

THE TIMES OF INDIA

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Musk-led Tesla sues an Indian battery maker for infringing on its trademark by using brand name 'Tesla Power' to promote its products. Tesla sought damages and a permanent injunction against the firm from a Delhi judge

Tension gripping US universities appears to be spreading to Canada, Australia, UK & France where student activists have challenged their own schools' stances on the war in Gaza and ties to Israel, P 17

Former British PM Boris Johnson, who introduced requirement for voters to show photo ID while voting, turned away from a polling station for forgetting to bring his photo ID. He voted later, P 17

Britain's governing Conservative Party led by PM Rishi Sunak suffers heavy losses in local elections, cementing expectations that Labour Party will return to office after 14 yrs in general election that will take place in coming months, P 17



Rohingya trafficking racket busted

Delhi Police has busted a racket engaged in trafficking Rohingyas from Myanmar through Bangladesh to parts of India and other foreign countries. Two men, including an agent from Myanmar's Rakhine, were arrested from Hyderabad after a Myanmar couple who had flown to Russia on fake Indian passports were sent back to New Delhi. The racket, run from Bangladesh, also arranged fake Aadhaar and PAN cards for the couple. **P 3**

Investors cut risk, Sensex down 733 pts

Sensex on Friday dropped 733 pts to settle at 73,878 while Nifty declined 172 pts to 22,475.9 after hitting a record 22,794.7, as investors pared exposure to telecom, capital goods and tech stocks. Heavy selling pressure in RIL, L&T and HDFC Bank pulled indices down. **P 19**

Forced anal sex with wife not rape: HC

Observing that marital rape is not an offence under IPC, MP HC has ruled that anal sex with wife is not rape and her consent is immaterial in such cases. Justice G S Ahluwalia made the observation while quashing an FIR by an estranged wife against her husband. **P 12**

20 killed as bus falls into ravine in Pak

A bus plunged into a rocky ravine in Gilgit-Baltistan's Diamer district in north Pakistan on Friday after its driver lost control, killing 20 people and injuring 30 others. In Balochistan, three people, including a journalist, were killed in a blast Friday that targeted his vehicle. **AGENCIES**

Rejected, ex-student shoots at tutor

A 28-year-old computer science tutor of a coaching centre in Bijnor was shot at by a 21-year-old ex-student in front of other pupils during class on Friday after she rejected his request to become "friends", police said, adding that the teacher is now battling for life. **TNN**

Tied to 3 dists, UP's 'nowhere' village

Saura Gopalpur is barely 5km from Mau district and 20km from Mau town, but its voters come under Salempur LS constituency, 50km away in Deoria district. The village itself falls under Ballia district. Villagers call themselves the "nowhere people". **P 10**

City temp at 18.3°C, drizzle likely today

The minimum temperature remained low for the second consecutive day in Delhi on Friday at 18.3 degrees Celsius, six degrees below normal, making night cooler than usual. However, there is a possibility of a drizzle, thunderstorm or dust storm on Saturday. **TNN**

Nepal currency includes map rejected by India

Nepal on Friday announced the printing of a new Rs 100 currency note with a map that shows the controversial territories of Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani. On June 18, 2020, Nepal updated the country's political map by incorporating the three strategically important areas of Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura areas by amending its Constitution, something India reacted to sharply, calling it a "unilateral act" and terming as "untenable" the "artificial enlargement" of the territorial claims by Nepal. India maintains that the three areas belong to it. **P 10**

Rahul picks Gandhi home turf Rae Bareilly as second LS fight

Party Loyalist Takes On Smriti From Amethi

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Rae Bareilly: Weeks of 'will-he-won't-he' culminated Friday in Congress naming Rahul Gandhi as the candidate in the family bastion of Rae Bareilly on the final day for nominations, setting the stage for the Gandhi and an entourage of loyalists to air-dash to the UP constituency.

► EDIT: Rahul Gandhi Gets It Right This Time

ency just in time for the Wayanad MP to file his second set of papers this election.

TOI had reported in Friday's edition that amid suspense over Rae Bareilly and Amethi, Rahul was veering around to contesting from the former seat.

Congress's nomination for Amethi, the other party fortress that Rahul contested and lost to BJP's Smriti Irani in 2019, also went down to the

'MOM HAS ENTRUSTED FAMILY KARMABHOOMI TO ME'

Nomination from Rae Bareilly was an emotional moment for me! My mother has entrusted me with the responsibility of the family's karmabhoomi and given me the opportunity to serve it. Amethi and Rae Bareilly are not different for me, both are my family...
—Rahul Gandhi on X

► Feroze Gandhi won from Rae Bareilly in 1952 & 1957. **Indira Gandhi** was elected MP in 1967, 1971, 1977 & 1980

► Held by Arun Nehru (1984) and **Sheila Kaul** (1989, 1991) — from the Nehru-Gandhi family. **Satish Sharma** won in 1999 — the only time someone outside the family held it since 1967

► Sonia Gandhi won from here in 2004 and enjoyed four terms, till 2019

Rahul Gandhi with Sonia, Robert Vadra & Priyanka at a haven after filing his nomination papers in Rae Bareilly on Friday



Daro mat, bhago mat, says Modi

PM Modi on Friday used Rahul Gandhi's stock phrases to target his candidature from Rae Bareilly, saying, "Today I want to tell him, daro mat (don't be afraid), bhago mat (don't run)". **P 11**

Priyanka superstar campaigner: Jairam

Priyanka Gandhi decided not to contest as she is a superstar campaigner who replies to PM Modi and Amit Shah and her presence nationally is crucial, Congress's Jairam Ramesh told TOI. **P 11**

Sharma: UP veteran, Sonia's man Friday

Sonia's man Friday and Cong loyalist Kishori Lal Sharma will take on BJP's Smriti Irani in Amethi. He is only the second non-Gandhi to be fielded from the constituency since 1980. **P 11**

great faith and has given me the opportunity to serve the community," he wrote on X.

► 'Both my family', P 11

Guv grabbed me from behind: Raj Bhavan staffer

Kolkata: "I didn't 'namaskar' and touched his feet and turned around when he grabbed me from behind," the Raj Bhavan employee, who complained of being molested by Bengal governor CV Anand Bose, told news channels Friday. A contractual worker, she claimed Bose had called her to his chamber to talk about a better job for her.

Raj Bhavan didn't react to the fresh allegations, and texts sent to Bose by TOI seeking a response went unanswered. Bose, who left for Kochi for an event, said, "It's a storm in a teacup... and I'm the storm... These are election plays". He claimed "political forces have planted one more person in Raj Bhavan with a sinister intent". **TNN**

► Cops enter Raj Bhavan, P 13

8 yrs on, T'gana cops close Vemula case, say no one to blame for his suicide

After Outcry, Order For Further Probe

Hyderabad: Eight years after PhD student Rohith Vemula died by suicide over alleged caste-linked discrimination at University of Hyderabad, Telangana Police has filed a closure report saying that nobody was to blame for his death and that Vemula was not even a Dalit.

Citing lack of evidence to incriminate the then VC and others for abetment of Vemula's suicide in a hostel room on January 17, 2016, the closure report insinuates he possibly feared being exposed for allegedly acquiring an SC certificate fraudulently.

An outcry over the report,

'REPORT FULL OF LIES'

► Vemula knew he wasn't an SC, closure report states, adding he was an OBC & got SC cert fraudulently. So he possibly feared being exposed & losing his degree

► Cops clear all accused, including some netas & then Hyd Univ VC, cites lack of evidence to incriminate them

► Vemula's bro calls report 'full of lies', plans to meet Rahul Gandhi & CM Reddy as well as challenge it in court

► Probe doubts', P 15

DKS let fellow Vokkaliga Prajwal flee, says Shah

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Seeking to turn the tables on the opposition alliance over the Prajwal Revanna case, home minister Amit Shah on Friday accused Karnataka deputy CM D K Shivakumar of allowing the JD(S) MP to leave the country as he reckoned that taking immediate action could cost Congress.

"We have taken a clear stand. We must take the strictest steps and if the Karnataka govt cannot, then let it be. We will take action. Until the Vokkaliga voting wasn't done, they suppressed the whole thing. And as soon as voting was over, they brought it out, and by then he had fled. I am telling you, if they had taken steps on time, he wouldn't have been able to flee and would have been arrested," Shah said.

► 'NDA will cross 400', P 15

Kidnap charge on Revanna, son booked for rape

The firestorm of abuse allegations around the family of H D Deve Gowda's son Revanna flared Friday with his son, JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, being booked for allegedly raping a 44-year-old former panchayat member at gunpoint after threats to kill her husband. Separately, a kidnapping case was filed against Revanna after a woman purportedly featured in one of the MP's sleaze videos went missing.

Revanna filed a second anticipatory bail petition before a special court on Friday, even as the SIT probing the sleaze video scandal issued a second notice to the father-son duo to appear before it on Saturday in connection with a sexual harassment case lodged by a former employee of their household. **P 10**

Afghan diplomat caught in Mum with 25kg gold

Mumbai: Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) officials intercepted consul general of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Zakia Wardak, at the Mumbai airport recently and recovered 25 kg of gold worth Rs 18.6 crore that she was allegedly trying to smuggle into India from Dubai. The incident occurred on April 25 and a case of gold smuggling under the Customs Act, 1962, has been registered. The gold has been seized under a panchnama, reports **Mateen Hafeez**. Wardak was not arrested as she enjoys diplomatic immunity, sources said.

► 'Surprised', P 13

₹461cr assets, ex-Birla exec is richest Odisha candidate

Bhubaneswar: Santrupt Misra (58), former HR head of Aditya Birla Group who is contesting the LS elections on a BJD ticket from Cuttack, has declared assets worth about Rs 461 crore in his poll affidavit, making him the richest candidate to have filed nomination so far in Odisha, reports **Debabrata Mohapatra**.

Misra joined BJD in Feb after opting for voluntary retirement from Aditya Birla Group. His ITRs showed his income at Rs 76.23 crore in 2021-22 and Rs 66.23 crore in 2022-23. According to his affidavit, submitted while filing his nomination Friday, Misra owns movable assets of Rs 408 crore and immovable assets worth Rs 53 crore, including

DANCE of DEMOCRACY

► Rohit Jhakhar, spokesperson of BJP ally RLD, resigns from the party over ticket to Brij Bhushan's son Karan from Kaiserganj constituency | **P 11**

► Chopper assigned to take Sena (UBT)'s Sushma Andhare and her brother to Baramati crashes at Mahad; pilot and assistant safe | **P 13**

► Dilip Ray ₹300cr, P 13

SC: May consider interim bail for Kejriwal due to polls

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New Delhi: Supreme Court on Friday said it may consider if interim bail could be granted to Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal or not in view of polling in the capital in three weeks, as deciding on the AAP chief's plea challenging his arrest in the excise policy case may take time given that it involved larger issues related to action under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

► ED makes fresh arrest in excise probe, P 8

ney Laundering Act.

At the end of the day's proceedings, which remained inconclusive, a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta indicated that it may have to consider interim bail for Kejriwal but made it clear to both Enforce-

IN THE COURTS

► HC issues notice to ED on Sisodia's bail plea, former deputy CM allowed to meet ailing wife weekly | P 4

► SC refuses to entertain PIL seeking directions to EC to take steps to resolve the issue of **namesake, imposter & duplicate candidates** | **P 10**

► SC asks govt for details of notices and arrests under GST provisions, says it may lay down guidelines | P 10

► Delhi high court says no wrongdoing in sexual relations between two consenting adults regardless of their marital status

ment Directorate and the CM that it was not expressing a view one way or another.

► Time to respond, P 6

Iran releases crew, including 16 Indians, of seized ship

New Delhi: Iran said Friday it has released the crew members, including 16 Indian nationals, of the Portuguese-flagged ship it had seized in the middle of its military flare-up with Israel.

According to an Iranian press release, foreign minister Hossein Amirabdollahian told his Estonian counterpart Margus Tsahkna Friday the ship, which turned off its radar in the territorial waters of Iran and endangered the security of navigation, was detained under judicial rules.

"He however noted that Iran has already released all the ship's crew members on humanitarian grounds, and if the ship's captain accompanies them, the crew, including the Estonians, can return to their country." **TNN**

► Female cadet, P 14

Canada cops arrest three 'hit squad' members, all Indians, for Nijjar killing

Canadian police on Friday arrested three Indians who they alleged were part of a hit squad tasked by Indian govt with the killing of Canadian citizen and pro-Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Surrey last year, media reports said.

The trio have been charged in the killing, CTV News quoted a senior govt source as saying. The accused — Kamalpreet Singh, Karanpreet Singh and Karan Brar — faced first-degree murder and conspiracy charges in the Nijjar case, according to documents filed in a Surrey court.

Canadian media reported

'BISHNOI LINK'

► Kamalpreet Singh, Karan Brar & Karanpreet Singh were held from 2 provinces

► Canadian media reports said all are alleged associates of a criminal group in Punjab & Haryana associated with **Lawrence Bishnoi**

► Quoting police sources, one media outlet said the suspects entered **Canada on student visas 'but may have been working at the direction of Indian intelligence'**

that the accused were arrested in operations in two provinces — Alberta and Ontario.

The three arrested men are Indian citizens who arrived in Canada on temporary visas after 2021, some of them on student visas. "None is believed to have pursued education in Canada. None has obtained permanent residency. All are alleged associates of a criminal group in Punjab & Haryana that is associated with Punjabi Lawrence Bishnoi," CBC News reported.

Quoting police sources, Globe News said: "The suspects... may've been working at the direction of Indian intelligence when they shot Nijjar." **TNN**

► 'Shooters, drivers', P 17

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Gang That Sneaked In Rohingyas Busted

Trafficked From Myanmar Via Bangladesh, Tripura And West Bengal, Many Sent Abroad

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi Police has stumbled upon an organised racket engaged in trafficking Rohingyas from Myanmar via Bangladesh, Tripura and West Bengal.

The gang created fake Indian identity documents for Rohingyas and Bangladeshi nationals and arranged Indian passports from Kolkata using the fake papers. While many were sent to different states, including Delhi, the others, who had money to spare, were sent to other foreign countries. The gang was offering a packaged deal for 10

AN OFFICER SAYS

The agent facilitated their illegal entry into India through Agartala border. Thereafter, they stayed in West Bengal for several days before Alam got them Aadhaar and PAN cards

their real names were Toha and Rabiya and they were citizens of Myanmar. The passports were issued from the regional passport office of Kolkata and both had left for Russia

from Delhi airport on Feb 20.

The deportees revealed that they had been lured by Alam into paying for Indian documents. The man claimed to have sold all of his family jewellery and paid Alam. "The agent facilitated their illegal entry into India through Agartala border. Thereafter, they visited Sealdah, Barasat and Hridayapur in West Bengal for several days before Alam and his associates managed to get them Aadhaar and PAN cards, and the passports were issued in their names fraudulently," deputy commissioner of police (airport) Usha Rangnani said.

The cops traced Alam to Hyderabad, and a special team led by inspector Raj Kumar Yadav arrested him and his aide, Gaffar, from the airport there.

Alam told police that he had been running the racket from Bangladesh while his associate, Sheikh Arif Ali, was operating it from West Bengal. Ali was working in a company that updated the data of Aadhaar Cards. An expert in Photoshop and other editing apps, he used to forge documents for the gang. Gaffar said he had also made forged documents through Alam and was trying for a work visa.



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15-hr drill by NSG, Pawsome! Dogged officers first line of defence in wake of bomb threats

city cops to check terror readiness



The drill that started at 12 noon on Friday went on till early Saturday in different parts of the city, including Jhandewalan temple (pic)

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Not ready to leave anything to chance, joint teams of National Security Guards (NSG) and Delhi Police carried out a massive 15-hour counter-terror exercise in the city to check preparedness. The drill kicked off at 12pm on Friday and went on till early Saturday across the city.

Spanning three phases, the drill, which continued till 3am on Saturday, encompassed key areas such as schools, colleges, five-star hotels and parliamentary premises. Eleven locations were carefully selected where security personnel dealt with imagined scenarios of terrorist attacks, hostage crisis, fire incidents and bomb blasts in public places.

A detailed reconnaissance of all targets was conducted by NSG in coordination with Delhi Police and other security agencies. "These exercises are meant to maintain high alertness levels and ensure the response to any real-life situation is swift and effective," an officer said.

Scenarios of terrorist infiltration began at Kirori Mal College, where an "improvised explosive device" was found underground and swiftly

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New Delhi: Even as over 7,000 cops, intelligence sleuths and bomb squads were deployed across Delhi on Wednesday to handle over 200 calls of bomb threats at the city's schools, there were around two dozen special officers on duty whom the cops had pinned their hopes on. Remo, Gabbar, Loafer and Lucy were leading the special K-9 squads which were sniffing through classrooms to sanitise them. It was only after their go-ahead that the cops felt confident enough to leave the schools. Racing against time, the squad managed to sanitise the schools by noon and headed to catch some sleep and munch on their favourite raw meaty bones.

For years, K-9 squad has been an integral part of the bomb detection teams of Delhi Police. "They are lifesavers, quite literally. They sniff out critical areas first, giving the team a breather and a heads-up on any threats," said a handler. Currently, Delhi Police has a strength of 72 dogs comprising 62 sniffers, seven trackers and three narcotics specialists. The tracker dogs play an important role at crime spots too. Their breeds include Labrador, German Shepherd and Belgian Shepherd.

At every bomb threat, the trained dog leads the operation wearing proper gear. "As the dog sniffs around, its behaviour is closely monitored by the handler. When the dog senses something out of the ordinary, it sits still. This action serves as an alert to the handler, who then moves the dog to a safe distance before allowing it to sniff the same area once more. If the dogs sit at the same spot repeatedly, this suggests a strong likelihood of some suspicious object," said an officer associated with the squad.

It's not just bomb threats but the canine unit also starts its preparations well ahead of any major event in the city. "These dogs have received several months of training, and we always test their abilities by creating real-life bomb threat situations where we place RDX at different locations. So far, they have been successful in tracing the bombs," the officer said.

The squad remains stationed at 10 locations. It comes under Crime Branch and a DCP-rank officer oversees its administration and functioning. Currently, DCP (Crime) Satish Kumar is heading the bomb disposal and K-9 squads.

The unit has over 100 skilled and experienced handlers who build a bond with them over a period of time. "They are regular dogs when they are not working. So, they need the same amount of care and love, maybe more, than any other pet dog. For them to perform their best, they need to be

UP TO 9 MONTHS' TRAINING, 10 YRS OF SERVICE



CRIME TEAM

Strength **72**
62 sniffers, seven trackers, and three narcotics specialists
Breeds Labrador, German Shepherd and Belgian Shepherd
Duty hours Deployed for 5-6 hours daily



THE DOG DETAILS

- Each dog costs ₹4.5 lakh to ₹5 lakh; they are purchased from Army
- They serve for 9-10 years before retiring
- Squad members are trained by ITBP and BSF
- Explosives and narcotics dogs are given specialised training for six months
- Trackers are trained for nine months
- The squad has over 100 handlers



HOW THEY OPERATE

- Upon receiving a threat call, bomb detection team rushes to the spot with canine partners
- The dog starts sniffing from building's main gate, meticulously searching for suspicious odour
- If the canine detects something concerning, it sits down and remains focused on specific spot, alerting the handler
- The handler guides the dog away from the area and then releases it again to sniff the same spot
- If the dog sits at the same location repeatedly, indicating a high probability of threat, bomb detection team is notified for probe
- If a suspicious object is confirmed, detection team calls bomb disposal squad to safely transport the item to an isolated location for a controlled detonation

A fortnight before hoax, DoE detailed school safety steps

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New Delhi: Just a fortnight before the hoax bomb scare hit several schools in Delhi on Tuesday, the city's education department had carried out a review of the threat posed and the safety plan of students and staff. The directorate of education (DoE) also dispatched staff to one of the prominent schools to examine safety measures taken by the school and its preparedness. And on April 16, DoE took out a detailed circular on the issue of dealing with bomb threats to schools. These are part of the submissions made by the department before Delhi High Court, where it has claimed it has a "zero-tolerance policy" in matters of safety in schools and its officials are doing their best to ensure effective implementation of the guidelines for dealing with disasters, including bomb threats.

In a status report filed last week, DoE said it had issued several directions to the institutions to "step up" their safety and security measures, including a circular dated April 16 on precautionary measures and the role of the school authorities in cases of bomb threats.

The DoE's stand was filed in response to a plea raising concerns regarding bomb threats in schools. The petitioner, Arpit Bhargava, filed the petition in 2023 in the wake of a hoax bomb threat at DPS, Mathura Road.

In its response, DoE said that "bomb threat is an issue of law and order and specifically pertains with the police authority and internal security agencies" but the directorate also called an emergent meeting last month to discuss the safety plan for students and staff of schools.

"DoE has taken into consideration each and every aspect of potential harm that may create any safety issue. After thorough discussions with stakeholders and experts, DoE has issued guidelines through various circulars catering to all the possible safety issues," the education department stated.

"The department is practising a zero-tolerance policy towards the safety issues and has directed all the schools under its jurisdiction to step up the safety and security measures," it submitted, adding that on the issue of bomb threats, the heads of schools have been directed to make parents aware that no student should make a hoax threat call due to any reason. Such action may not only affect his/her studies but also lead to police action and even suspension or rustication.

It also said the heads of schools have been asked to conduct safety walks and mock drills for a safe evacuation of students and staff on a regular basis. These include random, surprise checks of school bags of students and regular mock drills.

Justice Subramonium Prasad listed the petition for hearing on Monday.

REPORT IN HC STATES

We've a 'zero-tolerance policy' in matters of safety in schools and our officials are trying to ensure effective implementation of the guidelines for dealing with disasters

Decibel levels around IGI not shooting beyond limits

NOISE LEVELS ABOVE 60DB ON MOST DAYS AT VASANT KUNJ, DWARKA SECTOR-19



Aircraft noise monitoring is done under each runway funnel of IGI Airport on NGT's orders

- Continuous aircraft noise monitoring terminals (NMTs) installed under approach and departure funnels of IGI to measure and monitor aircraft noise level
- NMTs have been installed at five locations | Hauz Khas, Vasant Kunj, RK Puram and sectors 24 and 19 of Dwarka

What is an approach funnel

- A specified airspace around a nominal approach path within which it is considered normal for an aircraft to land
- NMTs monitor the noise levels in decibels at five locations that have aerial distance of around 15km from runways

Top decibel levels in March

Location	Lday (6am to 10pm)	Lnight (10pm to 6am)
Hauz Khas	55.5	59.9
Vasant Kunj	64.2	63.5
RK Puram	61.8	57.4
Dwarka Sector-24	63.8	61.8
Dwarka Sector-19	65.9	63.9

Standard 70 dB(A) Leq (equivalent continuous sound level) for day (6am to 10pm) and 65 dB(A) Leq for night (10pm to 6am)
Lday/night is noise level over entire day/night

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New Delhi: Delhi International Airport Limited has measured the noise levels under each runway funnel (15km aerial distance from a runway) of Indira Gandhi International Airport and found that the noise levels in March were compliant with the prescribed standard. Continuous aircraft noise monitoring terminals have been installed at five locations — Hauz Khas, Vasant Kunj, RK Puram and Dwarka Sectors 24 and 19.

The data for March, which has been submitted to National Green Tribunal, shows that the decibel levels were below the standard of 70dB during daytime, but Vasant Kunj and Dwarka Sector 19 recorded noise levels of over 60 dB on most days.

A plea was filed by Society for Protection of Culture, Heritage, Environment, Traditions and Promotion of National Awareness through its president in NGT last year, raising the grievance of noise pollution at IGI Airport and all other airports in India, which

Dwarka Sector 19 (from 6am to 10pm) recorded the highest noise levels of 65.9dB on March 2

are located close to residential areas, caused due to landing and take-off of aircraft on all the runways during nighttime, from 10 pm to 6 am. The plea sought enforcement of noise limits at IGI Airport and the other airports and to publish high noise impacted areas around the airports.

The tribunal had earlier observed that nearly 80 flights take off or land every hour at the Delhi airport.

DIAL informed NGT that it had issued circulars dated August 24, 2021; April 28, 2022; and May 29, 2023 to all the airlines operating at IGI Airport and ATC Palam requesting them to follow the best practices on noise mitigation measures and adopt latest new fleets, technologies and procedures to make aircraft operations quieter while ensuring a safe and efficient operational environment.

On March 21, NGT had asked AAI to issue similar di-

rections to all the airports maintained by it within two months and directed DGCA to issue similar circulars within three months. NGT had disposed of the case then, but had asked agencies to file a compliance report.

In its report dated May 1, DIAL said it had published the aircraft noise levels recorded at the Delhi airport for March 2024, along with the daily average noise level for night and day periods. "It will be ensured that all aircraft noise levels recorded at the Delhi airport will be published on its website monthly with the daily data," it added.

The monthly data for March shows that Dwarka Sector 19 (during the day from 6 am to 10 pm) recorded the highest noise levels of 65.9 dB on March 2. The lowest noise levels were at 41 dB at Dwarka Sector 24 during the night from 10pm to 6am on March 14.

Jyoti, who lives in Lajpat Nagar, said, "The constant noise of aircraft becomes loudest during night hours, especially during winter when fans or air-conditioners are switched off."

CBSE clears the air, board results likely to be declared after May 20

New Delhi: Quelling rumours over the release of the board results, the Central Board of Secondary Education on Friday clarified that the results are likely to be declared after May 20. CBSE stated on its official website, "The board results for classes X and XII are likely to be declared after May 20, 2024."

Apart from this website, the results can also be checked on other official websites of CBSE, including cbse.nic.in, cbseresults.nic.in and results.cbse.nic.in. Other websites to check the results are digilocker.gov.in and results.gov.in. A student will need his roll number, school number and admit card ID to check the results online.

This year, around 39 lakh candidates have registered for classes X and XII board exams across the country. The Class X examination was conducted from Feb 15 to March 13 and the Class XII examination from Feb 15 to April 2.

A fake circular was recently doing the rounds on social media, claiming that CBSE had released the result date for the board exams. TNN



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TWO RIVALS WHO AREN'T SHY OF TAKING POTSHOTS AT EACH OTHER TALK ABOUT DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR CONSTITUENCY

People Remember My Polls About Progress Work As MP: Mahabal Of Country: Sehrawat

Atul Mathur@timesgroup.com

A former Member of Parliament and a Poorvanchali leader, Mahabal Mishra is contesting his fourth Lok Sabha election from West Delhi parliamentary constituency. Excerpts from an interview:

■ What are your main election promises?

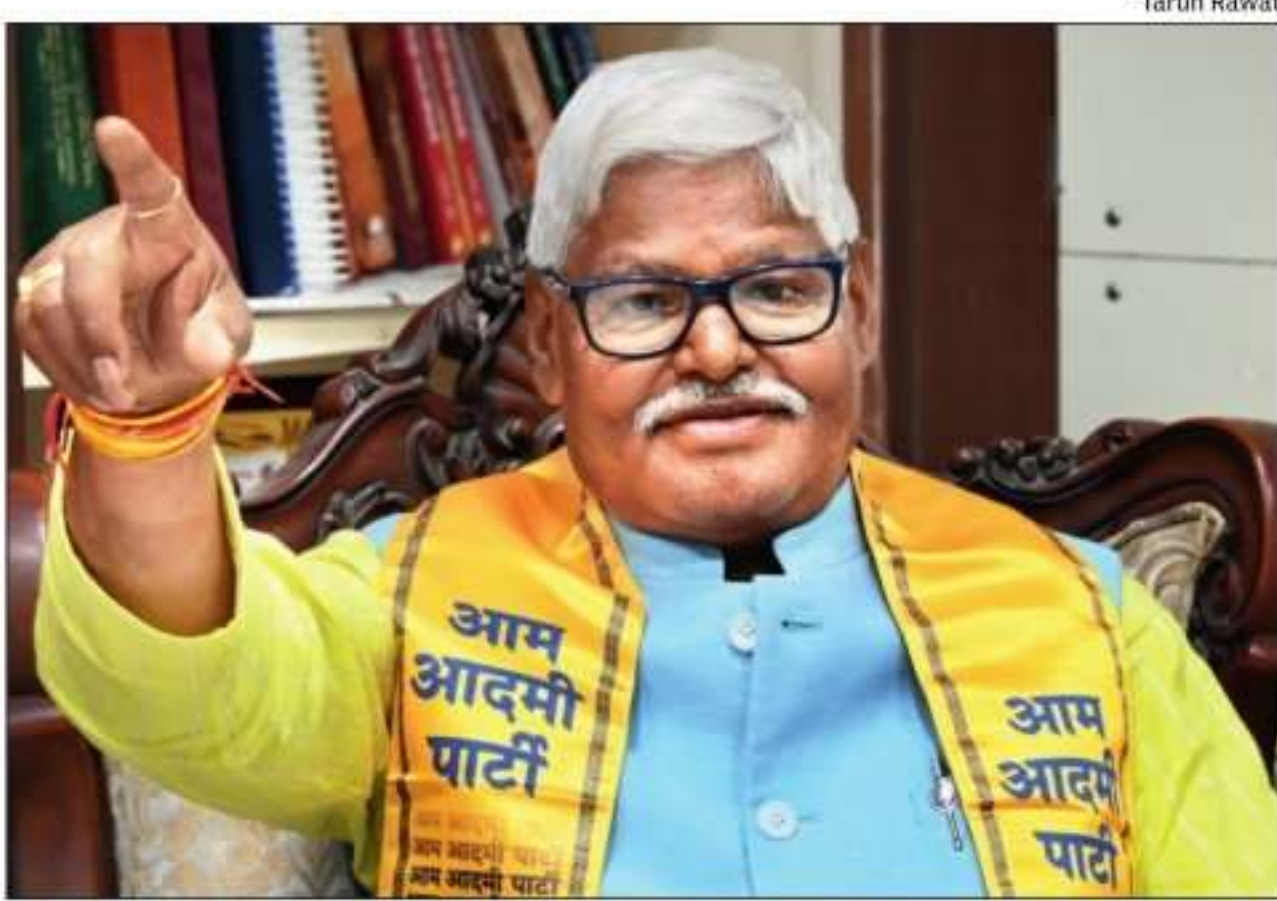
My slogan is 'Kaam kiya hai, kam karenge, jan jan ka samman karenge' (Have worked, will continue to work and will respect everyone). My priorities include Delhi Metro expansion to west Delhi with new corridors from Rajouri Garden to Lajwanti Garden and different lines from Najafgarh to Dhansa border, Nangloi and Jaipur Road. Students face a lot of difficulty travelling to central Delhi, so I'll work for a new campus of Delhi University for west Delhi. I will also get land allotted by DDA and MCD for parking lots.

■ You lost two successive Lok Sabha elections. Do you think people will give you a chance again?

I was an MP earlier and worked hard for the development of the area. People remember my hard work. The elevated road between Janakpuri to Azadpur was built due to my effort. Janakpuri flyover, the road over the drain connecting Dwarka, Delhi Metro lines from Janakpuri to Kalindi Kunj and Kakrola to Najafgarh, a Super Speciality Hospital and a dental speciality hospital and the Dilli Haat in Janakpuri—these came up because of my involvement. And despite losing elections, I was always available to the electorate and people acknowledge this.

■ You contested all your previous elections on a Congress ticket. Will AAP putting you up this time go against you?

I am a candidate of INDIA bloc put up by AAP. Wherever I go, all those who support the idea of an opposition alliance will support me. Both Cong-



Tarun Rawat

MISHRA SAYS

There is sympathy for AAP for the unjustified arrest of Arvind Kejriwal. People understand that Ambedkar's Constitution is being violated by BJP-led central govt

ress and AAP have similar ideologies and work for the welfare of the poor. The work done by earlier Congress govt to provide amenities to unauthorised colonies are being taken forward by AAP govt. Both the parties are secular and safeguard the rights of the poor. Both talk about 'Sarvjan hitai, sarvjan sukhai'. With AAP providing free water and electricity, free bus rides and free pilgrimage to the poor, a family easily saves Rs 10,000 a month. Their lives have improved. I have no regrets about changing parties.

■ There are allegations of corruption against CM Arvind Kejriwal. Do you think this will affect your chance of winning?

On the contrary, there is sympathy for AAP for the unjustified arrest of Arvind Kejriwal. People understand that Baba Saheb Ambedkar's

Constitution is being violated by BJP-led central govt. There is no proof of the charges levelled against the CM. Those who made statements against Kejriwal and got bail also gave electoral bonds to BJP. Where is the proof of corruption in the implementation of the excise policy? Where is the money trail? Since there is no proof, the court gave bail to (AAP's Rajya Sabha member) Sanjay Singh.

■ Are you getting support from Congress cadres on ground?

Whenever I go for corner meetings or padayatra, local functionaries of both Congress and AAP work together. Look at my videos; you will see that.

■ What are your views about your rival candidate?

I ask for votes for the work I have done while she is seeking support in Modi's name. I am an army veteran, a municipal councillor, three-time MLA and an MP. I have been a DDA member for 12 years. She was a councillor once and mayor of South MCD for one year. People say Mahabal will start working from the day he wins and she will take five years to learn.

Abhinav Rajput@timesgroup.com

BJP denied ticket to heavyweight Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma from West Delhi constituency nominating instead former MCD mayor Kamaljeet Sehrawat, who has also held various organisational posts in Delhi BJP. Excerpts from an interview.

■ What are your main poll issues?

In villages and unauthorised colonies, there is a lack of parks, sports facilities and community halls. In the next five years, we will develop such facilities on DDA and gram sabha lands. Just like the Dwarka Expressway has made people's lives easier, similar connectivity will be provided in other traffic-affected areas. There are schemes like Mudra Loan, Vishwakarma Yojna and many others for people who want to earn a livelihood. I want to make these schemes to the voters by opening service centres for the assistance of people.

■ Why were you chosen over MP Parvesh Verma?

When the PM brought in the Nari Shakti Vandan bill seeking to reserve one-third of the total number of Lok Sabha seats for women, Sonia Gandhiji said, 'Why don't you implement it right now?' It's a tough process to nominate a Lok Sabha candidate

because the party has to consider numerous aspects. PM wants to empower women. Parveshji did good work, whether it was hospitals, Delhi Metro extension, flyovers or bridges. We have a big party and there is work for everyone in it.

■ AAP has constantly accused Delhi BJP of using LG's office to get projects halted to create an atmosphere against the state govt.

Rs 42 crore was the cost of the renovation of a house but that work didn't get stopped. The excise policy didn't get stopped because LG wanted it stopped. If you send files to LG wit-



Sanjeev Rastogi

SEHRAWAT SAYS

These are national elections. My rival's party is not even contesting polls across India. If you ask AAP who its PM candidate is, there is no answer

hout following the procedure, without proper budget allocation, what can he do? There is a procedure for doing anything and if you engage in corruption, then you will face action.

■ What do you think of your rival candidate, who is banking on the Poorvanchali vote?

These are national elections. My rival's party is not even contesting polls across India. If you ask AAP who its PM candidate is, there is no answer. Not only Poorvanchal, but the whole country is clear that this election is about the country becoming developed and self-reliant.

■ BJP lost all assembly seats in West Delhi in 2020. So, is AAP and Congress coming together for the Lok Sabha polls a big challenge?

In an alliance, two plus two is not

four. You cannot play with people's emotions by allying with someone whom you accuse of corruption every day. We also rose from three seats and are now at 303 in the Lok Sabha, but never forgot our ideology. Our alliances with parties was under a common minimum programme (CMP).

■ But you had an alliance with PDP in Kashmir and with Ait Pawar whom you accused of corruption.

We allied with PDP as we wanted to make inroads into Kashmir, but even that was under a CMP. The reason Article 370 was scrapped easily was because we had been in govt before. We did not abuse PDP for power. We never compromise on ideology, but Congress and AAP have totally given up on their ideologies.

■ Sealing of shops and registry in unauthorised colonies are two central govt issues. People are upset with things not moving forward at a faster pace.

What should have ideally happened is that DDA should have made master plans instead of itself becoming a builder. That is why the Centre introduced PM-Uday scheme. We will amend the scheme for further convenience to people.

Local issues big deal for biggest constituency

Kushagra Dixit & Ashresh Marupaka | TNN

New Delhi: The West Delhi parliamentary constituency, the largest in Delhi with the highest number of voters, encompasses demographics and geographies, from the affluent neighbourhood of Dwarka and the bustling Rajouri market to the remote villages bordering Haryana and the humble lower middle class colonies.

While the 2019 election gave BJP's Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma a grand majority with over 60% of the electors pressing the lotus on the EVMs, this time, the battle between BJP's Kamaljeet Sehrawat and AAP's Mahabal Mishra, a former MP from the constituency who switched from Congress to AAP, could be fought on more than just party lines.

The constituency's 25.7 lakh voters include OBCs (20.8%), Punjabis and Sikhs (20.8%),

The constituency's 25.7 lakh voters have enumerated several poll issues, ranging from crime, inflation and traffic congestion to water and power outages, end-mile connectivity, employment and skill education

SCs (12.9%), Brahmins (9.9%), Jats (9.4%), Muslims (6.8%), Vais (6.5%) and Yadavs (3.7%) and a significant number of Poorvanchali voters. The electorate has enumerated several poll issues, ranging from crime, inflation and traffic congestion to water and power outages, end-mile connectivity, employment and skill education.

Ratnesh, who runs a general store in Dichaun Kalan, fretted about power supply. "We experience electricity cuts almost every alternate day, sometimes for six hours," he grumbled. A young voter, Minku, who lives in Hari Nagar and works as a conductor in Delhi Transport Corporation, worries about govt jobs. "I just learnt that four DTC bus depots are being shut down. We will be relegated to working for private ride aggregators," he sighed.

Sita, a housewife in Matiala village, like all housewives, talked of the rising cost of living. "Everything is expensive now. We are finding it difficult to pay our children's school fees. Basic groceries have also

become costly. I want a government that will check the rising costs," she said.

Alongside household concerns are other issues. Contractor Sairam in Tilak Nagar said, "The news frightens us. An elected CM has been put behind bars right before the elections. We can't support a regime which doesn't have our interests at heart."

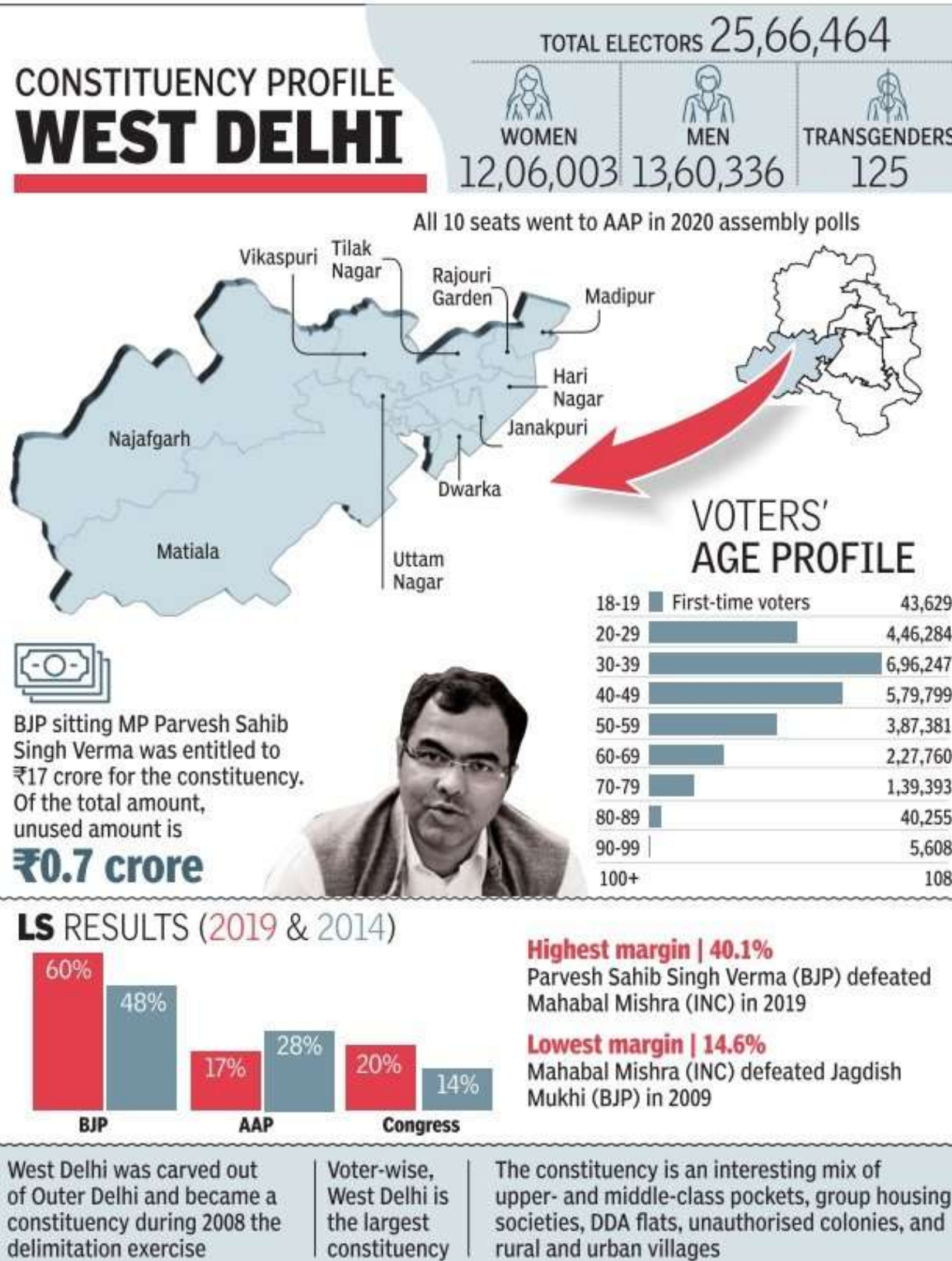
Several voters, disappointed by their MPs remaining inaccessible, declared that these polls need to be more than just Modi vs Rahul Gandhi or Kejriwal. As Kartar Singh, social worker in Najafgarh, remarked, "No doubt Modi has benefited on national security and lifted India's image internationally, but when the local MP is missing, it angers us. Also, several good works done by the earlier Congress MP Mahabal Mishra were scrapped. People will definitely have that in mind while voting."

Meanwhile at Janakpuri, 19-year old Mohit Kumar, a first-time voter, says his career is upmost and expects the next govt to boost employment. "I am doing an ITI diploma course and hope to get a job. While there are jobs in the market if you have the right skills, the rising cost of living makes me wonder if I can make it in the city with a fresher's salary. The present govt is promoting skills, but it must also focus on wages," said Kumar.

Some voters have decided to vote for a party rather than the candidate. "BJP's candidate used to be a municipal councillor. I think voting for such a candidate makes sense given there are more chances that BJP will form the govt at the Centre again," reasoned Aman Agarwal at Sanyog Vihar near Dwarka.

Political analysts expect the varying opinions to make the elections "absorbing". Professor Chandrachud Singh of Hindu College commented, "In West Delhi, there are a sizable number of Poorvanchali voters. With Parvesh Verma not being renominated, I understand there is some discontent. But I see Mahabal Mishra rising due to several other issues, including anger among some Jats, price rise and unemployment."

Singh added that there was a huge difference between the last election and this. In 2019, he said, there was the Pulwama factor and Modi buzz. "That buzz seems much diminished this time," the professor said. "So, there are chances that a non-BJP party will get past the post on the seat this time."



KEY ISSUES

Absence of elected representative

People in several areas across the constituency complain of absence of elected representatives, both MPs and MLAs, on the ground. Their inaccessibility irks voters, especially those in rural areas with specific issues. Voters wish for the elections to be more than just Modi vs Kejriwal

CRIME

It is a major issue in villages and small clusters like in Dwarka, Najafgarh, Vikaspuri, etc. People complain of frequent incidents of extortion, snatching, theft and gang rivalries. Many say formation of new gangs in the area a problem

INFLATION

Many voters across the constituency complain of increasing cost of living, especially education, medical expenses, food items and consumer goods. Rising rent in urban localities and increasing cost of transport in villages due to absence of last-mile connectivity are also some issues people grapple with

PROMISES

KAMALJEET SEHRAWAT | BJP

There are four sectors—villages, colonies, DDA quarters and JJ clusters—each with specific needs. I will work on fixing last-mile connectivity for villages, specifically from Nangloi to Najafgarh metro extension. Will create self-help groups and bring benefits of central policies like PM Awas Yojana to clusters. For urban areas, parks need to be maintained, community halls require modernisation and more facilities for senior citizens and women are needed

MAHABAL MISHRA | AAP

This constituency needs several new projects like skill centres for youth and women. Connectivity is a major issue. I will ensure Najafgarh is connected to Dhansa and Nangloi via metro and with Jaipur road by road. More hospitals are also required. Will resume projects that are stuck, like that of a paramedical institute. As an MP, I established several hospitals, flyovers, underground reservoirs, etc. Being a DDA board member between 1997 and 2020, I have vast experience, so I can deliver quickly, unlike the BJP candidate who will have to learn from scratch

Voting day scorchers! Poll body braces for med crisis

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: With Delhi likely to witness a high day temperature on May 25 when the city goes to polls, the election office has decided to make elaborate arrangements at polling stations to deal with any kind of medical emergency.

While all govt and private hospitals are being geo-mapped and linked with 2,627 polling locations, officials said each parliamentary seat will be divided into clusters and ambulances will be stationed in case a voter or a polling or a security officer requires to be taken to a health facility.

Officials said each polling location will have paramedical staff, while adequate arrangements will be made to provide cold water to the polling teams as well as voters. Chief electoral officer P Krishnamurthy on Friday held a high-level meeting of all stakeholder departments to discuss preparations for the anticipated heatwave conditions.

With a focus on ensuring the safety and comfort of citizens and smooth voting across the national capital, stakeholders were briefed about various measures to be taken, an official said.

"The meeting had representatives of various stakeholders, including Municipal Corporation Delhi, New Del-



MERCURY RISING!

hi Municipal Corporation, Delhi Cantonment Board, Directorate General of Health Services, Delhi Jal Board, department of women and child development, directorate of education and the social welfare department," an official of the CEO's office said.

"The CEO, Delhi, directed the stakeholders to ensure that adequate arrangements are made at all polling stations so that no voter feels any kind of discomfort due to the projected heatwave conditions while casting their vote," the official added.

More than 1.51 crore voters are eligible to vote in the seven seats in Delhi. Voting will be held at 13,637 polling stations, to be set up at 2,627 locations. Over 1 lakh personnel will be engaged to ensure smooth polling.

Officials said the India Meteorological Department has issued the forecast that Delhi may witness heatwave conditions on May 25.

"Taking proactive measures, the CEO has directed officials to equip every polling station with safe drinking water, proper shaded waiting areas with air coolers, essential medical kits and supplies. The CEO also directed local bodies and the health department to provide requisite paramedical staff equipped with essential medicines including ORS at each polling location," an official said.

To bring voters to the polling stations and drop them back to their houses, the election office is contemplating arranging for pick-up-and-drop facilities. Talks are on with a bike aggregator for it, the official added.

Synergy: AAP & Cong panels meet to discuss joint rallies

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Congress have appointed senior functionaries as co-ordinators for each Lok Sabha constituency to work together and resolve any issue related to election strategising and campaigning.

In a meeting of the coordination committee on Friday, which was attended by senior state-level functionaries of the INDIA bloc partners, a detailed discussion on joint rallies and roadshows was held and both parties decided to use the maximum number of joint events.

"We want to make it clear to both the people of Delhi and our own workers that this alliance is not a mere optic. Both Congress and AAP are together in this and will seriously fight a joint election against BJP," Delhi Congress' election management and coordination committee chairman, Subhash Chopra, said.

While Delhi Congress has given the responsibilities of seven constituencies to former MP Ramesh Kumar and former Delhi ministers Narend Nath and Mangat Ram Singhal, AAP has

has fielded its candidates on four seats—New Delhi, South Delhi, East Delhi and West Delhi, while Congress is contesting at North East Delhi, North West Delhi and Chandni Chowk.

Chopra said senior functionaries of both parties had also decided to attend the roadshows that the candidates would lead while going to file the nominations. On Friday, AAP Delhi convenor Gopal Rai and former minister Rajendra Pal Gautam accompanied Congress' North West Delhi candidate, Udit Raj, when he went to submit his nomination papers.

While the number of joint public meetings and roadshows are still being decided, Delhi Congress' communication in-charge, Anil Bhargava, said all such events would have only the flags and election symbol of the party of the respective candidate. The banners and hoardings will have the photographs of AAP's Arvind Kejriwal as well as Congress' Rahul Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge along with the candidate's.

"The decision of having the flags and election symbol of the party contesting from that particular seat has been taken to ensure there is absolutely no confusion among the workers and people. All big events will also have the functionaries of other constituents of the alliance," Bhargava said.

Senior functionaries of both parties are likely to meet next week to decide their joint campaign events.

HC seeks replies from agencies on Sisodia's bail pleas by May 8

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi High Court on Friday sought the response of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) on former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia's petitions seeking bail in the corruption and money-laundering cases lodged by the agencies in relation to the alleged excise policy scam.

Justice Swarna Kanta Sharma listed the matter for May 8 by when the agencies will have to respond to the petitions in which Sisodia has challenged a trial court's April 30 order rejecting relief to him.

Sisodia's lawyers also submitted that an application had also been filed seeking to continue the trial court's order allowing him to meet his ailing wife once a week in custody during the pendency of his petitions. As the counsel for ED submitted that the agency has no objection if the trial court order is continued, the judge allowed the request.

The trial court had dismissed Sisodia's bail pleas in the corruption and money-laundering cases lodged by CBI and ED, respectively.

The beneficiaries had diverted "illegal" gains to the accused officials and made false entries in their books of account to evade detection, the probe agencies have alleged. According to CBI and ED, the irregularities were committed while modifying the excise policy and undue favours extended to the licence holders.

The special judge had, in the April 30 order, denied the relief, saying the stage was not right for granting bail to Sisodia.

The high court had dismissed Sisodia's previous bail pleas in both cases on May 30 and July 3 last year, respectively. On Oct 30, 2023, Supreme Court refused to interfere with the high court's order.



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15-year-old held for minor's rape

New Delhi: A 15-year-old boy has been apprehended for allegedly sexually assaulting a minor girl in outer Delhi's Nangloi area. The suspect was nabbed by local residents on Thursday morning and thrashed after finding that he had allegedly raped the girl, police said.

After receiving a PCR call on May 1 regarding the minor girl's rape, police rushed to the spot. "However, the victim did not provide a proper statement last night. However, she had alleged that physical relation was made on 3-4 occasions by the accused," a senior police officer said.

On Thursday night, about 100 supporters of the victim's family gathered near Nihal Vihar police station demanding action. They briefly blocked traffic around Nangloi chowk. "The situation was normalised by 10pm after multiple meetings with the family," the officer said. A case was registered under relevant sections of rape under the IPC and PoCSO.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
NOTICE INVITING e-QUOTATION
WBPWD/EE/S24PGSD/NleQ 09/2024-25
EE, S-24Pgs. Divn., PWD, invites e-Quotation for in connection of "General Parliamentary Election 2024. Hire & Labour charges for Erection of Temporary kitchen with dining around 800 Sq. Ft. under South 24 Pgs Sub-Division, PWD." Location:- under JIBANTALA, BASANTI & NARENDRAPUR Police Station." Details of the NleQ will be available in the office Notice Board as well as in the visit the website <http://wbtdenders.gov.in> & <http://wbpwd.gov.in> Last Date of Bid Submission (Online) 11.05.2024 upto 10.00 AM. Tender Id No. 2024. WBPWD. 688750_1, 2024. WBPWD. 688750_2 & 2024. WBPWD. 688750_3. Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Division. ICA-17919(2)/2024

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
ELECTION URGENT
EE/PWD/Purulia Division invites Offline Short Notice Inviting quotation for Dinning cum Kitchen/Dinning/Kitchen shed at various locations of accommodation of CAPF under Purulia Division, PWD in CONNECTION WITH THE ENSUING LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024. N.I.Q. No. 01 of 2024-2025. Last date of application for permission (Offline)-06.05.2024. Last date for issue of quotation paper (Offline)-07.05.2024. Last date for submission of quotation paper(Offline)-09.05.2024. Bid submission closing date (Offline)-09.05.2024. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of N.I.T. and documents may be downloaded from: <http://wbtdenders.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, Purulia Division, PWD. ICA-17922(3)/2024

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
TENDER NOTICE
Ref No.: WBPWD/EE/S24PGSD/NITS2/24-25. (Tender ID: 2024. WBPWD. 688703_1) WBPWD/EE/S24PGSD/E1/NITS3/24-25. (Tender ID: 2024. WBPWD. 688705_1) WBPWD/EE/S24PGSD/E1/NITS4/24-25. (Tender ID: 2024. WBPWD. 688592_1)
Online Tender is hereby invited by the Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division, 57/2, Diamond Harbour Road, Kolkata-700023 from the eligible contractors for the following works: Name of Work: 1. Temporary Electrical Installation and DG Set, on hire basis, for accommodation of CAPF for 02 Nos. locations of Jharhail Coastal PS under Baruipur Police District, in connection with ensuring GE to Lok Sabha-2024 (for 09 days). 2. Temporary Electrical Installation and DG Set, on hire basis, for accommodation of CAPF for 02 Nos. locations of Gosaba PS under Baruipur Police District, in connection with ensuring GE to Lok Sabha-2024 (for 09 days). 3. Temporary Electrical Installation and DG Set, on hire basis, for accommodation of CAPF for 02 Nos. locations of Sundarban Coastal PS under Baruipur Police District, in connection with ensuring GE to Lok Sabha-2024 (for 09 days). Bid submission start: 03.05.24 at 09.00 AM. Bid Submission end: 08.05.24 at 12:00 PM. Bid Opening Date: 10.05.24 at 12:30 PM. Details of eNIT, BOQ & tender documents may be downloaded from <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> In This Tender/Advertisement is related to the Ensuing General Election to Lok Sabha 2024. Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, South 24 Parganas Electrical Division. ICA-17915(3)/2024

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
Executive Engineer, PWD, North 24 Prgs Electrical Division invite Offline Tender for the work of:- 1) "Temporary E.I. Work and DG Set, on hire basis for accommodation of CAPF/SF at various locations of MADHYAMGRAM PS, under BARASAT Police District, i.c.w. ensuring General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 in the District of North 24 Parganas." 2) "Temporary E.I. Work and DG Set, on hire basis for accommodation of CAPF/SF at various locations of GOBARANGA PS, under BARASAT Police District, i.c.w. ensuring General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 in the District of North 24 Parganas." NIT No: 1) WBPWD/EE/N24/EL/e-NIQ-73/24-25. 2) WBPWD/EE/N24/EL/e-NIQ-74/24-25. Tender Id: NIL. Pre Bid Meeting Date: NIL. Bid Submission start date (Online): 02/05/2024. Bid Submission Closing date (Online): 06/05/2024. Corrigendum if any will be published website only. Details of NIT & tender documents may be downloaded from <http://wbtdenders.gov.in> Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD, NORTH 24 PARGANAS ELECTRICAL DIVISION. ICA- T7924(2)/2024

In Fray With Show Of Strength

BJP's Bidhuri & Khandelwal, Udit Raj Of Cong File Papers; Hold Roadshows

Photo: Jatin Kumar

Ramvir Singh Bidhuri (71), BJP
Constituency | South Delhi
Education | Bachelor's of arts, Delhi University

Income and assets of Bidhuri and his wife, Rajesh Devi

	2024	2012	Total
Movable assets (Bank balance, valuables)	23.8	9	52.6 cr
Immovable property	11.7	28.8	20.7 cr

Income in last five financial years

Year	Income (in lakh)
2018-19	17
2019-20	18.7
2020-21	8.5
2021-22	3.6
2022-23	14.9

Wife's assets and income
Rajesh Devi's Assets
Income (2022-23)
₹27.1 crore
₹17.5 lakh

Photo: PTI

Praveen Khandelwal (64), BJP
Constituency | Chandni Chowk
Education | BA, LLB from DU

Income and assets of Khandelwal and his wife, Kanak Khandelwal

	2024	Total
Movable assets (Bank balance, valuables)	2.6	11.7 cr
Immovable property	9.1	

Income in last five financial years

Year	Income (in lakh)
2018-19	1.6
2019-20	1.9
2020-21	7
2021-22	7.4
2022-23	6.9

Wife's assets and income
Kanak Khandelwal's Assets
Income (2022-23)
₹4.9 crore
₹4.7 lakh

Photo: Anindya Chattopadhyay

Udit Raj (66), Cong
Constituency | North West Delhi
Education | MA (Osmania University), LLB (CCS University)

Income and assets of Raj and his wife, Seema Raj

	2024	Total
Movable assets (Bank balance, valuables)	6.3	10cr
Immovable property	3.7	

Income in last five financial years

Year	Income (in lakh)
2018-19	62.9
2019-20	48
2020-21	14
2021-22	140
2022-23	100

Wife's assets and income
Seema Raj Assets
Income (2022-23)
₹3.8 crore
₹40.6 lakh

Siddhanta.Mishra
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The returning officers for the capital's seven Lok Sabha constituencies had a busy day on Friday with as many as 33 candidates of national and unrecognised parties and independents filing their nominations for the May 25 polls in the city.

Among the prominent ones to officially enter the electoral fray were BJP veteran Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, who filed his nomination for the South Delhi seat, his party colleague Praveen Khandelwal who has thrown his hat in the ring from Chandni Chowk and former Indian Revenue Services officer Udit Raj of Congress in the reserved constituency of North West Delhi.

The office of the chief electoral officer said so far 90 candidates had submitted 115

sets of nomination documents. While May 6 is the last date to file nominations, the scrutiny of documents will take place on May 7 and the last date to withdraw is May 8.

Raj held a roadshow in his constituency, declaring a win to be "essential to save the country and the Constitution". The former BJP MP and now a Congress contestant concentrated on national issues and his party manifesto's "five guarantees". AAP minister Gopal Rai and Delhi Assembly deputy speaker Rakhi Birla accompanied him.

Raj said, "This is the final battle to save democracy. There is no alternative; we must win this battle at all costs. I want your support not just here (road show) but till the polling day and beyond." The Congress candidate and other Congress functionaries rode a mini truck adorned with banners and the slogan

prominently displayed, "Hath Badlega Halaat". The Congress event demonstrated unity with its alliance partner, AAP, with workers carrying cut-outs of MP Rahul Gandhi and CM Arvind Kejriwal side by side. Throughout the procession, Congress workers celebrated and danced to patriotic songs.

BJP's candidate from South Delhi Bidhuri sat in an open vehicle and mind chants of Bharat Mata Ki Jai by his supporters began his road show. The procession featured songs tailored for Bidhuri's campaign, such as "Bidhuri jeetega bhai, Ramvir jeetega bhai".

His party colleague, Khandelwal's nomination rally started with traditional music and party flags waving as workers marched from Chandni Chowk to Fatehpuri Chowk and then to Old Delhi Railway Station,

from where the candidate and Union minister Piush Goyal and other proposers went to Alipur by car to submit the nomination.

As the BJP's road show moved towards Saket, Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami expressed confidence in the people of Delhi making history and eagerly awaiting the voting day to reelect Narendra Modi as Prime Minister. Dhami highlighted the Modi gov't's accomplishments, such as the removal of Article 370, implementation of CAA, and the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

Speaking from the nomination stage, Khandelwal pledged to fulfil all the promises made to the people of Chandni Chowk, as outlined in his manifesto, ensuring their completion by 2027. He expressed confidence in forming a BJP gov't for the third

time under the leadership of Modi, promising to work tirelessly for the aspirations of the people of Chandni Chowk.

Bidhuri listed the Modi gov't's achievements, including peripheral roads, an eco-park in Badarpur, a six-lane national highway, the India Gate tunnel, the National War Memorial, Kartavya Marg, the new Parliament building, and the installation of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's statue at India Gate. He also criticised the Kejriwal gov't for tarnishing Delhi's reputation as the world's most polluted capital and mentioned the imprisonment of AAP ministers.

Among other candidates who filed nomination was Rajan Singh, who claimed to be the first third gender person to be contesting the Lok Sabha elections. Singh filed his nomination from South Delhi.

CM plea: SC says giving both sides time to respond

► Continued from P1

We are going to hear you both. We must be open to you, because neither side should be taken by surprise. Do not assume anything, do not read anything into it," the bench said and asked both sides to come prepared on May 7.

It asked additional solicitor general S V Raju to seek instructions from ED regarding the conditions which should be imposed if interim bail is granted.

"This case may take time... we may consider the question of interim bail, because of the elections," the bench told the ASG. The court is left with only two weeks before going into summer recess.

Opposing the proposition of interim bail, Raju told the bench that AAP MP Sanjay Singh, who was earlier granted bail in the excise case, was making all sorts of statements after coming out of jail. The court said it would hear the ASG before grant of any relief and asked senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi whether Kejriwal would be signing any files as he's Delhi CM.

Voting for the seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi is scheduled for May 25, while polling in Punjab is in the last phase on June 1. Kejriwal, who was arrested on March 21, has questioned the timing of his arrest and accused the Centre

and ED of trying to disturb AAP's campaign.

Kejriwal's petition raised a larger issue on interpretation of Section 19 of PMLA, which says if an ED officer, on the basis of material in his possession, has reason to believe (that reason for such belief to be recorded in writing) that any person was guilty of money laundering, then he may arrest such person and inform him of the grounds for such arrest.

The bench said it has to be examined how far the court can go to examine whether the objective materials are sufficient enough to trigger arrest and the subjective decision of the officer. The court said there was a higher-than-normal threshold of arrest under PMLA.

Countering ED's allegation that Kejriwal, as convener of AAP, was the brain behind the alleged scam, Singhvi said like Manish Sisodia's case, there was no money trail leading to him and said a political party was not covered under PMLA to be made an accused. The bench, however, expressed reservation in accepting the submission and said a political party, like a registered society, could be implicated.

"Person in charge of and responsible is also deemed to be culpable and then the onus shifts on you to show that it was done without your knowledge. You are wrong here," the bench told Singhvi. The hearing will resume on Tuesday.

HC rejects PIL challenging CM arrest

New Delhi: Delhi High Court has rejected a PIL challenging the arrest of chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in a money laundering case stemming from the alleged excise policy scam, saying it was not maintainable as the person had no connection with the matter.

The division bench of acting chief justice Manmohan and justice Manmeet Pritham Singh Arora said: "This court is of the view that the writ petition, which effectively challenges the arrest of the national convener of AAP on 16th March, 2024, is not maintainable as the said person is in judicial custody in pursuance to the judicial orders, which are not a subject matter of the present petition."

The PIL by law student Amarjeet Gupta sought court directions to EC to develop a mechanism to allow undertrial poll candidates to campaign through virtual conference.

"The petition has been filed in ignorance of the doctrine of separation of powers and seeks directions that are legislative and outside of power of judicial review," the bench said.

CINEMA OF THE WEEK

Pyar Ke Do Naam (Drama) ★★★
Cast: Bhavya Sachdeva, Ankita Sahu, Kanika Gautam, Achal Tankwal
Direction: Danish Javed
Duration: 2 hours 22 minutes
Language: Hindi (UA)

■ The story follows two scholars with contrasting ideologies. As they fall in love, will their clashing philosophies prove to be a hurdle, or will they change their opinions?

Aryan Khanna (Bhavya Sachdeva) is a scholar from Cape Town specialising in Nelson Mandela as a subject, while Kaira (Ankita Sahu) is a

student and follower of Mahatma Gandhi. Pitted against each other during a seminar on peace in Aligarh, the two fall in love. However, they also navigate their opposing philosophies on love — Kaira believes in commitment, and Aryan in togetherness, even if it's just for a night. The story is about whether their love will prevail or result in heartbreak.

Danish Javed's directorial venture has a promising and unique premise — of two lovers as followers of among the greatest leaders, and their opposing views on love adding another layer to their clashing ideologies. However, the script and screenplay fail to do justice to either: Their presentations on their idols lack depth as do their views on love. The abrupt transition between sequences and tracks makes for a



disjointed watch, especially since the narrative moves at an uneven pace. The viewer does neither relates to nor empathises with the two lovers.

Many tracks in the movie also seem illogical—for example, two students, Saima (Kanika Gautam) and Kabir (Achal Tankwal) tasked with their hospitality break up because of a misunderstanding between the lead couple. Other characters are introduced without much thought and do not take the story forward.

Ankita Sahu delivers a decent performance as someone who believes in the permanence of a relationship to avoid meeting the same fate as her unwed mother ditched by her father. One of the movie's most interesting parts comes when Kaira spends a night

with Aryan, and the latter decides to jilt her. Instead of being disillusioned, she feels liberated as she understands the depth of her mother's love for her father. Ankita pulls off this scene with aplomb. Bhavya Sachdeva is passable but has a limited scope for a character arc. Kanika Gautam and Achal Tankwal make sincere efforts, too.

While the film attempts to explore philosophical themes within a love story, the execution falls short. *Pyar Ke Do Naam* ultimately fizzles out, leaving a feeling of missed potential.

— Dhaval Roy

To review any movie and check show timings, visit [etimes.in](https://timesofindia.com)

Tarot (Horror, Thriller) ★★
Cast: Harriet Slater, Adain Bradley, Avantika, Wolfgang Novogratz, Humblerly Gonzalez, Larsen Thompson, Jacob Batalon
Direction: Spenser Cohen, Anna Halberg
Duration: 1 hour 33 minutes
Language: English (A)

■ College kids unwittingly unleash an evil curse after reading an insidious deck of tarot cards. As the entity trapped in the cards wreaks havoc, will they survive the deadly prophecies?

A group of college students sneaking into rooms of creepy houses, messing around with

cursed objects or breaking rules, and unknowingly awakening an evil curse — where have we seen that before? Think *The Cabin in the Woods*, *Ouija*, *Truth or Dare*, *Talk to Me*, and some more. Writer-director duo Spenser Cohen and Anna Halberg's *Tarot* is just another addition to the list.

While staying at an old manor in Catskills for a birthday party, Haley (Harriet Slater) breaks the sacred rule of tarot card reading—never use someone else's deck. Soon, an evil version of her friends' forecast starts coming true. To unravel its secret, the remaining survivors visit a tarot expert (Olwen Fouéré). The story goes back to old Hungary, a royal astrologer, and an ancient curse. The rest of the movie is about the friends' fight for survival and

if they break the curse.

Except for the concept of a tarot deck's evil interpretation of its reading, the slick hand-painted illustrations, and unique monsters such as The Fool, The High Priestess, The Magician, etc., on the cards, the movie's familiar elements fail to bring anything new to the *Tarot* table. At a runtime of 133 minutes, the narrative rushes through scares without much depth or thrill. Cohen and Halberg's direction and cinematographer Elie Smolkin create an atmospheric mood and visuals with a distinct gothic look. The special effects, too, salvage the movie, based on the 1992 novel *Horoscope*. Still, the



generic premise and a weak script and screenplay prevent the narrative from being impactful, with a few-odd jump scares and spooky scenes.

The star cast, including Harriet Slater, Adain Bradley, Avantika, Wolfgang Novogratz, Humblerly Gonzalez, Larsen Thompson, and Jacob Batalon, makes an effort but has little to offer.

Tarot shuffles familiar horror tropes into a predictable deck. The unique cards and gothic atmosphere offer some potential, but a rushed script, forgettable performances, and shallow scares make little impact.

— Dhaval Roy

Office of the District Election Officer & District Magistrate Hooghly, Chinsurah Hooghly : 712101						
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Information for all concerned that the Hon'ble General Observers of 27 Serampore PC, 28 Hooghly PC will be available for public hearing in connection with General Election to Lok Sabha-2024. Anyone having any grievance w.r.t election can visit personally as per following schedule with prior appointment.						
Sl No	Observer's Name	Parliamentary Constituency	Contact No	E-Mail ID	Meeting Venue	Meeting Time
1	Mr. Raghav Sharma, IAS	27 SERAMPORE	9330321185	27sreerampurgo.gels24@gmail.com	B.D.O Office Serampore-Uttarpara Serampore, Hooghly	03/05/2024 To 19/05/2024 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM
2	Mr. D. Muralidhar Reddy, IAS	28 HOOGHLY	9330326199	28hooghlygo.gels24@gmail.com	Conference Hall (1st floor), Gangotri Guest House, Bandel Thermal Power Station, Tribeni, Hooghly	From 3rd May/2024 to 20th May/2024 3:00 To 5:00 PM
Sd/- District Election Officer & District Magistrate Hooghly						
Memo No : 106(5)/HD/ICA/ADVT Date: 02.05.2024						

Singh & Atishi remind people to give 'jail ka jawab' with their vote

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh and Delhi cabinet minister Atishi held a sankalp sabha (resolution meeting) under the "Jail Ka Jawab Vote Se" campaign in the Varkaji Assembly segment of the South Delhi Lok Sabha constituency.

In a meeting in support of AAP's Sahi Ram, the candidate of the INDIA alliance, party workers and local people who participated took an oath to "give a reply to the illegal arrest (of Kejriwal) by voting".

Singh said that chief minister Arvind Kejriwal has provided many facilities to

the people of Delhi. "He reduced costs for electricity, water, women's bus travel, school and hospital bills to zero in Delhi. Therefore, this is an appeal to the people of Delhi that this time they should give all the seven seats of Delhi to the INDIA alliance and reduce BJP seats to zero."

He added: "You should elect such a candidate who can stand with you at any time. Sahi Ram will always be there for you and will fight for you in Parliament."

Singh said: "This is the last election. If the BJP wins by mistake, they will take away your voting power. They will take away Baba Saheb's Constitution and reservation."

Atishi said: "BJP had given the slogan 'Enough of inflation, this time Modi government', but in the last 10 years, instead of decreasing, inflation has increased. Today, it has become difficult for common people to manage their household expenses with what they earn."

She said that "within 4 days of the election being announced, Kejriwal was arrested in a false case. She said BJP had booked chief minister, the brother and son of Delhi, in a false case. They (the people) will answer it with votes. The answer to jail will be given by voting."

Hitting back, BJP's Virendra Sachdeva said: "AAP

leaders should tell Delhiites why Kejriwal has not been able to get bail, despite going to every court... almost every day since his arrest."

"AAP is inundated in corruption and they have no positive achievements or agenda for the future to present before the electorate. So, they keep trying to make Arvind Kejriwal's arrest a political issue," he said. "People of the country very well know that Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has all along tried to misguide the investigation agency Enforcement Directorate when confronted, after evading several summonses. It forced ED to arrest him," he said.

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ED makes fresh arrest in Delhi excise policy case

Atishi has now raised concerns over the prolonged delay in starting the audit. Despite the minister's directives two months ago, the finance department is yet to move.

New Delhi: Enforcement Directorate on Friday arrested a Delhi-based cash courier, Vinod Chauhan, who had transferred alleged kick-backs received from the South Group in the Delhi excise policy case to AAP functionaries in Goa for the party's election expenses.

The arrest comes just ahead of the chargesheet ED is likely to file against Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal and K Kavitha, daughter of former Telangana CM K Chandrashekar Rao, in the case. Both Kejriwal and Kavitha are currently in judicial custody and have challenged their arrest in court.

A case under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code was registered.

said as per the Constitution, a candidate running for Lok Sabha couldn't hold any office of profit at the time of filing the nomination. "Notwithstanding the fact whether these offices qualify to be offices of profit or not and to ensure that there is no such confusion..., I am resigning from this post with immediate effect," Bharti wrote to Lok

In grief:
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Ms. Meenakshi Arora
Mr. Rajan Arora

*'Life is one eternal
struggle between the
forces of good and evil.'
Thus Spake Zarathushtra*

Dr. Mrs. Nomita Aggarwal
Sumit & Megha Aggarwal
Pratham and Meito Aggarwal

We miss you every moment in our hearts. You are always in our thoughts and prayers.
Missed by :
Rishi & Monica Chopra
Ashu Kapoor & Family.

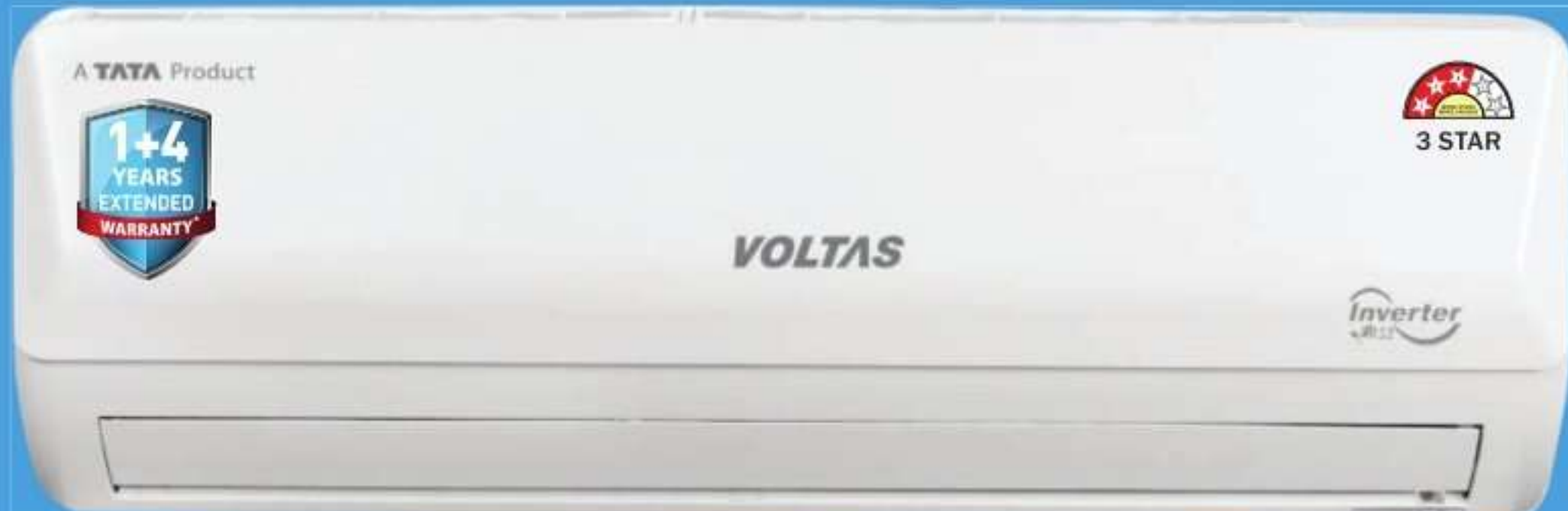
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Like the precious
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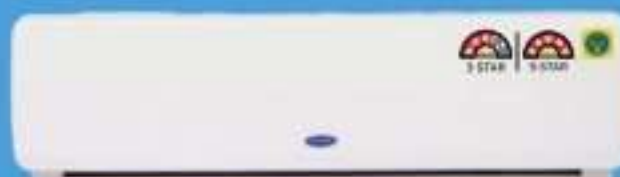


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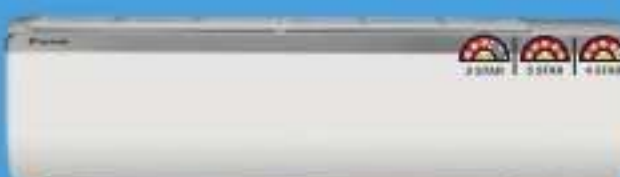
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CCTVs in 6 TN strongrooms housing EVMs malfunction

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Villupuram: Six CCTV cameras in the strongrooms where EVMs are stored after polling in the Villupuram reserved parliamentary constituency malfunctioned and stopped working for about 30 minutes on Friday morning. This is the fourth such incident in Tamil Nadu, and has raised concerns among candidates.

The surveillance cameras suddenly ceased working at 9.28 am. Technicians from the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board immediately attended to the problem in the presence of district officials and repaired the faulty CCTVs, restoring their functioning at 9.58 am.

The district collector and the SP later inspected the six strongrooms in the presence of people assigned by the candidates. However, repeated instances of CCTV snags in EVM strongrooms in the state have raised eyebrows.

Villupuram's sitting MP and VCK candidate D Ravikumar lodged a complaint with RO, and urged him to follow EC directive and take necessary measures to safeguard polled EVMs kept in strong rooms.

T'gana police arrest 5 Cong workers for Shah fake video

HC To Del Cops: Don't Take Any Coercive Action

Pinto Deepak & Sagar Kumar Mutha | TNN

Hyderabad: Five members of Telangana Congress social media team were arrested by Hyderabad cyber crime police for allegedly sharing a doctored video of Union home minister Amit Shah.

The five men — Pendyala Vamshi Krishna, Manne Sathish, Pettam Naveen, Asma Tasleem and Koya Geetha — were later granted bail.

Meanwhile, Telangana high court directed Delhi Police Friday not to take any coercive step until further orders against six Congress activists (the sixth being Ambala Shiva Kumar) in the Shah doctored video case.

The order followed a petition moved by Manne Satish and the others challenging notices issued to them by Delhi Police. The judge, however, said police were free to continue investigating.



The petitioners told Telangana HC that two FIRs had been registered against the same set of persons on the same set of allegations, which was unlawful. High court posted the matter for June

Congress digital platform activist held by Delhi cops

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi Police's special cell made its first arrest on Friday in connection with its investigation into the allegedly doctored video of Union home minister Amit Shah. The accused was identified as Arun Reddy, who ran an account on X in the name of "Spirit of Congress" and had a large following.

"He works as the national coordinator in the Internet Media and Digital Platform Cell of the party at Congress headquarters. His role has come to the fore in the form of uploading videos and broadcasting them to other people. He belongs to Hyderabad and is a key member of the Congress's internet media team," said a senior police officer. He will be produced in Patiala House courts and remand will be sought, the officer added.

Soon after his arrest, Congress MP Manickam Tagore

SC STAYS OPENING OF ROAD OUTSIDE PUNJAB CM MANN'S CHD HOUSE OVER THREAT PERCEPTION

The 'Nowhere People': Trapped between districts & deprivation

Siura Gopalpur's odd location links it to three districts — through proximity, LS constituency and administration. And it has been a bane instead of a boon

Arvind Chauhan
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Ballia: Siura Gopalpur is connected three ways but so "unconnected" that its village head calls himself and its residents "the nowhere people".

The oddity of its location makes the UP hamlet locus classicus — a classic example. It is barely 5km from Mau district border and 20km from Mau town. But the village's 1,600 voters press the button for Salempur Lok Sabha constituency, 50km away in Deoria district. To exacerbate matters, the village doesn't officially belong to either Mau or Deoria — it is part of Ballia district.

The fast-flowing Ghaghara, the second largest tributary of the Ganga which runs nearby, has long kept the electors from the elected. Few here remember which MP or MLA visited them the last — a pity considering former PM Chandra Shekhar's Ibrahimpatti village is close and his son Neeraj is a BJP Rajya Sabha MP. This time, he is BJP's Ballia LS candidate.

"This is our dilemma," village head Manoj Kumar says, justifying his scathing "nowhere people" remark about how Siura Gopalpur's link to three districts through proximity, LS seat and administration has been a bane instead of a boon.

Life for the residents of nearly 300 households is challenging. The village has power cables, but no power. "Connections were provided, only on paper, to people



MAP MISERY

under Saubhagya Ujjwala on the basis of their Aadhaar cards in 2018. Mayhem followed when people later received power bills up to Rs 40,000. Villagers have stayed away from using power since then," said Kumar. Batteries are used to charge the few mobile phones people have.

The village had a road laid in 2007 under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. It has since vanished. In the rainy season, villagers are cut off for days.

Healthcare is scarce, too. There is a primary health centre (PHC) 5km away in Kasauland, but no doctor. "A compounder administers medical advice at the PHC. In case of serious illness, the patients need to be taken to the district govt hospital in Ballia town. There is no good private hospital within a radius of 30-40km," said Rohan Singh, who lost his father a decade ago to complications arising out of typhoid and hepatitis that went undetected for days.

There is no employment and agriculture is unreliable

due to poor connectivity. The mandis (grain markets) are too far off and brokers who visit the village soon after harvest are poor paymasters.

"MPs and MLAs don't visit our village even for election campaigns. We don't exist, we don't matter," said Bahadur Singh (71), grandfather of six.

There is no piped water. Vishal Chauhan (28), who is preparing to become a teacher, said: "The groundwater has heavy metals, like iron, and arsenic. But villagers do not have a choice. We stop using water from hand pumps that give out coloured water and instead use those whose water seems cleaner. Nobody from the district administration has ever come to the village to see which hand pumps provide drinkable water."

All those VIP connections and more are irrelevant for Siura Gopalpur — pretty much like the village itself that plunges into darkness soon after dusk. The nights here are longer. Some say never-ending.

Prajwal booked for raping wife of ex-aide, his father for kidnapping another survivor

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: The firestorm of abuse allegations around the Revanna family flared Friday with JD(S) MP **Prajwal Revanna** being booked for allegedly raping a 44-year-old former panchayat member at gun-point after threats to kill her husband. Separately, a kidnapping case was filed against Prajwal's father, MLA HD Revanna, after a woman purportedly featured in one of the MP's sleaze videos went missing.

The claims have taken the number of FIRs against the Revannas to three. This includes one in which the father-son are accused of sexually harassing and stalking a former woman employee of their household.

The former panchayat

member lodged her complaint on May 1, making it the first in which Hassan MP Prajwal has been charged with rape under IPC Section 376. The woman's husband is a former aide of Prajwal.

She told police she often took up people's issues with MLAs and MPs. In 2021, she approached Prajwal at his MP's quarters in Hassan for help in getting hostels for college students.

According to her complaint, since there were people on the ground-floor hall, she was directed to first floor by the staff, who informed her Prajwal would meet her there. Later, the MP allegedly took her into his bedroom and locked the door. The woman claimed that when she objected, Prajwal told her

that because of her husband, the MP's mother (Bhavani) didn't get a JD(S) assembly ticket. He asked her to warn her husband to "talk less".

Later, Prajwal asked the ex-panchayat member to meet his physical needs if her husband "was to grow politically", she claimed. "As I refused, he said he had a gun and would not spare me and my husband, and raped me. He recorded the act on his mobile and threatened to leak the videos if I revealed the incident," she said. She added that Prajwal allegedly made multiple videos and raped her many times.

Other than rape, Prajwal has been booked under IPC Sections 376 (2) (N) (raping the same woman repeatedly), 354 A (1) (sexual harass-

ment), 354B (assault or use of criminal force to a woman with intent to disrobe), 354 C (voyeurism), besides offences under the Information Technology (IT) Act.

In the other FIR about alleged kidnapping, the case was filed late Thursday in Mysuru by the son of a woman purportedly seen in the sleaze videos allegedly involving Prajwal. According to him, Prajwal's father Revanna and an aide, Satish Babanna, abducted his mother on April 29 and kept her in confinement. Babanna has been arrested.

Revanna is named as accused no. 1 and Babanna as accused no. 2. They have been booked under IPC Sections 365 (kidnapping with intent to secretly and wrongfully confine a person) and 364 (kidnapping for ransom).

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

No.: CM-1/ATVM/Facilitators/Part-XI-PRYJ/2024 Date : 01.05.2024

This application is not for permanent service

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj on behalf of President of India invites sealed applications from interested Retired Railway Employees for engagement as facilitators for ATVM's (Automatic Ticket Vending Machine) at following stations, (list of stations attached at Annexure-B):-

Duration of work : Up to 31.03.2025 **Earnest Money : Nil** **Application Cost :** 100/-
Name of station : Sonbhadra, Chunar, Mirzapur, Vindhyachal, Manda-Road, Naini, Prayagraj, Subedarganj, Prayagraj-Chheoki, Bharwari, Sirathu, Fatehpur, Kanpur-Central, Govindpur, Phaphund, Bharrhana, Etawah, Shikohabad, Firozabad, Tundla, Jalesar-Road, Hathras, Aligarh, Sonma, Khurja, Dankaur, Dadri, Manikpur, Dabhaura, Shankargarh, Kanpur-Anwarganj, Panki Dham.

1. The application forms with all relevant rules and conditions are available (Starting from the date of notification) up to 31.05.24 at 11.00 hrs. The application form can be obtained from Booking Office MZP, PRYJ, PCOI, FTP, CNB, ETW, TDL, ALJN, at any working day (Monday to Friday) from 9.00 to 17.00 hrs. The cost of application form is Rs. 100/- (not refundable). The same has to be deposited in Booking Office and Original MR has to be attached along With application form. 2. Applications can also be downloaded from NCR, Indian Railway website www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. The cost of application form is Rs. 100/-. Applicant will have to attach Bank Draft/DD issued by any scheduled commercial bank equal to prescribed value Rs. 100/- in favour of Sr. Divl. Finance Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj towards the cost of application form. 3. The application form in sealed cover duly filled in and complete with all formalities will be received in the office of Assistant Commercial Manager, Commercial Branch, 2nd floor, DRM's office, North Central Railway, Nawab Yusuf Road, Prayagraj or in the office of Station Director/Dy. CTM/Kanpur, North Central Railway, Kanpur Station building, Kanpur, till 13.00 hrs. dt. 31.05.24 and will be opened on same date at 15.00 hrs. If due to any reason this day is declared as a holiday, the same will be done on next working day at same place and time. 4. Applications received late/incomplete/wrongly filled will neither be accepted nor be entertained. 5. Railway Administration reserves the right to postpone/modify or to cancel any one or all the application without assigning any reasons.

778/24 (D)

North central railways @www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in @northcentralrailway @CPRONCR

झारखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग, सर्कुलर नोट, रॉटी

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति
झारखण्ड राज्य के स्वास्थ्य, चिकित्सा शिक्षा एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग के अन्तर्गत खाद्य सुरक्षा पदाधिकारी (विज्ञापन संख्या-18/2023) नियुक्ति के संबंध में आवश्यक सूचना।

झारखण्ड राज्य के स्वास्थ्य, चिकित्सा शिक्षा एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग के अन्तर्गत "खाद्य सुरक्षा" पदाधिकारी नियुक्ति (विज्ञापन संख्या-18/2023) से संबंधित परीक्षा कार्यक्रम निम्नवत् है :-

- (i) लिखित (वस्तुनिष्ठ) परीक्षा दो पालियों में दिनांक-27.05.2024 (सोमवार) को संभावित है।
- (ii) अभिलेख सत्यापन दिनांक-09.06.2024 से 11.06.2024 तक संभावित है।
- (iii) साक्षात्कार दिनांक-10.06.2024 से 12.06.2024 तक संभावित है।

2. यह प्रेस विज्ञप्ति आयोग के वेबसाइट www.jpssc.gov.in पर उपलब्ध है।

हो / -
परीक्षा नियंत्रक,
झारखण्ड लोक सेवा आयोग, रॉटी।
PR.NO.324328Jharkhand Public Service Commission(24-25):D

HD Revanna files 2nd bail plea after kidnapping FIR

Bengaluru: JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna's father HD Revanna filed a second anticipatory bail petition before a court Friday, a day after a kidnapping case was registered against him, even as SIT probing the sleaze video scandal issued a second notice to the father-son duo to appear before it Saturday in connection with a sexual harassment case lodged by a former employee of their household.

Hours before filing the second bail petition in the court, the former Karnataka minister withdrew the first plea moved in the same court in connection with the sexual harassment case. His counsel said that non-bailable IPC sections 364A (abduction) and 364 (illegal confinement) have been invoked and there is the threat of his petitioner's arrest, who is ready to appear before SIT in the sexual harassment case Saturday. The court adjourned the hearing to Saturday. SIT also sent a notice to Prajwal's mother Bhavani, directing her to share details of the woman who had claimed that she was a close relative of Bhavani.



Rs 100 Nepal note to have new map with India territories

Kathmandu: Nepal on Friday announced the printing of a new Rs 100 currency note with a map that shows the controversial territories of Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani, already termed "artificial enlargement" and "untenable" by India.

"The meeting of the council of ministers chaired by Prime Minister Pushpakamal Dahal 'Prachanda' took a decision to print the new map of Nepal, which includes the Lipulekh, Limpiyadhura and Kalapani in the Rs100 denomination bank notes," govt spokesperson Rekha Sharma told media persons while briefing about the cabinet decision.

"The cabinet approved to re-design the banknote of Rs 100 and replace the old map printed in the background of the bank note during the cabinet meetings held on April 25 and May 2," Sharma, who is also the minister for Information and Communication, added.

On June 18, 2020, Nepal completed the process to update the country's political map by incorporating three strategically important areas Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura areas by amending its Constitution, something that India reacted sharply, calling it a "unilateral act" and terming as "untenable" the "artificial enlargement" of the territorial claims by Nepal.

India maintains Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura belongs to it. Nepal shares a border of over 1,850 km with five Indian states — Sikkim, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Why BJP stood firm when Kshatriyas protested in Gujarat

The party saw no reason to cancel Parshottam Rupala's nomination even after his comments sparked protests by Rajputs in Gujarat. Protests consolidated BJP's crucial Patel vote

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Caste is ever centrestage in India's dance of 'democracy'. Politicians invariably keep caste equations in mind when addressing rallies. One slip of tongue can cause an irreversible slide.

Which is where Rajya Sabha member Parshottam Rupala, MoS for fisheries, animal husbandry and dairying, may have found himself after his comment on Kshatriyas. But that's not what's happened, so far.

Post-Godhra Gujarat had adjusted to a new reality where castes stuck together to create a bigger umbrella of religion. On Modi's watch as chief minister, caste fault-lines seldom surfaced.

It was only after Modi moved to Delhi that communities began to get reorganised to extract the most out of the power pie. Patel

quota agitations, Dalit stirs and show of strength of Thakors in 2016-17 were manifestations of this churn.

These agitations were brought under control once two of the three key people behind them — Hardik Patel and Alpesh Thakor — joined BJP. Patel belongs to the powerful Patidar community, a bulwark of BJP's success since 1980. BJP's rise in Gujarat is largely due to the Patels, who wholeheartedly backed the saffron party in retaliation to the social-engineering formula KHAM (Kshatriyas, Harijans, Adivasis and Muslims), brainchild of former CM Madhavsinh Solanki.

Gujarat's one-sided parliamentary poll battle — BJP won all 26 seats in 2014 and 2019 — turned a tad interesting after Rupala's take on Kshatriyas, Rajputs in particular. BJP's fielded the RS member in LS elections. Kshatriyas demand-



CASTE CONUNDRUM: Parshottam Rupala leads a roadshow on his way to filing his nomination as the BJP candidate for Rajkot Lok Sabha seat

ed the party revoke his candidature from Rajkot constituency in Saurashtra, a region where caste divides run deep.

But protesters limited their demand to recall of Rupala's candidature, at the same time expressing their loyalty to BJP, and asserting they had no issue with Modi. But despite Rupala's apology, and the party's appeals for 'forgiveness', protesters stuck to their demand.

An anxious Rupala rushed to New Delhi, returned confident, and threw himself into campaigning. As he filed his nomination, it

was abundantly clear BJP wasn't going to yield to Kshatriya protesters' demands.

Why did BJP choose to back Rupala at the cost of antagonising a community? The answer lies in numbers and reverse consolidation of non-Kshatriya votes in its favour. The Kshatriya vote is not predominant in any of Gujarat's LS seats. While they may reduce BJP's vote share, they cannot cause its defeat.

Kshatriyas strictly adhere to hierarchy. Those less privileged economically and socially within the community see the inherent

inequality but the privileged strata are oblivious to it. Hence, the protesters who identify themselves as Rajputs within the larger Kshatriya fold in Gujarat barely received the support of other aspiring Kshatriya castes like the Thakors or the Kolis. Together, the Thakors and Kolis form the largest electoral group in Gujarat.

Efforts by organisations such as Gujarat Kshatriya Sabha (GKS) to unite all sub-castes under one umbrella have not borne fruit. When GKS sought unification to push for reservation benefits, they met with resistance from erstwhile 'royals' who strongly opposed the bid for reservation, emphasising their higher status. Later, Thakors and Kolis were included as OBCs.

BJP has little to worry about any possible electoral fallout from the protests. These protests cannot disrupt the party's plans in the manner that the annoyed Patidars had, after the quota stir, which pushed BJP's tally to below 100 in Gujarat's 182-seat assembly in 2017's election.

This time, BJP's support for Rupala, a Patel, is resulting in consolidating the Patidar votes in towns and villages. Competition between Kshatriyas and Patels is intense in villages. Kshatriya protest has also united two Patidar segments, the Leuvas and Kadvas. Rupala is a Kadva Patidar. His comment targeted Rajputs, which Thakors and Kolis barely related to.

Sociologist Ghanshyam Shah says the protesters cannot mobilise resources in the same way the Patidars did during 2015's quota stir. To exploit the inequality among Kshatriyas, BJP's encouraged patriarchs of erstwhile 'royalty' to appeal to the protesters.

BJP is also angling to swing another caste equation. Kshatriya anger is directed towards its Patidar candidate. The agitation could therefore electorally blur the distinction between Leuva and Kadva Patidars in Saurashtra. BJP may also consolidate support of so-called lower castes, who will support its unyielding stance on Kshatriyas. It thus has little reason to heed Rajput protests.

'Priyanka's a superstar, party needs her nationally. Hence, she's not contesting'

On the day Congress ended the suspense on Amethi & Rae Bareilly, party general secretary Jairam Ramesh in an interview with Ambika Pandit says even though the party wanted Rahul and Priyanka to contest from these seats, one very important reason for Priyanka not contesting is that she is a 'superstar' campaigner for Congress who is taking on BJP forcefully. Excerpts:

Congress wanted Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi to contest. Why did Rahul eventually decide to contest from Rae Bareilly and Priyanka stayed away from the contest?

■ One very important reason for Priyanka ji deciding not to contest Amethi is that she is a superstar campaigner and her presence as a national campaigner is crucial. If both (Rahul and Priyanka) had contested, then they would have been bottled up in their own constituencies. I must say that Rahul is campaigning nationally too and has programmes in the days ahead, but he will have to campaign in Rae Bareilly also. Priyanka ji is the most forceful campaigner we have. She pays back Modi and Shah in their own language. Her response to the PM's insane remarks on Rajiv Gandhi and estate duty abolition demolished Modi completely. I don't think when I say this, neither the Congress president nor Rahul would disagree with me.

Since you say that she is a su-

perstar campaigner, would it not have been better if she contested the polls?

■ The party wanted both Priyanka and Rahul to contest but realistically, it was clear to me and many people in the party that since PM Modi has upped the campaign and taken it to a totally different pitch, attacking the family... Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, she (Priyanka) is able to blunt the BJP's attacks. She is campaigning all over the country. By temperament, Rahul talks on issues — inequality, Constitution and other policy issues. She (Priyanka) is tailor-made for politics and she is a natural in every way — her connection with people, her style of campaigning, her personality... so it is a matter of time before she comes into electoral politics. She is very much in politics, let us not be under any misimpression.

Don't you think holding up the announcement of candidates till the last day of nomination sends out a message that there was reluctance or indecisiveness on the part

Rahul: Amethi, Rae Bareilly are not different for me, both my family

► Continued from P 1

Amethi and Rae Bareilly are not different for me; both are my family, and I am pleased that Kishori Lal ji, who has been serving the area for 40 years, will represent the party from Amethi," Rahul wrote on X. "In the fight against injustice, I seek the love and blessings of my loved ones. I believe that in this fight to save the Constitution and democracy, all of you are standing with me."

AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra quoted her mother Sonia Gandhi as telling her a few days ago, "My family in Delhi is incomplete; it becomes complete only in Rae Bareilly."

Sonia has been MP from Rae Bareilly, first represented by her father-in-law Feroze Gandhi, since 2004.

Rahul arrived at Amethi's Fursatganj by a charter plane at 10.30am, accompanied by Sonia, Priyanka, brother-in-law Robert Vadra, AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, and Congress veterans KC Venugopal and Ashok Gehlot. The team split into two groups, with Priyanka and Gehlot going to Amethi while the rest proceeded to Rae Bareilly. In Amethi, Priyanka joined nominee Sharma's roadshow and appealed to people to vote for "those who speak the truth and stand for justice".

Rahul and others reached the Bhuyemau guesthouse for a final check of his documents and waited for Priyanka to join

PRIME SEAT

Rae Bareilly Cong candidates

Year	Candidate	Result
1951-52*	Bajinath Kureel, Feroze Gandhi	Both won
1957	Feroze Gandhi	Won
1962**	Bajinath Kureel	Won
1967	Indira Gandhi	Won
1971	Indira Gandhi	Won
1977	Indira Gandhi	Lost to Raj Narain
1980	Indira Gandhi	Won
1984	Arun Nehru	Won
1989	Sheila Kaul	Won
1991	Sheila Kaul	Won
1996	Vikram Kaul	Finished 4th
1998	Deepa Kaul	Finished 4th
1999	Satish Sharma	Won
2004	Sonia Gandhi	Won
2009	Sonia Gandhi	Won
2014	Sonia Gandhi	Won
2019	Sonia Gandhi	Won

*The seat was known as Pratapgarh District (West) cum Rae Bareilly District (East) at the time and was a 2-member seat. **Rae Bareilly was a reserved seat in 1962. *** In Dec 1960, RP Singh of Cong won the bypoll from Rae Bareilly following Feroze Gandhi's death

them for the formality of the nomination. Around 1.30pm, Rahul's cavalcade reached the Rae Bareilly collectorate.

SP functionaries, including two sitting MLAs, were with the Gandhi family throughout the process.

About 30 minutes later, as confirmation arrived that Rahul had submitted his papers

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL

UTTAR PRADESH

SANDEEP ADHWARYU



of Rahul and Priyanka?

■ No. There is no delay. If you check on details of past elections, you will find that they (Gandhis) have filed nominations either on the penultimate day or the last. There is no negative messaging going out to people because of the announcement coming on the last day; these are all headlines being masterminded by BJP.

Congress has been under attack from BJP on issues

ranging from redistribution of wealth, inheritance tax, religion-based quota and Muslim appeasement. What do you have to say?

■ The PM clearly changed his discourse after the first phase of polling on April 19 as political trends became very evident that not only was BJP going to be wiped out in the south but even in traditional bastions, where it had done very well in 2019 and virtually destroyed Congress, in Karnata-

ka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. So suddenly, the PM's discourse changed and the comments on redistribution of wealth, inheritance tax, reservations, mangalsutra started coming. He started talking of Muslims explicitly. So far, they used to use minority appeasement but this was a no-holds barred frontal accusation. I put it down to a nervousness on the part of BJP.

BJP has been citing video clippings of Rahul drawing from his statements. What is your view on this?

■ PM Modi is picking up one line from here and there and they (BJP) are twisting every line. It is very clear that he (Modi) is making this into a Hindu-Muslim battle. It shows

TOI INTERVIEW

the PM wants to play the game on his own pitch and that is the communal pitch.

We are now heading for the third phase. What are Congress's prospects?

■ I am sticking my neck out to say that the INDIA bloc will get a clear and convincing majority. I say this based on our performance and we will gain in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana.

'Daro mat,' Modi taunts Rahul as he picks Rae Bareilly

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New Delhi: For the past few days, Rahul Gandhi would consistently claim that PM Narendra Modi was running scared and was on the verge of breaking down. On Friday, it was the PM's turn to tell the Congress leader that the taunt was on him. With Rahul choosing to vacate Amethi for the "safer Rae Bareilly", Modi led BJP leaders in mocking him, spraying him with "daro mat (don't be afraid), bhaago mat (don't run away) barbs that Rahul had hurled against him.

"Today, I want to tell him (Rahul), daro mat, bhaago mat," Modi said in Bengal's Bardhaman soon after Rahul gave in to relentless persuasion from his colleagues to contest from Rae Bareilly.

Modi quickly projected Rahul's decision to vacate Amethi, which he had lost to Smriti Irani in 2019, as a pointer to BJP's third consecutive landslide, while also saying that the decision to contest from Rae Bareilly showed the Congress leader's jitters about his prospects in Wayanad in Kerala. "Many media personalities and experts continue to speculate about the election outcome. There is no need for opinion polls or exit polls, the country's voice is clear. The only question that still remains unsettled is whether we are going to cross the 400 mark," he added.

Modi asserted that Congress's tally in the Lok Sabha polls would be an "all-time low", and the party would



Modi in Bengal's Bolpur on Friday

'Hindus 2nd-class citizens in Bengal'

PM Narendra Modi on Friday criticised the Congress and TMC for pursuing "appeasement politics" and asked whether TMC tried to save the tormentor of Sandeshkhali "because his name was Sheikh Shahjahan." "Hindus have been reduced to second-class citizens in Bengal. Congress would get less than 50 seats all over the country and TMC less than 15 in Bengal," Modi claimed. TNN

struggle to cross even the "half century" mark. Congress's lowest tally was in 2014 when it bagged 44 seats. In 2019, it managed 52.

Taking a swipe at Sonia Gandhi for moving to the Rajya Sabha, the PM said he had mentioned earlier that the most prominent opposition leader would be too afraid to contest and she fled in fear. "She ran off to Rajasthan and entered Rajya Sabha from there," he said.

RLD spokesman resigns over BJP ticket to son of Brij Bhushan

Lucknow: National spokesperson of BJP ally Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), Rohit Jharkar, resigned from primary membership of the party on Friday in protest against BJP ticket to Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's son Karan from Kaiserganj.

Jharkar, who is also president of the Rashtriya Jat Mahasangh, has been extending support to wrestlers who have accused Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh of sexual harassment. "BJP's decision to give ticket to the son of a person who is facing such heinous charges is highly objectionable," he said.

Jhakar is the third key RLD leader to resign from the party after it joined BJP in Feb this year. Earlier, RLD vice-president Shahid Siddiqui had quit the party flagging the "attack on Indian democracy" in the wake of alleged BJP govt's action against chief ministers and the opposition. RLD's national campaign chief Prashant Kannaujia too had resigned saying he cannot work in alliance with BJP "which is against the Constitution." TNN

Shah, Kishan Reddy booked for roping in kids for poll rally

Hyderabad police have registered a criminal case against Union home minister Amit Shah, his cabinet colleague G Kishan Reddy and others for allegedly involving children in their recent election rally in violation of the model code. The children were allegedly holding BJP placards and balloons, and were made to stand on the dais along with the ministers and other BJP functionaries. TNN

Second non-Gandhi fielded by Cong in Amethi since 1980

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Amethi: Sonia Gandhi's man Friday Kishori Lal Sharma, who is well-versed with Amethi and Rae Bareilly, where he has been working for the party for over four decades, will take on BJP's Smriti Irani in Amethi Lok Sabha seat. Sharma filed his nomination paper after the party announced his name on Friday morning.

Thanking the party brass for reposing faith in him, Sharma said, "Amethi and Rae Bareilly have been my 'karmbhoomi' and this is a momentous opportunity for me to serve the people of Amethi."

Priyanka Gandhi took out time from attending Rahul Gandhi's filing of nomination in Rae Bareilly to join Sharma's roadshow in Amethi. "I am here for Kishori Lal ji... we have known him for over 35-40 years now... I am here to urge you all to shower your love on him and vote for him," Priyanka said.

He is the second non-Gandhi to be fielded by Congress from Amethi since 1980. Captain Satish Sharma represented the seat in 1991 (bypoll) and in 1996. Hailing from Ludhiana

in Amethi's Shivajinagar area, Sharma was deeply influenced by former PM Rajiv Gandhi. It is said that he came to Amethi with Rajiv Gandhi in 1983 when he was in his early 20s.

A graduate from Panjab University, he was quick to win Rajiv's confidence. After Rajiv's demise, he worked with Satish Sharma, and when Sonia Gandhi made her political debut in 1999, he became associated with her.

"Sonia was aware of her husband's faith in Kishori Lal, who never let her down, especially after Rajiv's death in 1991," recalled Kalyan Singh Gandhi, a contemporary of Sharma. In due course, he was made in-charge of both Rae Bareilly and Amethi seats because of his 'people management' and 'micro-planning' skills.

Meanwhile, Sharma's nomination from Amethi evoked mixed reactions from people. "We were hoping for Rahul Gandhi. KL Sharma may be important, but he is not family," said SK Barnwal, owner of a local jewellery store.

"Guests are welcome. We will ensure good hospitality to them, but it is an indication that the family (Gandhis) has already accepted defeat," Irani said in Amethi.

LDF, BJP criticise Rahul's candidacy from Rae Bareilly

Kozhikode: LDF and BJP candidates criticised Congress for fielding Rahul Gandhi's from Rae Bareilly right after he contested against them in Wayanad, where polls were held on April 26. LDF candidate Annie Raja claimed Gandhi had been unjust to the people of Wayanad because he hid his decision to contest from Rae Bareilly till polls ended in Wayanad. "In parliamentary polls, a person can contest from two seats and, if he wins from both seats, he will have to resign from one constituency and that would amount to injustice to the voters there. That he was going to contest from another constituency was hidden from the people of Wayanad and this does not align with political morality," she said.

BJP candidate K Surendran said Gandhi had deceived the people of Wayanad and his decision to contest from Rae Bareilly instead of Amethi showed his cowardice. "If he had contested from Amethi, then one would have said he was contesting to wrest back his seat. Instead, he is contesting from the seat where Congress won in the previous poll," he said.

Meanwhile CPI state secretary Binoy Viswam said as an INDIA bloc ally, CPI will extend support to Gandhi in Rae Bareilly. "We've been saying that Congress in Kerala lacks political foresight & they insisted on Rahul's candidature from Wayanad, which is a politically wrong move," he said. TNN

Govt exempts chana from import duty, puts 40% export duty on onions

New Delhi: Amid indications of fall in chana production, govt on Friday exempted 'desi chana' (Bengal gram) from import duty till March 2025 while also announcing 40% export duty on onions, a kitchen item that has so far remained on banned list of exports.

The govt also extended duty exemption on imports of yellow peas for which bill of entry was issued on or before Oct 31, 2024. In the past month, chana prices have increased over 10% to around Rs 6,300 a quintal in Delhi compared to Rs 5,700 last month. Traders said that India gets Bengal gram from countries like Australia and Tanzania. Govt has been closely monitoring prices of key food items and is keen to ensure that prices do not rise at a time when the country is in the midst of elections. TNN

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CABINET SECRETARIAT

Advertisement No.01(A)/2024

Closing Date: 10/06/24

Applications are invited from Indian Nationals for Direct Recruitment in the grade of Trainee Pilot [Group 'A' Gazetted, Non-Ministerial, Level-10 as per 7th CPC] in Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India Organisation. Total monthly emoluments including all allowances will be Rs.1.52 Lacs (approximately) at Delhi upon joining the post. Candidates possessing the following Educational Qualification and prescribed age are eligible for the above mentioned post:-

Tentative number of vacancies	Age-limit	Educational & Technical Qualification [As on closing date]
15	Between 20 and 30 years (as on closing date)	50 % marks and above in Higher Secondary or equivalent with a valid Commercial Pilot Licence or Helicopter Pilot Commercial Licence from Director General Civil Aviation (DGCA).

2. For detailed information and application format, interested candidates may refer to the Employment News dated 11/05/24

CBC 58101/11/0002/2425

i3c BRIC-RCB PhD Programme 2024-25

The Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC) is a newly formed autonomous body subsuming 13 DBT institutes. A nationally cohesive, interdisciplinary Ph.D. programme in biosciences is being started as a collaboration between BRIC, the Regional Centre for Biotechnology (RCB) and the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) to foster greater academic and research interaction and to increase the professional networking opportunities for the Ph.D. scholars.

Accordingly, online applications are invited for admission to the i3c BRIC-RCB PhD Programme in Biosciences from Indian students through two tracks. Track I: Candidates holding an MSc/ MTech in any of Life Sciences, Chemistry, Physics, MPharm, MVSc, MBBS or an equivalent degree, and Track II: Medicine (MBBS) graduates and 4-year undergraduates in any branch of engineering from the non-biological sciences (BTEch/ BE).

Details of the qualifying criteria and selection process can be found at <https://rcb.res.in/i3c/index.php>. The last date for submitting online applications is June 2, 2024. For any query, please email to i3cadmissions@rcb.res.in.

CONTACT US

Regional Centre for Biotechnology
Faridabad - 121 001, Haryana (NCR Delhi)

Telephone: +91-129-2848800
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support@quantumenergy.in

*T & C Apply

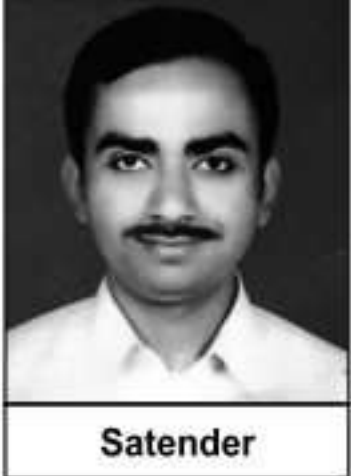
www.quantumenergy.in

Buy & Claim ₹ 75000/- paytm Free rewards Available on amazon

Ujjain dy collector held for 'raping' subordinate: Police on Friday held Ujjain deputy collector Dr Abhay Singh Khari for allegedly blackmailing and raping a subordinate posted in Barwani. He was arrested from Bhopal, produced in court and remanded in jail. **TNN**

SEARCH FOR MISSING MALE

General Public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo) namely **S/o Om Parkash R/o H.No.C-1/261, Gali No.23, C-Block, Khajuri Khas, Delhi** **Aged-45 Years** has been reported missing since 30.04.2024 from his residence vide **GD No.0091A Dated 30.04.2024** registered at Police Station Khajuri Khas, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-
Complexion: Wheatish, **Height:** 5'8", **Face:** Round, **Build:** Thin, **ID:** Om tattoo on neck, **Clothing:** Grey coloured checked shirt, Blue coloured pant and Slipper in feet.
Any person having any information/Clue about this missing male, may inform SHO, Khajuri Khas, Delhi at E-mail : **cic@cbi.gov.in** or website : **http://cbi.nic.in** Sd/-
Tel. No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641 SHO, Khajuri Khas, Delhi
FAX No. : 011-24368639 Tel. : 011-22962735, 22195181
DP/5274/NE/2024 Mob.: 8750870727



Satender

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an **unidentified female** (depicted in the photo) name **unknown** residence and family is **unknown** about **20-35 years** of age was found dead at **Jungal, Shamshan Ghat Wala Road, Tuglakabad Village, Govind Puri, Delhi** on **22.03.2024** at about **1:29 pm**. In this regard a **FIR No. 183/24 U/s 302/201 IPC, Dated 22.03.2024** has been registered at **PS Govind Puri, New Delhi**. Her physical description is as under:-
Sex: Female, **Age:** 20-25 years, **Height:** 5' 5" ft., **Injury Marks:** Burn Partially, **Identification Mark:** Wear Bengles, **Wearing:** Burned Cloths.
Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers:-
SHO
Website:**http://cbi.nic.in** **PS: Govind Puri, Delhi**
E-mail: **cic@cbi.gov.in** **Ph.: 011-29980049**
Tel. No.: **011-24368638/24368641** **Mob.: 8750870932**
Fax No.: **011-24368639** **DP/3548/SE/2024**



APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Unknown S/o Unknown R/o Unknown**. Age about **30-35 years**, **Height 5'4"** Complexion **Shallow**, **Face Oval**, **Built Thin** wearing **Blue & Red Colour Check Shirt & Blue Colour Pant** was found unconscious at **Near Delhi Gate Red Light Daryaganj, Delhi** on **12.03.2024** who was admitted in **LNJP Hospital, New Delhi**, Where he declared **Brought Dead** by Doctor.
In this regard a **DD No. 72A** dated **12.03.2024** has been lodged at **PS Daryaganj, Delhi**.
Any person having any information or clue about this deceased male may kindly inform to the following.
SHO
PS Daryaganj, Delhi
Ph. 011-23274683, 23279331

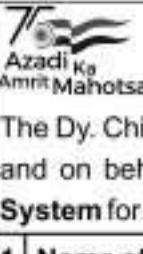


NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Engineer/TMCL/Line, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-tender under **One Packet System** for the under noted work:-

1. Name of work and location	Overhauling of 18 sets of tamping banks (CSM/WSTV/PR = 05 Sets, UNIMAT-2S/3S = 02 Sets, UNIMAT-4S/MPT = 02 Sets, MFI = 04 sets, CSM/DUO Modified type = 02 Sets and PCT/CRCC = 03 sets) over next two years" under jurisdiction of Dy. CE/TMCL/Line/New Delhi.
2. Completion period of the work	24 Months
3. Approx. cost of work	Rs. 8,94,61,215.00
4. Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)	Rs. 5,97,300.00
5. Cost of Tender Document (to be deposited Online)	Rs. Nil
6. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tender document remain available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 06.05.2024 upto 15:00 Hrs. on 27.05.2024 . Tender Bids may be uploaded from 13.05.2024 & upto 15:00 hrs on 27.05.2024 on IREPS web site. The tender will be opened soon after 15:00 hrs 27.05.2024 .
7. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed tender document is available at www.ireps.gov.in . Above tender document will be available for online submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 13.05.2024 to 27.05.2024 . All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender Notice No. 1-W-Dy.CETMCL-TB-01-24-25 Dated : 03.05.2024 1351/2024
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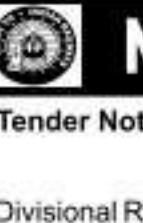


No bio-breaks in first hour, last 30 minutes of NEET-UG, says NTA

Manash.Gohain
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Ahead of NEET-UG 2024, National Testing Agency (NTA) said no bio-breaks have been allowed in first one hour and last half-an-hour of the exam. The agency also advised candidates to arrive at examination centers on time to complete all pre-examination procedures and cautioned of zero-tolerance policy towards malpractices as it has implemented various measures such as multi-stage biometric authentication for both candidates and invigilation staff. NEET-UG is scheduled for Sunday.

NTA chief Subodh Kumar Singh said the agency has geared up with enhanced security measures and administrative arrangements for India's biggest competitive exam where a record 24 lakh aspirants have registered.



HC: Unnatural sex with wife not rape, consent immaterial

Ashutosh.Shukla
@timesgroup.com

Bhopal: Observing that marital rape is not an offence under Indian Penal Code (IPC), Madhya Pradesh HC has ruled that unnatural sex with wife is not rape, and her consent is immaterial in such cases.

Justice G S Ahluwalia made the observation while quashing an FIR registered by an estranged wife against her husband under IPC sections 377 (unnatural sex) and 506 (criminal intimidation). In his May 1 order, the judge referred to several judgments of SC and HCs, and the definition of rape under section 375 of IPC, and stated that a husband engaging in anal sex with his wife did not amount to rape, even if it were non-consensual, as long as the wife was not below 15 years of age.

According to the husband's petition, the couple got married in May 2019, but the wife has been living at her parental house since Feb 2020. She filed a case of dowry harassment against her husband and in-laws, which is pending in court. In July 2022, the wife lodged another FIR accusing him of unnatural sex.

"The only question for consideration is whether a husband during the subsistence of marriage while residing together can be said to be guilty of marital rape...", Justice Ahluwalia said.



बिहार सरकार

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
भ.नि.वि., पटना पश्चिम भवन प्रमंडल, दानापुर, पटना
(बेल्लूनि के पीछे, शास्त्रीनगर, पटना-23)
ई- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना सं- 10/2023-24
शुद्धि-पत्र

सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 529 अनु दिनांक 15/03/2024 द्वारा आमंत्रित ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-10/2023-24, जिसका पी0आर0 सं0-020133(BCD)/2023-24 को प्रकाशित दिनांक 16.03.2024 को निम्न रूप से संशोधित किया जाता है:-

क्र.सं0	विवरण0	पूर्व में प्रकाशित तिथि	संशोधित प्रकाशन की तिथि
1	प्रिवीड मोटिंग की तिथि, समय एवं स्थान	1. दिनांक-22.04.2024 15:30 अप0 को अधीक्षण अभियंता, पटना भवन अंचल, पटना का कार्यालय। 2. दिनांक-24.04.2024 15:30 अप0 को मुख्य अभियंता, पटना का कार्यालय।	1. दिनांक-06.06.2024 15:30 अप0 को अधीक्षण अभियंता, पटना भवन अंचल, पटना का कार्यालय। 2. दिनांक-10.06.2024 15:30 अप0 को मुख्य अभियंता, पटना का कार्यालय।
2	परिमाण विवर (डाउनलोड) तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-15.04.2024 से 15.05.2024 15:30 अप0 तक।	दिनांक-28.05.2024 से 18.06.2024 15:30 अप0 तक।
3	निविदा प्राप्ति (अपलोड) तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-16.05.2024 15:30 अप0 तक।	दिनांक-18.06.2024 15:30 अप0 तक।
4	निविदा खोलने(तकनीकी बीड) की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक- 20.05.2024 को 15:30 अप0 तक।	दिनांक- 20.06.2024 को 15:30 अप0 तक।

शेष शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।
कार्यपालक अभियंता
पटना पश्चिम भवन प्रमंडल, दानापुर, पटना।
PR- 000434 (B C D) 2024-25
लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024 - चुनाव का पूर्व, देश का गर्व।



Office of Superintending Engineer, Moradabad Circle, P.W.D. Moradabad

Short term E-Procurement Notice Inviting Tender (Second Invitation)
No.- 2357 /Nivida-Moradabad/2023-24 Dated :-02-05-2024

On behalf of the Governor of UP, tender for following work are invited by the Superintending Engineer, Moradabad Circle, PWD Moradabad online on website **http://etender.up.nic.in** from registered contractors in column No-8 from 10.05.2024 at 10.00 am to 16-05-2024 at 12.00 noon. Amount mentioned in column no. 5 & 7 shall be mandatory deposited by Net Banking Only through E-tender portal. Technical bid /Prequalification of tenders shall be opened on 16-05-2024 at 12.30 noon in office of undersigned by tender committee in presence of authorized representatives/bidders who wish to be present. Financial bid of the tenders who qualify in technical bid shall be opened on date and time as specified by a notice in the office of undersigned. In case of Government holiday the required process shall be carried out on next working day.

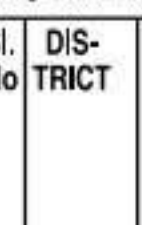
Sl. No	DIS-TRICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs.in Lacs)	Bid Security (Rs.in Lacs)	Time of completion of the work (including rainy season)	Cost of tender documents including GST (RS.)	Category of road contractor eligible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	MBD	Work of rehabilitation of roads owned by PWD for laying sewer lines under Moradabad Sewerage Phase-2 (Zone-2) scheme under AMRIT Programme	389.22	21.47	05 Month	300+2000+54=2354	"A" (Road Category)
2	MBD	Repair and improvement work in Thakurdwara-Rajwaha service link road.	106.30	7.32	05 Month	300+2000+54=2354	"A, B" (Road Category)

Rules/conditions & details of the tender are available at website **http://etender.up.nic.in**. Bidder have to login Praharhi URL **http://wms.uppwd.gov.in/prahari/** and upload their documents As per G.O No.-879 (1) / 23-7-2020 dated 25-08-2020 and E-IN-C (Vikas) and Head of Department letter-4650 / 4NL-OC / 2020 dated 27.08.2020.

(Mohd. Naved Ahmad Khan)
Executive Engineer
Provincial Division, PWD
Moradabad

(S.P.Singh)
Superintending Engineer
Moradabad Circle, PWD
Moradabad

For and on behalf of Governor of UP



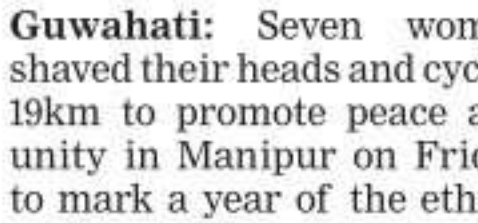
Protests, peace appeals mark a year of Manipur ethnic conflict

Guwahati: Seven women shaved their heads and cycled 19km to promote peace and unity in Manipur on Friday to mark a year of the ethnic conflict in the state, reports **Prabin Kalita**.

The women clad in black rode from Sekmai, a village on outskirts of Imphal, to historic Kangla. They carried placards reading "We want peace", "No to separate administration", "Protect territorial integrity", "Today we again remember the atrocities committed on farmers, daily wage earners..." M Sobita Devi, a Meira Paibifunctionary said at Kangla.

Over 225 people have been killed and 60,000 displaced in the strife.

Kuki Inpi Manipur, the apex body of all Kuki tribes, has submitted a memorandum to PM Modi underlining that a "separate administration is the only viable solution". It has also called for stringent safety measures to ensure safety of Kuki-Zo people, besides recovery of bodies or missing people.



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Interview Date: 06.05.2024 | Timings: 9:30 am to 2 pm
Venue: **Hotel DEE Marks, NH-08, Adjoining Shiv Murti, Rangpuri, New Delhi-110037**

*Passport issued after January 2021 is mandatory. Academic/ Exp. documents & recent colour photograph (Passport size) is required to carry for Interview.

*Disclaimer: This is direct recruitment of the Company. No Institutions/ Third Party representatives are authorized to do any coordination/ act on behalf of AISATS.



tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

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CIN: L68000 MH1919 OIO000526
Delhi Regional Office-1, R.G. City Centre, 2/13 Floor, LSC Block-B, Lawrence Road, Delhi-35 Ph. 27004532, 27004572 Fax No. 27004500
E-mail: **nias310000@newindia.co.in**

PUBLIC NOTICE

The New India Assurance Co. Ltd. informs all the Policy Holders/Stake Holders & General Public that the Business Office: 312000 presently located at B-401, Ansal Chambers-I, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi-110066, will not be functional after 2 months from the date of the publication of this advertisement as this office is being shifted to new premises. address of the same is given below:-
204, 2nd Floor,
Bhika Ji Cama Bhawan,
Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi.
For any Insurance Business related queries/advice, please contact Mrs. Lipi Raheja whose contact details are given below:-
Mob. No.: 991122272, Email: **lipi.raheja@newindia.co.in** Sd/-
(Dy. General Manager)



PUBLIC NOTICE

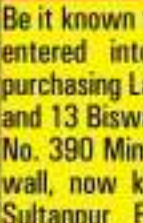
Shalu Bakshi and Roshini Bakshi D/o Late Wg Cdr Subash Bakshi (retd.) R/o Flat No-276, (SFS), Hauz Khas Apartments, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016, declare that our father namely Late Wg Cdr. Subash Bakshi (retd.) died on 21st April 2021 and has left the following heirs:-
1. Shalu Bakshi (Daughter)
2. Roshini Bakshi (Daughter)

There is no other legal heir of our father except for the above legal heirs. If anyone is having any objections regarding this, then he/she can raise objections within 30 days from the publication in the office of SDM, Hauz Khas New Delhi.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client has entered into an Agreement for purchasing Land measuring 2 Bhas and 13 Bhas, comprised in Bhas No. 390 Min (2-13), with boundary wall, now known as Farm No. 1, Sultanpur Farms, Prakriti Marg, situated at Village Sultanpur, Tehsil Mehrauli, New Delhi from Mrs. SNSD Builders Private Limited who had purchased the said land from Mrs. Madhu Trehan, 1 Original Sale Deed dated 12.06.1981 executed by Mrs. Chandania in favour of Mrs. Madhu Trehan, duly registered as Document No. 3183, in Addl. Book No. 1, Vol. No. 4495 on pages 167/170 on 15.06.1981 in the office of SR II, New Delhi has been lost. An online FIR was also lodged regarding the same having LR No. 186047/2022. Any other person(s)/institution(s)/association(s)/organization(s)/government authorities, having any sort of right, title, interest or claim of any kind whatsoever against, in or upon the said property or any part thereof under and by virtue of any sale, transfer, exchange, gift, trust, assignment, inheritance, agreement, contract, mortgage, charge, lien, deeds, documents, receipts or otherwise howsoever and of whatsoever nature, is/are hereby required to put forth his/her/its claim in writing with the undersigned within 10 (ten) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be deemed that there are no claims against the above mentioned property and my client will proceed to get a Sale Deed executed in its favour.

Jyotsana Agnihotri (Advocate)
Office at: Kt. No. 2/2, Main Chatterpur, New Delhi - 110074
E: **jyotsanaagnihotri126@gmail.com**
Mobile: 9999303880



personal

CHANGE OF NAME

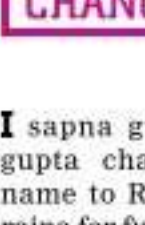
I sapna gupta changed my daughter name to RIDHI GUPTA from raina for future purposes

I Vishwanathan Krishnan Iyer S/o Kodanate Madham Laxman Krishnan Iyer, R/o Bhagwanti CGHS, Gurugram declare that my names Vishwanathan Krishnan Iyer & Vishwanathan Krishnan are the same and one person only and that my name should be treated as Vishwanathan Krishnan Iyer for all future purpose

I, Mohammad Nadeem S/o Jameel Ahmad R/O H.N.O. A-161-A, Gali No.4, Nehru Vihar Dayapur, Delhi-110094 have changed Mohamad Nadeem to Mohammad Nadeem.

LOST & FOUND

I Sangeeta Arora d/o Ravinder Kumar Arora-Owner of house E17 GF BPTP Astaire Garden Sec70 GGN have lost original property documents in fire.



business

LOSS of document. I. Shivani MATRA, w/o Sudeep MATRA have lost a conveyance deed for flat 931 Navsard Vihar, Sector 22 Dwarka, New Delhi 110075 on 01 April 2024. Finder please contact at Shivani.maitra@gmail.com

I, Sunita Srivastava D/o Keshav Das Hajela 251.2nd Floor, GH-13, Paschim Vihar, New Ambika Vihar, New Delhi-110087, have lost Share Certificate in the Name of Shri Gopal Prasad for Flat No. 36-D Delhi Niwas Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd. (Ayodhya Enclave) Plot No.30/2, Sector-13, Rohini, Delhi-110085, Membership No. 396. Finder may Contact: 9654407559

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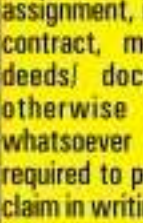


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Despite gov's 'ban', police enter Kolkata Raj Bhavan

Continued from P1

The woman said she first faced inappropriate advances the first time on April 24. "The governor had called me to his room with my CV. The ADC asked me to sit on the chair opposite to him but after the ADC left, he asked me to sit next to him. He asked about my salary and qualification and said he had connections at different universities and could offer me the position of a teacher, but I said I wasn't confident about the job. He also asked me if I was married. After the interaction he extended his arm for a handshake. I did a namaskar and touched his feet. He then asked me to write my phone number behind the CV and while I was doing so he grabbed me from behind. I pushed him aside and ran out of the room," the woman said. She said she didn't have the courage to lodge a complaint as the governor had asked her not to tell anyone about the interaction. She only told her parents about the incident. When she was called to Bose's chamber again on May 2, she allegedly faced similar advances.

Meanwhile, Kolkata Police on Friday said they entered the Raj Bhavan to carry out a "preliminary inquiry" into the allegations by the Raj Bhavan employee. Kolkata Police has also formed an eight-member SIT headed by DCP (central) Indira Mukherjee to probe the case.

The governor had issued a statement on Thursday night prohibiting cops on Raj Bhavan premises. The statement read, "Governor banned entry of police to Raj Bhavan premises in the guise of conducting unauthorised, illegitimate, sham and motivated 'investigation' to placate political bosses during elections."

The team that reached Raj Bhavan spoke to a few employees on Friday, reportedly those "who were present near the complainant just before and after the alleged incident" to ascertain the chain of events, confirmed a senior officer.

'A cauliflower has fractal architecture — its 'curds' repeat via gene mutation and memory'

Christophe Godin is senior researcher at France's Inria Centre. Speaking to Srijana Mitra Das at Times Evoke, he discusses fractal plants — and the shape of cauliflowers:

What is the core of your research?

■ We are a group of mathematicians, statisticians and physicists studying the development of plants, looking at how genes control this process. Our work focuses on the meristem, a region of plant tissue at the tip of each stem. This has a population of actively dividing cells — these produce all the organs a plant has, from internal ones to leaves, branches, tendrils, flowers, etc. This happens in a tiny space.

What is a fractal property here?

■ The term 'fractal' was coined by Benoit Mandelbrot, a mathematician. It means an object with geometric properties and a mathematical quality — it occurs with many details, repeated at different scales. A tree, for instance, has a complicated architecture with branches that repeat, many branching patterns and consecutive orders — it thus has a fractal shape. In plants, one of the most iconic fractal shapes is produced when all the branching elements are tightly compacted with each other — this occurs in cauliflowers and broccoli Romanesco. Their compactness, with many organs operating very close to each other, shows an extremely strong fractal property.



TWINNING: Leaves repeat geometry

Why does your research mention a 'memory' that cauliflowers have?

■ This isn't a memory in that it doesn't use a neural network but it functions in the sense of events occurring. The first event we found was that higher-order branches were unlocked in a cauliflower, which causes a chain reaction of branches proliferating — that produces what scientists term



A CAULIFLOWER'S POWER: It looks quiet — but genes in this plant cause its whorls or 'curds' of repeating patterns

cauliflower, there are eight to nine such orders. When I researched this with Francois Parcy, a biologist who has specialised in inflorescences or genes which control the development of flowers, we discovered that in wild plants, the possibility to produce a higher order was blocked genetically — it could have two to three orders after which its genes would stop any more. In a cauliflower, this was unlocked by a double mutation.

We tried this in a model plant and obtained a vegetable resembling the cauliflower on an Arabidopsis thaliana weed. We felt making the meristem larger could increase the shoots the plant produced but we didn't know which gene controlled the meristem's rate of shoot creation. Finally, we found a gene which changed the size of the meristem's central zone. We altered the plant genetically — and cauliflowers emerged.

Why does your research mention a 'memory' that cauliflowers have?

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we also use computational modeling to understand the many plant processes working at different scales and how these synchronise and interact with each other. Quantitative methodology helps us assemble all the pieces of this jigsaw puzzle.

Why is plant architecture important?

■ A key reason is that plants make flowers which lead to fruit. Understanding how this happens — and why it sometimes fails — needs a study of plant development, gene control, etc. This lets us understand how crops produce

yield. By studying plant architecture, we can breed resilient varieties.

Could climate change impact such genetic movements within plants?

■ Yes — we are already finding evidence of this. Plants are reacting to environmental stresses which

or three into flowers — that stops its growth. In the cauliflower, a floral architect gene tries to rise but because there is a mutation, it can't sustain its progress and falls into no activity, leaving a 'memory' of floral patterns. The cauliflower then produces more axes as the floral gene can't stop this.

What are the technologies you use?

■ We utilise genetic technologies with imaging, microscopy and the fluorescent marking of cells and genes — that means attaching fluorescent markers to the proteins produced by genes and observing these through the microscope at the level of different cells. So, if you want to see one gene being active at any moment during a plant's development, you attach these and see where and when the gene functions.

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READERS WRITE

Dear Times Evoke,

Firstly, blessings to Team TE for taking such care of nature! I enjoyed reading about floral diversity (April 27th) as explained by Beverly Glover. Such articles widen our thinking and perceptions about life. The edit 'Flower Power' was amazing. I realised my self-absorption in 'days of din and gadgets of tin', to quote TE's edit. A big thanks to TE for such precious information. God bless you!

— Dr Swati Singh, Associate Professor, Indore

'Flower Power' was yet another fascinating TE read! The beautifully written, yet pithy account of the enormous intelligence contained in flora and their sustained evolution suggests that perhaps survival is a gentle art after all, lost to misplaced notions of antagonistic perseverance. Thank you, TE, for this unusual tapestry of ecology, aesthetics and philosophy.

— M. Krishan, Bengaluru

It was absolutely delightful to read 'Flower Power'! TE's lovely page was such a thoughtful amalgamation of how flowers evolved, their relevance through the ages and how they evoke good emotions, even during challenging climate change!

— Aditi Mahtia, Kolkata

'Flower Power' was such a nice topic! Such in-depth articles are TE's ornament, refreshing us readers. My 16-year-old grandson insisted I write to you as TE really appeals to him.

— SV Ram Mohan, Visakhapatnam

TE's pollen-soaked bee made my day, showing how pollination works! Also, TE's design with monkey orchids, parrot flowers and a 'bed-bug' was just beautiful. Keep it up!

— Umesh Lal, Ghaziabad

Thanks, TE, for the beautifully crafted articles every week! Kasia Boddy on flowers as symbols of revolutions was so insightful. TE is itself like a fragrant bouquet!

— Rita Dhalbisoi, Bhubaneswar

Share your thoughts at: timesevoke@timesgroup.com
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BJP's Dilip Ray owns assets worth ₹300cr

DEEP POCKETS

Pallavi Shrinivas Dempo BJP South Goa, Goa	Total Assets (₹ Cr)
Nakul Nath Cong Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh	1,362
Ashok Kumar AIADMK Erode, Tamil Nadu	717
Venkatarame Gowda (Star Chandru) Cong Mandya, Karnataka	663
D K Suresh Cong Bangalore Rural, Karnataka	623
	593

Continued from P 1

The affidavit puts the value of his wife's movable assets at Rs 11.72 crore.

Misra does not have any immovable property in Odisha, but owns agricultural land in Raigad district of Maharashtra, and one flat each in Hyderabad and Mumbai.

Another super-rich politician in fray is former Union minister and BJP

nominee for Rourkela assembly seat, Dilip Ray (71), who became eligible to contest after Delhi high court recently stayed his conviction in an alleged coal block allocation scam in Jharkhand in 1999.

He owns assets worth around Rs 300 crore, according to his poll affidavit.

BJD candidate from mineral-rich Champua assembly seat, Sanatan Mahakud, declared assets worth nearly Rs 152 crore.

Surprised and concerned: Af diplomat on smuggling charge

Continued from P 1

Under the law, if the amount of smuggled gold is valued above Rs 1 crore, the suspect is arrested and faces criminal prosecution. Sources said Wardak had a diplomatic passport, issued by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Responding to a query by TOI, Wardak said: "I was surprised and concerned by the accusations and need to look into this matter further. I believe you're aware of the recent personal challenges I've faced while working to support the consulate and embassy. Currently, I am away from Mumbai seeking medical assistance." This is perhaps the first case in the city in recent times where a senior diplomat of a foreign country has been intercepted at an airport in a smuggling case, officials said.

Wardak (58), accompa-

nied by her son, flew to Mumbai from Dubai on an Emirates flight. The duo used the green channel, indicating they were carrying no goods that needed to be declared to customs. They were walking towards the exit when the DRI officials stopped them.

The two were carrying five trolley bags, a handbag, one sling bag and a neck pillow. Their baggage did not carry any tags or marks, indicating their diplomatic status. Sources said DRI officials asked them whether they were carrying any dutiable goods or gold on their person and they replied in the negative. Their bags were examined and cleared. It was only after Wardak was taken to a separate room for a physical pat-down check by a woman officer that the gold was discovered. The gold bars were concealed in her customised jacket, leggings, knee caps & waist belt. DRI officials

recovered 25 yellow metal bars, each weighing 1kg, hidden in the customised clothing worn by Wardak. No contraband was found on her son.

Wardak was appointed consul general of Afghanistan in Mumbai under the erstwhile President Ashraf Ghani's govt. The Ghani govt was overthrown in August 2021 by the Taliban. Though the Taliban regime is not officially recognised by India, the erstwhile Afghan diplomatic corps continue to operate their missions in Mumbai and Hyderabad providing consular, educational and commercial assistance to Afghan nationals. The Afghan embassy in Delhi was shut down, but India has reopened its embassy in Kabul and despatched humanitarian aid to the war-torn country. Officially, the Indian govt continues to work with diplomats appointed by the previous Afghan govt.

Chopper hired for Sena UBT functionary crashes; none hurt

Umesh K Parida & Vijay Singh

Navi Mumbai: A helicopter hired to take Shiv Sena (UBT) functionary Sushma Andhare and her brother to Baramati crashed at Mahad on Friday. The chopper's pilot and his assistant are safe.

Andhare witnessed the crash which happened while they were waiting for it to land at Bashirbhai Chinchkar ground, Raigad district. It was flying from Pune to take Andhare to Baramati

for a poll meeting.

Capt Uday Gelli, chief, Rotary Wing Society of India, western region, said election flying involves landing in rural, temporary helipads. "The question is whether the helicopter operator sprayed the ground with water, as per SOPs, to prevent dust clouds when the aircraft lands."

Sena UBT spokesman Dhananjay Deshmukh said, "PWD did not prepare the ground properly for safe landing of the helicopter."

Government of India
Ministry of Communications
Department of Telecommunications
Applications for the post of Director (Human Resources) in ITI Ltd.
Last Date of receipt of application in Department of Telecommunications is **15.00 hours on 03.06.2024.**
For details login to website <https://www.dot.gov.in>
CBC 06201/11/0001/2425

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NOTICE INVITING e-Tender
Tender No.: JP-EN-RUB-Dewater-2024-05 Name of Work: KGBS - MD section: De-watering of RUB under CGMJP unit for one year. Estimated Cost of Work: ₹1,86,85,558.32/- (Rupees One Crore Eighty Six Lakh Eighty Five Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Eight and Paise Thirty Two only.) Earnest Money: ₹2,43,400/- (Rupees Two Lakh Forty Three Thousand Four Hundred Only) Last date and time of online submission of Tender: 15:00 Hrs. of 21.05.2024 Date and time of opening of tender: 15:30 Hrs. of 21.05.2024. Address for Communication:- Office of Chief General Manager, Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India Ltd., C-16, Khushi Vihar, Patrakar Colony, Mansarovar Jaipur-302020 (Rajasthan), Tel-0141-7196260, E-mail: anuragsharma@dfcc.co.in Note:- Tender documents can be downloaded from the website address www.ireps.gov.in and www.dfccil.com. Terms, conditions and other information are shown on website. Any further addendum/Corrigendum for this tender will be posted in www.ireps.gov.in and www.dfccil.com
(Anurag Sharma), Chief General Manager

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BID NOTICE
1. Procurement of services of vehicle hiring services (Bid No-GEM/2024/B/4866370 Bid start: 17.04.2024 Bid end date: 07.05.2024
The bid documents are available on GeM portal/CPP Portal & can also be viewed at www.aimsrishikesh.edu.in. All interested bidders are requested to visit the portal and participate.

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ADMISSION NOTICE
All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Rishikesh invites applications for Entrance Examinations leading to admission in Post-Doctoral Fellowship Course at AIIMS, Rishikesh for July 2024 Session.
Important: For detailed information all applicants are required to visit institute website (www.aimsrishikesh.edu.in) regularly as all subsequent Corrigendum/Addendum/Updates will only be uploaded on website.
Executive Director
AIIMS Rishikesh

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
(Through e-tendering)
Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-997 Dated: 03.05.2024
Name of work with its Location: Provision of Fire Detection and Suppression system in various telephone exchange, Railnet System over Delhi Division.
App. Cost of the work (₹): ₹ 2,34,92,724.94/- only
Earnest Money Deposit (₹): ₹ 2,67,500/- only
Address of the office: Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annex-1, DRM office, New Delhi-110055.
Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender: Tender uploading / closing date & time: 30.05.2024 up to 15.00
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc: See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055
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NORTHERN RAILWAY
1st CORRIGENDUM
Name of Work:- Provision of Telecom Facilities for Upgradation of maintenance facilities including provision of covered shed on Washing Cum Pit-lines to facilitate high-speed train's maintenance at Coaching Maintenance Complex at Anand Vihar, Delhi Division.

S. No.	Item / Sub heading.	As in Tender Notice	Now to be read as
1.	Work Name	Provision of Telecom Facilities for Provision of Telecom Facilities for Upgradation of maintenance facilities including provision of covered shed on Washing Cum Pit-lines to facilitate high-speed train's maintenance at Coaching Maintenance Complex at Anand Vihar, Delhi Division.	Provision of Telecom Facilities for Upgradation of maintenance facilities including provision of covered shed on Washing Cum Pit-lines to facilitate high-speed train's maintenance at Coaching Maintenance Complex at Anand Vihar, Delhi Division.

All other terms & conditions remain same.
Tender No.: Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-998
Dated: 03.05.2024 1345/24
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OFFICE OF THE RETURNING OFFICER
NEW DELHI PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY (NDPC-04)
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, NEW DELHI DISTRICT
12/1, Jam Nagar House, Shahjahan Road, New Delhi – 110011,
Email: sdmend@delhi.nic.in
F.No.RO-NDPC-04/LS-2024/4808 Dated:- 03/05/2024
PUBLIC NOTICE
Regarding appointment of General Observer, General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 for New Delhi Parliamentary Constituency-04 (NDPC-04), NCT OF DELHI
This is for information of political parties and General Publics/Voters of General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 of New Delhi Parliamentary Constituency-04 (NDPC-04), that the Election Commission of India has designated the following officer as General Observer for General Election to Lok Sabha 2024 for New Delhi Parliamentary Constituency-04 (NDPC-04).

Allotted Parliamentary Constituency No. & Name	Name of Observer	Mobile/Tel No. & Email	Time & Date	Office Address
04- New Delhi Parliamentary Constituency	Mr. Arun Kumar Sinha, IAS	Email: ro.villivakkam@tn.gov.in (Mobile No.): 9650529714	Public Meeting Time: Between 12:00 to 01:00 PM From 06/05/2024 to 25/05/2024	Atal Adarsh Balika Vidyalaya, Gole Market, New Delhi-110001

The General Observer will be available to General Public on all working days as per time/date/venue mentioned in aforesaid table. Any complaint with respect to malpractices in Election and violation of Model Code of Conduct may be reported at the contact number given above.
Sd/- (Isha Khosla), IAS
Returning Officer, NDPC-04
DIP/Shabdarth/Classified/0033/24-25

Centre for Railway Information Systems
Chhatrapati, New Delhi-110025
Tel: 24100717, 24104525
Tender No. 01245132
Subject: Implementation of Application Performance Monitoring (APM) and Full Stack Observability Solution, its implementation, training, OEM Mandays and Resident Engineer for 03 years. Date of Opening: 31.05.2024 (Friday) 15.30 Hrs. Pre-Bid Meeting on 15.05.2024 (Wednesday) at 11.00 hrs. at CRIS, ITPI Building, Near ITO, New Delhi-110002.
Tender Documents can be downloaded from website www.ireps.gov.in. For future modification/ extensions please see www.ireps.gov.in

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अज्ञात भवन, 220 के.वी. विद्युत उपस्थान
बाई-पास रोड, सिन्दगा, अमरा-431007
ई-निविदा संशोधन सूचना
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2. ई-निविदा विशिष्टीकरण सं० डीवीवीएनएल - एमएम / 3484-2024: LT AB Cable 3x95+1x70+1x16 Sq. mm मात्रा: 1, 4 3 7 किमी०, धरोहर राशि: ₹0 49,62,000.00, निविदा प्रश्न का मूल्य: ₹0 11,800.00 (जीएसटीडी सहित) नवीन टेण्डर ID 2024_DVVNL_919370_2
3. ई-निविदा विशिष्टीकरण सं० डीवीवीएनएल - एमएम / 3485-2024: LT AB Cable 3x120+1x95+1x16Sq. mm मात्रा: 1, 5 3 6 किमी०, धरोहर राशि: ₹0 66,44,000.00, निविदा प्रश्न का मूल्य: ₹0 11,800.00 (जीएसटीडी सहित)। नवीन टेण्डर ID 2024_DVVNL_919382_2

निविदा शुल्क केवल अनिवार्य, DVVNL, AGRA को वेबसाइट www.dvvn.org पर माध्यम से ही रवींकार किया जाएगा।
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उपरोक्त निविदाएं दिनांक 09.05.2024 को समय 13:00 बजे तक अनिवार्य रूप से जमा की जा सकेंगी एवं निविदाएं दिनांक 09.05.2024 को समय 18:55 बजे खोली जाएंगी। निविदा प्राप्त 3000 शासन के ई-प्रोक्योरमेंट पोर्टल <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर अपलोड की जाएंगी, वहाँ से निविदा प्रश्न डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड किये जा सकते हैं।
प्र. संख्या- 1654/अग्रा (सोप्रा-ग्राम)/अमरा/विमान दिनांक: 03.05.2024 (आनंद स्वरूप शुक्ला) मुख्यालय, सोप्रा (अमरा) प्रम
"सुनता अविद्य मान्य, तद्विदित मे विजयिता बनेगा"

Centre for Railway Information Systems
Chhatrapati, New Delhi-110025
Tel: 24100717, 24104525
TENDER NOTICE
Industry Consultation/Feedback on Draft RFP for "SELECTION OF MANAGED SECURITY SERVICE PROVIDER TO BUILD, OPERATE AND MANAGE SECURITY OPERATION CENTRE FOR INDIAN RAILWAY (IRSOC)".
Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS) seeks inputs/Feedback from reputed SOC Service provider/OEMs to Build, Operate and manage Security Operation Center for Indian Railways (IRSOC). The Draft RFP of IRSOC can be accessed using below link: http://cris.org.in/PDF/Tender/Draft_RFP_IRSOC_May2024.pdf
Interested agencies having relevant work experience may submit their inputs/feedback latest by 12:00 hrs of 07.05.2024 to CRIS through mail at crisappsec@cris.org.in. Discussion/Meeting shall be held at CRIS ITPI Office 3rd Floor Main Conference Hall on 07.05.2024 from 15:00 hrs. Organisation can show their interest to participate in meeting by sending an email at crisappsec@cris.org.in. 1-2 Person from Each Organisation can join physically.

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
S.No. CSJ/KJ/PUR/IE-Tender/19/0162 Date: 29/04/2024. The following e-Tenders can be accessed under the link www.ireps.gov.in. Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the link www.ireps.gov.in → login → E-Tender Stores/Supply. Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or IREPS related information: Mr. S. K. Chatterjee, HQ CLW/Chittaranjan, 0341-252594 or SMM/CON/HQ, 0341-253561. Office Address: Office of the PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan, Sl. No.; Tender No.; Brief Description of Item; Quantity; Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees); Tender Closing Date & Time (IST) are as follows: H1: 70245022 Supply and Installation of ONBOARD KAVACHI Equipment as per RDSO specification No. RDSO/SPN/196/2020 version 4.0, RDSO UVAM ID No. 3100234, Sub ID No. 3100234003 (Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery); H1000 Set: R 50000000; 20/05/2024 at 11:00 AM. H2: 75324007B: Components of General Arrangement of Floor Ventilation Ducting for WAG-9HC Loco, as per Spec No. CLW/MS/3154 Alt-2. Category No. R/90087 (Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery); 265.00 Set; R 599100.00; 22/05/2024 at 11:00 AM.
PR-24/05/2024 PCMM/CLW/Chittaranjan
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CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
E-TENDER NOTICE
Tender Notice No: PCMM/CLW/HWH/ E-Procurement/24/26 Dated: 27/04/2024. PCMM/CLW/HWH on behalf of the President of India invites electronic bids from established reliable manufacturer for supply of the following. The following E-Tender's are for supply of materials for manufacture of Electric Locomotive. The Prospective likely suppliers are requested to look up the website www.ireps.gov.in for detailed instructions. These are E-Tenders only electronic offer bids shall be accepted. Sl. No.; Tender No.; Description of Stores; Quantity; Due On; Tender Cost are as follows: [119]; 124242794: Capacitor for BUR INPUT SNUBBER for BUR 1/2 TO CLW Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/044 R/A or latest; As per tender/ documents; 29/05/2024; ₹ 0.00. [120]; 124242720: Set of Pipe Saddle for WAG-9HC Locomotive to CLW Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0038/ F or latest. (Set Details as per Annexure uploaded); As per tender/ documents; 31/05/2024; ₹ 0.00. [121]; 292450292: Grinding Wheel Straight Size 500 X 80 X 203.2 MM Grade : A60M6V/CNM Make:- G Rindwell Norton, Carborundum Universal, Orient or Similar; As per tender/ documents; 24/05/2024; ₹ 0.00. [122]; 25335122A: Routine Test Plan for Testing of 3-phase Traction Motors as per CLW Specification no. MT-2304 Dated: 23.08.2023 (HSN Code:9031); As per tender/ documents; 23/05/2024; ₹ 0.00. [123]; 25245078: Procurement of VVVF Drive 3-Phase AC Traction Motor Testing Plant for light load for testing upto full load/rated speed. Qty. 01 no., as per Specification no. MT/2327 dated 05.04.2024, HSN Code : 85044010; As per tender/ documents; 10/06/2024; ₹ 0.00. [PRI-401] PCMM/CLW/HOWRAH
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Sole female cadet was freed days after tanker seizure

Continued from P1

A mirabdollahian underlined that compliance with maritime rules and regulations by all ships is necessary and unavoidable in order to maintain maritime safety," said Iran in a

readout of the conversation between the two ministers. Ann Tessa Joseph, the

SHIP CREW RELEASE

sole woman cadet among the 17 Indian crew members of the Israeli-linked container

vessel was released days after the tanker was seized by Iran's military on April 13.

Hours after the Iranian military seized the vessel, White House National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson had said the ship's crew comprised Indian,

Filipino, Pakistani, Russian and Estonian nationals.

Recent attacks on merchant shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden by Yemen's Iran-allied Houthi, claiming solidarity with Palestinians have affected global shipping. AGENCIES

Uttarakhand forest fire claims third life in 24 hours

Dehradun: Three labourers from Nepal, including an unidentified woman, all aged 30, who were associated with a pine resin (leesa) factory at Syunrakot in Almora died in the last 24 hours after they were caught in a forest fire near the factory, reports Pan-

kul Sharma.

The deceased included Gyaneshwar Bahadur who along with the unidentified woman died on Friday. Deepak Pujara, the third worker, suffered burns and died on the spot on Thursday. Divisional forest officer of

Almora, Deepak Singh, told TOI: "There were four labourers who were caught in the blaze. While three of them died, the fourth injured person—a woman—is currently in hospital. We learnt they were perhaps not working in the factory, but were servants

at a residence, which is located in the factory complex. An FIR has been registered in the matter and investigations are on."

On Friday, seven separate wildfire incidents were reported across Nainital. (Inputs from Sonali Mishra in Nainital)



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IDFC Bank	3,10,000	HALDIRAM	11,00,000
ICICI Bank	4,25,000	MOTEL	17,75,000

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NDA will cross 400 by 1pm on June 4: Shah

'If EVMs Faulty, Should Cong Take Oath If They Win?'

► Continued from P1

In an interview with Times Now Navbharat, **Amit Shah** justified the police investigation against those accused of circulating a video which was doctored to make it appear that he had called for scrapping Dalit quota, saying those who edit and distort videos to influence elections must be ready to face the consequences. "Police will investigate, and everyone should cooperate with the investigation. And then they will say no, no, no, the agencies have come upon us, and they start crying, so brother why did you edit? You cooperate now," he said. Shah mocked the opposition for its allegations about EVMs being faulty, and said the voting machines were highly secure and could not be tampered with by any external force.

"If they lose, they blame EVMs and if they win, they accept it wholeheartedly. Don't take the oath after winning. After all, it is the same EVM? The faulty EVM. Should they be taking oath after winning with faulty EVMs? Rahul Gandhi should say whether he will take oath as the winner from Wyanad?" he added.



To a question about BJP "playing politics" on alleged sexual oppression of women in Sandesh-hali in Bengal by TMC functionaries, Shah emphasised HC had ordered a CBI probe into the incident. "Is HC playing politics?" he asked, adding that it was the "height of appeasement" that the culprit accused of exploiting hundreds of women right under the nose of a woman CM was not arrested until the court order. He also justified former Calcutta HC judge Abhijit Gangopadhyay contesting the poll as a BJP candidate. He said hundreds of people, ministers in Indira Gandhi's ministry had done this. "Any judicial officer, after leaving

their job, can join any party. This is not the first time this has happened. But if we do it, the question only arises then," he said.

Asked about NDA's ambitious aim of winning 400 seats, Shah said the alliance would definitely win 400 seats. "By 1pm on 4th June, the people will bless Narendra Modi for the third time as PM with a majority of over 400 seats," he added.

On the opposition's allegations of foul play after BJP candidates got elected unopposed, he said so far 37 people had been elected unopposed, most of them from Congress. "What about when Yashwantrao Chavan won, when Farooq Abdullah won, when Dimple Yadav (SP boss Akhilesh Yadav's wife), was elected unopposed. They cannot handle even people in their own parties and describe every defeat as an attack on democracy," he said.

About the party's explorations in the south, Shah said BJP would be a bigger party than Congress. "In Tamil Nadu, BJP will open its account. We will also be elected in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka," he said.

Vemula's mom expressed doubts over probe: DGP

► Continued from P1

Doubts have been expressed by the mother of the deceased and others over the conduct of the investigation... A petition will be filed requesting the magistrate to permit further investigation into the case," the DGP said.

Vemula's family said they would legally challenge the report, which they termed "full of lies" and farcical. "After his suicide, Rahul Gandhi and Congress supported our cause and promised to stand by us till justice is delivered. But within four months after their party came to office in Telangana, police closed the case. This is extremely shocking. We are all heartbroken with the findings," Vemula's brother Raja told TOI from Vijayawada.

The report claims that the Guntur district administration cancelled SC certificates obtained by Vemula and his family members after finding out that they were from OBC Vaddera community.

A case of abetment of suicide and other charges under Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, had been registered against

Vemula's family said they would legally challenge the report, which they termed 'full of lies' and farcical

ex-VC Apparao Podile, then Union minister and Secunderabad MP Bandaru Dattatreya, BJP's N Ramchander Rao, and university students Krishna Chaitanya, Nandanama Sushel Kumar and Nandanam Diwakar.

They were charged with harassing Vemula because of his caste and driving him to suicide.

The closure report mentions a letter from Dattatreya to then Union HRD minister Smriti Irani's office, quoting a complaint by ABVP about campus disturbances. It also cites a representation on the matter by Rao to ex-VC Podile.

"The action taken (against Vemula and his friends) by the university authorities cannot be attributed to Bandaru Dattatreya and Ramchander Rao. None of the proctorial board members or the executive council stated that they were aware of any such communication to the VC and they acted independently," the report states.

The report says that being prosecuted for fraudulently obtaining an SC certificate would have led to Vemula losing the academic degree he had earned over the years.

It also declares there is no evidence of harassment by the ex-VC, who had suspended Vemula and four other students from their hostels.

According to the investigating officer, Podile took a lenient view and reduced the original punishment of expulsion for one semester, hostel and scholarship.

"In view of this leniency, it cannot be said that the VC discriminated against Rohith Vemula and his friends," the report says.

It mentions that in Dec 2015, Vemula wrote a letter to the vice-chancellor asking him to provide poison and a rope to die by suicide.

"If this can be considered an indication for suicide, it was written a month prior to that (expulsion) and could have been due to disappointment and anger, and (which) might have died down due to lapse of time."

The report says that Vemula's parents were separated and that he was more involved in politics on campus than studies.

Pre-Mauryan period yagna pits, coins found near Raj's Bharatpur

Jaipur: Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has unearthed 15 yagna kunds (yagna pits), copper coins and around 1,000 pieces of pottery dating back to the pre-Mauryan period (300-500 BC) at Bahaj village in Rajasthan's Bharatpur, reports Shobh Khan.

Several idols were also found at the site but officials did not disclose details due to their "worn-out" condition. The excavation has been conducted under ASI's Jaipur Division since Jan 10.

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

SEE SECTION U/S 82 Cr. P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Sushil @ Sulli S/o Sh. Rajender Prasad, R/o D-55, Jailor Wala Bagh, Ashok Vihar, Phase-II, Delhi.** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in **FIR No.456/2023 U/s 302/34 IPC & 25/27/54/59 Arms Act, P.S. Ashok Vihar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused **Sushil @ Sulli** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sushil @ Sulli** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sushil @ Sulli** of **FIR No.456/2023 U/s 302/34 IPC & 25/27/54/59 Arms Act, P.S. Ashok Vihar, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **18.07.2024**.
By Order
Apoorv Bhardwaj
Ld. Metropolitan Magistrate
Room No.113, North West District
Rohini Courts, Delhi



Project Management Unit
Jal Marg Vikas Project-II (Arth Ganga)
INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
(Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Govt. of India)

Head Office: A-13, Sector - 1, Noida - 201 301;
Phone: 0120-2544004, Fax: 0120-2543976; vc.iwai@nic.in

National Competitive Bidding

e-Bids are invited from interested bidders for "Construction of Onshore Facilities at 8 Locations in West Bengal under JMVP-II".
The Tender Documents and other relevant details are available at IWA website www.iwai.nic.in and e-procurement site <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>.
Date: 04.05.2024

Vice Chairman & Project Director (JMVP)

DG, ITBP Block No.2, CGO Complex, New Delhi-03

EXPRESSSION OF INTEREST (RECRUITMENT RELATED ACTIVITIES)
Indo Tibetan Border Police Force (ITBPF), Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from eligible agencies for empanelment to outsource Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) based Physical Efficiency Test (PET), Digital Machine based Physical Standard Test (PST) and CCTV recording of entire PET/PST recruitment events of Constable (General Duty) and also for all other direct recruitment examinations in CAPFs/AR, where PST/PET is a part of the selection process from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024.

For details and eligibility criteria for the Firms please visit our website i.e. www.itbpolicen.nic.in and CPP Portal at <http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>, using valid Digital Signature Certificates.

Place- New Delhi
Date- 5 April 2024
Sd/-
DIG (Procurement), ITBP
CBC 19112 /11/0049/2425

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Shri Ram, S/o. Jage Ram, R/o. H.No. 200, C-Block, Vijay Colony, Bawana, Delhi,** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 33/2017 U/s 509/506 IPC** registered at P.S. Bawana, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said **Shri Ram** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Shri Ram** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said **Shri Ram** accused of **FIR No. 33/2017 U/s 509/506 IPC** P.S. Bawana, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **25.06.2024**.

By Order
Sh. Saurabh Goyal,
Metropolitan Magistrate -05,
North District, Room No. 114,
Rohini Court, Delhi

PRERNA OJAS PRIVATE LIMITED

RTC Bhawan (Rural Technology Center), Near RIRD Training Institute, Indora Bagh, BKT, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh- 226202
Tender No.: 4,5LED BULB & Solar Study Lamp/Prerna Ojas/2024-25 Dated: 03/05/2024
NOTICE FOR TENDER
Prerna Ojas, Lucknow invites sealed tenders from interested firms for supply of raw material of 9w LED Bulb quantity 100,000 unit (One Lakhs) for the purpose of assembly and other related accessories and raw material for 5000 (quantity) Solar Study Lamp and other related accessories. Interested firms/company are requested to submit their tenders by 17/05/2024 till 03:00 p.m. All other details related to the tender can be downloaded from website www.prernaogas.com.
Managing Director
Prerna Ojas Pvt. Ltd., Mob.: 9415905545

Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences

Saifai, Etawah-206130 (UP)
Email: jdmm-upums@upums.ac.in
Ref.No. 67/UPUMS/MM/Advertisement/24-25 Dated: 03.05.2024
NOTICE
UPUMS intent to invite Expression of Interest (EOI) from possible bidders for procurement of Medical Equipments for Financial Year 2024-2025. Interested bidder are requested to look on the University website www.upums.ac.in
JDMM



Government of Rajasthan
DIRECTORATE OF CIVIL AVIATION
State VIP Hangar, Sangar Airport, Jaipur-302011
Ph: 0141-2552623, Telefax: 0141-2720783,0141-2550543, Mail: dc@rajasthan.gov.in
File no.3 (10)DCA/2024/50
NOTICE INVITING BID Date:- 01.05.2024
Tender ID No 2024_CIVAV_389912

Bids for Hiring of Twin Engine VFR and IFR capable Helicopter with Seating capacity of 05 passengers (excluding crew) and/or 07-08 passengers (excluding crew) for a period of 02 years for Travel of VIPs (estimated value of INR 25.00 Crores and 40.00 Crores respectively) are invited from interested bidders upto 14:00 Hrs. on or before 24.05.2024. Other particulars of the bid may be seen on the procurement portals (<https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> or <https://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in/>).
UBN: DCA24555.0800001
DIPR/C/3466/2024

Director



NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR SELECTION OF AGENCY FOR ELECTRONIC & PRINT MEDIA MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELATED SERVICES FOR RAILWAY BOARD

The Chief Public Relations Officer, Northern Railway for and on behalf of the President of India invites applications from the interested parties/agencies on prescribed application form for the following work :-

Notice Inviting Application (NIA) No. 5PR/1/2024/Agency Selection/RB

Full Name of Work	SELECTION OF AGENCY FOR ELECTRONIC & PRINT MEDIA MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL MEDIA RELATED SERVICES FOR RAILWAY BOARD
Appx. Total Cost of Service/Work (Exclusive of GST)	₹ 3,91,00,000/- (Rs. Three Crore and Ninety-One Lakh only (exclusive of GST) per annum, or ₹ 7,82,00,000 (Rs. Seven Crore and Eighty Two Lakh only (exclusive of GST) for two years.
Appx. Total Cost of Service/Work (with GST)	₹ 9,22,76,000/- (Rs. Nine Crore Twenty Two Lakh and Seventy Six Thousand only inclusive of GST) for two years
Earnest Money Amount	₹ 6,11,380/- (Rupees Six Lakh Eleven Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty only)
Cost of Application Form	₹ 10,000/- + 18% GST = ₹ 11,800/- (Non-Refundable) in cash across the Railway Counter or if downloaded from website Demand Draft/Pay Order etc. in favour of PFA, Northern Railway, New Delhi; (In case if application is demanded by Dak - ₹ 500/- extra)
Last Date of downloading Application Form from NR's official Website i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in or purchase from PR Office	Up to 12:00 hrs. on 20.05.2024
Last Date/Time of submission of Application	Up to 12:30 hrs. on 20.05.2024
Date & Time of Opening of Applications	On 20.05.2024 at 13:00 hrs.
Venue for Submission & Opening of Applications	CPRO Office, NDCR Building, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055
No. 5PR/1/2024/Agency Selection/R.B. Dt. 03.05.2024	1344/2024
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified male (depicted in the photo) name **Unknown S/o Unknown** residence and family is **Unknown** age 30-32 years approx. was found dead at **Near Vardhman City Centre, Chowki No. 2, Sindhora Kalan, Shastri Nagar, Delhi on 16.03.2024.** In this regard a DD No. 45/24, Dated 16.03.2024 has been lodged at **PS Sarai Rohilla, North Distt., Delhi.** The dead body was preserved for 72 Hrs in Subzi Mandi Mortuary. His physical description is as under:-
Sex: Male, **Age:** 30-32 years approx., **Height:** 5' 6" ft., **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** Blue colour printed Shirt and Grey colour Lower.
Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers:-
SHO
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> **PS: Sarai Rohilla, Delhi**
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in **Ph.: 011-23693611**
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 **Mobile: 8750870133**
Fax No.: 011-24368639 **DP/3237/N/2024**

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that this Woman (depicted in the photo) namely **Malti Devi V/o Girijanand R/o Anaj Mandi, Narela, Delhi** has been missing from her residence since **10.03.2024 at 01:00 pm.** In this regard a DD No. 59-A, dated 14.03.2024 has been registered at **PS Narela, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this woman but no clue has come to light so far.
Her physical description is as under:-
Sex: Female, **Age:** 50 years, **Height:** 5' ft., **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Long, **Built:** Medium, **Identification:** **Malti Girijanand** written on the Right hand, **Wearing:** Pink colour Saree and Blue colour slipper in feet.
Any person is having information or clue about this missing lady may kindly inform to the following:-
SHO
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> **PS: Narela, Delhi**
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in **Ph.: 011-27280435**
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 **Mob.: 7065036323**
Fax No.: 011-24368639 **DP/3192/ON/2024**

SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one male (depicted in the photo), **Namely: Suraj, S/o Ram Kishan, R/o C-2/46 Nand Nagri Delhi.** Aged: 24 years has been Missing from above address since 17.04.2024. In this regard a DD No.29-A Dated 18.04.2024, has been lodged at **P.S. Nand Nagri, Delhi.** His physical description is as under:
Height: '5'8" Feet, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Built:** Thin, **ID:** Tattoo on right arm "MOM DAD" and cut mark on upper lips, **Wearing:** Yellow colour T-Shirt and Blue colour Jeans and chappal in feet.
Any person is having any information/clue about this missing male, may inform to the following at **E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.nic.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in>** **Tele No: 011-24368638 or 24368641**
S.H.O
P.S. Nand Nagri, Delhi
DP/4720/NE/2024 **Ph: 011-22583307, 22585985 & 8750870733**

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

(SEE SECTION 82 Cr.P.C.)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person(s) **Ashwani @ Kale S/o Sh. Gyan Chand R/o H. No. A-286, Amar Puri, Nabi Karim, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 243/2023, U/s 25/54/59 A. Act, PS Sadar Bazar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a Warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) **Ashwani @ Kale** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused person(s) **Ashwani @ Kale** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person(s) **Ashwani @ Kale** of **FIR No. 243/2023, U/s 25/54/59 A. Act, PS Sadar Bazar, Delhi** are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before dated **04.06.2024 at 10:00 PM.**
By Order
Sh. Gaurav Goyal
Metropolitan Magistrate
Central Distt., Room No. 247
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi

DP/5097/N/2024
(Court Matter)

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF THE PERSONS ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr. PC)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that two accused persons namely 1. **Mohd. Ali Hussain S/o Md. Yakub R/o B-3/559, Agar Nagar Prem Nagar I/rd Kirari, Delhi** 2. **Mohd. Sahil S/o Laik Ahmed R/o H.No. S-1/23 1st Jamia Nagar okhla, Delhi**-25 has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case 1. **FIR No. 932/14, U/s 23/26 JJ Act & 3/14 CL ACT at PS: Aman Vihar, Delhi** 2. **FIR No. 932/14, U/s 23/26/79 JJ Act & 3/14 CL ACT at PS: Aman Vihar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused 1. **Mohd. Ali Hussain 2. Mohd. Sahil** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused 1. **Mohd. Ali Hussain 2. Mohd. Sahil** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused 1. **Mohd. Ali Hussain 2. Mohd. Sahil** of 1. **FIR No. 932/14, U/s 23/26 JJ Act & 3/14 CL ACT at PS: Aman Vihar, Delhi** 2. **FIR No. 932/14, U/s 23/26/79 JJ Act & 3/14 CL ACT at PS: Aman Vihar, Delhi** are required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **02.07.2024.**
By order
Navdeep Gupta
Metropolitan Magistrate (NW)
Room No.109, 1st Floor,
Rohini Court, Delhi

DP/4741/RD/2024

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

See Section U/S 82 Cr. P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused **Erfan R/o H.No. 150, Village Chehalka, Tehsil Tauru, District Nuh Mewat, Haryana-122105** has Committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **CC No. 3035/2021 U/s 138 NI Act, PS Dwarka North, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said **Erfan** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said **Erfan** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Erfan** of case **CC No. 3035/2021 U/s 138 NI Act, PS Dwarka North, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **07.06.2024.**
By Order
Ms. Sanjana Kasana
Metropolitan Magistrate (NI Act Digital Court-09)
First Floor, CD Wings, South West District
DP/5254/DW/2024(Court Matter) **Dwarka Courts, New Delhi**



PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
(See Section 82 Cr. PC)
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely **Sonu @ Ravi S/o Rajesh R/o 2/18, Kamal Pur Ganesh Nagar, Burari, Delhi** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **FIR No. 556/2017 U/s 392/394/411/34 IPC at PS: Prashant Vihar, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Sonu @ Ravi** can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Sonu @ Ravi** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Sonu @ Ravi** of **FIR No. 556/2017 U/s 392/394/411/34 IPC of PS: Prashant Vihar, Delhi** is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before **04.06.2024.**
By Order
Rohit Kumar
Metropolitan Magistrate-04
(North) Room No. 110,
Rohini Courts, Delhi

DP/5107/RD/2024



कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल बक्सरा।
शुद्धि-पत्र
इस कार्यालय के जापांक- 406, दिनांक- 15.03.2024, एवं सूचना एवं जन सम्यक् विभाग द्वारा प्रकाशित ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-26 / 2023-024 पीठ आरआरख्या-020066 (भवन) 2023-024, दिनांक-16.03.2024 जो पंचायत सरकार भवनों के निर्माण कार्य के संबंधित है जिसका प्रकाशन दैनिक समाचार पत्रों में हुआ है को अपरिहार्य कारणवश निम्नांकित रूप से संशोधित करते हुए अवधि विस्तारित किया जा रहा है :-
संशोधित (अवधि विस्तारित) तिथि

क्रमांक	विवरण	पूर्व निर्धारित तिथि एवं समय	संशोधित तिथि एवं समय
1	परिमाण विवरण (अपलौड/डाउनलोड) करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक- 15.04.2024 से 15.05.2024 को 15:00 बजे तक।	दिनांक-15.04.2024 से 30.05.2024 को 15:00 बजे तक।
2	निविदा खोलने (तकनीकी बीड) की तिथि एवं समय	दिनांक-20.05.2024 को 3.30 बजे अपराह्न तक।	दिनांक-03.06.2024 को 3.30 बजे अपराह्न तक।
3	वित्तीय बीड खोलने (तकनीकी बीड) की तिथि एवं समय	तकनीकी बीड मूल्यांकन के पश्चात।	विभागीय निविदा समीति द्वारा तकनीकी बीड मूल्यांकन के पश्चात।
4	ग्री बीड मॉडिंग की तिथि, समय एवंस्थान	1. दिनांक- 19.04.2024 को 3.00 बजे अपराह्न में कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल बक्सरा के कार्यालय, एवं 2. दिनांक- 24.04.2024 को अधीक्षण अभियंता, भवन अंशल आरा का कार्यालय।	1. दिनांक-13.05.2024 को 3.00 बजे अपराह्न में कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल बक्सरा के कार्यालय, एवं 2. दिनांक-16.05.2024 को अधीक्षण अभियंता, भवन अंशल आरा का कार्यालय।

शेष शर्तें यथावत रहेंगी।
कार्यपालक अभियंता
भवन प्रमण्डल, बक्सरा।

PR-000413 (B C D) 2024-25 **लोकसभा आम निर्वाचन 2024 - चुनाव का पूर्व, देश का गर्व।**



Jingle vs jungle jibe: Tejashwi's musical counter to Modi

The RJD Leader Is Striking A Chord At Poll Rallies With A 1990s' Bollywood Song And Audio Recordings Of Old Modi Speeches

Manoj.Chaurasia@timesgroup.com

Patna: During the 2019 poll campaign, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi had gone to voters with the "Chowkidar *****" slogan, which ultimately proved counter-productive for the opposition alliance. This time round, his ally and RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav has been taking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a 1990s' Bollywood number, "Tum to dhoke-baaz ho, wada karke bhoole jaate ho." And, he appears to be striking a chord with voters.

Dressed in his trademark white kurta-pyjama with a big RJD election symbol (lantern) embossed on it, Tejashwi has been singing this popular number from the Govinda-Karisma starrer, 'Saajan Chale Sasural', at almost every election rally. Not only this, he has been playing audio clips of the PM's past

speeches promising to "grant special attention to Bihar, giving two crore jobs to youths every year, bringing back black money allegedly stashed in foreign banks and taming surging inflation" to drive home his point. Unlike Rahul's 'chowkidar' jibe, Tejashwi has been successful in attacking Modi without getting too personal. Such has been its impact that people are attending his rallies in large numbers, braving the scorching sun.

At the moment, Tejashwi, 35, seems to be waging a lone electoral battle against the army of mighty NDA leaders like PM Modi, Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, J P Nadda, Yogi Adityanath and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, who went to the NDA fold after breaking with the Grand Alliance barely three months ago. Only two top Congress leaders — Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi — have



CROWD-PULLER: Tejashwi has addressed 92 rallies in Bihar so far

come here since the elections started, leaving the responsibility of opposition poll campaign solely on the shoulders of Tejashwi. Although RJD president Lalu Prasad figures among the list of the

party's 40 star campaigners, he was seen sharing stage only with his daughter, Rohini Acharya, who is making a poll debut from Saran Lok Sabha seat this time. In fact, Lalu's multiple health complications do

not permit him to walk freely and address rallies in this hot and humid weather, with the temperature rising to 45 degrees Celsius.

On the other hand, Nitish has been unsparing in his attacks on Lalu, questioning his move to bear so many children, promoting his family in politics and indulging in corruption. However, Tejashwi has preferred not to hit back. "Nish ji mere liye adarniya hai, abhikhawak hai. Wo kuchh bhi kar sake hai. Wo jo bhi kahenge, mere liye ashirwad hoga (Nitish is like a guardian. I consider his words a blessing)," is all that Tejashwi says when asked about Nitish's comments about his family.

Apparently, Tejashwi's focus on granting government jobs during his 17-month tenure in the second Nitish-led Grand Alliance govt, where he was deputy CM, has made him the darling of young voters. However, Nitish says the jobs were given because of him.

Such is Tejashwi's popularity that every Grand Alliance candidate wants him to campaign for them. According to RJD spokesperson Shakti Singh Yadav, Te-

jashwi has so far addressed 92 election rallies in the state. At his rallies, Tejashwi has been focusing on three key issues giving jobs to youths, taming inflation and putting a check on migration. Although there is no official data available about people working outside the state, Bihar govt had transferred Rs 1,000 each to the bank accounts of around 35 lakh migrant labourers during the nationwide lockdown due to Covid in April 2020. The figure amply explains the pangs of migration.

Analysts say Tejashwi became the party's star campaigner due to certain political compulsions. First, he had to lead the poll campaigns single-handedly in 2019 as his father was in jail after his conviction in the multi-crore fodder scam cases. Tejashwi shone during the 2020 Bihar assembly elections when he launched intensive poll campaigns and took on the mighty Nitish and his NDA colleagues then, addressing as many as 16-19 election rallies in a single day. The end result was startling as RJD emerged as the single-largest party in the 243-member Bihar assembly,

while Nitish's JD(U) was relegated to a distant third, marking the beginning of JD(U)'s downfall that still continues.

Tejashwi was first seen sharing stage with party leaders during the 2009 LS polls when Lalu was facing the toughest battle of his political career from Saran LS seat and his wife Rabri Devi, former Bihar CM, joined the poll campaign in his support. Saran was earlier known as Chhapra before delimitation in 2009. It was then that Tejashwi started following his mother at election rallies. At that time, Tejashwi was often spotted following his mother on the stage and standing silently behind her.

He graduated into politics after the party fielded him from Raghurpur in the 2015 assembly elections. He won and became deputy CM in the first Nitish-led Grand Alliance govt formed in the state in Nov 2015. But the govt fell barely 20 months later as Nitish went back to NDA camp.

The setback sharpened Tejashwi, and the change was palpable in his speech during the trust motion. The rest is history.

BJP scores early run in Gujarat but two north seats may spin a chance for Cong

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

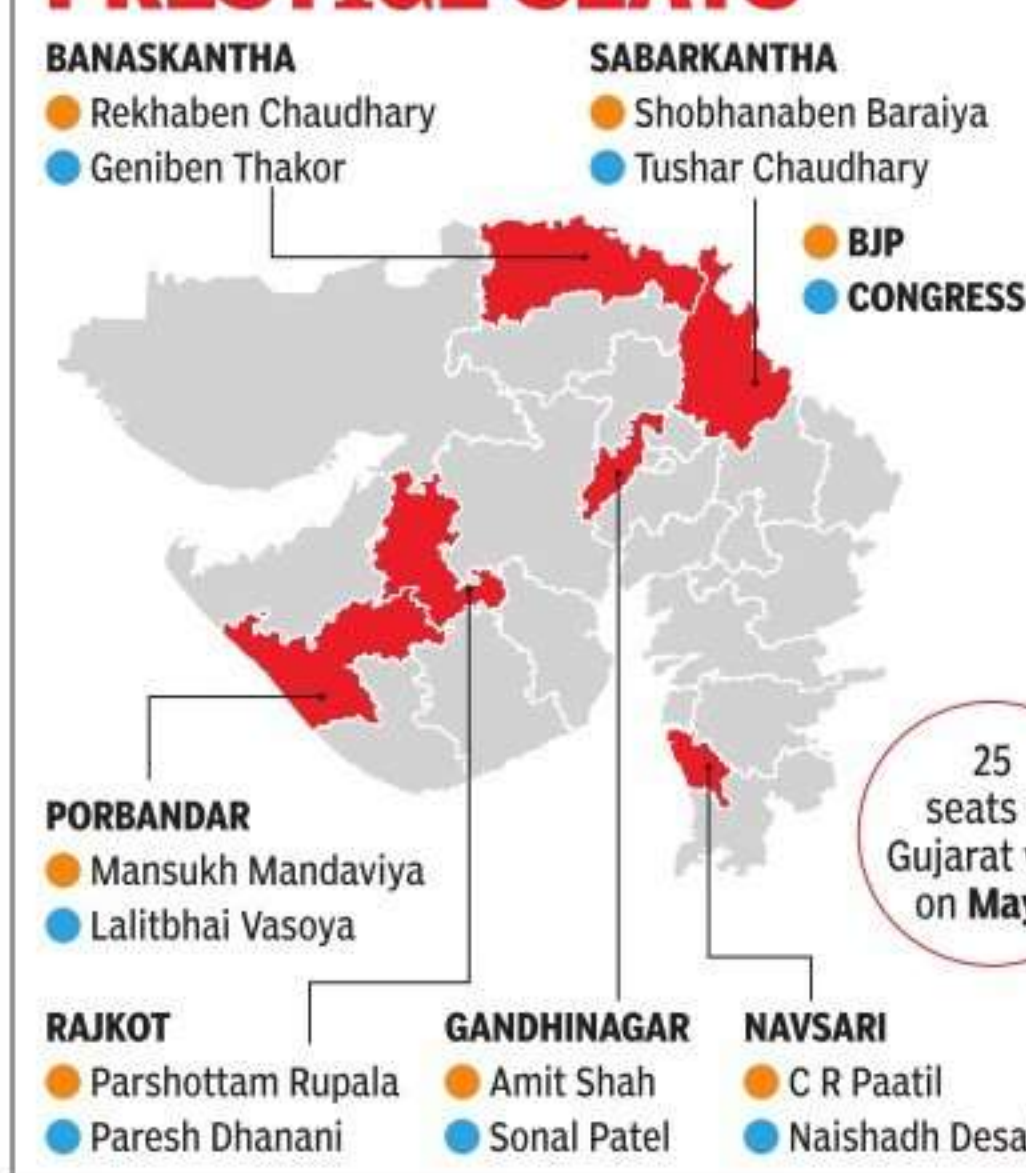
In cricket parlance, battleground Gujarat in the 2024 general elections could loosely be described as a face-off between a star-studded superpower armed with ferocious fast bowlers and ruthless pinch-hitters, against minnows who have got whitewashed in the past two seasons of 2019 and 2014.

Arguably, the only point of interest and speculation among pundits, commentators and spectators of the duel seemingly being the margin of victory, even as the heavyweight team has already got runs on the board without a ball being bowled. For the first time in the state, since it was carved out in 1960, BJP's Surat Lok Sabha seat candidate Mukesh Dalal has been declared winner uncontested after the nomination of Congress candidate Nitesh Kumbhani was rejected and all the others in the fray withdrew their candidature. In fact, Dalal's unprecedented, uncontested win has thrown a piquant challenge for BJP and district administration: getting voters of Majura, Udhna, Limbayat and Choryasi areas of Surat city to vote, as they fall under Navsari Lok Sabha constituency. BJP state president C R Paatil is fighting Congress's Nishad Desai in the constituency.

The lotus has been in full bloom in the home state of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, with the BJP party pulling off 26-on-26 victories in the past two general elections. BJP has upped the ante this time round, declaring its intention to win the remaining 25 seats again, with victory margins exceeding 5 lakh votes. The targets are even higher in the big bouts involving central ministers Amit Shah, Mansukh Mandaviya and Parshottam Rupala as well as Paatil, who is tipped for a ministerial berth if NDA returns to office. BJP office-bearers have been proclaiming that Shah will pull off a record win in Gandhinagar, with a victory margin of 10 lakh votes.

Over the past two general elections, BJP has notched up a huge vote share as compared with Congress. While BJP and Congress had a vote share of 47.4% and 43.9%, respectively in 2009 general elections, the

PRESTIGE SEATS



saffron party's chunk increased to 59% and 62.2% in the 2014 and 2019 parliamentary polls, respectively. Congress's vote share, meanwhile, fell to 32.9% and 32.1%, respectively, in the 2014 and 2019 general elections.

Hit by defections of influential leaders in the weeks leading up to the ongoing general elections, and plagued by factionalism within, Congress is struggling to hold on to its traditional vote bank. Four MLAs, including former state president Arjun Modhwadia and C J Chavda, who quit before the LS elections and joined the saffron party, are now contesting their respective seats as BJP candidates. Bypolls for five out of six vacant assembly seats in Gujarat, too, are scheduled for May 7.

BJP's seemingly smooth ride did, however, take somewhat of a hit in March following Union minister Parshottam Rupala's statement on royals of the erstwhile princely states. Rupala, BJP's Rajkot LS seat candidate, said the royals broke bread with foreign rulers and even got their daughters married to them, irking the state's Kshatriya community that has been

protesting in several parts of the state. Rupala has since apologised several times while BJP leaders have held several rounds of parleys with the agitating Kshatriyas, trying to persuade them, but in vain. While the protests remain unabated, political watchers say Kshatriya ire may end up as sound and fury and will not be potent enough to cause major damage. BJP leadership clearly believes that Kshatriya numbers are not big enough to damage their party's prospects, although they may dent the victory margins. There are a handful of seats though where Congress is putting up a spirited fight. In north Gujarat's Banaskantha seat, firebrand Vav MLAs Geniben Thakor, who earned the sobriquet of 'giant killer' after she defeated sitting assembly speaker Shankar Chaudhary in 2017 state polls, is pitched against BJP's Rekha-ben Chaudhary. Geniben has had to resort to crowdfunding to finance her campaign while Rekha-ben is the granddaughter of cooperative stalwart Galabhai Chaudhary, who founded Banas Dairy.

BJP is also encountering a contest

in north Gujarat's Sabarkantha constituency where it had to change its candidate Bhikhaji Thakor after party workers raised objections to his candidature. BJP workers insisted that his candidature will topple caste equations because though he uses Thakor surname, he does not actually belong to the community, which has a dominant presence in this constituency. BJP then named Shobhanaben Baraiya as its candidate. But what followed was verbal duels between supporters of Baraiya and Thakor. Old-timers, who were hopeful of the Sabarkantha LS seat ticket, are also miffed that a schoolteacher with little experience in active politics has been made the nominee. Over the past couple of weeks, Kshatriyas have intensified protests in the constituency making Congress hopeful their candidate, ex-Union minister Tushar Chaudhary, could gain.

Not wanting to leave anything to chance in high-stakes Gujarat where every seat is a prestige issue for BJP, top party brass has been busy ironing out conflicts — minor or major — in key north Gujarat constituencies.

Union home minister Amit Shah is reported to have summoned about 150 party functionaries, including office-bearers and elected representatives, asking them to channel their efforts on winning Sabarkantha and Banaskantha seats impressively.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is contesting two of the 26 seats in the state as part of INDIA bloc, is looking to further strengthen its foothold in Gujarat's politics. AAP picked up a few seats in the Dec 2022 elections, and both of its sitting MLAs have been fielded as LS candidates. The party has fielded its sitting MLA Chaitar Vasava in Bharuch constituency, amid vociferous disapproval from members of Congress veteran Ahmed Patel's family, while Umesh Makwana is fighting from Bhavnagar seat. Bhauruch has been Patel's home turf with the senior Congress leader having held the Lok Sabha seat in 1977, 1980 and 1984.

While some argue that the massive influx of Congress leaders and workers into the saffron fold ahead of polls will potentially strengthen BJP, this phenomenon has also led to considerable disquiet within party workers. The unease among BJP workers is natural, as many of these "new recruits" are placed at positions higher than those who have been serving in the party for years, and in some cases even decades, said sources.

Despite BJP already being on firm ground in the state, the party is heavily banking on the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to wrap up campaigning in the state with a blitzkrieg of rallies that kicked-started on Thursday.

The midsummer heat, however, could play spoilsport, affecting voter turnout, as day temperatures are expected to be very high on May 7. Political parties, electoral machinery and the state govt are all doing their bit to ensure the scorching sun doesn't take a toll on the turnout. In 2019 general elections, held in April, Gujarat's voter turnout was lower than the national average. Party leaders have urged people to vote before 10.30am while the Election Commission has decided to set up special facilities at polling stations. The state govt has issued guidelines on tackling possible heat wave conditions.

SURROUND SOUND

From cockpit to cart: Pilot trades wings for wheels in LS campaign

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Lok Sabha candidate Manmath Routray, who is a former commercial pilot, took to the streets of Bhubaneswar on Thursday in a decorated bullock cart for campaigning. Amid cheers and applause from thousands of supporters, Routray's procession brought a wave of enthusiasm. The BJD leader said he would keep his promises made to the public. "I am receiving so much love and support from the public. I just want to say that I will never break my promises made to them," said Routray, who filed his nomination from Bhubaneswar. Routray is the son of six-time Odisha Congress MLA Suresh Routray, who recently resigned from all committees of his party. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, BJD had won 12 of the 21 seats. BJP won eight seats and Congress one. ANI



TOI Archives



1989 | L K Advani, flanked by Khushwant Singh (L) and Atal Bihari Vajpayee (R), filed nomination papers in New Delhi — his first Lok Sabha seat contest. He won the seat, defeating Congress's V Mohini Giri. Later in 1991, he contested from Gandhinagar as well as New Delhi, and won both seats. He vacated the Delhi seat and retained Gandhinagar. Later, he was re-elected from Gandhinagar in 1998, 1999, 2004, 2009 and 2014. In 2019, he was succeeded by Amit Shah in the constituency.

In Guj, ballot battle turns into a VR playground

Instead of leafing through boring pamphlets or enduring lengthy lectures, first-time voters can now immerse themselves in a virtual voting adventure. Gujarat polling officials have unleashed a virtual revolution in the form of Election Metaverse. Aimed at guiding and entertaining the state's 13 million first-time voters, this high-tech initiative allows voters to strap on their VR headsets and embark on a simulated voting journey, exploring every nook and cranny of the electoral process from the comfort of their own homes, said Gujarat's chief electoral officer P Bharti. IANS

Raj Babbar returns to poll stage; can he be Gurgaon's aaj ki awaaz?

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The year was 1994. Raj Babbar was shooting for a film in Ooty when he received a 'lightning call', a super-expensive, super-quick version of the trunk call. In those pre-mobile days, such calls generally aroused a mix of curiosity and anxiety because, it was assumed, the caller had something euphoric or dreadful to say. It was Mulayam Singh Yadav on the other side. "Arre bhai kahan ho (where are you)? Can you come immediately to Lucknow," he said.

A year earlier, Babbar was a 'star' campaigner for Mulayam's Samajwadi Party. He had an idea of what was in the offing. When he reached the city of nawabs and kebabs after taking a few days' leave from producer Pahlaj Nihalani (film: Ilzaam), he was asked to file his nomination for Rajya Sabha.

"I was elected nirvirodh (unopposed). The credit for bringing me into active politics goes to Mu-

layam Singh-ji," said Babbar, recounting the conversation to this reporter during a phone interview in 2020.

Mulayam Singh is no more, but the veteran actor's long association with parliamentary politics — two terms in the Upper House and three in the Lower House — received fresh impetus earlier this week when Congress declared him its candidate from Gurgaon, Haryana.

Many actors have been one-hit wonders in politics, but Babbar, now 72, has had more than a silver jubilee in the game, answering tricky political questions with ease and élan. In his debut Lok Sabha run in 1996, he was pitted against the charismatic Atal Bihari Vajpayee in Luck now. "Vajpayee faces stiff challenge from Babbar," went a TOI headline. Babbar lost by about 1.2 lakh votes, not a bad performance against the BJP veteran.

The actor-politician, who once claimed to be inspired by the philosophy of socialist leader Ram

Manohar Lohia, was rewarded with an SP ticket again in 1999; this time from his birthplace Agra. He won, then retained the seat in 2004. After becoming a 'rebel' within the party for some time, Babbar quit SP and joined Congress in 2009. Vanquishing Mulayam's daughter-in-law Dimple Yadav by over 85,000 votes in Firozabad — the SP supreme's backyard — was perhaps his most shining moment in electoral politics. But Babbar flopped against Gen VK Singh of BJP in Ghaziabad in 2014, losing by about 5.7 lakh votes.

Many professional politicians would have hung up their boots after a defeat at that stage of their career, but Babbar returned to Rajya Sabha two years later, a nominee from Uttarakhand, and spoke passionately against inflammatory speeches.

"Yeh baat Agra ki nahi hai, yeh us mohabbat ke shahr ki hai jise nifrati ki prayogshala ki tarah istemaal kiya ja raha hai. (The issue isn't about Agra. It is about the city of love that is being used as a laboratory of hate)," he said in Parliament.

Actor Who Sold His Scooter

Raised in a middle-class family of railway employees, Babbar became a familiar name on the Delhi theatre scene in the 1970s. He acted in plays such as Mitti Ki Gaadi. In 1977, he won the coveted United Producers Talent Contest organised by a caucus of top Hindi cinema producers, in-

cluding B R Chopra and Shakti Samanta. Rajesh Khanna, another star-turned-politician, had won the contest in the 1960s.

But none of the producers immediately announced a film with Babbar. He even auditioned for the Pippys but nothing came of it. "When I went back for theatre work in Delhi, people would make fun. 'Haan bhai star (hey, star!),' they would say. I was

Vajpayee faces stiff challenge from Babbar

His constituency as far as Haryana was concerned. As compared to the Vajpayee and the Babbar, the remaining 10 Congress MPs, including the late Pankaj Chandra, the architect of the Congress (I) party, were known to the electorate. When news broke that the Babbar was contesting from Firozabad, the Congress (I) party leaders were reportedly surprised. The Babbar was a well-known face in the constituency, but he was not a member of the party. The Babbar was a well-known face in the constituency, but he was not a member of the party. The Babbar was a well-known face in the constituency, but he was not a member of the party.

broken inside. But I kept silent," he said. In 1979, Babbar moved to Mumbai for a year, hoping to find film work. "I sold my Bajaj scooter for Rs 6,000 in the black market and gave the money to my wife, Nadira, telling her to use Rs 500 every month," he said.

Babbar struck bull's eye as a suave, sexual psychopath in B R Chopra's Insaf Ka Tarazu (1980). He remained in demand right through the 80s, though his flops vastly outnumbered hits. The three blockbusters of his career — Insaf Ka Tarazu, Nikaah

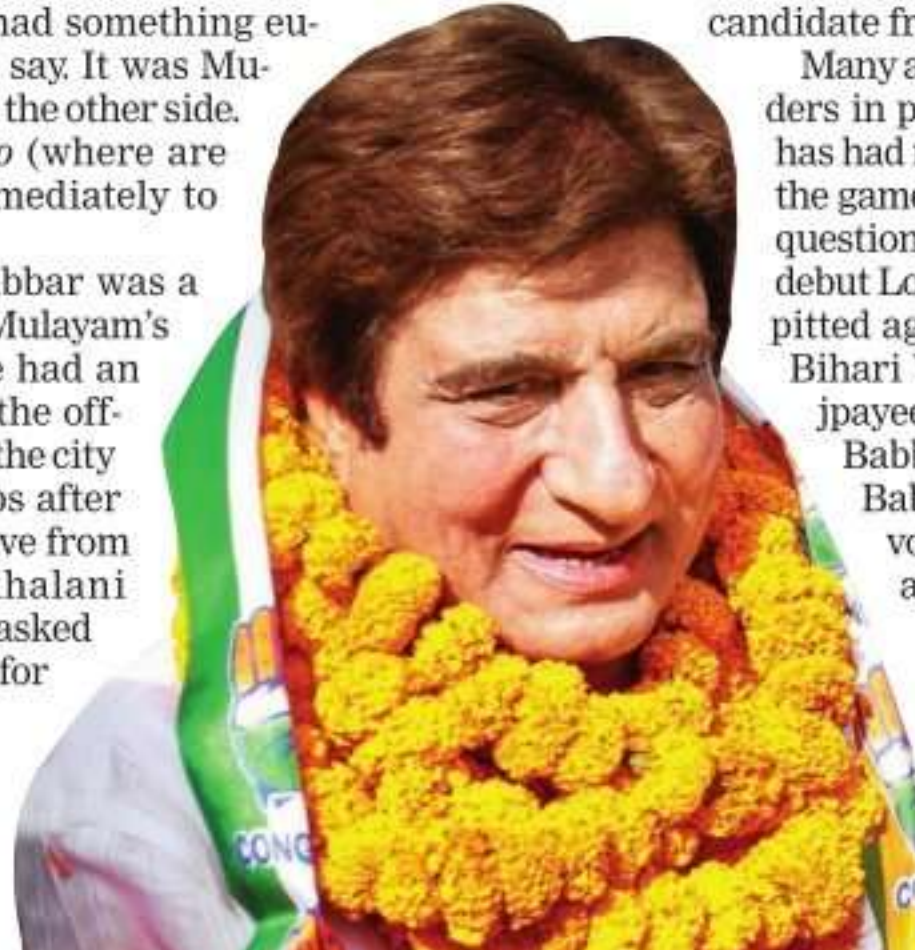
(1982) and Aaj Ki Aawaz (1984, inspired by Charles Bronson's Death Wish) — were all produced and directed by the Chopras; the first two by BR, the third by BR's son Ravi Chopra.

Schooled in Bofors-Babri Era

Babbar's first brush with national politics happened in the late 1980s when he campaigned for V P Singh, seeking 'Bofors-ed' spotlight, in the momentous Lok Sabha by-election from Allahabad in the summer of 1988.

But it was his work during the post-Babri Masjid riots that perhaps caught Mulayam's attention. "Dutt sahib (Sunil Dutt) and I worked among the riot victims, both Hindus and Muslims, in Bombay. One day I received a call from Mulayam Singh. He said he wanted to visit the camps. We organised it. He came to my home, had food. He said, 'Yeh jo bhi ho raha hai iski Gangotri Uttar Pradesh mein hai (the point of origin of what's happening here lies in UP). I need your help. I campaigned for him for almost a month during the polls,'" he said.

Three decades later, when the political climate has again grown communal, Babbar will be canvassing in the sadistic summer heat. And in a season of political realignments, he will have both Congress and SP (only a nominal presence in Haryana) rooting for him this time.



Babbar is contesting from Gurgaon on a Congress ticket



KATE BECKINSALE RETURNS TO RED CARPET FOR FIRST TIME SINCE FEB AFTER HOSPITALISATION FOR MYSTERY ILLNESS

DREW BARRYMORE RECALLS AN X-RATED BLUNDER AT A TALK SHOW, SAYS SHE ONCE MADE A 'SEX LIST' & LEFT IT AT DANNY DEVITO'S HOUSE

Pro-Palestinian Encampments Spread To Campuses In Canada, Aus, UK & France

Student Activists Challenging Their Univs' Stances On Gaza War And Ties To Israel

Pro-Palestinian students at one of France's most elite universities, Sciences Po, occupied a campus building overnight. Like-minded protesters at University College London set up an encampment. And tents with Palestinian flags stretched out this week across campuses in Australia. The tensions gripping universities in the US appear to be spreading to other countries, where students have challenged their schools' stances on war in Gaza and ties to Israel.

Demonstrators at universities in France have put pressure on administrators to more forcefully condemn Israel's military offence in Gaza and review partnerships with Israeli universities and private donors. Police officers went into Sciences Po Friday to clear out a group of pro-Palestinian protesters who had occupied a campus building and refused to leave until their demands were met, according to a statement from the university.



Demonstrators at an encampment on the University of Toronto campus

The intervention came after a town hall debate about the war at the university failed to defuse tensions.

The university said students had breached an agreement not to disrupt classes and exams, and that it had made the "difficult decision" to involve police after multiple attempts at dialogue failed. Live video on Instagram showed students chanting, "We ask for justice! We get the police!" as officers pulled them out.

In Britain, small encampments have begun to spring up at universities in Bristol, New-

castle and Warwick. And a coalition of students and staff at University College London put up tents on the campus grounds on Thursday to pressure the school to divest from companies complicit in what they called "the genocide of Palestinians," among other demands.

A union representing students at Trinity College Dublin said the university had fined it more than 214,000 euros, about \$230,000, for losses incurred because of disruptive protests since last Sept, rising student fees and other issues. The university, a non-profit, cited the "negative financial impact" of protests blocking visitor access to the Book of Kells, a Medieval religious manuscript held at the university. Laszlo Molnarfi, president of the students' union at Trinity College, said the union could not afford the fine. He called it an attempt at intimidation, adding that the protests would continue. "We will be escalating," he said.

In Australia, encampments

have come up at major universities in Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney. These protests have grown more tense as pro-Israel demonstrators have gathered nearby. University administrators have said they support students' right to protest, while warning them to abide by school policies.

In Canada, encampments have sprung up in some of the country's largest universities, including universities of Toronto, British Columbia and Ottawa. Organisers at University of Toronto said the encampment will stay until the university discloses its investments, divests from any that "sustain Israeli apartheid, occupation and illegal settlement of Palestine" and ends partnerships with some Israeli academic institutions. At Montreal's McGill University, the administration requested police intervention to dismantle camps, but law enforcement instead said it was monitoring the situation. NYT & REUTERS

Israeli officials weigh sharing power with Arab states in Gaza

For months, PM Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel has avoided detailed public discussion about Gaza's post-war future. Trying to placate both his far-right allies, who seek to rebuild Israeli settlements in Gaza, and Israel's foreign partners, who want Gaza returned to Palestinian governance, Netanyahu has stopped short of any specific declaration.



Behind the scenes, however, senior officials in his office have been weighing an expansive plan for post-war Gaza, in which Israel would offer to share oversight of the territory with an alliance of Arab countries, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as the US, according to three Israeli officials and five people who discussed the plan with members of the Israeli govt.

According to that proposal, Israel would do so in exchange for normalised relations between itself and Saudi Arabia, according to the people.

Far-right members of Netanyahu's coalition are almost certain to dismiss such an idea, and so are the Arab countries mentioned as possible participants. But it is the clearest sign yet that officials of Israel's govt are thinking about Gaza's future, and could be a starting point in future negotiations.

Arab officials and analysts have called the power-sharing plan unworkable because it does not create an explicit path toward a Palestinian state, which the Emirati and Saudi govts have said is a prerequisite for their involvement in post-war planning. But others have cautiously welcomed the proposal as it at least suggests greater flexibility among Israeli leaders than their public statements suggest.

Under the proposal, the Arab-Israeli alliance, working with the US, would appoint Gaza leaders to redevelop the devastated territory, overhaul its education system and maintain order. After 7-10 years, the alliance would allow Gazans to vote on whether to be absorbed into a united Palestinian administration that would govern in both Gaza and the Israeli-occupied West Bank, according to the proposal. In the meantime, the plan suggests, the Israeli military could continue to operate inside Gaza. NYT

US protests on wane after crackdowns, Biden rebuke

New York: Pro-Palestinian protests that have rocked US campuses for weeks were more muted Friday after a series of clashes with police, mass arrests and a stern White House directive to restore order. Police in Manhattan cleared an encampment at New York University after sunrise, with video posted to social media by an official showing protesters exiting the tents and dispersing when ordered by loudspeaker. The scene appeared relatively calm compared to crackdowns at other campuses in the country.

University administrators, who have tried to balance the right to protest and complaints of violence and hate speech, have increasingly called on police to clear out the protesters ahead of year-end exams and graduation ceremonies — and some clashes with counter-protesters.

More than 2,000 arrests have been made in the past two weeks across the US, some during violent confrontations with police, giving rise to accusations of over-use of force. President Joe Biden gave his first expansive remarks on the protests Thursday, saying that "order must prevail". "We are not an authoritarian nation where we silence people or squash dissent. But neither are we a lawless country. We're a civil society, and order must prevail," Biden said.

His remarks came hours after police moved in on demonstrators at UCLA, which had seen

Officer accidentally fired gun inside Columbia: NYPD

An officer whose gun went off inside a Columbia University building this week fired it accidentally as the police were removing pro-Palestinian protesters from the campus, the New York police department said Thursday. No one was injured during the shooting on Tuesday, and the bullet ended up in the frame of a wall a few feet away, the NYPD said in a statement. The officer, who was not identified, was approaching a barricade on the first floor of Hamilton Hall when he fired his gun, which had a flashlight on it, the police said. The shooting was captured on the officer's body camera, which was handed over to the Manhattan district attorney's office. The episode did not come to light until Thursday, when The City, a local news organization, published a story that said a shot had been fired inside Hamilton Hall on Tuesday as police cleared the Columbia campus of protesters. NYT

a violent confrontation when counter-protesters attacked a fortified encampment there.

On the east coast, protesters at New Jersey's Rutgers University agreed to take down their camp after reaching a compromise with administrators, similar to deal at other institutions, including Brown University. AFP

PROTESTS, CHAOS, ARRESTS AT US CAMPUSES

An AP tally has recorded at least 56 incidents of arrests after weeks of pro-Palestinian protests at 43 different colleges or univs across US since April 18. Nearly 2,200 arrests have been made



Some Key Names

US Campuses	No. of Arrests	US Campuses	No. of Arrests
1 Columbia Univ, NY	408	11 Indiana Univ	56
2 New York Univ	150	12 Yale University, Connecticut	48
3 Emerson College, Massachusetts	118	13 Aurora Campus, Colorado	44
4 Washington Univ, Missouri	100	14 University of North Carolina	44
5 Northeastern Univ, Massachusetts	100	15 Ohio State Univ	36
6 University of Texas at Austin	97	16 Cal Poly Humboldt, California	35
7 University of Southern California	93	17 University of Wisconsin	34
8 University of South Carolina	93	18 University of Georgia	28
9 Virginia Tech, Virginia	82	19 Emory University, Georgia	28
10 Arizona State of University	72	20-25 14 campuses in 12 states	200

Source: CNN, New York Post, Reuters

AI-POWERED F-16 TAKES OFF



With the midday sun blazing, an experimental orange and white F-16 fighter jet launched with a familiar roar that is a hallmark of US airpower. But the aerial combat that followed was unlike any other: This F-16 was controlled by artificial intelligence, not a human pilot. And, riding in the front seat was Air Force secretary Frank Kendall. AI marks one of the biggest advances in military aviation since the introduction of stealth in the early 1990s. Even though the technology is not fully developed, the service is

planning for an AI-enabled fleet of 1,000+ unmanned warplanes to be operating by 2028. The AI-controlled F-16, called Vista, flew Kendall at more than 550 miles an hour. It went nearly nose to nose with a second human-piloted F-16 as both aircraft raced within 1,000 feet of each other, twisting and looping to try to force their opponent into vulnerable positions. At the end of the hour-long flight, Kendall said he'd seen enough during his flight that he'd trust this AI with the ability to decide whether or not to launch weapons. AP

German co tests rocket powered by candle wax

Berlin: German company HyImpulse Friday successfully launched a candle wax-powered rocket capable of carrying commercial satellites on a test suborbital flight into space for the first time. "We're signalling Germany's prowess as a space-faring nation and expanding Europe's access to space," HyImpulse's chief executive Mario Kobald said. The 12-metre, 2.5-tonne test rocket dubbed "SR75" lifted off in Koonibba, Australia.

It is capable of carrying satellites weighing up to 250kg to an altitude of up to 250km while being fuelled by paraffin, or candle wax, and liquid oxygen. Paraffin can be used as a cheaper and safer alternative fuel for rockets, reducing satellite transportation costs by as much as 50%, HyImpulse said. REUTERS

Cop chase causes multi-vehicle collision in Canada, Indians die

Toronto: An Indian couple visiting Canada and their three-month-old grandchild were among four people killed on the spot in a multi-vehicle collision when Ontario police pursued a liquor store robbery suspect driving the wrong way. All four people were pronounced dead at the scene on Highway 401 in Whitby, about 50km east of Toronto, police said on Thursday.

Ontario's special investigations unit (SIU) said two of the victims, a 60-year-old man and a 55-year-old woman, were visiting from India. However, the SIU did not release the names of the victims. The couple's three-month-old grandson also died. Highway 401 was closed for several hours after the incident on Monday, it said.

The agency said the parents of the infant, his 33-year-old father and 27-year-old

Indian couple visiting Canada and their 3-month-old grandchild were among 4 people killed on the spot

mother, were travelling in the same vehicle and were taken to hospital. The mother's injuries are serious, SIU said.

The 21-year-old robbery suspect was also killed in the collision, which involved at least six vehicles, CBC News reported. Officials said the car chase started in Bowmanville and ended around 20 minutes later after the suspect in a cargo van fled Durham police on a high-speed chase against opposing traffic on Highway 401.

A 38-year-old male passenger from the cargo van was also taken to the hospital to be treated for serious injuries. PTI

Sunak's party suffers heavy losses in UK local elections

Labour Wins Control Of Councils It Hasn't Held For Decades

London: Britain's governing Conservative Party suffered heavy losses in local election results Friday, further cementing expectations that Labour Party will return to power after 14 years in a UK general election that will take place in the coming months. Labour won control of councils in England that the party hasn't held for decades and was successful in a special by-election for Parliament that, if repeated in the general election, would lead to one of the Conservatives' biggest-ever defeats.

Though the results overall, admittedly on a low turnout, make for grim reading for PM Rishi Sunak, he was able to breathe a sigh of relief when Conservative mayor of Tees Valley in the northeast of England was reelected, albeit with a depressed share of the vote. The victory of Ben Houchen, who ran a very personal campaign, may be enough to cushion Sunak from any revolt by Conservative lawmakers.

For Keir Starmer, Labour Party leader, it's generally been a stellar set of results, with the only real negative coming in some areas with large Muslim populations, such as Blackburn and Oldham, where the party's candidates appear to have suffered as a result of the leadership's pro-Israel stance in the conflict in Gaza.

Perhaps most important in the context of the looming general election, Labour won back the parliamentary seat of Blackpool South. The seat had gone Conservative in the last general election in 2019, when then PM Boris Johnson



Britain's PM Rishi Sunak holds a T-shirt with his image in Darlington

Ex-PM Boris Johnson turned away from polling station after forgetting photo ID

Former PM Boris Johnson, who introduced a contentious requirement for voters to show photo ID while voting, was turned away from a polling station Thursday for forgetting to bring his. Media reported that Johnson was initially turned away at a polling station in Oxfordshire. Sky News reported that he was later able to cast his ballot and that he voted Conservative. As PM, Johnson's govt introduced the ID requirement in 2022 to crack down on possible voter fraud but it was criticised for the potential to disenfranchise parts of the electorate. Previously, voters only needed to give their name and address to be able to vote. AGENCIES

made big inroads in Brexit-supporting parts of the country. Starmer went to Blackpool to congratulate Webb and urged Sunak to call a general election. "This was directly to Rishi Sunak to say we are fed up with your decline, your chaos and your division and we want change," Starmer said.

Labour has won in areas that voted heavily for Brexit, such as Hartlepool and Thurrock. It also seized control of Rushmoor, a leafy and military-heavy council where it has never won. Sunak will be hoping Andy Street will also hold on to remain mayor of

West Midlands when that result is announced on Saturday. Also Saturday, Labour's Sadiq Khan is expected to remain mayor of London.

Sunak struck a defiant note in Teesside as he congratulated Houchen, whose share was down nearly 20 percentage points from 2021 to 54%, while admitting "disappointing" results elsewhere. "I've got a message for Labour too, because they know they have to win here in order to win a general election, they know that," he said. "They assumed Tees Valley would stroll back to them, but it didn't." AP

Hit squad allegedly played roles of shooters, drivers & spotters on day Nijjar was killed

Continued from P1

Members of the hit squad are alleged to have played different roles as shooters, drivers and spotters on the day Nijjar was killed at the Guru Nanak Sikh



Gurdwara in Surrey in British Columbia, according to the sources. Themed were arrested on Friday during police operations in at least two provinces, the report said. Sources said investigators identified the alleged hit squad members in Canada some months ago and have been keeping them under tight surveillance.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police are expected to announce the arrests and share details of their investigation later Friday, CTV News reported, quoting a senior govt source.

India had on Thursday rejected fresh comments by PM Trudeau on the killing of Nijjar and said the remarks once again illustrated the political

space given in Canada to separatism, extremism, and violence. Trudeau had addressed a Khalsa Day event in Toronto Sunday attended by some pro-Khalistan supporters.

On the sidelines of the event, he told the media the killing of Nijjar created a "problem" and that he cannot ignore it, in an apparent reference to his earlier allegations of involvement of Indian agents in the assassination.

"PM Trudeau has made such remarks earlier as well. His remarks illustrate once again the political space that has been given in Canada to separatism, extremism, and violence," external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in News Delhi at his weekly media at a briefing.

"This not only impacts India-Canada relations but also encourages a climate of violence and criminality in Canada to the detriment of its own citizens," he added, when asked about Trudeau's remarks. India on Monday also summoned the Canadian deputy high commissioner and lodged a strong protest with him over the raising of 'pro-Khalistan' slogans at the event in the presence of Trudeau. PTI

In a first, an orangutan is seen using medicinal plant to treat a wound

Scientists observed a wild male orangutan repeatedly rubbing chewed-up leaves of a medicinal plant on a facial wound in a forest reserve in Indonesia.

It's the first known observation of a wild animal using a plant to treat a wound, and adds to evidence that humans are not alone in using plants for medicinal purposes.

The male orangutan, Rakus, lives in Gunung Leuser National Park on the island of Sumatra and is thought to be around 35 years old. For years

researchers have followed orangutans like him on his travels through the forest, tracking his way through the canopy in search of fruits to eat.

Scientists first noticed a wound on Rakus' face on June 25, 2022, when they saw his self-medication behaviour begin.

"Once I heard about it, I got extremely excited," said Isabelle Laumer, a primatologist with Max Planck Institute of Animal Behaviour in Germany, in part because records of animals medicating themselves are rare — even more so



The wound on the face of Rakus, the orangutan, closed five days after he began self-medication and healed without signs of infection less than a month later, said Dr Laumer

when it comes to treating injuries. She and colleagues detailed the discovery in a study published Thursday in the journal Scientific Reports.

The plant Rakus used, known as akar kuning or yellow root, is used by people throughout Southeast Asia to treat malaria, diabetes and other conditions. Research shows it has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties.

Orangutans rarely eat the plant. But in this case, Rakus ingested a small amount and also coated the wound several

times. Five days after the wound was noticed, it had closed, and less than a month later "healed without any signs of infection," Dr Laumer said.

Primates have been observed appearing to treat wounds in the past, but not with plants. A group of more than two dozen chimpanzees in Gabon in Central Africa have been seen chewing up and applying flying insects to their wounds, said Simone Pika, an expert on animal cognition at Osnabruck University in Germany who documented that observation.

Orangutans have been spotted using medicinal plants in a different way: In 2017, six orangutans in Borneo rubbed chewed-up leaves of a shrub with anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties onto their legs and arms, probably to soothe sore muscles.

Dr Laumer hopes the study of Rakus will help create more appreciation — and desire to protect — the Sumatran orangutan, a critically endangered species. "There are so many things we still don't know about these apes," she said. NYT

AROUND THE WORLD



RAINS, MUDSLIDES KILL 29 IN BRAZIL: Twenty-nine people have died, 36 injured and more than 10,000 have been displaced due to heavy rains this week in Brazil's southern state of Rio Grande do Sul. The local govt declared a state of emergency as rescuers continued to search for dozens of people reported missing among the ruins of collapsed homes, bridges and roads. Storm damage has affected nearly 150 municipalities in the state. Gov Eduardo Leite said the state was dealing with "the worst disaster in (its) history"

Berlin offers to give away villa once owned by Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels

Berlin's govt is offering to give away a villa once owned by Adolf Hitler's propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, hoping to end a decades-long debate on whether to repurpose or bulldoze a sprawling disused site in the countryside north of the German capital. "I offer to anyone who would like to take over the site, to take it over as a gift from the state of Berlin," finance minister Stefan Evers told state parliament Thursday, dpa reported. Berlin has repeatedly tried to hand off the site to federal authorities or the state of Brandenburg, where the villa lies, rather than pay for maintenance and security

at the complex, which has become overgrown and fallen into disrepair. "If we fail again, as in the past decades, Berlin has no option but to carry out the demolition we have already prepared for," Evers said.

Myanmar junta bans men from going abroad to work

Myanmar's junta has suspended the issuing of permits for men to work abroad, it said, weeks after introducing a military conscription law that led to thousands trying to leave the country. The junta, which is struggling to crush widespread armed opposition to its rule, in Feb said it would enforce a law allowing it to call up men to serve in the military for at least two years. This sent thousands queuing for visas outside foreign embassies and others crossing into Thailand to escape the law.



A thought for today

Let noble thoughts come to me
from all directions

RIG VEDA

Be Open, Get Richer

Biden's clumsy statement contains some home truths

Joe Biden is gaffe prone. To dump India, Japan, Russia and China together as nations economically held back by xenophobia was bizarre. But there's a case to take a closer look at his messy observations. He attributed America's economic strength to its welcoming of immigrants. He's right. America is still the most sought-after destination for immigrants.

Always churning | US is technologically the most consequential country. A look at Silicon Valley and other hotspots of technology there shows the beneficial spillovers of a system that's a magnet for the world's best and the brightest. It's just not Indian-origin CEOs who stand out. Even entrepreneurs such as Elon Musk and Jensen Huang of Nvidia chose US to pursue their dreams.

This is the most important takeaway from Biden's clumsy communication. A system that holds the promise of allowing anyone a chance to realise their dream will always be competitive, notwithstanding social discord. That's the lesson for xenophobes in US politics.

Aging without appeal | Japan's median age is close to 50, while that of China and Russia is close to 40. Japan and Russia collectively have a few million migrant workers. But that's just a controlled flow to offset demographics. Hardly any driven youngster seeks to move there to realise a dream. The odds are stacked against them, and against authoritarian China too.

India's chance | India's evolution is different. It didn't have the economy to be a global magnet. Yet, it sheltered millions of refugees in 1971 during Bangladesh's liberation. India is today hamstrung by the absence of a refugee policy. But if there's a bigger lesson for us: it's to create an environment that not just retains talent but also attracts it.

Ladakh Makes It Large

This cold constituency promises a hot battle

Expect 100% turnout here? Five electors. One family. A poll booth all their own. India's northernmost poll booth is at village Warshi in district Leh. At an altitude of 15,000 ft, Anley Pho-296 poll booth is a tent. India's largest constituency by area, Ladakh's electorate is 1.8L strong. Call it trivia, but there's much afoot, including frosty politics, for the May 20 election – this is Ladakh's first LS election after it became a UT alongside the abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir in Aug 2019.

EC bandobast | EC has Ladakh's stars, including women's ice hockey team captain Tsewang Chuskit and taekwondo player Shahnaz Parveen, to get people to vote. Helicopter services, back-up strongrooms and 100% reserve EVMs – preparations are underway for excessive snowfall or rain. But the extra chill this time is in its politics.

Brand Ladakh | The taste of power Ladakh got as UT has whetted its appetite for inclusion in Sixth Schedule. The reason proffered is protection of its fragile environment and culture. The movement spearheaded by activist Sonam Wangchuk included a 21-day fast, and, also highlighted loss of grazing lands to solar farms, corporations and Chinese incursions. Yesterday, the last day to file nominations, saw hectic negotiations – BJP soothing its sitting MP who's been dropped and who got himself a nomination form, and Congress hoping to dissuade NC and its Kargil Congress unit from fielding their own nominee. Cold Ladakh's LS poll is a hot affair.

Where Is The Freedom In Poverty Or Fear?

After 40 years, failure of the neoliberal experiment is stark

The Road To Freedom: Economics and the Good Society by Joseph Stiglitz, makes the case that economic and political freedom are inseparable. It seeks to take back the rhetoric of freedom from conservatives and libertarians.

Freedom has been interpreted by Western politicians like Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher and economists like Milton Friedman and Friedrich Hayek. Financial deregulation was named 'liberalisation', to connote this freeing. After the fall of communism, this neoliberal consensus swept the world. It says accept claims of market efficiency as a matter of belief, never asking, for instance, why US healthcare is the most expensive in the advanced world, with the worst outcomes. Any failure is ascribed to external factors, not flaws in the system itself.

This book argues with those ideas, from a 21st century perspective. Deregulation caused the biggest financial crisis in 75 years, free trade accelerated deindustrialisation, and free corporations exploited consumers, workers and the environment. As philosopher Isaiah Berlin put it, "freedom for the wolves has often meant death for the sheep." People struggling with scarcity and fear are not free, the book points out.

For Stiglitz, freedom lies in one's 'opportunity set', the range of choices actually available to you. What does the right to vote mean to a starving person?

2008 may have been the apex of neoliberalism, when govts rescued the banks, and the cost to the rest of us exceeded the banks' gains. This is the signature move of the system: losses are socialised, gains are privatised.

If this system has led to galloping inequality, that's not coincidental. Its first patrons were billionaires and big corporations. We cannot divorce the

current distribution of income and wealth from the current and historical distribution of power. Our social problems are not laws of nature or economics – they are choices, the result of rules and regulations governing the economy.

Neoliberalism is not only inefficient and unstable, it generates corrosive inequalities and a narrowing of vision, the book says. Adam Smith's metaphor of the 'invisible hand', the idea that pursuing self-interest leads to social well-being, has been debunked by the experience of the last quarter-century. Instead of growth and better lives for all, it has brought monopolisation and concentration of economic power. Questions of distribution and questions of efficiency are not separate: even IMF and OECD emphasise that economies with greater equality perform better.

The flaw with the libertarian position is that it does not acknowledge actual tradeoffs. To understand freedom, we must understand that we are not islands, our actions affect each other. And when the promise of faster growth and high living standards, widely shared, does not pan out, the loss of hope has political consequences. Fascist and authoritarian govts are a result of the state not doing enough for its citizens, not of it doing too much.

Neoliberalism is cracking under its own strains. What this book proposes is a tempered vision of 'progressive capitalism', or a rejuvenated social democracy. It would focus on reducing inequality, reining in corporate power, valuing humans and nature as well as GDP and balance sheets. In some sectors, cooperatives or non-profits might work better than profit-maximising companies. Market and state would act in balance, and there would be a key place for collective action, with the aim of truly expanding human freedom.

mindfield
SHORT TAKES ON BIG IDEAS



THE NETA-JANATA DIVIDE

Politicians, always looking for a better deal in a tough profession, don't want to be pinned down by ideology. It's people who tend to acquire ideological convictions. That explains a lot of politics

Dipankar Gupta



Elections bring up memories. One of them is a quotable quote delivered by Dominique de Villepin in 2002, when he was visiting India as France's foreign minister. When asked what it felt like to trounce the Socialists so completely, he came up with this killer line: "Politicians, socialists or conservatives, we are all alike, it is the voters who are different."

For example, while ideologically laden Congress and CPM cadres were bloodying each other in the streets of Kolkata, their seniors, Siddhartha Shankar Ray and Jyoti Basu, respectively, often enjoyed a drink together. Politicians are indeed alike, in spite of stated ideological differences, and hence can flit easily between parties making friends and searching for the best fit.

The message is clear: Voters are driven by ideological convictions, but party bosses often rear up like nervous horses if burdened with them. When freed of all baggage it gets so much easier for professional politicians to switch parties. They behave as an executive would, when moving for a better compensation package from Larsen & Toubro to Hindustan Unilever, or vice versa.

Once we get a hang of this it becomes easier to appreciate what Tom Vadakkan said when he left Congress. He clearly stated that as Congress spokesman he was just doing a job though his heart was not in it, especially when he was pouring pure vitriol on BJP. Yet, he stayed at his post as long as he did and ultimately switched when a better opportunity came along.

Or take Nitish Kumar. Between 2013 and 2024, he went in and out of political alliances seeking a CEO's position each time. While some may wonder how anybody can be so nimble, but as a professional politician can such a person be faulted? Voters are true believers and such turnovers could disorient them, but the politician is a hunter at core – a job hunter.

In politics, ideological loyalty is weighed carefully against the chances of winning office. That is why a party flamethrower can in an instant turn into a party flameout. Even so, it is not as if such moves by professional politicians do not have a positive side to them. When 'rebels' desert they usually insist that their departure is for ideological reasons.

Of course, that is rarely true but, even so, voters in that constituency are somewhat dramatically reminded of the party's manifestos and of its professed claims. These had been lost amidst abuses and snarls of the election campaign and now they are suddenly centre stage again. This is how deserters from parties contribute unintentionally to the democratic process.

Several corporate houses do something similar when they seek 'exit opinion' from employees who

malfunction in their previous party. Six former Congress MLAs from Himachal joined BJP allegedly because of Congress's disinterest in "developmental work", thus forcing politicians in the fray to at least acknowledge its need.

Likewise, Kota's Prahlad Gunjal said he left BJP because the party had strayed away from its anti-dynastic credo. Gunjal is not alone. Karnataka's KS Eshwarappa, a recent BJP rebel, has a similar complaint. Such protests should make BJP doubly cautious about family sycophancy.

Rarely do party rebels do a complete flip as Rohan Gupta, former Congress spokesman, did when he said that "BJP stands for everything Congress once represented." Did he even ask BJP before saying this? Gourav Vallabh, another ex-Congress spokesperson, left his party saying he treasured tradition and could no longer accept the anti-Ram Temple diatribe.

When one-time party favourites rebel, they often make it appear as if they are breaking out of jail. Suwendu Adhikari gave that impression, when he left TMC because Mamata's nephew had undue influence in the party. So, even if defectors like Adhikari, Vallabh, or Eshwarappa are looking for an upgrade as professionals, their rebellion brings ideology back from the wild.

The parties they have deserted are forced into damage control mode and must recall their manifestos, which they had lost sight of in the dust that election campaigns raise. This, unintentionally, gives voters a chance to rerun ideological basics well before they approach the polling booth. An alert party can tune in here and take advantage of such defections.

This does not happen easily. To demand ideological fidelity would cause an instant nosebleed in politicians who have turned professional and who calculate their allegiances and accompanying perks carefully. Politics is far from being a soft-hearted 'vocation'. It is a hard as hard can be profession and can smelt the toughest ideological metal to a pliable, handy tool.

When Mr Gaya Lal shifted party allegiance thrice in 1967, he not only professionalised politics but also, immortalised the phrase, 'aya Ram, gaya Ram'. Consequently, à la Villepin, it is the voter who carries the ideological can while the professional politician freely kicks it down the road.

The writer is a sociologist

Rahul Gandhi Gets It Right This Time

It was strategically smart for him to choose 'safer' Rae Bareilly over Amethi. A win in UP will give him a chance at reviving Congress in the state. It signals serious long-term intent

R Jagannathan



For a man who has often been accused of getting his theme song, tactics and timing all wrong in politics, Rahul Gandhi has got it just right this time by seeking to fight the Lok Sabha elections from Rae Bareilly.

Earlier, when his party was being badly trounced in Gujarat in 2022, he was busy doing his south-north Bharat Jodo Yatra. But, in the second east-west phase, his yatra wrapped up when the Lok Sabha election schedule was announced. He has learnt that a yatra might be great to connect with people, but he has to do more to help his party in an actual election.

Tactical choice | While the media speculation around his candidature revolved around whether or not he would be seeking a rematch with the feisty Smriti Irani in Amethi, where he lost in 2019, the choice of Rae Bareilly indicates two things: an awareness of the political consequences of winning or losing in UP, and also that he needs to expand the party's base for the longer term.

Of course, he will still have some explaining to do to his voters in Wayanad, which went to polls on April 26 and where he may well win, but that is a problem for later.

When filing his nomination in Wayanad, he called it his home and the people his family. If he wins Rae Bareilly, where again his chances appear to be good, he will have to make a difficult choice.

Staying alive in UP | The decision to fight from Rae Bareilly, which has often been likened to the Gandhi family's pocket-borough, makes solid sense for good reasons. One, if he had chosen to fight from Amethi, he would

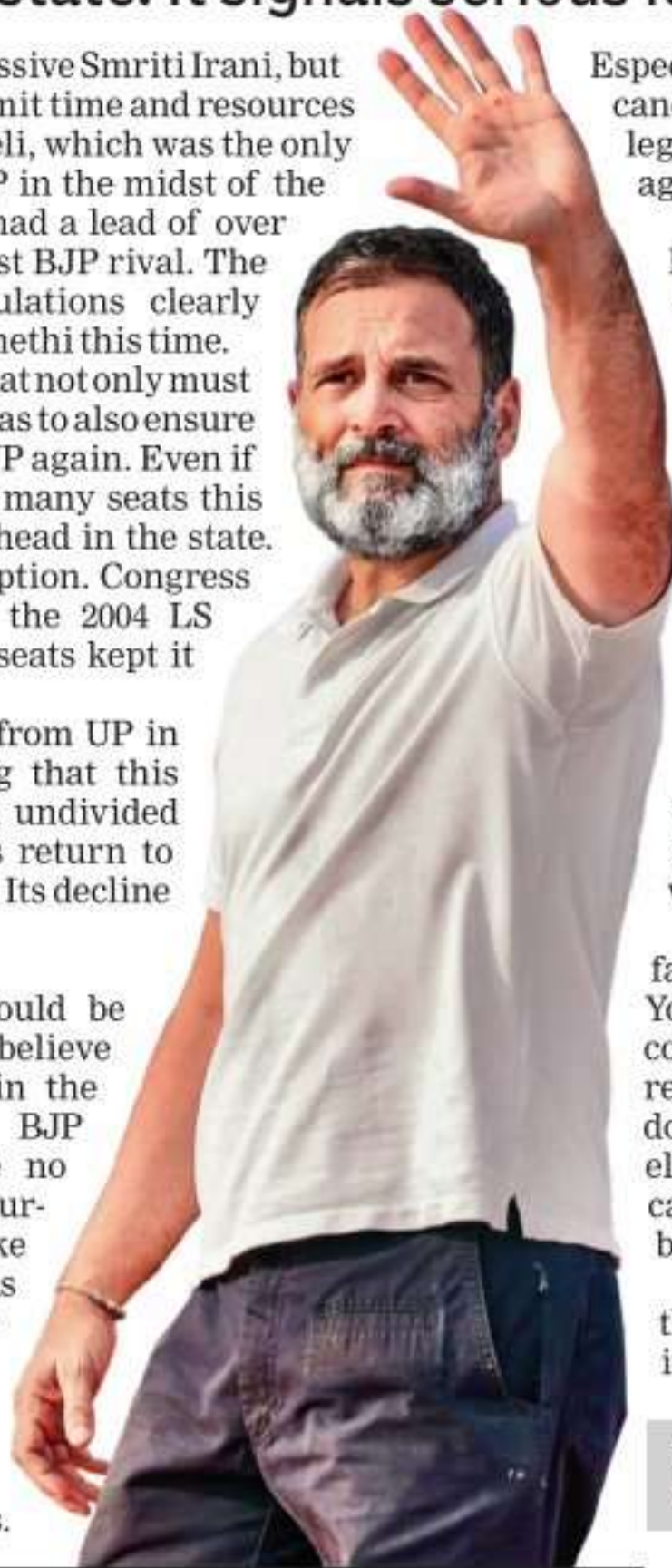
not only have faced an aggressive Smriti Irani, but also would have had to commit time and resources to ensure a win. In Rae Bareilly, which was the only seat won by Congress in UP in the midst of the 2019 Modi wave, the party had a lead of over 1,67,000 votes over its nearest BJP rival. The political cost-benefit calculations clearly favoured Rae Bareilly over Amethi this time.

Clearly, Rahul realises that not only must he win his own seat, but he has to also ensure the growth of his party in UP again. Even if the party does not win too many seats this time, it still needs a beach-head in the state. Rae Bareilly gives him that option. Congress had nine seats in UP in the 2004 LS elections, when just seven seats kept it ahead of BJP with 138.

The party won 21 seats from UP in the 2009 elections, proving that this populous state (apart from undivided Andhra) was crucial to its return to power both in 2004 and 2009. Its decline began from 2014 in UP.

Finally, some fight | It would be foolish for Congress to believe that Rae Bareilly itself is in the bag, for BJP will leave no stone unturned to make the fight as

close as possible. But, win or lose, Rahul has sent a strong message to his own party, that we are going to fight. That is always a good message to give to the troops.



Especially if he also gives the party's new candidate in Amethi, Kishori Lal Sharma, a leg up against Smriti Irani by campaigning aggressively for him.

It is nobody's case that Rahul will have a hugely positive tally to deliver for his party on June 4, when the results will be out. But what he has done is show that he is in it for the long haul and is not a fly-by-night operator. Before the Bharat Jodo Yatra, and even after, he has had a tendency to disappear from the country for long periods of time, something that has not gone down well with his party men who expect more commitment from him.

No longer 'Pappu' | The yatra did two things for him. One, it allowed him to leave his 'Pappu' image behind. And two, it proved that he has the physical endurance necessary to go the distance when required.

His return to UP to seek a mandate in his family's fortress sends the same message. You can disagree with his radical agenda on conducting a caste census, or his party's redistributive streak, or its penchant for doling out unaffordable freebies to the electorate right, left and centre. But you cannot now doubt his keenness to deliver better results for his party.

A dynasty cannot last if it cannot do that from time to time. He has signalled intent now.

Amethi and Rae Bareilly vote on May 20 (14 seats) in the fifth of UP's 7-phase elections

Calvin & Hobbes



Whose Dream Is This Anyway

Nayaswami Devi

A farmer was standing completely still amidst the wind-blown wheat field, lost in thought. His wife rushed to him, crying that their only son had just been killed by a cobra. When her husband did not reply, she blurted out, "You are heartless!"

"Forgive me, but you don't understand," the farmer replied. "Last night I dreamt that I was a king with seven sons, who all were bitten by cobras and died. Now I am wondering whether I should grieve for my seven dead sons in that dream, or for my one son who has died in this dream we are in now."

Our life's experiences, with all their joys and sorrows, mesmerise us with a sense of undeniable reality. Yet, the truth is that everything is only a thought in the mind of the Divine.

Paramhansa Yogananda, who related the story above, explains: "This world seems real to you only because God dreamed you into existence along with His cosmic dream. You are a part of His dream. If, at night, you dream that you bump your head against a wall, you may experience an imaginary pain. The moment you wake up, you realise that there is no pain. The pain you experienced was only in your mind; it was not physical. The same is true of this dream you are dreaming now. Wake up to the one Reality and you will see that this earth life is just a show; it is nothing but shadows and lights."

In a small way this reflects Yogananda's teaching that all of life's experiences are for our 'education and entertainment'. The Supreme dreams a particular dream

for each of us and arranges the events in life for our benefit. Though it's often hard to see amid suffering, it is meant for our welfare and growth.

When we get caught up in the pleasure or pain in life, it's good to remember that we're not really in charge of our circumstances. We're only playing our part in God's dream – be it one of success or failure; health or sickness; love or rejection. With compassion and wisdom, God gives us the roles we are to play perfectly designed for what we need to learn in this lifetime.

Therefore, try to release the anxiety over what has happened in the past, what choices you need to make now, and what the future holds. Let the Divine take charge of your life, for, in fact, He already has. Try to see, in every person and every



THE SPEAKING TREE

Sacredspace



There is something infantile in the presumption that somebody else has a responsibility to give your life meaning and point... The truly adult view, by contrast, is that our life is as meaningful... as we choose to make it.

Richard Dawkins

Sensex Ends Volatile Week
At Nearly Unchanged Levels

Dalal Street continued to see volatility as a host of global and local factors weighed on investors' sentiment. As geopolitical tensions in West Asia ebbed, the week started on a strong note and the sensex again crossed the 75K milestone mark. However, by weekend, confusing economic data from the US pushed investors to be cautious

Source: ETIG, CDSL, RBI, Refinitiv

TIMES BUSINESS

THE TIMES OF INDIA, NEW DELHI | SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024

The Week That Was...

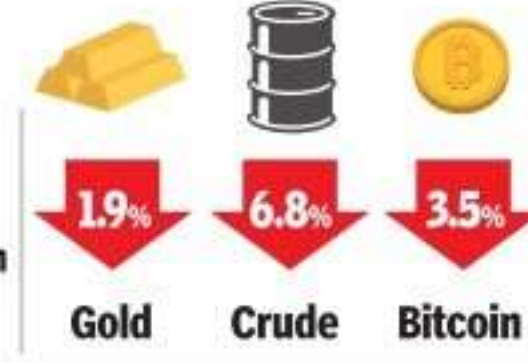
Sensex (73,878) 0.2%
S&P 500* 0.3%
MSCI Emerging Mkt 1.1%

Newgen Software Tech 27%
REC 22%
Power Finance 18%

Coforge 15%
Sun Pharma 13%
Advanced Research 10%
Eureka Forbes

(*As of 12am; BSE Group A comprises most traded stocks)

44.3cr Avg daily UPI transactions touched a new record in April



FPI Inflows ₹1,211cr
Rupee vs \$ 83.42
Forex* \$6438bn
2 paise

Macro Watch
5.25-5.5% | US Fed held interest rates for sixth straight meeting
(Week ended April 26)

RBI tightens norms for loans to projects like roads & ports

Lenders Must Set Aside 5% Of Loan Amount | Profits May Be Hit

Mayur.Shetty@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: RBI has proposed stricter regulations for project financing, which will make it more expensive for lenders to provide loans for infrastructure and industrial projects like roads, ports and power plants.

The new norms require lenders to set aside 5% of the money they have lent as general provisions for all existing and new loans. Currently, banks have to provide only 0.4% of the loan amount for exposures that are not in default.

This move could impact profits of banks with significant exposure to such projects. The norms come at a time when asset quality has substantially improved in project lending, partly because most of the funding has been done in projects where govt was a counterparty.

Bankers added that the new norms require 1% provi-

Project Financing To Get Costlier

Currently, banks set aside 0.4% of the project loan amount for exposures that are not in default
The new norms come at a time when asset quality has improved in project lending, partly because most funding has been to projects where govt is a counterparty



sion even after project completion, which is more than double the existing provision.

According to a senior public sector bank official, the cost of project financing will increase due to higher interest rates. The provisions will also reduce banks' profits as they have to be carved out of their earnings. The new norms have also reduced the flexibility available for lenders, as they have hard-coded what needs to be done under different scenarios such as project delays.

However, RBI might have

decided to tighten the prudential norms as a slew of projects are expected to come up for financing in the private sector, including renewable power and other areas.

"The lenders have already been adding risk premium while funding under construction projects, however, higher provisions and capital allocation will further increase borrowing costs for projects during construction phase. On the positive side, increased provisions during construction phase improve resilience of lenders to add-

ress the potential risk of such projects," said Anil Gupta, senior vice-president at Icra.

He added that lenders who have higher share of under construction projects with longer gestation periods may also face sustained impact on their capital adequacy.

Once a project starts operating, lenders can reduce the provisioning to 2.5% of the money lent. If the project is performing well and has sufficient cash flow to repay loans, the provisions can be further reduced to 1% of the money lent.

RBI also revised its rules on exposure to capital markets, considering the T+1 settlement introduced by stock exchanges. Under T+1, the maximum risk is assumed at 30%, assuming that stocks may go down 20% one day and 10% the next. The earlier norms were prescribed by RBI based on T+2 rolling settlement for equities.

Adani looks to develop port in Philippines

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Adani Group is looking to invest in ports, airports, power and defence sectors in the Philippines. Group company Adani Ports has shown an interest in developing a 25-meter deep port that could accommodate Panamax vessels in Bataan.

Group chairman Gautam Adani's son Karan Adani, also the MD of Adani Ports, disclosed the company's plans during a courtesy call with Philippine President Ferdinand R Marcos Jr in Manila on Thursday.

Marcos welcomed Adani Ports' plans and suggested it may focus on ports handling agricultural products to enable the country to compete globally. The president also said that govt is developing gateways for tourists and for the country's agricultural products to be moved around affordably. If things materialise, it will be Adani Ports' fourth deal internationally after Colombo, Australia and Israel.

7 of 10 listed Adani cos get Sebi notices

Showcause Notices Over Alleged Violation Of Disclosure, Related Party Transaction Norms

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Seven of the 10 listed Adani group companies have received showcause notices from markets regulator Sebi for alleged violations of various rules including disclosure & related-party transaction norms. The companies that received the notices said that the notices have no material impact on their businesses.

The markets regulator sent notices to flagship Adani Enterprises, Adani Energy Solutions, Adani Green Energy, Adani Ports, Adani Power, Adani Total Gas and Adani Wilmar. If charges mentioned in the notices are proved, monetary or other penalties may follow. In all the seven companies, auditors qualified their reports after mentioning Sebi's showcause notices. Neither the companies nor their auditors gave details of the charges mentioned in Sebi's showcause notices.

The notices to the seven Adani companies are significant in the light of a Supreme Court-directed probe by the markets regulator that star-

DISCLOSED BY AUDITORS

The seven Adani group entities under Sebi lens: Adani Enterprises, Adani Energy Solutions, Adani Green Energy, Adani Ports, Adani Power, Adani Total Gas and Adani Wilmar
The regulatory notices were

disclosed by the auditors of the respective companies
The auditors qualified their audit reports with info about Sebi's showcause notices
Management of Adani companies said no material impact of Sebi notices

ted about a year ago.

In Jan 2023, US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research had alleged several cases of corporate malfeasance against Adani group companies. Allegations, which Adani group denied, included round tripping using offshore entities to inflate stock prices, cooking up books of accounts and several cases of non-disclosure. As a result, over the next five weeks, the group's stocks were on a free fall, wiping out about 65% of the group's total market value from a peak of Rs 19.2 lakh crore just a day before the report was published on Jan 24, 2023.

A case was filed in the Supreme Court, which then had asked Sebi to investigate the allegations made in the Hindenburg report. In Jan

this year, the SC had passed its order in the investigation and had asked Sebi to complete two of the 24 issues it was looking into.

On Friday, Adani Green Energy said its fourth-quarter profit dropped by 70% from a year earlier, when a foreign exchange gain helped boost the earnings. Gautam Adani's green energy unit posted net income of Rs 150 crore (\$18 million) in the March quarter, it said in a stock exchange filing on Friday. Total income dropped 5.7% due to one-time adjustments in the year-earlier revenue. Adani Enterprises stock fell nearly 2% on Friday a day after it said that it had received two showcause notices from Sebi during the March quarter.

Forex reserves fall for 3rd wk, decline \$2.4bn

Mumbai: India's forex reserves dropped \$2.4 billion to \$637.9 billion as on April 26, the third consecutive weekly decline in reserves, RBI said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, overall reserves had declined \$2.3 billion to \$640.3 billion.

For the week ended April 5, reserves had hit an all-time high of \$648.6 billion following multiple weeks of increases. The earlier high of \$642.5 billion achieved in Sept 2021 got surpassed in March this year.

For the week ended April 26, foreign currency assets — a major component of the reserves — decreased \$1.2 billion to \$559.7 billion, the data showed. Expressed in dollar terms, foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves decreased \$1.3 billion to \$55.5 billion during the week, RBI said. The special drawing rights were up \$15 million to \$18 billion, RBI said. AGENCIES

Sensex swings 1,600 pts, ends below 74k on selloff

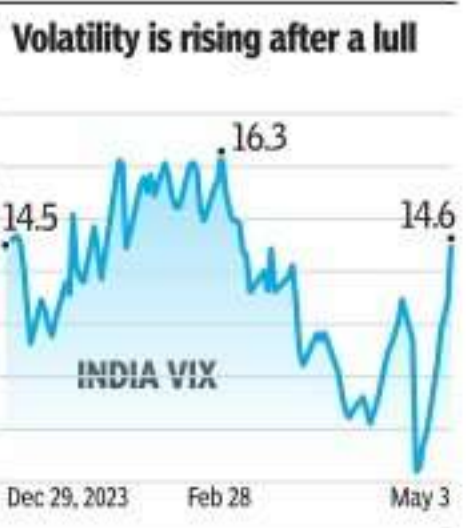
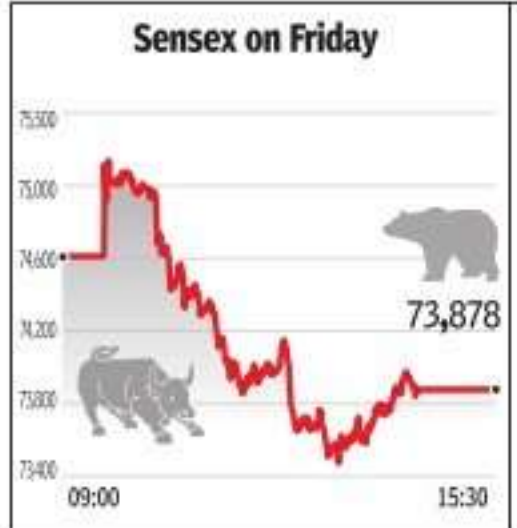
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: Across-the-board selling after the sensex scaled the 75,000 mark in early trades on Friday pulled the index down by 733 points or 1% to close at 73,878. Reliance Industries, L&T and HDFC Bank contributed the most to the day's loss during which foreign funds sold aggressively.

Market players said profit-booking at higher levels, also investors' unease about US labour market data that was due after the domestic markets closed for trading for the weekend, prompted them to liquidate their positions.

"Profit-booking and a degree of caution ahead of the release of the US non-farm payroll resulted in selling pressure in the market," said Vinod Nair of Geojit Financial Services. "However, the absence of significant negative sur-

PROFIT-BOOKING AT 75K LEVEL



prises in Q4 earnings thus far, along with a decline in oil prices, might help to mitigate the downside. Though the correction was broad-based, the large-cap stock was the key underperformer due to the moderation of FII exposure to the domestic market."

After the markets closed in India, the US said it had added about 1.75 lakh people to its labour force, much lower than what was estimated. This led to a sharp rally

on Wall Street with most leading indices up over 1% each. This could have a positive impact on Dalal Street when trading begins in the new week, dealers said.

On Friday, foreign funds were net sellers at Rs 2,392 crore while domestic funds were net buyers at Rs 691 crore, BSE data showed.

The day's selling also left investors poorer by about Rs 2.2 lakh crore with BSE's market cap now at Rs 413.1 lakh crore.

Carlyle sells 2% in Yes Bk for ₹1,441cr

New Delhi: Carlyle Group on Friday divested nearly a 2% stake in private sector lender Yes Bank for Rs 1,441 crore through an open market transaction. US-based Carlyle Group, through its affiliate CA Basque Investments, offloaded shares in Yes Bank through a bulk deal on the NSE.

According to the data, CA Basque Investments sold 59.4 crore shares, amounting to a 1.98% stake in Yes Bank. The shares were disposed of at an average price of Rs 24.27 apiece, taking the transaction value to Rs 1,441.64 crore. After the stake sale, the Carlyle Group's shareholding in Yes Bank has declined to 7.13% from 9.11%.

In Feb this year, the group pared a 1.3% stake in Yes Bank for Rs 1,057 crore. Meanwhile, Goldman Sachs (Singapore) bought more than 36.9 crore shares, representing a 1.23% stake in the Mumbai-based lender. The shares were acquired at an average price of Rs 24.26 apiece, taking the deal value to nearly Rs 896 crore. AGENCIES

NSE Q4 net profit jumps 20% to ₹2,488cr

Mumbai: NSE, the largest stock exchange in India in terms of turnover, on Friday said it earned a consolidated net profit of Rs 2,488 crore during the quarter ended March 2024 — up 20% from a year ago period. Its net profit margin was a staggering 49%.

NSE also reported a consolidated revenue of Rs 4,625 crore for Q4 FY24, up 34%. Apart from trading revenue, its revenue from operations was also supported by other inflows including data centre & connectivity charges, and clearing, listing, index and data services. NSE said in a release.

The bourse also announced a 4:1 bonus. TNN

'Apple logs double-digit revenue growth in India'

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New Delhi: Strong growth in India continued to reap rich dividends for Apple as CEO Tim Cook said the company is "very, very pleased" after scoring a double-digit revenue growth here.

Cook spoke about Apple's growing engagement in India across retail functions and developer ecosystem as he pointed to sustainability efforts initiated by the company in water conservation.

On growth in India, Cook said, "We did grow strong double-digit. And so, we were very, very pleased about it. It was a new March quarter revenue record for us. As you know, as I have said before, I see it as an incredibly exciting market and it's a major focus for us."

Apple is growing sales channels in the country, apart from engaging deeper with the developer ecosystem, says Cook. He had visited India last year to inaugurate two company-owned stores. He also met PM Narendra Modi and other partners.

"We just opened a couple of stores last year, as you know, and we see (an) enormous opportunity there. We're continuing to expand our channels, and also working on the developer ecosystem as well. And we've

been very pleased that there is a rapidly-growing base of developers there. And so, we're working on entire ecosystem from developer to market to operations, the whole thing. And I just — I could not be more excited and enthusiastic about it."

side or supply chain side, we are producing there, from a pragmatic point of view, you need to produce there to be competitive," Cook said.

As Apple moves production out of China, India seems to be a clear beneficiary. The company is understood to ha-

ON INDIA GROWTH...

"We did grow strong double-digit. And so, we were very, very pleased about it. It was a new March quarter revenue record for us...I see it as exciting market and major focus for us

ON ECOSYSTEM...

"...We see enormous opportunity there. We're continuing to expand our channels and working on developer ecosystem as well. And we've been very pleased that there is a rapidly-growing base of developers there. And so, we're working on entire ecosystem from developer to market to operations...I could not be more excited and enthusiastic about it

—TIM COOK | CEO, APPLE

Apple has seen fast adoption of its products in India as the company sells across channels — both offline and online. The adoption has been enabled by growing product finance opportunities, as well as lucrative buybacks, at the level of retail.

The company is also helped by higher production within India where Foxconn, Tatas and Pegatron are manufacturing locally. This makes the products competitive. "In terms of the operational

ve had a record production of \$14 billion in India last year, with a bulk of the output being exported. Apple said it is also working with partners in India and US to replenish 100% of water it uses in places that need it most, "with the goal of delivering billions of gallons of water benefits over next two decades." Globally, Apple posted a quarterly revenue of \$90.8 billion, down 4% year-on-year. For second quarter, iPhone sales fell 10% to \$45.9 billion.

RBI to buy back G-Secs worth ₹40k cr

Bengaluru: RBI will buy back Rs 40,000 crore (\$4.8 billion) worth of securities, it said on Friday. The securities offered for buyback are G-Secs 6.18% 2024, 9.15% 2024 and 6.89% 2025, RBI said in a statement.

"The choice of securities suggests this buyback is a liquidity redistribution exercise by govt as they have clear visibility on their shorter-term funds," said Vivek Kumar, economist at QuantEco Research. "One could construe this as a yield management exercise, too. However, RBI has alternate options with direct and indirect signalling potential," he added. There is no notified amount for individual securities, RBI said. REUTERS

Sebi eases e-onboarding for portfolio managers

New Delhi: Capital markets regulator Sebi on Friday relaxed the digital onboarding process for clients of portfolio managers, a move aimed at facilitating ease of doing business.

While onboarding clients, portfolio managers will have to ensure that new clients use a typed or electronically written note saying they have understood the fee structure rather than the current practice that focuses on clients giving the same in their own handwriting.

The change, aimed at making digital onboarding easier, would be effective from Oct

1, Sebi said in a circular.

The move came after Sebi observed certain operational challenges in complying with the requirement of a handwritten note on the annexure of fees in the agreements, including the non-availability of a stylus at the location of the investors. This requirement was creating a hindrance towards complete digital onboarding of the clients.

"While onboarding a client, portfolio manager shall ensure that the new client has separately signed the annexure on fees and charges, and added a note that they have understood the

structure for fees and charges in handwritten in case the client is onboarded through physical mode and typed using keyboard or written electronically using fingers/a stylus pen, in case the client is onboarded through digital mode," Sebi said.

The regulator added that the standard procedure for client onboarding through digital mode will be specified by industry body Association of Portfolio Managers in India (Apmi) in consultation with Sebi. Sebi said that portfolio managers will have to provide an annexure detailing the fee calculation. AGENCIES

Fruits pack a punch in India's mocktail mkt

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Chennai: Fuelled by a shift to healthier choices and ease of consumption, readymade punches and mocktail companies using 'natural' ingredients — from fruits and roots to herbs and spices — are making a foray into India's beverage market.

From boozy highs and soda burps, party animals are switching their loyalties to fruity concoctions. According to a Statista study, the global non-alcoholic drinks market is anticipated to experience a volume growth of 2.3% this year. By 2027, it is projected to reach 944.6 billion litres — clocking a CAGR of 4.6% between 2023-27. Currently, India's ready-to-drink juice, mocktail and non-alcoholic beverage market comprises over 200 players. Makers are raking in the

'NATURAL' TWIST

A shift towards healthier living, increased consumer awareness of alcohol's harmful effects has stimulated demand for non-alcoholic alternatives that taste similar

New players have emerged to meet the rising demand, and India's ready-to-drink juice, mocktail and non-alcoholic beverage market comprises over 200 players at present
Startups are getting fresh funding from angel investors, while FMCG majors are looking



to buy stakes in the cos
Tracxn data shows that top players in this sector received over \$33mn in funding from institutional and angel investors between 2019-24

startup information and market trends provider Tracxn.

Singh added that in recent years, new brands have emerged to meet the increasing demand, and India holds a strong position among other leading countries in terms of the funding raised in this area. There is high interest in the market — startups are getting fresh funding from angel investors, while FMCG majors are looking to buy stakes in the companies.

Bengaluru-based Swizzle received a seed funding of nearly \$67,000 from angel investors Akshay Singhal and Monika Rao this Feb. Coolberg got \$1.1 million in its latest round from institutional and angel investors including Ashok Kumar Damani. Institutional investors including Emami, Venture Catalysts as well as nine unicorns invested an undisclosed amount in AloFrut last Sept. Data provided to TOI by Tracxn shows that top players in this sector received over \$33 million in funding from institutional and angel investors between 2019-24.

Harsha V Agarwal, vice chairman and managing director of Emami, echoes similar sentiments. "With health & wellness being the buzzword for consumers today, we see tremendous potential in the segment," she said.

Deepender Singh, co-founder of ready-to-drink mocktail brand Swizzle, said, "Consumers are not only seeking products that are better for their health but also ones that are produced ethically, with minimal impact on the environment." Swizzle, which achieved a 210% growth in FY23, aims to reach a projected revenue of Rs 12 crore by the end of FY25.

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Las Vegas: Google has added Bengali, Tamil and Telugu, among 52 additional languages it has announced, to its 'Workspace' — a platform with 3 billion users comprising AI-powered apps like Gmail, Chat, Meet, Calendar, Drive and Docs.

The tech giant is seeing "India as a strong market with Workspace, both in consumer space as well as businesses", Google Workspace VP and GM Aparna Pappu said at the Google Cloud Next '24 conference here recently.

She also announced an AI-powered video creation app for work — Google Vids — to be launched in June in Google Workspace Labs, along with a slew of other new offerings. "In our initial launch, we had supported Hindi. Of the 52 additional languages that we have launched and announced, we have Bengali, Tamil and Telugu in there as well. That's because that's where

user interest is," she added.

"We have been spending a lot of time understanding what small businesses mean in India. A team will be visiting India to find out aspects like what businesses need over there, does our road map match theirs," she said.

"Vids is video, writing, production and editing assistant — all in one — and can work alongside Google's other productivity tools like Docs, Sheets and Slides. People tell stories at work everywhere, whether it's HR onboarding new employees to the organisation's mission, training team creating digital learning experiences or a sales person pitching a new client on the benefits of their offering. Now, everyone can be a great storyteller through Vids," she said.

On the menace of fake videos especially in an election year, Aparna said: "One of the things that makes Workspace a great space to deploy AI is the key principle that the user is in charge. The

user makes the decision. You take responsibility as an author and as a collaborator. Your name is associated with the document. That changes the nature of kind of stuff people create," she said.

And, as govt across the world deliberate on introducing legislation to regulate technologies such as AI, Google Cloud CEO Thomas Kurian said the need to ensure that any policy introduced should be implementable technologically. "We are discussing the issue with govt including the US and countries in Europe and Latin America. We have always been open to policy and regulation models," Kurian said, during a roundtable with mediapersons. "We need to ensure that whenever a policy is drawn up, it can actually be implemented technologically. Because all this is piece of software, and you would want to put a policy on there, that can be implemented on software," Kurian said.

(This writer was in Las Vegas at the invitation of Google)

ALONSO'S UNBEATABLES

GOALS FROM WIRTZ AND ANDRICH GIVE
BAYER LEVERKUSEN A FIRST-LEG
ADVANTAGE AT ROMA IN EUROPA LEAGUE

Rome: Bayern Leverkusen players were easily motivated to give their best as they grabbed a 2-0 win at AS Roma in the Europa League semi-finals on Thursday but remain cautious ahead of the return leg, coach Xabi Alonso said.

Goals by Florian Wirtz and Robert Andrich gave the newly-crowned Bundesliga champions a two-goal advantage over Roma, extending their unbeaten run to 47 matches in all competitions.

"We made good transitions once they were open and we had enough spaces, the commitment and the discipline from the players have been fantastic," Alonso said. "But there is still a game to play."

"We have used that system before, especially because we have players who can play in different roles ... Today the game plan was quite clear, and we really performed at a very high level. We could have scored more. But to be fair, they could have scored as well. The result could have been a little bit different, but it's fair enough. It was not difficult to motivate the players."

Leverkusen won their first meeting with Roma in almost

LEVERKUSEN'S UNBEATEN RUN IN ALL COMPETITIONS NOW STANDS AT 47 MATCHES



MOMENT OF DRAMA: Leverkusen's Jeremie Frimpong (C) tries to score against Roma during their Europa League encounter

20 years, since they beat Italy's capital side 3-1 at home in October 2004 in the Champions League group stage. They were winless in five games against Roma since.

"It was a serious and careful match, we were smart and mature. They had their chances, the lead gave us more confidence to do our things in possession and non-possession," Alonso added.

"Up front, we have fast players. In the second half, we

did not concede anything - we knew if we were careful and solid, we would then have our chances. The team found the right compromise.

"The result (2-0) is a good one, we go home happy but cautious. What we are doing in this season is outstanding. We have quality players with a very high level of focus, the most difficult thing is to be consistent." Leverkusen side three games from a record-breaking unbeaten season. REUTERS

ATALANTA DRAW FIRST LEG

Marseille: Marseille's Europa League semifinal tie against Atalanta is finely poised going into the return after the teams drew 1-1 in Thursday's first leg in France.

Gianluca Scamacca gave Atalanta an early lead to silence a huge crowd at a packed Velodrome, but Chancel Mbemba quickly pulled Marseille level with a stunning strike from outside the box.

The draw means it will be all to play for in the second leg in Bergamo next Thursday, although Atalanta must be considered the favourites.

Scamacca was neglected by the Marseille defence as he controlled a pass from Teun Koopmeiners before firing in past home. The visitors then lost defender Sead Kolacinac to a hamstring injury, forcing a reshuffle which saw captain Marten de Roon drop to defence back from midfield. AGENCIES

FREE KICKS SALAH ARGUMENT RESOLVED: KLOPP

Liverpool: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp insisted Friday his spat with Mohamed Salah has been "completely resolved."

Klopp and Salah were involved in a touchline confrontation during the 2-2 draw at West Ham on Saturday. When Salah was asked after the game to comment on the incident, the Egypt international was heard saying: "There's going to be a fire today if I speak." Nearly a week later, Klopp said, "There's no problem. If we wouldn't know each other for that long, I don't know how we would deal with it but we know each other for that long and respect each other too much that it's really no problem."

WANTED TO SIGN KANE: TEN HAG

London: Erik ten Hag has revealed he wanted to sign Harry Kane for Manchester United last year but is convinced Rasmus Hojlund will deliver on his potential.

The United manager said the Old Trafford club had not always been able to bring in the players they had wanted over the past decade. "Then you have to build and you have to accept that you get talent in instead of players who have already proved it in the past," he explained. "We have had some choices made with talents like Rasmus Hojlund."

"I can see a striker (Harry Kane) who already proved it, who we want to sign and we couldn't get him. And then we went to Rasmus because he's a talent."

"With Harry Kane you know you get 30 goals. I think Rasmus will get there but he needs time."

Spurs' Euro dreams suffer Chelsea blow

London: Tottenham's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League are getting thinner by the day.

By falling 2-0 at Chelsea on Thursday, Tottenham slumped to a second loss to a London rival in the space of four days in the Premier League — after a 3-2 home defeat to Arsenal in the north London derby on Sunday.

In between those losses came confirmation that England will have just four places in next season's expanded Champions League, and not five.

That's another blow to Spurs, who are fifth and stayed seventh points behind fourth-place Aston Villa with one game in hand. They still have to play Liverpool and Manchester City in their remaining four games so it is looking in-

creasingly unlikely they will close the gap to Villa.

"We lacked belief and conviction in our game," Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said.

"I don't know if it's low confidence but we're not playing with the mindset we need to play the football we want to and that's something I have to look at."

Headed goals by Trevoh Chalobah in the 24th and Nicolas Jackson in the 72nd were enough for Chelsea, which could yet salvage a place in one of the minor European competitions from what has been an underwhelming Premier League campaign for a squad assembled at a cost of more than \$1 billion.

Chelsea climbed above West Ham and into eighth place, two points behind Newcastle and three behind Manchester United in sixth. AP



GOOD SHOW: Chelsea's Nicolas Jackson (L) celebrates after scoring against Tottenham at Stamford Bridge

Maradona's children want to transfer his body from cemetery to a mausoleum

Buenos Aires: Diego Maradona's children have asked a court in Argentina to authorize the transfer of his body from the private cemetery to a mausoleum under construction in Buenos Aires to allow fans from around the world to pay tribute to him.

They made the request to a court in San Isidro in a letter quoted on Thursday by local media in which they indicated that it comes from "all the heirs" of the soccer star, who died in 2020.

The mausoleum called "Memorial del Diez" under construction in the capital's neighborhood of Puerto Madero is "a much safer

place than the current one ... so that all the Argentine people and citizens of the world can pay tribute to who was the greatest Argentine idol," read the letter.

Maradona, who led Argentina to the World Cup title in 1986, is buried in the Jardin de Bella Vista, a private cemetery.

Court approval is needed because of an ongoing criminal case against eight medical workers. In their request, Maradona's children indicated that the pertinent examinations have been carried out on the body and requested the transfer with sufficient conditions of "security and confidentiality."

Villa have a mountain to climb, says McGinn

London: Aston Villa face a tough task to turn around their Europa Conference League semi-final after losing the home leg against Olympiakos 4-2 on Thursday but captain John McGinn said they are far from finished.

Unai Emery's side were 2-0 down inside 30 minutes at Villa Park but levelled through Ollie Watkins and Moussa Diaby before the visitors scored twice more in the second half to secure the advantage ahead of next Thursday's return leg in Athens.

"We have a mountain to climb but we know we're capable," McGinn said. "They played very well tactically. "Everything that could have gone wrong tonight did."

MUMBAI STAND BETWEEN MOHUN BAGAN AND 'DOUBLE'

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Kolkata: As the dust settles on Indian Super League's longest season with Saturday's grand finale at the Salt Lake Stadium here, the order in India's domestic football has already been established. Mohun Bagan SG and Mumbai City FC have truly emerged as the best in business. Nineteen days after Antonio Lopez Habas's green-and-maroon pipped the rivals from their maiden Winners' Shield, they are back again, this time the championship title being up for grabs.

There will be more at stake and expect fireworks. As Mumbai's Spanish midfielder Alberto Noguera said at the pre-match press conference: "This is revenge for us. It's an opportunity to show who we are." Habas does not usually indulge himself in any such hyperbole.

But the veteran Spaniard made it clear how he was being driven by the sense of the occasion to "complete the circle" — of winning the ISL Shield and playoff trophy in the same season.

Mumbai City remain the sole owner of this honour. When they achieved this feat back in the 2020-21 season, Habas — then standing as ATK Mohun Bagan coach — ended up getting the wrong end of the stick on both occasions.

Having finished the league on top, Habas is certainly salivating at the prospect of crossing the finishing line once more.

It could also be a boundary-obliterating push for him as no team has managed to defend the ISL title and a Shield-Cup 'double' will brighten the halo around his managerial accomplishments.

Habas and his opposite number in the Mumbai camp Petr Kratky, however, stressed that it will be a different ball game on Saturday.

Foden, Khadija Shaw win football writers' award

London: Manchester City's Phil Foden was Friday named Footballer of the Year by the English Football Writers' Association, with the club's Khadija Shaw scooping the women's award. England attacking midfielder Foden joins a roll call of famous names including Stanley Matthews, Bobby Charlton, George Best and Keny Dalglish.

The 23-year-old Foden received 42 per cent of the votes, heading off competition from Arsenal's Declan Rice and his teammate Rodri, who came third in a ballot of the FWA's near 900-strong membership.



Oly prize row: World Athletics should help needy athletes, says Bach

Berlin: International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach has suggested that instead of offering prize money for Olympic gold medalists in Paris, World Athletics should focus its funding on supporting athletes at the other end of the spectrum.

Athletics broke with a 128-year tradition in April by announcing it would become the first sport to offer \$50,000 in prize money for its Olympic champions, starting in Paris this year.

The announcement by World Athletics (WA) President Sebastian Coe, who is also an IOC member but did not discuss his plan with the Olympic body, was welcomed by many athletes. It was also met with surprise and sharp criticism by other international sports federations which accused Coe of failing to consult them prior to his unilateral move.

"This is not a discussion about prize money because prize money exists for decades," Bach said in an online media roundtable on Friday.



"My (fencing) team mates and I in 1976, we received prize money for our gold medal through the foundation supported by the national Olympic Committee (of Germany). In the meantime this is more or less common practice among NOCs."

Bach said while sponsors, governments or private institutions provided payments to athletes for Olympic success, the role of an international sports federation was not that.

"This question in principle is a question of how to support the athletes best," Bach said, adding that his organisation reinvested 90% of its revenues with national Olympic Committees and international federations being major beneficiaries.

"The NOCs and IFs are major recipients of this money, of this share of the commercial success of the Games," Bach said. The IOC president said he expected the Paris Games to be secure and successful despite the wars in Ukraine and Gaza and he was not expecting protests on the field of play. REUTERS

Shubhankar, Gaganjeet hope to be each other's support in Paris

New Delhi: Olympic debuts can be intimidating but then, what are friends for if not to ease the nerves and spur each other? It's something that Indian golfers Shubhankar Sharma and Gaganjeet Bhullar are banking on as they gear up for the Paris Games.

Sharma and Bhullar are ranked 47 and 52 respectively in the international golf rankings as of April 29 and are expected to be among 60 professionals who will tee off on August 1 at the Le Golf National.

The Chandigarh-based professionals are part of the sports ministry's Target Olympic Podium scheme.

"TOPS is great initiative by government and supports deserving sportspersons who represent the nation at



the highest level. Few will know that golf is different in many aspects especially as far as expenses are concerned," the 27-year-old Sharma, who is currently competing in Volvo China Open in Beijing, was quoted as saying by the Sports Authority of India in a press release. "I will draw on my experience to meet the expectations of the nation in Olympics. Needless to say, I will put my best foot forward," he said. PTI

Bopanna launches tennis venture for underprivileged kids in Bengaluru

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Rohan Bopanna, who is in the midst of a remarkable season, having clinched his first men's doubles Grand Slam title in January and topping the ATP doubles ranking en route, produced yet another ace.

He has kickstarted a holistic programme centred around tennis for underprivileged children at his tennis academy in Bengaluru. The 44-year-old's latest venture, which has been in the works for the last six months, will involve 25 children in the 9 to 11 age-group.

The selected trainees are from the remote areas of Majuli Island and Bongaigaon in Assam. The 25 aspiring tennis players will relocate to Bengaluru. They have the opportunity to pursue their passion for tennis while receiving essential support in education and accommodation at the Rohan Bopanna Tennis Academy.

The trainees will undergo a rigorous regimen under the watch of experienced coaches with the goal of honing their tennis skills for future success in the sport.

Bopanna has been supported by the Kamal India Foundation, UK.



Rublev ousts Fritz in straight sets to reach Madrid final

Madrid: Andrey Rublev reached the fifth Masters 1000 final of his career with a 6-4, 6-3 win over American Taylor Fritz at the Madrid Open on Friday. The seventh-seeded Rublev arrived at the tournament carrying a four-match losing streak but rebounded in the Spanish capital, claiming five impressive wins, including one over world number three Carlos Alcaraz in the quarterfinals.

"For sure mentally I was feeling much better (this week) and I was able to perform, putting emotions in the right direction, for sure that helped me to be in the final," said Rublev.

After being broken in the opening game, Rublev recovered immediately and won the last seven points to wrap up the first set in 39 minutes.

A break of serve in the sixth game of the second set was enough for the Russian to complete a 72-minute victory and book a final clash with either Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime or Czech Jiří Lehecka.

Rublev is seeking his 16th career title and his second of the season after winning Hong Kong in January.

"My serve helped me a lot," Rublev said. "It's crazy. It's the good thing about sports, about tennis. One week can change everything, you have to remember that... because you can't perform all ways at 100%, so it is normal



ON SONG: Rublev in action during his semifinal against Taylor Fritz

there will be ups and downs."

Fritz, ranked 13th, entered the match with a 5-3 record against Rublev.

Sabalenka roars back against Rybakina: Defending champion Aryna Sabalenka will face top seed Iga Swiatek in a rematch of last year's Madrid Open final after the Belarussian rallied from a set down to edge out fourth seed Elena Rybakina 1-6, 7-5, 7-6(5).

Swiatek, a four-times Grand Slam champion, is now the youngest player to reach 10 WTA level finals on clay since Swiss Martina Hingis in 2000.

In the second semifinal, Rybakina looked on course for an easy victory after tak-

ing the first set for the loss of just one game.

But as the 2022 Wimbledon champion was serving for the match, Sabalenka shifted the momentum by breaking the Kazakh's serve and then holding her own to force a decider. After a thrilling third set the match went to a tiebreak where the two-time Grand Slam winner prevailed. Sabalenka, 25, sealed her victory with a typically powerful serve that Rybakina could not control.

"It's definitely going to be a great battle. We're always fighting as hard as we can," Sabalenka said. "It's always incredible matches. I'm really looking forward to this final. I'm gonna do everything I can to get this win." AGENCIES

Paris Games 'walk in the park' after Tokyo, says Ingebrigtsen



CONFIDENT: Jakob Ingebrigtsen in action during the Diamond League

New York: Jakob Ingebrigtsen believes his 1500 metres Olympic title defence will be a breeze as long as he avoids illness and injury on the road to Paris, the Norwegian said on Wednesday.

The 23-year-old won gold at the Covid-delayed Tokyo Games in astonishing fashion, cruising past Kenyan Timothy Cheruiyot on the final lap to break the tape in an Olympic record time of 3:28.32.

"Obviously the Olympic Games in Tokyo was very different, I would imagine, to the upcoming Games in Paris, with no spectators, a lot of testing and rules with Covid," Ingebrigtsen told European Athletics' "Ignite" podcast.

"If I don't get injured and I don't get sick, I think it's going to be a walk in the park (in Paris)."

He picked up gold in the 5000 metres at the 2022 World Championships in Eugene in the United States and again in Budapest a year later but had no such luck in the 1500 metres.

Britons Josh Kerr and Jake Wightman pushed Ingebrigtsen to the second spot on the podium in the metric mile in 2023 and 2022, respectively, in a pair of remarkable upsets. "At the end of the day, it's a competition where everybody tries their best to win but sometimes everything doesn't go as planned for everyone," said Ingebrigtsen. REUTERS

After strong 2023, Indian athletes hope to make impact in World Relays

Nassau (Bahamas): A 15-member strong Indian athletics contingent will look to make an impact in scenic Nassau and hope to qualify for the Paris Olympics in three events when the two-day World Athletics Relays Bahamas 24 starts on Saturday. The Indian men's 4x400 relay team has been making waves of late, coming up with impressive performances at the 2021 Olympics in Tokyo and following it up by challenging the USA's aura of invincibility at the World Championships in Budapest last August.

The team then lived up to

the billing by clinching gold at the Hangzhou Asian Games with a tremendous run of 3:01.58. On a high following those superb performances last year, India would be hoping to reset the national and Asian record of 2:59.05 seconds set by the duo of Mohammed Anas Yahiya, Amoj Jacob, Muhammed Ajmal and Rajesh Ramesh in Budapest.

The quartet will, however, have to work really hard to achieve that feat, given that its best this season is only 3:05.71 seconds, which is nearly four seconds adrift of their gold medal-winning



LEADING THE WAY: (L-R) Rajesh Ramesh, Muhammed Ajmal, Amoj Jacob and Muhammed Anas will be key to India's chances

performance in Hangzhou.

As per the World Relay format for Paris, the two top

teams in each heat on Saturday will advance to the final a day later. They will also se-

cure Paris 2024 Olympic quotas in the process. The Olympic lane seeding positions will be decided in the finals on Sunday and those will also be competing for medals.

All the other teams will compete in an additional round on Sunday where the top-two teams in each heat will also qualify for Paris.

India will be fielding teams in men's, women's and mixed 4x400m, with the men's quartet the best placed to qualify for Paris based on their performances last year.

India has sent an eight-member men's 4x400m relay team here, including the

Asian Games gold-medallist quartet of Amoj Jacob, Muhammed Anas Yahiya, Muhammed Ajmal and Rajesh Ramesh. PTI

Team: Men's 4x400m: Amoj Jacob, Avinash Krishna Kumar, Rajiv Arokia, Rajesh Ramesh, Noah Nirmal Tom, Muhammed Ajmal Varyathodi, Muhammed Anas Yahiya, Yashas B.

Women's 4x400m: Jyothika Sri Dandi, MR Poovamma, Aishwarya Kailash Mishra, Prachi, Vithya Ramraj, Rupal, Subha Venkatesan.

4x400 Mixed: Amoj Jacob (M), Rajesh Ramesh (M), Yashas (M), Jyothika Sri Dandi (W), Vithya Ramraj (W), Rupal (W).



5 Mumbai Indians have lost five matches out of six while chasing in this IPL — one each against GT, SRH, CSK, DC & KKR. Their only win while chasing came by 7 wickets against RCB.

ONE BRIGHT MOMENT FOR MI: Hardik Pandya runs KKR's Andre Russell out on Friday

SCORECARD
KKR: P Salt c Varma b Thushara 5, S Narine b Pandya 8, A Raghuvanshi c Suryakumar b Thushara 13, S Iyer c David b Thushara 6, V Iyer b Bumrah 70, R Singh c&b Chawla 9, M Pandey c sub (Brevis) b Pandya 42, A Russell run out 7, R Singh c Coetzee b Bumrah 2, M Starc b Bumrah 0, V Arora not out 0; Extras: (lb1, nb1, w5) 7; Total: (19.5 overs) 169; FoW: 1-7, 2-22, 3-28, 4-43, 5-57, 6-140, 7-153, 8-155, 9-155; Bowling: Thushara 4-0-42-3, Bumrah 3.5-0-18-3, Coetzee 2-0-24-0, Pandya 4-0-44-2, Dhir 3-0-25-0, Chawla 3-0-15-1.
MI: I Kishan b Starc 13, R Sharma c Pandey b Narine 11, Naman Dhir b Varun 11, S Yadav c Salt b Russell 56, T Varma c Narine b Varun 4, N Wadhwa b Narine 6, H Pandya c Pandey b Russell 1, T David c S Iyer b Starc 24, G Coetzee b Starc 8, P Chawla c Narine b Starc 0, J Bumrah not out 1; Extras: (lb3, nb1, w6) 10; Total: (18.5 overs) 145; FoW: 1-16, 2-38, 3-46, 4-61, 5-70, 6-71, 7-120, 8-144, 9-144; Bowling: Arora 3-0-35-0, Starc 3.5-0-33-4, Varun 4-0-22-2, Narine 4-0-22-2, Russell 4-0-30-2.
Result: KKR won by 24 runs

Mumbai's nightmare continues

Hardik's Boys All But Out Of Playoff Race After Crashing To 24-Run Loss Against KKR

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Mumbai: With the Wankhede Stadium pitch holding up a bit, Kolkata Knight Riders were banking on spin duo of Sunil Narine and Varun Chakravarty to tame the Mumbai Indians' batters on their home turf.

The combo didn't disappoint as they finished with combined figures of 8-0-44-4—both taking identical 4-0-22-2—to break the back of the MI chase and almost end their playoff hopes. KKR, with their 24-run win, moved to 14 points and a

step closer to a knockout spot. MI's eighth defeat of the season leaves them second last on the table with six points. It was KKR's second win against MI at the venue in 11 games and the first since 2012.

Defending a low total of 169 was never easy at the Wankhede which has small boundaries, but KKR bowlers stuck to their plans and crafted MI's downfall.

It started with Mitchell Starc (4/33) cleaning up Ishan Kishan after he was hit for 10 runs off two balls. The spinners took over thereafter and made sure that MI's mid-

dle-order was kept in check. Not only did they bowl economically but kept taking wickets as well to put the home side under pressure.

Narine accounted for Rohit Sharma (11, 12b; 1x6), who came in as an impact sub, and Nehal Wadhwa (6, 11b; 1x4) while Chakravarty dismissed Naman Dhir (11, 11b; 2x4) and Tilak Varma (4, 6b). Skipper Hardik Pandya's dismal run with the bat continued as he played a loose shot off Andre Russell (2/30) which left MI reeling at 71-6.

Suryakumar Yadav gave MI a glimmer of hope with his 35-ball 56. He started sedately with wickets falling around him but once the spinners had finished their quota, he opened his shoulders

and took on the KKR pacers. He took 20 runs off Vaibhav Arora in the 14th over to bring down the equation to 60 runs from 36 balls. But when it looked like he would take the match away from KKR, he skied a full toss from Russell, which was well caught by keeper Phil Salt, and with it MI's hopes ended. Starc rounded off the proceedings with three wickets in the 19th over to seal an emphatic win. He had Tim David caught at long-off after being hit for a six, Piyush Chawla's chip could only find Narine at extra cover and the left-arm pacer put the icing on the cake by cleaning up Gerald Coetzee.

Earlier, things looked grim for KKR when they could post just 169 on the board. The only solace for

them was a 62-ball 83 partnership between Venkatesh Iyer (70, 52b; 6x4, 3x6) and impact substitute Manish Pandey (42, 31b; 2x4, 2x6) in an otherwise dismal display by their batting unit.

Either side of that association, there was carnage. MI reduced KKR to 57 for five by 6.1 overs and when it looked like the Iyer-Pandey combo was ready to launch, quick blows—four wickets to be precise—between overs 17 and 18 made sure that KKR couldn't end their innings with a flourish.

First to depart was Pandey, playing his first match of the season, off the bowling of Hardik Pandya (2/44). In the same over the dangerous Andre Russell (7, 2b; 1x6) was run out after a mix-up with Iyer.

Bhuvneshwar: SRH's man for all seasons

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Hyderabad: Before the start of the new season, Sunrisers Hyderabad's captain Pat Cummins was clear in his assessment that having a bowler like Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who can bowl at the start and at death, is an asset and enhances his options.

On Thursday, Bhuvneshwar justified Cummins' faith in a crunch game against Rajasthan Royals. Defending 12 runs in the final over against Rovman Powell, the mainstay of SRH attack showed nerves of steel and scuttled the chase by one run. In the context of the tournament, the win was crucial as it ended SRH's two-match losing streak and brightened their playoff chances.

"I told everyone that the process is very important," the 34-year-old said after he was adjudged the man of the match for his three for 41. "I was so detached from the result and focused on the process. There was no discussion in the last over: Was thinking just about bowling two good balls, anything could have happened," Bhuvneshwar added. Nitish Kumar Reddy, who helped the hosts post 201/3, lauded the veteran. "When I saw Bhuvni bhai coming to bowl, I had the confidence that he could pull it off for us. He did it many times for SRH when in his prime."

His effort against Rajasthan

BHUVI AT SRH

Season	Wickets
2014	20
2015	18
2016	23 (purple cap)
2017	26 (purple cap)
2018	9
2019	13
2020	3 (4 matches)
2021	6
2022	12
2023	16

● Bhuvi was the highest wicket-taker for SRH in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2023

Royals brought back memories of the match against Royal Challengers Bangalore in 2018. With 12 required in the final over then too, Bhuvneshwar conceded just six to take his side into the playoffs.

Ever since he joined Sunrisers in 2014, Bhuvneshwar, a fine exponent of swing with the new ball, has been the leader of their bowling group. He added a yard of pace in the following years and honed his death-over skills too.

With David Warner at the helm between 2015-19, Bhuvneshwar and Co. made defending low totals at home a fine art. He was the Purple cap holder with 23 scalps when

SRH won the title in 2016 and repeated the feat the next year with 26 wickets.

Injuries in the 2020 season meant he struggled for the next two years, allowing many to question his abilities. But even when not among wickets, his economy of eight an over across seasons underlines his class. "The ball swung so much, really enjoyed it. When the season started, the thought process was different, but it changed when I saw the batters play in such a way," added Bhuvneshwar.

Cummins had the last word. "It was an amazing game. Bhuvi executed that last ball."

'My role is to set the stage for Klaasen'

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Hyderabad: Nitish Kumar Reddy, who came in when Sunrisers Hyderabad were struggling at 35/2, played his role to perfection with an unbeaten 76 (42b) in his side's thrilling last-ball one-run victory over Rajasthan Royals.

"My role is to play till the 13th or 14th over and give (Heinrich) Klaasen the license to go bang bang," the Andhra lad said on Thursday night. "There is no point if Klaasen and Samad come in 8th or 6th over and struggle to score. I saw (Yuzvendra) Chahal coming to bowl and I backed myself to go after him. That went pretty well."

When Yashasvi Jaiswal and Riyan Parag were going great guns during their 134-run partnership, the 20-year-old was confident that a wicket would change momentum. "T20 is all about changing momentum. We be-

lieved that a wicket or two wickets would change the game and we got Jaiswal and Parag."

Parag (77, 49b) termed the last-ball defeat as 'dramatic' and added he should have finished the game for Royals. "I don't think any one of us threw our wickets. Jaiswal was trying to scoop because Natarajan was bowling good, slow bouncers. I was trying to muscle it for a six. Probably an error in execution. It would have been nice to stay at the end. And credit to the Sunrisers bowlers. You've got to give credit to Bhuvaneshwar Kumar and Natarajan and Cummins."

He also felt that they should have restricted Sunrisers in the final overs. "We bowled well in the powerplay. We could have cut them down by 10-15 runs towards the end. But Nitish batted so well. Some of his sixes were incredible," he added.

NITISH KUMAR REDDY ON THE MATCH'S FINAL OVER
"I was looking at who was going to bowl. When I saw Bhuvneshwar was going to bowl, I got the confidence that he was going to pull it off. During his prime, he had done it so many times. I did not think we were going to win, I thought either we'd lose or tie. But that last-ball wicket, I felt so happy."



GALLERY India lead ODI, T20I rankings

Dubai: India have retained their top position in ODIs and T20Is but slipped to the second position in the men's Test team rankings in the ICC annual ranking update issued on Friday. India conceded the top spot in the five-day format to Australia following the annual update that drops results from the 2020-21 season and reflects all series completed since May 2021. PTI

ACTION TODAY

BADMINTON: Thomas & Uber Cup, 7 am & 2.30 pm (Jiocinema); **CRICKET:** IPL, Bengaluru vs Gujarat, 7.30 pm (Star Sports, Jiocinema); **FOOTBALL:** EPL, Arsenal vs Bournemouth, 5 pm; Man City vs Wolverhampton, 10 pm (Star Sports); ISL final: Baglan vs Mumbai, 7.30 pm (Jio Cinema)

Three Indians to officiate in T20 WC

Srinath, Menon & Madanagopal Make The Grade

Dubai: Umpires Nitin Menon and Jayaraman Madanagopal, along with ICC match referee Jagavall Srinath will be the Indian representatives at the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas next month.

The ICC on Friday announced the list of 26 match officials set to be in charge for the first round of the month-long event to be held in the United States of America (USA) and the West Indies, starting June 1. There will be 20 umpires who will be officiating in 55 matches across nine venues, which also include renowned ICC umpires — Richard Illingworth, Kumar Dharmasena, Chris Gafaney and Paul Reiffel.

Besides Madanagopal, the likes of Sam Nogajski, Allahu-

dien Paleker, Rashid Riaz and Asif Yaqoob will also be making their ICC senior men's competition debut.

"Within the selected cohort, we have a complement of experienced match officials and other high-performing members who have been recognized for their strong and consistent performances," said ICC General Manager, Wasim Khan, said.

Umpires: Chris Brown, Kumar Dharmasena, Chris Gafaney, Michael Gough, Adrian Holdstock, Richard Illingworth, Allahu-dien Paleker, Jayaraman Madanagopal, Nitin Menon, Sam Nogajski, Ahsan Raza, Rashid Riaz, Paul Reiffel, Langton Rusere, Shahid Saikat, Rodney Tucker, Alex Wharf, Joel Wilson and Asif Yaqoob.

Match referees: David Boon, Jeff Crowe, Ranjan Madugalle, Andrew Pycroft, Richie Richardson and Jagavall Srinath. PTI

Powell to lead WI team, rookie Shamar called in for T20 WC

Port of Spain: Rajasthan Royals power-hitter Rovman Powell will lead a strong West Indies squad, filled with some of the world's best franchise free-lancers, in the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Americas. One of the prominent names included is rookie pace sensation Shamar Joseph, who is a part of Lucknow Super Giants in this edition of IPL.

The team bears a formidable look with some of the biggest power-hitters in world cricket like Nicholas Pooran of Lucknow Super Giants, Andre Russell of Kolkata Knight Riders, Shimron Hetmyer of Rajasthan Royals apart from skipper Powell himself being part of the 15.

Not to forget Romario Shepherd of Mumbai Indians, Sherfane Rutherford (KKR) and Shai Hope (Delhi Capitals), who are also playing their trade in the IPL.



BIG RESPONSIBILITY: Rovman Powell

Pacer Alzarri Joseph, who plays for Royal Challengers Bengaluru, is Powell's deputy while seasoned pros like all-rounders Roston Chase, Jason Holder, Batters Johnson Charles, Brandon King have also been inducted.

Powell, Shepherd, Russell and Rutherford all can bowl part-time medium pace apart from their primary skill of batting. The co-hosts will have three specialist spin-

ners in Akeal Hossain, Gudakesh Motie and Chase.

Squad: Rovman Powell (c), Alzarri Joseph, Johnson Charles, Roston Chase, Shimron Hetmyer, Jason Holder, Shai Hope, Akeal Hossain, Shamar Joseph, Brandon King (wk), Gudakesh Motie, Nicholas Pooran, Andre Russell, Sherfane Rutherford, Romario Shepherd. PTI

Milind, Anderson named in US squad

Dallas: Former Delhi batter and 2018-19 Ranji Trophy top run-getter Milind Kumar found a place in the United States of America squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup, starting June 1. The USA, a co-host of the event alongside the West Indies, announced its 15-member squad to be led by Gujarat-born Monank Patel.

Right-handed batter Milind, who scored 1331 runs in the 2018-19 Ranji Trophy season, had before that played seven seasons for Delhi and then migrated to the US in search of better opportunities. Milind, a Delhi-born cricketer, played for the state, Sikkim and Tripura in the Indian domestic before migrating to the US.

The squad also includes former New Zealand ODI World Cup runner-up Corey Anderson. The 33-year-old all-rounder played for New Zealand and in the 2015 World Cup final defeat against Australia. He last played for New Zealand in 2018 and, after be-



NEW INNINGS: Corey Anderson

coming eligible to represent USA Cricket, made his debut last month in a T20 win against Canada. .

Squad: Monank Patel (captain), Aaron Jones (vice-captain), Andries Gous, Corey Anderson, Ali Khan, Harmeet Singh, Jessy Singh, Milind Kumar, Nisarg Patel, Nitish Kumar, Noshtush Kenjige, Saubh Nathralvakar, Shadley Van Schalkwyk, Steven Taylor, Shayan Jahangir. Reserve Players: Gajanan Singh, Juanoy Drysdale, Yasir Mohammad. AFP



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Bengaluru: The scorching heat in Karnataka this summer has sent the mercury levels north and Friday afternoon rain brought huge relief to a parched Bengaluru. While the city rejoiced, the conditions will have Royal Challengers Bengaluru worried.

Languishing at the bottom of the points table with three wins from 10 matches, the Bengaluru franchise is clinging to a flimsy thread of hope of making the playoffs. A rain-marred contest against a struggling Gujarat Titans at the M Chinnaswamy stadium will wash away even the mathematical chance Faf du Plessis and his men have of advancing in the competition.

Having failed to come together as a unit, RCB have felt the heat this season. After six losses on the trot, they have belatedly found their footing with back-to-back wins with their last one—a commanding nine-wicket win against their Saturday night opponents Gujarat. The visitors have two points and a win more than the hosts, but find themselves in a similar position in the race to playoffs.

Less than a week after losing to RCB on home turf, Shubman Gill and his men are here for the return fixture, hoping to cash in on RCB's wobbling fortunes at home—one win in five outings.

Virat Kohli, the second highest run-getter of the season with 500 runs, is the only Indian player on either side to have made the T20 World Cup cut, and will look to continue with his consistent form. But the focus in the weekend gala will be on English all-rounder Will Jacks.

Having remained in the dugout for five matches, Jacks made his IPL debut against Mumbai Indians but set the league on fire last week with his unbeaten 41-ball 100. The 25-year-old left GT's spin ace Rashid Khan and

31 Number of wickets at 45.74 runs apiece in ten matches captured by RCB pacers is the least by any team this season. GT pacers are second from bottom, claiming 33 wickets at 31.06 runs apiece in the same number of matches.

104 An unbeaten knock by Shubman Gill off 52 balls at Bengaluru on May 21, 2023 — the only hundred recorded for GT vs RCB.

—Stats: Rajesh Kumar

pacer Mohit Sharma scarred, milking the duo for 57 runs off 11 deliveries.

RCB's loyal legion will hope for the youngster to replicate the form here. RCB's batting line-up which has been let down by inconsistency, will have to bring their act together.

Gujarat too will hope for the batters to come good, especially in the Powerplay which has been a grey area for the team this season. While Wriddhiman Saha will have to weigh in with his experience, Gill, will have to lead with the bat as well. Sai Sudashan has made an impact, but the middle-order has been the bane of Gujarat's challenge.

HOW THEY STAND					
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
RR	10	8	2	0.622	16
KKR	10	7	3	1.098	14
LSG	10	6	4	0.094	12
SRH	10	6	4	0.072	12
CSK	10	5	5	0.627	10
DC	11	5	6	-0.442	10
PBKS	10	4	6	-0.062	8
GT	10	4	6	-1.113	8
MI	11	3	8	-0.356	6
RCB	10	3	7	-0.415	6

Play without pressure is RCB's mantra: Jacks

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Bengaluru: Scoring at an average of a run-a-ball, Will Jacks had managed 17 runs against Gujarat Titans before he switched gears, scoring 83 runs off 24 deliveries. He raced from 50-100 in six minutes! While the talk still revolves around the blinder last week, the all-rounder has since moved on. If anything, Jacks knows, given the format and the weather in the city, a lot can change in a short while.

"We've had a lot of time between games and spent two days in Goa. We've had some nice training here to re-assess for this next game. There has been a lot of talk about it (the century). I think it is time to go ahead for another game," said Jacks on the eve of the crucial contest against Gujarat here on Saturday.

Primarily an opener, Jacks, who has featured in seven ODIs and 11 T20I for England, came into the playing XI in place of Glenn Maxwell and had to adapt to the switch in role and batting position. Prior to the IPL, Jacks opened the innings for his franchises in SAT20

and Bangladesh Premier League earlier this year.

Jacks admitted the role change was challenging. "It is something that I am adapting to. I started doing it in November in the Caribbean for England. The hardest thing I found is coming in outside the Powerplay. Normally when you face the first ball, you get a few to look at, and you can get your easy boundaries. I think it is more of a mental thing," he pointed out.

The next four games are knock-out contests for the Bengaluru outfit but Jacks said the focus is on performance sans pressure.

"What we have spoken about as a batting unit is playing with freedom. At the beginning of the competition, we were probably behind the other teams in terms of run rate and not getting the results we desired. So, we spoke long about how we get to those 200-plus. We have been taking risks at the right time and putting bowlers under pressure. We are keeping it simple and that's what has been working for us recently," Jacks explained.



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Riding on the 83-run stand of Venkatesh-Manish Pandey, followed by Starc's pace magic, KKR register a 24-run win against MI, **P 21**



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