's Aadhaar database using UIDAI's Face Recognition App p. EPFO adopted this technology in July 2022.

The use of facial authentication method is done through two applications — "Aadhaar Face RD" and the "Jeevan Pramaan" in their smartphones. The operator authentication for these applications are carried out through Aadhaar-linked mobile numbers. Once the scan is completed in the app, the DLC submission is confirmed on the mobile screen along with the Jeevan Pramaan ID and Pension Payment Order (PPO) number.

Hatchbacks lose market share in FY24

VIKRAM CHAUDHARY
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

ONCE A darling of the masses, hatchback cars are now falling out of favour. The market share of hatchback cars to overall passenger vehicles (PVs) has dropped from 47.4 per cent in FY18 to just 27.7 per cent in FY24, latest data collated from the industry shows.

In FY18, 1,558,787 hatchbacks were sold in a total market of 3,288,581 PVs. In FY24, this dropped to 1,168,593 hatchbacks in a total market of 4,218,746 PVs.

This implies a sales drop of 25 per cent for hatchbacks from FY18 to FY24, even as the PV market grew 28 per cent during the same period. Automotive analysts said the fall can be attributed to the general rising interest in SUVs, but more specifically due to rising sales, and more model launches of sub-4 metre SUVs, which are marginally more expensive than hatchbacks, especially premium hatchbacks. Although a lot of SUVs had been launched starting 2015-16— including Hyundai Creta— hatchbacks got hit starting 2019-21 when sub-4 metre SUVs

started arriving one after another. The market share of hatchback cars to PVs was a high 47.4 per cent in FY18, 46 per cent in FY19, 46.5 per cent in FY20, and 45.6 per cent in FY21, around the time when there weren't many sub-4 metre SUVs in the market.

In FY22, this ratio dropped sharply to 37.5 per cent, and further to 34.4 per cent in FY23, and just 27.7 per cent in FY24, largely because sub-4 metre SUVs such as Hyundai Venue, Kia Sonet, Toyota Urban Cruiser, Nissan Magnite, and Renault Kiger were launched in quick succession. **FE**

INTENTION FOR ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURING IN AP CLEAR

TDP's smartphone, chip push for AP may pose a new challenge for Gujarat

SOUMYARENDRA BARIK
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

THE TELUGU Desam Party (TDP) – currently the key kingmaker from the new government in the Centre – has given its first indication that it would like a share of new investments in the electronics manufacturing space, in semi-conductors and smartphones, to come to the coastal state of Andhra Pradesh.

The party's general secretary and son of party chief Chandrababu Naidu, Nara Lokesh – who recently won from the Mangalagiri Assembly constituency with a thumping majority – said that while the TDP may not be vying for cabinet berths in the central government with the intensity that has been previously reported, he outlined that increasing investments in Andhra Pradesh under centrally-subsidised schemes like chip and smartphone manufacturing are among the demands they are making to the BJP.

"We have issues like Amravati, Polavaram, backward district funds, Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, bringing various agencies to invest in Andhra Pradesh, performance linked incentives in fab manufacturing, bringing electronics manufacturing, investments in the ports sector because ours is one of the largest coastline states," Lokesh

said during an interview with NDTV.

"TDP never negotiates for posts (in the central government), we only negotiate funds for the state, to bring industries to our state... strong states make a strong nation, and we want to be part of the \$5 trillion economy dream. We believe that Andhra Pradesh alone can be a trillion dollar economy," he added.

The Indian Express had earlier reported that the party, and its tech-savvy leader Naidu, will use the leverage they currently have over the formation of the government at the Centre to lobby for such investments to come to the state, which has been reeling the bifurcation and with Hyderabad – its previous economic centre – no longer its official capital.

With the BJP managing 240 seats in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls – well short of the majority mark of 272 – TDP's 16 MP-elects are crucial for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), along with MPs from parties like Janata Dal (United), Shiv Sena, and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas).

In the last 10 years, when the BJP had a majority in the Lok Sabha on its own, thus relegating the role of its NDA allies, there was a feeling that many of such investments went to the state of Gujarat. Just before the Lok Sabha polls began, three projects in the chip ecosystem, including a

EXPLAINED

TDP's tech manufacturing demands

TDP's GENERAL secretary Nara Lokesh said that while the party may not be vying for cabinet berths in Centre with the intensity that has been previously reported, he outlined that increasing investments in Andhra Pradesh under schemes like chip and smartphone manufacturing are among the demands they are making to the Bharatiya Janata Party.

founndry by the Tata Group and an assembly plant of Micron Technology went to the western state. A number of smartphone manufacturing plants, including Foxconn which assembles iPhones, went to states like Tamil Nadu. Together, these two states represent the bulk of ongoing and upcoming projects in the electronics manufacturing space.

When the erstwhile Foxconn-Vedanta chip plant (which later fell apart) was shifted from Maharashtra to Gujarat, it had given way to a lot of political furor.

With the TDP's rise now as a crucial ally, some of these investments could now be routed to

Andhra Pradesh, a senior BJP leader had earlier told this paper — thus changing the electronics manufacturing map of India significantly.

Apple supplier Foxlink, which makes cables for iPhone chargers, already has a base in the state, potentially allowing for more such suppliers to set up shop in Andhra Pradesh. Xiaomi, too, has a manufacturing base in the state. So do car makers like Kia and Isuzu.

With Hyderabad no longer the official joint capital of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, Naidu's party could capitalise on the opportunity to develop the capital city of Amravati, along with pulling a number of manufacturing projects along the Visakhapatnam Chennai Industrial Corridor.

Naidu's newfound king-maker status could help resolve the financial constraints that have hit the construction of his dream capital of Andhra Pradesh, Amravati for the designs of which he had roped in British architects Foster and Partners and Baahubali director Rajamouli. However, the project has far from taken off, especially after the World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank dropped plans to lend funding for the capital project due to political uncertainty in the state.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com



BRIDGE

Dealer: South Vulnerable: None

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ KJ1096		♠ Q4	
♥ 43		♥ AK97	
♦ 98		♦ AK104	
♣ AQ53		♣ 842	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			INT
pass	3H♥	pass	2S♠
pass	3NT	pass	
pass			pass

West leads the six of clubs, a fourth best lead. What are your thoughts on this?

One thing that is perfectly clear is that you will need the spade suit for tricks. You have to have an entry to dummy to use the spades. The defenders will surely duck the first round of spades so you won't be able to get to dummy in the spade suit. What does that mean?

What it means is that you have to guard the ace of clubs. If you play the queen of clubs and East has the king, a club return will remove the ace of clubs before the spades are set up.

If you use the rule of eleven, you will subtract six (the club led) from eleven, which gives you five. Your dummy has two clubs higher than the six and you have one. There are two higher clubs in the East hand. He can very well have the king of clubs.

You have to play low on the opening lead in order to keep your ace of clubs available for an entry later.

The West hand: S-A7H-J62 D-Q532C-J976
The East hand: S-8532 H-Q1085D-J76C-K10

NOTE: If you play low on the first club, you may still be able to take the club finesse later if you judge it is safe.

Dealer: South Vulnerable: North/South

NORTH		SOUTH	
♠ Q10		♠ K3	
♥ KQ542		♥ AJ9	
♦ QJ8		♦ K6542	
♣ K62		♣ 843	

WEST	NORTH	EAST	SOUTH
			1S♠
pass	2H♥	pass	2NT
pass	3NT	pass	
pass			pass

South plays in 3NT and West makes his normal lead of the four of diamonds. Dummy wins with the queen and leads the queen of spades to your king. What is the correct play and how do you know it is the correct play?

SUNDAY CROSSWORD 2481

QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- Financial considerations (9)
- Happen again (5)
- The type of card to send to a sick friend ? (3,4)
- Go along with (5,2)
- Consumes, devours or masticates ? (7)
- The pope (7)
- Connoisseur of wine (9)
- The same (5)
- A type of sea eagle - "greet" anagram ? (5)
- Reprimand severely (9)
- Religion of the Jews (7)
- Perspicacity (7)
- Google's video-sharing platform (7)
- Cause of affliction (7)
- Dig deep (5)
- Moderate or self-restrained ? (9)

DOWN

- _____ on : encouraged or abetted ? (5)
- Eight-sided figure (7)
- Starts to speak freely (5,2)
- West Indies, e.g. (5)
- Acuity, keenness (9)
- Ruled (7)
- Druggist (7)
- See a _____ : start to feel more optimistic about ? (3,2,4)
- Elated (9)
- Obligatory (9)
- Max Verstappen's team (3,4)
- An action of respect or gratitude to someone (7)
- Coming up (2,5)
- Country in North Africa (7)
- To put it briefly (2,3)
- At that place (5)

down (5)

- The bottom pack of cards is not for naval officers (5-4)
- Cowboy's capital bronco's misbehaving because of this base for maize feed (4,3)
- A little bone is close after surgery (7)
- Expulsion got us in trouble (7)
- He keeps his self-esteem under a large hat (3-4)
- Sounds not going Westwards ? (5)
- Get your paper here! Amphibious creature seizes steamship; a number dead (9)

thing at night ? (5,2)

- Coke sir? Drunk in the mountains! (7)
- Note evidence of leaves (7)
- Stools made out of stuff from Crete? (7)
- Do cattle salute at the river-bend? (5)
- Suspended towards the close - it's the finale (5)

Solutions to 2480

QUICK CLUES Across: 1 Rowling, 5 Hauteur, 9 Constrain, 10 Down, 11 Infanta, 12 Settling, 13 Tormented, 15 Drags, 17 Ethic, 19 Enshrines, 22 Outfit, 25 Ophelia, 26 Metre, 27 Congruent, 28 Comes to, 29 Sedated **Down:** 1 Receipt, 2 Went forth, 3 Intense, 4 Guarantee, 5 Hunts, 6 Updated, 7 Ecoli, 8 Reneges, 14 Discounts, 16 Annulment, 17 Epidemic, 18 Coffers, 20 Rehired, 21 Started, 23 Totem, 24 Lacto **CRYPTIC CLUES Across:** 1 Swansea, 5 Cape Cod, 9 Adressees, 10 Aran, 11 Depicts, 12 Spandee, 13 Money-bags, 15 Perry, 17 Spy on, 19 Tableland, 22 Evictor, 25 Outshot, 26 Pep up, 27 Long beach, 28 Tetrode, 29 Dreaded **Down:** 1 Stardom, 2 Andy Pandey, 3 Sketchy, 4 Assistant, 5 Claws, 6 Peasoup, 7 Cared, 8 Densely, 14 Subjoined, 16 Reachland, 17 Stew-pot, 18 Nota pro, 20 Eatable, 21 Ditched, 23 Input, 24 REELe.

If it's your Birthday

Sunday June 9
You're feeling sensitive. Hopefully friends and family will shower you with affection. If they don't, there's no problem. The key to happiness is that you should follow your deep interests.

Monday June 10
It's a fine moment to plan ahead. You should take professional and business matters seriously if you are to make the most of valuable opportunities.

Tuesday June 11
You could also be facing a burst of the emotional wobbles, so keep your head down and stay out of trouble over the next few weeks.

Wednesday June 12
There's still a lot of indecision and you might have to cope with distractions caused when other people change their minds. The best way forward is to take one careful step at a time.

Thursday June 13
You will be making the most of every golden opportunity which comes your way. Don't take other people's goodwill for granted though.

Friday June 14
It's time to choose your words with care. Say the right thing and you'll keep important people on board, those whose goodwill is essential.

Saturday June 15
This is certainly a sociable period. In fact, if you don't set aside extra time for getting out and enjoying yourself, you'll definitely be missing the fun.

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
Venus is now wafting its way through pleasant regions of your chart. This soft planet calms your passions. That doesn't mean you won't be falling in love, just that you'll be a lot less agitated about it.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
The Moon is rushing headlong through your chart, and the pace of events will speed up. When it finally reaches its destination, it will represent a massive inrush of energy into your emotional life - and your heart. Until then, you may put your feet up and look after yourself.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
You're still not prepared to talk about your most important proposals and plans. You should bear in mind, though, that next week may be very different, so have your story ready. Socially, your confidence is rising and you are prepared to meet new people.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
There's a long-distance dimension to your affairs, and overseas contacts definitely seem to be growing stronger. Either that, or someone who arrives from far away may come knocking at your door. The indications are complex.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
You've made your point, and made it well by all accounts. Now is the time to pursue your romantic dreams, especially if a new relationship is on the cards. But what really means the most to you is companionship, the sense that treasured friends will stick around.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Confrontation is never far away, but there is no reason why you shouldn't have your say and stand up for yourself without arousing a partner's anger. A battle of principles seems likely, yet there is no cause worth risking your personal relationships for.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
From the planetary point of view your week is divided into neat compartments. Get trim and fit, work and do your chores up to Wednesday, and then change tack, devoting your time to love, romance and marital matters.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
These are strange times indeed. You might blame the planets, but you should really take responsibility for unexpected twists of fate. A person, problem or memory you thought had been disposed of for good may soon pop up again without warning, although you might be pleasantly surprised.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)
Sooner or later you need to call a halt to a course of action which is designed to please other people, but may not be right for you. It doesn't make any sense to keep slogging away at something that has lost any meaning or relevance.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)
If you're true to your sign, only you know what needs to be done, how it is to be done and what the outcome must be. You need to trust your instincts, but without causing other people unnecessary irritation. As you know, it's all a matter of striking a careful balance.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
You've done your work, and now you deserve a break. If you can soldier on until the end of the week, you will see that all the trouble was worth it. This is no moment to worry about letting someone down - it is high time they took responsibility for their own affairs.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
The winds of change are blowing through your sign with hurricane force. Yet you can't see where you're being blown to. Just for now you may have to content yourself with taking life a day at a time.

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given quip.

The _____ is he who knows the relative value of things. - William Inge (4,3)

GLVAE

EIZZMN

CMUIS

AFLYYW

Answer: The wise man is he who knows the relative value of things. - William Inge

SOLUTION: GAVEL, MUSIC, MIZZEN, FLYWAY

SUDOKU 5586

Difficulty Level 5s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5585

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

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. GSU/Elect./PRYJ/E-Tender Notice/2024/38 Dt. 04.06.2024

E- Tender Notice

Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer/GSU/N.C.Rly/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invite the following e- Tenders on prescribed form for the following works up to **15.00 hrs. on 28.06.2024** The details of the tenders are as under:

TN: GSU-EL-WC- 48-2024	Cost of work (In ₹): ₹6026581.10
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Name of Work: "Electrical work in connection with- Providing Divyangjan facilities at Main Entry and second entry at Etawah Railway station in Prayagraj division.

Bid Security (in ₹): ₹120500.00. Duration of Completion : 06 Months, **Tender Opening Date: 28.06.2024, 15.00 Hrs. Note: - 1.** The complete information along with tender document of above e-Tender is available on Website **www.ireps.gov.in** up to 15:00 hrs. on the due date of tender opening. **990/24(DG)**

Office of the Executive Engineer RCD, ROAD DIVISION, JAMSHEDPUR, JHARKHAND

e-Procurement Notice

For National Competitive Bidding

e-Tender Reference No. RCD/JAMSHEDPUR/914 Date- 07.06.2024

1.	Name of the work	RECONSTRUCTION OF APPROACH ROAD AND FOUR LANE BRIDGE OVER SWARNREKHA RIVER AT 2ND KM OF BHUIYADIH LITTI CHOWK TO BHILAI PAHARI (NH -43) (LENGTH 3.681 KM)- 2024-25
2.	Estimated Cost of Work (in INR)	Rs 44,69,40,563.45 (Rupees Forty four Crore Sixty nine Lakh Forty Thousand Five Hundred & Sixty Three and Paise Forty Five Only)
3.	Initial Bid Security (Rs In Lacs)	Rs 44.70 Lakh (Rupees Forty Four Lakh Seventy Thousand only)
4.	Initial Bid Security in the shape of	Initial Bid Security - As per SOP issued by Information Technology and e-Governance Department, Govt. of Jharkhand vide Letter No.120, Dt. 03.10.2023
5.	Cost of Bidding documents	Rs 10,000.00 (Rs Ten Thousand) only.
6.	Time of Completion	24 (Twenty Four Months)
7.	Date of Publication of Tender on website	14.06.2024 at 12.30 P.M.
8.	Start date of bidding	14.06.2024 from 12.30 P.M.
9.	Last date & Time for online bidding	05.07.2024 up to 02.00 PM.
10.	Type of Bid	Two envelope mode (Technical and Financial Bid) 05.07.2024
11.	Last date & time for receipt of Bid Security and other documents in Online form	Through e-tendering portal www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in As per SOP issued by Information Technology and e-Governance Department, Govt. of Jharkhand vide Letter No.120, Dt. 03.10.2023
12.	Date & time for opening of Technical Bid	08.07.2024 at 3.00 PM by e-Procurement Cell, Room No. 330A, 3 rd floor, Road Construction Department, Jharkhand Mantralaya , Dhurwa , Ranchi
13.	Name & address of office Inviting tender	Executive Engineer, RCD, Road Division, Jamshedpur, Road No.- 1, CH Area.
14.	Contact no. of Procurement officer	0657-2227724
15.	Helpline number of e-Procurement cell	0651-2401010

Above informations are only indicative. Detail NIT & SBD published on Tender portal shall be final and mandatory. Details can be seen on website <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>

Executive Engineer PR 325553 Road(24-25),D RCD, Road Division, Jamshedpur

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one male Namely **Amit Gupta S/o Narsingh Gupta** R/o 14/24/2 Shiv Kunj gali No.7 old No.84 BLK B Sant Nagar Burari, Delhi has been missing from the his house Delhi. since 04.06.2024. In this regard, a case **FIR/DD No. 54A dt. 05.06.2024 has been registered at P.S. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi.** The description of the missing childrens is as under.

Age: 24 years, **Height:** 5'7", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** thin, **Face:** Oval, **Wearing:** Blue color T-shirt, Gray color pant. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing male then please inform **P.S. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi** at following Tel No./ e-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, providing clue about the person.

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011- 24368639
DP/7012/NW/2024

Sd/-S.H.O. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi
Tel No. 8750878480

UNIDENTIFIED DEAD BODY

General Public is hereby informed that a one male person was found on Fly Over Vikram Batra Fly Over (Road going towards ISBT from Rohini) dated **04.06.2024**. In this regard a **DD No. 59A** dated **04.06.2024** has been registered at **P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi.** The dead body has been preserved for identification at BJRM Hospital Mortuary, New Delhi for 72 hrs. The description of the dead body is given as under **Name:** Unknown, **S/o:** Unknown, **R/o:** Unknown, **Age:** About 50 years, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Height:** 5'7", **Face:** Long, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Yellow Colour Shirt, Blue Colour Pant. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the dead person but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about this dead person please inform undersigned.

SHO P.S. Mahendra Park, Delhi
Ph.: 8750870227, 7428139095

DP/6875/NW/2024

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl Namely **Deepa @ Kangna D/o Bandu** R/o H.No. 222/21 K-1block Sangam Vihar New Delhi, has been missing /kidnapped from her House, since: 02.05.2024. In this regard, a case **FIR No.266/24 dated 03.05.2024, has been registered at P.S. Sangam Vihar, Delhi.** The description of the missing girl is as under.

Age: 16 years, **Height:** 5'4", **Complexion:** Fair, **Built:** strong, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Chocklet colour suit Salwar.Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out her but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing girl then please inform **P.S. Sangam Vihar Delhi** at following Tel No./ e-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, providing clue about the person.

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011- 24368639
DP/5413/SD/2024

Sd/-S.H.O. Sangam Vihar, Delhi
Ph No. 8750870833

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas a complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Javed @Happy S/o Lt. Wazid Ali R/o Double Tanki, Roop Nagar, Loni, Ghaziabad, U.P.** have committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under **FIR. No. 1276/14 U/S 397/394/34 IPC.** has been registered at **P.S. Khajuri Khas Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, **Javed @Happy** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, **Javed @Happy** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Javed @Happy** of under **FIR. No. 1276/14 U/S 397/394/34 IPC.** registered at **P.S. Khajuri Khas Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **09.07.2024**

By Order
Sh. Pankaj Arora ASJ, Karkardooma Courts Delhi

DP/6948/NE/2024-Court matter

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Subham Mishra, S/o: Lt. Sh. Dinesh Mishra, R/o: EL-100, Gali No. 05, 4th Pusta, Sonia Vihar, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 469/2018 & CC No. 8333/2020, U/s 498A/406/34 IPC, P.S.: Sarai Rohilla, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Subham Mishra** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Subham Mishra** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Subham Mishra** accused of **FIR No. 469/2018 & CC No. 8333/2020, U/s 498A/406/34 IPC, P.S.: Sarai Rohilla, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **26.07.2024.**

By Order
Manya Metropolitan Magistrate
Room No. 273, 2nd Floor, Tis Hazari Court, Delhi

DP/7039/N/2024 (Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Bahvyia @ Sajjan @ Yoyo, S/o: Om Prakash, R/o: H. No. TC 810 TC Camp Raghbir Nagar New Delhi,** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 1008/2020, U/s 498A/406/34 IPC, P.S.: Rajouri Garden, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Bahvyia @ Sajjan @ Yoyo** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Bahvyia @ Sajjan @ Yoyo** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Bahvyia @ Sajjan @ Yoyo** accused of **FIR No. 1008/2020, U/s 498A/406/34 IPC, P.S.: Rajouri Garden, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **29.08.2024.**

By Order
Sh. Akansha Gautam Ld. MM (West) Room No. 252 Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/6941/WD/2024 (Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section 82 Cr. P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sakshi D/o Lt. Som Nath R/o A-13B, First Floor, Avantika Enclave, Rohini-85** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **Regd. No. 14560/2017 U/s 138 NI Act, P.S. North Rohini, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Sakshi** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Sakshi** has absconded (or is concealing herself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sakshi** of case **Regd. No. 14560/2017 U/s 138 NI Act, P.S. North Rohini, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint/case on or before **24.07.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Ebbani Aggarwal Metropolitan Magistrate (NW) Room No. 107, 1st Floor Rohini Court, New Delhi

DP/7024/RD/2024(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sonu, S/o Rajender Singh, R/o H. No. D-485, Raghbir Nagar, New Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 1036/06, U/s 326/34 IPC, P.S. Rajouri Garden, New Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Sonu** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Sonu** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Sonu** accused of **FIR No. 1036/06, U/s 326/34 IPC, P.S. Rajouri Garden, New Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **09.07.2024.**

By Order
Sh. Shashank Nandan Bhatt Metropolitan Magistrate-02 (West) Room No. 356, 3rd Floor Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/7051/WD/2024

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person **Nirpal Singh, R/o A-94, 2nd Floor, Swasthya Vihar, Delhi-110092** has committed the offences (or is suspected to have committed) in case **Case Reg. No. 20272/16, U/s 138 NI Act, P.S. North Rohini, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Nirpal Singh** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Nirpal Singh** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Nirpal Singh** accused of **Case Reg. No. 20272/16, U/s 138 NI Act, P.S. North Rohini, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **31.07.2024.**

By Order
Ms. Ebbani Aggarwal Metropolitan Magistrate (N/W) Room No. 107, First Floor Rohini Courts, Delhi

DP/7019/RD/2024

PREVIEW: INDIA VS PAKISTAN

Cricket wears its Sunday best — blue and green

Clash between arch-rivals could be the booster shot the sport needs to capture America’s heart

SANDIP G
JUNE 8

AMERICA CELEBRATES grand sporting occasions. Celebs flock for the Super Bowl week; Hollywood descends on Miami when Lionel Messi turns up; Marlon Brando would wear a false beard and attend baseball games; Ernest Hemingway would sneak into the packed stands to watch his favourite star, Joe DiMaggio. Cricket’s biggest game yet in the US, between arch-rivals India and Pakistan, wouldn’t bring Hollywood or celebs to New York, or capture the country’s imagination. But this Sunday they could get the first glimpse of cricket’s most marketable rivalry with all its fervour and frenzy.

It could acquaint them with the mad rush, the feverish excitement, and the aural commotion of a predominant Indian and Pakistani crowd. A slice of the subcontinent in Long Island. The build-up had begun long ago. Since the moment rumours swirled that New York would host the most sellable game in the sport, this has been projected as the match that could spark the sport’s American revolution.

But as the tournament unfolded, the erratic drop-in pitches and unearthly-priced tickets have stolen some of the attention from the contest per se. As has the USA’s shock defeat of Pakistan, after which the latter’s stocks and odds have dramatically plummeted.

But once the seats begin to fill, the teams arrive at the ground for warm-up, the background would blur.

The 22-yard-strip of doubt and mystery would be the centre of the cricketing universe, for those 34,000 inside the arena and the millions outside.

The pitch and shock-defeat would add further layers of drama and suspense into a match that already brims with several threads of Hollywood scripts.

A narrative arc, for example, is the much-trodden but eternally relevant, one of Pakistan being on the precipice, a nudge away from rolling down the abyss, but then miraculously pulling themselves from the brink to scale the peak. There are at times the mythical Phoenix that rises from the ashes, and at times Sisyphus rolling the giant boulder up and down the slope.

If Pakistan lose this game, they would be practically out of the tournament; whereas India still have wriggle room to reach the super eight. India would begin the favourites, but you cannot bet against Pakistan any time or anywhere, thus taking their fans through a roulette of emotions.

Glaring cracks

There are glaring cracks; the fielding in the USA game was abysmal to judge generously; batting was bereft of explosive power with too many players suited to the 50-overs game than the 20-overs variant; a good Pakistani spinner is now a pixelated memory. That said, their pace firm restores hope.

The quartet of Shaheen Shah Afridi, Mohammed Amir, Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf could trigger anxious minds and frozen feet in batsmen. Their late flicker — more so when they began reversing the 10-over-old ball — was the sole reason the match lasted till the Super Over.

Pakistan bowlers versus Indian batsmen. It’s the eternal plot when these two teams meet, in the best of times and the worst of times. Not that India’s seam cartel is any inferior — they could match the opponents toe-to-toe, and they could leave their stamp on the game, apart from India possessing superior spinners.

But some storylines repeat, or rather remain the same.

It used to be Sunil Gavaskar and Imran Khan; Sachin Tendulkar and Wasim Akram/Waqar Younis/Shoaib Akhtar; Virat Kohli-Rohit Sharma versus Afridi and Shah. It has seldom been about Zaheer Abbas and Bishan Bedi, Kapil Dev and Javed Miandad; or Babar Azam and Jasprit Bumrah, though these



Babar Azam will hope Pakistan find their A game against India. file

A narrative arc, for example, is the much-trodden but eternally relevant, one of Pakistan being on the precipice, a nudge away from rolling down the abyss, but then miraculously pulling themselves from the brink to scale the peak.

have been equally riveting spectacles.

But pregame conversations would be trodden on how Rohit and Co. negotiate Afridi and friends and how the passage could define the game. Afridi’s first spell in Dubai in the 2021 edition was one for the ages and fashioned Pakistan’s first-ever win over India in any World Cup.

The latter have beaten them five times in six meetings, a one-sided rivalry in the statistical sense, but most have been close and tense affairs, like the Kohli heist in Melbourne, or the twin nerve-shredders in the inaugural issue.

But history would mean nothing — and sometimes everything — when they clash. Their encounters have a standalone existence, often immune to the standard sporting barometers like recent form, state of mind, and historic outcomes, as if it has a code of law unto itself. It has produced unseemly heroes, like Venkatesh Prasad and Joginder Sharma, Iqbal Qasim and Tauseef Ahmed. Maybe, the hero this time could be Arshdeep Singh or Azam Khan.

Individual titans

Both sides wield several names that could win a game single-handedly. That’s the other peculiar charm of an India-Pakistan match, a team game suddenly transforms into a clash of individual titans. Cricket’s equivalent of the Avengers. Everyone wants bragging rights. Thus the undulating glamour and the simmering rivalry.

The cricketers of this generation might not nurse grudges as they once did, they chat and banter like friends in their rare exchanges. But beneath them is a fierce sense of competitiveness, an ambition to exceed your skill levels, a motivation to win the game at all costs.

Like the one between the New England Patriots and New York Jets, with geopolitical tension. Even though the captains would pour out the platitude “it’s just another game”, it seldom is the case.

It’s the intoxicating pull of the game, one that might not bring Hollywood to town, but one that would offer America glimpses of cricket’s most marketable rivalry, with all its fervour and frenzy.



Virat Kohli with teammates during a training session in New York ahead of their Group A game against Pakistan. ANI

How Pakistan fell deeply in love with Kohli

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, JUN 8

VIRAT KOHLI is yet to play a single game in Pakistan. The only time he played there was in 2006 with India’s U-19 side. India stopped its cricketing ties with Pakistan after the 2008 Mumbai attacks and Kohli has featured in just a handful of internationals against them — 16 ODIs and 10 T20Is. Despite that, Virat Kohli has a massive fan following in Pakistan.

“The day Virat plays in Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi or in Multan, only then you guys will understand his craze in Pakistan,” former Pakistan captain Azhar Ali tells *The Indian Express*. “You won’t believe but the stadium will be filled with green jerseys, *magar peeche naam Babar ya Shaheen ka nahi, Virat ka hoga aur No 18 ke saath* (but the name on the backs won’t be Babar Azam or Shaheen Shah Afridi, it will be Virat Kohli’s along with his jersey No 18),” laughs Ali.

The ‘deewanapan’ is perhaps best captured by Azhar Ali’s own reaction in the phase when Kohli was out of form. The former Pakistan captain says not a day went by then when he didn’t pray for Kohli’s return to form. “When he was out of form, I prayed so many times for him. *Allah isko aaj run banane do* (Please god let him score). I have prayed for Kohli. I don’t know why but I did consistently for three years,” he laughs. “You will find people, who will criticise Virat’s batting but before criticising him at least try and understand what he has done for over 15 years. There was a dip but he bounced back. I have not seen anyone doing that,” Azhar says.

There have been several occasions during the Pakistan Super League or in Pakistan domestic games where the broadcast has shown fans holding placards with a message for Kohli. In 2019, a motorcyclist in the Pakistani city of Lahore was famously spotted wearing the Pakistan cricket team’s replica shirt for the Cricket World Cup with Kohli’s name on the back.

In the same year when Kohli was going through his lean patch, a fan at a Pakistan-Australia cricket match in Karachi was seen



A Pakistani fan at the National Stadium in Karachi in 2019. @Saj SadiqCricket

holding a placard with a message: “Dear Virat! whether you score a century, or not you’ll always be my hero”.

Former Pakistan captain Rashid Latif compares Virat’s fandom to Bollywood stars Dilip Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan and Shahrukh Khan. “It’s not like that Virat is the first one with such a big fan base in Pakistan,” says Latif. “If you go back, Dilip Kumar had a massive fan following in Pakistan. Sunil Gavaskar became a cult in Pakistan. Young batsmen were told to copy Gavaskarsaab’s technique. Then Amitabh Bachchan’s ‘angry young man’ movies used to get sold out. Then came Kapil Dev, Sachin Tendulkar, Shah Rukh Khan, MS Dhoni. When Dhoni came here his long locks became a trend.

“But Virat’s popularity in Pakistan is on par with Dilipsaab, Mr Bachhan and Shah Rukh. Like in India, you guys loved our bowlers - Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis and Shoaib Akhtar became household names. Here in Pakistan, we adored Gavaskarsaab, Tendulkar, then Dhoni and now Kohli - they are all icons. Yuvraj Singh and Virender Sehwag too have a good fan following in Pakistan. “But all said and done, *Virat ko le kar deewanapan next level hai*.” (The mad-craze over him is another level). Ahead of the Asia Cup, co-hosted by Pakistan and Sri Lanka last year, a sand artist Sachaan Baloch, from



“The day Virat plays in Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi or in Multan, only then you guys will understand his craze in Pakistan. You won’t believe but the stadium will be filled with green jerseys, but the name on the backs won’t be Babar Azam or Shaheen Shah Afridi, it will be Virat Kohli’s along with his jersey No 18.”

AZHAR ALI
FORMER PAKISTAN CAPTAIN

Gawadar in Balochistan province, sketched a portrait of Virat Kohli. The footage of the artist and his work on beach sands went viral on social media.

Youth icon

Azhar Ali says Kohli is famous among the millennials and Gen Z in Pakistan because of the way he has carried himself over the years and his fitness, passion, and aggression. “Virat run kar le aur Pakistan match jeet jaaye ye maine khud suna hai (Virat can score the runs but Pakistan should win, this I have heard myself),” says Ali.

“First and foremost, he has changed Indian cricket. You can debate that Sourav Ganguly and MS Dhoni have also played a role. But when it comes to fitness, there is no one like Virat Kohli. He has led by example. He is a role model to all the youths.

“Now in our part of the world, we have someone who is the most fit athlete. Earlier we used to give examples of athletes from the West. Now Virat has set that bar. The Pakistani youths are fascinated by the sacrifices he has made. You see his interviews where he is talking about how he quit having his favourite food (Chole Bhature) for cricket,” he adds.

The former Pakistan skipper feels it is also the passion and aggression in his game that’s loved in Pakistan. “We admire him for his pas-

sion as well. Everyone knows what he can do with the bat. He is someone who has scored runs against every opponent and in their own backyards as well. He dominated the English bowling attack in 2018, not every Asian batter can do that in English conditions.

“*Duniya kehti thi ki Sachin Tendulkar ka record koi nahi tod sakta* (People used to Sachin’s record will never be broken). This guy has smashed all of Sachin’s records in the ODIs. It’s unbelievable. In an event, I remember Sachin himself said ‘There is a guy sitting in this room who will break my records’.”

Azhar talks about how Virat never gets complacent, another trait that’s respected across the border. “We also seen talented youngsters in Pakistan but they end up becoming lost talents. I don’t want to take names but there are plenty. Then you see Virat, most of the cricketers after receiving compliments from Sachin will get relaxed or become complacent. But not Kohli; that comment drove him to make his own name,” he says.

‘Aap Jaldi form me laute’

When Virat Kohli was struggling for runs, the Pakistani cricketers across the border rallied behind Virat. Current Pakistan captain Babar Azam had tweeted “This too shall pass. Stay strong.” During the 2022 Asia Cup, in a video posted by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), left-arm seamer Shaheen Shah Afridi can be heard saying to Virat “*Hum aapke liye dua kar rahe hai ki aap jaldi form me laute* (I am praying for your form).”

Virat’s unbeaten 82 at the MCG against Pakistan in the 2022 T20 World Cup is best remembered for those two sixes he hit against Haris Rauf. The entire Pakistan media went berserk.

Azhar calls it the best T20 knock of all time. “I admire him as a complete package and what he has done for cricket for the sub-continent. It’s unfortunate that India and Pakistan are not playing bilaterals. You can’t even imagine the fan following he has here. Youngsters look at his lifestyle, they just want to copy Virat. He is a bonafide star. A random kid in Pakistan will tell you his numbers. I guess we’ll never have another Virat Kohli,” Azhar says.

UNKNOWN FACTOR

Rohit on unpredictability of drop-in pitches: Even the curator is confused

EXPRESSNEWSERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 8

THE UNPREDICTABLE nature of the drop-in pitches at the Nassau Country Ground in New York was once again the talking point on the eve of the anticipated India versus Pakistan group game on Sunday. India captain Rohit Sharma, who had retired hurt in the game against Ireland, after getting hit on the shoulder because of uneven bounce, took a potshot and said that ‘even the curator is confused’ because ‘the pitches behave differently on different days’.

Rohit also spoke about how he doesn’t want India to rely on just Virat Kohli and revealed the moment he decided Rishabh Pant would be batting in the top order.

“New York is not our home ground. We have played two matches here but we don’t have much awareness about its nature. It behaves differently on different days, so even the curator is confused,” Rohit said during the pre-match media interaction. “So, you can imagine the kind of thinking we need to put in. We

don’t know on which pitch we are playing (against Pakistan), so whoever plays better cricket will win the match,” he added.

The Indian captain spoke about how he expects Kohli to bounce back after an indifferent first game. “I don’t want to rely on one individual to win us the game. Everyone needs to chip in. He didn’t play the Bangladesh game. He didn’t have a great outing in the first game, but we all know he brings in a wealth of experience.”

With Rohit and Kohli as openers, India used Pant at No.3 in their first game. Pant also did the same role in the warm-up game against Bangladesh and Rohit shared his thoughts about the role of the wicketkeeper-batsman.

“I watched Pant play the first few matches in the IPL and made up my mind. It was about having the right batting position. His counter-attacking skill will be helpful, given we cannot play Yashasvi (Jaiswal). He has got an all-round game. Besides the openers, none of the other batting positions are fixed, unless it is a Super Over. We want to be flexible,” Rohit said.

It will come down to attitude and “body language” in the big-game scenario against



India captain Rohit Sharma arrives for a press conference at Nassau County International Cricket Stadium in New York on Saturday. ANI

New York is not our home ground. We have played two matches here but we don’t have much awareness about its nature. It behaves differently on different days, so even the curator is confused.”

ROHIT SHARMA
ON EVE OF GAME AGAINST PAKISTAN

Pakistan, according to Rohit.

“I am pretty confident. Body language plays a big part for any game. There is no room for complacency. Any team can beat any on a given day. You cannot relax. If you don’t have a good day, you can take some brilliant catches and that can change the complexion of the game,” Rohit said.

Not only is the pitch creating problems for batsmen but the slow outfield has added to the woes, Rohit said. “The outfield is slow. Some shots get a lot of bounce on the field, and some

others do not roll on the field. So running between the wickets is important. We need to play as per conditions,” Rohit said.

In a statement on Thursday, the ICC acknowledged that the pitches have ‘not played consistently’. “... the pitches used so far at the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium have not played as consistently as we would have all wanted. The world-class grounds team have been working hard since the conclusion of yesterday’s game to remedy the situation,” the ICC said.

The highest score in New York is 137/7 posted by Canada against Ireland, a game Canada won by 12 runs. Though India chased down the target of 97 against Ireland, Rohit and Rishabh Pant were struck on the body because of unpredictable bounce.

On Saturday, Netherlands posted 103 for 9 and South Africa lost six wickets and took 18.5 overs to overhaul the target.

However, Rohit also added that the Indian team had enough experience to counter the conditions.

BRIEFLY

World Junior Chess:
Divya surges ahead

Gandhinagar: Capitalising on an optical blunder by Ayan Allahverdiyeva of Azerbaijan, top seed Divya Deshmukh nosed ahead of the field in the World Junior Girls' chess championship here. The Sicilian Najdorf came in handy for the top-rated Indian, who is seeking her maiden world junior title and is by far the favourite with her accomplishments and rating. Divya got what she wanted out of the opening, an open white king and the dynamics that help her calculation skills. Allahverdiyeva got some chances to hold as the endgame approached but her knight was left unattended and Divya did not give a second chance. With 5.5 points in her bag, Divya is now followed by Mariam Mkrtchyan of Armenia, Norman Kseniya of Russia and Normin Abdinova of Azerbaijan who all have five points apiece.

Hamilton fastest in
final practice

Montreal: Lewis Hamilton, seven times a winner at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, used that experience to put his Mercedes top of the timing sheets in final practice on Saturday for the Canadian Formula One Grand Prix. Hamilton, who claimed the first of his 103 grands prix wins in Montreal in 2007, clocked a best lap of one minute 12.549 seconds around the island circuit in a frantic final practice after the opening two sessions were disrupted by rain. Red Bull's Dutch triple world champion Max Verstappen, who put in only four laps during the second session on Friday after smelling smoke in his car, was second best, 0.374 seconds behind the Briton. Hamilton's team mate George Russell was third quickest in what was a promising final practice for Mercedes ahead of qualifying later on Saturday for Sunday's race.

England loses to
Iceland in friendly

London: England was booed by some of its own fans after losing 1-0 to Iceland on Friday in its last friendly before the European Championship, while host nation Germany recovered from a goal down to beat Greece 2-1. Jón Dagur Thorsteinsson left defender John Stones standing as he scored for Iceland in the 16th minute to bring back memories of one of England's lowest points of recent years, its 2-1 elimination by Iceland at Euro 2016. England created few clear-cut chances against Iceland and nearly conceded a second goal when a promising Icelandic counterattack ended with Thorsteinsson slipping as he shot. "We learned a lot and we know the performance wasn't good enough," England manager Gareth Southgate told broadcaster Channel 4.

Ortega signs 1-year
contract extension

Manchester: Manchester City goalkeeper Stefan Ortega has signed a one-year contract extension, saying he feels "motivated and challenged" at the English champion. The 31-year-old German extended his stay to the summer of 2026. Ortega is City's backup goalkeeper, but an injury to Ederson meant he came on against Tottenham Hotspur in a crucial League match when he denied Son Heung-min with a fine save late on, featured in City's final league game and made his 20th appearance of the campaign in the FA Cup final defeat to Manchester United.

PTI/AP

NAMIT KUMAR
JUNE 8

CLAY CAN be the most fickle surface in tennis, especially the kind at the French Open in Paris. The mix of crushed stone and red brick must be kept smooth and dry but also watered and moistened. Conditions, constantly changing due to the unpredictable weather, drastically alter outcomes. Its impracticality feels obvious when a classic slow-burning baseline contest becomes a heavy-hitting power duel when the roof closes due to intermittent rain. The ball can come slow and high under the dry heat, and heavy as the wind rolls in.

Mastery of clay-court tennis, rare as it may be due to its many peculiarities, has always prompted fascination. Rafael Nadal's run of sustained success may have permanently changed perceptions regarding this surface, but on the women's tour, Chris Evert remains above all. Her run of 7 French Open titles – which began half a century ago – is unmatched (she also only lost once before the semifinal in her entire career in Paris).

Steffi Graf came close during her run of dominance, Monica Seles showed bursts of it before tragedy struck, and Justine Henin went on a run at the start of this century.

On Saturday, at the intimately small Court Philippe Chatrier at Roland Garros, Evert handed the trophy to anoint a new great into their league.

Iga Swiatek, the 23-year-old World No. 1 from Poland, defeated Italian 12th seed Jasmine Paolini 6-2, 6-1 to lift a third consecutive French Open title – her fourth in five years. It was her fifth Grand Slam singles title. In open era women's tennis, only Evert and Graf (6) have won more Roland Garros titles than her, and she becomes the first woman since Henin in 2007 to triumph thrice in a row in Paris. She also became the only woman apart from Serena Williams to do the Madrid-Rome-Paris triple – winning all three of the most important clay court events on the calendar in the same year.

Swiatek has earned her place in the esteemed company. Monday kicks off her 107th week as the top-ranked women's player, putting her ninth on the all-time list. While there is room for improvement in some facets of her game, and she may need to prove herself at Majors on all surfaces, little doubt remains that she has set the modern-day standard for excelling on the red dirt.

Sunday's straight-sets scoreline may be harsh on Paolini, a late bloomer making her breakthrough at 28. The Italian has been surging in the rankings this year after win-



This Monday will be Poland's Iga Swiatek's 107th week as World No. 1. Reuters

ning a first Masters 1000 title in Doha and even causing a major upset by downing World No. 3 Elena Rybakina in the quarterfinal in Paris.

She came out bravely and fashioned an early lead with a break of serve, but after Swiatek shed some early nerves, it was one way traffic. The Pole won 11 of the final 12 games, bringing her big return and forehand to the fore and dominating. Paolini was an equal participant in some exchanges, but Swiatek did what she has done to many others, using her brutal shotmaking to not only take control of the rallies but also take out her opponent's legs. The long exchanges were often followed by easy points won by Swiatek's 1-2 shot crunches.

Even as the crowd willed Paolini on in search of a more even contest, and as she pushed herself to enjoy the occasion, the gulf in class was apparent as Swiatek stepped up in the second set to take total control and come away with the win.

"I love this place, I wait every year to come back," she said on court after her near-flawless performance, without a trace of cliché.

All weapons on clay

Daughter of an Olympic rower, the 22-year-old enjoys a natural athleticism that makes her a threat on clay. She has sharp, angled, at times devastating returns on a

surface that reduces the zip on serves. Her spin-laden forehand, inspired by her idol Nadal, does plenty of damage. Her side-to-side lunges allow her to turn defence into attack. But despite the technique and physicality, it's her appetite to fight, an attribute that is rewarded more on this surface than any other, that she can so readily rely on.

Sunday's steamroller was not where Swiatek won this title. Go back a week to her peculiar second round tie against four-time Grand Slam winner Naomi Osaka.

Osaka, plotting a post-pregnancy comeback, outthit and outplayed Swiatek for the entirety of that contest but Swiatek did not lose focus, raising her game at the right moments and escaping with a win after saving match point. She did not lose a single set on her march to the trophy from there.

"I was almost out of this tournament in the second round. I needed to believe this is going to be possible, so it has been a really emotional tournament for sure," she would say after the final.

Perhaps Paolini will take solace in the fact that so many players have been well beaten in this situation. Perhaps if she returns to this stage, she will come with clever tactics and more brave hitting. Perhaps she may even down this champion from her perch. But at present, in Swiatek's dominion of clay, it seems like nobody can.

Against Germany,
India show sparks
but fuse out in
key moments

MIHIR VASAVDA
JUNE 8

CRAIG FULTON expected a strong Germany outfit, resembling something close to their Olympic squad. He got one. But if the India coach hoped his players would raise their game and match the world champions, he didn't get that. Fulton's India, throughout this tour, have shown sparks of brilliance. But in the true schizophrenic nature of this Indian hockey team, they also seem to fuse out during key moments. Saturday wasn't different.

Continuing their irresistible-occasionally-frustrating-sometimes run of form, India were outplayed in Q1 and Q3 but in Q2 and Q4, they took the fight to Germany with high, aggressive pressing. Individual errors and lack of quality in the final third, however, meant they succumbed a 3-2 loss in the FIH Pro League in London.

There were many different things Fulton tried on Saturday compared to the previous weekend, when they beat Germany and lost to Britain the following day. When asked about not using Jarmanpreet Singh in the first half in the mid-match interview, the South African smiled: "Top secret."

What isn't top secret, however, is India's tendency to make mistakes, despite the improvements they've made of late, including the goal-scorers finding their touch. Two such mistakes led to Germany's goals. The first was from Pathak who let a feeble Gonzalo Peillat drag-flick pass from in-between his legs. It was a soft goal to concede, especially given the race between him and Sreejesh for the lone goalkeeping spot in the 16-member team for the Olympics. Pathak recovered and stood his ground rest of the match. What would worry India is the mistakes piling up in the outfield, especially in their own half.

In the 10th minute, a pass aimed for Hardik Singh was intercepted by a German player who launched a speedy counterattack, which was finished in style by Christopher Ruhr.

These two mistakes eventually were the difference. Germany added a third in the 33rd minute, with another Peillat drag-flick, and India cut the deficit with goals from Harmanpreet Singh and Sukhjeet Singh. They had a very good chance to equalise in the final seconds but missed out. Jarmanpreet, who came on only in the second half, had the ball at his stick and had to simply lob it over the German goalkeeper, who had committed himself and was out of position. Instead, he ended up hitting the goalpost.

It was, in a way, a fitting finish, on a day where error-ridden India were punished for their blunders.

Home boy Carlsen triumphs; Wenjun wins women's event



EXPRESS IN NORWAY

AMIT KAMATH
STAVANGER, JUNE 8

MAGNUS CARLSEN won the Norway Chess 2024 tournament late on Friday night after defeating Fabiano Caruana in the Armageddon with white pieces. The duo had played out 52 moves in the Armageddon format before Caruana threw in the towel. Their classical game had meandered into a draw after 25 moves with a three-fold repetition on the board.

Carlsen's victory was confirmed by Praggnanandhaa holding World No 2 Hikaru Nakamura to a draw in the classical

portion. Praggnanandhaa returned in the Armageddon format to take down Nakamura to hand the American his second defeat in the Armageddon format in two days.

After victory over Caruana, Carlsen was made to wait a considerable while for confirmation that he had won the title as Nakamura and the 18-year-old Indian were still tussling over the board. Heading into Friday's Round 10 games, Carlsen was leading the standings with 16 points but both Nakamura and Pragg had a chance to win the title as well. Nakamura was on 14.5 points after Round 9 while Praggnanandhaa was on 13 points. Had Magnus lost in the classical section and Nakamura defeated Pragg in the longer format, he would have claimed victory. On the other hand, had Praggnanandhaa defeated Nakamura in the classical event while results in the Carlsen game had gone the 18-year-old's way, the game would have gone into a tiebreak as well with Pragg and Carlsen competing for the title.

Meanwhile, in the women's section of



Magnus Carlsen beat Fabiano Caruana in the Armageddon with white pieces to seal the title. Norway Chess/Stev Bonhage

Norway Chess, Ju Wenjun claimed the title with 19 points ahead of Anna Muzychuk who was three points behind her in second place.

R Vaishali had dragged legend Pia Cramling into the Armageddon after a long

"I wasn't quite sure what to do today. It's hard to know what to do against Fabi (Caruana) because when he wants to be solid, he's quite hard to beat. Also I wasn't in the mood to take risks. It ended up being really neither here nor there."

MAGNUS CARLSEN
ON HIS MATCH AGAINST CARUANA

game in the classical portion. Humpy Koneru was fifth in the six-player women's event. World champion Ding Liren slumped to another defeat via the Armageddon section after holding Alireza Firouzja to a draw in the classical event.

In his 10 games, Carlsen claimed three wins in the classical format while he had five victories via the Armageddon format.

But he admitted that he was not sure what he needed to do coming into the game against Caruana on Friday.

"I wasn't quite sure what to do today. It's

hard to know what to do against Fabi (Caruana) because when he wants to be solid, he's quite hard to beat. Also I wasn't in the mood to take risks.

"It ended up being really neither here nor there," admitted Carlsen to Chess.com as he waited for the Nakamura vs Praggnanandhaa game to end.

He admitted that when the opportunity appeared on the board to play for a draw against Caruana in the classical event, it was the way Pragg was playing that convinced him to settle for a draw.

"I saw there was a repetition on the board and then I saw the other game looked a little bit drawish to little bit better for Pragg. So (taking the draw) felt like a reasonable thing to do.

"The Armageddon game wasn't great but I got the job done. I felt really good about it at the time. Now is probably the most concerning that I have been the whole game," Carlsen admitted while the Nakamura vs Pragg game played on.

Eventually his concerns turned out to be misplaced as he won the open section.

SA survive scare to
beat Netherlands

New York: David Miller struck a high-quality 59 not out to help South Africa recover from a terrible start and post a four-wicket win over the Netherlands in their T20 World Cup match here on Saturday.

Miller hit a 51-ball 59 to guide SA to their second win in as many matches, while putting on a crucial stand for the fifth wicket with Tristan Stubbs. The Proteas finished at 106 for six in 18.5 overs chasing 104. South Africa were reduced to 12/4 inside the powerplay but they recovered strongly, riding on a 65-run stand between Miller and Stubbs. Earlier, pacer Ottneil Baartman returned a four-wicket haul as SA restricted the Netherlands to 103 for 9.

BRIEF SCORES: Netherlands 103-9 in 20 overs (S Engelbrecht 40; O Baartman 4/11) lost to South Africa: 106-6 in 18.5 overs (T Stubbs 33, D Miller 59 *) by 4 wickets **PTI**



Rahmanullah Gurbaz led the way for Afghanistan with a 56-ball 80. Reuters

spinners anymore. In Fazalhaq Farooqi, they have that new-ball left-arm pace weapon that teams crave for in T20 cricket. After a match-winning 5/9 against Uganda, he zoned in straight away against NZ. First ball of the run-chase, a terrific inswinging full delivery sent Finn Allen's stumps into disarray. Devon Conway's wicket followed in the third over, and Daryl Mitchell in the fifth over. Farooqi broke

the NZ chase before it ever got going. Fittingly he picked up the last wicket too.

Then, of course, there was Rashid Khan. After a not-so-great IPL by his standards, he showed up in the middle overs at his very best, picking up 4/17, including the key wicket of Kane Williamson, who guided a ball straight to the lone slip.

For their part, New Zealand looked woefully short of zeal. The first half of their fielding effort was littered with mistakes and while batting too, they appeared rusty. Ian Smith, the voice that is most associated with New Zealand cricket now, repeatedly pointed out that NZ have come into the tournament undercooked, with no international cricket and even in the IPL, most of their players not having the most consistent runs.

One of those rusty players on the day was the otherwise dependable Devon Conway. With the gloves, Conway missed a fairly regular stumping, because he was about half a second late to react to Mitch Santner's arm-ball, when Gurbaz was on 12 off 14. Then with Gurbaz on 19, Conway failed to collect a throw with Gurbaz stranded after a mixup. There were other mishaps on the field too, very unlike what we have come to expect

from the Black Caps.

"Our fielding didn't help our cause without a doubt," Williamson said after the match. "That would be the most frustrating part for me. It is something we pride ourselves on, so that was very disappointing but that performance from us married up to an outstanding performance from Afghanistan meant that it wasn't good enough. And they showed their skill today and we were outplayed."

With two big wins in the bag at a Net Run Rate of 5.225, and a match to come against Papua New Guinea, it would be a massive surprise if Afghanistan don't progress from this group.

"Now we need to beat the teams with our own skills rather than think about the opposition much and that's the only thing I have been telling the guys. It's more about how good you are, how good you're going to play and what type of energy you are coming into the ground with," Rashid said.

That, more than anything, signifies the real change in narrative around Afghanistan. It's about how good they can be on their day. And the other teams at the World Cup will do well to take note.

Rashid's Afghanistan beat NZ to pull off 'one of their greatest T20 wins'

VINAYAKK MOHANARANGAN
JUNE 8

AT THIS point, it should not come as a surprise when the Afghanistan cricket team pull off a win at the biggest stages against the traditional powerhouses. On Saturday, they didn't just beat New Zealand at Providence Stadium, Guyana. They outplayed the Kiwis, the masters of showing up in good form at these ICC events.

Kane Williamson and Co. would have known before the match that this wasn't going to be easy even if they hit the ground running close to their top level. Turned out, they were nowhere near that. And Afghanistan pounced. They won by a whopping 84 runs to make it two wins out of two and put one foot in the Super 8.

These are no longer upsets, these are moments of vindication for a side that has constantly punched above their collective weight.

But at the T20 World Cup, these wins have not been that frequent. There was that day at the 2016 edition, when they defeated eventual champions West Indies, but it came when the result didn't matter for each side's progress in

Give

POINT OF VIEW, PAGE 2
'Mainstream cinema in India is just a package'
Resul Pookutty



Udbhav Seth

FOR MUSKAN Nazz, it was a journey to freedom. What she had told her parents was, of course, something that didn't evoke suspicion — that she was going to Delhi to prepare for the IAS examination — but her family in Bihar slowly found out she wasn't going to return. A friend supported her for a while, after which her father, who used to beat her since she was six “for behaving like a girl”, grudgingly started sending her Rs 7,000 monthly, most of which went into rent. She would spend her time meeting new people — often queer and transgender — desperate to find out who she was.

Today, Muskan, 31, is settled in the big city. She's a senior analyst at a healthcare company in Gurugram. She often faces discrimination from colleagues and managers who don't understand her gender transition, and has to threaten them with the company's HR policies. Though her father asks her to undergo testosterone treatments and “go back to being the son”, Muskan is glad she is finally on her way to reclaiming her identity.

For Muskan, that reclamation means a gender-affirmation surgery. For others, it's the ability to vote for the first time as a transgender person. For yet others, it's the simple experience of walking into a public washroom without ugly glares from occupants. It was a journey partly made possible by the Supreme Court judgment of 2014 in the *National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) vs Union of India* case that ruled that transgender people — 4.8 lakh as per the 2011 Census — deserve the same rights as everyone else in the country: to education, employment, healthcare and movement around the country.

While the judgment helped transgender people stake their claim on public spaces and equal opportunities, the Central government's law and rules of 2019-2020, which mandated proof of surgery/hormone treatment before issuing a gender-change certificate, made the journey tougher. The rules omitted any mention of reservations in the public sector and gave less punishment for sexual abuse against trans women vis-a-vis cisgender women.

Yet, 10 years after the historic verdict, the needle on trans rights has moved. Trans activists such as Akkai Padmashali in Karnataka, Vyjayanti Vasanti Mogli in Telangana, Santa Khurai in Manipur, Amarjeet Shergill in Jharkhand, Sanjana Singh in Madhya Pradesh, Grace Banu in Tamil Nadu and Anindya Hazra in West Bengal have mobilised their communities to work with lawyers and state governments to improve access and visibility of trans people in public. In recent elections, many trans people also voted for the first time with their government documents reading not 'male' or 'female' but 'third gender'.

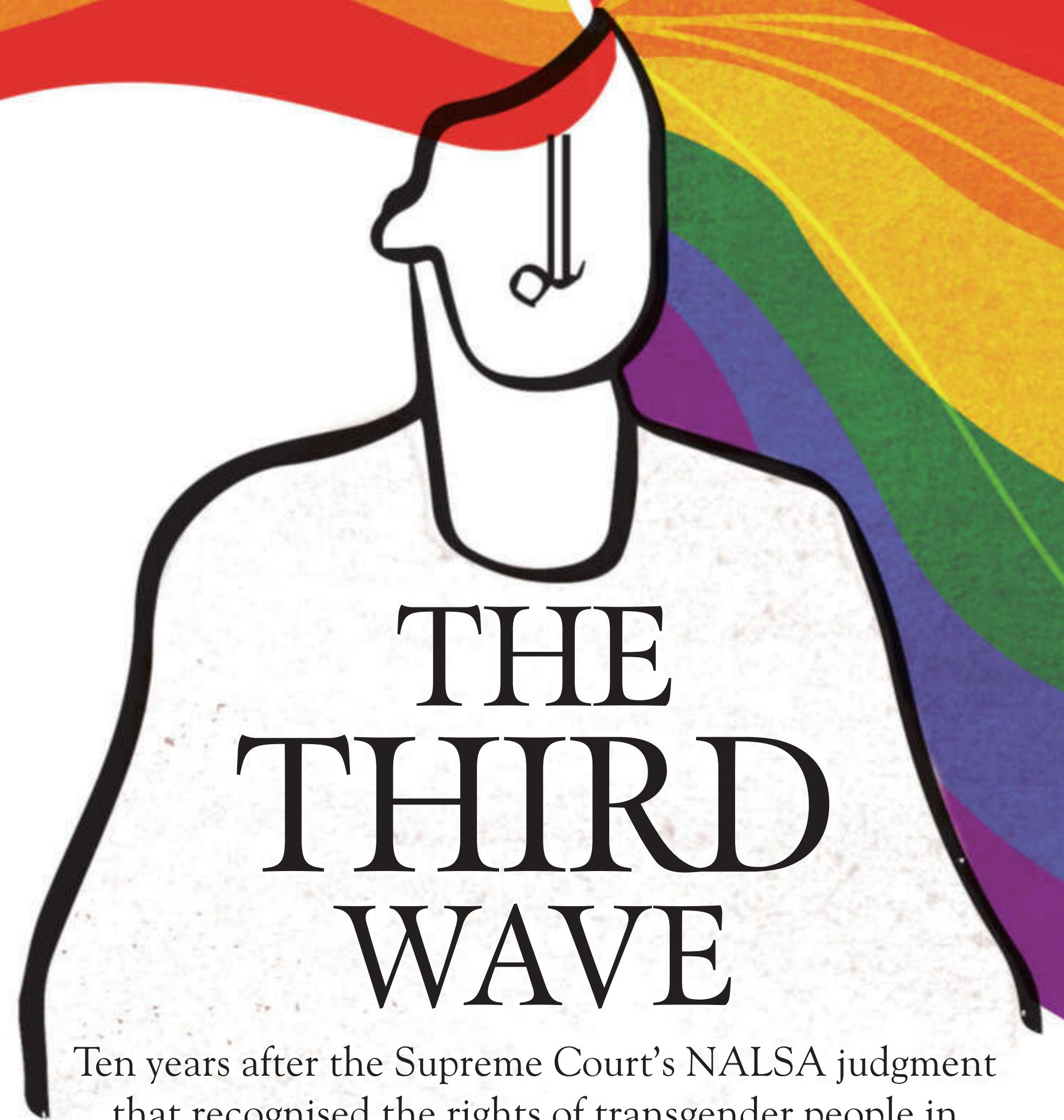
Voting for Change

Take Maya Nayak, 27, from Karnataka's Yadgiri district. She remembers a time of poverty, the uncle who raped her when she was in third grade, her father who beat her for “being girlish”, and also her mother. She'd be forced to go to the market to sell fruits and bring back money so her father could buy alcohol. It was on one such trip that she was approached by civil society members who asked her if she wants to come with them and work for the community. She decided to do it.

That was the beginning of her financial independence. The organisation paid her Rs 1,700 monthly, and she eventually went for mental health counselling which paved the way for her gender-affirmation surgery.

In last year's state elections, after changing her government documents to 'third gender', she voted as a legally recognised trans woman for the first time, and did the same for this year's national elections. She was even chosen by the Election Commission as a voter awareness ambassador. “I would go on stage and tell people not to vote for those who give us free alcohol, money or clothes. I wanted politicians to know that we, the trans people, are here and will vote,” she says, adding how she formed a WhatsApp group for everyone to send in a photo of their inked fingers. She proudly says that of the 2,000 trans people in her district, 97 per cent showed up at the polling booth. “Change is slow, but important... I was born a man, and then became a woman. I always knew I wasn't cis gender. I was very happy when my documents reflected that. After my counselling and surgery, I felt I had died and come back to life.”

However, for most trans people in India — who have low access to literacy and are forced to resort to sex work/begging in the absence of employment opportunities — safe and afford-



THE THIRD WAVE

Ten years after the Supreme Court's NALSA judgment that recognised the rights of transgender people in India, the community tells us what has changed in their lives – and what hasn't

able healthcare remains out of reach. Affordable testing centres for HIV, a common ailment in the community, are rare, as are dedicated clinics for trans people. Walking into a government hospital where staff isn't sensitive about trans rights can be humiliating.

Veronica Ratna, 24, a forex and binary trader from Faridabad, can testify, having been to the new trans OPD at Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia hospital many times since its feted opening in September. Many patients have criticised it for having absent, uninformed and often junior doctors; poor management and equipment; and a short duration of just two hours every Friday afternoon. Besides, in government hospitals, breast implants are not paid for, even if surgery is, making the procedure prohibitively expensive at about Rs 2 lakh.

“People in the psychiatry department behave badly with us. They act like they're doing us a favour,” says Ratna, who is currently undergoing mandatory counselling at the

hospital before her surgery. “I may be able to afford surgery elsewhere, but what about other trans people? Ninety per cent are economically backward and can't afford the implant... 19-20 year-olds are wandering helplessly in the hospital premises because the departments are scattered. They should be guided.”

Ratna is outspoken and assertive, refusing to put up with bullying even as a teenager. Having grown up with a high-pitched voice, mostly female friends and “dolls instead of balls”, she decided to work for her community after a queer friend in school was cornered in a bathroom, before being urinated and masturbated on. “This was when queerness was still illegal. I realised I must do social work, I must help people,” she says.

This sense of responsibility to the community has united many trans people across the country. Rakshita Mallikarjuna, 33, from Bengaluru, left a career in the private sector because of the allegedly rampant discrimination and now works to improve healthcare facilities and police interactions for trans people. She has helped constitute a committee of medical experts and doctors to raise awareness among the community and works regularly with police departments to ensure trans people filing cases are not harassed.

Mallikarjuna talks of an incident from a



THE WAY IT FEELS

(Clockwise from top) Muskan Nazz works as a healthcare analyst in Gurugram; Maya Nayak was selected by the EC as a voter awareness ambassador; Santa Khurai is a Manipuri activist

decade ago, when she was raped by local thugs in the middle of the night. She had run up to the police station, wrapping a banner around her, but changed her mind, fearing that the officers might arrest her or file a case, a harassment that trans people in her area often faced. She says she turned, ran back home and faced her mother at the door, who started beating her, suspecting her of sex work.

“It takes years to change mindsets. Basic sensitisation of government (officials) has to be done... There should also be transparency in the private and public sector. Corporates are only concerned with slogans of diversity and inclusion but don't focus on the equality that entails,” she says, recalling her own experience at tech companies. “My manager put a barricade between me and other employees/clients. When I raised my voice, she'd say, 'This is not a human rights organisation, this is a corporate.' I'd respond, 'We are

not slaves.' If you cross a line, you are targeted. The HR department doesn't help, they ask you to resolve the issue within the team. Trans people are leaving jobs because of harassment,” she says.

In the public sector, Karnataka remains the only state to institute a one per cent horizontal reservation in civil service employments for trans people. Madhu, 35, a trans woman from Karnataka's Shimoga district, is one such beneficiary, first working as a district coordinator, then as a Group D officer in a taluk court. Now she's planning to move to Bengaluru, expecting a job at the High Court. “I was told to dress the way I wanted and be myself. The officials (have been) very encouraging and told the staff to treat me as an equal,” she says.

Growing up, Madhu did face taunts about her femininity. She did manual labour to become more “manly” and was even forced to cut her hair. However, she later realised that

her experience of gender is not unique — there were others like her. Six years ago, she adopted a boy, now 12-years-old, who is HIV-positive.

Small cities, big fight

Amarjeet Shergill, 27, a trans woman from Jamshedpur, points out that Jharkhand, like several states and UTs such as Delhi, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Tripura, Assam and Mizoram, doesn't have a functioning trans welfare board.

“In a small city, there's no support. Everyone struggles. *Gurus* (community leaders of trans shelter homes) don't support you much,” she says.

While southern states such as Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have fared well in trans-friendly policies, northeastern states have been ignored in mainland queer activism.

Santa Khurai, a trans activist from Manipur, said in an earlier interview to this paper, “(Mainland) people hardly know the history of Manipur... When I talk about the (Meitei-Kuki) conflict and how it has affected trans people, (mainland) people talk about chosen families. Even the idea of a chosen/immediate family is understood differently here... There's less visibility of northeastern trans people in the national movement.”

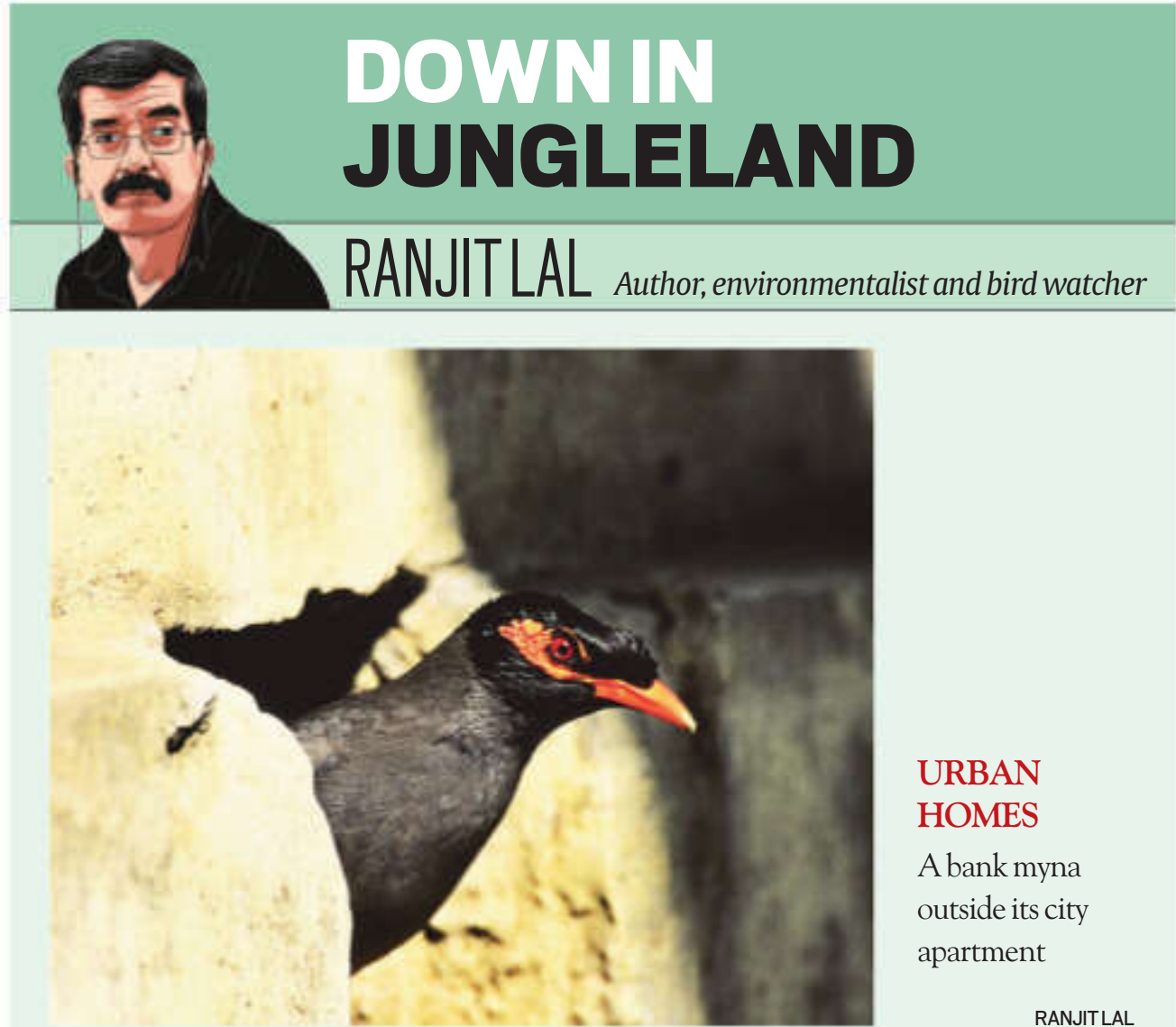
With no credible government data, invisibilisation of trans men in activist circles, and ignorance about gender and sexuality even among the educated populace, transgender people — especially the underprivileged — have a long fight for recognition ahead of them.

While there are legal milestones, senior advocate Jayna Kothari says that the 2019 law remains problematic.

Muskan, the analyst in Gurugram, says that when she speaks out, she thinks of the young ones at her workplace who are grateful that she's around, because she's the only openly transgender person in an organisation of more than 2,000 people. She thinks of a trans teenager who recently attempted suicide, living alone in Delhi without any support from his family. She knows he's not the only one because she was once like him.

“If I go back to Bihar, I'll be killed or given testosterone treatment. Politicians only mention men and women in their speeches. (For trans people), they may mention gods who change their gender. But we pick up the Constitution of India,” she says, invoking Article 15 that guarantees protection from discrimination on grounds of sex or gender. She adds, “When I came to this city, I was confused and had been suppressed for a long time. Now, I speak out.”

With inputs from Aditi Nadig



Big City Birds

Why do some some birds prosper in cities?

MANY SENSITIVE birding souls believe birders should not watch birds too keenly, lest they traumatised them. To some extent, they have a point — would you like to be stared at through binoculars by a bunch of shabbily dressed people who call you all kinds of names and sinisterly tick your name off in a notebook?

Some birds, however, have taken matters into their own hands and decided that bright city life is what they want. After all, people moved from the country into the city to better their lot, so why not them? And the birds that have done this, have prospered — leaving their country bumpkin cousins far behind.

Sparrows followed us from the grain-fields to the godowns, markets and our homes because we spilt grain everywhere en route. They moved in with us (rent-free) in our verandas and above our ceiling fans, bringing up generations of babies. Of course, all this slowed down and virtually stopped when we began

Blue rock doves hailed from homes made on cliff ledges but soon found that cities were great places to live in

hermetically sealing up our homes and using pesticides which killed off the insects their babies depended on, and other reasons. While it lasted, they enjoyed city life.

Then there are those infernal nuisances — the blue rock doves. Originally, they hailed from homes made on rocky cliff ledges (they were and are hopeless at house-building) but soon found that cities, with their buildings, houses and air-conditioning ducts, made wonderful places to live and breed like runaway nuclear reactors. Even better, city folk seemed to welcome them and thousands of generous souls daily scattered heaps of golden wheat and corn at their feet. As a result, their numbers shot up and now they're trying to push out other city birds such as mynas and sparrows. Worse, they are absolutely not potty-trained. Even if trapped and set free miles away from their cities, they will return equipped with a homing instinct that would be the envy of any GPS. There are so many of

them that their BO has begun causing lung problems in many of us.

Crows have shared our cities with us for aeons. Mischief and general *dadagiri* are their forte but they are more efficient at garbage disposal than any city municipality. Clever and canny, they may even form personal bonds with us — I met a gentleman who served them breakfast every morning and called them down from the trees one by one, by name, like a class teacher taking attendance.

Black kites wheel over the city skies, looking out for road kill and meat markets, circling easily on the thermals generated by heat islands in the city. They'll think nothing of diving down in front of your car to pick up a dead rat from the road, and again, many have formed bonds with us. Youths fling up pieces of meat to watch them dive and snap them up in mid-air.

Indian mynas behave as though they were always born and brought up in cities, and they prefer to strut around like landlords in gardens, parks and marketplaces. They've been taken abroad too for pest control purposes — to New Zealand, Australia and several exotic islands in the Pacific where they have outshone the locals and are now being discriminated against as though

they were illegal immigrants!

Even mynas that still like the country life, will often roost in cities. In Rome, they say huge flocks of rosy starlings spend the day in the surrounding fields and then return to the capital at dusk to roost because it is warmer and safer.

Seagulls, too, have taken to coastal and inland cities. In many coastal towns in the UK, they have become menaces, stealing chips from children and waylaying grannies. And in New York City, the sleek, fierce Peregrine falcon (once in danger of being extinct), is happily nesting on penthouse ledges, mobile masts and other high perches (of which there is no shortage) and dining off the flocks of blue rock doves that have also made the city their home. NYC is said to have the highest density of Peregrine falcons anywhere in the world and they are doing far better than their relatives in the countryside. Rest assured, no Peregrine is about to be nostalgically sighing *Take me home, country roads!*

‘Most Indian awards aren’t credible. So, Western validation is important’

Oscar-winner Resul Pookutty on the significance of India’s big win at Cannes, the need to support indie movies, the importance of film schools, and his upcoming projects

Alaka Sahani

A DAY after Payal Kapadia’s *All We Imagine As Light* won the Grand Prix at the 77th Cannes Film Festival, Oscar-winner Resul Pookutty’s social media post, questioning if “the Indian Film Industry has anything to do with this win”, went viral. Pointing out that the mainstream industry looks at many graduates from his alma mater, the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune, as “outcasts”, the sound designer also spoke about the lack of government support.

During a free-wheeling conversation with *The Indian Express*, the Padma Shri recipient breaks down what the big India moment at Cannes this year signifies, the struggle of independent filmmakers and the need to create a conducive atmosphere at FTII to facilitate creative interactions. Excerpts:

What made you say that the Indian film industry has nothing to do with Payal Kapadia’s success at Cannes?

It is great that Indian cinema and FTII were in focus at the recent edition of Cannes. If you take the work of Santosh Sivan, AR Rahman or mine, they came into global limelight because of Western validation. However, our work is also nurtured by the film industry. I came out of FTII in 1995 with an idea of restarting the use of live sound in India. I can say this with conviction that Sanjay Leela Bhansali invested in me and the sound for *Black* (2005). Before people got to know me in 2009 (after the Oscar win for Danny Boyle’s *Slumdog Millionaire*), for 14 years, there was an industry willing to listen to me. Ditto for Rahman and Sivan and many others. That was not the case with Payal Kapadia.

Had Payal gone to a studio or streamer today with a script like *All We Imagine As Light*, they would not have even looked at it. Had she tried to meet a mainstream actor, the managers wouldn’t have even let them meet. Today, talent agencies are controlling everything and they are interested in making money. That’s why I said that the Indian film industry has nothing to do with her success.

The role that Anasuya Sengupta plays in *The Shameless* (she received Best Actress award in Un Certain Regard), no mainstream Indian actor would have come forward to do it. These two achievements are independent of Indian cinema.

Why do you think you could get support but Payal wouldn’t?

Nearly 95 per cent of Indian technicians are from FTII and the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, Kolkata (SRFTI). We need technicians; without them the industry can’t move forward. Direction graduates are not given the same treatment.

You become a sought-after technician because you have a good storyteller within you. That’s something a good director or producer notices. In the case of directors (from FTII) trying to break in, they are always looked at as if they don’t understand mainstream cinema. That’s why I said directors coming out of FTII are seen as ‘outcasts’. What’s mainstream cinema in India? It is a package. They always want the same faces, stories, and song-and-dance sequences. We now need writers and directors with original vision.



(Clockwise from top) Resul Pookutty at his studio in Andheri, Mumbai; stills from *The Goat Life*; *Slumdog Millionaire*; *Black*

Some filmmakers like Anurag Kashyap and Ram Gopal Varma have questioned the need for a film school.

Steve Jobs is a college dropout. That does not mean that everyone should be a dropout. Kashyap says all those DVDs that he watched are his education. We watched three movies a day. We had some good teachers but what FTII gave us is the atmosphere. So many artists such as Ritwick Ghatak and Krzysztof Zanussi came there and left their energy. Not just film personalities but also visiting musicians, sculptors and painters. That atmosphere should be preserved. Every dispensation looked at FTII as anti-establishment. The

Malayalam industry is driven by independent minds. Otherwise, a film like Manjummel Boys won’t be made. We worked on The Goat Life for six years. Its producer, actors backed director Blessy’s vision

reason: we raise our voices.

You’ve demanded that the charges against Payal and other students for their protests at FTII be dropped.

I felt that if you are proud of the student (Kapadia), then charges against her do not stand anymore. Gajendra Chauhan is no longer the FTII chairman. If you read the charges against the students, your jaw will drop. They are accused of rioting, unlawful assembly and criminal intimidation. I don’t know if it’s appropriate for an educational institution to press charges against its students. Some decisions can be divisive. Recently, I came to know that the institute won’t approve the students’ association. Ever since FTII was formed, there has been a students body. However, the students going on protests over every issue is not advisable either. The present chairman of FTII, actor R Madhavan, is trying to create an atmosphere conducive for students but there are issues to sort out. (Former FTII chairman) Shekhar Kapur told me most of his time was spent resolving disputes instead of having creative interactions with students. So, we need to create a conducive atmosphere on the campus and trust has to be established.

After Payal’s Cannes win, many criticised the “need for Western validation”. What are your thoughts?

When the Academy saw unorthodox work done by us in *Slumdog Millionaire*, they

showed their appreciation for AR Rahman and me. Ben Burtt (*Wall-E*, 2008), who was a fellow Oscar nominee in the Best Sound Mixing Category, told me that he was rooting for us. In the West, the artist community expresses selfless love. That’s lacking in India. Also, most awards in India are not considered credible. That’s why these validations are important.

Are you hopeful about things shifting after India’s show at Cannes?

I don’t think Indian cinema is going to change. However, more voices like Payal will come out and they will make movies from their heart.

You directed the Malayalam-language film Otta last year. What are you planning next?

I went to FTII because I wanted to be a director. I became a good sound person because I was a narrator. It is after working with Danny (Boyle) and, more so, John Madden (*The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, 2011), that I understood how to collaborate with an actor to realise a director’s vision. After that experience, I gathered the courage to direct a movie. I have a subject in mind that is contentious. So, we will have to wait. However, this year I want to make another movie — a story of unrequited love — which is set in Mussoorie, Delhi and Mumbai. Next year, I wish to start a school of sound design in Dubai and also in Mumbai.

India at Venice

MF Husain to Manu Parekh, India shines at the Venice Biennale despite not having a national pavilion

Vandana Kalra

INDIA DOES not have a national pavilion at the ongoing edition of the Venice Biennale, but there is a substantial presence of Indian art and artists at the prestigious event helmed by its first Latin American curator Adriano Pedrosa. The representation extends from the central pavilion at Giardini and Arsenal, to national pavilions managed by respective countries, collateral exhibitions and independent exhibitions in the canal city coinciding with the biennale. Here is what is on view:

The central showcase

Meant to encourage inclusivity, Pedrosa’s central exhibition themed around ‘Foreigners Everywhere’ promotes diversity and plurality. As part of the showcase he has works of seven Indian modernists. Representing the late SH Raza is the 1986 acrylic *Offrande*, painted in geometric patterns that defined his oeuvre in the latter years. Also part of the exhibition is his fellow Progressive Artists’ Group member FN Souza’s 1956 untitled canvas with male figures, from the Jane and Kito de Boer Collection. Ram Kumar’s 1953 canvas belongs to the period before he delved into abstraction. Titled *Women*, it depicts four women comforting each other. If Jamini Roy is being represented with a depiction of Lord

Krishna, B Prabha is debuting at the biennale with the canvas *Waiting* that has a partially covered profile of a woman giving an impression of seclusion. Also making his debut at the biennale is Bhupen Khakhar’s *Fishermen in Goa* (1985) that delves into homosexuality.

Setting the record for highest price achieved by an Indian artist last year, Amrita Sher-Gil is being represented with *Head of a Girl*. Painted in her late style, the portrait of a young girl has her forehead covered with fringes, coming right above her almond-shaped eyes.

Also on invitation by Pedrosa, textile artist Monika Correa and Aravani Art Project — a trans-women and cis-women led art collective — make their first appearance at the biennale. Correa’s *No Moon Tonight* (1974) with vertical weaves draws from nature to present an interplay of light and dark. Aravani Art Project’s monumental mural in bright colours, featuring trans bodies, marks the 10th anniversary of the Supreme Court verdict that gave legal recognition to the transgender community.

Husain as an immersive

One of the first artists from India to have participated at the Venice Biennale in 1955, MF Husain has an exhibition and an immersive dedicated to him in Venice. Organised by the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art and drawing from its collection, the immersive titled



ROOM WITH A VIEW

(Clockwise from top left) The Aravani Art Project make their first appearance at the biennale; an immersive dedicated to MF Husain; Madhvi Parekh and Karishma Swali in Venice

‘The Rooted Nomad’, designed by Visioli Immersive Emotions, refers to nearly 160 works by Husain. The exhibition that leads to it, meanwhile, includes Husain’s photographs, poems, letters, toys and iconic paintings such as *Yatra* (1955), *The Pull* (1952), *Blue Ganges* (1966) and *Karbala* (1990).

Coming together of arts

Presented as a collateral, ‘Cosmic Garden’ has paintings and sculptures by artist-couple Madhvi Parekh and Manu Parekh juxtaposed with hand embroidered renditions of their works created by the Chanakya School of Craft and its creative director Karishma Swali. Meant to dismantle hierarchies between arts and pay tribute to feminine power, the theme explores myths, crafts and Vedic philosophy. Known to blend the modern and the traditional, while Madhvi’s



works are influenced by folk traditions and her growing up years in Gujarat, Manu is known for his powerful landscapes and abstracts that incorporate Indian cultural traditions with aspects of Western modernism and abstract expressionism. “We tend to undermine craft and mediums such as embroidery in India — by bringing these on the world stage, this is also an assertion on how all arts are interlinked,” notes Manu.

Also on view

Bringing together speech and sculpture, Shilpa Gupta’s *Listening Air* (2019-2022) comprises suspended microphones-turned-speakers that orbit in the exhibition space, broadcasting voices of dissent that have been suppressed through history and geographies. The work is now showing as part of the collateral event titled ‘From Ukraine: Dare to

Dream’ at the Palazzo Contarini Polignac.

Helsinki-based Vidha Saumya’s works are showing at the Finland Pavilion as part of the showcase ‘The pleasures we choose’. The graduate from Mumbai’s Sir JJ School of Art is showing a distinct body of work, including multi-panel ballpoint pen drawings on silk cloth depicting people in queues, sculptures portraying trash found on pavements and textile with cross-stitch embroidery.

Showing as part of ‘Personal Structures’ 2024, an exhibition organised by the European Cultural Centre, meanwhile, is sculptor Sonal Ambani’s stainless steel installation *Slings & Arrows of Outrageous Fortune*, and Delhi-based Paresh Maity’s *Genesis* — a 500-kg 120-inch bronze pendulum that stands as a metaphor for life and the balance it necessitates.

‘You’re no longer a private citizen in a public space’

Madhumita Murgia, shortlisted for the Women’s Prize 2024, on her book about the impact of Artificial Intelligence on privacy, healthcare and creative industries

Udbhav Seth

TECH JOURNALIST Madhumita Murgia’s *Code Dependent*, recently shortlisted for the Women’s Prize 2024, collects reportage from around the world about how machine learning and statistical software — today marketed as AI — are already impacting lives and livelihoods, and not always for the better. In this interview, she speaks of the power asymmetry in Artificial Intelligence (AI), its impact on relationships and why there’s no such thing as being anonymous anymore. Excerpts:

Could we have changed the public perception of AI with a different label? In the book, writer Ted Chiang quotes a tweet saying AI is ‘a poor choice of words we used in 1954’.

There’s a lot of history around why it’s called ‘AI’. Apparently, at a scientific meeting in Boston, ‘cybernetics’ was the other option but people didn’t like the guy who suggested it. So they picked the alternative.

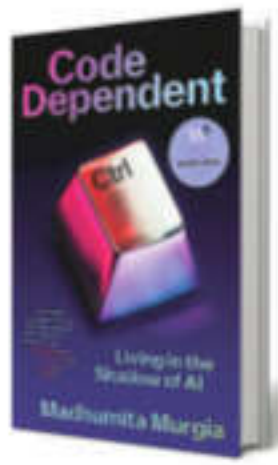
The word intelligence indicates something conscious, sentient, with some ability to reason. So far, we have none of that. This is essentially a very sophisticated statistical software. It does do some amazing things, like trawling through huge amounts of data and generating poetry and music. But it isn’t intelligent enough to make human decisions. Human intelligence isn’t just about pattern recognition. There’s emotional intelligence, social intelligence, all these other things we use while writing or being a doctor or doing social work. It involves not just the individual but the collective. AI has biases because of the data it’s trained on or because of decisions made while building. We would benefit from giving it a more direct, descriptive name that might be more boring but accurate.

I was struck by how much AI can help doctors in under-resourced places. How do you see that technology going from the private to public sector?

I write about a tuberculosis diagnostic tool made by Qure.ai. They also rolled out a Covid AI diagnostic tool in Dharavi, Maharashtra when there was no other way to test. Google has worked to diagnose diabetic retinopathy using AI and patient data. They want to help us learn but it’s a private enterprise and has to make money from it. So who’s going to step up? Are governments going to fund this? Because the people who can’t pay for regular



GETTY IMAGES



CODE DEPENDENT
BY MADHUMITA MURGIA
Pan Macmillan
336 pages
₹699

healthcare can’t pay for AI healthcare either. It has to be subsidised and rolled out at scale.

Another challenge is: Will this create more equity? Or will there be a class system? Will you have a flawed AI system used on people who can’t afford healthcare, with mistakes that could lead to lives lost or diagnoses missed? Will people pay for human care, which can turn out to be more sophisticated?

You write about data labellers in the Global South working for American companies far away, being small parts of a huge AI-training operation, underpaid and unaware of their role. Has Big Tech tried to improve that power asymmetry?

There hasn’t been enough pressure on Big Tech to change. If there’s no pressure, why should they? If they need tens of thousands of people for this job, and it’s cheaper to do it in Kenya, India or Bangladesh, why wouldn’t they carry on doing that? Big Tech can say, we’re giving people jobs they wouldn’t have otherwise had, we’re lifting people out of poverty, we’re doing a net positive for society.

Many individuals aren’t able to speak up because it’s a job supporting their families, and they don’t want to rock the boat. But now we’re seeing people who are brave enough to speak up. I mention Daniel Motong in my book, a South African migrant to Kenya, doing one of these jobs. He screened some of the worst content on social media — violence, terrorism, assault, just the worst of the internet



COURTESY PAN MACMILLAN

A PARADIGM SHIFT

Madhumita Murgia

— that he had to watch and label and mark, leaving him with lasting PTSD. He’s now suing both Meta and Sama for the impact of that job.

With media coverage, change will come, particularly around working conditions like taking more breaks, having more support, not having to sign non-disclosure agreements.

You write about public surveillance disproportionately harming marginalised communities and protestors against the state. In a country like India, how does this affect a layperson with little knowledge of AI?

Mass surveillance becomes a dragnet.

SHELF LIFE

Nature and Nurture

IGREW up reading fantasy where the protagonist could be a witch, a wielder of magic, a demigod saving the day. Those tales, blending reality with fantasy, shaped my childhood. So when I stumbled upon Gigi Ganguly’s speculative short-fiction collection *Biopeculiar: Stories of an Uncertain World*, it seemed like a return to that cherished world.

Ganguly brings something really special to the table, conjuring tales that honour the natural world while shining a light on the shadows we have created. The first

story ‘Head in the Clouds’ is about an old man who is a cloud herder, someone searching for lost souls — clouds, rain, thunder, mist — to bring them back to their world of the skies. His child-like obsession, without hope of rewards, harkens to a less materialist and industrial world.

‘Call for Kelp’ satirises real-world issues like climate change by depicting a world where animals cope with human-induced destruction. It highlights the elemental purity of the natural world, in contrast to the complexity of human nature.



HOW WE ARE SEEN

Gigi Ganguly



BIOPECULIAR: STORIES OF AN UNCERTAIN WORLD
BY GIGI GANGULY
Westland
196 pages; ₹399

‘Toothache’ champions nature’s strength and resilience, using the tiger as a symbol for déjà vu, dreams and fantasy.

‘Corvid Inspector’, a dark mystery, fails to strike a chord as it toggles between real-world parallels and fantasy in a way that doesn’t quite come together seamlessly. Instead, ‘Forest of Plenty’, with its contemplation on decay and regeneration, is a fine example of how speculative fiction can weave anxieties over an uncertain future into a framework of hope and possibility. Ganguly has a way with words — her prose is lyrical and manages to pack in richness within the book’s slim frame.

RAJLAKSHMI DASTIDAR

A Contested Legacy

Progressive on caste, reactionary on religion — a new book throws light on VD Savarkar’s politics

Pratinav Anil

VINAYAK DAMODAR Savarkar had a dull life. Like Samuel Beckett’s play *Waiting for Godot*, the Savarkar story can be summarised as “nothing happens — twice.” He spent two extended periods of his life under house arrest, first for annoying the Brits and then for annoying the Congress.

Born in Bhagura, a village in Bombay Presidency, Savarkar came from a lower-middle-class Marathi Chitpavan Brahmin family, which is to say precisely the kind of background likely to produce a Hindu nationalist. Tragedy struck early and often. Cholera picked off his mother, then plague his father. As a youth, Savarkar was already showing his bias, threatening Muslim boys with knives; by his own admission, he vandalised a mosque aged 13.

Savarkar read law in London. There, he moved in anarchist circles, sourcing pistols to send to nationalists back home. When his mate killed the Indian secretary of state’s political aide-de-camp in South Kensington, Savarkar was charged with conspiracy to murder and banished to a penal colony on

the Andaman Islands. No sooner did he get there in 1910 than he began begging the Brits to release him. The letters have generated controversy in recent years, as liberals have rushed to suggest that Savarkar was a wimp. Not so, the Berkeley historian Janaki Bakhle concludes in this superb book on his life and times. She’s evidently no fan of Savarkar, but she makes amply clear this was just subterfuge to secure freedom. Savarkar had absolutely no intention of becoming a colonial poodle.

Savarkar was released in 1921. Bakhle writes, because the Brits saw him as something of a useful stooge. At the time, the Khilafat Movement was in full swing, and Raj officials thought it would be convenient to have an unreconstructed Islamophobe attack Muslims and Gandhi. Savarkar played his part well, accusing Muslim men of raping ‘Hindu maidens’ en masse. All the same, he was kept on a tight leash. Savarkar remained under house arrest until 1937, when he was elected Hindu Mahasabha president.

What he wanted to do with Muslims was never very clear. Bakhle discerns a ‘striking resemblance’ between Savarkar’s Hindutva and the Nazi völkisch movement for racial



WIKIPEDIA

A NEW WAY OF LOOKING

A stamp of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar



SAVARKAR AND THE MAKING OF HINDUTVA
BY JANAKI BAKHLE
Princeton University Press
432 pages, ₹999

purity, but I don’t think this is right. Shruti Kapila has more convincingly argued that it was not the extirpation of Muslims that Savarkar was after, but rather a hierarchy of faiths. As Bakhle writes, he said to an American journalist that Muslims in India were to be treated “as a minority in the position of your Negroes” — as a disenfranchised underclass.

At all events, Savarkar’s hatred for Muslims was his USP and, in many ways, a sentiment original to him. The word ‘Hindutva’ was coined in 1892 by the Bengali literary critic Chandranath Basu to connote Hindu-ness. It was in this more or less benign sense that Rabindranath Tagore and Bal Gangadhar Tilak used it in the decade that followed. Savarkar’s sleight of hand, however, transformed the word into the epithet it has now become, where pride in

...
The book fascinatingly explores Savarkar’s caste politics, arguing that he’s been poorly understood outside Maharashtra
...

Hinduism is inevitably freighted with contempt for Islam.

Indeed, Savarkar’s pamphlet of 1923, *Essentials of Hindutva*, is as much a lesson in geography as it is a jeremiad against Muslims. Unsurprisingly, then, in later years, his anti-Muslim feelings eclipsed his anti-colonial feelings. So much so that at the time of Quit India, when most nationalists were eking out a sorry existence as jailbirds, Savarkar found himself a free man. The Mahasabha stayed aloof from the Independence struggle. He was, ironically, arrested after independence, when the RSS alumnus Nathuram Godse killed Gandhi ostensibly with his blessing. Savarkar was let go for want of evidence, though kept under surveillance and effectively under house arrest in Shivaji Park, the Bombay neighbourhood where he lived until his death in 1966.

Bakhle dispenses with his CV in a few quick pages, before homing in on his poems and *povadas* (didactic Marathi ballads). This is a literary study, not a biography. It’s a pity that it only covers his writings until 1937. Bakhle might have done well to serve up a full life to counter

the recent spate of appalling hagiographies, including Vikram Sampath’s. Her prose is crystal clear, if a touch fogeyish. Dipping into the vocabulary of a Victorian ethnographer, she writes, for instance, that to many people nowadays, *Hindutvavadi* is a ‘contumelious insult.’

The most fascinating aspect of Bakhle’s book is her reconstruction of Savarkar’s caste politics. Basing her account on his Marathi writings, she concludes that he has been poorly understood outside his native Maharashtra. Few in the Hindi belt are aware of Savarkar’s ‘progressive’ side. Not only did he rail against scripturalism and vegetarianism, he also defended intercaste marriages long before Gandhi came around to the idea. He likewise enjoyed taking digs at cow worshippers, who “filled their cupped palms with cow urine and sprinkled it all over a temple but if Ambedkar were to give them Ganga water, they believe they have been polluted.”

Progressive on caste, reactionary on religion: there was an internal consistency to it. The objective was to unite Hindus against Muslims. Low-caste Mahars ought to be allowed to draw water from public wells, he argued, since the real untouchables were Muslims. Still, Savarkar’s radical side shouldn’t be ignored.

“The great majority of the Brahmins are those who doggedly deny the horrors of the system in the teeth of such a mass of evidence; who, when they speak of freedom, mean the freedom to oppress the untouchables.” Who said this, Ambedkar or Savarkar? Before I read Bakhle’s book, I confess I’d have got this wrong.

The writer is a historian at the University of Oxford and author of *Another India*

Trailing the Caracal

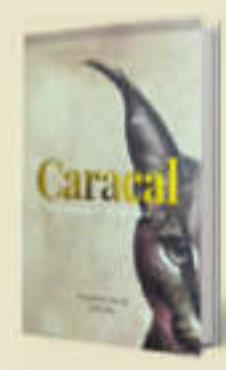
A tribute to the mysterious cat, covering the minutiae of its life

Ranjit Lal

THE CARACAL, with its hauntingly beautiful eyes and pointed charcoal fringed ears, is perhaps the most mysterious, elusive and rare of wild felines found in India, today confined to semi-desert areas like Ranthambore and Kutch. But it’s abundant in Africa and West Asia, to the extent it has been hunted as vermin in some places. This tawny, red-gold cat with its impressive leaping ability has always had a long and enduring relationship with us.

The *Caracal* is a magnificently illustrated tribute to this mysterious cat, covering in minutest detail every aspect of its life, relying on the authors’ own experiences as well as the large numbers of researchers (most working out of Africa) — biologists, historians, forest officials, conservationists, villagers, et al — who have come under its spell or simply encountered it. Sadly, very little original research has emerged from India — where it has a precarious existence. But the amount of detailed information the authors have unearthed and presented is truly staggering, especially given the fact that they have sourced information from all of the caracal’s territories.

Authors Dharmendra Khandal and Ishan Dhar are associated with Tiger Watch, based out of Ranthambore — one of the caracal’s last strongholds — and are involved in research and community-based wildlife conservation. The book is sorted in three parts: Biology and Ecology, History, and Distribution in India. The first dis-



THE CARACAL
BY DHARMENDRA KHANDAL, ISHAN DHAR

Tiger Watch
339 pages
₹3,850

sects the caracal bone by bone, hair by hair, body part by body part, all bolstered by photographs and line drawings. The language is scientific — which ought to be familiar to zoology students and academicians studying those subjects, but which may be a struggle for the layman. But if there is anything you want to know about the animal, and its habits: what and how it hunts, how it lives etc. the information is there for the taking.

The caracal has an ancient relationship with humanity stretching back to prehistoric times, both abroad and in India. The animal has been used (usually alongside the cheetah) for coursing by the nobility and royalty; for chasing and bringing down hares, birds (even the Great Indian Bustard), spotted deer, and blackbuck. It was also hunted for its pelt and because it was thought to be a pest in India and throughout its realm. In India, it now gets full protection under the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, though there have been instances of poaching.

Always an enigma, the caracal appears in wall art, paintings, stories, mythology, religion and legends throughout its realm. The reproductions — whether of cave art, miniatures, sketches (with all due credits given) — are superb and have been given a generous amount of space in the book. The authors have even gone to the extent of displaying an ‘album’ of postage stamps, featuring the animal from countries as diverse as the Republic of Burundi, Israel, Kenya and, of course, India signifying its mesmerising hold on people.

The authors have provided details of sightings from various parts of India, going back as far as records hold, with the help of maps. Its distribution in India is patchy — the animal is not easily seen — and your best chances would be in Ranthambore Tiger Reserve and in Kutch.

This book, with its stunning cover, needs to be in every library: the ordinary reader — unless obsessed by the animal — may find it a bit too scholarly and in-depth to tackle. But, at the same time, it could ignite a spark of interest in this elusive, relatively unknown, very beautiful wild cat — and who knows where that may lead to? After all, the siyagosh, which is one of its Persian monikers, may still have several secrets that it has yet to reveal to us. All you need to do is to look into its eyes.

Ranjit Lal is an author, environmentalist and birdwatcher

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