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ନବୀନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ
ଦିଲ୍ଲୀରେ ଶୁଭିବ
ଆମ ସ୍ୱର
ଆମକୁ ନବୀନ ଦରକାର

ନବୀନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ
ମତେ ମିଳିଛି
'କାଳିଆ' ଟଙ୍କା
ମତେ ନବୀନ ଦରକାର

ନବୀନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ
ମତେ ମିଳିଛି
'ବିଜୁ ପକ୍ୱାଘର'
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ଆମକୁ ନବୀନ ଦରକାର

ଆମ ଭଳି ୨୫ଲକ୍ଷ ଲୋକଙ୍କୁ
ନବୀନ ଦେଲେ
'ରାଜ୍ୟ ଖାଦ୍ୟ ସୁରକ୍ଷା
ଯୋଜନାରେ ଚାଉଳ'
ଆମକୁ ନବୀନ ଦରକାର

ଆମକୁ ନବୀନ ଦେଲେ
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ଆମ ପାଇଁ ନବୀନ
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'ସ୍ୱଚ୍ଛ ଉନ୍ନୟନ ପରିଷଦ'
ଆମକୁ ନବୀନ ଦରକାର

ଆମ ନିର୍ମାଣ ଶ୍ରମିକଙ୍କୁ
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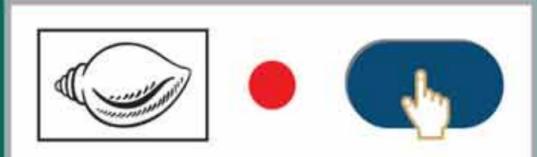
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ନବୀନ ଆମ ପରିବାର 'ଶଙ୍ଖ' ଆମ ଚିହ୍ନ



'ଶଙ୍ଖ' ଚିହ୍ନରେ ଭୋଗ୍ ଦେବା । ଦୁଇଥର ।
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Third phase polls today; all eyes on Babus

Aparajita, Arup, Prakash never utter a word against rivals as do normal leaders

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

As the high pitched campaigning ended for the third phase of polling in six Lok Sabha and 42 Assembly seats where polling will be held on Tuesday (April 23), all eyes are on the bureaucrats and top cops who have joined the fray. They are Odisha's popular former IAS officer Aparajita Sarangi, two super cops and retired IPS officers, Arup Mohan Patnaik and Prakash Mishra.

While Sarangi and Patnaik are pitted against each other as BJP and BJD candidates respectively in prestigious Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat, former Odisha DGP Prakash Mishra is a saffron party can-



Aparajita Sarangi



Arup Mohan Patnaik



Prakash Mishra

didate in Cutack Parliamentary constituency.

Mishra is pitted against BJD's five-time MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, who is also the son of former Chief Minister Harekrushna Mahtab.

Sarangi, who quit the lucrative IAS service to dedicatedly serve the people of Odisha, is ahead of her top cop rival in Bhubaneswar seat in terms of popularity and acceptance. However, the former woman officer is finding it difficult in the battle field as the ruling BJD is strongly rooted in all the seven Assembly segments in Bhubaneswar.

During a span of only three and a half months Sarangi has covered more than 200 villages and about 100 wards and claimed to be getting rousing welcome from the people both in the rural areas as well as in the urban pockets. If the acceptance of the people is translated into votes, then Sarangi will make history as the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat, in the grab of BJD since 1998.

Patnaik on the other hand is totally banking on the popularity of Naveen Patnaik and BJD's stronghold over the area. The former Mumbai Police

Commissioner is a gentleman and a positive personality.

Both Sarangi and Patnaik do not speak against each other, so also Mishra.

All the three former bureaucrats and top cops, though testing their luck for the first time, all of them maintain decency and never cross limit as regular politicians do during election time.

Apart from them, former Works Secretary Nalini Kanta Pradhan is fighting on BJD ticket from the Sambalpur Lok Sabha seat while former OFS officer Sarmista Sethi is a ruling party candidate in Jajpur

Lok Sabha seat.

For the BJP, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spearheaded a campaign for the party candidates along with party president Amit Shah. BJP leaders including Union Ministers Uma Bharti, Nitin Gadkari, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and Piyush Goyal also hit the campaign trail in the seat.

Though star campaigners of the Congress were absent in this phase and electioneering was steered by leaders like Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Niranjan Patnaik, BJD president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was at the centre stage undertaking extensive tours of the poll-bound areas and holding road shows.

The third phase polling will decide the electoral fortune of 417 candidates - 61 in six Lok Sabha seats and 356 in 42 Assembly constituencies.

While there are six women candidates in the six Lok Sabha seats, 38 women are in the fray for the 42 Assembly segments.

As many as 92,56,922 voters will exercise their franchise in the Phase III.

'Baijayant has betrayed you, reply him in ballots'

As MP, he only pursued his self interest: Naveen Patnaik assures to see K'pada dev personally

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

An impression that Baijayant Panda was misusing his position as a Member of Parliament to protect and promote his family industry and business seems to have been virtually confirmed with a statement of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in this regard.

Patnaik, during his election campaign at Rajnagar in Kendrapada district on Sunday, alleged that Panda, betrayed the people of the district in the matter of railway connection to the district, which is yet to find a place in the country's railway map.

Patnaik disclosed that when he was pleading for a railway link for Kendrapada

with the Central Government, a Union Minister told him that Panda, though being the MP of Kendrapada, was, instead, insistent on railway connections to his family's industrial locations.

Patnaik lamented that Panda was sent by him to the Lok Sabha twice as the BJD's Kendrapada MP, he was pursuing his self interest in New Delhi instead of serving the people he represented.

"Panda was not at all concerned about industrial development of Kendrapada. He was not bothered about creating jobs for youths of Kendrapada; rather, he always wanted to promote his own job," said Patnaik.

Stating that Kendrapada was the "Karmabhumi" (workplace) of Biju Patnaik and people of the district were taking him as their family member, Patnaik said, "As a son of Biju Babu, I am indebted to you for your love for him. I sent an educated young man (Panda) to Delhi for development

Kendrapada, but he has lost your trust and mine. His betrayal has disrespected both Biju Babu and you. Don't trust him anymore," Patnaik urged voters.

Notably, Panda is contesting this time from Kendrapada as the BJD candidate.

The BJD supreme targeted the BJP Government for halting of distribution of KALIA assistance and said Rs 10,000 would be credited to the accounts of rest farmers on the very day of formation of BJD Government. Reminding that he had declared to provide 33 per cent reservation of Lok Sabha seats from Kendrapada, Patnaik said the announcement has created history in the entire country now.

Asserting that he would personally take care of development of Kendrapada henceforth, Patnaik urged voters to bless him and elect BJD Lok Sabha candidate Anubhab Mohanty and Rajnagar Assembly BJD candidate Dhruva Sahoo by big margins.

PURI LS SEAT

BJD's strong base Vs BJP's 'Modi wave'

PNS ■ PURI

BJP nominee for Puri Parliament seat Dr Sambit Patra concluded his poll campaign near the Lions Gate of Jagannath Temple on Sunday evening. He bowed down before the Patitapaban idol.

Patra said he ultimately came under the Lord's shelter and it is His wish whether to save him or kill in the big battle

Patra said he ultimately came under the Lord's shelter and it is His wish whether to save him or kill in the big battle. He even repeated his earlier statement that Lord Jagannath had called him and Modi has sent him to fight the polls from Puri.

The BJP national spokesperson is fighting with formidable BJD candidate and three-time Puri parliamentarian Pinaki Misra. Satya Prakash Nayak from Congress is also in the fray. The main contest is between BJP and BJD. The BJD is confident of retaining the seat due to its strong organisational base while the BJP hopes to make its debut on the "Modi wave".

PRSI holds Public Relations Day



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), Bhubaneswar chapter observed the National Public Relations Day with the theme 'One Nation One Agenda One Voice' here on Sunday.

CSM Technologies founder and CEO Priyadarshi Pany discussed on role of information technology (IT) in nation building. He said that IT plays a big role in getting

our voice heard, setting up the agenda and building democracy. Data is being translated as knowledge and wisdom. This helps in building the nation, he viewed.

He also informed about use of IT in enhancing efficiency of public welfare programmes. PRSO Bhubaneswar chapter Chairman Amar Jyoti Mahapatra briefed about the importance of the day and Secretary Sanjay Kumar Sahoo proposed a vote of thanks.

Security heightened in capital for polls

BHUBANESWAR: The Commissionerate police have made elaborate security arrangements to ensure smooth and peaceful elections in the State capital to be held on Tuesday.

A five-layer security ring will be thrown around the city during the voting. Total 30 platoons of police force and six companies of paramilitary forces will be engaged to avoid any untoward incident during the voting.

Sources said out of the 1,156 polling booths, 383 stations have been identified as sensitive. Total seven Assembly segments under Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha Constituency will go to polls in third phase elections on the day. PNS

B'swar: No BJD, BJP women candidate in fray

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■ BHUBANESWAR

Although the BJD has given tickets to 33 per cent women in the Lok Sabha elections, Baleswar district has not a single woman candidate either for the Parliament seat or for an Assembly constituency.

Not only the BJD, BJP too didn't field any woman candidate for any of the constituencies although there were several prospective candidates whose names were doing the rounds during nominations.

The name of Lekhashree Samantsinghar while was much discussed in the district, it was assumed that either she would be candidate for Lok Sabha or MLA candidate from Nilgiri or Sadar.

Lot many hoardings, posters, banners and publicity in different forms were seen for about three months ahead of nominations, but Samantsinghar was not given ticket from any of the constituencies. She is no longer seen in the district.

Congress didn't field women candidates in any of the constituencies except Nilgiri.

The Congress party this time has fielded Manoja Manjari Mardaraj, from the Nilgiri royal family, for Nilgiri Assembly constituency. She would be taking on mainly candidates of BJD and BJP, Santosh Khatua and Sukanta Nayak (sitting MLA, formerly in BJD now in BJP).

Not only the BJD, BJP too didn't field any woman candidate for any of the constituencies although there were several prospective candidates whose names were doing the rounds during nominations

The Congress too fielded a woman candidate for the Badasahi Assembly seat of Mayurbhanj which comes under the Baleswar Parliamentary constituency.

Although, BJD was expected to field at least one woman candidate when there were several prospective candidates yet the party disappointed again for the reason best known to it.

While it was almost confirmed that Subasini Jena would be the candidate for Basta constituency yet surprisingly she was not offered ticket from Basta and on the other hand, Nityananda Sahu, the sitting MLA of the party, was fielded again.

Only Congress while fielded two women candidates in Nilgiri and Badasahi constituencies, three other women candidates are seeking mandate as Independents under Baleswar Parliamentary constituency.

POST ATTACK ON CANDIDATES IN CITY

Escort vehicles provided to two nominees

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A day after two MLA candidates were attacked in the State capital, the Commissionerate police on Monday decided to tighten the security for both.

BJD Bhubaneswar (Central) MLA candidate Ananta Narayan Jena and BJP nominee for the same constituency Jagannath Pradhan, who were attacked here on Sunday evening, will be provided escort vehicles by the police.

"Investigation into the incidents is underway and we have taken the matter seriously. Security has been tightened for those candidates who were attacked. They were earlier provided with Personal Security Officers (PSOs). Now, they will be given escort vehicles for better security," said Police Commissioner Satyajit Mohanty.

Notably, bombs were hurled at the car of Jena when he was passing through Jharpada. He was admitted to the Capital Hospital here for treatment.

Besides, bike-borne miscreants hurled a bomb at the car of Pradhan near the BJP office in Unit-VIII under the Nayapalli police station.

IN BRIEF

ROTRACT CLUB CHAPTER OPENED AT GIFT

Bhubaneswar: A chapter of Rotract Club Bhubaneswar Kalinga GIFT, sponsored by the Rotary Club Bhubaneswar, Kalinga, was opened at the Gandhi Institute of Technology (GIFT) here recently. GIFT Vice-Principal Dr Alok Kumar Mohapatra presided over the programme. Rotarians Sibabrata Das and Sanatu Pani attended as guests. On the occasion, rotact president Biswajit Samal and other members took oath. Among others, club president Dr HB Patanaik, rotarians RC Das, RM Patanayak, Col KC Nayak, TR Dash, Dr P Mohapatra, student volunteers Abhishek Panda, Subhashree Rout and faculty members Prof S Pati, Prof MN Das and Prof MM Sahu were present.



FIRE EVACUATION DRILL HELD AT SBI BBSR

Bhubaneswar: A fire evacuation drill was conducted on the eve of Security and Fire Safety Week at State Bank of India (SBI), local head office here on Saturday. SBI GM Devi Shankar Mishra along with senior executives and staff members participated in the mock drill conducted by AGM (Fire Safety) BP Satapathy. It was followed with a demonstration of rescue and fire fighting at the building by the Odisha Fire Department with the help of Bronto Sky Lift of 72 meter height, led by Odisha Fire Services Fire Officers Ramesh Chandra Majhi and Saroj Kumar Behera.



DAV CSPUR OBSERVES EARTH DAY

Bhubaneswar: Students of the DAV Public School, Chandrasekharpur here participated in a paint-and-preach display event to mark the Earth Day in the school premises on Monday. A water service kiosk also inaugurated to serve the thirsty people during the scorching summer in front of the school.



No schooling for them as they've to herd sheep

As parents away in Hyderabad as kiln workers

AJIT PANDA ■ NUAPADA

Hemraj (14) and Tularam (10) were herding their sheep in the forest. Tularam was chewing raw dates collecting it from small palm trees. Hemraj, sitting on a stone, was screaming at the sheep to keep them together.

"The sheep belong to us, our parents have gone to Hyderabad with two of our sisters and the younger brother four months ago; they will return at the arrival of rain; we are here to look after these six animals," said the boys.

The children belong to Dugripada hamlet of Kotamal village under Sinapali block of Nuapada district. It is located at a distance of 115 km from the district headquarters and 5 km from the block office. There



is a primary school in the village, but the children have never got an opportunity to go there. "Who will look after these animals if we go to the school," they ask.

Gundhar Raut and Dhane, parents of the boys, had incurred loan to perform the death rituals of Gundhar's mother in December last. Villagers informed that the couple had also taken loan from different

sources to complete the pucca house provided to them under the PMAY. "To repay these loans, they were forced to take advance payment from the labour broker to work in a brick kiln."

The children get 35 kilogram of rice every month under the PDS. "But it doesn't help us for a full month because we have to buy onion and potato in exchange of rice," said the boys. They collect various

forest produces like, kendu, chaar and mahua while herding sheep in the forest and sell those to get some cash to buy vegetables. "Sometimes, we skip meals and manage with forest foods," they added.

Villagers said, "The political parties and their leaders assure everything while seeking our votes; but once elected, they forget everything and the problems of children like Hemraj and Tularam remain unsolved."

BJP seeks all money, liquor seized

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Alleging that huge amount of money and liquor bottles were still kept in the farmhouse of arrested BJD Pipli Assembly candidate Pradeep Maharathy, the BJP on Monday demanded that the State Chief Electoral Officer take required steps to seize them and ensure a free and fair poll in the constituency.

BJP State vice-president Sameer Mohanty criticised BJD supreme and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for fielding Maharathy in the polls. "While Patnaik has always claimed to have a clean political image, how he fielded a criminal mentality person like Maharathy and many chit fund accused in the election," wanted to know Mohanty.

Notably, Maharathy has been arrested on the charge of attacking a Magistrate Rabi Narayan Patra during a raid on his farmhouse late on Sunday night.

BJP State vice-president Sameer Mohanty criticised BJD supreme and CM for fielding Maharathy in the polls. "While Patnaik has always claimed to have a clean political image, how he fielded a criminal mentality person like Maharathy and many chit fund accused in the election," wanted to know Mohanty.

144 imposed in Kuchinda, Redhakhol

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

The Sambalpur district administration on Monday clamped Section 144 of the CrPc in the two Assembly constituencies of Kuchinda and Redhakhol to ensure incident-free polls on Tuesday.

The prohibitory orders would continue till the end of the elections. Holding of public meetings and gatherings of more than five people at any place at a time have been restricted.

"The Section 144 has been done to preserve peace and maintain law and order in the two constituencies," said district Collector-cum-Election Officer Subham Saxena.

Congress gheraos SDPO office

KEONJHAR: Demanding action against the culprits who attacked PCC chief Niranjan Patnaik, Congress members on Monday gheraoed the Anandpur SDPO office under the leadership of Keonjhar district Congress working president Ratikant Baral.

According to reports, the Congress members wanted to submit a memorandum to the SDPO. But as the SDPO was not present, they held a demonstration.

Earlier in the day, the Ramachandrapur police arrested eight persons for their alleged involvement in the attack on Patnaik on Sunday evening.

Notably, Patnaik was injured after his vehicle was attacked by some miscreants during an election rally at Bhandaripoda Chaak under Ghasipura Assembly constituency, from where he is contesting the polls.

Apart from Patnaik, five to seven Congress workers were also injured in the incident. PNS

OPINION 8 MONEY RULES THE ROOST

WORLD 12 SRI LANKA'S CHRISTIANS AFRAID TO ATTEND CHURCH

SPORT 15 NEYMAR RETURNS AS PSG BEAT MONACO 3-1

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ଯୁବବର୍ଗଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ନବୀନ ଓଡ଼ିଶା

■ ଯୁବକଯୁବତୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ଶିକ୍ଷାନୁଷ୍ଠାନରେ ୭୫% ଚାକିରୀ ସୁବିଧା ■ 'ସ୍କିଲ୍ ଇନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା'ରେ ୧୫ଲକ୍ଷ ଏବଂ 'ଡ୍ରାଗ୍ଟ୍ ସ୍କିଲ୍ ସେଣ୍ଟର' ଦ୍ୱାରା ଦକ୍ଷତା ହାସଲ କରିବେ ୧.୫ ଲକ୍ଷ ଯୁବକଯୁବତୀ ■ 'ମେକ୍ ଇନ୍ ଓଡ଼ିଶା'ରେ ୩୦ଲକ୍ଷ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ସୁଯୋଗ ■ ସବୁ ରାଜ୍ୟସ୍ତରୀୟ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ପରୀକ୍ଷା ଫିସ୍ ଛାଡ଼ି ଦେବାକୁ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଅତ୍ୟାଧୁନିକ ଯୁବ ଭବନ ■ ସବୁ ହାଇସ୍କୁଲରେ ଆଇ.ଟି.ଲାଭ୍, କଲେଜ୍, ଯୁନିଭରସିଟିରେ ମାଗଣା ଡ୍ରାମ୍ ଫାଇ, କଲେଜ୍ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ୧ଜିବି ମାଗଣା ଇଣ୍ଟରନେଟ୍ ■ ବିନା ସୁଧରେ ୧୦ ଲକ୍ଷ ଟଙ୍କାର ଶିକ୍ଷା ରଣ



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ବିଜୁ ଜନତା ଦଳ

SL fears Thowheed got foreign terror aid

7 of its fideen carried out Easter blasts, 87 bomb detonators found at bus station

PTI/AGENCIES ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan Government on Monday accused a previously little-known Islamist outfit called the National Thowheed Jamath (NTJ) of having carried out the Easter Sunday attacks, and said an international terror group might have been behind the atrocities, the worst in the country's history.

Seven suicide bombers of the NTJ carried out a series of devastating blasts, authorities said on Monday. As many as 87 bomb detonators were found on Monday at a bus station in Colombo, police said. Police have so far arrested 24 people — mostly members of NTJ — in connection with the blasts that also killed eight Indian nationals. Police said that 9 out of the 24 arrested for involvement in the blasts were ordered to be remanded by the Colombo

magistrate's court till May 6. Government's spokesman Rajitha Senaratne said NTJ is suspected of plotting the blasts that struck three churches when the Easter Sunday mass were in progress and three five-star hotels. "All suicide bombers involved in the blasts are believed to be Sri Lankan nationals," said Senaratne, who is also the Health Minister. Speaking at a press conference here, Senaratne said the Government was investigat-

ing whether the group had "international support". "There may be international links to them," he added. The "conditional state of emergency" in force since Monday midnight would target terrorism and would not limit freedom of expression, said a statement from the President's media unit. "These will be limited to counter terrorism regulations. This is being done to allow the police and the three forces to ensure public security."

Rahul regrets misquoting SC

But Cong president repeats 'Chowkidar chor' hai in Amethi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI / AMETHI

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday expressed regret in the Supreme Court over his remarks attributing certain comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the basis of a recent order of the top court in the Rafale deal case, but wasted no time in repeating his "Chowkidar chor" jibe against the PM in Amethi.



Congress president Rahul Gandhi addresses an election campaign meeting at Tilote in his parliamentary constituency Amethi on Monday

Rahul expressed "regret" in the Supreme Court for claiming SC had justified his "Chokidar chor hai" allegation in its order. He said the comment was made in the "heat of political campaigning". The apex court on April 15 had given a categorical clarification that in its Rafale verdict there was no occasion for it to make a mention of the contemptuous observation that "chowkidar Narendra Modi chor hai" as has been attributed to it by Rahul. The court had directed Rahul to give his explanation on April 22 on a petition filed by BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi seeking criminal contempt action against him for his remarks. It is scheduled to hear Lekhi's petition on Tuesday.

Rahul, who filed an affidavit in response to the apex court's order, said his statement was "purely political" and was made to counter the "misinformation campaign" being led by senior BJP functionaries as well as the Government that the December 14 last year judgment gave a "clean chit" to the Modi Government on the Rafale deal.

Ph-III test for Shah, Rahul, MSY clan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All 26 constituencies of Gujarat and 20 of Kerala will go to polls on Tuesday in the third phase of Lok Sabha polls for 116 seats spread over 14 States.

assembly polls. Congress hopes to cash in on the resentment of the patidars and rural-urban divide to win at least five to six seats in the State. On the other hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have made repeated pleas to the voters to make sure that the Congress didn't open its account from the state.

Sheila faces Manoj; Gambhir challenge for Atishi, Lovely



Delhi BJP president Manoj Tiwari with party leaders Vijay Goel, Vijendra Gupta, actor-dancer Sapna Chaudhary during a roadshow before filing his nomination papers from North East Delhi Lok Sabha constituency in New Delhi on Monday

While Shah, who replaced LK Advani as the party nominee from Gandhinagar, Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Jaswantsinh Bhabhor, is the BJP nominee from Dahod seat.

About 18.56 crore voters are eligible for voting in this phase and the Election Commission has set up 2.10 lakh polling booths/stations and has made elaborate security arrangements.

In the first two phases, election was held to 91 and 96 seats on April 11 and April 18 respectively. Elections are being held in seven phases and with the completion of third phase, the election process will be completed in southern states.

ATTACK ON POLL OFFICIALS IN PIPILI

Maharathy arrested, refutes complicity in case

PNS ■ PURI

Pipili MLA and former Minister Pradeep Maharathy was on Monday arrested in connection with the attack on a poll flying squad in Pipili of Puri district late on Sunday night. Maharathy, who is seeking reelection from the constituency, was arrested under Sections 307, 353, 341, 332, 147, 148, 149, 188, 294, 333, 171 (B) and 506 of the IPC and Section 123 of Representation of the Peoples Act. Later, he was produced in a special court in Bhubaneswar.



Earlier in the day, he had been questioned at the Pipili police station by Puri SP Umashankar Dash. The development came a day before the polls in the Pipili constituency slated for Tuesday.

CAPSULE

FIR AGAINST PRAGYA FOR BABRI MASJID REMARK

Bhopal: Acting on orders of the Election Commission, the police Monday on filed an FIR against BJP Lok Sabha candidate from Bhopal Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur for her remark that she was "proud" of her participation in demolition of the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya in 1992.

72-HOUR CAMPAIGNING BAN ON SIDHU BY EC

New Delhi: The Election Commission on Monday censured Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu for his remarks in which he allegedly warned the Muslim community that efforts were on to divide their votes in Bihar, and barred him from campaigning for 72 hours.

Some miscreants attacked the three teams, leaving five officials injured. The victims were flying squad officer Rabinarayan Patra, videographers Purna Chandra Dash and Sushant Pradhan and two others.

Continued on Page 4

'BJP facing huge poll debacle across country'

Naveen alleges hooliganism saffron party's main agenda

PNS ■ JAGATSINGHPUR

Hitting the campaign trail for the fourth and last-phase elections in the State scheduled to be held on April 29, BJD supremo Naveen Patnaik on Monday lashed out at the BJP, alleging that 'hooliganism' is the main agenda of the saffron party.



Addressing a public meeting at Niali under the Jagatsinghpur Parliamentary constituency, Patnaik said, "False propoganda, violence and hooliganism are the main agendas of the BJP, which has given tickets to criminals for the ongoing elections. People will give this party a befitting reply in ballots." He asserted that the BJP would see a huge poll debacle across the country this time. Highlighting various

achievements of his Government during the last 19 years, Patnaik said Odisha, which was devastated by the 1999 Super Cyclone, has now emerged as a model State and is helping other States during various such emergency situations.

"The State that was importing rice to cater to the needs of its own people has now become a major supplier of the grain. Odisha, which was earlier known to be a poor State, is now on the frontline in removing poverty. Are not these indicators of transformation?" he posed.

Patnaik reiterated that he would continue to fight for the interest of the people of Odisha till his last breath.

Voting in 6 Lok Sabha, 42 Assembly seats today

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

All preparations are ready for polling in six Lok Sabha constituencies, Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Puri, and 42 Assembly seats under them in the third phase of voting on Tuesday.

State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Surendra Kumar stated this at a Press meet here on Monday. He said as many as 92,56, 322 voters (47,99,030 males, 44,56, 629 females and 1,163 third gender) have been enrolled to exercise their franchise in this phase. About 1, 58, 485 voters

ABOUT 1, 58, 485 VOTERS WITH DISABILITY WOULD VOTE IN THIS PHASE

with disability would vote in this phase, he added. Kumar also informed that as many as 59, 500 polling personnel have been deployed to conduct the elections at 10, 464

polling booths, which include 3,186 critical stations. Besides, CCTVs in 779 polling stations and webcasting facilities in 260 have been put in place. Videography would be done in 372 booths, the CEO said.

This apart, as many as 600 Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) personnel have been deployed for smooth conduct of the polls, he said. Notably, 61 LS candidates comprising 55 males and six females are in the fray in this phase. There are 356 Assembly nominees comprising 318 males, 37 females and one transgender.

Udit Raj revolts, Lekhi retained; Maken picked for New Delhi

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

With the Congress announcing its list of six candidates for the general elections on Monday, the North-East Delhi seat appears to be set for a humdinger of contest between Delhi Congress president and three-term Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit and Delhi BJP president and the sitting Member for Parliament (MP) Manoj Tiwari.

Apart from Sheila, former Union Minister Ajay Maken

Continued on Page 4

Assembly polls: Simulia heading for triangular fight

UBACHAK MOHANTY ■
BALESWAR

The Simulia Assembly segment of Baleswar district under the Bhadrak Parliamentary constituency is witnessing a keen triangular contest among BJD, BJP and Congress candidates Jyotiprakash Panigrahi, Padmalochan Panda and Ananta Sethi, respectively.

Sitting MLA Jyotiprakash was elected for the first time in 2014 on the BJD ticket. He is the son of former MLA (BJD) Parsuram Panigrahi. In the past 20 years while there has always been a fight between the BJD and the Congress, in 2004 Congress' Padmalochan Panda won the seat by defeating Parsuram Panigrahi.

In 2014, Jyotiprakash while polled 65,854 out of total polling 1.56 lakh votes, Panda was in the second place who polled over 53,000 votes. BJP candidate SashiSahoo had polled over 28,000 votes. This seat is never won by the BJP and it has been with

either BJD or Congress. In 2000 and 2004, while the BJP didn't give any candidate as the coalition (BJD-BJP) candidate was Parsuram Panigrahi, after breakup of the alliance, although BJP fielded candidates in 2009 and 2014 yet its candidate couldn't win.

This time, however, the BJP keeping in view to win the seat has played a strategy as per which it roped in Congress veteran Padmalochan Panda. After Panda's joining when it was expected the party will have an edge yet this time the equation of the constituency has changed as several twists and turns were witnessed in all these parties ahead of nominations.

Padmalochan, a former Minister (Congress) while joined BJP snapping his relationship with Congress, a BJP ticket aspirant, Sashi Kumar Sahoo, who had polled over 28,000 votes joined BJD deserting his party (BJP).

Although speculations were rife that Sashi Sahoo would be made candidate

from BJD yet it didn't happen and BJD repeated Jyotiprakash.

After Padmalochan joined the BJP with a large number of his supporters quitting Congress, it was assumed Panda has an advantage in the current elections having support of both BJP and his old Congress workers. But the chemistry again witnessed a change as Ananta Sethi is the candidate for the Congress.

Sources said the local cadres and leaders of Congress who had switched over to BJP along with Panda either have returned or in secret touch with Sethi, which may dampen the expectation of Panda as well as his party. The BJD while was assumed to be in better position with the joining of Sashi Kumar Sahoo yet it is not sure how much he would help Jyotiprakash when he himself was the ticket aspirant from BJD.

Further, another BJD ticket aspirant of the constituency Jajati Das has given a jolt to the party (BJD) after he joined BJP ahead of nominations filing.

Dhenkanal LS seat has 15,04,486 voters



PNS ■ DHENKANAL

A joint Press briefing relating to third phase election to be held on Tuesday, Dhenkanal district Collector-cum-Returning Officer Nikhil Pawan Kalyan and SP Anupama James said on Monday that a total of 15,04,486 voters would exercise their democratic right at 1,706 polling stations in Dhenkanal Parliamentary constituency. Among them, number of

male voters is 7,83,143, female voters 7,17,720 and physically-disabled voters is 16,767. All the polling personnel, meanwhile, have reached to the polling stations.

Executing the election procedure, a total of 1,066 arms have been deposited at the district treasury and two illegal arms have been seized. Apart from execution of 623 NBWs, cash of Rs4 lakh was seized from Ashok Kumar Naik, nominee for Hindol Assembly constituency of BJP. During excise raids, 166 cases have been registered and 455 litres of foreign liquors and 551 litres of country liquors were seized.

For smooth conduction of general election, 15 teams of flying squad, 68 mobile teams and nine micro observers have been deployed and installation of CCTV camera, webcasting, deployment of CPF force have been made for the poll day.

IN BRIEF

PUBLIC RELATIONS DAY OBSERVED IN BRAHMPAUR

Brahmapur: The 'Sampark Mass Media' observed the National Public Relations Day here on Sunday. Ganjam District Field Publicity Officer Manmohan Padhy gracing as chief guest highlighted about the importance of the day, which is being observed since the day of formation of the Indian Public Relations in 1968. Dainik Suriya Prabha south-in-charge Hemanga Prasad Roula and Gouranga Choudhury graced as other guests. Sampark Mass Media director Sanata Panda presided over the meeting. Many Journalism and Mass Communication students joined the event. Student Sonali Pradhan proposed a vote of thanks. Binod Mahakuda, Sukarita Gouda and Tejaswini Sethi coordinated the programme.



B'PUR NATARAJ NIWAS ASSN DEMANDS FACILITIES

Brahmapur: The annual general body meeting of the Nataraj Niwas Apartment Owners' Association at Kalinga Vinar here was held on Sunday under the chairmanship of advocate and scribe Prof KC Panda. For 2019-21, Padma Lochan Pattnaik was elected as secretary and Hara Prasad Das treasurer. The general body requested Prof Panda and I. Loknath to continue as president and vice-president, respectively. The meeting expressed its serious concern over non-construction of an approach road and non-supply of LED streetlights by the authorities causing inconvenience to the residents.

SMIT CHIEF DR GANTAYAT HONOURED WITH D.LIT

Brahmapur: Sanjay Memorial Institute of Technology (SMIT), Brahmapur president Dr Bhagaban Gantayat was honoured with D. Lit. degree in New Delhi. After receiving the degree Gantayat thanked SMIT secretary Jamula Sankar Narayan, treasurer Pramod Kumar Panda, Principal Dr Jagannath Sahu, Sudhashu Mohan Padhy, Prof Satyabrata Das, Prof Amir Kumar Sabat, NP Sahu, Prof Jitendra Kumar Sahu, Dr Manoj Kumar Muni, Ramchandra Patra, Dr Bharatibala Pattnaik and others.



MOHARANA MAKES THAKURANI IDOL OF NEWSPAPER

Brahmapur: Sand artist Satya Moharana has created a beautiful idol of Maa Budhi Thakurnai using old newspapers on the occasion of the ongoing Thakurani festival in the city. He took three days to make the 13-inch-high and 10-inch-long idol. Crown, tongue, earrings, nose-ring and other ornaments have also been prepared of newspapers. Earlier, Moharana had marvelously created micro sculptures out of wood, papers and detergent cakes.



NAWAB'S KITCHEN OPENS IN BRAHMAPUR

Brahmapur: The New Biryani Centre opened its third branch Nawab's Kitchen at Corporate Road here on Sunday. BJD youth wing VP R Muralli Mohan inaugurated the restaurant in the presence of its owner SA Rashid, SA Khalili, SA Sakilla, BJD youth leader Udaya Behera, Kailash Bisoi, Krushna Choudhury, Binod Gauda and Santosh Behera.



Vedanta invests ₹50K cr in Odisha

COMMITTED TO SOCIO-ECO GROWTH: CEO

PNS ■ BHAWANIPATNA

The Vedanta Aluminium has become the highest ever producer of the metal in India with 1.95 MT of production and Vedanta's Lanjigarh unit has been instrumental in making this happen, told Vedanta Alumina CEO Rahul Sharma. Sharma told Vedanta has invested over Rs 50,000 crore in Odisha till date, which is the single-largest investment in the State. This investment has led to the creation of tremen-



dous direct and indirect employment for the people in Odisha. The investment has also resulted in the development of hundreds of SMEs and vendors in the downstream sector. The company has spent more than Rs 174 crore in community development in Odisha. "We are essentially focussed on promoting health, education and livelihood in the local community. We have set

up the DAV Vedanta International School to provide high-quality education to the children and youth of the local community. It was the first English medium in the region and majority of the students are first-generation learners from the local community. Our state-of-the-art Vedanta Hospital has touched more than four lakh lives and made healthcare accessible and affordable for the people of the region. We have embraced artisans to support them in reviving the traditional Dhokra art and Saura art forms and nurture it in a way that it becomes a viable avenue of livelihood for them. It remains committed to the triple bottom-line of 'People, Planet and Prosperity' that will enable the company to create a sustainable future for the communities."

Rapido launches bike taxi for twin city

TO FERRY VOTERS TO POLLING BOOTHS

PNS ■ BHUBNESWAR

Rapido-India's largest bike taxi is offering free rides to voters during the elections. Users will have to book a Rapidobike through the Rapido app.

Rapido has introduced this initiative to ensure that every

voter can exercise their "Right to Vote" by helping voters to reach the polling station on time.

Users will have to use the coupon code "IVOTE" when booking a ride on the app. The offer will be applicable in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. In general Rapido offers an introductory rate of Rs 10 for 3km for the people of Odisha.

Customers can pay online for the ride through the Rapido Wallet, or other popular wallets like PayTM, Mobikwik, and Freecharge, or they may choose to pay with cash.

Crops in 5,084 ha land hit in hailstorm

PNS ■ BARGARH

Farming on more than 5,084 hectares of land in about 25 grama panchayats in Bargarh district has been affected due to hailstorm here.

According to information, 1,537 hectares of farming in 13 villages under 9 GPs under Bargarh block and 149 hectares of farming in eight blocks under Bhatli block, 314 hectares of farming in 15 villages under Bijepur block and 3,057 hectares of farming in 24 villages in Bheden Block have been affected in the hailstorm.

It was revealed from a report of the Agriculture Department submitted to the insurance company. The concern affected farmers would get compensation, said Deputy Director of Agriculture Dinabandhu Gandhi.

On the other hand, farmers of Bargarh district have alleged that crops in more area of land have been affected than the district administration survey report. They have demanded that a re-survey conducted again.

Liquor godown raided at Joda



PNS ■ CHAMPUPA

Sampalpur excise sleuths unearthed an illegal foreign liquor godown running on a Government land at Joda in Keonhar district on Monday.

Acting on a tip-off, the team led by Pratap Samal conducted a raid on the foreign liquor shop owned by one Mata Jaiswal. The team found a stock of bottles didn't march records maintained by the shop. The team also came to know about a go-down run by

THE TEAM FOUND A STOCK OF BOTTLES DIDN'T MARCH RECORDS MAINTAINED BY THE SHOP

one Sushil Jaiswal was situated on a Government land from where illegal liquor bottles were being transacted.

Udit Raj revolts, Lekhi...

From Page 1
has been fielded from New Delhi seat, Delhi Congress working president Rajesh Liloithia from North west seat, Mahabal Mishra from West Delhi, five-term Lok Sabha MP JP Agarwal from Chandni Chowk and former Delhi Minister Arvinder Singh Lovely will test waters from the East Delhi constituency.

Meanwhile, the BJP has decided to field sitting MP Meenakshi Lekhi from the New Delhi seat and former Indian cricketer Gautam Gambhir from the East Delhi seat.

The party did not declare the name of its candidate for the North West constituency. Sitting MP Udit Raj has raised the banner of revolt as he feels that the party has not been fair to him. Former Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officer Udit Raj posted a series of tweets on Monday to express his concern as the BJP has not declared his candidature.

Udit held a Press conference later in the evening to air his grievance and asked the party leadership to come clean on his nomination from the North West Lok Sabha seat. He took the names of senior party leaders including BJP president Amit Shah and Home Minister Rajnath Singh and claimed that he was promised re-nomination.

Sources said BJP may field popular Punjabi singer Hans Raj Hans from the North west seat and announcement to this regard is likely to be made by Tuesday morning as both the party president and the Prime Minister were not in the national Capital.

Sheila has been Chief Minister for three terms between 1998 and 2013. The eighty-one-year-old leader, who took over from Maken as the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) president earlier this year, was last a Member of Parliament from 1984-89 from Kannauj. Dikshit had unsuccessfully contested from East Delhi constituency in 1998. Again in 2013 Assembly polls, she lost to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal from Gole Market assembly seat. Since then she has not contested any election.

MAHARATHY ARRESTED...

From Page 1
On the other hand, Maharathy refuted his complicity in the incident. "A verbal duel and a scuffle took place between a person present at the farmhouse and the officials after the latter entered the premises. I am deeply disturbed by the incident," he said.

Paradip TU leader Pattnaik backs BJD in polls



PNS ■ PARADIP

Prominent trade union leader and president of eight mega workers' organisations Santosh Kumar Pattnaik has declared his support to the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in the current elections.

On the occasion of a Chaiti Parba Mahotsav of fishermen community organised at Zero Point on Sunday, a meeting was organised by Pattnaik to extend his support for the BJD.

Paradip BJD MLA candidate Sambit Routray was chief guest at the meeting while for-

mer Paradip Municipality Chairman Gobinda Chandra Tara, Kishor Kumar Parida, EIORW Union working president Dilip Kumar Behera and vice-president Manindra Guru, Paradip Port Land Loser Farmers' Association president Chimay Das, Purba Bharat Kaibata Mahasabha convenor Abhiram Samal and Netrananda Samal were present.

Santosh Pattnaik requested all office-bearers and members of his unions to vote for the BJD.

Sambit Routray assured the gathering not to maintain any bias and work for development of all sections of people. EIORW general secretary Padma Lochan Dash gave welcome address. Hundreds of members of Eastern India Oil Refinery Workers' Union (EIORWU), Paradip Port Banik Sangha, Jagatsinghpur District Truck Owners' Association, Paradip Port Land Losers' Dumper Owners' Association, Oil Refinery Contract Labour's Cooperative, East Coast Breweries Employees' Union and Purba Bharat Kaibarta Mahasabha were present.

AFFIDAVIT

By Virtue of an affidavit before the Notary Public, Keonjhar that, I, Parsuram Mahanta, aged about 47 years, S/O - Late Purusottam Mahanta, AT - Neudiposhi, P.O. - Budhikapudi, P.S. - Turumunga, Dist. - Keonjhar do hereby solemnly affirm and state that, my daughter's name was erroneously mentioned as Monika Mahanta instead of Kalyani Mahanta in my family pension. Kalyani Mahanta & Monika Mahanta is one and same person. This affidavit to be produced before the competent authority for necessary purpose.

Sd/-
Parsuram Mahanta

'Quality, skill required to have future in PR'

KSMC holds public relations summit

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The KIIT School of Mass Communication (KSMC) organised its first public relations summit on the eve of National Public Relations Day here on Saturday on the theme "Public Relations: Telling Your Own Story in a Dynamic World".

Chief guest India News group managing editor Rana Yashwant said that a country is functional only when the citizens have different opinions and understanding. Quality and skill



is required to have a future in public relations, he added.

Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), Bhubaneswar Chapter Chairman Amarjyoti Mahapatra spoke about role of public relation in ancient era. He also explained the popular mantra "Accept the change,

adapt and innovate".

KIIT University VC Prof Hrushikesh Mohanty encouraged the students to make their own stories that would set examples. He wished the students to meet their goals by utilising opportunities wisely. School of Mass

Communication CEO Prof Himansu Sekhar Khatua, faculties Ruby Nanda and Sudarsan Sahoo were present. In plenary session ECoR Chief PRO JP Mishra, OMC Director (Personnel) Dr. Santanu Rath and JSPL EVP Prashant Kumar Hota spoke.

Baleswar murder cracked; two arrested

'Accused didn't repay hand loan, killed lender'

PNS ■ BALESWAR

The Khantapara police finally unfolded the Amulya Behera murder case, which had taken place on April 10, by arresting two persons on Monday.

The assailants are identified as Pranab Saw (30) of Bishnuchhak under Khantapada PS and Nini Behera (32) of Siadamal village under Nilgiri block. They had allegedly killed Amulya Behera (40) on April 10 night.

The body with a slit throat was found next morning on a road near to Santa Chhak. According to Khantapara PS IIC Sriballav Sahu, nonpayment of hand loan was the reason behind the killing.

Amulya was running a betel shop and lending money to earn interest to others. Pranab, a brick kiln owner, had taken loan Rs 50,000 in January 2019. Though he was paying interest, yet he didn't pay the principal amount. Amulya was insisting for the refund of the principal amount.

Annoyed by Amulya's repeated demand, Pranab hatched a conspiracy with Nini, a worker at his kiln, and to eliminate the money-lender. The two invited Amulya to a dinner and cut his throat. The two conceded to the crime, said police.

Coast Guard on alert after Easter blasts in Lanka

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of the serial blasts in Sri Lanka on Sunday, the Indian Coast Guard has intensified patrolling to prevent terrorists responsible for the dastardly act from escaping from there and sneaking into India through the sea route. The precautionary step was taken on Sunday itself after the enormity of the situation became clear and more fast patrol boats besides surveillance planes and helicopters were deployed.

Maintaining high alert, the Coast Guard has mounted round the clock vigil all along the Indian maritime boundary with Sri Lanka to thwart any attempt by the terrorists to avoid the security dragnet in Sri Lanka and infiltrate into India through sea, officials said here on Monday.

They also said all ships from Coast Guard stations at Tuticorin, Mandapam and Karaikal were pressed into service for heightened patrolling along the sensitive sea lanes. Medium range maritime surveillance aircraft were providing aerial support to the ships in an effort to detect any hostile movement and alert the patrol boats for interception.

Vigil was increased soon after Sri Lanka said a local extremist group National Thowheed Jamath (NTJ) may be responsible for the blasts

which claimed nearly 290 lives. Sri Lanka President Maithripala Srisena declared a nationwide emergency on Monday.

The preventive measure in India was also taken to avoid a repeat of 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks in 2008 when Pakistani terrorists managed to reach the metropolis through sea and launch a series of attacks in which 166 people were killed. There were concerns that terrorists escaping from Sri Lanka

may try to engineer terror attacks in India, sources said. Keeping this in view, security was ramped up around all defence and other vital installations including naval bases in coastal region, they said. Moreover, all the stake holders in coastal security including the local police increased patrolling at all landing points in the coastal region especially in Tamil Nadu and deployed security pickets to prevent infiltration.



India alerted Colombo 2 weeks ago of terror attack

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Over two weeks before the deadly suicide bombings in Sri Lanka, India had alerted Colombo of possible terror hits at churches and preliminary findings suggest the slain suicide bomber and chief of the National Thowheed Jamath Whavan Hashim alias Zahran Hashim had attempted to carry out blast at the Indian embassy and at the US embassy earlier this month.

Following the inputs of the impending terror strike, the Lankan police had also issued an alert to the effect but could not assess the magnitude of the problem that was in the making

Sri Lanka of ISIS. Estimates here suggest Hashim has a follower base of nearly 400 radicals and the attack on the churches could be a tactical ploy to deflect attention of the aggrieved Buddhists against the Muslims who are lesser in number in the island nation than the former, sources said.

has put in place a tight security cordon and sophisticated access control paraphernalia. Following the inputs of the impending terror strike, the Sri Lankan police had also issued an alert to the effect but could not assess the magnitude of the problem that was in the making. Initial assessments here suggest the serial suicide bombings in and around Colombo were essentially an outcome of Islamist versus Buddhist conflict.

Pakistan's covert agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in Colombo might have provided facilitation for logistics supplies to Hashim through its terror proxies like the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and its humanitarian assistance arm Jamat-ud-Dawah that has been present in Sri Lanka since the 2005 tsunami. The JuD had purchased a number of orphans for the purpose of radicalization from Sri Lanka and other countries hit by tsunami.

Hashim is said to have undergone treatment earlier for mental illness and wanted to become a social worker in 2011. However, Hashim joined religious groups like the Sri Lanka Thowheed Jamat and subsequently got in touch with the ISIS especially those based in the UAE and went on to become the chief of Khorasan

The terror targets which include three luxury hotels-Shangri La, Kingsbury and Cinnamon Grand-and St Anthony Church Zion Church and St Sebastian church were identified after the failed bids at the Indian and American missions in Colombo.

Blasts could have TN repercussions: Security experts

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

The repercussions of Sunday's serial blasts in Colombo that claimed more than 200 lives could have a major effect in Tamil Nadu, according to intelligence and security experts in the State. Thowheed Jamath, an Islamic terrorist organisation, the name of which is linked to the serial blasts in Sri Lanka, has a strong presence in Tamil Nadu. The open sea between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka offers immense scope to the volunteers of this organisation to shift from one place to another. It is an open secret in Tamil Nadu that all anti-national and extremist organisations work in unison.

Jamath is a name which causes fear and terror in the minds of the people was made known by the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu J Jayalithaa herself while speaking to reporters in January 2013.

"There are more than 7.5 lakh active Thowheed Jamath activists in Tamil Nadu," Jayalithaa had told a Press meet specially convened by her to explain the reasons behind banning Viswaroopam, a Tamil movie produced by Kamal Haasan. About 24 Islamic organisations had expressed their opposition to the release of the movie because they alleged that the film contained anti-Islam references and they wanted such scenes to be deleted from the film.

Of the scenes were not deleted, the organisations, led by Thowheed Jamath had threatened to stage demonstrations in front of the 524 theatres where the movie was to be released. "We need 56, 440 policemen to ensure security and law and order in these theatres on a round-the-clock basis and hence we decided to effect the ban in the movie under Section 144 of the IPC," Jayalithaa had told during the press briefing.

She said she was very much worried about the law and order situation at that time as there were many instances of throwing of petrol bombs and vandalising film theatres. But the frequent shuffling and transfer of intelligence officials (both in State and Central

services) is coming in the way of tracking the real activities of Thowheed Jamaath which are shrouded in mysteries, according to insiders in these departments.

Since then the strength of Thowheed Jamaath has increased manifold in Tamil Nadu. Though the organisation is not visibly active in the State, it is very much present in areas of conflict between caste Hindus and Dalits. The Thowheed Jamaath is actively propagating Islam among the Dalits by distributing the Holy Books and religions literature.

A status report prepared by a Chennai based intelligence think tank for the union home ministry has this to tell about the state of affairs in Tamil Nadu.

IN SHORT

LOKPAL TO WORK FROM 5-STAR LUXURY HOTEL
New Delhi: The country's first Lokpal, the anti-corruption ombudsman, will work from the five-star luxury hotel, The Ashok, in Delhi. The Lokpal chairperson PC Ghose, all of its eight members and support staff are being allocated space in the hotel premises

SC REFUSES TO ENTERTAIN PLEA ON BRIBING IN POLLS
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea which alleged that people were being bribed on a massive scale for the Lok Sabha polls in Tamil Nadu. A Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi said it was not inclined to hear the matter since the elections in the state were already over.

NGO AROH CELEBRATES WORLD EARTH DAY
New Delhi: NGO AROH Foundation celebrated World Earth Day by organising plantation drives, awareness rallies and competitions in schools and villages in different States. Neelam Gupta, president AROH Foundation said, "World Earth Day is a day on which millions of people across the globe participate to accelerate work towards conservation and sustainability."

PM'S COPTER ROW: OFFICER SENT BACK TO KARNATAKA
New Delhi: The Election Commission general observer, Mohammed Mohsin (1996-batch IAS officer), who was suspended for checking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's helicopter in Odisha's Sambalpur in violation of norms for dealing with SPG protectees, has been sent back to Karnataka.

SC SEEKS REPLIES OVER RESTRICTION ON TRAFFIC
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought responses from the Centre and Jammu & Kashmir on a plea seeking quashing of an order which restricts civilian traffic two days a week on the national highway (NH) stretch from Udhampur to Baramulla for movement of security forces.

Explain why infiltration, casualties highest under BJP Govt: PC to Jaitley

New Delhi: After Arun Jaitley criticised him for his recent remarks on Pakistan, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram Monday hit back saying that the Union minister must explain why infiltration, the number of infiltrators and casualties last year were highest under the BJP government.

Slamming former Union minister P Chidambaram's statement that India must "change its behaviour" towards Pakistan, Jaitley said, "Why Mr P Chidambaram is siding with Pakistan by asking India to change its behaviour? Should we remain victim of terrorism & not do anything?"

BJP says Rahul 'liar of first order' after he expresses regret in SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the BJP demanded an apology from Rahul Gandhi and called him "liar of the first order" in public opinion after the Congress president expressed regret in the Supreme Court on Monday over his remarks in connection with the Rafale judgment, the main opposition party described the saffron interpretation as "blasphemous" amounting to criminal contempt of court proceedings even as it insisted "ek hi chowkidar chor hai".

Addressing a press conference here, BJP spokesperson GVL Narsimha Rao said, "Today, by filing an affidavit in the honourable SC, Rahul Gandhi accepted that he had lied on his allegations against PM Modi on the Rafale deal."

"This was an attempt by Rahul Gandhi to manufacture a lie and create a controversy in the Rafale deal... He should apologise to the people of this country," he said adding "In public opinion, Rahul Gandhi is a liar of the first order."

Stating that Rahul stands



guilty in the "court of public opinion", Rao added that all Congress cadres across the country hang their heads in shame that there leader has been blatantly lying on the Rafale jet deal.

While senior BJP leader and union defence minister Nirmala Sitaraman said the Congress leader's lie has given a big hit to his credibility in the public eye, BJP MP Meenakshi Lekhi said Rahul expressing "regret" over his remarks on Rafale verdict was an "admission of his guilt" and "wrong-doing" by him. It was Lekhi who had filed the criminal contempt petition against him.

The Congress, however, said it did not agree with BJP's interpretation of Rahul's regret as submitted with the apex court.

"Issue is sub-judice, stop passing verdict today! We reiterate -- ek hi chowkidar chor hai (only one watchman is a thief)!", said Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala.

Surjewala hit out at the BJP saying, "Fakery has no boundaries. Lies no limitations, disinformation no confines! BJP's blasphemous misrepresentation of Rahul ji's reply to the SC is itself a criminal contempt of court proceedings."

EC submits detailed report on Modi biopic to Supreme Court

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Monday submitted its detailed report to the Supreme Court on the biopic of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi took the EC's report on Modi's biopic and asked the poll panel to supply a copy of the report to the producer of the movie.

The bench, which also comprised justices Deepak Gupta and Sanjiv Khanna, has now fixed the plea of producers challenging the EC's ban on the movie for hearing on Friday 26.

The apex court had on April 15 directed the Election Commission to re-examine its earlier order and take an informed decision on banning pan-India the release of the biopic on Prime Minister Narendra Modi after watching the full movie.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for film producers who have challenged the EC's ban on the biopic's release till the current general elections are over, had told the

top court that the poll panel has taken the decision after watching the promo, and not the entire movie.

EC's counsel Amit Sharma

had said that the entire movie was not available and a decision to ban the release was taken after watching the trailer.

Notification for last phase of LS polls issued

New Delhi: The EC on Monday issued the notification for the seventh and last phase of the Lok Sabha elections in which 59 constituencies spread across eight states and union territories will go for polls. While the first phase of election was held on April 11, the last phase will be held on May 19. So far, two phases have taken place, while the third phase of polling is on Tuesday. All the 13 seats of Punjab, four in Himachal Pradesh and one in Chandigarh will go for polls in a single phase on May 19.

Ex-deputy EC appointed special observer for Tripura

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former deputy election commissioner Vinod Zutshi was on Monday appointed as special observer for Tripura where the Lok Sabha polls to one of the seats was postponed in view of the law and order situation. On Tuesday last, the Election Commission had postponed

polling in the Tripura (East) Lok Sabha seat to the third phase on April 23 (Tuesday) from April 18, saying the prevailing law and order situation there is not conducive for holding free and fair polls. EC sources said, the Commission has issued orders appointing Zutshi as special observer for Tripura.

Modi to file nomination on April 26

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will file his nomination from Varanasi on April 26 and will be accompanied by the party's top brass, including BJP national president Amit Shah.

Chief Ministers of NDA-ruled states and BJP allies are expected to attend the event, party sources said.

Modi will file the nomination papers from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh on April 26, they said, adding a road show will be held there on April 25.

Various leaders of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), including Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, are slated to attend the road show, the sources said.

"Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be filing his nomination later this week and given his track record as a Member of Parliament and Prime Minister, Varanasi will be looking forward to welcoming him," BJP spokesperson Nalin Kohli said.

Modi represents Varanasi in the Parliament. The city of temples votes on May 19.

PM's nuke-boast not in interest of national security, says Congress

New Delhi: The Congress on Monday attacked the Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his remarks on nuclear arsenal, saying his "boastful claims" of being "ready for an atomic missile attack" on Pakistan are uncalled for and not in the interest of national security.

Slamming Modi for his remarks, the party said PM's election speeches and irresponsible statements point to a growing desperation in the BJP. Modi, at an election rally in Rajasthan's Barmer on Sunday said India is no more afraid of nuclear threats of Pakistan. "Otherwise, Pakistan used to give nuclear threats. What do we have? Have we kept it for 'Diwali'?" the PM had said.

Anand Sharma said the Congress would like to remind Modi that these elections are about unemployment, farm distress and the betrayal of the voters on electoral promises. Every Indian is proud of the valour of our forces and our nuclear capabilities, but the government cannot hide behind this, he said.

Sharma targeting the PM for his "boastful remarks" was also in reference to Modi's comments in Gujarat's Patan in which he stated that after Indian Air Force pilot Abhinandan Varthaman was held by Pakistan, a senior American official on the second day said that "Modi has kept 12 missiles ready and might attack."

Apex court issues notice to Irani on Nirupam's plea

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to Union Minister Smriti Irani that pertains to two cross defamation complaints filed by Congress leader Sanjiv Nirupam and the BJP leader against each other.

In one case, the Delhi High Court had quashed the summons issued to Irani in a defamation complaint filed against her by Nirupam.

The High Court had however dismissed a similar plea of Nirupam seeking to set aside the summons issued against him in a cross defamation complaint filed by Irani.

The High Court, on December 19 last year, had said the case against Nirupam will continue.

On Monday, a Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi issued the notice to Irani on two appeals filed by Nirupam.

The Congress leader had challenged a magisterial court's March 11, 2013 order summoning him in Irani's defamation complaint against him.

He had also sought quashing of the January 1, 2013 complaint filed by Irani.

In her plea, Irani had sought quashing of the summons issued to her by a trial court on June 6, 2014.

She had also sought quashing of the complaint filed by Nirupam.

SC directs Madras HC to decide TikTok plea

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Madras High Court to decide on April 24 a plea of TikTok app seeking vacating of its ban order.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi said if the Madras High Court fails to decide on the plea of TikTok app then its ban order will stand vacated.

The apex court had earlier refused to stay the Madras High Court order that directed the Centre to ban the "TikTok" app over concerns about access to pornographic content through it.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for the Chinese company ByteDance, had told the top court earlier that there were over billion downloads of the mobile app and ex-parte orders were passed by the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court.

He had said the court did not even issue notice in the matter and an order was passed without hearing them.

The High Court had on April 3 directed the Centre to ban mobile application "TikTok" as it voiced concern over "pornographic and inappropriate content" being made available through such apps.

2 lawyers' bodies of SC disapprove of CJI's handling of allegations

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two lawyers' bodies of the Supreme Court on Monday disapproved of the manner in which Chief Justice Ranjan Gogoi dealt with the sexual harassment allegations against him, calling it "procedural impropriety" and "violation" of procedures.

As the apex court reassembled after the weekend recess in the backdrop of the stunning allegations by a former court staffer, the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) and the Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association (SCAORA) urged the Full Court to take all such necessary steps as may be required in law to deal with the charges.

The allegations cropped up against Justice Gogoi on Saturday prompting him to convene an urgent extraordinary hearing by a three-member bench headed by him during which he asserted that the charges against him were "unbelievable".

The allegations by the woman, who had worked at Justice Gogoi's home office in Delhi, dates back to October last year, days after he was appointed the CJI.

After an emergent meeting of its executive committee, the SCBA said in a statement that without prejudice to any enquiry which may be initiated the full court should collate all the materials and facts with



regard to the allegations from electronic, print, social media and other available sources for consideration at its next meeting.

"The executive committee has resolved that procedure adopted for conducting the court proceedings on April 20 in the matter of allegations made by ex-employee of the Supreme Court against the Chief Justice of India is in violation of procedure established by law as well as principles of natural justice," SCAORA Secretary Vikrant Yadav said.

In a resolution, the SCAORA, the top court lawyers'

body, said in a resolution that the allegations against the CJI have to be dealt with as per the established procedure of law and law must be applied in each and every case uniformly.

The Supreme Court Employees Welfare Association on its part came out in support of Justice Gogoi, claiming that the allegations were "false and fabricated".

The association, in a resolution, said it strongly condemned the "false, fabricated and baseless allegations" against the CJI which is aimed at maligning the institution of judiciary.

But apex court Employees Welfare Association comes out in CJI's support

"The Supreme Court Employees Welfare Association on behalf of all the employees strongly condemns the false, fabricated and baseless allegations against Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi," it said.

The SCAORA, which is a body of lawyers comprising advocates empowered by the apex court to file pleadings on behalf of parties in the top court, sought immediate appointment of a committee headed by full court of the apex court to impartially investigate and inquire into the allegations and give an independent finding.

"Supreme Court Advocates On Record Association expresses its deep reservation against procedural impropriety shown by Justice Ranjan Gogoi in the suo motu proceedings held on April 20 in the issue relating to allegations of sexual harassment against Justice Ranjan Gogoi, by an ex-Supreme Court employee," the SCAORA resolution said.

"It is therefore resolved that the SCAORA strongly disapproves the manner in which the complaint was dealt with and seeks enquiry and action in the above matter..." it added.

Justice Gogoi said during the Saturday hearing that the allegations were part of a conspiracy by some "bigger force" to "deactivate" the CJI's office.

The CJI also said he would not stoop too low even to deny them.

TOP CANDIDATES

ASSAM
DHUBRI
Maulana Badruddin Ajmal, AIUDF vs Abu Taher Bepari, Congress

BIHAR
MADHEPURA
Sharad Yadav, LJD (RJD alliance) vs Pappu Yadav, Jan Adhikar Party vs Dinesh Chandra Yadav, JD(U)

CHHATTISGARH
DURG
Vijay Baghel, BJP vs Pratima Chandrakar, Congress

GOA
NORTH GOA
Shripad Yesso Naik, BJP vs Girish Chodankar, Congress

GUJARAT
GANDHINAGAR
Amit Shah, BJP vs CJ Chavda, Congress

J&K
ANANTNAG
Mehbooba Mufti, PDP vs Ghulam Ahmad Mir, Congress vs Hasnain Masoodi, NC

KARNATAKA
KALABURAGI
Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress vs Umesh Jadhav, BJP

UTTARA KANNADA
Ananth Kumar Hegde, BJP vs Anand Anotikar, JD(S)

SHIMOGA
BY Raghavendra, BJP vs Madhu Bangarappa, Congress

KERALA
WAYANAD
Rahul Gandhi, Congress vs Thushar Vellappally, BJP ally Bharath Dharma Jana Sena vs PP Suneer, LDF

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM
Shashi Tharoor, Congress vs Kummanam Rajasekharan, BJP vs C Divakaran, LDF

ODISHA
PURI
Sambit Patra, BJP vs Satya Prakash Nayak, Congress vs Pinaki Misra, BJD

MAHARASHTRA
BARAMATI
Supriya Sule, NCP vs Kanchan Rahul Kul, BJP

RAIGAD
Anant Geete, Shiv Sena vs Sunil Tatkare, NCP

UTTAR PRADESH
MAINPURI
Mulayam Singh Yadav, SP vs Prem Singh Shakya, BJP

RAMPUR
Jaya Prada, BJP vs Azam Khan, SP

PILIBHIT
Varun Gandhi, BJP vs Hemraj Verma, SP

FIROZABAD
Shivpal Singh Yadav, Samajwadi Party Lohia vs Chandrasen Jadun, BJP vs Akshay Yadav, SP

WEST BENGAL
JANGIPUR
Mafuja Khatun, BJP vs Abhijit Mukherjee, Congress vs Khalilur Rehman, TMC

MALDAH
UTTAR
Khagen Murmu, BJP vs Isha Khan Chowdhury, Congress vs Mausam Noor, TMC

MURSHIDABAD
Humayun Kabir, BJP vs Abu Hena, Congress vs Janab Abu Taher Khan, TMC

Buses to ferry 206 voters of Guj village bound by river, sea

Vadodara: A small hamlet bound by Narmada river and Arabian Sea in Gujarat's Bharuch, where villagers previously used boats to reach their polling booth to cast votes, will this time be provided buses, a senior poll official said. Aliabet, part of Bharuch Lok Sabha seat, has 206 voters whose polling booth is almost 65 kilometres away in Vagra tehsil in the district, around 80 kilometres from here. This year, the water level in the Narmada river is low and using a boat would not have been possible, the official said. **PTI**

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| <p>Anantnag Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: PDP Mehbooba Mufti Runner-up: JKN Mirza Mehboob Beg</p> <p>Vote % PDP: 53.4, JKN: 36.0, Others: 10.6</p> | <p>Gandhinagar Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: BJP Lal Krishna Advani Runner-up: Cong Kiritbhai Ishvarbhai Patel</p> <p>Vote % BJP: 68.0, Cong: 25.5, Others: 6.5</p> | <p>Gulbarga Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: Cong Mallikarjun Kharge Runner-up: BJP Revunaiik Belamagi</p> <p>Vote % Cong: 50.8, BJP: 43.3, Others: 5.9</p> | <p>Jangipur Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: Cong Abhijit Mukherjee Runner-up: CPM Muzaffar Hossain</p> <p>Vote % Cong: 33.1, AITC: 18.5, BJP: 8.6, Others: 6.0</p> | <p>Madhepura Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: RJD Pappu Yadav Runner-up: JD(U) Sharad Yadav</p> <p>Vote % RJD: 35.7, JD(U): 30.2, BJP: 24.4, Others: 9.7</p> | <p>Pilibhit Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: BJP Meneka Gandhi Runner-up: SP Budhsen Verma</p> <p>Vote % BJP: 52.1, SP: 22.8, BSP: 18.7, Others: 6.4</p> | <p>Shimoga Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>By-Election Result 2018 Winner: BJP B. Y. Raghavendra Runner-up: JD(S) Madhu Bangarappa</p> <p>Vote % BJP: 50.7, JD(S): 45.9, Others: 3.4</p> | <p>Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha Constituency</p> <p>Electoral Performance 2014 Winner: Cong Shashi Tharoor Runner-up: BJP O. Rajagopal</p> <p>Vote % Cong: 34.1, BJP: 32.3, CPI: 28.5, Others: 5.1</p> |
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Saurashtra to be real test for BJP

Ahmedabad: With memories of the 2017 Assembly polls fresh in mind, the Saurashtra region, which has seven Lok Sabha seats, will be the real test for the ruling BJP when balloting is held in Gujarat tomorrow. The region, which used to be a BJP bastion since 1995, gave jitters to the ruling party in the Assembly polls held just over 17 months back, as it lost 14 of the 35 seats it had won from among the total 54 seats in the region in the 2012 Assembly elections. In those polls, the Congress had doubled its tally to 32 seats from 16 it had won in the previous elections. Because of the reverses in this region in the December 2017 Assembly polls, the ruling BJP had come close to losing power in the state for the first time in three decades. In the 182-member Assembly, the party won 99 seats, just 7 more than the simple majority and 16 less than the previous time. The key reasons for this reversal were farm distress, unemployment and adverse impacts of demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax (GST) on the small scale and medium sized industry as well as the trading class. The Congress kept harping on these issues which are still very much alive. Besides this, firebrand youth leader Hardik Patel's massive agitation for reservations to his Patidar (or Patel) community made a huge impact in Saurashtra which has sizeable population of the Patidar community. And now Hardik Patel is in the Congress. Clearly cognizant of this, the BJP pulled out all stops in Saurashtra this time, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself holding as many as seven rallies in this region only. Electoral performance of the BJP in Gujarat is a personal prestige issue for Modi who was the CM of the State for three consecutive terms before he became the PM. **IANS**



A woman gets her hair styled for voter awareness in Ahmedabad on Monday **PTI**

JAYA-AZAM RAMPUR POTBOILER

Abuses, insults, melodrama galore in electoral battle

Rampur: "Am I a nachne wali, am I an amrapali?" BJP candidate Jaya Prada asked at a rally, her question referencing SP leader's Azam Khan's derogatory remark about her as a dancing girl and testimony to how the electoral contest here has become more about personal insults than anything else. The crowd at the public meeting in Mat Khera village responded to her posers with a loud "no" and the actor-turned-politician went on to narrate the harassment she faced from the Samajwadi Party candidate. The contest between the two one time buddies and now arch rivals was always expected to be fierce but the saga of acrimony took an ugly turn with the SP veteran's "khaki underwear" jibe. Rampur, which goes to the polls on Tuesday, was propelled into the national spotlight with the furore that followed and the political discourse has since centred on just that. While Jaya Prada has been reminding the public about it in every meeting, Khan has played the victim card after the Election Commission's 72-hour campaign ban was imposed on him. As Jaya Prada turned this election into a fight for women's dignity, Khan gave it a religious colour with speeches seemingly intended to appeal to Muslims. **PTI**

Why 2nd phase of elections is crucial for BJP

KESTUR VASUKI ■ BENGALURU

The second phase of elections is a crucial test for the BJP in Karnataka. Mumbai Karnataka, Central Karnataka and Hyderabad Karnataka will go to the polls in the second phase on April 23. Riding on a Modi wave the BJP bets big on 14 seats in these areas, a space the saffron party thinks it can do well. They are in a process of consolidating votes against the united might of the Congress and the JDs. For the first time the BJP is facing the challenge of two forces, one is a vokkaliga (Gowda) party and second one is the secular Congress. It means Congress leader Siddaramaiah and Kumaraswamy are betting big to lure minorities (politics of AHINDA) and other communities in the name of secularism to take on and break the BJP's vote bank, the Lingayats. Congress hopes to with the united force and Rahul Gandhi and Deve Gowda, break the supremacy of the "communal party BJP", in the northern districts of the State. The 14 parliamentary constituencies which are going to polls are Chikkodi, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur (SC), Gulbarga (SC), Raichur (ST), Bidar, Koppal, Bellary (ST), Haveri, Dharwad, Uttara Kannada, Davanagere and Shivamogga where BJP is hopeful of maintaining the lead. The PM Narendra Modi being the mascot of the party has campaigned many times in the name of Rashtravad. He also raked up the dynasty politics and politics of "gathbandhan" Amit Shah, SM Krishna, Deve Gowda, Kumaraswamy, Siddaramaiah DK Shivakumar and host of other leaders are camping there as last leg of elections which are crucial for both BJP and Congress. The back to back campaign by Modi and Rahul shows the importance of these constituencies. The parties also think that the add-up number will play a crucial role in national politics and government formation. While BJP hopes for "agali baar Modi sarkar" and Congress with "mahagathbandhan" pitching for "Make Rahul the next prime minister". With Deve Gowda's acumen in politics Karnataka became a platform for opposition unity. With political permutations and combinations Gowda hopes to play a major role in the next Government formation. The BJP is contesting all 14 seats, while the Congress in 11 and JD(S) in 3. In 2014 general elections, BJP had won 11 seats and Congress remaining 3, with none going to JD(S). Congress is contesting in Chikkodi, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Gulbarga (SC), Raichur (ST), Bidar, Koppal, Bellary (ST), Haveri, Dharwad and Davanagere. The JD-S is contesting from Bijapur (SC), Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada.

UP to decide fate of four members of Mulayam's clan

Lucknow: The third phase of polling for ten Lok Sabha seats in Uttar Pradesh will decide the electoral fate of four members of the SP patron Mulayam Singh Yadav's clan besides those of senior party leader Azam Khan and film actor and BJP candidate Jaya Prada. The polling for the third phase is to be held on April 23 for ten Lok Sabha seats in the Rohilkhand region of the state along with 105 other seats across 13 other States. The BJP, which had won seven out of the ten seats in this region in 2014, has a huge stake in this phase in Uttar Pradesh as the area is considered a SP stronghold as three of the total five members of the Yadav family had won from this region despite a Modi wave in the last elections. The three Yadav family members who are seeking re-election respectively from Mainpuri, Badaun and Firozabad in this phase are Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav and his two nephews, Dharmendra Yadav and Akshay Yadav. Pitted against Akshay Yadav, son of Mulayam Singh Yadav's cousin Ram Gopal Yadav, is another brother of the party patriarch, Shivpal Yadav, who has fallen out with SP president Akhilesh Yadav, and fighting from Firozabad after floating a new political outfit, Pragatiseheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia). In 2014, Mulayam Singh had won both the Mainpuri and Azamgarh seats, but had vacated the first one, which was won by his another family member Tej Pratap Singh in the subsequent bye-election. The electoral fortunes of senior SP leader Azam Khan will also be decided in this phase from Rampur which witnessed a new low in campaigning this time. Known for his controversial statements, Azam Khan made an "indecent" remark, targeting his BJP opponent Jaya Prada in Rampur by allegedly speculating on the colour of her underwear and attracting the saffron party wrath, besides that of the National Commission for Women. The other political heavyweights, whose fate are in the poll balance in the third phase of elections here, include Union minister Santosh Kumar Gangwar, who is fighting from Bareilly and BJP's Varun Gandhi from Pilibhit. **PTI**



Election officials along with security personnel travel by tractors to reach a polling station, at Hajo in Kamrup district of Assam, on Monday **PTI**

Wayanad hogs limelight in poll season, courtesy Rahul Gandhi

Wayanad: All eyes are on the Wayanad parliamentary constituency on the slopes of the Western Ghats in Kerala, chosen by Congress chief Rahul Gandhi to seek people's mandate, besides his family bastion Amethi in Uttar Pradesh. He is facing CPI's PP Suneer fielded by Kerala's ruling LDF in the April 23 election on the soil of legendary king Pazhassi Raja who fought a guerilla war against British colonialists. The NDA has fielded Thushar Vellappally of Bharat Dharma Jana Sena (BDJS) from the constituency comprising seven assembly segments in Wayanad, Malappuram and Kozhikode districts. The Wayanad seat, which was created in 2009, shares its borders with the Nilgiris of Tamil Nadu and the Mysuru region of Karnataka. It is predominantly rural and of its seven assembly segments, three are in Wayanad district, three in Malappuram and one in Kozhikode district. Two Assembly segments in the constituency — Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady — are reserved for tribals who constitute around 18 per cent of the Wayanad's population. Vandoor in Malappuram district is reserved for Scheduled Caste. Female voters are more in number compared to male voters in the Lok Sabha seat which has a total of 13,57,819 electors. There are 6,84,807 females, there are 6,73,011 male voters. While the difference is 11,796, there is only one third gender elector in the constituency. Out of the 13,57,819 voters, 2,951 are overseas electors. Senior Congress leader MI Shanavas, who died last year, had been winning the seat ever since the constituency was carved out in 2009. He had trounced CPI's M Rahmatullah by over 1.5 lakh votes in 2009 and defeated CPI leader Sathyan Mokeri by a margin of 20,000 votes in 2014. Political analysts say Wayanad, a bastion of Congress-led UDF, is a safe seat for Gandhi. According to them, the one thing that matters is the winning margin. Senior Congress leader and INTUC state president R Chandrasekharan, who campaigned for his party chief in Wayanad, said Gandhi's candidature has given a new dimension to the constituency. His vision is upliftment of people dependent on farm, labour and rural sectors. "People have faith in Gandhi. Many of them are small and marginal farmers, who grow mostly hill produce and coffee, in Wayanad. Gandhi understands their problems due to the fall in prices of agriculture produce and crop loss caused by natural disasters and extreme weather events," Chandrasekharan told PTI. CPI(M) leader P Krishna Prasad, who is campaigning for Left's candidate Suneer, said it is not going to be easy for

Wayanad
Lok Sabha Constituency

Electoral Performance 2014
Winner: Cong M. I. Shanavas
Runner-up: CPI Sathyan Mokeri

Vote %
Cong: 41.2, CPI: 38.9, Others: 19.9

Wayanad hogs limelight in poll season, courtesy Rahul Gandhi as people feel that they suffer due to the anti-farmer policies of both the Congress and the BJP governments at the Centre. "There is no Congress wave in Wayanad. The Congress or its leader Rahul Gandhi have no specific plans for addressing their problems. Farmers are on the verge of suicide due to the wrong policies of the Governments led by the Congress and the BJP," Prasad, a former MLA, told PTI. What Rahul is seeking is a lifelong relationship with the people of Wayanad, Chandrasekharan said, referring to the Congress president's speech at an election rally at Sulthan Bathery Assembly segment on April 17. "I just don't want to have a relationship of just few months. I want a lifelong relationship with you. I want the sisters of Wayanad to say that I am like their brother, the fathers and mothers to say that I am their son," Rahul had said. Wayanad has significant Muslim and Christian populations. SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA As an uneasy lull prevailed a day ahead of the third phase of polling for five Lok Sabha constituencies in Bengal the Election Commission made a massive bandobast covering more than 92 per cent of booths by Central Armed Police Forces leaving the remaining about 8 per cent to be manned by State armed police. The lathi-wielding policemen have been asked to remain at least 200 metre away from the booths, sources said. The fate of 61 candidates would be decided on Monday as five constituencies of Balurghat, North Malda, South Malda, Jangipur, Murshidabad go for polls. Traditionally a Congress belt with the Left place in the second slot things tended to have changed in the past couple of years with both the TMC and the BJP having come up in a big way replacing the two traditional outfits. About 80,23,000 electorates will decide the fate of the 61 candidates. About 324 companies of CAPF will be deployed for the five constituencies. Additional CEO Sanjay Basu said. As of now Balurghat has the sitting TMC MP in Arpita Ghosh while former Congress MP and now a TMC candidate Mausam Benazir Noor is contesting from North Malda. Her uncle and outgoing MP AH Khan Chowdhury is contesting against TMC's Muazzam Hussein and BJP's Srirupa Chowdhury. Noor is pitted against her own cousin and Congress candidate Isha Khan Chowdhury and BJP's Khagen Murmu, a vocal former CPI(M) MLA.





PM: Have taken strong action against terrorists

PTI ■ UDAIPUR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said his Government had taken strong action against terrorism and that the Congress does not understand the importance of the issue because of its "narrow mindset".

"Modi is taking action against terrorism. Modi is hitting them in their homes," the prime minister said, in an election rally here. He said national security is "very much" the issue of Lok Sabha elections, but the Congress, due to its "narrow mindset", does not understand this.

"Congress and its 'mahamilavati' (wordplay on mahagathbandhan) say Modi should not talk about national security and terrorism in elections. Someone else may get deceived but not Modi," he said. It is okay if issues like national security are not highlighted in local elections, but in Lok Sabha polls it is very much an important issue, Modi said.

"They (opposition) have narrow mindset. Even after 60 years, they do not understand what the issues of the country are. They are roaming around the country with five-six abusive words," Modi said.

Targeting Congress leaders for asking for evidences of surgical strikes, Modi said the 'saboot gang' has put the country down, but people have now given the Opposition 'saboot' (evidence) in the initial phases of polling in the country. "Will you be trusting 'saboot' (soldiers) or those who demand 'saboot'?" he asked.

The Prime Minister targeted the previous UPA Government, saying that it pressured the banks to give loans to "its millionaire friends, but our Government gave loans to the poor, tribals and youths under the MUDRA scheme".

"Now, if someone has fled abroad, either he will have to return or he will be extradited just like Michel 'mama' of Naamdars. If any rich does not return money taken as loans from bank, then he will not be able to sleep comfortably," he said, referring to British-national Christian Michel, alleged middleman in the AgustaWestland VVIP chopper case who was arrested after his extradition from Dubai.

He said the NDA Government has showed that running an honest Government in the country is possible. Modi said the foundation which will be laid in the next five years will decide the future of the 21st century.

"The upcoming polls are very important for those who are going to vote for the first time. Those who are born in the 21st century will nurture dreams and realise them in this century. A strong foundation will be laid in the next five years," Modi said.

The PM said the Congress knows very well how to spread lies and do manipulations. In the rally, Modi highlighted the achievements of his government and sought vote for the BJP.



Rahul: Ask PM what he got in return for helping Ambani

PTI ■ AMETHI

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Monday exhorted the people to ask Prime Minister Narendra Modi what he received in return for "giving" Anil Ambani Rs 30,000 crore under the Rafale deal.

Addressing a poll meeting in his parliamentary constituency here, Rahul said, "When the Prime Minister comes and makes false claims, ask him one question. Why has he given Rs 30,000 crore to Ambani and what has Ambani done in return for him?"

Speaking in Tiloi area, he said, "Soon after the Congress comes to power after the Lok Sabha polls, a probe will be held in the Rafale deal and the truth will be before every-

one...What ex-French President Francois Hollande said and what is in the French defence files will come out...Only two persons' names will come out, first Anil Ambani and second Narendra Modi."

Asking if anyone has seen chowkidar in front of a farmer or labourer's house, he said for the past some time, every farmer has been forced to do 'chowkidari' of his agriculture field. "Modiji had stated that he does not want to be made a prime minister but a chowkidar... When his theft has been caught in the Rafale deal, he says 'hum sab chowkidar hain,'" he claimed.

Rahul also hit out the PM over the Goods and Services Tax, saying when the 'Gabbar Singh Tax' was imposed, the money was taken from people and it went to thieves and overseas. "The moment money went out of your pockets, you stopped purchasing and the factories closed down, leading to unemployment... In every 24 hours, 27,000 youths lost their jobs... This is the work of chowkidar," he claimed.

The Congress president said after 2019, 33 per cent women will be seen in legislature and Govern-

ment jobs. He promised that recruitment will be initiated for 22 lakh vacant posts and 10 lakh youths will get jobs in Panchayats.

Rahul said after coming to power, the Congress will see to it that all the people who have been harassed in the past five years are compensated.

Addressing an election meeting in Barabanki earlier, he said the Congress will take historic decisions for farmers and bring a separate budget for them. Campaigning for party candidate Tanuj Punia, he alleged that Modi ran a Government which helped just 15 people in the last five years.

It also took a sudden decision on demonetisation and made the entire country stand in queues, the Congress president alleged.

"The BJP conducted surgical strikes on poor people of the country, while we will conduct surgical strikes on poverty. If the Congress is voted to power, it will give 22 lakh jobs to youngsters," he said addressing an election meeting in Prashedpur in Rae Bareilly.

Rahul also claimed that 'chowkidar' has meted out injustice to the people of Amethi and Rae Bareilly.

Later, the Congress president told reporters, "If Prime Minister Narendra Modi sits for a face-to-face conversation for 15 minutes, everything will be clear."



Shah, Mamata in war of words over NRC, rigging

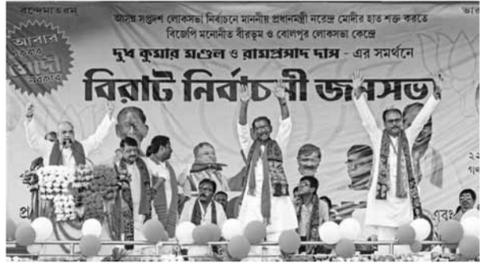
SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ ULUBERIA

Mamata Banerjee and Amit Shah engaged in a ruthless war of words former accusing the latter of manipulating the elections by communally dividing the electorate and the latter hitting out saying she was running a Government of the mafias in Bengal devouring whatever democracy that was left by the Left regime.

Addressing rallies at Uluberia in Howrah and Burdwan Shah said, "Mamata Didi's TMC stands for Tolabaji (extortion) Mafia raj and Chit fund scam," adding if BJP returned to power it would "send all the perpetrators of the chit fund to jail in 90 days' time".

Reminding Banerjee of the strong actions taken by the Election Commission in 2009 and 2011 that eventually catapulted TMC to power Shah said "when the ECI acts against your goons you feel hurt but when it took against the goons of the earlier regime that helped you ride to power you were happy."

The Chief Minister has strongly reacted to ECI Special Observer Ajay Nayak's statements that Bengal resembled a situation in which Bihar was 15 years ago adding the law and order machinery had completely collapsed in the State.



BJP president Amit Shah addresses an election campaign rally in at Ganpur in Birbhum on Monday

Banerjee had said "the BJP is running a parallel Government in Bengal without taking the State Government into confidence which is an attack on the federal structure. They have some retired IAS officers to kill democracy here. Let them bring 5 crore personnel from Delhi. Still we will win."

However, Shah on Monday retorted saying, "Didi is crying because her goons are not able to rig the elections," adding "Bengal is going to see a big change after May 23 the TMC's citadels will fall one after the other." The BJP had converted Bengal into a lawless State where only the writ of TMC's goons run, he said adding "this situation will change soon as only the BJP can remove the



TMC from power." Attacking the TMC for winning the panchayat elections by rigging which was why "37 per cent of the seats during the panchayat elections were won uncontested," he said "CRPF has plugged that hole."

For the rest of India this election is about taking the country to new heights but "for

Bengal, it is about establishing democracy," Shah said adding "It's high time people stood against TMC's misrule. This election is not only the election for a Government in Delhi but this election is also an election for the people of Bengal."

On the Citizenship Amendment Bill Shah said if his party came to power for the second time it would invoke the National Register of Citizens throughout India. "I can assure you that the NRC will be implemented not only in Bengal, but all over the country if we come to power again," adding however the "refugees will be safe because they will be given citizenship."

Coming back hard on the BJP president Banerjee said "in Bengal the BJP has joined hands with the Congress and the Left but the people have understood their intentions and they will defeat all of them. The TMC will win all the 42 out of 42 seats," Banerjee said during Shah to invoke NRC in the State."

They implemented NRC in Assam, "then they were telling that they will invoke it in Bengal and now they are telling that they will do it in all over the country. I will never let that happen because all Indians are equals and have democratic rights protected by the Constitution. I will not let them destroy the constitution."

"This is why I am telling that BJP is a dangerous party and if they come back to power they will take away all your rights, make the citizens of this country foreigners like they have done in Assam."

Regional parties to get more LS seats than Cong, BJP: Akhilesh

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday said regional parties will get more seats than the Congress and the BJP in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls. "I think regional parties will get more seats than the Congress and the BJP. The next PM will be from the regional parties," he said at a Press conference here.

When asked whether he was in the race for the top post, Yadav said, "I am not in the race for prime ministership, but will be happy if next PM is from UP. I will support those who want to become PM."

On being asked if the SP-BSP alliance will support Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, whose name is doing rounds as a possible Congress candidate against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Yadav ruled out any support to the Congress saying, "Our alliance is with the BSP and the RLD. We will declare candidate from the Varanasi seat soon."

The SP is contesting the Lok Sabha polls in an alliance with the BSP and the RLD, keeping the Congress out of the "gathbandhan".



Mayawati: Why EC not cancelling BJP 'gem' Pragya Thakur's nomination

Lucknow: BSP president Mayawati on Monday asked why the Election Commission was not cancelling the nomination of Pragya Singh Thakur, the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate from Bhopal, despite the "BJP ratna" issuing controversial statements.

"Malegoan blast case accused and BJP candidate from Bhopal Sadhvi Pragya is claiming that she is contesting a 'dharma yuddh'. This is the real face of BJP/RSS which is being exposed continuously. But why is the Commission only issuing notices and not cancelling the nomination of BJP ratna (gem) Pragya?" Mayawati tweeted.

"If the Election Commission is not able to work in an impartial manner to the satisfaction of people despite severe criticism in the media, it is an issue of grave concern for democracy and no one else but BJP and PM Modi, who are surrounded by serious electoral allegations." PTI

Tough electoral battle in picturesque Ladakh

SIANS ■ SRINAGAR

The electoral battle in the Ladakh Lok Sabha seat of Jammu & Kashmir has become interesting for poll watchers, but tough for contestants.

The constituency, spread over Leh and Kargil districts, is geographically one of the largest and population-wise one of the smallest in the country. Being one of the remotest areas of the country, the Ladakh division has its own issues, dissimilar to the Valley or the Jammu division.

Politically, Ladakh has always been closer to New Delhi than to Srinagar or Jammu, the two administrative capitals of J&K. It has faced no separatist movement, even as the Valley continues to remain in the throes of an unabated violence.

For over four months, from the middle of December to the end of April, each year, Ladakh remains emotionally and economically cut off from the rest of the state as snow in the Zojilla Pass area snaps it's only

surface link. Of the 1,56,888 voters (85,763 in Kargil and 71,125 in Leh districts), 79,432 are men and 77,456 are women. They will vote on May 6 in the last phase of the five-phase parliamentary elections.

The nomination papers of Jamyang Tsering Namgyal (BJP), Rigzin Spalbar (Congress), and four Independents — Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai, Sajjad Hussain, Kacho Muhammad Feroz and Asgar Ali — were found valid in



scrutiny on Saturday. But the contest is largely among the BJP, the Congress and the independent Sajjad Hussain. The regional National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have not fielded candidates in Hussain's support.

Traditionally, Buddhists and Muslims vote on different lines. With the Buddhist votes likely to be divided between Namgyal and Spalbar, both Buddhists from Leh, the NC and the PDP plan to consolidate Kargil votes

behind Hussain. Hussain also has the backing of Kargil's powerful religious organisation, Islamia School. However, what's thrown a spanner into the NC-PDP plan is the presence of Karbalai, former Congress MLA from Kargil, as Independent.

Karbalai deserted the Congress after he was denied ticket. He is being backed by influential Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust. Hectic efforts are on to persuade him to withdraw from the contest on Monday, the last date for withdrawal of nomination papers in the constituency.

Ladakh's long-standing demand for grant of divisional status was fulfilled during the current Presidential rule in the state. Because of this Prime Minister Narendra Modi is quite popular among Buddhists and this will weigh in favour of Namgyal, also the chief executive of the powerful Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PHE, GROUND WATER DIVN., BAGH ALI MARDAAN NOWSHERA, SRINAGAR KASHMIR

GIST of E-Tender
NIT No: PHE/GWDS 01/of 04/ 2019 Dated 19-04-2019

For and on behalf of Governor of Jammu and Kashmir State, e-tenders are invited in 02Cover System for Construction of Exploratory Test Bore Well and Construction of Production Tube Well for successful exploration at the following location/site from registered water well drillers/contractors as per the details given in tender document.

S.No.1. Site:- Construction of Production Tube Well at WSS Zadoora, Pulwama.
Cost of Tender Document:- Rs. 1000/-
Cost of EMD :- Rs. 40,000/-
Time of completion :- 30 Days
Validity of Rates :- 180 Days
Major Head:-NRDWP
Critical Dates /Information.

1. Publishing Date :- 20-04-2019
2. Document Downloading Start Date :- 20-04-2019(09:00 A.M)
3. Document Downloading Last Date :- 30-04-2019(04:00 P.M)
4. On Line Document Submission Start Date :- 20-04-2019(09:00 A.M)
5. On Line Document Submission Last Date :- 30-04-2019 (4:00 P.M)
6. Date of opening of Tender :- 01-05-2019at (11:00 A.M)
7. Tender Receiving Authority :- Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar.
8. Document Cost :- Rs 1000/=(one thousand only) for each well (Non-Refundable)in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt deposited to Account Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar(at Saddar Treasury Srinagar) on account of (The firm shall specify the name of work for which apply)
9. Earnest Money: for an amount shown in Gist of NIT against each well tender in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar 190011.
10. Bid Validity Period: 180 Days
11. Time of completion: Thirty days from the date of issuance of letter of intent/ allotment order.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
DIPK-NB-299/19
Dated: 22.04.2019

Terror returns

Sri Lanka has enjoyed a tremendous peace dividend. This momentum shouldn't be lost after the Easter attacks



First things first, any attack on a house of worship, no matter which religion's, by someone who claims to be a religious supremacist is not an attack by an individual who believes in God. It is an act by a cowardly individual who does not believe in any ideology of humanity. Whether those strikes happen in Varanasi, Christchurch or as it happened this past Sunday, in Colombo. These blasts shattered the peace of the last decade in the island nation, a peace achieved after a two-decade civil war that cost thousands of lives, including those of 1,200 Indian soldiers between 1987-1990 who were part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), an unmitigated disaster of our foreign policy and military intelligence, likened by some as India's Vietnam. A hard-handed and brutal approach by the Sri Lankan military wiped out the Tamil separatists in the north of the country, who had through several high-profile terrorist targets, killed hundreds of civilians and completely devastated the nation's economy. But following their rout, the country has enjoyed a huge peace dividend with rapid economic progress as well as a revival of the tourism sector.

However, there is little doubt that Sri Lanka, like India and many other countries, has underlying religious tensions. These have only accelerated over the past few years with the rise of fundamentalist forces such as the Islamic State as well as religious fundamentalism in South and South-East Asia. While this attack is a symptom of this rising wave of fundamentalism, it is strange that the killers targeted the Christians in the nation, since neither the Tamil separatists nor the Sinhala majority ever zeroed in on them during the civil war. But Sri Lanka's really small Muslim population on its eastern seaboard was singled out by both Tamil and Sinhalese forces. There have been rising tensions between Sinhalese Buddhists and Muslims for some time now. Though Buddhism is seen as a religion that advises mindfulness and the Middle Path, fact is the Sinhalese have, like their counterparts in Thailand and Myanmar, linked it to issues of identity and they justify violence when they are under threat. With the Tamil issue gone, these people have latched on to Islamic fundamentalism as the new threat. This is something for the government of Ranil Wickremasinghe to address, although with polls scheduled later this year, the situation could easily degenerate. It is also important for India to help Sri Lanka with intelligence and information at this time. The scale and coordination of the attacks make it obvious that a small band of terrorists could not have pulled this off without support from forces abroad. It is likely that some of the executors could have an Indian connection, which means India itself should be on guard to ensure that violence does not spread to its mainland or that the island doesn't become a festering launchpad. Most importantly, it is important that Sri Lanka's bountiful years of peace are not brought to an end. These terrorists clearly wanted to send not just a message of religious fundamentalism but also one that punctured the nation's burgeoning tourism economy with scare-mongering. They wanted to make a splash. They must fail.

A matter of honour

Whatever the allegations against the CJI, a due process needs to be followed to expose the truth. For every citizen's sake



Social activist Swami Agnivesh summed up the controversy over sexual misconduct allegations against the Chief Justice of India (CJI) Ranjan Gogoi with a rounded statement embodying what the judiciary, facing a crisis of confidence, should do. "The maturity, authenticity and stature of the Supreme Court will be tested on how this crisis is weathered and how the majesty of law is upheld without fear or favour," he said. For there is a gathering cloud of judgements swirling around the case already, one that has

to be dispelled convincingly. Is this another attack on an institution, as has been suggested by the CJI himself, to deactivate a position that is tasked with fair dissemination of justice on the eve of crucial rulings that can have a cascading consequence on polity, not too favourably may be for certain political parties? Is this a motivated attack, using the old trope of blackmail by a victimised woman, on a man who has been largely known for his personal decency for the most part of his judicial career and is looking to bow out with the same grace? Or is it comeuppance for moments that are unrecorded in the legal chambers? Is some vested interest taking advantage of the fact that there is no legal framework within the top court's rulebook whereby a CJI could be investigated on allegations such as these, his removal being only possible through parliamentary impeachment? Finally, in the age of #MeToo, this charge by a junior staff against the topmost office-bearer at the workplace ought to be dealt with high standards of objectivity and due process so that working women demanding justifiable rights are not trivialised anymore or subjected to innuendos of "I told you so." For the sake of all women out there, if the accuser is guilty of fabrication, coercion and mala fide intent, she should be booked, too. And for the highest court, which has been guaranteeing women's rights, it becomes imperative its highest office-bearer be seen as acting justly in matters concerning women employees.

Gogoi has already been in the public eye for joining three of his colleagues in the collegium last year for questioning the process of case allocations by the office of the then CJI and the independence of the institution. He risked his elevation by taking a public stand on the internal workings of the court, something which many believe should not have played out in the public space. Which is why he cannot afford a similar public jury verdict on the propriety of handling another delicate matter. Already some experts are saying that the CJI might have just hastily launched his defence through a suo moto hearing. Assuming he is right, a knee-jerk reaction only raises more questions and doubts. In the absence of a credible mechanism, the woman had no option but to appeal to the Justices of the Supreme Court to create a Special Inquiry Committee comprising retired judges. Besides, the top court's "In-House Procedure" lays out the process to deal with allegations of sexual harassment, instructing an inquiry committee to take cognisance of complaints and initiate proceedings only after giving notices to the respondent (the CJI in this case) and the complainant (the woman). However, this is yet to happen. Neither did the CJI's special hearing in court include the complainant, though remarks were passed about her and her faulty legal record. So this imputation that the allegations were a proxy war against the judiciary would look one-sided without meaning to be so. In the end, the Supreme Court is the country's most honourable institution, upholder of Constitutional morality and a protector of the citizen's rights. And if it is indeed under attack, then its justices should set an example why one should never attempt to defile it. If not, then they need to restore faith in its infallibility in a manner that there is no room for doubt.

Money rules the roost

Although muscle power has been brought under control, electoral spending has reached monstrous proportions. The Election Commission must come face-to-face with this reality



A SURYA PRAKASH

Although the use of muscle power to capture booths and intimidate voters belonging to vulnerable social groups has drastically come down in recent years, the percentage of candidates with criminal records still remains a matter of concern. But the bigger worry is money power. During a recent tour of some constituencies in Karnataka, this writer heard from political leaders and those in the know that in most constituencies, candidates have to spend upwards of ₹20 crore to be in the reckoning. There was also near unanimity that some candidates in the old Mysore area had spent over ₹100 crore! With top contenders in every Lok Sabha seat spending phenomenal sums of money, the democratic process is now out-of-bounds for an average citizen.

The National Election Watch (NEW) and the Association for Democratic Rights (ADR) have been providing detailed analysis of the information provided by candidates in their sworn affidavits while filing their nominations. Their analysis of the 521 members of the outgoing Lok Sabha, based on their affidavits, should be a matter of deep concern.

The NEW-ADR analysis found that 174 of the 521 MPs had declared that criminal cases were pending against them, constituting one-third of the Lok Sabha. Further, among them, 106 MPs (20 per cent) were facing serious criminal cases like murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping and communal disharmony among others. Thirty-five per cent of the MPs belonging to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and 16 per cent of the Congress and AIADMK MPs in the outgoing Lok Sabha have criminal backgrounds. However, the Shiv Sena topped the list with 83 per cent of this party's MPs having criminal records.

As regards the financial muscle of candidates, the survey showed that of the 521 sitting MPs, 430 (83 per cent) were crorepatris in 2014 and they had average assets of ₹14.72 crore. Eighty-seven per cent of the BJP MPs are crorepatris, as against 82 per cent in the Congress and 78 per cent in the AIADMK. The average asset base of BJP MPs was ₹12 crore, while that of Congress MPs was ₹15.47 crore.

A recent report by NEW-ADR, after examining the affidavits of candidates in the fray in the first two phases of the current Lok Sabha election, is also revealing. Out of the 2,923 candidates, the NEW-ADR analysis of 2,856 affidavits shows that 464 have criminal records, constituting 16 per cent of the total. Of them, 313 candidates have serious criminal cases. As regards the net worth of candidates, 824 of them — 29 per cent — are crorepatris and they have, on an average, assets of over ₹5 crore. But this is the average of 2,856 candidates. The net worth of successful



candidates will be much, much higher when you look at the amount of money being spent in each constituency.

A comparison of criminal records of outgoing MPs and candidates in this election shows that the new House will have its share of such individuals. Although statistically speaking, criminal record of candidates in the present election is lower than that of successful candidates in 2014, one must remember that the winnability of candidates with criminal records is higher than those who come with a clean slate. Therefore, we must await the results and see what percentage of the members of the new Lok Sabha have criminal cases pending against them.

What do we do with the fact that one-third of our MPs have criminal records and 20 per cent of them are facing serious criminal cases like murder, attempt to murder and kidnapping? This needs to be reversed and the best way to do it is to bar all those, against whom serious criminal charges have been framed in a court of law, from contesting elections until they are acquitted. In order to prevent vindictive prosecution, the courts must dispose

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WHAT DO WE DO WITH THE FACT THAT ONE-THIRD OF OUR MPs HAVE CRIMINAL RECORDS AND 20 PER CENT OF THEM ARE FACING SERIOUS CRIMINAL CASES? THIS NEEDS TO BE REVERSED AND THE BEST WAY TO DO IT IS TO BAR ALL THOSE, AGAINST WHOM SERIOUS CRIMINAL CHARGES HAVE BEEN FRAMED, FROM CONTESTING ELECTIONS UNTIL THEY ARE ACQUITTED
 ”

of these cases on a priority basis as recommended by the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, which was headed by former Chief Justice of India, MN Venkatachaliah.

Five decades ago, there would be large scale violence during elections in the country. States like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were notorious for booth capturing. Prominent candidates in the fray would have their own armed gangs to disrupt polling in booths which were not favourable to them. The gangs would open fire, chase away election officials and electors, capture the booths and burn the paper ballots. This is now a thing of past

But the other big issue — money power — has reached monstrous proportions. Although muscle power has been brought under control, spending in elections has gone completely out of control and the Election Commission appears to be totally helpless despite huge deployment of observers and seizure of cash, gold, liquor and drugs meant for bribing voters. In the first two phases of this election, the Election Commission already seized close to ₹700 crore in cash, liquor worth ₹218 crore

and drugs and narcotics worth ₹1,152 crore. They have also seized gold and precious metals worth over ₹500 crore. Although this is unprecedented, it is still the tip of the iceberg.

Having travelled in some States and heard reports of voter bribing, one can safely say that although the Election Commission has raised the permissible expenditure in a Lok Sabha constituency in larger States to ₹70 lakh, the spending is upwards of ₹20 crore per candidate. Thus, if we have two main contenders for each of the 543 elected seats in the Lok Sabha, the candidates and their parties would have splurged over ₹20,000 crores, mostly to bribe voters in this election.

With feudal, caste-based political families loaded with such huge, ill-gotten resources playing the game, democracy is becoming a no-entry zone for an average citizen. The Election Commission must come face-to-face with this reality and find ways to stop the bribing of voters. Failing which, democracy will be reduced to an absolute farce.

(The writer is an author specialising in democracy studies. Views expressed are personal)

SOUNDBITE

Whatever we do, we have to make Pakistan change its behaviour. That means we must also change our behaviour towards it.

Congress leader —P Chidambaram



Getting into an unknown and uncharted territory today. Doing something I have never done before. Excited and nervous both.

Actor —Akshay Kumar



Common interests far outweigh differences between China and India. Both sides should sustain the positive momentum of sound and steady relationship.

Chinese Foreign Minister —Wang Yi



I will be very happy if Muslim brothers vote for me. But even if you don't, no problem at all. You can still come to me for your work.

BJP MP —Varun Gandhi



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Congress revolt

Sir — Priyanka Chaturvedi's exit is definitely a loss to the Congress. However, she could have given those she had grievances against another chance to express their standpoint. The party leadership could have ensured this. Further, she should have waited to see further developments without quitting the party in a huff. The fact that she rushed to join the Shiv Sena soon after leaving the Congress is shocking. People have lost faith in her and will consider the entire episode a pre-planned farce.

Shalini Gerald
Chennai

Stand firm on terror

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "On Easter, violence resurrects in Lanka" (April 22). A series of explosions in churches and hotels in Sri Lanka during an Easter Sunday by suicide bombers linked to a Muslim organisation, Jamaat, has shaken the conscience of the world. Since it was a well-planned attack, it is disappointing that despite the intelligence having alerted the Government about the

Regional parties must bury the hatchet

This refers to the editorial, "A Mulayam transition" (April 22). Initially, when the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) announced a poll pact to fight Lok Sabha elections, speculation was rife that Mulayam Singh Yadav might not have agreed to this formula due to the old animosity between him and Mayawati. But Mayawati and Mulayam Singh Yadav turned the tables by not only sharing the stage at a historic rally in Mainpuri but also heaping praises on each other. It seems both have come very far from the guest house episode days.

Indeed, the need of the hour is for the alliance to put forth a united face and wage a coordinated fight against the ruling party to stand a chance of reaping maximum seats from the largest State of the nation. After the Karnataka State elections — where an unprecedented alliance between the Congress and the Janata Dal (Secular) was forged — the way regional party leaders came together to join hands, it was assumed that



the mahagathbandhan would be a pan-Indian affair. But only SP-BSP have walked the talk. On the other hand, the Congress has not shown any pragmatic approach. If Mulayam and Mayawati can join hands, it's not impossible for other regional leaders to forget past differences. They should move on with changed ground realities.

Bal Govind
Noida

impending disaster, no preventive measures were taken by the authorities to thwart the nefarious designs of religious fundamentalists. Further, it is distressing that more such attacks will be planned in the near future at different places across countries.

Along with the churches and the hotels, the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka, too, was on the attack list but thank-

fully the terrorists missed the target. The modus operandi of the perpetrators is very clear. The Islamist terrorists want to bleed not only India but the rest of the world. India must take the lead in fighting terrorism and urge world leaders to take decisive action to prevent catastrophes instead of just condemning incidents.

KR Srinivasan
Secunderabad

Versatile singer

Sir — Amar Pal, the renowned folk singer, passed away at the age of 98. He was the first folk musician, whose song was broadcast over the All India Radio in 1951.

I will always remember him for the songs he sang in one of Satyajit Ray's legendary films, HIRAK RAJAR DESHE. All the 12

songs in this movie were written as well as composed by Satyajit Ray himself. Ray got many awards for the best music direction for this film. One of these songs, 'Kotoi Rongo Dekhi Duniyay' (the world is full of wonders), was sung by Amar Pal. Amar means immortal in Bengali. Indeed, his voice has immortalised the powerful words of Ray in this song.

Sujit De
Kolkata

Restore the judiciary

Sir — It is regretful that the sanctity of the highest court of the land has been under threat since the last five years. Earlier, it was an unprecedented January 2018 revolt by four sitting judges of the Supreme Court and now, the CJI has been accused of sexual harassment by a former woman staffer. The incident highlights the fact that even the office of the CJI can easily be tarnished. A thorough investigation is the need of the hour.

Ravi
Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

'Orwellian' state of an island nation

There are several harrowing facets to Brunei's administration that resemble a backslide into archaic intolerance. The new stoning law is one among them



PRASHANT SINGH MEGHNA SHARMA

In his book, *1984*, George Orwell narrated a claustrophobic tale of a dystopian and totalitarian society through the eyes of his protagonist Winston Smith. Though the book was written over 70 years ago, it seems more relevant today than ever. No wonder, the sales of this book has seen a significant surge around the world lately. Renewed interest in dystopian literature has emerged primarily because it serves to remind us to look out for signs around us that have the potential to bring out the fictional hell into life.

Early this month, Brunei, a small island state, became the centre of attention as it introduced a Sharia'h law at the national level that makes gay sex and adultery punishable by stoning to death. The Sultan of Brunei had announced these changes in 2014 but amendments came into effect only this year. Since these changes go against the decades of progress made under the international human rights law, this move has drawn fierce condemnation from the global community. The Human Rights Watch has characterised this law to be "barbaric to the core." Regardless of growing international pressure from all quarters, including the UN, the country has no plans to halt the implementation of these laws. In this context, the themes discussed by Orwell have regained relevance, courtesy the totalitarian regime of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

The ministry of love in Brunei: The Sultan's aim is to transform Brunei into the same 'Orwellian' state as described in *1984*. It isn't surprising, therefore, that he described these amendments as a "great achievement." Parallels do not, however, end here. The "big brother" in Brunei exercises complete authority over public and private life of the individual. Sexual autonomy is not the only sphere of private life that is controlled here. The same penal punishment is also provided for adultery, abortion and alcohol consumption. The harsh forms of punishment, apart from death of stoning, include amputation of limbs and flogging. While homosexuality is being decriminalised in several nations, Brunei has managed to enter the league of those states that consider it to be a capital offence. The state of Brunei or rather, the monarch of Brunei, has not just retained death penalty but ensured that it is provided in the most cruel and vicious way — death by stoning.

Thought control: Another major theme from *1984*, which has found a second wave in Brunei, is through control. While the recent amendments have generated outrage across the international level, the people of Brunei are strangely silent about the entire episode. The Sultan has maintained a firm grip over the media and its right to free speech. Thus, any medium through which such criticism can be manifested is curbed. Quratul-Ain Baidul, in *Brunei Times*, said that although there is no censorship body in Brunei, the extent of self-censorship is such that everybody is afraid of overstepping their line. Journalists have become mere stenographers at the hands of the Government. While traditional media has ceded space for dissent, critics have turned to the Internet and social media. Anticipating these changes, the Government has planned to regulate online speech as well. The imposition of the current penal code was also preceded by a warning that online critics will be dealt with harshly once it is implemented.

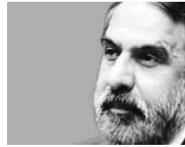
Much like the "Orwellian" state of Oceania, Brunei's Sultan insists on presenting his own reality. While the Sultan "does not expect other people to accept and agree with it, but it would suffice if they just respect the nation in the same way that it also respects them." The recent changes giving effect to harsh penalties are part of the Sultan's effort to impose conservative Islam in the country based on the restrictive interpretations of Sharia'h. Amnesty Journal reported that the proposed amendment seeks to impose further restrictions on women, like making it mandatory for them to stay at their guardian's house till marriage.

There are many other harrowing facets to Brunei's administration that resemble the 'Orwellian' state. The Government has also arrogated the power to ban any religious practice it considers "deviant" to Sharia'h principles. It does not allow workers to strike or participate in collective bargaining. Child marriage over 14 years of age is allowed. No civil society organisation in Brunei is allowed to raise concerns about human rights violations. As per the Human Rights Report 2018 released by the US Government, every humanitarian organisation here is required to work directly under the Government. Similar to the Orwellian dictator, the big brother, Hassanal Bolkiah has sweeping powers and continues to rule Brunei since 1961. Unfortunately, there is no end in sight. He has been able to assuage discontent among people with free healthcare and education, zero taxes and free housing. For the sake of the people in Brunei, one can only hope that this backslide into archaic intolerance doesn't go unnoticed and the bleakness of the Sultan's dystopia gets exposed.

(Prashant Singh is research fellow and Meghna Sharma is research intern at the Centre for Human Rights Studies, OP Jindal Global University)

EVERY OTHER DAY PAKISTAN USED TO GIVE NUCLEAR THREATS. WHAT DO WE HAVE? HAVE WE KEPT IT FOR 'DIWALI'?
—PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI

POINT COUNTERPOINT



PRIME MINISTER'S BOASTFUL CLAIMS OF BEING READY FOR A NUCLEAR ATTACK ON PAKISTAN IS UNCALLED FOR AND NOT IN NATION'S INTEREST.
—SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER ANAND SHARMA

No outsiders in Kerala

The Congress and the CPI(M) pretend to be arch rivals in the State even as they work together at the Centre. They alternate power in the State to keep a third entity out



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Every election in Kerala, whether it is to the Lok Sabha or the State Legislature, brings to mind the famous play *Ezhu Rathrikal* (Seven Nights), directed by Kaladi Gopi in 1963. *Ezhu Raathrikal* must have been the first play in Malayalam that was based on the lives of the marginalised and oppressed sections of society. The play is set in a street-side bus shelter that is home to a group of beggars, roadside vendors and anti-social elements. The central character of the play is Pazhanam Varkey, a professional beggar. "Pazhanam" is the Malayalam word for "poison." One, therefore, need not elaborate about his character.

Varkey's style of begging is unique and that's the reason behind the success of the character. Even 50 years after its first show, the play and Varkey remain engraved in the minds of theatre buffs in the State. Varkey wears a scapular that has two pendants. One is a crucifix and the other is that of Lord Krishna. When Varkey goes to Christian houses, he wears the scapular in such a way that the crucifix is visible to the people. Whenever he goes to the house of Hindus, he displays the locket with Lord Krishna.

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI-M) is the new Varkey of Kerala because of the twin roles played by it in and outside the State. While in Kerala, the CPI (M) considers the Congress to be its main enemy, outside the State, it mingles freely with the latter. The CPI(M) is, perhaps, the best defender of the Congress, especially the Nehru-Gandhi clan, when reports of scams featuring the family members surface in the public domain.

But why is that both parties pretend as if they are at loggerheads and that, too, for the consumption of the public? Since the formation of Kerala in 1956, by merging the old princely States of Travancore, Kochi and parts of the Madras province, the political centrestage has been monopolised by two fronts led by the Congress and the communists. Supporting characters differ, depending on the political wind blowing across the State. But the two fronts, known in modern parlance by the names of the United Democratic Front (UDF), led by the Congress and the Left Democratic Front (LDF), led by the CPI(M), are the central characters.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) or its previous avatar, the Jan Sangh, were never a force to reckon with in this State that has a split religious demography. The State consists of nearly 51 per cent Hindus, 26 per cent Muslims and 23 per cent Christians. Without active support from the minority communities, no front can win any election in Kerala.

Interestingly, the CPI(M)'s vote bank is the powerful Ezhava community, the society which gave birth to Sree Narayana Guru, the most revolutionary social reformer of the 20th Century. It was his teachings and uncompromising stance that led to the eradication of social evils like untouchability and marginalisation of the oppressed classes in the State. He could inspire the people to agitate for the right to walk along the roads leading to the temples which ultimately culminated in the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936. At one stage, the communists had hijacked the agitation launched by the Guru and,

“WHAT MAKES THE 2019 LOK SABHA ELECTION IN KERALA UNIQUE IS A SERIES OF REPORTS ABOUT THE BJP-LED NDA OPENING ITS ACCOUNT. THE SABARIMALA AGITATION AND THE CPI(M)'S ACTIONS, TARGETTING HINDU PLACES OF WORSHIP AND INSULTING THE ACHARYAS, HAVE HURT HINDUS AND HAS RESULTED IN THE POLARISATION OF THE COMMUNITY. ONE MUST NOT BE SURPRISED IF THE BJP WINS ONE OR TWO SEATS



thus, they could mobilise the Ezhava community under the communist flag.

Over the years, however, the CPI(M) has lost its proletarian image and become a party promoting crony capitalists. It also ensures that the State does not progress an inch, economically or socially. The much-hyped Kerala model of development has ended in a disaster. The last six months have seen more than 40 farmers committing suicide because of the debt trap they have fallen into following crop failure. And the Marxist Government has done nothing to revive the fortunes of either the farmers or the marginal entrepreneurs. Three small entrepreneurs based in Kollam, too, committed suicide because they could not withstand the harassment of their party bosses.

Though there is a change of guard in Thiruvananthapuram every five years, what generally happens is that the CPI(M) and Congress-led fronts alternate between themselves. The two parties do not provide space for a third alternative because they know it well that their relevance will be lost the moment a third party finds space here. Hence, all elections in the State have followed a match-fixing arrangement between the Congress and the Marxists. Though the two may act as if they are arch rivals, both have an unseen umbilical chord between them. Prime Minister Narendra Modi exposed the same while he addressed a public rally at the State capital recently. He said, "It is *kusti* in Kerala and *dosti* in New Delhi. The CPI(M) and the Congress are the two faces of the same coin."

Whenever there is a remote possibility of the BJP winning a seat in the State, the CPI(M) transfers its share of votes *en masse* to the Congress. This has been happening with active connivance of the local media. P Narayanan, octogenarian journalist, reminiscences how *Mathrubhumi*, a leading Malayalam daily, violated all media ethics during the Assembly election held in 1960. "There was a big speculation that TN Bharathan, the Jana Sangh candidate from Guruvayur, would romp home because of the excellent work he had done to save the Manathala Temple from miscreants. But on the day of polling, *Mathrubhumi* came out with a banner headline proclaiming that Jan Sangh supporters would vote for the Congress. This upset the party workers. This has been the style of Kerala media since then," said Narayanan.

What makes the 2019 Lok Sabha election in Kerala unique is a series of reports about the BJP-led NDA opening its account in this State. The Sabarimala agitation and the CPI(M)'s actions, targeting Hindu places of worship and insulting the *acharyas*, have hurt Hindus and has resulted in the polarisation of the community. So it is advantage BJP in two or three constituencies of the State. Congress chief Rahul Gandhi will definitely win from Wayanad because the LDF has fielded a "decoy" candidate against him as part of a game of match-fixing between the CPI(M) and the Congress. The Marxists want the Congress to win the 2019 Lok Sabha election and that's about it. Card-holding members of the CPI(M) had the audacity to ask this writer to vote for Benny Behanan, the

Congress candidate from Chalakudy. The comrades want to ensure that the Congress' candidate is elected with a big majority though the CPI(M) has fielded cine actor, Innocent Vareed Thekkethala, in the constituency.

TP Senkumar, former Chief of Kerala police, articulated the Hindu angst: "It is time the majority community, too, gets the same rights and freedom that is enjoyed by the minorities. Sabarimala is the beginning. The next in line is Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple in the State's capital." Kerala is the only State that issues monthly pension to widows belonging to minority communities. Social benefits should be all inclusive.

More than 4,000 people, who took part in the Sabarimala agitation, are still in jail under various charges that are non-bailable offences. KP Sasikala, the frail looking leader of the Hindu United Forum, has 475 criminal cases slapped against her, including that of murder, attempt to murder, stone-pelting and other such criminal offences. These things have happened even as those, who chopped off the right hand of Prof Joseph, are out. This Friday saw the Marxists publicly silencing the chanting of God's name at a temple in the capital city because the Chief Minister does not like it. Varkey would beg in Kerala displaying one-half of the scapular featuring the crucifix. He can show the other half with Lord Krishna's pendant while in New Delhi and the rest of India.

(Kerala goes to the polls today to elect 20 members to the Lok Sabha. (The writer is Special Correspondent, The Pioneer)

The bottom line on free electricity

For a State where agriculture is largely based on ground water, provision for round-the-clock power supply may not be the best policy. Instead, the Telangana Government's scheme has led to increasing farm distress. Alternatives such as recharging wells, water harvesting and conservation must be explored



JIN KATHRINE FOSLI A AMARENDER REDDY

Sattaiha, a farmer in Shivampet village of Medak district in Andhra Pradesh, dug another borewell to save his standing crop from drought as his existing borewell had dried up in January. Like his previous one, the new alternative, too, failed and he incurred huge losses. Studies conducted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the World Bank prove that groundwater-irrigated farms have twice the crop productivity as compared to rain-fed farms. However, groundwater must not be over-exploited as it is a natural resource with limited availability.

In this context, is the Telangana Government's scheme to provide round-the-clock power supply to 2.3 million farmers for free just another populist policy? Or is it a predominantly agricultural

State's desperate response to climate change? Or will it really help the farmers in the long run? Similar policies have been launched in many other States, including Andhra Pradesh, Punjab and Maharashtra since the late 1970s.

Never mind the answer, more power does not equal more water in the long run. Water being a limited resource, free electricity for agriculture can lead to over-extraction, failed investments and worse still, borewell failures rather than making this scarce resource cheaper. Depletion of groundwater levels to 1,000 feet and more has been reported in some drought-prone areas due to excessive digging of borewells. The Telangana Government's move to provide 24x7 free electricity to farmers is lopsided and neglects other water sources such as farm ponds and village tanks. Complementary water sources and recharging systems are left to dry up, rather than being maintained. In the current situation, every farmer must fend for himself, in contrast to the traditional systems which usually required cooperation, whether voluntary or forced through regulation.

Due to the geology of our States such as Telangana, which have underlying hard

rock formations, farmers are competing in a game they cannot win. According to figures from the Central Ground Water Board, farmers are not likely to hit major water-bearing fractures below 100-110 feet. Groundwater levels had already sunk beyond that level in many places due to extensive well drillings when the 24x7 free electricity policy was implemented.

Besides poor and erratic rains, over-exploitation of water without sustainable recharge options has led to a decline in groundwater levels in villages. The unfortunate outcome is the diminishing of the common resource base, losses on investments, crop failures and possibly, drinking water shortage. As of today, about 31 per cent of blocks in India are at a semi-critical, critical or over-exploited stage in terms of groundwater exploitation.

Fiscal costs to the Government: The central electricity authority, which announced the details of the progress of various States in the power sector for the year 2017-18, observed that Telangana secured the first place in the country in power consumption and per capita power consumption. The free electricity scheme was introduced with an aim to reduce farm distress but has in turn financially dis-

tressed the discoms. Distribution companies were already heavily in debt when the 24-hour free electricity scheme was introduced from December 31, 2017. With groundwater table declining, electricity use is bound to increase because of the extra power needed to pump water from deeper levels.

Discoms all around the country are adversely affected by subsidies such as free electricity. This is one of the factors that contributes to the widening gap between income and cost of supply, according to the Central Electricity Authority. One can even say that falling groundwater levels lead to higher levels of debt for electricity companies or levels of expenditure that are hard to recover.

Electricity consumption for agriculture in Telangana amounted to 29 per cent of the total consumption in 2016. The same sector contributed only three per cent to revenues for the electricity board. Still, there has been no policy shift to bridge the gap between electricity consumption and revenue generation. There are many other options that are more viable, environmentally and economically, such as construction of farm ponds, reviving village tanks and promoting micro-irrigation systems.

Look for alternatives: While the policy has been around too short to draw any definite conclusions, on their own account, farmers must shift their cropping patterns to sowing water-intensive crops such as paddy. This is not to say that it is a sustainable policy or that the farmers' response is viable. High informal debts due to investments in digging borewells was one of the causes for farm distress. Although free electricity contributes to reduced input costs, it does little to address the risks and losses faced by farmers. There is a need to strengthen institutions where farmers can acquire low-risk formal loans and facilitate viable payment conditions.

Farmers need information and education on which crops they should opt for in water-scarce conditions. They should be given incentives to grow suitable variants. Instead of blindly digging borewells on farmers' fields, they must be given assistance by hydrologists or technical experts. Many farmers also hold the opinion that instead of a 24-hour electricity, about five hours of uninterrupted electricity are enough to pump water for crops. Promoting groundwater recharging structures like farm ponds and village tanks,

which reduces risk of borewell failures, is another alternative that can be explored.

In an attempt to discourage over-exploitation of groundwater and ensure a more robust regulatory mechanism in the country, the Government has proposed to slap for the first time a Water Conservation Fee (WCF) on extraction by all users of groundwater in the country, barring the armed forces, farmers and individual households.

There are questions that are hard to address for State politicians but should be addressed at the national level. Faced with the consequences of climate change and disintegration of the rural resource base, how can farmers and the landless rural population make a living in a sector dependent on monsoon rains, frequent failures of rains, prolonged dry spells, lack of water and decreasing hopes of livelihood? Should these forces be left to live their own lives? Without any concerted effort, the common rural inhabitant will drift like a splint in the open seas tossed by the forces of climate change, market fluctuations and shifting policy regimes.

(A Amarender Reddy is Principal Scientist, Agricultural Economics, ICAR and Jin Kathrine Fosli is with the University of Oslo)

Iran sanctions: India lines up alternative

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India, the second biggest buyer of Iranian oil, has lined up alternate sources to make up for the likely shortfall in supplies after the US decided not to give waiver from its sanctions for buying oil from the Persian Gulf nation.

The Trump administration Monday decided not to renew waiver that let countries like India buy Iranian oil without facing US sanctions.

"Our crude sources are wide. We have alternate sources lined up to make up for any shortfall," a top source said.

US President Donald Trump last year withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers and revived a range of sanctions against the Persian Gulf nation. It, however, granted a six-month waiver from sanctions to eight countries - China, India, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Turkey, Italy and Greece, but with a condition that they would reduce their purchases of Iranian oil.

India, which is the second biggest purchaser of Iranian oil after China, had agreed to restrict its monthly purchase to 1.25 million tonne or 15 million tonne in a year (300,000 barrels per day), down from 22.6 million tonne (452,000 barrels per day) bought in 2017-18 financial year.

"We have optional volumes (over and above the term contracts) from a number of supplier which we can exercise to make up for any shortfall from Iran," the source said. "We can also go to the spot (or current) market to source crude."

"As far as Indian Oil is concerned, supplies will not be a problem. We have already lined up alternate sources," he said adding the impact of the US decision may reflect on global oil prices which may temporarily go up.

The six-month waiver granted by the US to 8 countries was to expire on May 2. IOC has the option to take 0.7 million tonne of crude oil from Mexico on top of its committed purchase of 0.7 million tonne during the year. From Saudi Arabia, it has an optional volume of 2 million tonne on top of a term contract of 5.6 million tonne.

Similarly, it has optional volumes of 1.5 million tonne from Kuwait and another 1 million tonne from the UAE. "We have all the supplies tied up and I think globally crude will be readily available but it is difficult to say what the impact will be on price," the source added.

The price of Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose as much as 3.3 cent to USD 74.31 a barrel on Monday, the highest intra-day level in almost six months.

When Trump first pulled out of the nuclear deal, oil shot up to over USD 85 a barrel and it fell to near USD 50 after the US administration unexpectedly granted the waivers.

US sanctions on Iran's oil

buyers snap back next month that will block the US financial system for importers.

India, the world's third-biggest oil consumer, meets more than 80 per cent of its oil needs through imports. Iran in 2017-18 was its third-largest supplier after Iraq and Saudi Arabia and meets about 10 per cent of total needs.

US President Trump in May withdrew from the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran, re-imposing economic sanctions against the Persian Gulf nation. Some sanctions took effect from August 6, while those affecting the oil and banking sectors were to start from November 5, 2018. A six-month waiver was granted that was to expire on May 2.

Iran was India's second biggest supplier of crude oil after Saudi Arabia till 2010-11 but Western sanctions over its suspected nuclear programme relegated it to the seventh spot in the subsequent years. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, India bought 11 million tonne and 10.95 million tonne, respectively from it.

Sourcing from Iran increased to 12.7 million tonnes in 2015-16, giving it the sixth spot. In the following year, the Iranian supplies jumped to 27.2 million tonne to catapult it to the third spot.

Iranian oil is a lucrative buy for refiners as the Persian Gulf nation provides 60 days of credit for purchases, terms not available from suppliers of substitute crudes - Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Nigeria and the US.

Trump decides not to grant waiver to India

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

In a move that could have implications on India's energy security, US President Donald Trump on Monday decided not to grant sanctions exemptions to any oil customers of Iran, further squeezing Tehran's top export commodity.

"President Donald J. Trump has decided not to re-issue Significant Reduction Exceptions (SREs) when they expire in early May. This decision is intended to bring Iran's oil exports to zero, denying the regime its principal source of revenue," White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said.

The US re-imposed sanctions on Iran last November, after President Trump pulled out of the landmark 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

The US' move which is seen as an escalation of President Trump administration's "maximum pressure" on Iran comes after it last year gave temporary 180-days waiver to eight countries, including India, China, Turkey and Japan among others.

As a result of this decision all countries including India would have to bring down its import of oil from Iran by May



global demand is met as all Iranian oil is removed from the market," she said.

In a statement, Sanders said the Trump Administration and its allies are determined to sustain and expand the maximum economic pressure campaign against Iran to end the regime's destabilising activity threatening the United States, its partners and allies, and security in the Middle East.

The President's decision to eliminate all SREs follows the designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a Foreign Terrorist Organisation, demonstrating the US' commitment to disrupting Iran's terror network and changing the regime's malign behaviour. We welcome the support of our friends and allies for this effort," Sanders said.

China and India are currently the largest importers of Iranian oil. If they don't go along with Trump's demands, that could cause tensions in both bilateral relationships and spill over into other issues, like trade, the Washington Post reported.

2. Greece, Italy, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have already heavily reduced their oil imports from Iran.

Iran is India's third-largest oil supplier behind Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Iran supplied 18.4 million tonnes of crude oil during April 2017 and January 2018 (first 10 months of 2017-18 fiscal).

The US, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, three of the world's great energy producers, along with its friends and allies, are committed to ensuring that global oil markets remain adequately supplied, Sanders said. "We have agreed to take timely action to assure that

Ghosn hit with fresh charge in Japan

AFP ■ TOKYO

Japanese authorities on Monday hit former Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn with a fresh charge of aggravated breach of trust, the fourth formal indictment against the auto sector tycoon.

Public broadcaster NHK and local news agency Jiji Press reported that prosecutors filed the new indictment that paves the way for his legal team to apply for bail.

The 65-year-old strenuously denies all allegations against him and insists they have been cooked up in a "plot" by Nissan executives wary of his plans to bring the Japanese car giant closer to its French partner Renault.

Prosecutors are looking into allegations that Ghosn funnelled funds from Nissan to a dealership in the Middle East and siphoned off around five million dollars for his personal use.

Ghosn has already won bail once before - but under strict conditions such as agreeing not to leave the country and living under surveillance.

The rollercoaster case of the executive, once revered in Japan for saving Nissan from the brink of bankruptcy, has gripped the business world and shone a spotlight on the Japanese legal system that has come in for some criticism especially from abroad.

Japan's justice allows authorities to keep suspects in custody for prolonged periods

and trials almost always result in a conviction - sparking outrage from outside the country. When Ghosn last won bail, he walked out of the detention centre in front of the world's media dressed like a Japanese labourer with a cap and a face mask in an apparent attempt to give reporters the slip.

Japan's Supreme Court has already rejected appeals by Ghosn's lawyers against his prolonged detention.

His wife Carole has also been questioned by prosecutors in Tokyo.

She has also denied any wrongdoing and been active in the media in recent days, writing an opinion piece in the Washington Post calling on US President Donald Trump to lean on Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe to allow her husband to obtain bail.

Ghosn's lawyers have expression reservations that he will receive a fair trial as 99 per cent of all cases that come to trial end in a conviction.

The executive has gone from a life of luxury and private jets as he ran three huge car companies to a small cell.

Nissan says an internal investigation has uncovered "substantial evidence of blatantly unethical conduct" by the former boss.

He has already been stripped of his position on the board at Nissan and resigned from the head of Renault and the three-way alliance the two companies share with Mitsubishi Motors.

Industry delegation calls on RBI Gov, discusses steps for MSMEs, NBFCs

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A delegation led by PHD Chamber President Rajeev Talwar met RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das here on Monday and discussed concerns related to the growth of MSMEs, NBFCs, affordable housing and the real estate sector.

The chamber in its submission has also sought further cut in the repo rate in the coming quarters.

"PHD Chamber in its submission has urged RBI to increase the limit for classifying over dues of MSMEs to 180 days from the current level of 90 days as working capital cycle of MSMEs keeps prolonging due to delays in realisation of their bills/receivables," said Talwar.

It has also requested that at least one year period should be considered for eligibility of MSMEs stressed and NPA accounts under the restructuring scheme. All such Accounts which turned into defaulters or became NPAs after January 1, 2018 should be covered under the policy of RBI for being eligible for restructuring, said Sanjay Agarwal, Vice President, PHD Chamber.

The industry body said that infrastructure financing should ideally be carried out by specialist players like Infrastructure Finance Companies (IFCs).

released this January, has pegged the traffic volume to 1.1 billion by 2040.

Jet Airways, once the second largest airline after no-frills IndiGo, lost as much as nearly half of the market share at 5.37 percent during March as against 10 percent in the same period of last fiscal, according to the data.

Together with subsidiary JetLite, consolidated traffic of the now non-functional carrier was 6.71 lakh passengers in the month, whereas in the same period last year it had flown 15 lakh passengers.

Significantly, national carrier Air India, which has a number of aircraft on ground for quite some time now, had the dubious distinction of cancelling the most number of flights at 8.94 percent of its scheduled departures followed by JetLite and new entrant Star Air, as per the data.

The national carrier, however, managed to get the third spot after IndiGo and SpiceJet in passenger volume, carrying 15.19 lakh passengers with a market share of 13.1 percent in March.

The passenger load factor in the month has shown falling trend compared to February due to the end of the vacation period.

SpiceJet continues to clock the highest average seat occupancy at 93 percent while smaller rival GoAir topped the on-time performance chart for the sixth consecutive month in March at 95.2 percent.

Air India, on the other hand, was forced to pay the highest amount of ₹119.37 lakh to 2,508 passengers for denied boarding.

Domestic air passenger volume crosses 171 m in FY19, up 14.25%

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic air passenger volume grew 14.25 RPT 14.25 percent to 171.25 million RPT 171.25 million in fiscal 2019 over the previous year, even as March posted the lowest growth rate in many years with a paltry 0.14 percent, according to the data from the DGCA.

In FY18, the passenger volume had clipped at a higher 18.3 percent to 146.84 million RPT 146.84 million.

However, the March numbers came as a shocker to the airline industry as the traffic though continued to grow in green but almost flat at 0.14 percent to 11.59 million passengers up from 11.58 million a year ago, largely due to the huge capacity reduction following the troubles at Jet Airways in the month, show data released by the DGCA Monday.

The cumulative traffic of domestic carriers stood at 171.25 million for the full year to March 2019, registering a growth of 14.25 percent.

Budget carrier IndiGo continued to be the largest player with a market share of 46.9 percent ferrying 54 lakh passengers during the month, while its closest rival SpiceJet was a distant second with 13.6 percent traffic pie as its ferried 15.81 lakh passengers in the reporting month.

The flat growth in traffic is a setback for the industry which had been clipping at over 20 percent for more than four years in a row.

Significantly, betting on the double-digits growth in the past four years, the government in its vision document

Jet employees appeal to Govt to bail out airline

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Around 100 staff members of the ailing Jet Airways Monday staged a demonstration here, urging the Government to intervene and bail out the airline.

Jet Airways had on April 17 announced temporary suspension of operations after it failed to receive emergency funds from lenders, leaving about 23,000 employees to face a bleak future.

This evening, the employees, dressed in their uniforms, staged the demonstration at Town Hall in the heart of the city.

Holding aloft placards, they raised slogans like 'Save our families, save Jet Airways', 'Don't make us cry, give a chance to fly' and 'Humko Tum Na Dhoka Do, Udne ka ek Mauka Do' (Don't ditch us, give a chance to fly).

'We pay loads of tax, Don't get us under the Axe' and 'We have dependents to feed, please don't let our 9W bleed' read the



messages in some of the placards.

Milind Paradkar, an engineer with Jet Airways, urged the government to infuse some funds to keep Jet Airways afloat.

"We want the government to infuse some funds instead of our aeroplanes being taken over by other airlines and being flown over by them," Paradkar told PTI.

He said there were rumours that somebody has shown willingness to take over Jet Airways, but the employees have no information who that is.

"The Government has to be transparent. Presently

Jet Airways shares trim early losses; close over 6% lower

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Jet Airways, which has shut down operations temporarily, continued to fall for the third day in a row Monday, closing over 6 per cent lower.

The scrip nosedived 19.34 per cent to ₹132.20 - its 52-week low - during the day on BSE. However, at close of trade it recovered most of its sharp early losses. It closed the day at ₹154.60, 5.67 per cent lower.

At the NSE, shares plunged 6.15 per cent to close at ₹154.70.

In terms of traded volume, 56.19 lakh shares were traded on the BSE and over five crore shares on the NSE during the day.

In three days, the scrip has plummeted 40.94 per cent.

Running into debt of more than ₹8,500 crore, Jet Airways has shut down operations temporarily after lenders decided against extending emergency funds for its survival.

Cash-starved Jet Airways, which has around 23,000 employees, has delayed payment of salaries to the employees, including pilots.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
 File No.: 23AC/393/Unfield Parking/2019/E-Tender
 DATED: 18 April, 2019
QUOTATION NOTICE
 The Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Chg., Northern Railway, New Delhi invites sealed Quotations for the allotment of Access Control Rights, which includes 3 pick / drop lines for passengers at New Delhi Railway Station (Ajmeri Gate Side) of Delhi Division on Quotation basis for 3 months or till the finalization of tender, whichever is earlier, to be opened on 30.04.2019. detail is as under:-

| S | Railway Station | Stn Ctg | Type of Pkg. | *Reserve Price for three months (In Rs.) | EMD@2% of Total Contract value (In Rs.) |
|---|---|---------|--|--|---|
| 1 | New Delhi Railway Station (Ajmeri Gate Side) (NDLS) | A-1 | Access Control Rights of 3 lanes (Entry to exit) | 15,96,875 | 32,000 |

*Applicable Taxes will be extra.
 In addition to above Reserve price, GST as applicable on date (Presently @ 18%) and TCS @ 2% or as applicable over the license fees has to be paid by parking contractor.
 Date and Time for submission of Quotation : up to 15:00 Hrs. on 30.04.2019 to be open immediately.
 For more information and obtaining Quotation forms, interested bidders may contact to the office of Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/Coaching, DRM Office, State Entry Road New Delhi From 22.04.2019 to 29.04.2019 in any working days between 10:00 hrs to 17:00 hrs and on 30.04.2019 Up to 13:00 hrs. The draft submitted for Earnest Money deposit should be in favour of "Senior Divisional Finance Manager Northern Railway New Delhi" and must be prepared from the bidders own bank account and in case found otherwise/ false, Railway Administration shall be at liberty to initiate any action, including termination as deemed fit at a later date also.
 Relevant information is also available on the official Web site of Railways i.e. www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in 1177/19
 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SEARCH FOR KIDNAPPED GIRLS

General public is hereby informed that these girls namely 1. Nisha @ Hunno and 2. Saniya both D/o Late Samsuddin R/o H.No. 1080, Gali No. 36, Jafraabad, Delhi

1. Nisha @ Hunno : Age : About 16 years 10 months, Height : 5', Face : Round, Build : Normal, Complexion : Wheatish, 2. Saniya : Age : About 8 years, Height : 4'1", Face : Round, Build : Normal, Complexion : Wheatish, have been kidnapped since 28.12.2016 from their house. In this regard FIR No. 490/16 dated 29.12.2016 u/s 363 IPC has been registered at P.S. Jafraabad, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about these kidnapped girls may kindly inform to the following:-

E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
 Website: http://cbi.nic.in
 Fax: 24368639,
 Tel.: 24368638/24368641

SHO - P.S. Jafraabad, Delhi
 Tel. No. : 011-22560191,
 22560192

SHO
 P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi
 Ph.: 011-27495198, 27497179

DP/6887/NE/19

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Age: 25 years, Complexion: Black, Height: 5'7", Face: Oval, Built: Thin, ID Mark: Old Cut Mark Over Right Eye Brow, was wearing Blue Jeans and White Shirt and Black Shoes, was found dead in bushes near Wall of Park of AC-Block, Near Azadpur Flyover, PS Shalimar Bagh, Delhi at 07:55 Hrs. In this regard a FIR No. 195/19, dated 20.04.2019, has been registered at P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO
 P.S. Shalimar Bagh, Delhi
 Ph.: 011-27495198, 27497179

DP/8894/NW/19

Finmin asks all departments to conduct review of Govt guarantee, submit details by Apr 30

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has tasked all departments to undertake a review of Government guarantees given by respective ministries to their CPSEs or entities.

The review should undertake aspects like the discharge of repayment obligations or interest obligations as per terms

of the loan agreement and covenants and conditions met, the Finance Ministry said in an office memorandum.

Besides, the details of CPSEs or entities due guarantee fee paid on time to the government should also be submitted.

The Finance Ministry has extended date for submission of these details to April 30 from

April 10. Guarantees are contingent liabilities have the potential to impact the financial performance of the Government.

In another circular, the ministry said FRBM Rules stipulates that Government cannot guarantee more than 0.5 per cent of the GDP of the respective financial year to CPSE/entities.

GAIL emerges as highest bidder for IL&FS wind power plants

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Debt-laden Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) Monday said GAIL (India) has emerged as the highest bidder for its seven operating wind power plants.

The bidding process to these assets having 12 sites spread across seven states was launched in November last year. "Gail's offer of approxi-

mately ₹4,800 crore for 100 percent enterprise value contemplates no hair-cut to the debt of the SPVs, aggregating to nearly ₹3,700 crore," the company said in a release.

These wind power assets have a total generation capacity of 874 MW.

The proposal was approved by the committee of creditors of IL&FS Wind Energy (IWEL), majority owner of the SPVs, it said.

SENIORS GIVE CALL FOR ROAD & TYRE SAFETY

NEW DELHI: Members of Dignity Foundation, an NGO helping senior citizens live a life of dignity, took a pledge to spread the message of Road & Tyre Safety. Senior citizens from Delhi NCR region assembled at Bipin Chandra Pal Auditorium holding placards on tyre/ road safety and enlisting themselves as ambassadors of road and tyre safety.

India VIX jumps to 3-year high on election concern, high crude

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The India Volatility Index shot up to a three-year high of 24.05 on Monday, amid rising uncertainty over the new government formation and soaring crude oil prices.

The India VIX, the fear gauge for domestic equities, rose 5.76 per cent to settle at 24.05, after an intra-day high of 24.56.

"Crude and election uncertainties is pushing the India VIX up," IIFL co-promoter and MD R Venkataraman told PTI.

Besides the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, market sentiment was hit as macroeconomic worries resurfaced, following reports that the US will end sanctions waiver on Iranian oil imports, analysts said.

Global benchmark Brent crude climbed to a multi-month high of \$73.81 per barrel, a 2.56 per cent rise.



HEALTH

PatchIt

Researchers from Brown University, US; Fudan University, and Soochow University, China have developed a patch that could reduce the stretching of cardiac muscle following a heart attack. The patch is made from a water-based hydrogel material and can be placed directly on the heart to prevent left ventricular remodelling



CONTROL THE SEIZURES

SATKAM DIVYA tells you the symptoms to look out for in epilepsy and its cure



Epilepsy is a central nervous system (neurological) disorder which brings about abnormality, causing seizures or periods of unusual behavior, sensations and sometimes loss of awareness. It can happen to anybody at any age. Epilepsy affects both males and females.

Symptoms: Epilepsy symptoms can vary widely. These can include where an individual with epilepsy may simply stare blankly for a few seconds before having a seizure, while others repeatedly twitch their arms or legs. At least two unprovoked seizures are generally required for an epilepsy diagnosis. Some of the seizure signs and symptoms may include:

- Uncontrollable jerking movements of the arms and legs.
- Loss of consciousness or awareness
- Temporary confusion
- A staring spell
- Psychic symptoms such as fear, anxiety or déjà vu.

However, symptoms may vary depending on the type of seizure. At times, a person with epilepsy will tend to have the same type of seizure each time, so the symptoms will be similar from episode to episode. Doctors basically classify seizures either as focal or generalised based on how the abnormal brain activity begins.

Focal seizures: Seizures appearing in just one area of the brain they are called focal or partial seizures.

Generalised seizures: These appear to involve in all areas of the brain and listed below are six types of generalised seizures.

Absence seizures: They often occur in children are characterised by staring into space or subtle body movements such as eye blinking or lip smacking.

Tonic seizures: These affect muscles in your back, arms and legs and which may also cause you to fall to the ground.

Atonic seizures: They cause a loss of muscle control, which may cause you to suddenly collapse or fall down.

Clonic seizures: These seizures are repeated or rhythmic, jerking muscle movements. These usually affect the neck, face and arms.

Myoclonic seizures: They usually appear as sudden brief jerks or twitches of your arms and legs.

Tonic-clonic seizures: These are the most dramatic type of epileptic seizure and can cause an abrupt loss of consciousness, body stiffening and shaking and at times loss of bladder control or biting of the tongue.

A strict meal plan like opting for a Ketogenic diet can help children especially after working closely with a doctor and a dietician. The diet usually starts with a fast that lasts 24 to 48 hours. Foods that are high in fat and low in carbohydrates are introduced. If the diet is strictly followed, studies showed that two-thirds of kids who follow it are able to stop their seizures.

Recently new surgical techniques have improved the outcomes. Depending on the type of seizure or if the patient has tried several medications without success, doctors may recommend surgery.

Do: Keep a cool head under pressure and try to keep the person safe till the seizure stops

■ Gently try to put the person onto a flat surface so he does not fall

■ Put something soft and flat under the head.

Don't: Don't restrain the person or you could injure the person or yourself.

■ Don't offer even a sip of water as that could cause choking

■ Attempting to put an object in the individual's mouth could be dangerous for you and him

■ Don't attempt artificial respiration unless the person is not breathing when the seizure has stopped.

The writer is CEO, KlinikApp

DOCYARD

DR ATUL PRASAD

Director & HOD, Neurology



A five-stage horror

Parkinson's is a progressive neurodegenerative condition most commonly seen among the ageing population. After Alzheimer's disease, it is the second most common age-related neurodegenerative disorder. An estimated seven to 10 million people worldwide are victims of Parkinson's. Globally, neurological disorders are now the leading source of disability and ageing is increasing the burden of neurodegenerative disorders. Parkinson's disease is one such example. In the year 2016, 6.1 million people had Parkinson's disease globally, compared with 2.5 million in 1990. Total number of deaths caused by this disease in the year 2016 is 211,296. The prevalence of the disease varies according to age. It ranges from 41 people per 1 lakh among people in their forties to more than 1,900 people per 1 lakh among those who are eighth decade of life and older. According to several surveys conducted on this disease, men are 1.5 times more prone to have Parkinson's than women.

Although Parkinson's disease (PD) is progressive in nature and worsens over time, it is highly individual and affects people differently. Not everyone who has Parkinson's disease will experience all the symptoms, and symptoms between patients may vary in their severity. The speed of the progression differs from people to people as well. However, physicians have distinguished definite stages that describe how the disease progresses. There are five distinctive stages that are usually seen in a person with Parkinson's disease.

The first stage has mild symptoms like tremors along one side of the body. Slight changes in walking, posture, or facial expressions may be noticed by those around them

the patients are still more or less independent in this stage to do things for themselves.

Stage 3: In the third stage of PD, with the motor symptoms becoming worse, patients may begin to experience loss of balance leading to falls and movement can become very slow. However, for many patients living independently it is still possible, but they may have difficulty in everyday activities such as eating or dressing.

Stage 4: In this later stage, patients experience extremely limiting. With greatly impaired movement, most will need help with everyday activities and will not be able to look after themselves. There are exceptions who can still stand without assistance.

Stage 5: At this advanced stage of the disease, most people will require a wheelchair as they experience difficulty in walking and standing. With seriously impaired motor skills, assistance will be needed in all areas of daily life. Hallucination is an additional nightmare at this stage of the disease.

Parkinson's disease is like a doom to the ones affected and their dear ones as well. It affects patients' quality of life in a horrible way, making social interaction more difficult and worsening their financial condition, due to the medical expenses associated with the disease.

SUMMER COOLERS

RAW MANGO: *Kachchi kairi*, or raw mango, is etched in all of our summer memories, as strongly as are the scorching winds, the uncomfortable heat and the relentless sun. Drinking juice of raw mango during summers is more than a mere exercise in palate pleasing. The drink reduces the effects of intense heat and prevents dehydration, by stopping excessive loss of sodium chloride and iron from the body. These minerals often tend to leach out into your sweat, during summers, making you dehydrated.

Raw mango is also consumed for its action against gastrointestinal disorders, which tend to go up during the summers. It is often prescribed to people with morning sickness, constipation, diarrhoea, chronic dyspepsia and indigestion.

Raw mangoes are great for the liver, and are believed to treat liver ailments. Having a little bit of raw mango powder cures the afternoon drowsiness that often takes effect after your meals. This is because raw mango gives your body an energy boost that wakes you up and helps you perform well.



TAKE ALTERNATE ROUTE

MUSBA HASHMI speaks with DR KUSHAL BANERJEE about the advancements in homeopathy and how it is effective in curing various diseases

Pollution, stress, hectic lifestyle and unhealthy food — all lead to various diseases in our lives. With various treatments for various diseases, one often gets confused with which way to opt for. This is when Homeopathy comes to the rescue.

With so much advancement in medicine and technology, homeopathy has also come a long way. With treatments for common cough and cold to severe diseases like cancer, homeopathy promise to provide a treatment for all.

Dr Kushal Banerjee of Dr Kalyan Banerjee Clinic says that though many people don't go to Homeopathy as the first treatment, it is the best on to take.

"Many people are sceptical to go for homeopathy as the first and foremost treatment for any disease. They think that the treatment is very long and the results are very slow. But, if one wants to cure their disease and is looking for a permanent treatment instead of just suppressing it for the time being, then homeopathy is the best treatment. For instance if someone has migraines and he wants to cure and control it instead of just managing it for that particular time that is when homeopathy is helpful," Banerjee explains and adds that a large number of patients suffering from some major diseases like cancer and brain haemorrhage have responded well to the homeopathic treatment.

"We have seen a large number of patients who were a failure of chemotherapy and they also responded to the treatment, which is very significant. But, not to forget that cancer is not a single disease, there are various types of cancers. So, the treatment can be effective in one and not another," he tells you.

In a recent study conducted at the Dr Kalyan Banerjee Clinic, it is found that Homeopathy can be beneficial in kidney failure and hypothyroidism too.

AN IMPORTANT THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS TO GO TO BED AT THE RIGHT TIME AND AVOID AN IRREGULAR SLEEPING PATTERN. ANOTHER NO-NO IS TO SKIP MEALS. IF ONE FOLLOWS THESE TWO THINGS, THEY CAN KEEP MANY DISEASES AT BAY — DR KUSHAL BANERJEE

The early findings have shown positive impact on patients with kidney failure and hypothyroidism.

Banerjee says that although these two diseases are very common but conventional medicine have no cure for them. "Hypothyroidism and chronic kidney disease or kidney failure are very common diseases and have no resolution in conventional medicine. But, in our study we have found that these two diseases can be cured or atleast prevented from further progression. In hypothyroidism study, the data indicates that specific homeopathic medicines given to patients were able to improve the functioning of the thyroid gland, thereby bringing down the Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH) readings. This runs contrary to the fact that says the progression of the disease cannot be controlled. The study was done between 2011 to 2015 and a case records of 2083 patients were studied and analysed. That is when we came up with the results. A total of 35 per cent patients saw positive results in their treatment by the fourth visit to the clinic," he tells you.

The study for chronic renal failure was done for two months and the records of 61 patients were analysed.

"Through this study we found that serum urea and creatinine readings, two of the most important clinical readings while studying kidney failure, showed reduction in them. Even a slight reduction in these readings is a big thing. No currently available treatment is able to do this. These readings shows whether a patient should undergo dialysis or not and homeopathic treatment may help patients avoid going through dialysis," Banerjee tells you.

Banerjee says that there are various causes and symptoms of chronic renal failure.

"There are many causes of the disease. Some of them being — if you are an old patient of diabetes,

the possibility of kidney failure increases, if you have hypotension from a long time then also the chances of chronic kidney failure increases. Drug toxicity also leads to kidney failure. If someone is using painkillers for a long time then kidney damage is a known side-effect. And one of the emerging cause is auto-immune condition in which the immune system automatically decides to attack the kidney," he tells you and adds that when the causes of the disease differs, the management and the prevention of the disease also differs.

Banerjee opines that unhealthy lifestyle opens door to many diseases.

"The most common cause for majority of diseases is unhealthy lifestyle. Leading a healthy lifestyle will keep your sugar in place, your blood pressure in place and your immune system in place. Unnecessary and indiscriminate usage of over the counter allopathic medicines should be stopped. Popping painkillers for every small thing is a habit that many of us have, it is very bad for health and should be stopped immediately," he tells you.

Banerjee says that taking small significant steps can help to live a healthy lifestyle and eliminate many diseases.

"The basic thing which we advised to our patients is having all the meals at the right time is a must. Skipping meals is the worst thing one can do to their body. The other important thing is to go to bed at the right time and avoid an irregular sleeping pattern. If one follows these two things, they can keep many diseases at bay. Additionally, regular exercise is also important for a healthy lifestyle. Moderate amount of regular exercise also helps to eliminate various diseases from life. If one keeps in mind these basic pointers of a healthy lifestyle then, medicines will work better and diseases will stay away," he tells you.

DadiKaKehna

With sun comes tanned skin. More so if your work keeps you exposed to the sunlight for long hours. ROSHANI DEVI shares simple home remedies that one can use to get rid of the tan instantly



Summer months are fun. Kids have vacations, you can take a break, go to the beach and relax or just have fun with friends. But the downside of staying out in the sun for too long is tanning. But fret not. There are simple things that one can do to get rid of it instantly.

First, slice the lemon and rub it on the tanned region. Leave it on for a few minutes before you go for your bath. Do this at least once a day.

You can also make a pack and use this once a day. Mix a tablespoon lemon juice, a tablespoon cucumber extract and a tablespoon rose water. Apply this to the tanned areas. Rinse after 10-12 minutes.

Second, mix a tablespoon *masoor daal* powder, a tablespoon tomato juice and a teaspoon aloe vera extract. Apply it on the tanned area. Leave it on for half an hour.

Wash it off with cold water. If you are rushed for time, a pack made with half a cup ripe papaya and a tablespoon honey works wonders. Leave it on for half an hour. Wash off with cold or lukewarm water. Do this twice a week.

Four, one can make a pack using a tablespoon plain yogurt and a tablespoon tomato juice. apply the paste on the tanned area. Let it dry for 30 minutes. Cleanse with water.



TIPTOP

India rolled out the National Viral Hepatitis Control Program (NVHCP) last week with the aim of eliminating viral hepatitis. The disease infects and kills more than HIV, malaria and tuberculosis combined. The National Action Plan - Viral Hepatitis was launched in Mumbai by the Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare. Viral hepatitis is recognised as an important public health problem across the world.

According to the WHO, viral hepatitis caused 1.34 million deaths globally in 2015, a number comparable to deaths due to tuberculosis, worldwide. There are about 4 crore people suffering from Hepatitis B in India, and another 0.6 to 1.2 crore people suffering from Hepatitis C.

SLIMLINE

A scientist at the National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health in Mumbai — an institute under the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) — says a new type of stem cell identified by her team can help restore fertility in men and women who have undergone treatment for cancer.

Cancer treatment that involves use of radiation and chemicals, renders patients infertile as an unwanted side effect and, while cured of cancer, they cannot beget

The programme will also focus on screening of pregnant women for hepatitis B, in places where institutional delivery is less than 80 per cent, to ensure provision of birth dose Hepatitis B vaccination and Hepatitis B immunoglobulin, if required.

Acute hepatitis due to any virus is usually self-limiting and requires a good diet, bed rest and only symptomatic treatment. Urgent hospitalisation may be required in cases of acute liver failure in acute viral hepatitis. One may also need intensive treatment and liver transplant. Chronic hepatitis B and C can be treated with antiviral drugs — oral and injectable. Hepatitis C virus is curable now and HBV can be controlled with medication. The vaccine is available for hepatitis A virus and HBV only.

children. Though women are born with a lifetime reserve of oocytes (immature eggs), these are wiped out by oncotherapy. In males, the testes responsible for the production of sperms, stop making them following cancer treatment.

Currently accepted approaches for fertility preservation require male patients to deposit their sperm in 'cryo-banks' before beginning cancer treatment for later use. — IANS

STUDYCENTRE

People who wish to live longer must reduce their sitting time and replace it with just 30 minutes of physical activity, according to findings of a recent study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology. The results highlight the importance of movement - regardless of its intensity or amount of time spent moving - for better health. Studies indicate that about one in four adults spends more than eight hours a day sitting.

Adults who sat for long stretches at a time - an hour or more without interruption - had a greater risk of early death than those who were sedentary for the same total amount of time but got up and moved around more often. Thus, even short bursts of activity - of just a minute or two - can provide health benefits.

Tips from Heart Care Foundation of India:

- Take the stairs as often as possible.
- Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way.
- Have "walk-meetings" instead of "sit-in" meetings.
- Walk to the nearby shops instead of driving.
- Stand up and walk while talking on the phone.
- Walk down to speak to your colleague instead of using the intercom/phone.
- Walk around your building for a break during the work day or during lunch.
- Buy a pedometer.



Sri Lanka's Christians afraid to attend church

AFP ■ COLOMBO

Members of Sri Lanka's Christian minority have been left afraid to go to church after deadly attacks that hit Easter services, killing nearly 300 and stoking fears of communal violence.

"Some people might be afraid to go to church now. At this moment I have no idea what to say," Father Lour Fernando told AFP by St Sebastian's in Negombo, one of three churches targeted Sunday.

"We have to remain strong and keep going to church and keep praying. We can't stop," Ranjan Christopher Fernand, a 55-year-old taxi driver from Negombo, said he was nervous about attending church after the attacks, which killed his friend's 11-year-old son.

"Tonight we (my family) will all go to church to pray for the victims," he said.

"Of course I feel afraid... but we have to go to church, we have to pray for the injured to get well soon." The suicide bomb attacks were the worst atrocity in Sri Lanka since the country's 37-year conflict with Tamil rebels ended a decade ago.

Sri Lanka's Christians, who make up just seven percent of the 21-million population, had been largely spared the worst of



Sri Lankans living near St. Anthony's shrine run for safety after police found explosive devices in a vehicle, seen behind before it exploded in Sri Lanka

the country's violence, including recent tensions between right-wing Buddhists and Muslims.

"We never thought we would ever be targeted. We never thought we would ever need protection," said a priest in the grounds of St Sebastian.

But others said there had been warnings, and documents seen by AFP showed the country's police chief had issued an alert on April 11 that warned a radical Muslim group planned to hit "prominent churches."

The government said Monday it believed the National Thowheeth Jamaath was behind the attacks.

A pastor at People's Church in Colombo, who declined to be

named, said police had told churches last week that they should brace for possible "incidents" and stay vigilant.

"We increased security at our church last week. We have also been checking vehicles coming into the church premises," he said.

"Although there was a generic warning to stay vigilant, some churches adopted a lax attitude because there were no details offered, like a possible timeline," he added.

"I feel more deaths could have been prevented if we were more alert." For some in the shaken Christian community, the attacks also raise the spectre of more widespread communal violence.

Buddhist monks visit bombed church

'WE DON'T HAVE ANY ANGER' AGAINST OTHER RELIGIONS: LANKAN MONKS

PTI ■ COLOMBO

A small group of monks in saffron robes visited the bombed St Anthony's Church

here on Monday and said they don't have any anger or ill will towards anyone of any other religion in the Buddhist-majority nation. The Buddhist monks visited the historic Catholic church located at Kochchikade, a day after a suicide bomber reportedly triggered a huge blast, killing many worshippers who had gathered for the Easter Sunday morning mass.

Venerable Prof Pitigala Vijitha Thero was outside St

Anthony's Shrine said he was "extremely saddened and grieved" by the incident.

"Since the (civil) war, people belonging to all religions and faiths had been co-existing and living together in unity and harmony. This is not something that anyone could have anticipated," he told the BBC.

He said he condemned the attacks, but "we don't have any anger or ill will towards anyone of any other religion."

"I pray that peace prevails - not only in this country, but in the whole world," he said.

Sri Lanka is a country of great religious diversity that crosses ethnic lines, and the monks' presence at the church was a sign of this, CNN commented.

Sunday's attacks are the deadliest seen in Sri Lanka since the end of the country's civil war in 2009. The civil war ended with the defeat of the Tamil

Tigers, who had fought for 26 years for an independent homeland for the minority ethnic Tamils. The war is thought to have killed between 70,000 and 80,000 people.

The nation has seen some sporadic violence since. In March 2018, a state of emergency was declared after hard-line members of the majority Buddhist Sinhala community attacked mosques and Muslim-owned properties.

Relatives endure grim screening to identify dead at Colombo morgue

AFP ■ COLOMBO

Some hid their eyes, some collapsed in tears as gruesome images of victims from Sri Lanka's Easter massacre were projected on to a screen in front of distraught relatives at a Colombo morgue on Monday.

The pictures of some of the 290 dead are disturbing, with faces battered and bodies missing limbs. A Roman Catholic priest and a Buddhist counterpart waited in the corner of the courtyard to intervene when one of scores of people in the audience recognised a mother, brother or child.

Many of the dead from attacks on three churches and

three luxury hotels have been taken to the government morgue and people queued in the heat to get into the heart-wrenching identification slideshow. Eighteen bodies were released on Monday morning after relatives recognised a victim from the gruesome images shown in a corner of the morgue courtyard.

Identification is painstaking, physically and emotionally. Many badly mutilated bodies will only be identified with the DNA of relatives, officials said.

Janaka Shaktivel, 28, father of an 18-month-old son, sat in shock outside the building waiting for the body of his wife to be handed over.



Three of the four children of Danish business tycoon, Anders Holch Povlsen, who is allegedly the Nordic country's richest man and a major private landowner in Britain have died in the Sri Lanka bombings on Sunday

A Catholic town at the center of Sri Lanka's deadly attacks

PTI ■ NEGOMBO

The seaside Sri Lankan fishing town of Negombo has long been called "Little Rome," a reference to its abundance of churches and its place at the center of the

country's small Catholic community.

On Monday, it was a town in mourning.

Small white flags flew in a house after house near St. Sebastian's Church, a sign that someone who lived there had

died. Groups of people visited, paying their respects.

On Easter Sunday, a bomb blast ripped through St. Sebastian's, one of a half-dozen coordinated attacks on churches and high-end hotels that killed nearly 300 people.

At least 110 were killed at St. Sebastian's, said Cardinal Malcolm Ranjith, making it the day's most deadly bombing.

Charles Fernando, 32, who was among the neighbourhood residents walking between houses, pointed to a home where he said nearly everyone had been killed or injured.

"We had war for 30 years but there were no bomb blasts in Negombo," he said.

Pompeo vows fight on 'Islamic radical terrorism' after Sri Lanka attacks

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo vowed on Monday that the United States will keep fighting "radical Islamic terrorism" after devastating attacks in Sri Lanka that targeted churches and hotels on Easter.

"Radical Islamic terrorism remains a threat. We are continuing to do real work against these evil human beings," Pompeo told reporters.

"This is America's fight, too," added Pompeo, who said he had spoken by telephone with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

US, Canada issue travel advisories to citizens travelling to Sri Lanka

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The US and Canada have issued travel advisories to their citizens seeking to visit Sri Lanka, citing threats of terrorism, a day after the calm of Easter Sunday was shattered by gruesome bombings targeting the country's churches and hotels that killed at least 290 people.

According to advisories, travellers should exercise a high degree of caution in Sri Lanka due to the current security situation.

The US Embassy said terrorists may attack with little or no warning targeting tourist locations, transportation hubs, markets/shopping malls, local government facilities, hotels,

clubs, restaurants, places of worship, parks, major sporting and cultural events, educational institutions, airports and other public areas.

The US citizens travelling to or residing in Sri Lanka were advised to enrol in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) in order to receive the latest security updates, the Sunday Times reported.

The situation remains volatile in Sri Lanka after eight explosions rocked churches and luxury hotels, killing up to 290 people, including six Indians, and with over 500 sustaining injuries.

The Canadian government also issued a travel advisory to its nationals.

"The decision to travel is your choice and you are responsible for your personal safety abroad," the advisory said.

"We take the safety and security of Canadians abroad very seriously and provide credible and timely information in our Travel Advice to enable you to make well-informed decisions regarding your travel abroad," it said.

The death toll Monday sharply rose to 290, including six Indians, from the blasts - the worst terror attack in the country's history.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but police on Monday arrested 24 people and declined to give further details.

GLOBAL TROTTERING

BUS CRASH KILLS AT LEAST 17 IN BOLIVIA

La Paz (Bolivia): Bolivian police say a bus has crashed head-on with another vehicle and plunged down a deep ravine, killing 17 people, leaving 15 others injured.

TRUMP: CONGRESS 'CAN'T IMPEACH' HIM

Washington: President Donald Trump said Monday that Congress "can't impeach" him over the findings of the Mueller report into Russian election meddling and his attempts to hamper the investigation.

BUILDINGS COLLAPSE IN PHILIPPINE QUAKE, 5 DIE

Manila: Five people were killed when at least two buildings collapsed as a strong earthquake rocked the northern Philippines, a local official said. Three bodies have been pulled out of a collapsed building in the town of Porac, while an old woman and her grandchild were crushed to death by another building in the town of Lubao, provincial governor Lilia Pineda told ABS-CBN television.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that one unknown male, Age about 65 years, Height 5'2", Complexion Wheatish, Oval Face, Weak Build, White Hair, Wearing Red colour T-shirt, white colour coat and blue colour check nikhar was found at Shantivan Red Light Bus Stand, Daryaganj, Delhi on 15.04.19. In this regard a DD No. 16-A dated 15.04.19 U/S 174 Cr.PC has been lodged at PS Daryaganj, Delhi. The dead body has been preserved for identification at Maulana Azad Medical College mortuary for 72 hours.

Any person having any information or clue about this male deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned.

SHO
PS : Daryaganj, Delhi
Ph.: 23274683, 23279331
DP/6214/CD/19

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PHE, GROUND WATER DIVN, BAGH ALI MARDAN NOWSHERA, SRINAGAR KASHMIR

GIST of E-Tender
NIT No: PHE/GWDS 03 of 04/ 2019 Dated 22-04-2019

For and on behalf of Governor of Jammu and Kashmir State, e-tenders are invited for the job detailed below in two cover system from registered Contractors:-

S.No.1. Description of Job :- Unloading, Stacking Handling/Re-handling /Head Load of the Departmental material i.e 125mm dia pipes/Hand pump sets in the Divisional office Stores at Nowsheera Srinagar.

Cost of Tender Document :- Rs.200/-
Cost of EMD :- Rs. 3600/-
Validity of Rates :- 180 Days
Critical Dates /Information.

1. Publishing Date :- 23-04-2019
2. Document Downloading Start Date :- 23-04-2019(09:00 A.M)
3. Document Downloading Last Date :- 02-04-2019(04:00 P.M)
4. On Line Document Submission Start Date :- 23-04-2019(09:00 A.M)
5. On Line Document Submission Last Date :- 02-05-2019 up to (4:00 P.M)
6. Date of opening of Tender :- 03-05-2019 at (11:00 A.M)
7. Tender Receiving Authority :- Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar.
8. Document Cost : Rs 200/= (Two Hundred only) for each well (Non-Refundable) in the shape of Treasury Challan/receipt deposited to Account Head 0215 in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar (at Sadder Treasury Srinagar):
9. Earnest Money: for an amount shown in Gist of NIT against the job in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer PHE Ground Water Division Srinagar 190011.
10. Bid Validity Period: 180 Days

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
DIPK-NB-300/19
Dated: 22.04.2019

Trump lawyer attacks Mueller report

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump's top lawyer Don Sunday attacked "calumny, lies and distortions" in the Mueller investigation report, and said there is "nothing wrong" with taking hacked information from Russia.

Rudy Giuliani mounted a combative defense of the president in Sunday talk show appearances that took aim at Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigators, the evidence they amassed and the witnesses they cited.

The former New York mayor heaped special scorn on Senator Mitt Romney, a former Republican presidential candidate who said Friday he was "sickened" by the report's findings and "appalled" that Trump's election campaign "welcomed help from Russia."

"What a hypocrite. What a hypocrite. Any candidate in the whole world in America would

take information," Giuliani said of Romney on CNN's "State of the Union."

He was referring to Democratic emails that were hacked by Russian operatives and disseminated by WikiLeaks in 2016 to hurt Trump presidential rival Hillary Clinton.

"Who says it's even illegal?" Giuliani added. "Does the information turn out to be false, by the way? The information that was gleaned and disseminated, every newspaper printed it."

Trump publicly encouraged Russia and WikiLeaks while top campaign officials, including his son and son-in-law, met in Trump Tower with a Russian promising dirt on Clinton.

"There is nothing wrong with taking information from the Russians. It depends on where it came from," Giuliani said, adding that as a lawyer he would have advised against it.

"This didn't become an international scandal because of immorality. It became an international scandal because the president was accused of violating the law falsely," he said.

His comments echoed Trump, who mocked Romney on Twitter Sunday, after lashing out Friday at the "bullshit" Mueller report. The president was in Palm Beach, Florida where he attended Easter services.

The special counsel's 22-month-long investigation concluded that Trump and his team did not collude with the Russian effort to sway the elections in his favour.

But it detailed 10 episodes of potential obstruction by Trump, including his firing of FBI director James Comey and demands that Mueller himself be removed.

MISSING/KIDNAPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl, Name: Priyanka, D/o: Virender, R/o: H.No. 227, Gali No.-01, Basti Bakner, Narela, Delhi has been missing/Kidnaped since 01.04.2019 from the area of P.S. Narela, Delhi. In this regard, a Case Vides DD No. 94-A Dated 01.04.2019, has been registered at P.S. Narela, Delhi. Investigations has been carried out but despite best efforts, the girl could not be traced.

The description of the missing/ kidnaped girl is as under:

Name: Priyanka, D/o: Virender, R/o: H.No. 227, Gali No.-01, Basti Bakner, Narela, Delhi, Age: 20 years, Height: 4'10" feet, Face: Round, Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Yellow Colour Suit & Salwar with Chundi and Blue Colour Chappal in feet. If anyone has any information about the missing/kidnaped girl, then please inform P.S. Narela, Delhi.

email: cbc@cbl.gov.in S.H.O
Fax: No.011-24368639 P.S. Narela, Delhi
Ph.: 011-24368638, 24368641 Ph.: 011-27282350, 27285839
DP/199/ON/19.

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of female Age: Approx 70 years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 4'10", was wearing Red Saree, Cream Blouse and Bare feet, was found near Kali Mata Mandir, Outer Ring Road, Pitam Pura, Delhi at 08:05 AM. In this regard a FIR No. 387/19 u/s 279/304-A IPC, dated 12.04.2019, has been registered at P.S. Mangol Puri, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO
P.S. Mangol Puri, New Delhi
Ph.: 011-27921168, 27922186
DP/2162/OD/19

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Age: Approx 40 years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'10", Built: Strong, Face: Round, ID Mark: Divansh/Rivansh Tattoo on Left Hand & OM Tattoo on Right Hand, wearing white colour shirt (Tailor Denizen) & Black colour Jeans Pant (Recrvit) and chappal in feet, was found unconscious at DBG Road Near Central Bank, Pahar Ganj, Delhi. Doctor declared him dead vide MLC No. 75144/19 in LHMC Hospital, New Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 12PPST, dated 18.04.2019, has been lodged at P.S. Pahar Ganj, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

SHO
P.S. Pahar Ganj, New Delhi
Ph.: 011-23520787, 23524746
DP/6216/CD/19

POSSESSION NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Axis Bank Ltd. under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued demand notice upon the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates.

The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Axis Bank Ltd.

The Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s) attention is invited to provisions of subsection (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

| Name of Borrower/Co-borrower | Description of Property | Date of Demand Notice |
|---|--|-----------------------|
| 1. M/S Dhalwal Impex, Through Proprietor Mr. Siddharth Jain 1118 Diamond Palace Shop No. 11, Chhatta Madan Gopal Mallawa Chandini Chowk, Delhi-110006 | A Residential Plot Bearing No. 16 In The Lay Out Plan Of I.M.D. Chbs Ltd. Measuring 202.66 Sq. Yds. Musam Vihar, New Delhi | 16-Jan-19 |
| 2. Mr. Siddharth Jain S/o Kamal Prasad Jain 16, Mausam Vihar Delhi-110051 | North- Road 45 West South - Drain East - Plot No. 1 West - Distt. Park | 28-Apr-19 |
| 3. Mr. Kamal Prasad Jain S/o Bimal Prasad Jain 16, Mausam Vihar Delhi-110051 | | |
| 4. Mrs. Ashok Jain W/o Kamal Prasad Jain 16, Mausam Vihar Delhi-110051 | | |

The above-mentioned Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Mortgagor(s) are hereby given a 30 days' Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date: 22-04-2019, Place: Delhi

Sd/-, Authorized Officer, Axis Bank Ltd.

DEBT RECOVERY TRIBUNAL II, DELHI 4TH FLOOR, JEEVAN TARA BUILDING, PARLAMENT STREET, NEW DELHI-110001
(Order 5, Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure)

PROCLAMATION OF SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Property will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues, in the matter of ICICI BANK LTD v/s DPL BUILDERSPVT LTD AND ANR O.A No. 790/2018 & I.A.No: 549/19

1. Description of Property: Make: Land Rover Freelander 2 Se. Reg No: DL1CS4142
Manuf Year: 2015 Km: 1.15 Lakh Reserve Price- Rs. 12, 60,000 EMD- Rs. 1, 26,000
2. Date and Time of Auction: 30.04.2019
3. Auction Venue: Ridhi Godara Yard, Kataria Chowk Sector 17, Sukhrani Gaon Behind Air Force Station, Gurgaon
4. Manager: Shankar Kapoor
Mob No: 9650193259

Terms of Sale
The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself / themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before submitting the bids.

Interested bidders shall be required to deposit an Earnest Amount mentioned above against the respective vehicle by way of **pay order/Demand Draft** payable at Delhi and in favour of **ICICI Bank Ltd, Delhi**. Successful highest bidder shall have to deposit balance amount within 5 days from the approval shared with them.

In Case of failure to deposit the amount as mentioned above, the amount of Earnest Money deposited shall be forfeited. Interested participant/s are requested to participate 30 April, 2019 for physical auction or call Bank Manager Shankar Kapoor.

Trend Blazer

Farhan will be guest at UEFA

Actor Farhan Akhtar has bagged a seat among one of the special guests at the UEFA Champions League Finals, this year.

As UEFA's official guest from India, he will watch the finals and get a taste of the UEFA Champions League experience at the Metropolitan Stadium in Madrid, Spain on June 1.

Farhan is a football enthusiast and has often spoken about his passion for sports, especially football. The actor will be seen across the Sony Pictures Sports Network, showcasing his love for the tournament in the *My Reasons to Watch UEFA Champions League* on-air campaign.



'I feel Arshad (Warsi), as an actor, is quite understated. He is one of the best actors I've worked with. When it comes to comedy, he is one of the best in the country, for he improvises with every take. His spontaneity makes the scene so exciting and keeps you constantly on your toes. I had thoroughly enjoyed working with him in Ishqiya.'
—Vidya Balan



Actress **KATRINA KAIF** has been roped in for filmmaker **Rohit Shetty's** next, titled *Sooryavanshi* starring actor **Akshay Kumar**.

Akshay welcomed the actress. "Welcome to our cop universe Katrina Kaif... Our *Sooryavanshi* girl," he wrote.



Filmmaker **Karan Johar**, who is bank rolling the film, shared a photograph of himself with Akshay, Katrina and Shetty, captioned the image, "Welcoming the *Sooryavanshi* girl on board. Releasing on Eid 2020!"

Akshay plays the role of Veer Suryavanshi, who was introduced as an Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) officer in a cameo in *Simmba*.

Nick, Priyanka celebrate Easter

Actor **NICK JONAS** and wife and actress **PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS** celebrated their first Easter after marriage.

The two celebrated Easter in Atlanta and shared photographs of their family time with mother, Denise Jonas on Instagram.

The couple can be seen with gift baskets in one photograph as Priyanka hugs her mother-in-law while Denise can be seen happily dancing in a video.

While Nick wrote: "Happy Easter to you and yours! From me and mine."

Priyanka captioned the image, "Happy Easter from ours to yours."

On the work front, Priyanka has wrapped up filming *The Sky is Pink*, directed by Shonali Bose.



It's important to look beyond men's personal accomplishments and see their fashion sense as well as the manner in which they are making informed choices and respecting the changing dynamics of women in the society. By TEAM VIVA

ARE YOU A MAN OF SUBSTANCE?

Whether it is style, fashion, fitness, travel, technology or personal space, men have more often than not taken a lead and in the bargain evolved manifold. Or so believes Karan Bhardwaj, co-founder of the India Men Show.

He pointed out that despite that there hasn't been a portal or space which talks about how men's lifestyle and personality has evolved over the years. The show was conceptualised keeping this aspect about technology, food, travel, way of living, fashion, luxury, fitness, entertainment and lifestyle in mind. Karan said, "It was to provide some direction to the lifestyle industry and give them a new subject to work on. The show not just looked at how their personal choices have changed with time, but also defined the 'man of substance', who has evolved by accepting the current scenario and change in the society."

With so many campaigns against the harassment and injustice towards



'WE SHORTLISTED MEN FROM EVERY FIELD LIKE FASHION, TECHNOLOGY, HOSPITALITY, FITNESS AND MORE, WHO AREN'T CONTROVERSIAL OR HAVEN'T BEEN CHARGED OF ANY ACCUSATIONS UNDER THE #METOO CAMPAIGN. THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SOCIETY IN A GREAT WAY'



women coming to the fore, the show questioned who after all is a "man of substance?" He added, "Even if the man is successful in his endeavours, he needs to be much more accepting of the changing roles and desires of women too. They need to be 'clean' enough to talk about society as whole. Hence, we shortlisted men from every field like fashion, technology, hospitality, fitness and more, who aren't controversial or haven't been charged of any accusations under the #MeToo campaign and respect humanity and feminism. Of course, they have contributed to the society in a great way."

Present at a panel discussion, talking about the changing trends in men's lifestyle in India, FDCI president Sunil Sethi said that a man shouldn't try to be just successful, rather be of value, quoting Albert Einstein. "If you are a man of value and ethics, you're a man of substance," he said, adding that "Achievers are not necessarily defined by clothes."

Talking about how the fashion sense in men has evolved, Sethi said that men haven't been adventurous in the past. However, today, they don't just

Real talent

While **ALIA BHATT** received the Best Actress award for *Raazi* again, **VINEET KUMAR** was given the Best Actor for *Mukkabaaz* at the Critics' Choice Film Awards

After her victory at the Filmfare and Zee Cine Awards this year for her notable performance as a spy in Meghna Gulzar's directorial *Raazi*, Alia Bhatt walked away with the Best Actress Award at the Critics' Choice Film Awards ceremony here.

Alia, who opted for a denim jumpsuit for the gala, took to Instagram to share her look for the ceremony that took place on Sunday.

Surekha Sikri, 74, was felicitated with Best Supporting Actress Award for her portrayal of a nagging grandmother in *Badhaai Ho*. While receiving the award, she got a standing ovation from the audience. Due to health reasons, she attended the event in a wheel chair. The presenters got off the stage to hand over the trophy to Surekha, who adorned a green sari.

Bollywood's first stuntwoman Reshma Pathan was honoured with the Extraordinary Achievement Award.

Reshma is popularly known as the *Sholay* girl as she had played Hema Malini's body-double in the cult film.

In the Best Actor (Male) category, Vineet Kumar bagged the golden trophy for his role in *Mukkabaaz*.

Sriram Raghavan received the Best Director Award for his thriller *Andhadhun*, which featured actors **A y u s h m a n n** Khurana, Tabu and Radhika Apte.

"This award means so much to me and everyone who has worked hard for *Mukkabaaz*. Thank you so much Anurag Kashyap (sir), Aanand L Rai (sir), my co-actors, all the boxers, my coaches and the entire team of *Mukkabaaz*," he wrote.

"And last but not least, all my friends and fans who have been pouring their love on me... Let

your love flow," he added. Music composer Amit Trivedi also bagged the trophy for Best Song for *Halla from Manmarziyaan* that starred Taapsee Pannu, Vicky Kaushal and Abhishek Bachchan.

The gala was hosted by actress Neha Dhupia but it was superstar Shah Rukh Khan who turned out as the surprise guest of the evening and entertained the attendees with his humour and wit.

In the videos from the extravaganza that have surfaced online, SRK is seen speaking about the craft of cinema.

Celebrities like Zoya Akhtar, Jackie Shroff, Aditi Rao Hydari, Rasika Dugal and Richa Chadha were also present.



Best Actor: Vineet Singh for *Mukkabaaz*

Best Actress: Alia Bhatt for *Raazi*

Best Director: Sriram Raghavan for *Andhadhun*

Best Supporting Actress: Surekha Sikri for *Badhaai Ho!*

Best song: *Halla from Manmarziyaan*

Best Film in Tamil: *Pariyerum Perumal*

Best Film in Malayalam: *Ee Ma Yau*

Best Film in Gujarati: *Tatvamasi*

Extraordinary Achievement Award: Reshma Pathan

ON A SPANISH NOTE

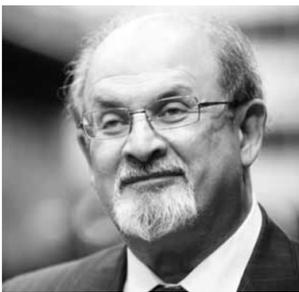
Writer **SALMAN RUSHDIE's** new novel is inspired by the classic *Don Quixote*

Spanish classic *Don Quixote*, which remains the most-translated book in the world after the Bible, has inspired a new novel by Man Booker Prize-winning author Salman Rushdie, publisher Penguin Random House India announced.

The publisher in a statement announced acquisition of the novel *Quichotte* which is expected to hit Indian stands in August.

Inspired by the classic by the sixteenth century writer Miguel de Cervantes, Rushdie's *Quichotte* is the story of "an ageing travelling salesman who falls in love with a TV star and sets off to drive across America on a quest to prove himself worthy of her hand".

The publisher said that the title's



tragicomic tale is one of a deranged time and deals, along the way, with father-son relationships, sibling quarrels, racism, the

opioid crisis, cyber-spies and the end of the world.

Calling the book a perfect follow-on to the success of Rushdie's 2017 novel *The Golden House*, the publisher's Senior Commissioning Editor Manasi Subramaniam said that the author remains the master fabulist.

"In *Quichotte*, this rich epic of the immigrant experience in modern America, we are delighted to see that Rushdie is back — with his signature dazzling prose — to tell the tale of the here and now within the realm that all that could've been," she said.

The book will be published under Penguin's imprint Hamish Hamilton, which has many distinguished titles in literary fiction. —IANS

MC Sher on highway to heaven

Zoya Akhtar's Gully Boy brought the growing hip-hop culture in India to the fore. While Ranveer Singh received glowing praise for his portrayal of Murad, a slum boy who uses rap as an outlet for his frustration, his mentor MC Sher played by Siddhant Chaturvedi came in for praise for his rapping skills.

Siddhant's fan-base has grown substantially since the release of the film. And now, according to a daily, producer Ritesh Sidhwani and Zoya are planning a spin-off focused on MC Sher.

"The film is entirely based on Siddhant's character and traces MC Sher's journey to becoming a hero. This will also give the makers a chance to delve deeper into hip-hop culture and you can expect many engaging rap battles," says a source.

Gully Boy was inspired by Naezy, aka Naved Sheikh, who shot to fame with the song *Aafat*.

On a show, Siddhant also opened up about his first meeting with Zoya. "It was at a party. I was dancing to a Govinda song, *Tujhko Mirchi Lagi Toh Main Kya Karoon*. I was full-on and she saw me. Then the DJ played *Gallan Goodiyaan* from *Dil Dhadakne Do* and I went up



to her and danced with her. She was like, 'Hey, who are you?' And I said I was an actor on *Inside Edge*. She asked me to come and audition for *Gully Boy*," he said.

On the other hand, Zoya Akhtar too reacted to the success of her last directorial *Gully Boy* by saying that while making a film, a filmmaker shouldn't look at the end result and should enjoy the process of filmmaking.

Zoya started 2019 on a positive note as both her film and digital project *Made in Heaven* received a good response from the audience.

Talking about her forthcoming projects, Zoya said, "It's been a good start. We are working on *Made in Heaven* season 2. We are also working on another show. We are working on two feature films with two other directors and we are working on Reema's (Kagti) and my next film. It's action-packed writing happening right now."

Talking about the success of *Gully Boy*, which featured Ranveer Singh and Alia Bhatt in lead roles, Zoya said, "It feels good when it does well at the box office and when you have certain amount of critical appreciation. I feel you have to do something that you believe in and you have to do it as honestly and truthfully as you can and then, whatever happens, happens for the best. You can't look at the end result. You have to just enjoy the process."

—With inputs from IANS

THE POLLOCKIAN CANVAS

Artist SHRIDHAR IYER's paintings initiate in-depth conversations about spiritual leanings, says UMA NAIR

Tucked away in Hauz Khas village, Art Konsult has a series of abstract works by veteran artist Shridhar Iyer that is a lesson in the leanings and learnings of the abstract journey that unravels through time and tide. Over the years, Shridhar has projected himself as a pilgrim in search of the intangible. A silent vibration of a mantra emanates from his countenance and you think of discipline, simplicity and devout absorption that transcend the frontiers of experience to give us a moving moment.

His profile photographs on Facebook clearly unravel a quest for something that is not merely temporary but something that is ephemeral and indeed incandescent in its deeply tenured terrain. His paintings are Pollockian canvases that are indeed not spectacularly beautiful but they are in-depth conversations about the spiritual leanings that are specifically cited within the compartments of his interior journey.

FLOATING TENDRILS

What meets the eye are lush-laced floating tendrils, which float toward and over each other but always in a swirl of grace, rising and falling through fields as if swirling down against an inky plane of deeper densities. The elegant tangerine and saffron shades create stunning contrasting islands of tonality, even as the looped lines meet at the stark dividing lines that separate different realms.

In the subsequent paintings, that continue this motif, the swirls shapeshift. They become ethereal,



like curvilinear spirits that converge in flashing swirls, transforming again into streams of energy that rush through a colourful, charismatic world at once ordered yet uncannily infinite.

TRANSCENDENT JOURNEYS

Shridhar has over the years meditated upon his own poetically transcendent journeys characterising an inner spirit inspired by his own interactions on an inward journey of a higher plane. You can look at these abstractions and

know immediately that Shridhar is an artist who delves and delineates his own intuitive journey.

Here are a series of embedded thoughts that are made of narrow strips of fragile and pliant strokes that lay stretched in quadruple layers of warps and wefts on the different layers of colour that appear and disappear, bringing up the lower levels to the top, sending it back down the brims of the canvas, bringing it up again in a different way so that it looks like the fiber lines are meshing, tangling,

and organically growing together. Before he takes them out of tension, they are aligned to certain gravitational forces that are unseen but hold them together in a lock in embrace that tingles in its minimal moorings.

ORDERED PROGRESSION

Whether you look at the colour tones or the looped linearities or the tiny textural nuances, you think of an ordered progression in which the inner being celebrates primeval, primordial chaos that is



RENDERED IN CRIMSON, AMORPHOUS BLUE, CANARY YELLOW AND MOSS GREEN, SHRIDHAR SUBTLY UNVEILS THE SYMBOLIC LEXICON OF THE MANTRAS THAT WE USE WHEN WE CHANT SANSKRIT PRAYERS

at once dulcet, distinct and deeply gravitas filled. These works, in an ordered progression, illustrate the birth of an inner world that is at once elusive as well as elegant in the many meanderings that it explores in terms of dimensions. Shridhar explores the dichotomies — heaven and earth, male and female, positive and negative — that structure our existence. He, in a subtle and silent way, also unveils the symbolic lexicon of the mantras that we use when we chant Sanskrit prayers and this is what he has continued to develop throughout his career as an abstractionist. You can sense the realms and the rhythmic resonance that grows and flows. You can see the ever-shifting primordial vignettes of experience that evolve in these works — rendered in crimson, amorphous blue, canary yellow, and moss green. We can think of the unity of colour tones as much as we think of zones of

meditation that form in our inner meditative moments.

Spiral and swirl forms appear often — a potent symbol that Shridhar has been using again and again to suggest individual personal spiritual growth, progress, and evolution that resides within and without.

We can think of many things. Of the importance of the individual as a being held by the spirit of godliness within — held by use threads of conviction in an invisible realm of existence.

These works remind of the *nirgun* poetry of Kabir the mystic.

Among the various collections of Kabir's poems, *Bijak* is considered the most authoritative by the members of Kabir Panth. The word, *Bijak* means a document by which a hidden treasure can be located. The compiler of the collection probably chose this word as a title for verses which were considered to reveal the hidden treasures of religious knowledge.

Ultimately, the abstractionist is one who conveys the spiritual world through his own paintings, and when these paintings are showcased in a space, it speaks like a temple that echoes the many mantras and prayers held within the folds of the works. This show is a must for students of the world of art in the capital city because it speaks at different levels about the why and wherefore of abstraction in a world that has been celebrating stray design and strokes of colour for abstraction when in reality, it belongs to the pedigree of experience and exploration over the years instead of the overnight bubble.

For Odisha's woman sculptor Nivedita Mishra, carving is nothing short of a meditative process. She is dedicated to carving and it connects her not just with the density and intensity of the granite blocks that she works upon but also the physicality and materiality of the smaller elements. Carving as sculptural practice has a deep, ancient, global history and this connection between a vision for modern sculpture and methods of making has been employed for centuries, millennia even, across the globe and that makes her work appeal deeply to the common man.

SPEAKING STONES

Carving is not simply a method of making sculptures for NIVEDITA MISHRA, rather it is an articulation of a particular vision of the craft, says U NAIR



Stones that speak
Her smaller clusters of work appear as if the earth has created itself into a cathedral of beautiful treasure stones in uncountable shapes and textures, each one stamped with its own rich familial and cultural history. No wonder so many of us pick up stones that speak to us and carry them home, placing them in special niches and treating them as our own personal discoveries. Each offers a puzzling mystery to explore; each tweaks our imagination, stimulates our curiosity and raises interesting questions. In the series that echo treasures and boxes and cavities, the set of four with lids



In her series, we see a direct reckoning of details and elements in the run of time. It is about the journey of man that Lord Tennyson speaks of in his poem, The Brook

are the finest in finesse and fervour. In yet another pair, *You and Me*, we espie the grace of the cylindrical column that begins with the magic of the stone. We can imagine how she fills her studio with about many lifetimes worth of stones still waiting to be carved. It's the potential of each piece that brings her great joy. Every carving block is filled with a silent beauty calling for attention; every stone an invitation for creative expression that echoes the infinitude of man and woman as individuals, consorts, friends walking their own paths sometimes crossing sometimes melding.

Moulding triangular bases

In the cluster of stones with triangular bases we see the earthiness and the balance of vision and vitality. "I've always been inspired by the capacity of a block of stone," says Nivedita and adds, "I can create one-of-a-kind groups or single works and I like to create my own language when my hands touch each sculpture and work it from start to finish."

Most sculptors in history, created a maquette of a composition in a malleable material, made any adjustments desired, then either copied it in stone themselves or had it done by a craftsman. Many sculptors in history who have been credited with carving their stone works have never even picked up a chisel. The final stone version of their creations was carved by a craftsman, while the artist directed like a symphony conductor. But here we see a direct reckoning of elements and journeys in the run of time. Nivedita's series is about the odyssey of man that Lord Tennyson speaks of in his poem, *The Brook*: "For men may come and men may go/ But I go on forever."



Bengali bard leaves songs of soil

Legendary Bengali folk singer Amar Paul died at a state-run hospital on Saturday following a celebratory hemorrhage. Paul, 96, a widower, breathed his last around 5.30 pm at the SSKM Hospital.

Born on May 19, 1922 at Brahmanberia in undivided Bengal in an area now in Bangladesh, Paul took his first lessons in folk music from his mother Durgasundari Debi, and later learnt Hindusthani classical music from Ustad Ayet Ali Khan. After shifting base to Kolkata, he joined All India Radio as a grade artist and began lending his voice to films.

His rendition of the song *Kotoi Ranga dekhi duniai* in Satyajit Ray's *Hirak Rajar Deshe* brought him instant fame. His songs in films directed by the likes of Debaki Kumar Bose and Rituparno Ghosh touched the hearts of the music lovers. The foremost urban exponent of the Bengali folk song today, Paul has performed extensively all over the state and attended seminars and workshops on folk music worldwide, while hold-

ing concerts in Tokyo, Bangladesh and the United States in the course of a professional career exceeding 50 years. Numerous songs sung by Paul were issued in the form of gramophone records, audiocassettes and CDs. He also published books on folk music such as *Banglar Loksangeet* and *Banglaar Nadir Gaan*. A much feted man, he received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for his contribution to folk music of West Bengal. He was honoured by the West Bengal State Academy of Dance, Music and Visual Arts, the Rabindra Bharati University, the Paachim Banga Sangeet Academy. He was also a recipient of the Lalan Puraskar for folk music conferred by the state government.

Condoling Paul's death, chief minister Mamata Banerjee said it was an irreparable loss to Bengali folk music, and recalled his popular songs like *Probhato Somoy Sachir Angina Majhe* and *Rai Jago Rai Jago*. —IANS

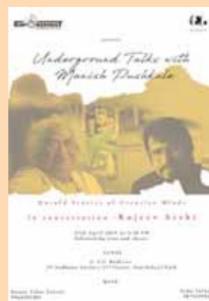
WATCH OUT

India International Centre presents screening of *And the Alley She White Washed in Light Blue*, a film by Nili Portugali, which takes us on an intimate journey to the Galilean *Kaballa*, holy city of Tzfat in Israel. This will be followed by a panel discussion. **WHEN:** April 23 **TIME:** 6:30 pm **WHERE:** C.D. Deshmukh Auditorium.



Cosmo Arts India Gallery presents *Cosmic Voyage*, a show by Indian masters and contemporary artists, that takes us on a journey through the galaxy of Indian art. **TIME:** 10 am to 6 pm **WHEN:** April 24 to 25 **WHERE:** Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road.

GAG Moderne presents Underground Talks, a series of conversations between artist Manish Pushkale and an eminent guest from the art scene every month to bring creative minds together and provoke conversations that matter. This month's Pushkale will be in conversation with designer and art curator, Rajiv Sethi. **WHEN:** April 27 **TIME:** 5:30 pm **WHERE:** GAG Moderne, Sadhna Enclave, Panchsheel Park.



Art Magnum presents a solo exhibition of artworks by Goa-based artist Mohan Naik. The works are inspired from his immediate surroundings, an isolated village in South Goa, amidst nature. **WHEN:** April 24 to May 12 **TIME:** 11 am to 7.30 pm **WHERE:** 6C/4, 2nd Floor, Yusuf Sarai, Indian Oil Complex, Aurobindo Marg.

Curated by Ina Puri, Art Alive Gallery presents *Clouds of Wings*, an exhibition of artworks by artist Venkat Raman Singh Shyam that celebrates life and the incandescent beauty of nature. **WHEN:** Till May 30 **WHERE:** Art Alive Gallery, S-221, Panchsheel Park.

Gomathi wins India's first Gold in Asian Athletics C'ships

Marimuthu runs supreme in women's 800m to win yellow metal; Shivpal wins Silver in Javelin

PTI ■ DOHA

Unheralded Gomathi Marimuthu gave India its first Gold medal in the women's 800m race as the country added four medals on the second day of the Asian Athletics Championships here on Monday.

The 30-year-old Gomathi clocked a personal best time of 2 minute 02.70 seconds in the half mile event to win a surprise Gold for India.

Shivpal Singh then added a Silver in men's javelin throw by sending the spear to a distance of 86.23m, his personal best. In the process, the 23-year-old Shivpal also booked a berth for the World Championships to be held at the same venue in September-October as he crossed the qualifying mark of 83m.

Jabir Madari Palliyalil and Saritaben Gayakwad bagged a Bronze each in men's and women's 400m hurdles respectively to swell the Indian medal tally.

With the four medals on Monday, India's medal tally stood at 1 Gold, 3 Silver and 5 Bronze. India had won 2 Silver and 3 Bronze on the first day on Sunday.



India's Gomathi Marimuthu, left, competes in the women's 800-meters race final; Jabir Madari Palliyalil celebrates with his national flag after winning the bronze medal in the men's 400-meters hurdles; Saritaben Laxmanbhai Gayakwad rests after racing in the women's 400-meters hurdles final



Sprinter Dutee Chand also shared some of the limelight as she smashed her own national record in 100m dash for the second time in two days.

The first Indian medal of the second day came from 24-year-old Gayakwad who clocked 57.22 seconds to

finish third in women's 400m hurdles, behind Vietnam's Quach The Lan (56.10) and Bahrain's Aminat Yusuf Jamal (56.39).

His male counterpart Jabir then added a Bronze by running the third fastest men's 400m hurdles by an Indian as he clocked a per-

sonal best of 49.13 seconds. In the process, the 22-year-old Jabir joined national record holder Dharun Ayyasamy as the second Indian to qualify for the World Championships 400m hurdles event to be held at the same venue in September-October. The

World Championships qualifying mark is 49.30 seconds. Dharun, who set a new national record of 48.80 during the Federation Cup last month, missed this Asian Championships due to injury.

Pre-race favourite Abderrehman Samba of

Qatar won Gold with a world leading time of 47.51 seconds.

In the women's 100m dash, Dutee bettered her own national record of 11.28 seconds set on Sunday during the heats by clocking 11.26 seconds while winning her semifinal race on Monday. She is, however, yet to touch the World Championships qualification mark of 11.24.

However in the men's 400m, India suffered setbacks as defending champion Muhammed Anas and last edition silver winner Arokia Rajiv failed to win a medal.

Rajiv finished fourth with a personal best time of 45.37 seconds while Anas, who has been struggling after a leg injury in an accident last year, ended at eighth with a time of 46.10 seconds.

Hockey coach Reid asks players to put team first

PTI ■ BENGALURU

India's newly-appointed men's hockey chief coach Graham Reid on Monday took charge of the national camp and asked his players to put the team first in his maiden address to them.

Reid, who arrived in Bengaluru on April 20, got down to business on Monday, meeting players for the first time at the SAI Centre.

"The turf here is world class. I addressed the players when I arrived and expressed my expectations as one unit, one team and that we always need to put the team first," the 54-year-old Australian said.

"We also spoke about the importance of trust and communication and to make sure it is both ways," he said. Reid said the available talent in India makes him optimistic about the future.

"I am really glad that I also got to watch the 33 players from the Junior Core Group and being part of the National Trials this morning gives me a good sense of the talent that is available at the moment and it makes me feel very positive about the future," said Reid, a former player of the Australian national team.

Reid's first big assignment as chief coach will be the upcoming FIH Men's Series Finals in Bhubaneswar, starting June 6 where India will vie for top honours against Asian Games champions Japan, Mexico, Poland, Russia, South Africa, USA and Uzbekistan.

The Indian team will go for an exposure tour to Perth, Australia between May 6 and May 18 where it will



play a four-match series against the Australian national team as part of their preparations for the FIH Men's Series Finals in Bhubaneswar.

"We extend a warm welcome to Graham Reid on his arrival to India. Many players in the senior team are already familiar with him due to his stint as coach during Hockey India League," Hockey India President Mohd Mushtaq Ahmad.

"The Australia tour will be an ideal ground for him to understand further about the team and their temperament and short comings ahead of the crucial FIH Men's Series Finals in Bhubaneswar. We wish him the very best in his new role with the Indian Men's Hockey Team," he added.

Bajrang, Sakshi to lead India's challenge

PTI ■ XI'AN

Olympic Bronze medalist Sakshi Malik and World No 1 Bajrang Punia will spearhead India's campaign at the Asian Wrestling Championships starting on Tuesday.

Besides Sakshi and Bajrang, Vinesh Phogat is another big names who would be vying for top honours during the mega-event.

Vinesh will hope to give a good account of herself in the women's 53kg — a relatively new weight category for her.

She had competed for the first time in that category at the UWW Dan Kolov-Nikola Petrov tournament in Bulgaria and had bagged a Silver medal.

In the same competition, Bajrang, who was competing in men's 65kg category, clinched a Gold.

Sakshi, the Bronze winner at the Rio Olympics, also settled for a Silver, in women's 65kg, while Pooja Dhandha won the yellow metal in women's 59kg category.

At the Asian Championships, Sakshi will go back to her 62kg category, while Navjot Kaur will represent India in women's 65kg.

Pooja Dhandha will fight in 57kg in this tournament.

Asian Games Bronze medalist Divya Kakran will return to competitive wrestling having recovered from an ankle injury and is all set to compete in women's 68kg category.

National champion Amit Dhankar will participate in men's 74kg in the absence of two-time Olympic medalist Sushil Kumar, who decided to give the Championship a miss.

Dhankar is a former Asian Wrestling Championship Gold medalist at the 2013 New Delhi edition.

Rahul Aware, the wrestler from Maharashtra, is making a comeback to the Indian team and will compete in men's 61kg weight division.

In men's freestyle, Praveen Rana (79kg) and Satyavrat Kadian (97kg) are other key wrestlers from India who are expected to finish on the podium.

Kavinder stuns world champ, Panghal beats Dusmatov

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kavinder Singh Bisht (56kg) upstaged reigning world champion Kairat Yerallyev, while Amit Panghal (52kg) edged past familiar foe and Olympic champion Hasanboy Dusmatov, assuring themselves of medals at the Asian Boxing Championships in Bangkok on Monday.

In the women's draw, world Silver-medallist Sonia Chahal (57kg) advanced to the last-four stage at the continental showpiece.

Bisht clinched a split verdict over Yerallyev, who hails from Kazakhstan, in a high-intensity contest to assure himself of a

maiden Asian championship medal.

Panghal, who claimed a Bronze in the 2015 edition of the event, also secured a hard-fought 3-2 triumph over Dusmatov, the former world champion Uzbek he defeated to claim the Asian Games Gold just a few months ago.

Before that, the two boxers had also clashed in the world championship quarters where Dusmatov had emerged triumphant.

Sonia too fetched a similarly close victory over Korea's Jo Son Hwa.

Also making the semis was national champion Deepak Singh (49kg), who did not have to step inside the ring to fight for the spot



after Afghanistan's Ramish Rahmani gave him a walkover owing to injury.

However, world championship Bronze-medallist Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) bowed out of contention after a quarterfinal loss to reigning world champion Chen Nien-Chin of Taiwan.

In another women's bout, Seema Poonia (+81kg) lost to China's Yang Xiaoli 5-0, ending another disappointing international outing for her. Poonia had got a bye into the quarters.

In the last Indian bout of the day, Rohit Tokas (64kg) fought hard but could not avert a 2-3 loss to Mongolia's Chinzorig Baatarsukh in the quarterfinals.



Former foes unite to lead France into Fed Cup final

AFP ■ PARIS

France set up a Fed Cup final against Australia on Sunday when Caroline Garcia and Kristina Mladenovic, who once were barely on speaking terms, teamed-up to crown a 3-2 victory over Romania.

Former Roland Garros doubles champions Garcia and Mladenovic beat Simona Halep and Monica Niculescu 5-7, 6-3, 6-4 to secure the winning point and a final date against Australia in November.

Victory was a diplomatic coup for France coach Julien Benneteau who teamed up Garcia and Mladenovic for the first time in Fed Cup since 2016 after which the pair had a bitter falling out which led to a self-imposed Fed Cup exile for Garcia, her country's top player.

"Every match was incredible," said Benneteau. "I am so proud of them. It was always my intention to put them together — and it was not hard to do." Earlier on Sunday, French Open champion Halep won her second singles of the weekend, seeing off Garcia 6-7 (6/8), 6-3, 6-4 for a 2-1 lead in the

semi-final. Veteran Pauline Parmentier then beat a hobbling Irina-Camelia Begu 6-3, 2-6, 6-2 to pull France level.

In a tense deciding rubber, Halep, whose doubles ranking is in the 400s, committed a double fault to concede the break in the ninth game of the final set before Garcia held her nerve to serve out the victory.

"We prepared ourselves as best as we could, we had a good training session at the beginning of the week, and we were ready, maybe at the beginning we made some mistakes," said Garcia.

"We really made the effort from start to finish together, it was intense on the court from the first point of the weekend to the last. But it was a great weekend and we can really be proud."

France, who won the last of their two titles in 2003, will travel to Australia for the final. Six-time champions Australia, whose most recent title was in 1974, reached a first final in 26 years by seeing off Belarus 3-2 in Brisbane in a tie also settled by a three-set deciding doubles rubber.

Mbappe flattens Monaco in title party

AFP ■ PARIS

Neymar joined the Paris Saint-Germain title party on Sunday when he made his first appearance since January as Kylian Mbappe swept aside Monaco with a hat-trick in a 3-1 win for the newly-crowned Ligue 1 champions.

Mbappe took his league tally for the season to 30 following his treble, which came just hours after PSG were crowned champions for the sixth time in seven years when closest challengers Lille dropped points.

Neymar's return at the start of the second half replacing Layvin Kurzawa is the cherry on the cake for Thomas Tuchel's side, who had been without the Brazilian superstar since January 23 with a right foot injury.

Edinson Cavani also returned to action as a second half substitute, having a late strike correctly ruled out for

offside, meaning that PSG's famed front three are back together following months apart.

Mbappe has thrived in the absence of his strike partners, and gave his side a 2-0 first-half lead with two neat finishes, the first coming in the 15th minute and the second seven minutes before the break after a beautiful pass from Dani Alves.

The World Cup winner then put the three points beyond doubt when he tapped in Alves' low cross nine minutes after the break.

Aleksandr Golovin rolled home a consolation for the away side, who remain in trouble in 16th place and are only four points away from the relegation play-off spot.

On Sunday afternoon Lille ended their challenge with a goalless draw at Toulouse that left them 16 points behind PSG with only five games to play and allowed capital club to cele-



brate the title after missing chances to seal it in their previous matches.

The Parisians have struggled with key injuries in recent weeks and they lost Italian international midfielder Marco Verratti with what looks like a

knock to his left ankle.

PSG took the field wearing a shirt with a large image of Notre Dame replacing the usual sponsor's logo. "Notre-Dame" replaced the player names on the back of the shirts. The iconic Paris cathedral was damaged in a spectacular blaze last Monday.

The club said that they would put a limited edition of the shirts on sale on line during the match for 100 euros each. The club said the money "will be donated to associations related to firefighters".

The club also posted a "Homage to Notre Dame" video on their web site in which players praised the team-work of the Paris fire brigade and made a gesture that imitates the two famous towers that form part of the cathedral's facade.

The club said it was also using Sunday's game to thank the firefighters.

Davies sets top four target for Spurs

AFP ■ LONDON

Ben Davies has challenged Tottenham to win their last four Premier League games as they aim to get their top four push back on track against Brighton on Tuesday.

Mauricio Pochettino's side suffered a setback in their bid to repeat their league finish for a fifth straight season when they were beaten 1-0 at Manchester City at the weekend.

It was a frustrating end to a memorable week that saw Tottenham reach the Champions League semi-finals with a dramatic away goals success at City. Aided by Arsenal's surprise loss to Crystal Palace on

Sunday, Tottenham remain third, but they will drop to fourth if Chelsea defeat Burnley on Monday.

With the race to qualify for next season's Champions League heating up, Tottenham defender Davies knows his team have no margin for error in their remaining fixtures.

Davies believes only four successive victories will be enough to secure Tottenham's place in Europe's elite club competition.

"It's never easy to reflect but look, it's about kicking on and trying to win every game between now and the end of the season," Davies said. "That's the target and it starts against Brighton on Tuesday."



Demanding Tottenham display a more predatory instinct in front of goal after missing a host of chances in the City defeat, Davies said: "It's always hard to see any positives straight after a defeat."

"We certainly created the chances but unfortunately we didn't take them this time."

"That's the difference between this game and Wednesday night, we were a bit more clinical." Brighton are desperate for points as they battle to avoid relegation, but Davies hopes the feelgood factor from Tottenham's new stadium will continue to provide a welcome lift. Pochettino's men have

won all three of their matches at the \$1 billion arena, scoring seven goals and conceding none.

"It will be tough, they are fighting for everything and they will go the full 90 minutes to try to get something out of the game. We have to be ready," Davies said.

"We've played well at the new stadium so far and we need to keep that momentum going for the rest of the season." Brighton are just one place and three points above the relegation zone after Saturday's 0-0 draw at Wolves. Chris Hughton's side haven't won in their last six matches in all competitions.



Sissoko likely to miss Ajax opener

AFP ■ LONDON

Tottenham Hotspur suffered a fresh blow to their Champions League hopes on Monday when Moussa Sissoko appeared to be ruled out of the first leg of their semi-final against Ajax.

The midfielder, one of Tottenham's outstanding players this season, suffered a groin injury in the return leg of the quarter-final tie at Manchester City and Spurs manager Mauricio Pochettino believes he will not be fit for another two weeks.

That would rule Sissoko out of the north London club's home leg against Dutch giants Ajax on April 30, with Tottenham already missing South Korea star Son Heung-min through suspension.

Son has been a key man for Spurs while England captain Harry Kane has been sidelined with an ankle injury.

"Moussa Sissoko is not going to be fit, maybe for the next two weeks, we hope he can recover before but I am not so optimistic," Pochettino said ahead of Tuesday's Premier League match at home to Brighton.

"Harry Winks we don't know because it is a problem that is one day very good, next day not very good, it is about assessing each day."

"We hope he will be available for Tuesday but we are not sure." There are also doubts over the fitness of France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris, with Pochettino saying: "Lloris I hope yes, we are going to assess, we have a training session and we hope it is not a big issue, we hope he is going to be available."

LEADERBOARD

| | | |
|---------|------|--|
| RUNS | 517 | David Warner (SRH) |
| WICKETS | 23 | Kagiso Rabada (DC) |
| 6S | 496 | IF MS HAS A FEELING THAT HE'S GOING TO WIN IT THIS WAY, I'M GOING TO BACK HIM EVERY TIME |
| 4S | 1117 | — STEPHEN FLEMING |

IPL 2019



105 NOT OUT

Rahane smashes 2nd IPL hundred to help Rajasthan Royals post 191-6 against DC

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Blending panache with power, Ajinkya Rahane roared back to form with a scintillating century and propelled Rajasthan Royals to 191 for six against Delhi Daredevils in the Indian Premier League here on Monday.

Rahane remained not out on 105 off 63 balls, decorating his knock with three sixes and 11 fours, while Steve Smith contributed 50 off 32 deliveries.

Asked to bat after Shreyas Iyer called correctly at the toss, Rahane spearheaded Rajasthan Royals' innings after getting a life on 16, the culprit being Ishant Sharma, who dropped a sitter at sort fine-leg. The drop hurt the visitors, but Delhi did well to prevent RR from going past 200.

Entering the game with over 650 runs against Delhi in the league, Rahane chose his favourite opponents to find form, and when he walked back to the dressing room, he had over 750 to his name.

To start with, Rahane drove Ishant through a crowded off-side field for a boundary, a shot that had his characteristic elegance written all over it.

Stripped of captaincy last week following a string of poor results, the 30-year-old went into attack mode and smashed Axar Patel for a six and a four at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium, which had a dash of pink.



Seeing the flight early, Rahane danced down the crowd to hoist his Axar ball over him and into the sightscreen.

Unfazed by the sight of pacer Kagiso Rabada steaming in, he smoked the South African's short of a length delivery down the ground for another maximum.

He reached his fifty by dispatching Chris Morris over the mid-wicket for a four and celebrated it with fist pumps.

A flurry of boundaries followed as Rahane galloped along to bring up his second IPL hundred, the first coming seven years ago.

He raised his bat to acknowledge the applause from the crowd and his dugout that was as relieved as the batsman himself.

Meanwhile, Smith, who replaced Rahane as captain hours before the start of their last

match against Mumbai Indians, struck medium pacer Sherfane Rutherford for three consecutive boundaries to score his second successive half century of the season.

And even as Smith and Ben Stokes got out in quick succession, Rahane was going strong, swiftly hitting Morris for a boundary over mid-off. At the other end, Ashton Turner fell for a third golden duck.



BCCI shifts IPL final to Hyderabad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

he added.

The Indian Premier League final scheduled on May 12 was on Monday shifted from Chennai to Hyderabad after the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) failed to get requisite permission from the government to open the three closed stands.

While the Chennai Super Kings still have a chance to play Qualifier 1 at home if they finish among the top two teams in the league but the Eliminator (May 8) and Qualifier 2 (May 10) has been shifted to Visakhapatnam.

"We had to shift the matches from Chennai to Hyderabad after TNCA intimated us that they have not procured the requisite permission to open the three stands I, J and K," Committee of Administrators (CoA) chief Vinod Rai said on Monday.

"Since the gate sales of the knock-out matches is BCCI's prerogative, we had to take a call. We would be having two knock-out matches in Vizag,"

The three stands make up for more than 12,000 tickets and BCCI would have lost out on a few crores of gate money.

The stands have remained closed since 2012 save one international match between India and Pakistan when an exception was made.

Asked if all the knock-out matches' ticket sales are BCCI's prerogative, why was Qualifier 1 allotted to Chennai, Rai reasoned: "CSK, by virtue of being defending champions, were allotted the Qualifier 1 and final. Now if they finish in top two, you cannot take away all the games. They deserve to get at least one of the knock-out games."

Hyderabad only got the final and not the Eliminator or Qualifier because of the general elections in the Cyber city on May 6, 8 and 10.

The first three-team mini women's IPL will be held from May 6-10 in Jaipur with a new team Velocity being added to the existing Trailblazers and Supernovas.



MI release players to manage workload

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai Indians have released all the players for four days to ensure that they relax, spend time with their families and return strong for the business end of the tournament. With the 2019 World Cup starting just after the 12th edition of the IPL, India skipper Virat Kohli had time and again spoken about the need for players to be smart and manage their workload well to stay fresh for the showpiece event.

The only team in the competition apart from Chennai to have three Indian players who will be headed to the World Cup — Rohit Sharma, Hardik Pandya and Jasprit Bumrah — the MI franchise made the move keeping in mind the interest of the players and the need to keep them fresh not just for the second half of the IPL, but also for the World Cup.

As per the sources, the management decided to release the players after their game against Rajasthan Royals on April 20 and the players will reunite in Chennai on April 25 before the game against CSK.

"Players are the priority and the only instruction to the boys was that whatever you do, don't get anywhere near a bat or ball. They should unwind, relax, switch off and focus on enjoying the four-day break," the source said.

Asked if the move was aimed at keeping the Indian boys fresh for the World Cup, the source said: "Not just the likes of Rohit, Bumrah or Hardik



We have the likes of Quinton de Kock, Lasith Malinga and other players as well who will be playing the World Cup. The idea is to manage their workload in such a manner that they can give it their best when they play in the showpiece event. While the foreign players have mostly gone to Chennai directly and are enjoying there with their families, the Indian players have headed home."

'SRH will badly miss Warner, Bairstow'

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

David Warner and Jonny Bairstow have been primarily guiding Sunrisers Hyderabad to victories in the ongoing IPL and captain Kane Williamson says the departure of the two openers will be a huge loss to the side.

With the ODI World Cup scheduled to start on May 30, the two prolific batsmen will be leaving the IPL mid-way owing to national duty.

"Without a doubt Warner and Bairstow will be big losses, they are world class players. We knew at the start of the tournament that we will lose them at the back end of the tournament and new guys will come in then," Williamson said.

Warner and Bairstow are currently sitting at the first and second spots respectively in the leading run-scorers' list in the IPL, and their formidable partnership at the top of the order has been the biggest reason behind Sunrisers' five wins this season so far.

Warner, the top-scorer this season with 517 runs at an average of 73.85 and a staggering strike rate of 148.56 from nine games including six half-centuries and a ton, will depart for Australia by the end of April.

Bairstow, who is at second position with 445 runs, including a century, from the same number of matches at a strike rate of 158.36, will leave for England after Tuesday's match.

Up Next CSK, SRH AIM TO SORT OUT BATTING WOES

Live on Star Sports 1 & 2

CSK vs SRH

CHENNAI

TUESDAY | 8:00 PM

HEAD TO HEAD

M 11

CSK 8

SRH 3

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The wretched form of Chennai Super Kings' top three will be primary worry for Mahendra Singh Dhoni as Chennai Super Kings aims to arrest the mini-slide when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad in an Indian Premier League encounter at Chepauk on Tuesday.

If CSK's problem is the non-performance of the top-order, Sunrisers Hyderabad's issues are that there are no performers in the middle-order with bulk of the runs being scored by openers David Warner (517 runs) and Jonny Bairstow (445 runs).

A win will almost ensure a play-off berth for the defending champions, who lost back-to-back away matches against Sunrisers Hyderabad and Royal Challengers Bangalore respectively.

While Dhoni's Herculean



MS Dhoni chats with Sunrisers players after SRH beat CSK on 17th April | IPL/Twitter

effort to pull off another miraculous chase has been the talking point, it is difficult not to shed light on the poor show of CSK's top three which is putting the skipper under unimaginable pressure.

Last season's hero Shane Watson (147 runs), Ambati Rayudu (192) and Suresh Raina (207) haven't lived up to expectations. The pressure has been entirely on Dhoni, who leads the charts with 314 runs and the batting unit needs to step up.

"The top three needs to

finish more matches," Dhoni said after CSK's one-run loss to RCB.

Back at its den after a schedule of away games, Dhoni's men will be slight favourites as it will be Bairstow's last game for the last year's runners-up as he heads back to England for World Cup preparations.

The Chepauk pitch has been sluggish in the games played so far and coach Stephen Fleming attributed it to being one of the reasons for top-order's poor show.

Good to be World Cup underdogs: Sarfraz

AFP ■ LONDON

Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed said on Monday that being underdogs in next month's World Cup eases the pressure on his young team, who leave for the tournament this week.

Pakistan will play three warm-up matches before taking on joint-hosts England in a five-match one-day series and a Twenty20.

The 1992 World Cup winners start their campaign against the West Indies in Nottingham on May 31.

Sarfraz he would prefer his side to go into the tournament under the radar.

"Look, when we go as favourites, then it's a problem, but if we go as underdogs then other teams feel the danger, so I think being underdogs is good for us and eases the pressure," Sarfraz told a press conference in Lahore before they depart for England on Tuesday.

Sarfraz, 31, was among five key players rested for the white-wash ODI series defeat by Australia last month to freshen up



the squad before the competition. The high-voltage clash between arch-rivals Pakistan and India scheduled for Manchester on June 16 promises to be one of the most tense of the tournament.

But Sarfraz played down the hype, saying all games are important.

"For us all nine matches are important so we will take every match as a match against India," he said of Pakistan's bitter rivals —

who have won all six of their previous World Cup clashes.

But Pakistan took the Champions Trophy against India in 2017 with a stunning 180-run victory in the final.

"We have beaten India in a bigger event recently so we will have that advantage," said Sarfraz.

'WE HAVE, WE WILL'
He said the theme of Pakistan's World Cup mission is

"we have, we will", citing the team's previous glories.

Along with the Champions Trophy two years ago, Pakistan won the 1992 World Cup and the 2009 World Twenty20.

"I think these are exciting times for Pakistan cricket and for the team," said Mickey Arthur, who took over as head coach in May 2016.

"We leave on a journey for which we have worked really hard," he said, adding that they have "a good team, both in talent and attitude".

"The initial thing is to qualify for the last four and take it from there, so I think we have the potential to certainly go all the way but before that we have to play very well," South African Arthur added.

Pakistan have named two extra players in their squad for the five-match one-day series against England, with paceman Mohammad Amir and batsman Asif Ali in addition to the 15 for the World Cup.

But they have until May 23 to finalise their squad for the tournament.

Hassan and Asghar named in Afghan WC squad

PTI ■ KABUL

Pacer Hamid Hassan and former captain Asghar Afghan were on Monday named in Afghanistan's 15-strong World Cup squad headlined by IPL stars Rashid Khan and Mohammad Nabi.

Gulbadin Naib will lead the side which also features Mohammad Shahzad and spinner Mujeeb ur Rahman. Afghanistan was removed as captain in all formats earlier this year.

Hassan has been recalled after nearly a three-year hiatus. However, his fitness remains under scrutiny after he had been laid low by a thigh injury. The 31-year-old has represented Afghanistan in 32 ODIs with 56 wickets to his



credit.

"We selected the best squad considering factors such as experience, fitness, team balance, current form & conditions," chief selector, Dawlat Khan Ahmadzai said in a statement.

Ahmadzai said the side will aim to play inspirational cricket during the tournament

which starts May 30 in the United Kingdom.

"The mission is to play inspirational cricket in the tournament; I know there are strong teams but we will do our level best to achieve our goals," he said.

Ikram Alikhil, Karim Janat and Sayed Shirzad were named the three designated reserves by the committee.