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VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

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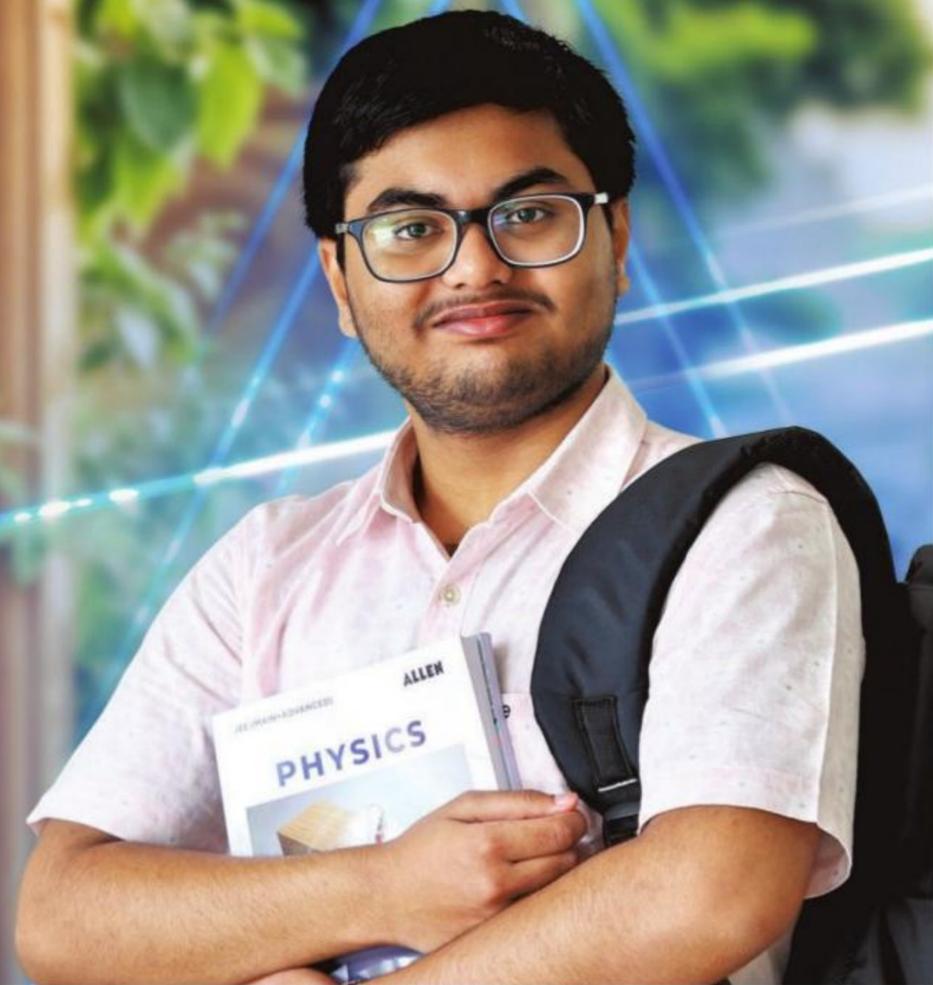
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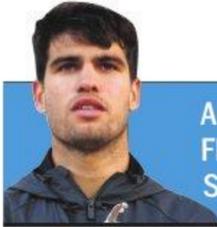
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BJP EXAMINES REASONS BEHIND DIP IN VOTE SHARE IN JAMMU & K



PADDY: INTERMITTENT IRRIGATION CAN SAVE WATER INFOCUS

WITH 6 MINISTERS, BIHAR GETS MAJOR SHARE IN MODI CABINET BACK PAGE



Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets invitees during the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. REUTERS

MODI'S NDA = NAIDU + NITISH

Sworn in for third term, Modi becomes second PM after Nehru to secure this historic feat | 72-member Council of Ministers takes oath; Anurag among 7 Cabinet ministers dropped | Cong president Kharge attends grand event at Rashtrapati Bhavan; most oppn leaders skip

ADITI TANDON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9
Standing on the ramparts of the Rashtrapati Bhavan that sparked with hues of the Tricolour, BJP veteran Narendra Modi on Sunday took oath as the Prime Minister for the third consecutive time, entering the league of predecessor Jawaharlal Nehru.

After he arrived to frenzied cheers of "Modi Modi" from sections of an over 8,000-strong gathering, Modi was administered the oath of office and secrecy by President Droupadi Murmu.

Later, 71 members of the Council of Ministers — 31 Cabinet rank, five ministers of state (independent charge) and 36 ministers of state took oath at a grand event on the Rashtrapati Bhavan forecourt, attended by heads of seven neighbouring nations barring Pakistan, top business honchos, including Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani, celebrated actors from Rajnikant and Shah Rukh Khan to Anil Kapoor, transgenders, rat-hole miners and sanitation workers.

Eye on growth momentum and reform, which he has stressed as the goals of his third term, Modi (73) stamped the Union Cabinet with continuity.

Nineteen of the 26 outgoing Cabinet ministers (a whopping 73 per cent) have been retained, including Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nitin

11 berths to allies; women ministers down from 10 to 7

The ruling NDA partners have got 11 of the 72 Union Council of Minister berths in the new BJP-led dispensation. Of the 11, five are Cabinet posts, which have gone to different allies — former Bihar CM Jitan Ram Manjhi of HAM; former Karnataka CM HD Kumaraswamy of the JD(S); Rajeev Ranjan Singh Lalan of the JD(U), Ram Mohan Naidu of the TDP and Chirag Paswan of the LJP (Ram Vilas). The number of women ministers has come down from 10 to seven.

In the outgoing Council of Ministers, there was no Cabinet rank minister from the NDA. It is learnt the TDP could get two more berths in the future Cabinet expansion.

Gadkari, Nimla Sitharaman, S Jaishankar, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Piyush Goyal, Hardeep Puri, Dharmendra Pradhan, Mansukh Mandaviya and Virendra Kumar Rajnath, Shah, Gadkari, Nirmla, Jaishankar and Vaishnaw are expected to retain Defence, Home, Transport, Finance, External Affairs and Railways, respectively. As reported by *The Tribune*.

Modi will retain key strategic ministries to continue the growth push, vital to his pledge of making India the world's third largest economy. Eleven new entrants to the Cabinet are BJP chief JP Nadda, whose term as party president ends on June 16; former chief ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan of Madhya Pradesh, Jitan Ram Manjhi of Bihar, ML Khattar of Haryana and HD Kumaraswamy of Karnataka; Annapurna Singh of Jharkhand; senior tribal leader from Odisha Jual Oram, veteran Gujarat BJP leader CR Patil and three representatives of NDA parties — Munger MP Rajeev Ranjan Singh, alias Lalan Singh, of the JD(U), three-term Srikakulam MP of the TDP Ram Mohan Naidu and LJP's Chirag Paswan.

The most prominent Cabinet ministers among seven to be dropped are Anurag Thakur, who just offset his four-term anti-incumbency in Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur to win a fifth Lok Sabha term, and Smriti Irani, who lost Amethi to Congress worker KL Sharma. Arjun Munda, Narayan Rane, RK Singh, Mahendra Nath Pandey and Parashottam Rupala are other ministers who failed to make the cut this time. Anurag is likely to get a plum organisational role with sources saying he could be groomed to lead in Himachal Pradesh. All three ministers of state in the outgoing Modi

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



President Droupadi Murmu administers the oath of office to Narendra Modi as Prime Minister at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. PTI

NADDA, 3 EX-CMs MAKE THE CUT



DROPPED FROM TEAM MODI



MORE INSIDE

Former CM Beant's legacy helps Bittu pip Sandhu
Eye on Haryana poll, NDA inducts 3 of 5 MPs from state
Khattar's journey from RSS pracharak to Union minister
Council of Ministers features 33 first-timers

Be humble, rise to people's hopes, PM tells ministers

ADITI TANDON
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

In the first message to the members of his new Council of Ministers, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said "a tree laden with fruits always bends low".

The PM's top messages to the ministers of NDA 3.0, whom he met at noon for tea before the official evening swearing-in were "humility, transparency and accountability".

"Stay humble. People like those who have the capacity to show humility. Be respectful to fellow parliamentarians and off-

WORK DILIGENTLY

"People like those who have the capacity to show humility. Whatever task is assigned to you, do it diligently, sincerely. Narendra Modi, PM

cers," the PM said to the ministers-designate. Stressing the continuity of the BJP-led NDA government, the PM urged the ministers to collaborate, work as a team and to never compromise on probity. "Whatever task is assigned to you, do it diligently, sincerely. Be mindful of the fact that you

must accord due respect and dignity to all fellow MPs, irrespective of the parties they represent," the PM said.

Attendees said the PM was upbeat, stressed the historicity of the mandate the people had given to the NDA government by repeating it for the third time — a first since 1962 — and flagged the need for accountability.

"We have to be accountable to the people for this massive mandate. We have to rise to their expectations," said the PM, with the BJP this time failing to touch the simple majority on its own.

Bittu: Will act as bridge between Centre, Punjab

NITIN JAIN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

LUDHIANA, JUNE 9

In a surprise and what he himself calls a "totally unexpected" move, three-time Congress MP Ravneet Singh Bittu, who unsuccessfully contested the Lok Sabha election from Ludhiana on the BJP ticket, was on Sunday inducted into the Council of Ministers.

The grandson of slain Punjab CM Beant Singh will be the

Says resolving farmers' issues his top priority

saffron party's Sikh face in the NDA government. The BJP lost all 13 parliamentary seats in Punjab, which it contested alone for the first time since 1996 after parting ways with its long-time ally SAD. From being Rahul Gandhi's "soldier" to "Modi's man" in his

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

SIT formed to probe Kangana slap case; protest in Mohali

MOHALI: An SIT, headed by the Mohali SP, has been formed to probe the Kangana Ranaut slapping case. SP City Harbir Singh Atwal said, "A woman member will also be nominated. We will look into all aspects and give report soon." Meanwhile, around 1,000 activists of farmer unions took out a march seeking justice for CISF constable Kulwinder Kaur, booked in the case on June 6. **INSIDE**
EDIT: KANGANA 'SLAPGATE'

9 die as bus comes under terror attack in J&K

ARJUN SHARMA

JAMMU, JUNE 9

At least nine persons were killed and 33 others were injured when a bus carrying pilgrims rolled down a gorge after it came under heavy firing by terrorists in Reasi district of Jammu division on Sunday evening.

Sources in the intelligence said the bullets were targeted at the bus driver, identified as Vijay, who lost control over the

20 rounds of AK-47, M4 carbine found at site; most victims from UP

vehicle due to which it veered off the road and fell into a gorge. Reports suggested that at least nine persons succumbed due to the impact the bus suffered from the bullets and also after it plunged into the gorge. The toll can go up

as several injured are critical. Reasi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Mohita Sharma said terrorists targeted the bus that started from Shiv Khori towards Katra. "Nine people are dead and 33 are injured. The rescue operation has been completed. The victims are not locals and we can initially say they belong to UP," she said. She said the injured had been shifted to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

Two berths in kitty, TDP keen on spl package for Amravati capital project

SATIYA PRAKASH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Having secured 16 seats in the 18th Lok Sabha to become the most crucial ally of the BJP in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), the N Chandrababu Naidu-led Telugu Desam Party (TDP) appears to have chosen to focus on a financial package from the

Likely to get two more berths in next expansion

Centre for Andhra Pradesh. Despite being the second-largest coalition partner in the NDA, only two TDP MPs were administered oath as ministers in the Modi 3.0 Government on Sunday. TDP MP K Ram Mohan

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



The damaged bus which came under attack in Reasi.

Eye on Assembly elections, BJP inducts 3 of five MPs from Haryana into Modi govt

Karnal MP Manohar Lal Khattar gets Cabinet berth | Rao Inderjit, Krishan Pal Gurjar retained as MoS

GEETANJALI GAYATRI
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, JUNE 9
With three of the five newly elected Members of Parliament from Haryana being accommodated as ministers in PM Narendra Modi-led NDA government at the Centre, the BJP clearly has an eye on the state Assembly elections to be held in October.

The party today inducted former Chief Minister and Karnal MP Manohar Lal Khattar as Cabinet minister, while six-time MP Rao Inderjit Singh and Krishan Pal Gurjar, both ministers in the previous term of the NDA government, were sworn in as Minister of State (Independent Charge) and Minister of State, respectively.

The party deciding to accommodate three of five MPs in the cabinet from a

“small state” like Haryana indicates that the BJP is working towards consolidating non-Jat votes ahead of the Assembly poll.

Though in the past also, Modi has had three ministers from Haryana in the Council of Ministers, it was on account of a larger number of seats unlike this time when the party is down to half its tally of 2019.

The elections in Haryana are divided along caste lines and the BJP sees non-Jats as their vote bank.

By inducting first-time MP Khattar as Cabinet minister, the party has tried to placate the Punjabi community that had been feeling “hurt” by the party leadership’s move to replace Khattar with CM Nayab Singh Saini. The community had stood firmly behind the BJP ever since it

WOING VARIOUS COMMUNITIES

- By inducting first-time MP and former CM Manohar Lal Khattar as Cabinet minister, the BJP has tried to placate the Punjabi community
- By giving Inderjit a berth in the Council of Ministers,

the party has tried to reward the Ahir community that backed it in LS poll

- The BJP is hoping to cash in on its Gurjar vote bank in the upcoming Assembly elections by accommodating Krishan Pal Gurjar

assumed power in the state in 2014. The party leaders, even at that time, had maintained that Khattar, a close confidant of PM Narendra Modi, would graduate to a bigger role at the Centre, but it did not seem to have cut ice with the community this election. By giving him a Cabinet rank, the BJP wants to appease the Punjabi community and send out a message that Khattar continues to be “powerful” within the party and in the government.

Sources said by giving Inderjit a berth in the Council of Ministers, the party had achieved the twin objective of giving him his due as also rewarding the Ahir community that stood with the party in the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections.

While the BJP could not have overlooked Inderjit’s claim given his seniority, sources said the party also wanted to duly recognise the Ahir community’s support on Gurgaon and Bhiwani-

Mahendergarh seats. However, he has not been promoted as Cabinet minister.

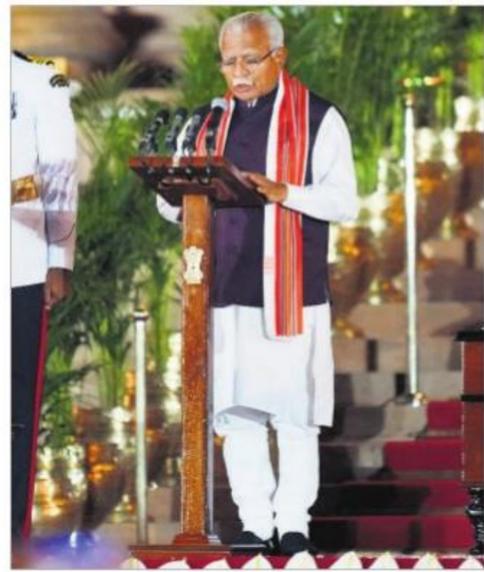
Given the party’s emphatic win from Faridabad in a clash of the Gujjars (the BJP had fielded Krishan Pal Gurjar, while the Congress fielded Mahendra Pratap), the BJP is hoping to cash in on its Gurjar vote bank in the Assembly elections by accommodating Krishan Pal Gurjar.

Meanwhile, the CM today announced handing over possession certificates of 100 sq ft plots to 7,500 BPL families, while depositing Rs 1 lakh in the accounts of 12,500 beneficiaries who could not be given plots. He was accompanied by the party’s two SC faces, Rajya Sabha MP Krishan Lal Panwar and vice-president of the party’s women’s cell Banto Kataria, indicating the party’s out-

reach programme to tap and win back the SCs.

Sources in the BJP said the representation given to the three communities indicated that the war between the BJP and the Congress was far from over. “Our party and its leaders would leave nothing to chance ahead of the Assembly poll. We will come back to power for the third time,” said a senior leader.

The party, it seems, has reconciled to the fact that it cannot make inroads into the Jat vote bank that stands with former Chief Minister and Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda. This also probably explains why the party’s Bhiwani-Mahendergarh MP Dharmvir Singh, a Jat, was not considered for a ministerial berth despite a tough contest and his third consecutive win.



BJP MP Manohar Lal Khattar takes oath in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

Khattar’s journey from RSS pracharak to Union minister

PARVEEN ARORA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, JUNE 9

Known as the fourth “Lal” of Haryana politics, former Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has once again made headlines with his inclusion in the PM Narendra Modi’s cabinet.

The inclusion marks Khattar’s remarkable rise from an RSS pracharak to the CM of Haryana, and now, to a Union minister.

Khattar (70) was a newcomer to electoral politics when he was fielded from the Karnal Assembly seat in 2014, where he emerged victorious and was later elected as Haryana CM. He won the poll again in 2019 and continued to work as CM. He stepped down on March 12 this year to make way for Kurukshetra MP Nayab Singh Saini as CM. On March 13, Khattar resigned from the post of MLA, paving the way for Saini to become an MLA from Karnal.

The BJP replaced sitting MP Sanjay Bhatia with Khattar in the recent Lok Sabha elections from the Karnal seat. Khattar secured victory over Congress candidate Divyanshu Budhiraja by 2,32,577 votes.

Born on May 5, 1954, at Nindana village in Rohtak, Khattar’s RSS journey began in 1977. By 1980, he became a full-time RSS pracharak. He joined the BJP in 1994, quickly rising to the position of organisation’s general secretary in Haryana.

JOINED BJP IN 1994

Khattar’s RSS journey began in 1977. By 1980, he became a full-time RSS pracharak; he joined the BJP in 1994

He was fielded from the Karnal Assembly seat in 2014, where he emerged victorious and was later elected as Haryana CM

He stepped down on March 12 this year and Nayab Singh Saini became the CM; Khattar won the LS poll from Karnal seat

In 1996, Khattar began working with Narendra Modi and played an important role in forming the BJP government with Bansilal’s Haryana Vikas Party. However, noticing the alliance was costing dear to the party, he favoured withdrawal of support from the government. The BJP then decided to extend outside support to Om Prakash Chautala and later that coalition with the INLD won all 10 seats in Haryana in the 1999 parliamentary elections.

Khattar was appointed Chairman of the Haryana poll campaign panel for the 2014 LS elections that the party won emphatically. “Manohar Lal ji has done inclusive development of the state with a vision of ‘Haryana Ek, Haryanvi Ek. His sensitivity for the marginalised comes from his own humble background,” said Shashipal Meha, former state minister, who worked with Khattar

Rao Inderjit gets third term as minister in Team Modi

SUMEDHA SHARMA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

GURUGRAM, JUNE 9
Rao Inderjit Singh, who has become the first Haryana politician to reach Parliament for the sixth time, has made it to the Modi Council of Ministers for third consecutive term.

Rao, a veteran Ahir leader who switched to the BJP in 2014, has managed to win Lok Sabha elections consecutively for five terms. He had made a record by securing the highest number of votes in the state in the 2019 elections. In a brief conversation with *The Tribune*, Rao said that he considered this induction as yet another chance to serve the people of Haryana.

“My representation in the Cabinet is the people’s representation. We got major projects in the past 10 years, but these five years will break all records,” said Rao.

Prior to this, he served the Modi government for last two terms as Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Planning, Statistics and Programme Implementation and Planning, and Union Minister of State, Ministry of Defence.

The veteran Ahir leader Rao Inderjit started his political career in 1977 from Jatusana



Rao Inderjit

GOOD PERFORMANCE

- Rao Inderjit Singh is the first Haryana politician to reach Parliament for the sixth time
- He has managed to win Lok Sabha elections consecutively for five terms
- He had made a record by securing the highest number of votes in the state in the 2019 elections
- Prior to this, he served the Modi government for last two terms as Union Minister of State

Assembly (now Kosli). In Jatusana, which was the traditional seat of his father Rao Birender Singh, he was fielded as the political heir of his family and has since managed to maintain a stronghold in Ahirwal.

Rao remained a member of the Haryana Legislative Assembly four times from 1977 to 1982, 1982 to 1987 and 1991 to 1996 and again from 2000 to 2004. From 1986 to 1987, he was given the responsibility of Minister of State (Independent Charge), Planning Food and Civil Supplies, in the Haryana Government. From 1991 to 1996, he was a Cabinet Minister in the state government.

He also handled important

departments like Environment and Forest and Medical and Technical Education. His father Rao Birender Singh made him the Lok Sabha candidate in the state in 1998 for the Mahendergarh Lok Sabha seat. Rao Inderjit entered Parliament and became a member of the 12th Lok Sabha.

The stint was short-lived as he faced his first defeat in the very next election in 1999 but came back in 2004 and has never looked back. From 1998 to 1999, Rao was also a member of the Parliament’s Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests. In 2004, he was again elected to the 14th Lok Sabha from Mahendergarh seat.

He also handled important

Gurjar scores double hat-trick as LS MP & Union minister

BIJENDRA AHLAWAT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

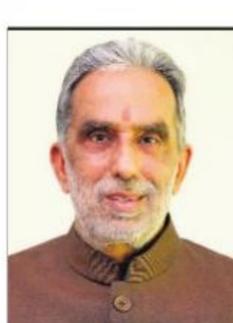
FARIDABAD, JUNE 9
Krishan Pal Gurjar, who made a hat-trick by getting elected as Lok Sabha MP from Faridabad in the recently concluded elections, came out successful in making it to the Modi Council of Ministers for the third time in a row.

He is perhaps the first MP from Faridabad to have this achievement. Gurjar, who had been a Minister of State for Heavy Industries in the Modi-2 ministry (2019-24) has been inducted on a similar rank this time.

Describing his induction in the Council of Ministers as an expected development, Gopal Sharma, a former district president of the BJP, said that this would help Faridabad constituency attain new heights with regard to development.

He said the induction of three MPs from Haryana in the Modi ministry was a matter of great happiness as it would help the state get a privileged status, perhaps for the first time.

67-year-old Gurjar has been the Minister of State for Pow-



Krishan Pal Gurjar

STINTS AT CENTRE

- Elected as MP for the first time in 2014, he was inducted as MoS for Road Transport and Highways and Shipping. However, his ministry was later changed to Social Justice and Empowerment
- He continued with the position of MoS for Social Justice and Empowerment from 2019 to 2021. Shifted as Minister of State for Heavy Industries in 2021, he continued with the portfolio till the election held last month

er and Heavy Industries in the outgoing Union ministry. Elected as MP for the first time in 2014, he had been inducted as Minister of State for Road Transport and Highways and Shipping. However, his ministry was later changed to Social Justice and Empowerment.

He continued with the position of Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment in the period between 2019 and 2021. Shifted as Minister of State for Heavy Industries in 2021, he continued with the portfolio till the election held last month.

While Gurjar had won by a margin of 4.66 lakh votes in

2014 against the Congress candidate, this margin went up to 6.36 lakh votes in 2019. However, the margin got reduced to just 1.72 lakh in the election held this time.

His induction is considered as a boon in view of the upcoming state Assembly poll, according to political analysts.

A graduate from MD University, he started his political career by getting elected as Municipal Councillor in 1994. He became an MLA for the first time in 1996 and served as Transport Minister in the Bansilal government in Haryana from 1996 to 1999. He later served as BJP state president of Haryana.

Ahead of Assembly poll, BJP plays OBC card

RAVINDER SAINI
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

ROHTAK, JUNE 9
The BJP has played the OBC card by inducting its two MPs belonging to this category to Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led NDA government’s Council of Ministers ahead of the Assembly poll that is due in October.

The elevation of Gurugram MP Rao Inderjit and Faridabad MP Krishan Pal Gurjar is believed to be an effort to woo OBC voters in the Assembly election as well because the reins of Haryana are already in the hands of another OBC leader, Nayab Singh Saini, who was appointed Chief Minister in place of Manohar Lal Khattar in March before the Lok Sabha poll.

“Although Rao and Gurjar have been ministers in the previous Council of Ministers of the Modi government, giving them berths this time — since the Chief Minister is also from OBC class — undoubtedly is part of the BJP’s strategy to focus on OBC electors. It is a bid to gain political mileage in upcoming Assembly poll as the party managed to get a considerable chunk of the OBC vote bank in the Lok Sabha elections,” said a political analyst.

Inducts both OBC MPs Inderjit, Gurjar in Modi Council of Ministers

Interestingly, only two MPs from OBC have been elected from the state in this Lok Sabha poll. Both of them are from the BJP and have been included in the Council of Ministers.

Out of 10 elected MPs in Haryana, three are Jats, two are OBC, one each belongs to Brahmin, Punjabi and business community while the remaining two are SCs.

On the other hand, supporters of Bhiwani-Mahendergarh MP Dharamvir Singh are disappointed after not finding the name of their leader in the list of Central government’s ministers. Dharamvir made a hat-trick in the Lok Sabha poll by defeating Congress’ nominee Rao Dan Singh.

“This time, we were quite confident about a ministerial berth for our leader. The BJP could have appeased people of farming communities ahead of the Assembly poll by elevating him as minister, but we became disappointed on coming to know that he was not being inducted in Modi Council of Ministers,” said one of Dharamvir’s supporters.

Despite curbs, illegal mining goes on in Aravalli belt; govt seeks report

BIJENDRA AHLAWAT
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

FARIDABAD, JUNE 9
The state government has sought a regular compliance report on violation of norms regarding illegal mining and unauthorised construction activity that tend to affect the forest cover and greenery in the Aravalli belt. The authorities concerned have also been asked to submit reports about the measures taken for the restoration of the forest cover.

The matter came up at a recent meeting, but directions had already been given regarding the mining of construction material on forest land. In an order passed on a petition in 2022, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) had directed the departments concerned to file reports giving information about the complaints received regarding illegal mining and the action taken. The authorities concerned had also been directed not to issue short-term permits for the mining of ordinary clay in the Aravallis. They were told that the permit for the extraction of earth be granted only up to a depth of five feet on private land.

The authorities concerned had also been directed to keep a strict vigil on activities that



An illegal structure on forest land in Surajkund area of Aravallis.

could result in illegal mining and ensure a check on the activities of the mineral concession holders, if any. The district-level task force will conduct inspection twice a month along with the videography of checking and take legal action against anyone found to be violating norms.

However, sources in the district administration and some individuals advocating the protection of forests claim that despite curbs on the mining of materials under the garb of private construction and unauthorised construction, the norms were still being violated, causing constant damage to the ecology and the environment of the Aravalli belt. “Large-scale construction in the form of farmhouses, marriage gar-

dens and commercial activities have resulted in the depletion of the greenery and forest area in Surajkund and nearby areas,” says Sunil Harsana, a social activist.

Harsana says that encroachments and illegal construction have damaged greenery, leading to a decline in the forest cover. “The district authorities, which had demolished over 9,500 houses of the poor at Khori village in 2021, have failed to take action against 140 unauthorised farmhouses identified in 2018,” says Vishnu Goel, a resident.

Sandeep Singh, a member of the district task force, says while the issue is reviewed regularly, no activity of illegal mining has been reported in the Aravalli belt.

Haryana Diary

JJP scores over rivals at Rahaneali village

Hisar: Rahaneali village of Fatehabad district is perhaps the only village in the Lok Sabha elections where the Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) maintained a lead over other rivals. The JJP candidate, Ramesh Khatak, secured 329 votes in this village which has just one polling booth. Congress candidate Kumari Selja polled 268 votes in this village and BJP candidate Ashok Tanwar got 95 votes. Notably, JJP has polled less than one per cent votes in the Lok Sabha poll and all of its 10 candidates lost security deposits.

Defeat exposes cracks in BJP

Hisar: The defeat of the BJP in Hisar and Sirsa (reserved) Lok Sabha seats has exposed cracks in the party. This will naturally lead to the possibility of significant changes in the district units in these two districts in the near future. “Though the party has got the report of the role of party leaders in these districts, the party will wait for the installation of the next state president. The party will definitely set things in order in these two districts soon after the new state president takes charge,” said a leader.

Hooda Jr gets emotional

Rohtak: Congress’ newly-elected MP Deepender Hooda got emotional when he reached his poll office to meet supporters after winning Lok Sabha poll with the highest margin in the state. His supporters lifted him on their shoulders. Later, a video of him wiping tears also went viral on social media. A similar situation happened with his mother Asha Hooda when Deepender reached home and met her. This victory obviously means a lot for the Hoodas in view of the upcoming Assembly elections. Deepender had lost the 2019 Lok Sabha poll by a mere 7,503 votes.

Selja and Hooda factions vie for credit

Yamunanagar: The Congress performed well in Sadhaura Assembly segment of Yamunanagar district in the recently-concluded Lok Sabha elections. Taking a lead of 40,055 votes, Congress candidate Varun Chaudhry got 98,531 votes from this reserved Assembly segment. The runner-up BJP candidate, Banto Kataria, bagged only 58,476 votes. Now, a credit war has broken out between Kumari Selja’s camp and faction headed by former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Varun reportedly belongs to the Hooda faction. The main leaders of both factions are trying to take credit of the huge lead to cement their claim on ticket in the coming Assembly elections.

Independents get votes despite supporting BJP

Kamal: Two Independent candidates, Rajinder Arya Dadupur and Shamsher Singh Nain, extended support to the BJP candidate and CM Nayab Singh Saini in the Karnal bypoll. Despite this, people still cast their votes for them with Dadupur receiving 212 votes and Nain getting 143 votes. This indicates that people were either unaware of them extending support to the BJP or knowingly cast their votes for them to show their “anger” against the BJP.

DCs to hold daily camps to address public grievances

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, JUNE 9
Haryana Chief Secretary TVSN Prasad has said that the state government has established a 'Samadhan Prakoshth' (resolution cell) in the Chief Secretary's Office to resolve public grievances.
This 'prakoshth' will organise 'Samadhan Shivir' (resolution camp) in each district and sub-divisional headquarters on all working days to resolve public grievances.
Prasad said this while interacting with media persons here today. "These camps will be organised from 9 am to 11 am every day in all the districts and the CS office will monitor the complaints and their disposal," he said.
He said that it has been observed that generally, public grievances involve two stages — issues in policy and bottlenecks in the implementation process.
The issues relating to the policy part will be resolved at the state headquarters level by the 'prakoshth' in coordination with Administrative Secretaries while the implementation bottlenecks will be resolved in 'samadhan shivir' through the district administration.
"I will hold meeting of the 'prakoshth' with the Administrative Secretaries to resolve the policy issues being faced by the public in the implementation of various public welfare schemes and issue necessary directions through the district administration to remove the bottleneck in the implementation of the scheme," he added.

PROCESS TO BE MONITORED
"These camps will be organised from 9 am to 11 am every day in all the districts and the CS office will monitor the complaints and their disposal. TVSN Prasad, CHIEF SECY

The Chief Secretary said that as part of the programme, Deputy Commissioner, Superintendent of Police/ Deputy Commissioner of Police (HQ), Additional Deputy Commissioner, District Municipal Commissioner, Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil) (HQ) and SDO (C) and Deputy Superintendent of Police and other officers in independent sub-divisions in the district will sit together daily in the Deputy Commissioner's and SDO (Civil) office and resolve public grievances. Further, the Deputy Commissioner concerned may co-opt any other officer as required.
He said that the state was 10 per cent short of its power requirement and had explored purchase of additional units from the North-East and Himachal Pradesh. "Also, southern states, where the monsoon arrives early, have been contacted," he said. On the water crisis in Haryana, Prasad said that private tankers had been deployed by the Public Health Department to supply water and the districts were making arrangements. He said that the issue of discrepancies in property IDs would be removed at the earliest.

7.5K BPL beneficiaries to get possession of plots: CM

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, JUNE 9
To provide housing for the underprivileged, the government, under the Mukhyamantri Gramin Aawas Yojana, will issue possession certificates of 100 sq ft plots to over 7,500 BPL beneficiaries. Besides the distribution of these certificates, registration of the respective plots will also be done on the spot.
This announcement was

made by CM Nayab Singh Saini at a press conference today. He said while he would hand over possession certificates in Sonapat, similar events would be held in other districts by ministers and MLAs simultaneously. He was accompanied by Rajya Sabha member Krishan Lal Panwar and BJP's Ambala candidate Banto Kataria.
"Taking a dig at the Congress, he said the Congress government had promised to allocate

100 SQ YD PLOTS
■ CM Nayab Singh Saini will hand over possession certificates of 100 sq yd plots to BPL beneficiaries in Sonapat
■ Similar programmes will be held in other districts by ministers and MLAs simultaneously



plots to the poor under the Mahatma Gandhi Gramin Basti Yojana, but they were not given any documents.
"The beneficiaries have been running from pillar to post for the plots. To help out such people, former CM Manohar Lal Khattar announced in the 2024-25 Budget speech that under the Mukhyamantri Gramin

Aawas Yojana, possession of plots would be given to approximately 20,000 beneficiaries. The government has decided to provide a financial assistance of up to Rs 1 lakh each to the remaining 12,500 beneficiaries to enable them to purchase plots," Saini said.
He said the state government was identifying new eligible individuals through a survey. A portal would soon be made operational for receiving applications in that regard.
The CM said the Congress initiated schemes in the name of Mahatma Gandhi, but didn't implement them properly. On the other hand, PM Narendra Modi's government, believing in the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi, Jyotiba Phule and Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, is working to make the lives of poor people easy by formulating various schemes.
Saini said 14,839 houses were built under the PM Awas Yojana in 10 years.



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PUBLIC NOTICES

I, Tara Chand s/o Banarsi Dass r/o 1444, Hallomajra, Deep Complex Chandigarh 160002 have changed my name from Tara Chand to Anil Kumar. All concerned please note. (CL24023230)

I, Sunyana w/o Naresh Kumar, r/o H. No. 4512, Shimlapuri Colony, Ward No. 66, Teh. & Distt. Ludhiana have changed my name to Sunyana Rana. (CL24023265)

I, Kuldeep Kumar s/o Kamal Kumar r/o H. No. 106-A, Sector 19, Panchkula, Haryana 134113 have changed my name from Kuldip to Kuldeep Kumar. All concerned please note. (CL24023357)

I, Sheela w/o Rajinder Kumar r/o Backside Maharaja Hotel, VIP Colony, Malerkotla have changed my name as Sheela Rani. (CL24023426)

I, Raj Kumar S/o Swarna Singh R/o Karimnagar (Chichrawa) Patran, Patiala, have changed my name to Raj Singh. (CL24023429)

I, Deepak Kumar Khurana s/o Late Sunder Sham Khurana, employed as Scientist-E/ Director (IT) in National Informatics Centre, Mini Secretariat, Kathal, residing at House No. 327, Sector 19 Part I, HUDA- Kathal, Haryana-136027 have changed my name to Deepak Khurana. (CL24023427)

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COURT NOTICES

(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC)

In the Court of Sh. Anish Goyal Addl. Civil Judge (Sr. Division)-I, SAS Nagar CNR No. PBSA02-001659-2022 Next Date: 03.07.2024 Computer Systems West Pvt. Ltd.

Vs. Tejwant Kaur (Suit for Recovery)

Notice to: Tejwant Kaur d/o Sh. Baljit Singh r/o H.No. 749, Jamaal Enclave, Phase 2, Zirakpur, Distt. SAS Nagar.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 03.07.2024 at 10.00 a.m.

For details logon to https://www.highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=mohali

Dated, this day of 31.05.2024. Sd/- Addl. Civil Judge (Senior Division)-I, CL24023015 SAS Nagar

(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC) In the Court of Sh. Ajay Mittal Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division), Bamala Vijay Kumar Versus Sinder Kaur CNR No.: PBBR02-001852-2023

Next Date: 28.08.2024 Civil suit for the Recovery on the basis of Pronote and receipt of total Rs. 17,04,000/-

Publication issued to: Harjinder Kaur:- Baljit Singh near Interlock Tiles Factory, Pakho-Kainchian Road, Vill. Dhillwan, Teh. Tapa, Distt. Bamala.

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 28.08.2024 at 10.00 a.m.

For details logon to https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=barnala

Dated, this day of 05.06.2024. Sd/- Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division), CL24023188 Barnala

(U/O 5 Rule 20 CPC) In the Court of Ms. Vineeta Luthra Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division), Dera Bassi IDBI Bank Ltd. Versus Chandar CNR No. PBSAB0-000862-2019

CIS No. CS/460/2019 Next Date: 02.07.2024 Suit for recovery of Rs. 1,59,899/-

Publication issued to: Mrs. Chandar wife of Sh. Balvinder Singh R/o House No. 318/B2 Shiv Colony Dharampur, Pinjore, Haryana- 134102

In above titled case, the defendant(s)/respondent(s) could not be served. It is ordered that defendant(s)/respondent(s) should appear in person or through counsel on 02.07.2024 at 10.00 a.m.

For details logon to https://highcourthd.gov.in/?trs=district_notice&district=sasagar

Dated, this day of 20.05.2024. Sd/- Ms. Vineeta Luthra Additional Civil Judge (Senior Division), CL24023360 Dera Bassi

The Tribune INTERVIEW: RAVNEET SINGH BITTU, UNION MINISTER

Will ensure farmers get red-carpet welcome by PM

RAVNEET SINGH BITTU, now Union Minister, says he is humbled by the opportunity given to him by the BJP despite his losing the election from Ludhiana. He will act as a bridge between Punjab and New Delhi. Three-time turcoat MP Bittu, who was tipped by his rival Amrinder Singh Raja Warring, Punjab Congress president and once his friend, said the farmers would get a red-carpet welcome at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence. "I was not expecting the Cabinet call but it came as a big surprise to me," the grandson of slain Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh said on being inducted into the Modi 3.0 team. Talking to **Nitin Jain**, the 48-year-old third generation Congressman, who joined the BJP ahead of this election, said his induction into the Union Cabinet was Modi's benevolence and gift to Punjab. Excerpts:

■ Were you expecting the Cabinet berth after losing this election? I never expected the call and it came as a big surprise to me and my family as well. On getting the call, I immediately rushed to the Prime Minister's residence where I was told that I would be a part of the Modi 3.0 Cabinet. I am humbled by the opportunity given to me by the party despite my



losing this election.

■ What message your elevation as Union Minister will give? It has again proved beyond doubt that Punjab figures on top of Prime Minister's priority states.

■ How do you look at the BJP having lost all 13 seats and you are still getting a Cabinet berth? It is Modi's gift to Punjab. It's because he has been attached to the state since he was the party in-charge.

■ What role you will play as the lone Union Minister from Punjab?

"I am confident that voters of Punjab will consider giving the BJP a chance to form the government in 2027. SAD misled the BJP on the farm laws. While initially providing a positive feedback, its leaders later backtracked when faced pressure from the ground. I pledge to hold constructive discussions with the farmers after the elections."

I will act as a bridge between Punjab and New Delhi and will get all issues, especially that of farmers, addressed once and for all by the Centre.

■ How do you plan to resolve the farmers' issue? I will take farm leaders to PM Modi and arrange their one-on-one meeting.

■ What Punjab can expect from you as Union Minister? Punjab will be among the major beneficiary states under the Modi government. I will raise all demands and issues of Punjab

with the PM and will get these resolved at the earliest.

■ What will be your priorities as minister? Bringing major infrastructure development projects and giving thrust to the upliftment of agriculture, health, education, industry and improving the deteriorating law and order situation in the border state will be top on my agenda.

■ Why did you leave the Congress and join the BJP? The refusal of the Congress to accept the invitation to the Ram Mandir consecration ceremony was the tipping point for me. While there were underlying tensions before also, this incident struck a chord deeply. Lord Rama must be revered beyond political affiliations and when the invitation came from the Mandir Trust, it should have been embraced by all. Instead, the Congress' decision to abstain from the participation was disheartening.

■ Who were the persons behind influencing you to join the BJP? Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

■ What were the main attractions to switch over to the BJP? The BJP's nationalist ethos,

shaped by the vision of leaders like Narendra Modi and Amit Shah, was the driving force behind my decision to join the party. Their initiatives, such as the construction of the Ram Mandir, opening of Kartarpur Sahib Corridor, implementation of the CAA, abrogation of Article 370 and introduction of GST, resonated deeply with me. Additionally, measures like the empowerment of women with 33 per cent reservation in Parliament, Ayushman Bharat, Swachh Bharat schemes, and India's rise in global ranking further strengthened my conviction.

■ Did farmers' protest cost dear to the BJP in Punjab?

The BJP represents the future of Punjab, offering the best chance to uplift the state from its financial struggles. I have witnessed first-hand the genuine concern that Modi and Shah have for Punjab and their sincere desire to enact a positive change. I am confident that the voters of Punjab will consider giving the BJP a chance to form the government in 2027. SAD misled the BJP on the farm laws. While initially providing a positive feedback, they later backtracked when faced pressure from the ground. I pledge to hold constructive discussions with the farmers after the elections.

SIT formed in Kangana slap case Ex-CM Beant's legacy helps Bittu pip Sandhu

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

MOHALI, JUNE 9

A Special Investigation Team (SIT), headed by the SP, Mohali, has been formed to probe MP Kangana Ranaut slapping case.

SP City Harbir Singh Atwal said, "A SIT has been formed, a woman member will be nominated soon. We will look into all aspects and give the report soon."

Meanwhile, around 1,000 protesters from farmer unions took out a march seeking justice for CISF constable Kulwinder Kaur, booked in the Kangana slapping case on June 6. Kulwinder's brother Sher Singh Mahiwal was also part of the march.

SKM and BKU protesters gathered near Gurdwara Amb Sahib this afternoon and also raised slogans and demanded an FIR against



Farm activists hold a march in support of CISF constable Kulwinder Kaur in Mohali on Sunday. VICKY

Kangana for inciting the people of Punjab by giving provocative statements.

Hundreds of protesters marched from Gurdwara Amb Sahib to the Mohali SSP office. The SKM members reached

the SSP office later and gave a memorandum. The SKM and BKU sought action against a person in Ranaut's team, who slapped a woman on back. "Whether Kulwinder Kaur slapped Kangana or not, we do

not know but one thing is clear that the person accompanying Kangana slapped a woman. Why not register an FIR against him too?" said Sarvan Singh, district president BKU (Shaheed Bhagat Singh).

SAD fifth at Maluka's home turf

SUKHMEET BHASIN

BATHINDA, JUNE 9

The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) candidate for the Faridkot parliamentary constituency, Rajwinder Singh, stood at fifth spot in the Rampura Phul Assembly segment, which is the home turf of former minister Sikander Singh Maluka.

The BJP nominee Hans Raj Hans, who had contested on the BJP ticket, remained at third position.

In the 2022 Assembly elections, Maluka had polled 45,745 votes in this segment. However, the



Sikander Singh Maluka

SAD candidate polled 11,360 votes. In 2022, the BJP could bag only 1,041 votes, this time, Hans Raj got 15,252 votes in this segment.

Be accessible to public: DGP to senior officers

CHANDIGARH, JUNE 9

DGP Gauarav Yadav today directed all senior police officers from the rank of Additional Director Generals of Police up to SHOs to remain present in their offices from 11 am to 1 pm on all working days to resolve public grievances. "Directions have been issued to officials to be available in their offices from 11 am to 1 pm on all working days to address public issues. —TNS

Ludhiana man shot in Surrey, 4 held

SHIVANI BHAKOO

LUDHIANA, JUNE 9

Yuvraj Goyal, 28-year-old youth from Ludhiana, was killed in a shooting incident on June 7 at Surrey BC. The only child in the family, Yuvraj had moved to Canada about five years back.

According to information, the Canadian police arrested four persons and charged Manvir Basra, Sahib Basra, Harkirat Jhutti and Keilon Francois with first degree murder in the case.

The family resides in Nirmal Chhaya Apartments, Rishi Nagar, here. Though the parents were not in a position to talk to anyone, family friends said it was a case of "mistaken identity" as told by



Yuvraj Goyal

the Canadian police. The youth had no personal enmity with anyone and the mother had visited Yuvraj about 2-3 months back.

Dr Ranjana, professor at SDP College here, who is close to the family, said the boy had a talk to his mother on June 7 when he was going to home from gym by car. On reaching near his apartment, he disconnected the call.

"There is no clarity as to what exactly happened after that. The Canadian police maintain that when he stopped the car, someone had asked Yuvraj if he lived in the particular building. When Yuvraj said yes, six shots were heard and he was dead", said Dr Ranjana.

The deceased was the student of Kundan Vidya Mandir here. He was a brilliant boy, who worked at KPMG in Delhi, got the best employee award before leaving for Canada.

"The family is in touch with the Canada government and formalities are being done to get his body back home. Since it is not a natural death, it may take some time", said another family friend.

Nadda part of Modi Cabinet, Anurag Thakur misses berth

SUBHASH RAJTA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, JUNE 9
BJP chief JP Nadda took oath as a Union Cabinet Minister in the Narendra Modi-led NDA government in New Delhi today. The induction of Nadda as a Cabinet Minister has in all probability landed a knockout punch to Anurag Thakur's hopes of getting a ministerial berth.

Thakur was the high-profile Minister for Information and Broadcasting in the last term of the NDA government. Having won his fifth consecutive election from the Hamirpur Parliamentary constituency and perceived to be quite close to the Prime Minister and Amit Shah, Thakur was seen as a strong contender for the ministerial berth this time too.

The BJP top leadership, however, have preferred Nadda over him. And it's highly improbable that there would be two ministers from this tiny state that has just four Lok Sabha seats. The rumour mill is already in an overdrive about what could have led to the omission of Thakur, whose rise as a sports administrator and a politician has been nothing short of spectac-

ular over the last decade or so. Some political analysts feel that the results of the latest Parliamentary elections and the Assembly bypoll may not have sent out right signals even though he won his seat with a handsome margin. From Sujanpur, his home Assembly constituency, Thakur secured the highest margin, but the BJP candidate Rajinder Rana lost the bypoll on this seat.

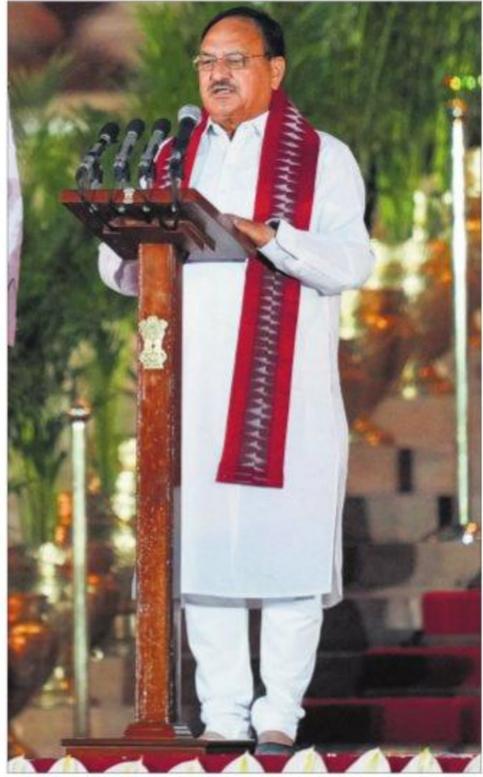
The history between Thakur's father Prem Kumar Dhurnal and Rana (Rana had defeated Dhurnal in the 2017 Assembly elections) may have complicated the result further. However, it's also a fact that both Dhurnal and Thakur campaigned quite extensively for Rana.

"The defeat of Rana could be due to the slogan of 'one vote for PM and one for CM' in the constituency more than anything else. After all, the CM also comes from the Parliamentary constituency," said a Hamirpur resident.

Having missed the ministerial bus, what waits the 49-year-old Thakur? If the sources in the BJP are to be believed, Thakur could get a key position in the party at the national level.



Nadda was Health Minister in 1st Cabinet of PM Modi from 2014-19



BJP president JP Nadda takes oath during the swearing-in ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

Mandays under MGNREGA up from 275 lakh to 300 lakh

LALIT MOHAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
DHARAMSALA, JUNE 9
The Union Government has increased mandays to be provided to people in rural areas of Himachal under MGNREGA from 275 lakh to 300 lakh for the current financial year. Sources here said that owing to demand of work under MGNREGA in rural areas of Himachal, the state government had demanded from the Union Government that the number of man days of employment should be increased to 350 lakh. However, the Union Government has raised the man days to be provided in the state under MGNREGA from 275 lakh to 300 lakh days.

Director Rural Development and panchayats Himachal, Raghav Sharma, said the number of mandays to be provided under MGNREGA in Himachal had been increased from 275 lakh in last financial year to 300 lakh in the current financial year. He said the state government had already completed 20 per cent target of providing employment under MGNREGA for the current financial year. In case the state meets the target of giving employment for 300 lakh mandays till January 2025, a case could be presented to



MAY BE INCREASED FURTHER

- The Director Rural Development and Panchayats said the state government had already completed 20% target of providing employment under MGNREGA for the current financial year
- In case the state meets the target of giving employment for 300 lakh mandays

till January 2025, a case could be presented to the Union Government for further increase

- Last year also, the number of mandays was increased to 350 lakh mandays by the Union Government though initial sanction was 275 lakh mandays

the Union Government for further increase in number of mandays to be provided in state. Last year also, at a later stage it was increased to 350 lakh mandays by the Union Government though initial sanction was 275 lakh man days, he said.

Recently, the present Congress government had increased MGNREGA wages in the state from Rs 240 per day to Rs 300 per day. The Union Government provides Rs 235 per day daily wage while the remaining portion

has to be provided by the state government.

Raghav Sharma said from June onwards directions had been passed to respective district officials to provide daily wage of Rs 300 per day to MGNREGA workers in the state. The scheme of providing Rs 300 per day wage under MGNREGA was being implemented from April 1. The arrears of increased wages would be provided to labourers employed under MNREGA from April to June soon, he said.

Hamirpur boy wins 2 golds in para athletics Grand Prix

HAMIRPUR, JUNE 9
Saurabh Sharma, an athlete from Himachal Pradesh's Hamirpur district, has won two gold medals in the ongoing World Para Athletics Grand Prix in the Nottwil city of Switzerland. Sharma emerged victorious in 155 metre and 5000 metre races.

Sharma, who hails from Ropa Khayab village of Nadaun area in Hamirpur district, is representing the Indian team in the T12 category. This championship, which started on June 6, will conclude on June 9. He had earlier won seven gold medals at the national level.

Sharma is currently studying in the National Drishti Divyangjan Empowerment Institute in Dehradun. His coach Naresh Singh Nayal expressed happiness over Sharma's excellent performance. — PTI



Saurabh Sharma

Sportspersons get big hike in diet allowance

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
SHIMLA, JUNE 9
Following a significant increase in prize money for medal winners in various international championships, the state government has increased the diet allowance besides upgrading the travel provisions for the sportspersons.

The diet allowance for athletes had been substantially increased across various levels of competition. "For state-level events, the diet money has been increased from Rs 240 to Rs 400, while for district-level events, it stands at Rs 300, and Rs 240 for block-level events within the state. Athletes participating in events outside the state would now get Rs 500 as diet money. Apart from this, for athletes residing in sports hostels would receive Rs 250 up to the elementary education level and Rs 400 for others," said Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

The CM further said his government had also enhanced

TRAVEL PROVISIONS ALSO REVISED

The athletes travelling up to a distance of 200 km will now be provided with AC-3 tier train fare, while those travelling more than 200 km will be eligible for economy class airfare.

travel provisions for athletes participating in sports events outside the state. "The athletes travelling up to a distance of 200 km will now be provided with AC-3 tier train fare, while those travelling more than 200 km will be eligible for economy class airfare," he said.

Sukhu said these measures underscore the government's commitment to support and encourage the athletes of the state. "By improving the training conditions and participation incentives, the government aims to nurture the skills of sportspersons of the state, which would foster excellence in their respective sports," he said.

Two killed, five hurt in mishap

MANDI, JUNE 9
Two persons died, while five others sustained injuries in a road accident in Seraj area of Mandi district near Aahun Nala today.

A seven-seater vehicle met with an accident. The vehicle, carrying seven passengers, driver Sandeep (30), a native of Bilaspur district, his wife Neelam, their two children and Sandeep's in-laws, veered off the road while trying to overtake another vehicle near Aahun Nala area.

It collided with the vehicle. The collision resulted in the vehicle plunging into a ravine. Sandeep and Neelam lost their lives on the spot, while the other passengers sustained severe injuries. The injured were rushed to the nearby hospital at Bagsiad, from where they were referred to Nerchowk Hospital for medical treatment. Sandeep's father-in-law is in critical condition.

The police are investigating the incident to determine the exact cause of the accident. A case has been registered. — TNS

Mandi gears up to host four-day inaugural film fest from June 27

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE
MANDI, JUNE 9
The vibrant city of Mandi, renowned as the cultural hub of Himachal Pradesh, is gearing up to host its inaugural film festival. Spearheaded by filmmaker Pawan Sharma, who had directed films like 'Brima' and 'Karim Mohammad', the event promises a cinematic extravaganza from June 27 to 30.

Pawan Sharma hails from Mandi district. He is keen to organise this event successfully. Under the joint auspices of the Himachal International Film Festival and Rattan Jeweller, the festival aims to showcase a diverse selection of around 39 regional, art-house and foreign films, providing audiences with a rich cinematic experience.

Addressing the media persons here today, Pawan Sharma expressed the festival's mission to bring quality cinema to the masses, emphasising the pivotal role of films as a reflection of society. With focus on nationally and internationally acclaimed produc-



Filmmaker Pawan Sharma addresses mediapersons in Mandi.

tions, the festival aims to steer discourse and highlight societal issues. As part of its outreach, the festival will curate screenings for school children, featuring award-winning films from around the globe.

Highlighting the linguistic and cultural diversity of cinema, Sharma said the festival would feature films in various languages, including Gujarati, Himachali, Marathi and Bengali, alongside art-house productions and international festival winners.

"The festival's inaugural

day will be dedicated to Himachali cinema, celebrating narratives rooted in the state's rich culture, breathtaking landscapes and vibrant communities. Films like "The Rabbit House," set in a picturesque village in Kullu district, and "Chitta," helmed by a young Himachali director, exemplify this commitment to local storytelling. The festival will also pay respect to esteemed artists like Niraj Sood and Sapna, who have left an indelible mark on the film industry from Mandi," said Sharma.

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT
led by
CHIEF MINISTER BHAGWANT SINGH MANN
pays homage to
• The Revered 5th Sikh Guru •
SRI GURU ARJAN DEV JI
who made supreme sacrifice to uphold religious tolerance, social amity & peaceful co-existence
on his
418th MARTYRDOM DAY
Guru Ji's great contribution in compiling Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji and construction of Sri Harmandir Sahib at Amritsar shall be remembered till eternity
Bhagwant Singh Mann
Chief Minister, Punjab
Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab

The Tribune

ESTABLISHED IN 1881

Kangana 'slapgate'

Politicians, farm leaders must exercise restraint

THE farmers' agitation of 2020-21 continues to be an emotive issue in Punjab, going by the ugly episode involving newly elected BJP MP Kangana Ranaut and Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) constable Kulwinder Kaur. The latter slapped the actor-turned-politician at the Chandigarh airport last week. This was apparently in retaliation for some controversial statements by Kangana, who had claimed that farmers were being paid as low as Rs 100 or Rs 200 to protest at Delhi's borders. The film star had also mocked the women who were part of the historic stir. Kulwinder's mother was presumably among the protesters who had laid siege to Delhi for a year over the three Central farm laws. These were eventually repealed, but not before 700-odd agitators lost their lives.

Some farmers' outfits have rallied round the suspended constable, saying that the incident needs to be thoroughly investigated, even as a CISF officer has stated that the suspect probably acted in a rush of blood. Kulwinder is receiving a groundswell of support on social media, while Kangana also has her fair share of backers, including fellow celebrities who have denounced the use of violence to express anger. True to form, she has voiced her concern over the 'shocking rise in terror and violence in Punjab'.

The deplorable incident is symptomatic of the anti-BJP sentiment in the rural belt of the border state. Party candidates and campaigners were shown black flags and prevented from entering villages during the just-concluded Lok Sabha elections. The BJP's poll debacle in Punjab was attributed to the prolonged standoff between the state's farming community and the Modi government. A new flashpoint emerged this year when the protesting farmers' *Dilli Chalo* march was brutally stalled. Amid the prevailing acrimony, it is imperative for both politicians and farm leaders to exercise restraint and avoid provocative remarks. A return to the negotiating table would be in order to defuse tensions.

Long-delayed justice

Punjab ex-cops jailed for 1993 staged killing

IN a significant verdict on Friday, a CBI court in Mohali sentenced former Punjab Police DIG Dilbagh Singh to seven years of rigorous imprisonment and ex-DSP Gurbachan Singh to life imprisonment for their roles in the 1993 fake encounter killing of Gulshan Kumar, a fruit vendor. This case, a chilling reminder of the dark days of unbridled police brutality in Punjab, highlights the systemic lapses that had plagued the state. Extrajudicial killings, illegal detentions and staged encounters had become distressingly common. The details of this case are harrowing. On June 22, 1993, Gulshan, along with his father and brothers, was abducted by a police team led by Dilbagh and Gurbachan. While the others were released, Gulshan was kept in illegal custody for a month before being killed in a staged encounter. His body was cremated as 'unclaimed', a common practice then to cover up extrajudicial killings. The case, initially overlooked, was taken up by the CBI in 1995 on the Supreme Court's directive, culminating in the conviction nearly three decades later.

The law has at last been catching up with rogue cops. In September 2023, three ex-officers received the life sentence for the 1992 fake encounter killing of three youths. A year before that, a retired sub-inspector was sentenced to 10 years in another fake encounter of 1992. These cases reveal a pattern of grave misconduct and long-overdue comeuppance.

The delivery of justice underscores the resilience of the victims' families amid numerous challenges, including the death of several accused during the trial and witness attrition. This is crucial for restoring faith in the rule of law and can serve as a deterrent against abuse of power.

ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

The Tribune.

LAHORE, TUESDAY, JUNE 10, 1924

Judicial whitewashing

IF Mr Justice McCardie's whitewashing of Gen Dyer and of the whole body of wrong-doers under Martial Law was as bold a piece of judicial special pleading and absurdity as any Judge ever made himself responsible for, his whitewashing of the administration of Sir Michael O'Dwyer was scarcely less so. In both cases, the argument was much the same. Nobody had questioned the honesty of the officials concerned. This would have been a bad enough plea, even if the officials had been literally and technically on their defence before his lordship, especially in a criminal case. It was an entirely rotten plea, considering that the chief of these officials figured in the case, not as defendant but as plaintiff. Here the sole question was whether the defendant was justified, as a matter of fair criticism upon known facts, in making the remarks he had made. The honesty of the officials had nothing whatever to do with the matter. What the then Secretary of State said in his dispatch on the report of the Hunter Committee in regard to Gen Dyer is substantially true of all of them. The gravest feature of the case against them is their avowed conception of their duty in the circumstances which confronted them. It was literally a case of the path to a certain unnameable place being paved with noble intentions. Apart from this ingenious line of defence, there was another in the case of Sir O'Dwyer which clearly carried the absurdity a step further. "There was not a single witness," said the Judge in words which would have been more appropriate in the mouth of senior plaintiff, "who could say that he told Sir O'Dwyer (that terrorism prevailed in Punjab)."

Political compulsions back in calculus

Agnipath scheme finds itself under scrutiny, but not for professional reasons



CUDAY BHASKAR
DIRECTOR, SOCIETY FOR
POLICY STUDIES

THE defining outcome of the 2024 General Election is that India will be governed by a genuine coalition, wherein the BJP, the single largest party, needs critical support from two allies, the JD(U) and the TDP. Hence, both the form and content of governance in Modi 3.0 will not be similar to that seen in the past decade.

This shift has already come to the fore in the national security-military framework. The JD(U) has stated that a seemingly radical policy unveiled during Modi 2.0, the Agnipath scheme, needs to be reviewed. This scheme pertains to the induction of soldiers (Agniveers) into the military for a four-year period after a six-month training spell, and is a marked departure from the earlier model of pension and related benefits being provided to personnel below officer rank (PBOR) after 15 years of service.

In the run-up to the swearing-in ceremony, senior JD(U) leader KC Tyagi noted, "There is anger among certain sections on the Agnipath scheme. Our party wants those shortcomings removed." When the scheme was announced in mid-2022, there was considerable consternation in professional circles, for this decision appeared to have been taken by the PMO unilaterally. The military top brass was apparently not apprised of the fine print of the new scheme and nor was there a detailed discussion among parliamentarians.

Gen MM Naravane, who was the Army Chief from December



COALITION PRESSURE The JD(U), an ally of the BJP, wants the Agnipath scheme reviewed. ANI

2019 to April 2022, has provided a valuable insight in his yet-to-be-published memoir about the Agnipath scheme. He notes that while he had mooted the idea of a 'tour of duty' pilot scheme to induct soldiers for a short-term tenure, the PMO's formulation unveiled in 2022 had a sweeping scope and included all three services. The memoir adds: "We, in the Army, were taken by surprise by this turn of events, but for the Navy and the Air Force, it came like a bolt from the blue."

In keeping with the tenets of a normative democracy, if the political leadership arrives at a policy decision, the military top brass has to comply, and this was the case with Agnipath. In hindsight, it is evident that budgetary considerations (saving on the pension bill) were the principal drivers for Modi 2.0 in pushing the scheme, and the impact on the combat efficiency of the military was a secondary consideration.

While the long-term efficacy and benefits to composite national security of the Agnipath scheme will be apparent after a decade or so, what the JD(U)'s demand has done is to bring political compulsions back into the military calculus. An alliance

As Modi 3.0 begins, it would be useful if parliamentarians and domain experts are permitted to take an objective view of last decade's big-ticket changes.

partner in a coalition government is compelling the BJP to review a policy initiative, but not for professional reasons. It is to assuage the anger and desperation among a large swathe of the youth in Bihar who have been denied what was an opportunity to don the uniform and have the security of a government pension. During the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections, Opposition parties led by the Congress and the Samajwadi Party had voiced their reservations about the mili-

tary recruitment scheme.

It is not a desirable sequence of events, wherein major national security decisions and policies are contested post facto. This could have been avoided if Modi 2.0 had engaged in consultative deliberations on the Agnipath scheme both within Parliament and with the military top brass before announcing it.

There is no denying that the Indian military and the higher defence management lattice are in dire need of a review and re-wiring. During Modi 1.0, there were four defence ministers and the only major decision taken was the grant of OROP (one rank, one pension) in November 2015, and it was welcomed. During his second term (2019-24), PM Modi took a bold and radical decision of creating the post of CDS (Chief of Defence Staff) and creating the DMA (Department of Military Affairs). Five years later, this re-organisation is still a work in progress.

Parliamentary forms of government evolve their own template of governance and policy formulation. In India's case, each PM — from Nehru onwards — has made the PMO more powerful. But traditionally, deliberations within Parli-

ment and, particularly, within the individual committees have played a valuable role in injecting transparency and allowing for both an objective review and consensus-building.

This is not the preferred model in Modi's book of governance. Hence, whether it pertains to the Agnipath scheme or the appointment of a retired three-star officer as a four-star CDS, the decisions were taken by the PMO in a peremptory manner. This augurs poorly for the long-term national security and the apolitical ethos of the military. Domestic political considerations and short-term electoral benefits have shaped internal security matters. The Manipur tragedy is a case in point.

Powerful PMs can lurch into grave policy blunders that irreparably degrade national security; the Nehru-Krishna Menon debacle should serve as a warning. It would be highly desirable for national security matters to be deliberated upon by legislators and within committees, and hasty decision-making avoided.

As Modi 3.0 begins, it would be useful if parliamentarians and domain experts are permitted to take an objective view of last decade's big-ticket changes and an assessment made about the current status of India's composite military capabilities. The BC Khanduri Parliamentary Committee report of 2017 regarding military inventory gaps could be a good starting point.

Agnipath apart, the focus on *atmani bharta* (self-reliance) to reduce imports is much needed. The trigger for such a review must evolve from within the system and not be driven by political compulsions or a major security setback, like the Galwan dash of 2020.

The most urgent task for Modi 3.0 is to appoint a new Army Chief before mid-June. One hopes that politics will not trump the time-tested principles that nurture institutional rectitude and integrity.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

The soldier is the Army. No Army is better than its soldiers. — Gen George S Patton

The gentle, witty bhajis of Doaba

POONAM KHAIRA SIDHU

IN Punjab, your regional identity often defines who you are. If Malwa is famous for its cool *kakajis*, Majha is known by its fierce *bhaus* and Doaba for its gentle *bhajis*.

Nestled between the Beas and Sutlej rivers, Doaba is special because of its geography, fertile land, flourishing industry and a large diaspora. *Doabias* are spread across Canada, the US, the UK and Australia. Their global presence brings in remittances and has made the region a melting pot of modern influences. No wonder some homes, marriage palaces, hotels and even hospitals there look like mini European castles, complete with baroque paintings and plastic hothouse flowers.

A *Doabia* joke that captures the regional ethos talks about a *Malwai*, a *Majhail* and a *Doabia* boasting about their homeland. The *Malwai* says: 'In Malwa, summers are so hot that even the crows carry water bottles.' The *Majhail* replies: 'That's nothing. In Majha, we are so tough, we use bulletproof vests as raincoats.' The *Doabia* says: 'In Doaba, our relatives send us air-conditioners and raincoats from Europe.' This joke highlights the stereotype of *Doabias* being well-connected globally, while also playing on the toughness of Majha residents and the extreme weather of Malwa.

Blessed with fertile soil, Doaba has adopted modern agricultural practices. Ever seen someone chase away crows with the determination of a gladiator? Visit a *Doabian* farm. Another story that underscores the resourcefulness of its people and their ability to leverage their global connections for local benefits is about a *Malwai*, a *Majhail* and a *Doabia* who decide to compete in a farming competition. The *Malwai* boasts: 'Our soil is so rich that crops grow double the size of those anywhere else!' The *Majhail* retorts: 'In Majha, we have the most advanced irrigation techniques. Our crops are always treble the size of those elsewhere.' The *Doabia*, smiling gently, says: 'Well, we just call up our relatives in Canada and they send us the latest equipment and seeds. The crop size rises manifold.'

Doabias are urbane, savvy and smooth operators. Unlike those from Majha, who deal with the struggles of living near the border or the Malwa folks, who brave the scorching heat, *Doabias* are city-bred; thanks to good schools and colleges, many make a career in medicine, Army or the hospitality sector — if they don't move abroad. The sports and leather industries are testament to the region's entrepreneurial spirit.

Doabias' storytelling skills are legendary. One tale goes thus: at a wedding, a buffalo strolled in. The bride's uncle, known for his quick wit, declared that it was an old family friend who just couldn't miss the celebration. The guests erupted in laughter, even as the buffalo munched on flowers.

The *Doabias* are a delightful blend of humour, heart and hustle. The next time you meet one, be ready to laugh and pick up a few life lessons along the way.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Modi's moment of truth

With reference to 'Keep your friends close, enemies closer'; as Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarks on his third term, political manoeuvring becomes paramount. The warmth from allies like N Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar masks a precarious balance of power. With Sonia Gandhi's rumoured outreach to NDA partners, the adage 'Keep your friends close, but your enemies closer' is more relevant than ever. Modi must navigate this landscape with the cunning of Chanakya and Machiavelli. The internal dynamics within the NDA, coupled with an emboldened Opposition, demand strategic acumen. Naidu's focus on Andhra Pradesh may benefit Modi, but the larger question remains: Can the PM manage these intricate alliances without compromising his vision? The coming months will reveal whether this coalition stays resilient or fractures under pressure.

GURDEV SINGH, MOHALI

Holding the coalition steady

Refer to 'Keep your friends close, enemies closer'; the article captures the intricate dynamics of PM Narendra Modi's third-term manoeuvring, emphasising the need for Chanakya and Machiavelli-like strategic pragmatism. As Modi consolidates power, allies like Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar must align with the Centre's demands to secure essential financial aid for their states. Despite Sonia Gandhi's overtures for a coalition shift, Modi retained power as the INDIA bloc lacked the numbers. Potential infighting in the NDA and possible parliamentary disruptions reveal a tactical style of governance. Keeping allies close and adversaries closer will be crucial for Modi to maintain stability in the coalition in the coming months.

CHANCHAL S MANN, UNA

Spreading awareness is the key

Apropos of the editorial 'Child food poverty'; though India has achieved self-sufficiency in food production, it does not guarantee food security. It is unfortunate that, despite having surplus food, hunger still persists in the country. A significant num-

ber of children do not have access to a protein-rich diet or grains. The significance of consuming a diet rich in nutrition for the healthy development of young children cannot be emphasised enough. The government should focus on stepping up food intake among young children. A nationwide awareness campaign to enlighten the masses about the perils of malnutrition is the need of the hour.

GAURAV BADHWAR, ROHTAK

Spectre of militancy in Punjab

Apropos of the news report 'Cop slapped Kangana Ranaut in rush of blood, says CISF'; the statement by Vinay Kajla — who is the DIG, CISF, Airport (North Sector) — suggesting that the constable had assaulted MP-elect Kangana Ranaut in a rush of blood is irresponsible and uncalled for. It does not matter if the CISF staffer had a clean record of 15 years. She had no right to raise her hand on the actor. The SKM and other farm unions have made life miserable for the masses. There are some anti-social elements in the state who harbour separatist sentiments. On top of that, a cash reward and support have been announced for the erring official, setting a dangerous precedent. It seems like the people of Punjab have not learnt anything from the long spell of militancy in the state.

JAGDISH BANYAL, BY MAIL

Kangana must watch her mouth

The CISF staffer's assault on actor-turned-politician Kangana Ranaut at the Chandigarh airport is condemnable. There is no place for violence in this country. But the actor's remarks on rising terrorism in Punjab are highly inappropriate. As an MP, she must refrain from making statements that can hurt the religious sentiments of a community. She may have to pay a heavy price for her words. Besides, as the CISF's Vinay Kajla put it, Kulwinder had acted in a rush of blood over some derogatory remarks previously made by Kangana on the farmers' stir. Stringent action should be taken against the Bollywood actor for hurting the sentiments of the Sikh community.

NYAMATDEEP KAUR, AMRITSAR

Use of violence to vent anger condemnable



SHERBIR PANAG
LAWYER AND COMMENTATOR

A CISF constable, Kulwinder Kaur, slapped actor and MP-elect from Mandi, Kangana Ranaut, at the Chandigarh airport on June 6. While the CISF promptly (and rightly so) suspended Kulwinder and handed over the matter to the local police, polarised narratives almost instantly overtook the events.

There were those who expressed support for Kulwinder, celebrating the act, offering her a job and suggesting that Kangana deserved violence because of the abhorrent statements that she had made about Sikhs, Punjab and the farmers' protest. On the other hand, there were the moderates, who rightly castigated what Kulwinder did as being contrary to the ethos of the uniform. And then, there were the not-so-moderate ones, who concluded that this was an act of terror and that Punjab was on the brink of secessionism by lazily correlating this incident with the election of Amritpal Singh and Sarab-

jeet Singh Khalsa. In short, the usual trope, devoid of reality, that has been peddled since the farmers' protest. Kangana, as if on cue, added her two bits of 'concern' and equated the incident with the 'rise of terrorism' in Punjab.

First things first — violence, for any reason whatsoever, is not acceptable. The use of violence to make a political statement is not okay. And violence by someone in uniform — who is sworn to protect the Constitution of India and all Indians alike — is not acceptable. Neither one's political beliefs and biases nor the actions of the recipient of violence should dictate how we feel about violence. There is no space for support to what Kulwinder did. There can be no justification for it and no ifs and buts or nuances associated with this position.

Kangana's abhorrent remarks on Sikhs and Punjab during and after the farmers' protest do not justify an act of violence against her, and I say this as someone who has sparred with her and attracted the vitriol and abuse of her supporters. We cannot justify someone in uniform making a political statement on duty — whatever the provocation. This is a slippery slope, and what the meme makers, stand-up comics, artistes and others fail to realise is



FACE-OFF: CISF constable Kulwinder Kaur (R) slapped Kangana Ranaut at the Chandigarh airport last week. PH

that they could also be on the receiving end of violence one day. We must not forget that it was only last year that a constable of the Railway Protection Force killed four persons aboard the Jaipur-Mumbai Superfast Express, and at least three of the victims were allegedly targeted by him on account of their religion.

The uniform cannot be politicised, and if it is, it will lead to disastrous consequences. It would be incorrect to label the CISF an unprofessional force — which it is not — based on Kulwinder's unbecoming conduct, but it would be pertinent to also address the 'yeoman service' that some officers in the mili-

Kangana Ranaut's abhorrent remarks on Sikhs and Punjab during and after the farmers' protest do not justify an act of violence against her.

tary and paramilitary forces have rendered to the politicisation of their offices. The rank and file observe their leaders. And if the leaders depart from their constitutional duties, join political events, make political statements in service and run as candidates of the ruling party immediately after demitting office, then politicisation will occur and manifest itself in different forms.

But equating what Kulwinder did to an act of terrorism is highly objectionable and sinister. To constantly take every incident involving a Sikh or Punjabi and call into question their patriotism is no longer a

laughing matter and must be unequivocally condemned. That it has been normalised is deeply concerning. It finds its genesis in the not-so-civil discourse that surrounded the farmers' agitation and the events thereafter.

The right to protest in a democracy is fundamental and absolute, as is the right to oppose those who protest. Therefore, it was entirely within the growers' right to hold a stir against what they believed were unjust laws, and others are entitled to disagree with their cause. That the Government of India saw merit in their demands and ultimately repealed the laws is lost on various IT cells of political parties and trolls. Unfortunately, the discourse at the time reached the lowest of lows, and whoever protested or disagreed with the government was labelled an anti-national, a terrorist, an urban Naxal or a member of some fabled 'Tukde Tukde' gang and was subjected to hate and bigotry and faced calls for violence.

This has now been stretched ad absurdum, and Indians are being called on to answer for the statements and actions of the diaspora as well. Collectively, this is the greatest disservice one Indian can do to another, and that we do so with impunity is nothing we should be proud of. But the

damage that these bizarre narratives have done in creating social fissures and fractures is going to last long and will only be compounded or fanned by statements of prominent BJP leaders.

There is no terrorism in Punjab, and the state rejected the idea of Khalistan long ago. Does Punjab have deeper social, economic and political challenges? Absolutely. And do these challenges create fissures and give rise to a fringe? Yes, they do. But has Punjab adopted the fringe en masse? Absolutely not. I am not doing a detailed analysis of the Khadoor Sahib election in this piece, but I will say that Amritpal's election has got nothing to do with what Kulwinder did. The fearmongers don't understand Punjab and that Amritpal and his supporters have not won all 13 Lok Sabha seats. Nor do they take note of the fact that Simranjit Singh Mann lost in Sangrur and that Amritpal will soon be taking an oath on the Constitution of India.

Let me conclude with something I am pained to say. I should not have to say it, but I feel compelled to — that for most members of my generation — we are Indian, Sikh and Punjabi. And there is no contradiction between any of these identities. While the second and third are interchangeable, the first is not.

Biased predictions to blame for exit poll fiasco



ATANU BISWAS
PROFESSOR, INDIAN STATISTICAL INSTITUTE, KOLKATA

I have never been a fan of exit and opinion polls. Rather, I consistently say that we shouldn't treat them seriously; they should be regarded as game shows. Thus, I am not at all astonished by the exit poll fiasco in the just-concluded Lok Sabha elections.

Usually, people are bewildered by the disparate predictions of exit polls. The uncertainty persists until the EVM votes are counted. But it was a different scenario this time. Nearly all exit polls got it wrong.

These days, dozens of these polls are conducted by various organisations, with sample sizes ranging from a few thousand to a few lakh. I have heard that those conducting a recent exit poll claimed that its sample size was one crore! But how do the polls stand? How do the investigators question the voters? Unfortunately, I was never asked whom I would vote for or had voted for by an exit poll or opinion poll surveyor. I asked my acquaintances, and to my surprise — and regrettably —

none of them were ever approached by a pollster. Overall, such a low-probability event might have happened to me by chance. However, how do pollsters make poll predictions worldwide? It's primarily a statistical task, for sure. One must choose a sample size that will keep the prediction within a predetermined error range, say 3 per cent. One requires a sampling frame, random sample selection and proportionate representation across society. And then one must appropriately analyse the data using some auxiliary information, such as the voter list or other demographic data.

However, since the majority of the pollsters don't disclose information about their sampling frame, sampling technique and summary statistics across several margins, we are unable to determine where they make grave mistakes and how those mistakes accumulate to produce a blunder.

Ideally, an exit poll survey should be conducted on voters just leaving the polling booths, which ought to be chosen at random with appropriate weightage. Every fifth or 10th person in a chosen booth must be questioned about his or her vote; this is called 'systematic sampling'. The investigator has to decline if some overly enthusiastic people want to opine in between. Are our exit polls adhering to these



PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECT: Pollsters attempt to gauge respondents' political inclinations. PH

standards? Do the investigators cover voters at different periods of the day? Do the pollsters visit sensitive booths in the right proportion or in the most remote areas of the country for their surveys? Usually, we don't know the answers to these questions. Only the estimated magic numbers are provided by the pollsters. To us, everything is merely an output from a black box, and we are unable to assess its quality.

What about sample sizes? The claim of a one-crore sample size by a polling organisation brought to mind a prediction made during the 1936 US presidential election by a reputed magazine, *Literary Digest*. The poll, which had a sample size of 24 lakh, showed that the

Would everyone feel comfortable telling an anonymous pollster what they really thought about voting, especially if their choice ran counter to the prevailing wind?

Democratic candidate, incumbent President Franklin D Roosevelt, would receive only 43 per cent of the votes and the Republican nominee, Alfred Landon, would get 57 per cent. In reality, the outcome was even worse than the opposite: Landon received only 38 per cent of the votes, while Roosevelt got an overwhelming 62 per cent. A retrospective examination showed that the sample had a serious selection bias: the people chosen for this opinion poll were drawn from lists of magazine subscriptions, club memberships and telephone directories, all of which at the time were considered to be indicators of wealth. A significant non-response bias was also pres-

ent in the sample; out of the one crore people the magazine approached for their opinions, only 24 per cent replied. However, this was an opinion poll survey. Thirty-one years later, in the Kentucky governor election, pollster Warren Mitofsky of *CBS News* would conduct the first exit poll.

In any event, both exit and opinion polls have consistently produced inaccurate results across the globe. Politicians of all hues would concur that these predictions can't be blindly believed.

The key point is that poll predictions can go horribly wrong, even when pollsters adhere diligently to statistical rules. The rationale is that the poll is really a psychological one in which researchers attempt to gauge respondents' political inclinations, a very delicate subject. In a political society like ours, this is an even more delicate matter. Would everyone feel comfortable telling some anonymous pollster what they really thought about politics and voting, especially if their choice ran counter to the prevailing wind? Thus, if respondents' comments are believed at face value, the poll's predictions would be glaringly inaccurate. However, one doesn't need to know who is lying specifically; only a reasonable estimate of the overall proportions of individuals supporting various parties would suffice. Do our pollsters employ a suitable

methodology in order to make sense of their predictions by using suitable statistical filtering of the responses? I have never heard of a pollster claiming to have used any kind of methodology for filtering in his or her predictions, at least.

Let's acknowledge that supporters of particular political parties are reluctant to participate in these kinds of surveys. As a result, supporters of Opposition parties have artificially boosted the sample. In that scenario, one should expect a skewed and biased prediction. In the UK, pollsters are aware of the 'shy Tory factor' or the reluctance of Conservative party members to participate in such surveys. A similar 'shy Trump factor' surfaced following Donald Trump's election in 2016. Do our pollsters know which party's supporters are reluctant to participate in these kinds of exercises? Do they alter the sampling design appropriately to address this important issue?

Following its dismal 1936 predictions, *Literary Digest* did not conduct the exercise subsequently. Perhaps it understood that this wasn't its task. Nonetheless, throughout the Assembly elections scheduled for later this year, we will be inundated with poll predictions. And perhaps their 'success' would be applauded if some of them turned out to be true — by chance.

QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Enemy within the gates (5,6)
- Effective (2,5)
- An obsession (5)
- Be entitled to (4)
- Keep one's distance (5,3)
- Unequaled (6)
- Shade of meaning (6)
- Act of retaliation (8)
- Rouse (4)
- Escape from by guile (5)
- Flow in drops (7)
- He, she, it, they (5,6)

DOWN

- Deduce (5)
- Become sour (4)
- Bring into being (6)
- Giving out light (8)
- Seasonal Indian Ocean wind (7)
- Show mercy to enemy (4,7)
- Lacking enthusiasm (4-7)
- Military insurrectionist (8)
- Call in question (7)
- Short of money (4,2)
- Outlawed by social custom (5)
- Habitually untruthful person (4)

SATURDAY'S solution

Across: 1 Demote, 4 Shambles, 9 Lonely, 10 Claptrap, 12 Rifle, 13 Balmy, 14 Plan, 17 Milk-and-water, 20 Bureaucratic, 23 Ache, 24 Alley, 25 Fair, 28 Tolerant, 29 Dawdle, 30 Crevasse, 31 Flimsy.

Down: 1 Doldrums, 2 Manifold, 3 Toll, 5 Half measures, 6 Mope, 7 Lordly, 8 Supine, 11 Hard feelings, 15 Value, 16 Zebra, 18 At random, 19 Scarcely, 21 Baltic, 22 Shelve, 26 Area, 27 Fall.

SU DO KU

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

MEDIUM

FORECAST

CITY	MONDAY TUESDAY	MAX	MIN
Chandigarh	43	28	
New Delhi	44	28	
Amritsar	42	27	
Bathinda	43	25	
Jalandhar	41	26	
Ludhiana	43	27	
Bhivani	44	27	
Hisar	43	27	
Sirsa	44	29	
Dharamsala	33	22	
Manali	26	13	
Shimla	29	17	
Srinagar	29	11	
Jammu	41	24	
Kargil	26	11	
Leh	22	06	
Dehradun	40	24	
Mussoorie	29	18	

TEMPERATURE IN °C

SATURDAY'S SOLUTION

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

CALENDAR

JUNE 10, 2024, MONDAY

- Shaka Samvat 1946
- Jyeshtha Shaka 20
- Jyeshtha Parvishite 28
- Hijari 1445
- Shukla Paksha Tithi 4, up to 4.16 pm
- Dhruva Yoga up to 4.47 pm
- Pushya Nakshatra up to 9.40 pm
- Moon in Cancer sign
- Gandmoola Start 9.40 pm

1 dead, 14 hurt as vehicle rolls down gorge in Udhampur

JAMMU, JUNE 9 One person was killed and 14 others injured when a mini-bus skidded off the road and fell into a gorge in Udhampur district on Sunday.

The passenger vehicle was on its way to Nagrota from Manwal when its driver lost

control near Battal around 3.45 pm, a police officer said. An unidentified person was found dead at the scene by the rescuers, while 14 others were rushed to a hospital for treatment. The police have initiated a probe into the incident. — PTI

BJP reviews why vote share fell in Jammu Assembly segments

Anger in Gujjar community over grant of ST status to Paharis among factors

ARJUN SHARMA

JAMMU, JUNE 9

The BJP has started the process to scrutinise the reasons for its poor show in several Assembly segments of Jammu region during the recently held Lok Sabha poll, even as its two candidates were able to retain their seats and win their third consecutive terms.

The party high command has asked the J&K unit of the party, led by Ravinder Raina, to ascertain the reasons behind dip in the winning margin of the two candidates — Jitendra Singh from Udhampur and Jugal Kishore Sharma from Jammu Lok Sabha seats, respectively. Even the non-BJP candidates supported by the saffron party were not able to perform well, especially in the Anantnag constituency, which include Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu.

The BJP-led Centre had granted Scheduled Tribe (ST) status to the Pahari speaking people of Rajouri and Poonch and was expecting their support in the election.

While Apni Party candidate Zafar Iqbal Manhas, who had the backing of the BJP, was able to secure the votes of Pahari population in some



TIME TO FOCUS ON VIDHAN SABHA POLL

“After a phenomenal performance in the Lok Sabha poll, the time has come to focus on the upcoming Assembly poll as the announcement of its schedule is on the cards. The Election Commission can declare the dates for poll any day now.”

Kavinder Gupta, BJP LEADER & FORMER DY CM

<< BJP leader Ashok Koul holds a meeting with party workers in Srinagar. TRIBUNE PHOTO

Assembly segments of Anantnag, the Gujjar population strongly voted in favour of NC's Mian Altaf, who won the poll.

It was expected that the Gujjars would vote against the BJP as they believed that quota meant for them had been given to Paharis.

In certain areas of Udhampur and Jammu LS, the BJP nominees trailed behind the Congress candidates in vote tally. The saffron party witnessed setbacks, especially in Muslim-dominated areas of these constituencies, a development which is now giving nightmares to the local unit of the party, which

has already started preparing for the Assembly poll to be held by September 30.

Jitendra Singh had got 51.28 per cent votes against 61.38 per cent in 2019, while Jugal Kishore Sharma got 53.46 per cent votes this time, against 58.02 per cent in the 2019 election. The Election Commission has indicated that it would conduct the Assembly elections in J&K as per the directions of the Supreme Court, which had asked the poll body to conduct poll before September 30.

In the Udhampur seat, Congress candidate Choudhary Lal Singh was able to secure

more votes than the saffron party in Inderwal, Bhandarwah, Doda and Banihal Assembly segments. Lal Singh was also supported by the PDP and NC in Udhampur, and both of these parties did not field candidates to avoid division of votes. The BJP led in 14 of 18 Assembly segments in Udhampur.

It has been learnt that the saffron party is already in discussion with the local leaders of the district to increase the percentage of vote share in the Assembly poll. In the Jammu Lok Sabha seat, BJP's Jugal Kishore Sharma led in 15 of 18 Assembly con-

stituencies. The party did not perform well in Jammu East, Nagrota, Ramgarh and Bahu segments, even as they are Hindu-dominated. Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta recently asked party workers to intensify efforts and concentrate on winning the upcoming Assembly poll.

Gupta said: “After a phenomenal performance in the Lok Sabha poll, the time has come to focus on the upcoming Assembly poll as the announcement of its schedule is on the cards and the Election Commission can declare the dates any day now.”

Lamba: Modi will be a weak PM in 3rd term

SRINAGAR, JUNE 9

Narendra Modi would be a “weak” Prime Minister in his third term as the BJP did not get majority on its own in the Lok Sabha elections, Congress leader Alka Lamba said here on Sunday.

“A weak PM is taking oath, this PM does not have majority. The autocrat is falling weak. He was asking for 400 seats to change the Constitution. He failed to even get majority,” Lamba said. She who was here

‘Cong top brass to take call on continuation of pre-poll alliances’

to interact with Mahila Congress leaders and workers.

She claimed the Opposition had achieved a “victory” in saving democracy in the country. “Modi won't be able to crush democracy now. He won't be able to deny the rights of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the country. This is our victory,” Lamba added. “In J&K, the BJP won two seats, INDIA won two seats while an Independent won one seat. If we talk about Kashmir, BJP did not even field a candidate because the wounds inflicted by them on J&K are very deep,” she said. Asked if the Congress would continue its pre-poll alliances, Lamba said the party's top leadership would take a call on it. — PTI

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTE SOCIETY SCD GOVT COLLEGE, LUDHIANA

Applications on Contract/DC Rates/Fixed Salary are invited in the prescribed format (available on the college website www.scdgovtcollege.ac.in within 10 days of publication of this advertisement for the posts Assistant Prof. (Computer Science, Commerce, Mathematics), Office Superintendent, Technical Assistant/Lab Attendant in Computer Lab, Clerk and Peon under HEIS, S.C.D. Govt. College, Ludhiana. Eligibility as per Pb. Govt./PU/JGC Norms.

Sd/- Chairman/Chairperson

DI-3699

ICMR NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF NUTRITION (INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH)

Jamai Osmania Post, Tarnaka, Hyderabad - 500 007, TS

Advt. No. 346/Projects/DABS/Phase-III/Chandigarh/2024 Date: 28.05.2024

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW

Eligible candidates are invited to attend the Walk-in-Interview for various Project Posts on temporary basis for the Pan India Study entitled “Diet and Biomarkers Survey in India (DABS-II)” funded by ICMR. The interviews will be held on 12th & 13th June, 2024 at Government Medical College & Hospital, Sector - 32, Chandigarh. For more details like Name of the Post, Age, Essential Qualifications, Number of vacancies, Emoluments etc., visit our website: nin.res.in/employment.html

Sd/- Sr. Administrative Officer for Director

GOVT. OF INDIA DEPARTMENT OF POSTS

Office of Chief Postmaster General, Punjab Circle Chandigarh

No. CP/11-1/2022/Vol-II Dated at Chandigarh, the 30.05.2024

127th DAK ADALAT

Punjab Postal Circle is organizing 127th Dak Adalat on 20.06.2024 from 11:00 Hours to 12:00 Hours in the office of the Chief Postmaster General, Punjab Circle, Sandesh Bhawan, Sector-17E, Chandigarh - 160017. The said Dak Adalat will be held through C-DOT video conferencing. The Adalat will attend all types of long pending complaints concerning Postal Services of Punjab Circle. The complainant must contain full details including reference number, date of letter received earlier from various Postal Authorities and the Mobile Number of complainant and forwarded in advance through Registered/Speed Post. The complainant should be addressed to Sh. Deepak Sharma, Assistant Postmaster General (Public Grievances), O/o the Chief Postmaster General, Punjab Circle, Chandigarh - 160017 so as to reach on or before 14.06.2024 by Registered/Speed Post. The complainant is requested to attend Dak Adalat through C-DOT video conferencing through the link <https://cdotmeet.cdoinvmeet/punm71-z2f> on the above scheduled date and time. For any clarification Assistant Postmaster General (Public Grievances) may be contacted in Telephone No. 0172-2727002/2706700.

Sd/- Assistant Postmaster General, (Public Grievances), Punjab Circle, Chandigarh.

CBC 06341/11.0001/2425

PM SHRI SCHOOL JAWAHAR NAVODAYA VIDYALAYA PEKHUBELA DISTRICT UNA HIMACHAL PRADESH — 174303

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender are invited from the registered firms/suppliers/manufacturers/authorized dealers, Self Help Groups, MSME for the following supplies/services for the year 2024-25.

Sr. No.	Item
1.	M&R LABOUR RATES/SERVICES
2.	FRUIT AND VEGETABLES
3.	SWEETS, BREAD AND REFRESHMENT ITEMS
4.	WASHING AND IRONING OF UNIFORM

Tender document along with terms and conditions are available on our Vidyalaya website <https://navodaya.gov.in/nvs/nvs-school/UNA/en/home/index.html> and <https://eprocurement.gov.in>. Document can also be had from our office on any working day between 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM against payment of Rs. 300/- only. The documents, if downloaded must accompany cost of tender in the shape of Demand Draft separately besides EMSD (Financial Bid & Technical Bid should be in separate envelop). Duly filled in tender complete in all respect can either be submitted by Registered post or dropped in tender box on or before 28.06.2024 by 4:00 PM. Tenders will be opened on 29.06.2024 in the office of the Principal in the presence of suppliers who wish to be present. PAC reserves the right to accept or reject any tender partially or fully without assigning any reason.

Sd/- Principal

NOTICE FOR ENGAGEMENT ON CONTRACT BASIS

Applications are invited from eligible retired persons for the following posts in the office of Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority, Gurugram for engaging on contract basis as below:

Sr. No.	Name of the post	Eligibility Criteria
1.	District Revenue Officer/Tehsildar	Retired as District Revenue Officer/Tehsildar from Govt. of Haryana.
2.	Judgement Writer	Retired as Judgement Writer/Senior Scale Stenographer from Govt. of Haryana or Punjab & Haryana High Court/District Court/Tribunal of Haryana.
3.	Stenographer	Retired as Stenographer from Govt. of Haryana/Central Government or any of their Public Sector Undertaking/Board/Corporation or High Court/District Court/Tribunal of Haryana.
4.	Reader	Retired as Reader from Revenue Department, Govt. of Haryana or Punjab & Haryana High Court/District Court/Tribunal of Haryana.
5.	Ahlmad	Retired as Ahlmad from Government of Haryana or Punjab & Haryana High Court/District Court/Tribunal of Haryana.
6.	Record Keeper	Retired as Record Keeper from Govt. of Haryana or Punjab & Haryana High Court/District Court/Tribunal of Haryana.

Age Limit: The incumbent shall be below 65 years of age as on 01.01.2024.

Tenure of Engagement: Initially the engagement shall be for a period of one year which may be extendable on year to year basis, based on suitability and performance.

Salary: Last pay drawn minus uncommuted pension as per Government Rules.

The interested candidates may submit their Bio-Data along with all supporting documents and a recent passport size photograph in the office of the Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority, Gurugram at New PWD Rest House, Civil Lines, Gurugram on or before 24.06.2024 (by 5:00 PM). Notice may also be seen on the website of HARERA, Gurugram www.harayanarera.gov.in for information of the prospective candidates.

Date: Secretary For: Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority, Gurugram

Cong, Azad condemn Reasi bus terror attack

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

The Congress on Sunday condemned the gruesome terror attack on a bus carrying pilgrims that resulted in the loss of nine lives and said the incident reflects the true picture of the worrying security situation in J&K.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge said: “Even while PM Narendra Modi and his NDA government get sworn in and heads of several countries are in the country, a dastardly terrorist attack on a bus carrying pilgrims has resulted in loss of lives of at least 10 Indians. We unequivocally condemn this gruesome terror attack on our people and deliberate affront to our national security,” he said in a post on X.

Congress leader Rahul

PEACE CLAIMS HOLLOW

“All the chest-thumping propaganda of bringing peace and normalcy by the Modi (now NDA) government rings hollow. India stands united against terrorism.”

Mallikarjun Kharge, CONG CHIEF

Gandhi said the cowardly terrorist attack on a bus carrying pilgrims from Shivkhodi temple in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district was extremely saddening. Former CM and DPAP chief Ghulam Nabi Azad also condemned the terror attack. Taking to X, Azad said: “Strongly condemn the terror attack on the pilgrim bus in Ransoo, Reasi.” — Agencies

All steps being taken to maintain peace: Army

OUR CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR, JUNE 9

General officer Commanding (GoC) of Srinagar-based Army's 15 Corps, Lieutenant Governor Rajiv Ghai, on Sunday said the situation along the Line of Control (LoC) was stable and all measures were being taken to maintain peace in the Valley. He was talking to reporters on the sidelines of a felicitation ceremony of Kargil War veterans at the General Bipin Rawat Stadium in Baramulla.

On the remarks made by DGP RR Swain on Saturday that 70 to 80 foreign terrorists were active in J&K and the focus of terrorism had shifted from local to foreign, the GoC said: “The numbers suggested by the DGP are a fact. Whatever is needed to keep the situation stable will be done by the



Army officials during a felicitation ceremony of Kargil War veterans at the General Bipin Rawat Stadium in Baramulla on Sunday.

security agencies.”

About situation along the LoC, the GoC said: “The situation along the borders is stable.” On the recent successful anti-militancy operation in South Kashmir, in which the longest surviving Lashkar-e-

Toiba commander was killed, the GoC 15 Corps said: “Every successful anti-militancy operation is a progress ahead.”

Earlier, the GoC said in the Kargil War, the Himalayan regiment of the Army had given a befitting reply to the enemy.

Security forces recover IEDs in Pulwama

SRINAGAR, JUNE 9

The security forces recovered two Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) from a field in Pulwama district on Sunday, an official said.

The IEDs — buried underground in two plastic containers — were recovered by the security forces from the Nehama area of Pulwama district, the official added. He said that a bomb disposal squad was summoned at the site and the explosives were destroyed by the forces without causing any damage. Many IEDs have been recovered in the Union Territory in the recent past. — PTI

Bittu: Will act as bridge between...

two-decade political career, the 48-year-old firebrand politician vows to act as a bridge between Punjab and Delhi. “I will take up all issues concerning Punjab, mainly those related to farmers, directly with the PM to get these addressed once for all,” the Congress-turned-BJP leader told *The Tribune* over the phone from Delhi. “It was an unexpected call that I received this morning following which I rushed to the PM's residence where I was told that I would be part of the Modi 3.0 Cabinet,” Bittu said. He said his induction into the Cabinet had proved that Punjab figured on the top among Modi's priority states.

“The BJP lost all 13 Lok Sabha seats in Punjab and still gave a Cabinet berth to the state. It is nothing less than Modi's gift to Punjab,” Bittu said. Maintaining that the farmers' protest was among the major issues, Bittu said he would talk to farm union leaders and take them to PM Modi to get all their genuine demands met and bring a permanent solution to the issue that had been simmering since the introduction of the three controversial farm laws in September 2020. Though the legislations were later withdrawn, the farmers continued to hold a grudge against the saffron party. The SAD had to walk

out of the alliance with the BJP over this issue.

He said Punjab would be among the major beneficiary states under the new Modi government. He said bringing major infrastructure development projects and giving thrust to agriculture, health, education, industry and the “deteriorating” law and order situation would be his top agenda. Bittu, a Class XII pass-out and a licensed commercial pilot, had successfully contested his maiden election from the Anandpur Sahib Lok Sabha constituency in 2009. Then 33, Bittu was the youngest MP from Punjab.

Two berths in kitty, TDP keen on spl..

Naidu was sworn in as a Cabinet Minister while another TDP MP Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani took oath as a Minister of State. The party is likely to be given two more ministerial berths in the next Cabinet expansion, sources said. The son-in-law of late Telugu actor and former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister NT Rama Rao who founded the TDP in 1982, N Chandrababu Naidu is known to be a pragmatic politician. He is scheduled to take oath on June 12 as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, which lost its capital

Hyderabad to Telangana following bifurcation of the state. As the new Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, he needs huge funds to fulfil his dream of building a new state capital at Amaravati. The TDP has reportedly asked for a special package of Rs 5 lakh crore for Andhra Pradesh.

Outgoing CM and YSR Congress Party leader YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's plan to build three capitals of Andhra Pradesh — one each to headquarter the state legislature (at Amravati), executive (at Visakhapatnam) and judiciary (at Kurnool) — led to legal wrangles and confusion over the issue, putting Amaravati project on the backburner.

Now that the TDP is back in power in Andhra Pradesh along with Jan Sena Party and the BJP with a huge majority, winning 164 seats together in the 175-member House, Naidu has got an opportunity to revive his dream project of building a new capital at Amaravati.

Fitness first



Yoga enthusiasts at the Mubarak Mandi complex ahead of International Yoga Day in Jammu. PTI

9 die as bus... Modi's NDA = Naidu + Nitish

FROM PAGE 1

Naryana Hospital and some to the district hospital in Reasi. She added that the security forces were on high alert for past many days and the whole Shiv Khori Shrine was under tight security. She said village defence guards had also been put on alert. At least 20 rounds of AK-47 and M4 carbine were found on the road where the incident took place. Locals of Teryath village in Pouni where the incident took place immediately started rescuing the pilgrims.

Security forces, including the J&K Police, rushed to the spot to help the pilgrims and also to search the area. The area was cordoned off.

FROM PAGE 1

Cabinet — Rao Inderjit (Gurgaon MP), Arjun Ram Meghwal (Bikaner MP) and Jitendra Singh (Udhampur MP) — have been retained. Two inductions in this segment are of NDA leaders — Shiv Sena's Prataprao Jadhav from Maharashtra and RLD's Jayant Chaudhry. Among 36 ministers of state who took oath today, only 10 are the ones who were also part of Modi's outgoing Council of Ministers.

All other faces in this section are new, including former three-term Ludhiana MP Ravneet Bittu, who lost to Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Warring this time; first-ever BJP MP

from Kerala and actor Suresh Gopi, former UPA minister and current Pilibhit MP Jitin Prasad and Karnataka BJP leader V Somanna, who reluctantly contested the state poll against CM Siddaramaiah and lost, among others.

As against 71 ministers in the outgoing council, the newly sworn one has 72 members, with further expansions expected later to accommodate allies of the NDA. In the outgoing council, there were 26 Cabinet ministers, three MoS (independent charge) and 42 MoS. The new council has 31 Cabinet ranks, five MoS (independent charge) and 36 MoS.

Team Modi features 33 first-timers

INDIA bloc leaders stay away from oath event

NEERAJ MOHAN
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9
As Prime Minister Narendra Modi prepares for his third term, several new faces from the northern states of the country were inducted to his Cabinet, including former Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Ravneet Singh Bittu and BJP president JP Nadda.

With the third Modi government taking shape on Sunday, 33 first-timers will grace its ranks and at least six of them hail from well-known political families.

Those joining Prime Minister Narendra Modi's council of ministers for the first time include three former chief ministers — Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Madhya Pradesh), Manohar Lal Khattar (Haryana) and HD Kumaraswamy (Karnataka).

Prior to elections, the BJP had removed Khattar from the post of the Haryana CM and he successfully contested the LS elections from Karnal.

Rao Inderjit Singh, a significant Yadav leader and Guru-



President Droupadi Murmu with PM Narendra Modi and lawmakers after their oath during a swearing-in ceremony in New Delhi. REUTERS

gram MP, has also been inducted into the Cabinet as a Minister of State. This move aims to strengthen the BJP's influence in the Yadav-dominated Ahirwal region of Haryana, where the BJP won Yadav-dominated Gurugram and Bhiwani-Mahendragarh seats for the second term.

Another leader from the poll-bound Haryana is Krishan Pal Gurjar. The Faridabad MP and former Union minister has been inducted into the

Cabinet. His elevation highlights the BJP's focus on the OBC community.

Meanwhile, a Congress turncoat from Punjab Ravneet Bittu's induction into the Union Cabinet as a Minister of State came as a surprise. Bittu, grandson of slain Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh, shifted to the BJP before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Although he lost the Ludhiana seat to Punjab Congress chief Amarinder Singh Raja Waring by over 20,000

votes, his inclusion would send a strong message to Punjab, where the BJP failed to win any seat and is facing severe criticism from the farmers. Bittu has been a Lok Sabha MP from Anandpur Sahib in 2009 and from Ludhiana in 2014 and 2019 on a Congress ticket. He hails from Kotla Afghana village in Patala Assembly segment of Ludhiana.

Another prominent face from the northern state of Himachal Pradesh inducted in the Cabinet is JP Nadda, who

has replaced another leader of the hill state Anurag Thakur. Nadda, the BJP president, is unlikely to continue as the party chief as his term will end this month. Despite Thakur's fifth consecutive win from Hamirpur, he failed to secure a Cabinet berth. It's clear that Thakur has been dropped to accommodate Nadda. From 2014 to 2019, when JP Nadda was a part of the Modi Cabinet, Thakur was working for the party organisation. After JP

Nadda became the BJP chief, Thakur joined the Cabinet. There are reports that Thakur might be given an important role in the party again.

Meanwhile, another new face inducted into the Union Cabinet is Jayant Chaudhary. The grandson of former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Jayant is considered a prominent Jat leader from western Uttar Pradesh.

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Several prominent leaders associated with the INDIA bloc and key opposition parties didn't attend the oath-taking ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Cabinet, displaying unity and leaving a message of strong opposition.

However, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge attended the ceremony as the leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha and a repre-

sentative of the INDIA bloc. Kharge also criticised the previous term of the Modi government for insulting the opposition.

"We are attending the ceremony because of our constitutional responsibility. As the Rajya Sabha LoP, I am attending this event. Everyone knows the attitude of this government. They have always insulted the opposition, but as the Rajya Sabha LoP, I am fulfilling this responsibility," said Kharge.



Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge with Pramod Kumar Mishra, Principal Secretary to the PM, at the swearing-in ceremony. ANI

Delhi lad gets 355, highest-ever marks in JEE-Advanced

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Ved Lahoti from the Delhi zone has topped the IIT entrance exam JEE-Advanced securing 355 out of 360 marks, the highest ever, officials said on Sunday. The previous highest was 352 in 2022.

According to IIT Madras, which conducted the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Advanced this year, Dwija Dharmeshkumar Patel from IIT Bombay zone is the topper among women candidates with 332 marks. Her all-India rank is seven.

Ved's mother Jaya Lahoti is a housewife and father Yogesh Lahoti is a construction manager with a private firm. Ved, who scored 98.6 per cent marks in Class X and 97.6 per cent in Class XII, said, "Nothing is impossible. If you are determined, everything is possible. There should be a goal in life and it should be big." His favourite

subject is Maths.

Other toppers include Aditya from Delhi zone, who secured AIR 2 by securing 346 marks. Bhogal Palli Sandesh from Madras zone bagged AIR 3 with 338 marks, followed by Rhythm Kedia from Roorkee with 337 marks and AIR 4, and Putti Kushal Kumar from Madras zone with 334 marks and AIR 5.

Rajdeep Mishra (333 marks) and Dwija (332 marks) from Bombay zone bagged the sixth and seventh positions. Koduru Tejeswar (331 marks) from Madras ranked eighth, Dhruvin H Doshi (329 marks) from Bombay has bagged the ninth position, and Alladaboina SSDB Sidhvik Suhas (329 marks) from Madras has secured AIR 10.

A total of 48,248 candidates have qualified the exam for admission to IITs, of which 7,964 are women. Of 158 foreign candidates who took the test, only seven have qualified.

Pandian quits active politics after defeat of BJD in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, JUNE 9

Exactly six months and 13 days after joining politics, former bureaucrat VK Pandian on Sunday announced his withdrawal from active politics following the BJD's drubbing in both the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls, but said he would keep Odisha in the core of his heart and 'Guru Naveen Babu' in his breath.

In a video message, Pandian said his only intention to join politics was to assist Naveen Patnaik, which is why he did not contest in the 2024 elections. He also apologised to the people and BJD leaders and workers if they held him responsible for the electoral loss.

During the campaign, Pandian had asserted that he would quit politics if party president Patnaik did not become the Chief Minister of Odisha for the sixth consecutive time after the Assembly elections.

The swearing-in ceremony for the first BJP government in Odisha has been rescheduled from June 10 to June 12, party leaders Jatinder Mohanty and Vijaypal Singh Tomar confirmed here on Sunday. — PTI

Planelands, another takes off within minutes; DGCA probes incident

MUMBAI, JUNE 9

Aviation regulator DGCA is probing an incident of an IndiGo plane landing and an Air India aircraft taking off from the same runway in less than a minute at the Mumbai airport, officials said on Sunday.

The watchdog has de-rostered the Air Traffic Controller (ATC) who was on duty at the time of the incident on Saturday, while IndiGo has initiated a probe into the matter, they added. A purported video of one plane landing and another taking off from the same runway has been shared on social media.

"We are conducting a probe and have already de-rostered the ATCO involved in the incident," the DGCA official said. Mumbai airport is a single-runway operation with two crossing runways 09/27 and 14/32 that handles over 850 flights per day. On a single runway RW27 at the Mumbai airport, there are around 46 arrivals and departures per hour.

IndiGo said its aircraft continued the approach and landing as per the ATC instructions. "On June 8, IndiGo flight 6E 6053 from Indore was given landing clearance by ATC at Mumbai Airport. — PTI

**Remembering
Guru Arjan Dev Ji
on his Martyrdom Day
June 10, 2024**

“ धर्म एवं मानवता की रक्षा के लिए अपना सर्वस्व न्योछावर करने वाले समस्त मानवता के गुरु, गुरु अर्जुन देव जी के शहीदी दिवस पर मैं उनके चरणों में श्रद्धासुमन अर्पित करता हूँ। ”
- नायब सिंह

Information, Public Relations and Languages Department, Haryana | www.prharyana.gov.in | Follow us on [social media icons] @dipharyana

US citizen among three hostages killed in Israel's Gaza raid: Hamas

CAIRO, JUNE 9

Hamas' armed al-Qassam Brigades said in a video posted on its Telegram channel on Sunday that three hostages, including a US citizen, were killed in an Israeli military operation on Saturday in which some hostages were freed.

The group did not release the names of those said to be killed, but the video showed what appeared to be three unidentifiable corpses using censor bars over their faces. "Your captives will not be released unless our prisoners are freed," the video added.

Israel rescued four hostages held by Hamas in a hostage-freeing operation in central Gaza's al-Nuseirat on Saturday which killed 274 Palestinians.

A Hamas assertion on Saturday that some hostages were killed in the operation was dismissed shortly afterwards as a "blatant lie" by an Israeli military spokesman.

The Palestinian death toll is the worst over a 24-hour period of the Gaza war for months and including many women and children, Palestinian medics said. — Reuters



A damaged structure after Israeli strikes in the central Gaza Strip on Sunday. REUTERS

AID FLOW RESUMED

Washington: Badly needed aid has been delivered into Gaza from a newly repaired American-built pier, a US official said, following problems that had plagued the effort to bring supplies to Palestinians by sea. The pier constructed by the American military was only operational for about a week before it was blown apart in high winds. AP

POPE FOR CEASEFIRE

Vatican City: Pope Francis called today for humanitarian aid to urgently reach Palestinians in Gaza and for Israel and Hamas to immediately accept proposals for a cease-fire and release of hostages. During his Sunday noon blessing, Francis said: "I encourage the international community to act urgently to come to the aid of the people of Gaza..." AP

HOUTHIS ATTACK SHIP

Manama: A missile attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels hit an Antigua-and-Barbuda-flagged cargo ship in the Gulf of Aden, the latest assault on shipping in the region. The missile hit the ship's forward station late Saturday, starting a fire that those on board later put out, the private security firm Ambrey said. A second missile missed the ship. AP

Seven Pakistani soldiers killed in bomb explosion

ISLAMABAD, JUNE 9

A bomb blast targeting a military truck killed seven soldiers on Sunday in north-western Pakistan along the border with Afghanistan, the army said.

The incident took place in the Lakki Marwat district which is on the edge of a lawless tribal region divided on both sides of the border.

The improvised explosive device exploded near the military vehicle, killing seven soldiers including an officer, the army said in a statement.

"The perpetrators of this heinous act will be brought to justice," it said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. The tribal region has long been a safe haven for Islamist militants who operate on both sides of the border.

An umbrella group of Islamist and sectarian militant groups called Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan has been waging a war against the state to try to overthrow the government. — Reuters

US turning South China Sea into 'whirlpool of arms race': China

BEIJING, JUNE 9

The US poses the largest security challenge in the South China Sea as its military deployment there is turning it into "the whirlpool of an arms race", Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong said in remarks published on Sunday.

Recent maritime run-ins between China and the Philippines, a US treaty ally, have made the highly strategic South China Sea a potential flashpoint between Washington and Beijing.

"At present, the biggest security challenge in the South China Sea comes from outside the region," Sun said in comments published by his ministry, after attending a high-level meeting on East Asian cooperation in Laos.

Sun said US-led forces were "promoting military deployment and actions in the South China Sea, inciting and intensifying maritime disputes and contradictions, and damaging



A Philippine navy ship in South China Sea. REUTERS FILE

the legitimate rights and interests of coastal countries".

A move by the United States to deploy medium-range missile systems in the area "is dragging the region into the whirlpool of an arms race, placing the entire Asia Pacific region under the shadow of geopolitical conflicts", Sun said.

In April, the Philippines said during a meeting with US allies that it was determined to assert its sovereign rights in the South China

Sea, accusing China of escalating "its harassment" of the Philippines.

The Philippines and China have sparred repeatedly this past year near disputed features that fall within Manila's exclusive economic zone. China routinely accuses the Philippines of encroachment while Manila and its allies have condemned what they call aggression by Beijing. The US has said it stands with Manila. — Reuters

Edge for far-right parties in European polls

BRUSSELS, JUNE 9

Voters across the European Union are going to the polls on the final day of voting for the European parliamentary elections to choose their representatives for the next five-year term.

Polls opened in 20 EU countries early on Sunday for the June 6-9 elections for a new European Parliament, the legislative branch of the 27-member bloc.

Millions of Europeans have been casting their ballots this week in one of the world's biggest democratic elections. Far-right parties are looking to gain more power amid a rise in the cost of living and farmers' dis-



People cast vote at a polling station during the European Parliament election in Madrid, Spain, on Sunday. REUTERS

content, while the wars in Gaza and Ukraine are also key topics weighing on the minds of voters.

The economy, jobs, poverty

and social exclusion, public health, climate change and the future of Europe are also prominent issues.

Official results are not

expected before the last polling stations in all 27 EU nations close late on Sunday.

Some 38 million Spaniards are eligible to vote Sunday to elect 61 members of the 720-seat European Parliament.

The far-right was seen scoring big gains in Germany and Austria in Sunday's EU election, opinion polls showed, joining the Netherlands in offering the first signs that an expected rightwards shift in the European Parliament is happening.

Germany elects 96 of the 720 lawmakers who will make up Europe's new Parliament, the biggest single share. — Agencies

Hit one of Russia's most advanced jets: Ukraine

KYIV, JUNE 9

Ukraine today said its forces hit an ultra-modern Russian warplane stationed on an air base nearly 600 km from the front lines, after its Western allies allowed Kyiv to use their weapons for limited strikes inside Russia.

Kyiv's main military intelligence service shared satellite photos it said showed the aftermath of the attack. It



confirmed, it would mark Ukraine's first known successful strike on a Su-57 fighter plane, a twin-engine stealth fighter lauded as Moscow's most advanced military aircraft. — AP

Iran okays 6 candidates for presidential race

DUBAI, JUNE 9

Iran's Guardian Council on Sunday approved the country's hard-line parliament speaker and five others to run in the country's June 28 presidential election following a helicopter crash that killed President Ebrahim Raisi and seven others.

The council again barred former President Mahmoud

Ahmadinejad, a firebrand populist known for the crackdown that followed his disputed 2009 re-election, from running.

The most prominent candidate remains Mohammed Bagher Qalibaf, 62, a former Tehran mayor with close ties to the country's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. He ran unsuccessfully for president in 2005 and 2013. — AP

INFOCUS AGRICULTURE

PADDY FARMING

Intermittent irrigation a must to curb water wastage

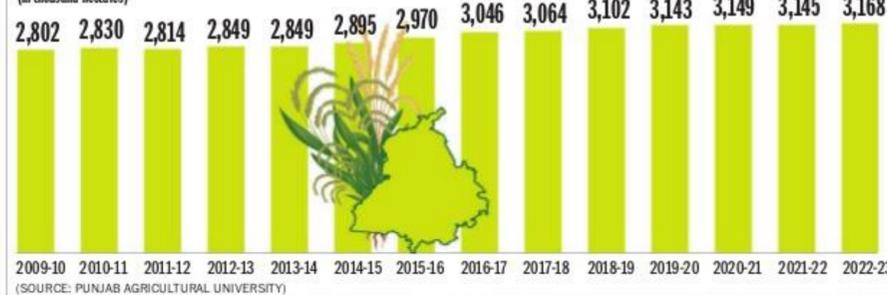
SURINDER S KUKAL AND KB SINGH

DIVERSIFYING area under paddy to other crops has been and is being advocated in the northwestern region of the country. Various schemes for crop diversification have not seen the light of day due to the lack of economically matching alternative crops and the absence of assured procurement at the minimum support price. On the other hand, the area under paddy has increased consistently. During the past decade and a half, the area under paddy increased from 28 to 31.7 lakh hectares in Punjab. The area irrigated by canal water declined from 16.6 lakh hectares in 1990-91 to 11.4 lakh hectares in 2020-21. This has led to grave depletion of groundwater, thereby threatening the sustainability of agriculture in the food bowl of the country. Farmers have to bear a large financial burden to deepen their tubewells for extracting water from deeper layers, thereby adding to their debt burden. The state government also has to shell out a lot of money every year to ensure subsidised power supply to the tubewells. The government subsidy on agricultural power in Punjab increased from Rs 2,805 crore in 2009-10 to Rs 7,722 crore in 2022-23.

The practice of continuous flooding of paddy fields, varying from one to three months, coupled with heavy irrigation has put great pressure on groundwater, which is falling at an average rate of 65-70 cm every year. The actual water consumed in paddy fields, in the form of evaporation and transpiration, is 650-700 mm, for which farmers consume

AREA UNDER PADDY IN PUNJAB

(in thousand hectares)



(SOURCE: PUNJAB AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY)



more than 1,800 mm of irrigation water, apart from rainwater. This gap between actual crop requirement and that applied by the farmers needs to be lowered for ensuring water-efficient paddy. The intermittent irrigation after two weeks of continuous standing water, as recommended by Punjab Agricultural University long ago, is not being followed by farmers, thanks to the highly subsidised power for tubewells in the region. It is high time that a power supply policy be framed and implemented by the states so that the same amount of paddy could be grown with half the water being consumed presently.

It is well known that during very wet years (good rainfall), the paddy yields in Punjab and Haryana are lower than during the dry ones (below-normal

rain). The micro-climatic conditions become conducive for a higher incidence of insect-pests and diseases. Intermittent irrigation results in better conditions for a lower incidence of pests and diseases. This lowers the input (pesticide) costs, apart from lesser extraction of groundwater. Thus, to achieve effective intermittent irrigation, it is proposed that the power supply to the feeders be provided as per the intermittent irrigation schedule. A particular feeder supplying eight hours' power daily during the period of two weeks after the transplanting date must shift to intermittent supply at an interval of two days after the previous irrigation. But power supply should be dedicatedly ensured for 14-16 hours. This way, the state will be able to save power. The sheer wastage of

irrigation water can be avoided by intermittent irrigation. Increasing the power supply duration from eight to 14-16 hours will lead to avoidance of repeat irrigation in a partially irrigated field. This power supply policy, if implemented, can prove to be a win-win situation for the farmers and the state.

Also, the power supply in the command area of a particular feeder needs to be curtailed 15 days before the expected harvest time of the paddy crop. Similarly, during rainy days, the agricultural power supply should be stopped altogether. Otherwise, even during the rains, the tubewells keep running, leading to the loss of water as well as energy.

Vital interventions

■ The side-effect of laser leveling of fields, being adopted on a

large scale by farmers, has led to the creation of bigger irrigation plots (more than two acres), which ideally should be less than one acre for paddy. The bigger the irrigation plot, the higher will be the application of irrigation water.

■ A huge amount of irrigation water gets wasted before and during puddling. Fields are continuously filled with water 2-3 days before the actual puddling and transplanting. The fields should be irrigated just before puddling and transplanting, and the depth of standing water should not exceed 5 cm.

■ Short-duration cultivars of paddy should be promoted as a shorter irrigation period leads to better water-saving.

■ The transplanting of paddy should ideally begin after

June 20 to escape the harsh and dry weather conditions and hence save upon water use by the crop.

■ The depth of irrigation water in paddy fields during an irrigation should not be more than 5 cm as a higher depth of standing water leads to faster movement of water into the soil.

■ The under-bund percolation in the paddy fields should be checked by ensuring not to remove the puddle for plastering the field bunds.

■ Farmers should avoid the use of automatic starters at tubewells as they lead to unnecessary application of irrigation even if it is not actually required or it is the rainy season.

■ The aerobic cultivars of paddy need to be developed for saving water both in direct-seeded and puddled transplanted cultural systems.

■ Sturdy and affordable sensors like tensiometers need to be developed and standardised for the exact time of irrigation of the paddy crop, especially during uncertain weather conditions.

A blend of a well-framed agricultural power supply policy and efficient cultural practices can ensure a water-efficient paddy-wheat system. It can reduce the groundwater extraction to the extent of 40-50 per cent of what is being consumed by the traditional practice of irrigation, especially in the case of paddy. In addition, it can reduce the state's burden on subsidy for agricultural power supply.

Kukul is a member of the Punjab Water Regulation & Development Authority, Chandigarh; KB Singh is Director, Punjab Agricultural Management & Extension Training Institute, Ludhiana

Australia's all-round performance flattens defending champions England

Wizards of Oz

BRIDGETOWN, JUNE 9 Defending champions England charged at Australia's tournament-best total of 201 and fell 36 runs short in a one-sided T20 World Cup contest on Saturday.

The first big heavyweight match of the tournament failed to live up to the billing as Australia impressively squeezed England, who hit only three boundaries in the last six overs at Kensington Oval.

Forced to bat first, Australia's openers David Warner and Travis Head made a brutal start — 70/0 in 4.5 overs. Despite being pulled back, Australia posted 201/7, the highest total in the week-old tournament featuring tricky pitches.

Tasked with making the third-biggest successful run chase in the tournament's history, England took a swipe but fell apart to be restrained to 165/6. Adam Zampa and Pat Cummins took two wickets each.

Australia moved to the top of Group B with two wins from two matches, while England remained winless with Oman and Namibia to come.

England's chase was measured but cruising. Phil Salt and Jos Buttler had them 54-0 after the powerplay. Zampa spun the momentum back Australia's way. His first ball bowled Salt. Buttler then hit Zampa straight to backward point.

England were 92/2 in the 10th over and on track, but the middle-order failed to fire as they were pinned down by the Australian battery.

WI get big win

Georgetown: Uganda equalled the lowest score ever recorded at a T20 World Cup on Saturday when they tumbled to 39 all out against West Indies at the Providence Stadium. Netherlands also scored 39 against Sri Lanka in 2014.



England's Phil Salt is bowled by Australia's Adam Zampa; BELOW: West Indies' Akeal Hosein celebrates a dismissal against Uganda. AP/PTI



39 Uganda were bowled out for the lowest score ever recorded at a T20 World Cup. Netherlands had also scored 39 against Sri Lanka in 2014

Pulling out of IPL working wonders for Zampa

Australia spinner Adam Zampa said that pulling out of the IPL was the "best thing" to do coming into the T20 World Cup, adding that skipping the league also allowed him to spend time with family and tend to injuries. "Obviously made that decision a little while ago to pull out of the IPL and I thought it was the best thing for me moving forward into this World Cup," said Zampa, who was named the Player of the Match. "I was tired, I had some niggles and I'm a family man as well, so trying to put them first over work sometimes is pretty important. I actually am a bit of a slow starter and I put in a little bit of extra work. My body feels great and I just did that bit of extra work. Maybe a bit more bowling than I usually would before a tournament like this. And then the practice games and everything just feels nice at the moment," he added.

173/5 after winning the toss and electing to bat, won by 134 runs, the second-largest margin in T20 World Cup history.

West Indies, playing their final game in Guyana before flying to Trinidad and Tobago where they meet New Zealand on Wednesday, also struggled to time the ball on another low, slow pitch.

The home side's left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein took 5/11 after opening the bowling. "I think I needed this," said Hosein after accepting the Player of

the Match award. "In the nets and in the previous series I felt the ball was coming out good but I was just not getting the rewards." — Agencies

India-Pakistan rivalry comes alive in New York

NEW YORK, JUNE 9

A sold-out crowd descended on Eisenhower Park today for a T20 World Cup clash of arch-rivals India and Pakistan — a face-off that fans called a dream come true.

The cricketing titans share one of the most intense rivalries in all of sport, and today's affair in Nassau County had a historic feel as the two sides rarely face off.

For Rubal Sikka, who moved to the United States from India 25 years ago and played cricket with friends at Eisenhower Park in high school, watching the match is beyond his wildest imagination. "Saturday, Sunday morning without fail everybody was there, seven in the morning, you know, setting up the field, getting ready for cricket," the restaurateur and banquet hall-owner on Long Island said.

"Never ever did we imagine that, you know, our dream players, people, sportsmen that we look up to are going to end up playing at the same exact spot that we were playing on."

Fans pay top-dollar on the secondary market for a seat inside the 34,000-capacity temporary stadium

India last hosted Pakistan in a bilateral series in 2013, and the teams now meet only in international tournaments. Their 2019 World Cup clash drew 229 million television viewers in India alone.

Fans paid top-dollar on the secondary market for a seat inside the 34,000-capacity temporary stadium, and local officials held an outdoor watch party at nearby Cedar Creek Park to accommodate those who could not snag a seat. "While we're having a watch party here, there's going to be a watch party around the world," said Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman.

Rain delayed the start of the match but could not dampen the enthusiasm of fans, who overflowed merchandise kiosks and lined up at food

stalls offering chicken tikka masala alongside classic American ballpark hot dogs.

Attendees wended their way through layers of tight security largely without issue as helicopters circled overhead and a row of mounted police stood between cheering fans and the arriving athletes. Cricket officials hope the tournament co-hosted by the United States and the West Indies will help the sport capture a bigger piece of the lucrative North American market, where football, baseball, basketball and ice hockey have a choke-hold.

Sunday's blockbuster showdown assured all eyes would be on New York, as West Indies legend Chris Gayle stood on the grounds seeking autographs from players from both countries.

"The atmosphere at an India-Pakistan game is something very, very different," International Cricket Council CEO Geoff Allardice said. "When you get fans of those two countries together, it's generally a celebration." — Reuters



Fans stand as national anthems of the two countries are played before the start of the match. AP/PTI

BRIEFLY

BUDAPEST Reetika clinches silver in ranking series

Indian wrestler Reetika Hooda bagged the silver medal in the women's 76kg category at the Polyak Imre and Varga Janos Memorial wrestling tournament. With less than six competitors in the women's 76kg weight category, the Nordic system was followed. In this system, the competing grapplers faced each other in a round-robin format. The U23 world champion won three of her four bouts.

HELSINGBORG (SWEDEN) Shubhankar shoots 1-under to slip to tied-26th

India's Shubhankar Sharma shot a slightly pedestrian 1-under 71 in the third round to slip to tied-26th at the Scandinavian Mixed golf tournament. Sharma, who had 69-69 in his first two rounds, was looking good at 3-under through the first eight holes with four birdies against one bogey. He then found the water off the tee on the par-4 13th and also went into deep rough before finally holing for a triple bogey.

PORTLAND Sanjivani bags top spot in 10,000m event

Asian Championships medalist runner Sanjivani Jadhav won the gruelling women's 10,000m race at the Portland Track Festival High-Performance Meet, clocking a personal best time of 32 minutes, 22.77 seconds. Commonwealth and Asian Games medalist Avinash Sable clocked 8:21.85 in the men's 3000m steeplechase to finish second. Parul Chaudhary finished third in the women's steeplechase, clocking 9:31.38. AGENCIES

TODAY ON TV
T20 WORLD CUP
SOUTH AFRICA VS BANGLADESH
STAR SPORTS 8PM

Pro League: Indian teams end campaigns with close defeats



Both the women's and men's teams conceded late goals to lose 2-3 to Great Britain. FIH



LONDON, JUNE 9

Veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh showed superhuman reflexes to save a penalty stroke but that was not enough as India, who conceded just 38 seconds into the match, lost 2-3 to Great Britain in the men's FIH Pro League here today.

The result meant the Craig Fulton-coached India finished their Pro League campaign with a second successive 2-3 loss. India finished with 24 points from 16 games.

Sukhjeet Singh (19th minute) and Harmanpreet Singh (36th) scored for India, while Phil Roper (1st), Jack Waller (37th) and Alan Forsyth (50th) were on target for the hosts.

"In every game we always learn. Today we played very well, we created and converted well today. It's a good lesson before the Olympics. It's been a long time where we have worked in our camps. We are fit, we trust the process, and we are good to go I think," skipper Harmanpreet said. Earlier, the women's

"In every game we always learn. Today we played very well, we created and converted well today. It's a good lesson before the Olympics. It's been a long time where we have worked in our camps. We are fit, we trust the process, and we are good to go I think."
Harmanpreet Singh, INDIA SKIPPER

side went down fighting 2-3 to Great Britain, extending their run of losses to eight matches.

India thus ended their Pro League season with a heart-breaking defeat, having played well for the majority of the match before Grace Baldson (56th and 58th minutes) fired a brace to snatch victory for the home team.

Two calls went against India, including a video review, leaving coach Harendra Singh frustrated. Three years ago, Badli-

son had scored the winner against India in the bronze medal match at the Tokyo Olympics. Her strikes also prevented India from winning their first match under Harendra.

Lalremisiami scored a field goal for India in the 14th minute after Watson Charlotte put Britain ahead with her third-minute strike. Navneet Kaur gave India the lead in the 23rd minute.

"These are not the results we want. We are upset about today's result. We came back from a goal down, we needed to be calm in the end. When we came here, we had to play attacking hockey. The four matches in Belgium, we were defensive. We did that in London, but of course our defence needs to be better," said goalkeeper Savita Punia.

"It means a lot to Indian hockey that we keep our place in the Pro League, because otherwise we don't get enough matches. Not happy with the performance, but happy that we remain in the Pro League," she added. — PTI

Gurpreet to lead team against Qatar

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

DOHA, JUNE 9

India's first-choice goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu was today named the captain of the team for the must-win FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Qatar. India will play hosts Qatar in the return fixture on Tuesday.

The Indian team landed here on Saturday night for the match in which a win could pave the way for a maiden entry into the third round of the World Cup qualifiers.

Head coach Igor Stimac had named a 23-member squad for the fixture. Apart from Sunil Chhetri, who retired after his last game for the country against Kuwait on Thursday, defenders Amey Ranawade, Lalchungnunga and Subhasish Bose did not travel to Qatar. — PTI

Puja scores historic victory in UFC

LOUISVILLE, JUNE 9

India's Puja Tomar scripted history as she became the first mixed martial arts fighter from the country to win a bout at the Ultimate Fighting Championship in UFC Louisville here. Debutant Tomar eked out a 30-27, 27-30, 29-28 split-decision win over Brazil's Rayanne dos Santos in the straw-weight (52kg) bout on Saturday.

"I only thought I have to win and show the world that Indian fighters are not losers," Tomar said.

The 30-year-old, known as "cyclone", signed a contract with the UFC in October last year to become the first woman from India to compete in the championship.

Anshul Jubli and Bharat Kandare have represented India on the world stage in the UFC, as has Canada-



Puja Tomar beat Brazil's Rayanne dos Santos in the 52kg division. FILE

based Arjan Singh Bhullar.

"I worked really hard that's why I am here and the crowd is cheering for me. I was very strong and motivated so that's why I won," she said.

Born in Budhana village of Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar, Tomar is a five-time national wushu champion and also has a background in karate and taekwondo. — PTI

Gauff, Siniakova clinch doubles title

PARIS, JUNE 9

Coco Gauff and Katerina Siniakova claimed the French Open women's doubles title on Sunday with a 7-6(5) 6-3 victory over Italians Sara Errani and Jasmine Paolini — a day after the latter's crushing loss in the singles final. The win was Siniakova's eighth women's Grand Slam doubles crown and Gauff's first. Their makeshift pairing only came together days before the start of the French Open, after the American's regular partner Jessica Pegula withdrew from the tournament.

"Thank you Katerina for

playing with me, we decided to do it two days before the tournament started," said Gauff, a doubles finalist at the 2022 French Open. "It was very last-minute, I wasn't planning on playing doubles, so thank you for asking me."

The first hour of the match was largely dictated by Errani and Siniakova's struggles to serve, as both were broken twice each, with the first set going into a tiebreaker. A quick start there gave Paolini and Errani a 5-3 lead, but Siniakova raised her game to win some key points that turned the tide in her and Gauff's favour. — Reuters



Coco Gauff and Katerina Siniakova pose with the trophy. REUTERS

MODI CABINET 3.0

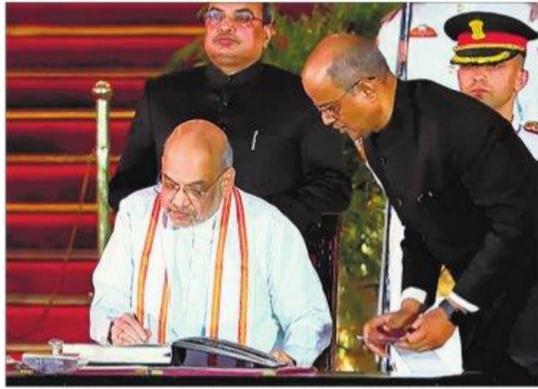
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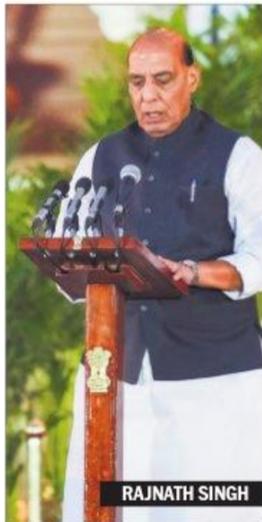
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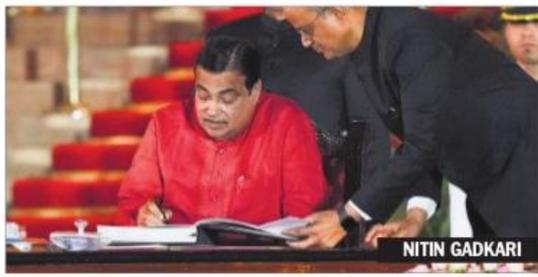
Amit Shah along with others takes oath as Cabinet Minister at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. PHOTOS: AGENCIES



RAJNATH SINGH



S JAISHANKAR



NITIN GADKARI

Bihar gets major representation in NDA govt with six ministers

AKSHEEV THAKUR
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9 Six MPs from Bihar have made it to the NDA government as PM Narendra Modi took oath for the third straight term on Sunday. Of these six MPs, four are from NDA partners JD(U), LJP and HAM (S), while two are from BJP - Giriraj Singh and Nityananda Rai, both of whom held Cabinet berths in the previous Modi government.

These MPs have their own caste equations in the state. JD(U)'s Rajeev Ranjan Singh, 69, alias Lalan Singh, is a four-time MP who won from Munger constituency. An upper caste Bhumihar leader, Singh was groomed as a leader under socialist leader and former Bihar CM Karpoori Thakur.

Known as a close aide of Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, Singh also represented Begusarai constituency between 2004 and 2009. When he lost in 2014, Nitish nominated him as an MP in the Rajya Sabha. Later, he was appointed as JD(U) national president.



Two-time JD(U) Rajya Sabha MP Ramnath Thakur, son of Karpoori Thakur, has also become a Central minister. Ramnath was preferred over other EBC leaders Rampreet Mandal and Dileshwar Kamat. Former Bihar CM Jitan Ram Manjhi and Hindustan Awam Morcha (secular) leader is a Dalit face of NDA in Bihar. He

won from Gaya, the lone seat his party contested. Elected to the state Assembly for the first time in 1980 as a Congress MLA, Manjhi has always occupied a prominent position in the state government. Chirag Paswan, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president and a three-time Lok Sabha MP from Bihar, whose party won all five seats it contested from, will also become a minister at the Centre. He has won from Hajipur seat, which his father Ram Vilas Paswan represented nine times.

Two-term Lok Sabha MP from Ujiarpur and former MoS in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai has also been sworn as a Union minister in the new Modi government. BJP leader Giriraj Singh has also taken oath as the minister for the third consecutive term.

Sitharaman, HDK, 3 other K'taka MPs in new Cabinet

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9 Five representatives from Karnataka, including senior BJP leaders Pralhad Joshi and Nirmala Sitharaman, are part of the Modi Cabinet.

Hubballi-Dharwad Lok Sabha MP Pralhad Joshi served as Parliamentary Affairs Minister and Coal Minister in the Modi government. Sitharaman served as Finance Minister, while Shobha Karandlaje served as Minister of State for Agriculture. Tumkur MP V Somanna who served as a minister in the Karnataka Government is also in Narendra Modi's new team.

Former Karnataka CM and JD(S) chief HD

Kumaraswamy whose party won two seats - Kolar and Mandya - is also a Cabinet Minister now. Son of former Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda, Kumaraswamy was a film producer before venturing into politics. He became the Karnataka CM in 2018 but had to resign in 2019 after the JD(S)-Congress government fell.

Joshi has been representing the Dharwad Lok Sabha constituency since 2004 and with the present victory he became the first MP who won from Dharwad for the fifth term. He is a popular Brahmin face in the constituency.

Karandlaje who won from Bangalore North defeating Congress' Rajiv Gowda is the first woman MP of Bengaluru.

Education mafia thriving: Rahul on NEET results

NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the alleged National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) fraud has affected over 2.4 million students.

He said, "Six students from the same exam centre have topped the exam with maximum marks and many others have received technically impossible scores." He flayed the Centre for continuously

denying the possibility of a paper leak, despite the suspicious results. Rahul further claimed that an "education mafia", allegedly in collusion with the government machinery, is running a widespread "paper leak industry". "I assure all students across the country that I will be your voice in Parliament and will vigorously raise issues concerning your future," he said. — TNS

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