







Don't vitiate atmosphere during polls rallies: EC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Taking serious note of the "plummeting level of campaign discourse", the Election Commission has advised the political parties and their star campaigners to exercise caution and restrain themselves from saying anything that could vitiate the elections atmosphere.



With the statutory status of star campaigner. Such instances have occasioned various complaints, cross complaints and have also attracted negative media attention.

The Commission's attention has recently been brought to the instances of inappropriate vocabulary and language used during the on-going campaign by persons, in particular, by those invested with the statutory status of star campaigner.

The advisory states "It is imperative for all parties and stakeholders to remain within the confines of the Model Code of Conduct and the legal framework in their utterances while campaigning so as to maintain the dignity of the political discourse and not to vitiate the election atmosphere.

imperative for all parties and stakeholders to remain within the confines of the Model Code of Conduct and the legal framework in their utterances while campaigning so as to maintain the dignity of the political discourse and not to vitiate the election atmosphere. They are thus expected to contribute in maintaining and raising the level of discourse to "issue" based debate, provide pan India perspective, depth to the local discourse and to reassure all sections of electors to participate fully and fearlessly in a free and fair election.

CBI seizes ₹20 cr in raid at WAPCOS ex-CMD's house

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has seized more than Rs 20 crore in cash during searches at the premises of Rajinder Kumar Gupta, former Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Central Public Sector Undertaking WAPCOS Limited.



Gupta was booked recently for amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. After registering the FIR against Gupta and his family members, Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) teams conducted searches at his premises where Rs 20 crore in cash was seized in addition to documents related to properties and other valuables, officials said.

WAPCOS or Water and Power Consultancy Services (India) Limited, is a Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) wholly owned by the Government under the administrative control of the Ministry of Jal Shakti.

"It was further alleged that the accused after retiring from the service had started a consultancy business in the name of a private company based at Delhi. The alleged immovable properties belonging to the accused include flats, commercial properties and a farmhouse spread across Delhi, Gurugram, Panchkula, Sonapat and Chandigarh," the CBI said in a statement.

Searches were conducted on Monday at 19 locations across Delhi, Gurugram, Chandigarh, Sonapat and Ghaziabad at the premises of the accused which led to recovery of huge cash of Rs 20 crore, large quantity of jewelry, valuable items and incriminating documents. Besides Gupta, his wife Reema Singal, son Gaurav Singal and daughter-in-law Komal Singal have been named as accused in the case.

Mulling panel to examine current mode of execution of convicts: Centre to SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday was apprised by the Centre that it was considering setting up a committee of experts to examine the prevalent mode of execution of death row convicts by hanging in the country.



will give a fixed date after the (summer) vacation," the bench said.

The top court on March 21 had said it may consider setting up of a committee of experts to examine whether execution of death row convicts by hanging was proportionate and less painful and had sought "better data" from the Centre on issues pertaining to the mode of execution.

Lawyer Rishi Malhotra had filed a PIL in 2017 seeking to abolish the present practice of executing a death row convict by hanging and replace it with less painful methods such as "intravenous lethal injection, shooting, electrocution or gas chamber".

'Indian patent landscape set to change for better'

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Every year, just 23,000 patents are granted in India, a poor show when compared to over 5 lakh in neighbouring China and 3.5 lakh in the US.



Global Science, Research and Innovation Summit organized by business chamber CII themed "Fostering Science, Research and Innovation Partnerships" under the aegis of the India's G20 Presidency held here.

Dr Gupta admitted that India lacks the culture of Patents filing and taking it to its logical conclusion. He knows better. According to the Economic Survey 2021-2022, though patents filed in India have grown considerably, the World

Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) data reveals that the number is still less as compared to 1.79 lakh granted in Japan in 2021 and 1.35 lakh were granted in South Korea, respectively, as of 2020. The number of patents filed in India is merely 3.8 percent of China and 9.5 percent of the USA in 2020.

However, on its part, India is reporting increase in the number of patent applications, up from 45,444 in 2016-17 to 66,440 in 2021-22. Similarly, the patents granted in India have gone up from 9,847 to 30,074 during the same time period, as per the Government data.

Dr Gupta, who is also Secretary of the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) also flagged data that around .69 percent of budget

being spent on R&D in India and exhorted the private sector to pitch in with higher research allocation to match and support the government for a win-win proposition.

Echoing similar views, Dr Parvinder Maini, Scientific Secretary in the Office of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government underlined that the main reason for the huge gap of the low R&D budget of India is due to almost non-participation of private sector to take big risks in emerging and cutting-edge technologies.

Dr Maini said, out of 90,000 start-ups in India, only 12,000 are technology-based and also only about 3,000 of them are deep tech start-ups. She said, unless industry will not lend funding support to innovative

and bright ideas, India will miss the bus, which is now on its way to full bloom.

IIT-D will start M-tech in Robotics this year and appealed to Industry to support this mission, Prof Rangan Banerjee, Director, IIT, Delhi said while Ryuhei Nishi, First Secretary, S&T, Embassy of Japan stressed on increasing more people to people contact as she noted that only 1000 Indian students are there in Japan, which is 8 times less than China.

Others who spoke on the occasion included Vipin Sondhi, Chairman, CII National Mission on Technology, Innovation 7 Research and Alok Nanda, Co-Chair National Mission on Technology, Innovation & Research Dr Ashish Mohan, Executive Director, CII.

SC to hear pleas against remission of convicts in Bilkis case on May 9

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday deferred to May 9 the hearing on a batch of pleas challenging the remission granted to the 11 convicts last year in the case of gang-rape of Bilkis Bano and murder of her family members during the 2002 post-Godhra riots. A bench of justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna was told by Solicitor General (SG) Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and the Gujarat government that they are not claiming any privilege and are not filing any plea for review of the March 27 order of the court, which had asked for production of original records, with regard to the remission

granted to the convicts.

The SG raised preliminary objections with regard to petitions filed in the matter other than by Bano, saying it will have wide ramifications as every now and then third parties will come to the courts in criminal cases. Government was objecting the petitions filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali and TMC leader Mahua Moitra. The bench fixed May 9 for hearing the matter as several counsel for convicts, who have been released in the case, said that they need time to file their replies to the plea by Bano.

"We are only fixing timelines, so that whichever court takes up the matter, it will not have to waste time on these procedural issues. I am retiring

during vacation on June 16. My last working day will be on May 19. My sister (Justice Nagarathna) will be going to attend a conference in Singapore till May 25. If all of you agree, then we can sit during vacation and finish hearing this case," Justice Joseph said.

Advocate Shobha Gupta said that the matter will take a very short time as only the question of law needs to be decided. Justice Joseph told Gupta, "It is apparent from the way counsel appearing for convicts that they do not want this hearing to take place. Every time the matter will be called up, one person or the other will come and say that he needs time to file a reply. It is more than obvious".

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FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL 600/1, University Road, Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow

Air Marshal Manikantan new Chief of Southern Air Command



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Air Marshal Balakrishnan Manikantan took over as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) of Southern Air Command on Monday. An alumnus of Sainik School Kazhakootam and National Defence Academy (NDA), the Air Marshal was commissioned in the Indian Air Force in 1986.

Prior to assuming the current appointment, he was the Senior Air Staff Officer at Eastern Air Command, handling air operations, the IAF said here on Tuesday. He is a recipient of the Presidential Awards of Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) and Vayu Sena Medal (VM).

Rajnath gifts fast patrol vessel to Maldives, talks with Prez Solih

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Signifying close defence ties between the two countries, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday handed over a fast patrol vessel and a landing craft to the Maldives as India's gift at an event in Male.



Rajnath also held talks with Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih to expand the already close bilateral strategic ties. The defence minister is on a three-day visit to the island nation beginning Monday.

Addressing the top civil and military brass at the ceremony, Rajnath said the India-Maldives relationship is "truly special" and that it has evolved as a model for the entire region to follow.

The defence minister also highlighted the need for India, the Maldives and other like-minded nations of the region to enhance our cooperation, towards addressing the common challenges of the Indian Ocean Region, he said.

"We must, therefore, ensure a collaborative effort, towards ensuring that the maritime expanse of the Indian Ocean is peaceful and the maritime resources therein are optimally harnessed, for ensuring regional prosperity," he added. India's handing over of the two platforms to one of its strategically key maritime neighbours came amid China's increasing efforts to enhance its strategic influence in the Indian Ocean Region.

Protein critical to spread of Covid may help develop anti-viral drugs: Researchers

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

A specific protein, occludin, inside the human body that plays a critical role in the spread of coronavirus from cell to cell after infection, could help in the development of new antiviral drugs in the future, researchers from University of Missouri, US, said in their study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The protein mediates the transmission of the virus between cells. "This basic, scientific research is very important to better understand the underlying mechanisms of disease progression inside the body's cells so that the proper countermeasures can be identified and developed," said Wenjun Ma, an associate professor at the university and lead author of the study.

The research team examined how the coronavirus spreads through cells by analysing cell samples. They found that when the occludin protein in a single cell is damaged by the coronavirus, the virus is able to quickly replicate and spread to neighbouring cells throughout the body, making the infection worse and symptoms potentially more severe.

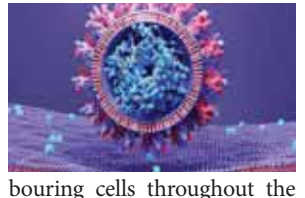
This knowledge would be helpful for developers of antiviral drugs by examining the potential impact the antiviral drugs have in strengthening the occludin protein against infection, Ma said. "We learned that the virus may only start off by infecting a singular cell, but cells are incredibly complex, and when the occludin protein gets damaged, the virus quickly replicates and spreads to neighbouring cells.

"For example, if only one cell in the lungs is infected at first, the ability to breathe may not be significantly impacted. "However, once the virus spreads to neighbouring cells throughout the lungs, it can lead to difficulty breathing and other respiratory problems," said Ma.

SC refuses to entertain plea seeking stay of release of 'The Kerala Story'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused to entertain a plea seeking a stay on release of the movie "The Kerala Story" on grounds that it is a "worst kind of hate speech" and an "audio-visual propaganda".



Later on the day, the court set aside the certificate for public display given to the movie by the censor board. The High Court bench comprising Justices Nagesh and CP Mohammed Nias also gave time to Deputy Solicitor General of India (DSGI) Manu S, appearing for the Centre and the censor board, to obtain the CBFC's stand on the PIL before the next date of hearing, scheduled on May 5.

Meanwhile a public interest litigation (PIL) was moved in the Kerala High Court on Tuesday against certain statements in the teaser and trailer of controversial Hindi film, "The Kerala Story", and seeking that the court set aside the certificate for public display given to the movie by the censor board.

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Dengue pathogen has evolved dramatically over decades: IISC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

that they are very different from the original strains used to develop the vaccines," said Associate Professor at the Department of Chemical Engineering at the institute, Rahul Roy, who led the study published in the journal PLOS Pathogens.

There are four broad categories—serotypes—of the dengue virus (Dengue 1, 2, 3 and 4). "We found that the sequences are changing in a very complex fashion," said Roy, corresponding author of the study. The researchers noted that at any given time, several strains of each serotype exist in the viral population.

The antibodies generated in the human body after a primary infection provide complete protection from all serotypes for about 2-3 years. Over time, the antibody levels begin to drop, and cross-serotype protection is lost, they said. Until 2012, the dominant strains in India were Dengue 1 and 3, the researchers said. However, in recent years, Dengue 2 has become more dominant across the country, while Dengue 4—once considered the least infectious—is now making a niche for itself in South India, they found. The team also investigated what factors decide which strain is the dominant one at any given time.

After conducting a detailed computational analysis of the available (408) genetic sequences of Indian dengue strains from infected patients collected over six decades in India, scientists from Indian Institute of Science (IISC) Bengaluru have concluded that the pathogen has evolved dramatically from its ancestors in the presence of serotypes.

This calls for urgent need for development of vaccines against the mosquito-borne viral disease, they said. "We were trying to understand how different the Indian variants are, and we found





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Sound policies

GST collection has reached all-time high at ₹1.87cr, and manufacturing may be on an upward swing

Just as sorrows come in droves, sometimes good things also come in twos. On Monday, the government announced that it collected Rs 187,035 crore in April as goods and services tax (GST). It is the highest ever GST collection in a single month. In fact, it is for the first time that the gross GST collection has crossed Rs1.75-lakh crore mark. The same day we also came to know that Manufacturing PMI increased to 57.2 in April, up from 56.4 in March, according to S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index. This was also the fastest ever improvement in factory production. The April GST collection is 12 per cent higher than that in April 2022. Also, the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) are 16 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during April last year. Another feat in the last month was on 20th, the highest ever tax collection on a single day, when Rs 68,228 crore was paid through 9.8 lakh transactions. The GST mop-up elicited a response from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He tweeted: "Great news for the Indian economy! Rising tax collection despite lower tax rates shows the success of how GST has increased integration and compliance." Needless to say, technology has played a great role in integration. The Modi regime's reliance on technology is immense. All its decisions and policy announcements, whether they are related to infrastructure development or welfare measures, are predicated upon adoption of the latest technology available.



The two developments, the highest ever GST mop-up and the fastest ever improvement in manufacturing, seem to be linked. Manufacturing PMI had also done well in March. Is industrial growth finally picking up? Two months' data is not sufficient to answer this question; we will have to wait for some time to see if the measures that the Government has introduced in the recent past have yielded dividends. It is, however, indisputable that some signs are comforting. The index of industrial production (IIP) for February showed manufacturing growth of 5.3 per cent. This was not very good, especially because the base was very low—0.2 per cent in February 2022. For the April 2022-February 2023 period, however, there was a rise of 4.9 per cent, which was against 13 per cent in the corresponding period in 2021-22. Importantly, capital goods, indicating capacity addition to the economy, have been doing very well. In the first eleven months of the last fiscal, capital goods grew by a whopping 13.4 per cent, against a very high 19 per cent in the corresponding period in 2021-22. On the whole, the government's instincts and policies—with emphasis on lower taxation, economic reforms, and infrastructure development—are sound. It just has to stay the course—and not get swayed by the compulsions of electoral politics.

### PICTALK



A tourist boat caught in high waves at Eedakkal, in Thiruvananthapuram

# Choose wisely on options in Myanmar



ASHOK K MEHTA

New Delhi has abandoned the democratic forces in Myanmar, practising realpolitik to deal with the Govt of the day, not the elected Govt

Military coups usually end in instant success or instant failure. The coup in Myanmar has lasted more than two years and has reached a stalemate. The Resistance forces consisting of the National Unity Government (erstwhile National League for Democracy and Peoples Defence Forces allied with Ethnic Armed Organisations) are putting up a stiff fight. They appear to have some external support. The junta is in control mainly in urban centres while PDF and EAO control most of the rural areas. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing is the undisputed leader with his corps commanders loyal to him although desertions have taken place—6000 police and 2000 Army have crossed over. But elite units are intact. On 10 April military air strikes killed 100 civilians supporting the opposition. On 17 April of 17500 prisoners, 3000 were released to mark the lunar new year.

At one stage, there was speculation the army's high command could split and the coup dissipate. But that has not happened because the stakes are very high for soldiers. For the last 78 years, they have run the country bar a decade 2011-2020 when hybrid civil-military rule was in place. Military casualties are known to be high—one estimate puts army/police at 10,000 and PDF at 1200. The State Administration Council runs the country of 54mn people which is the poorest in South East Asia. Nearly 4 to 5mn people have fled the country excluding 1mn Rohingyas who were forced out before the coup. Another 1.2 mn have become internally displaced persons.

As both sides call each other 'terrorists' there is little hope of reconciliation as direct talks between junta and NUG have not materialized. The Asean Five-Point Consensus brokered in April 2021 has failed to take off as Asean is badly divided with Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia pro-military and remaining Indonesia (current chair) Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore and the Philippines taking a hard line. Last month a



Track 1.5 level dialogue was held in Bangkok with all stakeholders besides Asean members attending. Here too, there were more divergences than commonalities. The immediate need is a ceasefire, the release of prisoners and humanitarian assistance for people trapped in the fighting.

The junta has pledged to hold elections in August and the Election Commission has decreed new electoral laws. Political parties were to register by 31 March and as NLD did not, it was dissolved. By military courts awarding 76-year-old NLD leader Aung San Sui Kyi 33 years in jail, the junta has ensured the elimination of the most popular party which won the 2020 elections overwhelmingly. The new laws relating to funding, banning parties with links to terrorist groups, securing 100,000 members within three months, and establishing offices in half of 330 towns. Election laws will be altered to ensure Union Solidarity Development Party (Military) wins as it did in the 2010 elections.

There are as many as 90 political parties in the fray. As the junta has ruled for more than two years under emergency rule, acting President Myint Swe said on state TV that it was against the constitution. Elections if held will be a sham as the junta's writ runs only across only 20 per cent of

the territory though it has been negotiating with certain EAOs and declared a unilateral ceasefire. The military admires the Thai model where three former Army chiefs run a civilian party that wins elections. But Myanmar will have its own model with changes in the 2008 constitution which was drafted by the military.

At the recent Director General Police conference in New Delhi, three papers circulated dealt with North East and Act East policy. They recalled how China exploited Indian insurgencies and provided weapons to insurgents. The biggest casualty of the civil war in Myanmar is India's Act East policy. Former Army Chief, Gen MM Naravane at a seminar in March on Myanmar: Two Years After the Coup, said that the Act East policy has an inner and external dimension. Both have to be addressed with a focus on the development of the northeast. He said India should provide electricity to villages across the border to have friendly population there.

As a consequence of violence, more than 100,000 refugees including some law-makers have crossed over into Mizoram and Manipur. Mizoram acted with alacrity and humanity to welcome refugees while the central government had ordered they be pushed back. Similarly, fencing

the border has been opposed by people on both sides. One of the reasons for insurgency was the mishandling of people residing along the border.

India's premier projects central to Act East Policy like the trilateral highway connecting India with Asean and the multimodal Kaladan road/port project are in a mess though Ports and Shipping Minister S Sonowal said recently Sittoung port will be inaugurated soon. It is key to the development of the northeast but is stuck due to fighting in the Rakhine state. The investment at Sittoung port can fructify only once the Arakan Army which Indian security forces engage, can pacify Rakhine.

A truce between the Arakan Army and Junta will allow the projects to prosper. Chinese presence on Myanmar's Coco Island will pose a threat. New Delhi has made hard choices virtually abandoning NLD and democratic forces, and practising realpolitik to deal with the government of the day, not the elected Govt. Keeping other options is a prudent policy.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal)



AS A CONSEQUENCE OF VIOLENCE, MORE THAN 100,000 REFUGEES INCLUDING SOME LAWMAKERS HAVE CROSSED OVER INTO MIZORAM AND MANIPUR

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### THE REASON FOR BUILDING COLLAPSES

Sir — Bhiwandi and Bhandup are the oldest residential places, which form the best part of old buildings and monsoon rains every season cause the residents fear to factor all the time. BMC has failed to follow construction norms strictly and educate the residents of dilapidated buildings in a better way to avoid such fatal mishaps and that made matters worse in fatal mishaps.

Residents on the other hand fail to adhere to Municipal instructions and pay a heavy price for that. The residents not only lose their property as well dear life of near and dear ones. Now BMC should check on erring builders, who resort to illegal construction without proper plan alterations done without permission. Building crashes in Bhiwandi and other similar incidents have created a fear among the residents. The death toll touched 6 and eight people are still trapped inside the debris.

CK Suresh Ramani Dora | Coimbatore

#### KING CHARLES' CORONATION

Sir — As per report the to curb terrorism and unrest in Jammu and Kashmir, the Centre block 14 mobile applications which were reportedly used by Pakistani terrorists to gather and spread information in the valley. The government sources also said that these mobile applications were used by terrorists in Kashmir to communicate with their supporters and on-ground workers (OGW). This comes as the Centre continues its crackdown against Chinese apps that steal data from Indian users. Agencies keep track of channels used by Overground workers (OGWs) and terrorists to communicate among themselves. While tracking down one of the communication, agencies found that the mobile application does not have representatives

in India and it is difficult to track down activities happening on the app," said an official. Thereafter, with the help of other intelligence agencies operating in the valley, a list of such apps was prepared that pose a threat to national security and do not follow Indian laws. In official communications to higher-ups, the intelligence agencies informed that these apps are spreading terror propaganda in the Valley. Sources said these apps include Crypviser, Enigma, Safeswiss, Wickrme, Mediafire, Briar, BChat, Nandbox, Conion, IMO, Element, Second Line, Zangi, and Threema among others.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

#### Mann Ki Baat@100 episodes



A unique way of the world's most populous (very soon) country India's Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi connecting with citizens through his favourite 'Mann Ki Baat'. To commemorate it as the milestone was regarded as 'historic' as the 100 episodes were also broadcasted live at the United Nations headquarters. PM Modi's journey of 'Mann Ki Baat' started on the day of Vijaya Dashami, and this monthly episode is continuing. In his 100 episode PM Modi reminded us how his episodes "Whether it is about Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (nothing have so much improved and torturing in woman a daily phenomenon), or the Swachh Bharat movement, love for Khadi or nature, whether it is the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav or Amrit Sarovar (not for your 'Mann ki Baat', but your day and night advertisement) any subject with which 'Mann Ki Baat' got asso-

ciated, turned into a mass movement, and you people have made it so."

But PM Modi a simple question to you, why should I listen to what you want us to hear? Have you ever heard of public ki Mann-ki-Baat? Do you answer what we want to know? We want to know your nexus with Adani, or why SEBI wants 6 months more to investigate...so that Adani can clear his tracks and give you a clean chit? Through our 'Mann Ki Baat' we want to know why unemployment is so high? We want to know why fuel cost is so high when we are buying cheap Russian oil. Why ED and CBI are activated overnight for opposition Why have you not ever talked about the increasing Hindu-Muslim rift, and why are you sheltering goons in BJP like WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh? It's good to hear when PM Modi says one India, but Union Home Minister Amit Shah and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath scream Hindu Muslim. Whereas the country is on the verge of war with China and the government is misleading people every day by controlling the media. After all his 'Mann Ki Baat' there is one significant victory for India that people have made it so, is India now the most populous country in the World. That's progress!

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

#### DEALING WITH TERRORISM IN J&K

Sir — As per report the to curb terrorism and unrest in Jammu and Kashmir, the Centre block 14 mobile applications which were reportedly used by Pakistani terrorists to gather and spread information in the valley. The government sources also said that these mobile applications were used by terrorists in Kashmir to communicate with their supporters and on-ground workers (OGW). This comes as the Centre continues its crackdown against Chinese apps that steal data from Indian users. Agencies keep track of channels used by Overground workers (OGWs) and terrorists to communicate among themselves. While tracking down one of the communication, agencies found that the mobile application does not have representatives

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Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

# Revamp IAS officers' training programme

If the mission and values are well defined and the young officers are aligned with those values, it would inspire them to be proactive and positive



SANGRAM MISHRA

A paradigm shift relating to training is essential to ensure vision, mission and value alignment for the probation period during training in LBSNAA at Mussoorie. A clear vision mission and value statement should be projected before the young recruits and that should be inculcated in their mind.

At present the subjects generally taught in the classrooms of the academy are Indian policy, law, constitution and public administration etc. But no step has been taken to keep subjects like value statements, vision and mission ideals for the civil servants so as to align them to these values to give their best.

A vision statement like 'Service before self, so as to bring smiles on the faces of people and to take the nation on the path of a holistic and inclusive growth' would project the goal in a clear fashion. Similarly, the mission statement may be pronounced as 'to boost the trajectory of growth with equitable distribution being pro-poor, pro-people and positive officers with the quali-



ties like honesty, integrity and alacrity and always committed to the development of nation and the constitution of India.

Value statement can be defined as 'to be pro-poor, positive officers with democratic way of development. Strive to stick to the cardinal principles like honesty, integrity, sincerity, alacrity and devotion towards the nation. Always to keep the dignity and prosperity of the nation above everything else.'

If the vision, mission and value statements are well defined and the probationers are aligned to those values, automatically it would inspire them to be proactive and positive and

give their best for administration and governance keeping service to people before self-interest. The bureaucracy is giving way under pressure because of deviation from these values as mentioned above. Moreover, complacency is also one of the undoings of bureaucracy.

The implementation of these vision, mission and value statements and huddle and bottlenecks thereon should be taught and young minds should be imbued with thoughts of purity. These should constitute a subject and be given maximum focus in the academy so as to bring out the best in the young officers with

instruction to perform as per the guidelines. Another thing that should also be thought of is that promotion should not be an automatic and routine affair for civil servants so was to curtail the complacency apparent. At each level of promotion, a committee (taking retired bureaucrats and academicians etc) should rigorously find out the eligibility of the officer for promotion keeping in view his performance and his commitment to vision, mission and value statements all through. This would energize the not-so-active bureaucracy to spring into action so as to deliver as a proactive and positive unit.

These ideas may not be taken happily by laggard officers accustomed to a life of comfort and unethical rewards, but the harsh reality is that some steps like these as mentioned above can transform the bureaucracy and metamorphose the scenario to achieve the most difficult task and start a glorious period.

(The author is a superannuated senior IAS officer. Views expressed are personal) Concluded

R.Narayanan | Navi Mumbai



## FIRST COLUMN

## ADVENTURE SPORTS TO EXPERIENCE IN 2023

Try these adventure sports to add zest to your life



NIHARIKA NIGAM

A profound spiritual feel, breathtaking landscapes, spawning rivers, jungles, beaches and the most fascinating white blanket in the north makes India the perfect destination to reconnect with self. People have already started making plans to explore various destinations in the country this year and while we have already wasted many days, let's plan an amazing 2023!

The 2 years of isolation made all of us realize the importance of adventure and thrill in our life and gradually the adventure sports industry in India witnessed a plethora of youth participation like never before. Some of the extreme adventure activities have gone viral on social media- bungee jumping, flying fox, giant swing, paragliding, and others. So what are you waiting for? Sit back and relax as we bring you the best of thrilling activities to give your inner explorer a chance this year. Let's do this!

## BUNGIE JUMPING

What comes to your mind when thinking of jumping off a cliff? Bungee jumping is not for the faint-hearted! Albeit, there is nothing better than this extreme adventure sport to experience the ultimate adrenaline rush. The popularity of this adventure has catapulted Rishikesh to the st satire of India's adventure capital!

Make sure to purchase your photo and video packs. This is a solo activity but having this experience amidst friends or family adds a lot to your bank of shared memories. Recommended destinations: Rishikesh is the OG to have popularised Bungee in India, and Goa is the only destination in the country that offers a bungee-over-a-lake experience!



## GIANT SWING

This one is a lesser-known hero. Adapted from the Canyon Swing in New Zealand, this was modified for the wild mountains of Rishikesh. Operated from the same bungee platform, this is an unparalleled thrill, with double the free fall of the bungee with almost as much fear. Suited with a chest and seat harness, the jumper swings through the panoramic valley over a tributary of the Ganga. This is an experience to be had.

## SCUBA DIVING

Scuba diving at Andaman & Nicobar Islands is arguably one of the best scuba spots in the world. While it attracts divers from around the world, scuba as an adventure is only now gaining momentum. This is a crash course on mind over matter as the ocean consumes you. Experience the tranquillity of a whole different ecosystem in an experience you aren't likely to forget anytime soon.

Experiencing the underwater flora and fauna, and the rich marine life is a soul-soothing experience. Tiny reef fishes, coral ecosystems, reef sharks and turtles swimming over and under beautiful plants is an unforgettable memory to make.

## THE BOTTOM LINE

Be it any adventure activity you go for, do not miss getting yourself medically checked before. Begin warming up a month before to maintain stamina and core strength. Also, research the climatic conditions and challenges that your destination might face around the time you are visiting. Planning is an important part of any adventure trip. You don't want the 2023 adventure to go in vain, right? Try to experience as much as possible and embrace positivity in every moment so that there is no room for anything else once you are back in your hustle and bustle world.

(The writer is Director, Business Development at Jumpin Heights)

## Mindfulness: A path to mental well-being



BALVINDER KUMAR

Mindfulness is emerging as a great hope for humanity in promoting mental well-being through self-awareness

Mindfulness has, in recent times, emerged as a powerful tool to promote our mental well-being. It can alleviate stress, regulate emotions and mood, and improve cognitive function. This practice has been widely accepted as an effective tool for overall improvement in our mental health. Across the world, mindfulness has now taken the shape of a widespread movement. It's already a multi-billion-dollar industry. Meditation and yoga, two ancient practices, are now among the most popular alternative health practices in many parts of the world. Many Fortune 500 companies have introduced mindfulness-based meditation in their workplaces. In addition, medical institutions and hospitals are introducing practices to manage chronic pain and stress.

Jon Kabat-Zinn, an American professor emeritus of medicine and the Centre for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, USA, has been universally recognized as a global leader in mindfulness. He famously remarked in a 2019 publication, "We have the potential to ignite a global renaissance catalyzed by the cultivation of mindfulness and heartfulness at this critical juncture in the arc of human evolution and development." According to him, the cause of dissatisfaction and distress among us lies in our heads, and it's a 'thinking disease.' His research and a plethora of studies conducted across nations have established a positive correlation between mental well-being and mindfulness.

Mental well-being refers to our overall psychological and emotional health so that we can think and work efficiently in our daily life. When we feel mentally healthy and sound, we can effectively manage the stress we encounter on a day-to-day basis and face adversity that may arise unexpectedly in life. In fact, during adversity and tough times, we often break down, and we don't know how to live with emerging situations. We may get badly trapped in a negative loop of thoughts. In fact, the real test of life comes when we face such eventualities. Here the role of psychological and mental well-being comes in. If we are mentally fit and tough, we can quickly come out of those circumstances. Besides, mental well-being affects our relationships, work performance, and physical health in many ways.

It's now largely accepted among the medical community that mindfulness has numerous benefits for mental health and overall well-being. It's also being used as a therapeutic tool to help people manage a range of mental health conditions. Many studies have supported the claim of establishing a positive impact of mindfulness on our mental health, including stress reduction, emotional regulation, reduced worry, and rumination. Even it helps alleviate symptoms in mild to moderate cases of depression and anxiety. Some studies further establish the role of mindfulness in overcoming addictions, especially smoking.

What exactly is mindfulness? Mindfulness is nothing but our experience of 'being present' and observing whatever is happening around us in a non-judgmental way. We are, in fact, in the highest state of awareness when we are attentive and focused on the present moments. This state is known as mindfulness.



IT'S NOW LARGELY ACCEPTED AMONG THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY THAT MINDFULNESS HAS NUMEROUS BENEFITS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND OVERALL WELL-BEING

(The writer is a retired IAS officer. He is an author and founder of Mind Therapy)



When we experience mindfulness, we are fully conscious and awake. We are aware of thoughts, emotions, and feelings as they arise from time to time. We are, therefore, self-aware and mindful during those times.

In this way, mindfulness has three crucial ingredients: first, we are in the 'present.' Second, we are focused and attentive to those moments. Our mind is not wandering in various directions. Lastly, we experience 'non-judgmental awareness.' We take things as they are rather than reacting, passing judgment, or assigning meaning to those experiences. In other words, we accept things as they are rather than as we perceive them.

On the contrary, we generally don't pay close attention to the things happening to us or the surrounding. The reason is we are mostly lost in our own inner world. We may become mindless, impulsive, and reactive when we are not present and fully conscious of those moments. We, therefore, become prone to miss valuable experiences. The same happens when we work, eat, walk, talk to others, and so on; we are in a way 'unconscious' and in 'half-sleep' mode.

Not being mindful has a huge cost. We tend to keep worrying, ruminating, and getting trapped in a loop of distressing thoughts. We become prone to mental stress and experience anxiety of varying degrees. When we are not mindful of an ongoing stream of thoughts and fail to manage them,

we don't know when such conditions may lead to mental health problems. As a result, we become highly vulnerable to mental health conditions such as being highly stressed, anxious, depressed, and lonely.

Benefits of mindfulness on our mental well-being: Many research studies have undoubtedly supported the claim of having a positive impact of mindfulness in different aspects of mental health. We become mentally fit and tough. Not only can mindfulness regulate our thoughts and emotions, but also enhance cognitive flexibility. Improved emotional regulation leads to greater self-control and increased resilience to stress and adversity. We gradually become more focused and attentive, and these attributes lead to better control in our workplace as well as our personal life. As we continue to practice mindfulness, we become more compassionate, empathetic, and loving, leading to improved relationships with others. In a broader sense, we become better human beings.

How to develop mindfulness: The only way to develop mindfulness is to practice and experience more and more of the present moments. It's necessary to maximize our experiences of being fully aware and awake. We need to make a conscious effort to bring back our wandering minds to the present. We should develop a habit of doing this simple exercise of bringing back our attention to the present. This should be in the

back of our minds all the time. When we walk, eat, work, play, watch TV, listen to others, and so on, we should be able to focus and be present on that activity to the best of our ability. However, it sounds simple and easy, but difficult to sustain. This is because our habitual and conditioned minds and behaviour are at work most of the time. However, with conscious efforts, we can become more and more mindful as the practice of mindfulness progresses.

Mindfulness can be practiced not only through meditation but from mindful breathing, walking, eating, and communication with others. When we meditate, we observe our stream of constant thoughts that arise in our mind in a non-judgmental way; our mind becomes quiet and peaceful. Also, we keep bringing our attention back to breathing when we do breathing-based meditation. This mental exercise leads to the state of 'being mindful'.

With the habit of being mindful and self-aware, we begin to manage our minds and thoughts effectively. This automatically leads to better control over our lives; it's then more manageable for us to handle life's adversities and challenging times. We can come out from those tough times quickly and with greater ease. With a simple and easier-to-do mental exercise of mindfulness-based meditation, we can witness a host of transformative changes in our physical and psychological well-being.

## The coronation of King Charles will be historic

King Charles would need to show the world that his reign would be modern and the Commonwealth would be inclusive

Viewers worldwide will witness the coronation ceremony of British King Charles and his Queen Camilla on May 6. The critical moment in modern British history will be 70 years after Queen Elizabeth II coronation in 1952. Though Charles succeeded Queen Elizabeth II in September 2022 after her death, the coronation will only occur now. From the investiture ceremony to the big coronation day, it will be a long weekend of many events, lunches, and community events. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said it was a "unique moment" for the country.

The ceremony will include the Recognition, the Coronation Oath, the



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The author is a senior journalist)

Anointing, the Investiture, and the Enthronement and Homage. While most other world monarchies have discontinued this pompous event, Britain continues. King Charles now also heads the Commonwealth, a group of 54 independent countries comprising 2.4 billion people. He needed to show the world his reign would be modern and the Commonwealth would be inclusive. There is a growing demand for reparation payments and an apology for slavery.

The guest list for Charles' ceremony has been slashed from 8,000 to just 2,000. Other monarchs like Monaco's Prince Albert and Princess Charlene, Japan's Crown Prince Akishino and Crown Princess Kiko,

Poland's President Duda, and President of the Philippines Ferdinand Marcos Jr. will participate for the first time in 900 years. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar will represent India at the coronation.

Most British royal family members will attend, including William, Prince of Wales, his wife Katherine, and their children. Notable absentees include Meghan Merkel, but her husband, Prince Harry, will be present, and so will Prince Andrew. US President Joe Biden will be absent, but his wife, Jill Biden, will lead the US delegation. The service will include different faiths and community groups following the King's wishes. Indian-origin peer Lord Indarjit Singh will represent the Sikh community and

Lord Patel will represent the Hindu community. Charles has long expressed interest in all religions, regardless of race or religious beliefs.

That brings us to the larger question of whether such an event holds the significance it once did, and does the monarch need one. There has been a debate in the country on this issue. While some would like the continuation of the monarchy, others consider it a burden on the country's economy, particularly the younger generation, when there is an economic crisis. Some anti-monarchy groups feel it might seem out of place in 2023.

The latest YouGov opinion poll to assess the public mood before the coronation revealed that Charles is not

popular but is certainly less popular than his mother and son, Prince William. The survey suggests broad support for the monarchy, with 58% preferring it to an elected head of state - which was supported by 26%.

There were doubts about how effective Charles would be. He impressed the royalists and non-royalists during his first six months on the job. He has reshuffled royal residences. He would like to slim down the royal household. The new postage stamps bearing the image of King Charles III without the crown were released by the Royal Mail. Also, Charles rejected Heathrow's offer to name Terminal 5 after him, an honour it also extended to his mother. Terminal 2 became

the Queen's Terminal in 2014.

In the past, Charles' broken marriage with Diana left him unpopular. Now this is changing. People are willing to accept Charles and his Queen Camilla. As the Prince of Wales, King Charles started The Prince's Trust in 1976 with his severance pay from the British Navy. This provides first grants for people with disadvantaged backgrounds. His other interests include climate change, employment prospects for young people, and interfaith relations.

There is an Indian connection, too, with the coronation. So far, the queens have worn the famous 105-carat Koh-i-Noor diamond, mined in Golconda in Andhra Pradesh, to coronations. The Kohinoor was put in a cross on Queen

Mary's crown in 1911. Still, the diamond was removed from the crown and sent to the Tower of London for public display to avoid controversy.

After the coronation, the King plans to downsize the royal household and the number of working royals. Also, the Sunday Times reported Charles wanted Buckingham Palace, Clarence House, Windsor Castle, and Balmoral to be transformed into public places. Politically, too, the King would like to be more flexible than his mother. He has developed a good rapport with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. He has already said he will abide by the constitutional principle to avoid controversy as King. Overall, King Charles aims to be a modern king in line with the changing times.









# EVERTON RESCUE DRAW AT LEICESTER



**AFP ■ UK**

Iwobi scored a second-half equaliser at the King Power Stadium after James Maddison wasted a chance to put Leicester 3-1 up when his penalty was saved by Jordan Pickford.

Dominic Calvert-Lewin put Everton in front with an early penalty, before Leicester hit back with goals from Caglar Soyuncu and Jamie Vardy.

Leicester, who have won one of their last 12 league games, moved out of the relegation zone on goal difference.

The Foxes, Premier League champions in 2016, are fighting to avoid playing in the Championship for the first time in nine years.

"We missed a penalty for 3-1, but also in the first half we were second best for long periods," Leicester boss Dean Smith said.

"We knew the result today would not define what happens. We came out of the bottom three, but there are still four games to go."

Everton, who last played in the second tier in 1954, remain in 19th place.

Sean Dyche's side are one point from safety with four games left for each of the bottom five clubs.

Everton narrowly escaped relegation last season under Frank Lampard, but their struggles again this term led to Dyche's appointment in January.

The Toffees beat Arsenal and Leeds in two of Dyche's first three games, but have won just one of the 11 games since then, sparking furious fan protests against the club hierarchy.

"We held our nerve, kept trying to create things and overall it's a good performance, although we didn't get the three points," Dyche said.

"I didn't come here for a walk in the park. I knew it was going to be a challenge. The only crime tonight was two really soft goals, but the mentality is what we want."

Despite the mutinous mood among Everton's travelling fans, they took the lead in

the 15th minute.

Timothy Castagne needlessly conceded a penalty with a rash shove on Calvert-Lewin as the striker tried to control Seamus Coleman's lofted pass.

Calvert-Lewin smashed the spot-kick into the roof of the net for his first goal since October and only his second of an injury-plagued campaign.

Leicester needed a response and they delivered emphatically with two goals in the space of 11 minutes.

Harvey Barnes' 22nd-minute cross was headed back across goal by Wout Faes and Soyuncu pounced with a half-volley that eluded Jordan Pickford's weak attempted save.

Vardy rolls back the years Everton's creaky defence was exposed again after 33 minutes.

Iwobi lost possession too easily and Vardy rolled back the years with a blistering run to reach Maddison's pass and round Pickford for a cool finish.

Everton were in disarray at the back and Michael Keane conceded a penalty in first-half stoppage time when he blocked Barnes' cross with his out-stretched arm.

But Maddison blasted his penalty straight at Pickford to give Everton renewed hope.

The save was also a tribute to England keeper Pickford's preparation.



## Alcaraz earns Zverev revenge

**AFP ■ FRANCE**

Third-ranked Daniil Medvedev crashed out against Russian compatriot Aslan Karatsev, 7-6 (7/1), 6-4.

In the women's competition world number two Aryna Sabalenka was forced to sweat by Mayar Sherif but eventually came through 2-6, 6-2, 6-1 to reach the semi-finals.

Top-seeded Spaniard Alcaraz, who also beat Zverev in last season's Madrid final, gained revenge for the German's triumph when they met later in the 2022 French Open quarter-finals.

Two-time Madrid winner Zverev, 26, was blown away in the opening set. He improved a little in the second but not sufficiently to trouble Alcaraz, who moved his opponent around at will.

"I played at a great level, I didn't let him dominate, I went on the attack the whole time, and above all, I returned really well," said Alcaraz, who won in one hour 22 minutes.

"I played a complete game, and that's how we have this result -- but it's not a normal result against (Zverev)."

Zverev zipped past Hugo Grenier 6-1, 6-0 in the third round, appearing to find form after the ankle injury he suffered last year, but was exposed by a razor sharp Alcaraz.

The US Open champion dropped just two points in the first set in his near-immaculate service games, and put strong pressure on the German's serve.

Alcaraz converted his third break point to take a 2-0 lead in the 11-minute second game, before wresting another from Zverev for 5-1, consolidating to take the set.

The duo traded blows on serve at the start of the second set before Alcaraz carved out a break for 3-2 when Zverev sent a forehand return wide.

Alcaraz again broke for a 5-2 lead with a neat forehand down the line and triumphed on serve when Zverev batted a return long.

Alcaraz, who turns 20 on Friday, is aiming for his 10th tour-level title after defending the Barcelona Open in April.

In the last eight, the Murcian will face Karen Khachanov who dispatched Andrey Rublev 7-6 (10/8), 6-4 in another all-Russian battle.

Medvedev, second seed in the Spanish capital, has admitted he struggles on clay and fell to another defeat against Karatsev on the dirt, as he did in Rome two seasons ago.

The 27-year-old secured an early break but Karatsev immediately struck back for 2-2.

They stayed on serve and Karatsev triumphed comfortably in the tie-break, his ball striking immaculate throughout the clash, hitting 28 winners to just four unforced errors.

Ranked 121st in the world, qualifier Karatsev broke the 2021 US Open winner for 3-2 in the second set and only dropped two points on his serve after that to progress.



## Serena debuts baby bump at Met Gala

**AFP ■ NEW YORK**

Williams said on Instagram just before she arrived at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, decked out in a black and white gown, for fashion's biggest night of the year.

In the photos, the 41-year-old tennis great is seen posing in a black and white gown with her husband Alexis Ohanian, the founder of Reddit, and cradling the baby bump.

Williams and Ohanian are already parents to Olympia, born in September 2017.

Last year, Williams, who won 23 singles Grand Slam titles and multiple Olympic gold medals throughout her long career -- bid an emotional farewell to tennis at the US Open.

"I'm ready to, like, be a mom, explore a different version of Serena," she said at the time.

Last year, in an essay for Elle magazine, Williams described the difficulties she experienced in giving birth to Olympia, eventually via emergency C-section, and how she suffered blood clots in her lungs shortly thereafter.

Williams was not the only person to reveal a baby bump at the Met Gala; model Karlie Kloss also confirmed her second pregnancy at the event.

# Referee row down to 'emotion and anger': Klopp

**AFP ■ FRANCE**

The Football Association is investigating comments by the Reds boss that appeared to call into question the integrity of referee Paul Tierney after Sunday's 4-3 victory at Anfield.

Following Diogo Jota's late winner, Klopp ran down the touchline to celebrate in front of fourth official John Brooks and received a yellow card from Tierney.

"The whole situation shouldn't have happened at all," Klopp said at a press conference on Tuesday. "It was out of emotion, out of anger in that moment. That's why I celebrated the way I celebrated."

"I didn't say anything wrong. I couldn't get close to the fourth official and I didn't want to get close to him."

Klopp, whose team are fifth in the Premier League table after four straight wins, added: "Paul Tierney came over and I didn't expect a red card, I expected a yellow. He said to me: 'For me it's a red card,' but he gave me a yellow."

"After the game I tried to calm down and didn't properly. I said (in TV interviews): 'What he said to me was not OK. I opened the box which I didn't want to open.' 'The rest was things I said about how I felt in that moment and Paul Tierney doing our



games. I'm not a resentful person but these things which happen in the past happens, not intentionally but they are there."

"Obviously the refs are really angry about what I said. I did a lot of things that day but I didn't lie."

Klopp said after the game that he did not know what the official "has against us".

Speaking ahead of Wednesday's home match against Fulham, Klopp said he expected to face punishment.

"Refs think I questioned their integrity, which if I am sitting here now calm, I don't do," said the German.

Shortly after the Spurs game, PGMOL (Professional Game Match Officials Limited) issued a statement.

"PGMOL is aware of the comments made by Jurgen Klopp after his side's fixture with Tottenham Hotspur," it said.

"Match officials in the Premier League are recorded in all games via a communications system and, having fully reviewed the audio of referee Paul Tierney from today's fixture, we can confirm he acted in a professional manner throughout including when issuing the caution to the Liverpool manager so, therefore, we strongly refute any suggestion that Tierney's actions were improper."

## Djokovic set for US Open after vaccine mandate lifted

**AFP ■ NEW YORK**

Djokovic, one of the highest profile athletes to remain unvaccinated, has not been able to play in the United States since the vaccine mandate came into effect in November 2021.

The 35-year-old world number one last played the US Open in 2021, when his bid to complete a calendar year Grand Slam ended in defeat in the final to Russia's Daniil Medvedev.

Since then Djokovic has

been a glaring absentee from US tennis tournaments due to the travel mandate.

The 22-time Grand Slam singles winner applied unsuccessfully for a special exemption to enter the United States to play this year's Masters events at Indian Wells and Miami US Open organizers, as well as the US Tennis Association, both called for Djokovic to be granted an exemption.

US tennis great John McEnroe was one of several who questioned the decision to



## Sabalenka defeat Sherif to reach Madrid Open semis

**AFP ■ FRANCE**

Australian Open champion Sabalenka struggled badly at first but turned the two-hour match around convincingly to reach the semi-finals.

"I was just trying to keep fighting to keep playing my game and find my rhythm," said Sabalenka.

"She's a clay court specialist and I'm very happy with this win. It was a very tough one."

Sherif, the first Egyptian to reach a WTA 1000 quarter-final, capitalised on Sabalenka's erratic start to break in the first game.

The 26-year-old became the first player to take a set off Sabalenka in Madrid, breaking again for 4-1 and missing set point at 5-1 before clinching it on serve.

However the Belarusian, 24, bounced back strongly, converting all four of her break points in the second set and hitting 10 winners to Sherif's one to force a third.

The 2021 Madrid winner was a break down at 2-1 in the second but won 11 of the next 12 games.

Sabalenka showed her power as she battered Sherif back to break in the third set before consolidating for 3-0.

Sherif, who beat world number five Caroline Garcia in straight sets in the third round, was eventually overrun by the big-hitter, who secured another break and then served out.

Sabalenka will face Greek world number nine Maria Sakkari or Romanian Irina-Camelia Begu, who play in the second quarter-final later Tuesday.

# Wolfsburg beat Arsenal to reach Women's Champions League final

**AFP ■ LONDON**

The Germans won 3-2 in the semi-final second leg at the Emirates Stadium as Bremer's goal in the closing seconds of extra time sealed a 5-4 aggregate success.

Stina Blackstenius put Arsenal ahead, with Jill Roord and Alexandra Popp netting for Wolfsburg before Jennifer Beattie levelled for the Gunners, setting the stage for Bremer's decisive goal.

Barcelona, who beat Chelsea in the other semi-final, lie in wait for Wolfsburg in the final at Eindhoven's PSV Stadium on June 3.

Wolfsburg, who beat Arsenal in last season's quarter-finals, are back in the final for the first time since losing the showpiece to Lyon in 2020.

"It was a tough game. I thought it was going to go to penalties but we won," Roord said.

"Credit to Arsenal, they've



**The Gunners had battled back to draw the first leg 2-2 in Germany**

been through a lot as a team but they made it super hard. At the end they could have won, we could have won. We were the lucky ones."

Arsenal are the only Women's Super League club to have won the Women's Champions League, lifting the trophy in 2007.

But their hopes of another crack at the trophy were dashed in the most painful fashion.

The Gunners had battled back to draw the first leg 2-2 in Germany despite trailing by two goals after just 24 minutes.

Yet Jonas Eidevall's side were ravaged by injuries to Beth Mead, Vivianne Miedema, Leah Williamson, Caitlin Foord and Kim Little and the attrition eventually took its toll.

"It's tough. No doubt about it, because it was a game of such fine margins and they're not on our side tonight," Eidevall said.

Hendrich with her tenacious pressing and applied the finishing touch after rounding the keeper.

Manuela Zinsberger preserved Arsenal's advantage when she palmed away a fierce long-range strike from Lynn Wilms. But Wolfsburg had the momentum and Roord equalised in the 41st minute, curling into the far corner from the edge of the area after Popp headed down a free-kick. Wolfsburg's pressure paid off again as Popp put them ahead in the 58th minute.

Felicitas Rauch's corner was met by a glancing header from the Wolfsburg captain that flashed past Zinsberger.

Beattie forced extra time when she equalised in the 75th minute with a clinical header from Wubben-Moy's cross. But with a penalty shoot-out just seconds away, Wolfsburg booked their final berth as Jule Brand's cross was turned in by Bremer.

Emirates crowd of more than 60,000 -- a record attendance for a women's club match in England -- Arsenal took the lead in the 11th minute.

Blackstenius forced the mistake from Kathrin



# DC STUN DEFENDING CHAMPIONS

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Aman Khan's maiden T20 fifty was beautifully complemented by the pacers as Delhi Capitals kept their playoff hopes alive with a tense five-run win over Gujarat Titans in the IPL here on Tuesday. Bowling impeccable lengths, Mohammed Shami (4/11 in four overs) was lethal with the new ball as he knocked the wind out of the Capitals' top order, as Gujarat Titans restricted DC to 130 for eight after being asked to bowl. Aman (51 off 44) waged a lone battle, putting some much-needed runs on the board. He added 50 off 54 balls with Axar Patel (27) and 53 off 27 balls with Rival Patel (23). In reply, Hardik Pandya's (59 off 53) sedate fifty and Rahul Tewatia's (20) hat-trick of sixes were not enough as Delhi bowlers held their nerves to stop the defending champions at 125 for 6.

It was the third win of the season for Delhi, who continue to remain at the bottom of the table, while Gujarat continued to remain on the top spot.

Defending a modest target, Delhi quicks were able to make an early breakthrough, as Gujarat lost three wickets inside the powerplay.

If 'Impact Player' Khaleel Ahmed (2/24) bowled a beautiful first over which was a wicket- maiden, pace spearhead Anrich Nortje (1/39) got rid of the dangerous Shubman Gill (6).



Veteran pacer Ishant Sharma (2/23) too joined the party as he outfoxed Vijay Shankar (6) with a perfectly executed knuckle ball.

Wickets continued to tumble with the introduction of the slow bowlers, left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav (1/15) bamboozled David Miller (0) in the seventh over. Pandya and Abhinav Manohar (26) steadied the Gujarat ship with 62-run stand for the fifth wicket.

Pandya anchored the innings with Tewatia hitting three back-to-back sixes off the penultimate over. But with 12 needed off the final over, Ishant gave away just six runs while taking the vital wicket of Tewatia.

Earlier, Delhi once again suffered a dramatic collapse, losing five wickets for 23 runs inside five overs and at the centre of it all was Shami.

The veteran Indian pacer set the tone of the match as he struck off the first ball of the game to get Phil Salt for a golden duck. A horrible mix up between young Priyam Garg (10) and skipper David Warner (2) cost Delhi the wicket of the Australian in the second over. Rilee Rossouw (8) was next to depart as Shami struck once again. The veteran Indian induced slight movement away from Rossouw. An outside edge led the ball to straight into the hands of wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha's gloves as Delhi fell to 16 for three.

## Rahul's injury big concern as LSG get ready for CSK challenge



PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Hit by injuries to skipper KL Rahul and seamer Jaydev Unadkat, Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) would be wary of Chennai Super Kings' ability to bounce back when the two sides face each other in an Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

LSG would also be facing the heat after failing to chase down a meagre total of 126 in their own den, getting bundled out for just 108 in 19.5 overs by Royal Challengers Bangalore on Monday.

Rahul sustained injury on his right thigh during the match against RCB here on Monday, while Unadkat slipped badly

while bowling at the nets, resulting to a nasty fall on Sunday.

The extent of both the injuries is yet to be ascertained but Rahul came out to bat at No. 11 in LSG's unsuccessful run chase, facing three balls without opening account. His inclusion in the LSG team for Wednesday's match is doubtful.

Players like Kyle Mayers, Nicholas Pooran, Marcus Stoinis and Krunal Pandya have chipped in individually as well as collectively in previous games to keep the Lucknow franchise afloat while skipper Rahul has not been at his best after the two half centuries (74 against Punjab Kings and 68 against Gujarat Titans).

## KL should have come out in middle overs: Moody

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Former India cricketer Deep Dasgupta and former Australia cricketer Tom Moody recently shared their thoughts on KL Rahul's late arrival to bat during the second innings of the match between LSG and RCB, after he sustained a thigh injury in the first innings.

In an exclusive interview with ESPNcricinfo, Dasgupta and Moody shared their differing opinions on when and why Rahul should have come out to bat and whether he would change the outcome of the game.

Deep Dasgupta spoke on

when he felt KL Rahul should have come out to bat, after the LSG captain succumbed to a thigh injury during the first innings.

"See, top of the order, you would think, that you're going to chase it, and your top order looks good. And you weren't even thinking of KL Rahul batting or needing him to bat. But obviously, looking at the last over, 23 off six, you never know, four sixes, if it comes off. And you would expect that, he's got that ability. But obviously, it was going to be difficult. And anyway he wasn't running, so there was no chance of him getting runs like that," he said.

## PBKS to test MI's class in crucial game



PTI ■ MOHALI

Five-time champions Mumbai Indians' class and pedigree will once again be tested when they take on an unpredictable Punjab Kings in a crucial Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

A win will give MI the much-needed push on the points table, while a loss will see them slip further and chart a familiar course like the previous edition. MI had finished 10th and last in the previous edition.

The Mumbai team is currently placed seventh with eight points from eight matches and things are not looking great for Rohit Sharma's side.

The win against Rajasthan Royals at the Wankhede Stadium on April 30, though, would have instilled a fair bit of

confidence in the MI team after it chased down a massive 212 with three balls to spare to earn two valuable points.

The win was crafted by Singapore-born Australian cricketer Tim David, who smashed three sixes on the trot in the final over during his 14-ball unbeaten 45 to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

While there were vital contributions from India's T20 specialist batter Suryakumar Yadav (55), tall Australian all-rounder Cameron Green (44), Ishan Kishan (28) and Tilak Varma (29 not out), none could match the ferocity of David's strokes.

The 27-year-old middle-order batter smashed five sixes and two boundaries at a strike rate in excess of 300 as Mumbai Indians won on home turf.

A similar commitment

would be required against Punjab Kings, who are known to play aggressive cricket, though their biggest drawback is an unreliable top order.

Barring Shikhar Dhawan and to an extent his opening partner Prabhshimran Singh, very few PBKS batters have contributed enough to their overall totals, though all that changed in their previous game against Chennai Super Kings at Chepauk on April 30.

Set a stiff 200-run target by MS Dhoni's side, the entire top and middle-order came to the party to win a last-ball thriller by four wickets. With Prabhshimran and Dhawan laying a good foundation in powerplay, England all-rounder Liam Livingstone, Sam Curran and wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma all chipped in to make it a memorable chase.

The team, though, will likely have to face the fiery pace of Mumbai Indians' Jofra Archer, who was back in the game against Rajasthan Royals, bowling his quota of overs and taking a wicket as well.

MI skipper Rohit's form, though, is the biggest concern for the five-time IPL champions and much would depend on the India captain on Wednesday to shore up his side, after contributing just three runs in the match against the Royals.

## Clarke wants Hazlewood to focus on preparing for Ashes

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Former Australian captain Michael Clarke is not pleased with Josh Hazlewood's decision to compete in the ongoing IPL 2023 as he believes the pacer should be focusing on preparing for the World Test Championship final and the Ashes.

After being out of action for nearly four months due to Achilles injury, Hazlewood had a successful comeback to cricketering action as he bowled three overs for Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) in the IPL match against Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) and returned

with impressive figures of 2/15. Hazlewood sustained an Achilles injury during a Test match in Sydney in January and has since not featured in any format of the game.

He was initially selected for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in India but was headed back home midway through the series to continue his rehabilitation from an Achilles complaint.

With his return to IPL, Hazlewood will begin his attempt to demonstrate his physical readiness for Australia's upcoming six-Test tour of England, which includes the World Test Championship



Final and the Ashes. The 32-year-old was one of only four specialist pacemen named in the Aussies' squad for the first half of their campaign in England.

While national selectors were pleased that Hazlewood used the IPL to build up his bowling loads, Clarke believes that the pacer should be in Australia and concentrate on red-ball cricket.

"I don't know why he's over playing IPL. I don't know why he's not over here in Australia preparing to play Test match cricket," Clarke was quoted by Fox Cricket.

"I know they'll have people

over there, in the nets he'll be bowling more than what the IPL players are bowling, in preparation for Test match cricket.

"But I just don't know if him bowling three overs, four overs right now is his best preparation for an Ashes series, after the injuries he's had and the amount of time he's had out of Test cricket.

"It's great to see him back playing, there's no doubt about it... but for Australian Test cricket fans, you want to see him at his best for this Ashes series," Clarke said.

Clarke further stressed that a significant amount of money



## Eng announce revised dates against Sri Lanka

IAN S ■ LONDON

The England & Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on Tuesday announced the change in dates and venues for their women's team's three-match T20I and three-match ODI series against Sri Lanka, starting on August 31.

The change has been made after a request from Sri Lanka Cricket due to the confirmation of women's cricket being a part of the Asian Games 2023.

"Following a request from Sri Lanka Cricket due to the confirmation of the women's cricket tournament at the 2023 Asian Games, the England & Wales Cricket Board have mutually agreed to a schedule change to the England Women's white-ball home series against Sri Lanka planned for September," the ECB said in a statement.

Sri Lanka's white-ball tour of England will now begin on August 31, with the commencement of the three-match T20I series. The three matches will be played in Hove, Chelmsford, and

Derby. This will be followed by a three-match ODI series between September 9-14 in Chester-le-Street, Northampton, and Leicester.

The Hove which was originally scheduled to host an ODI will now host the T20I series opener. Canterbury, which was originally set to host an ODI, will no longer host a match during the series.

The series will be key for Sri Lanka in their bid to prepare for the Asian Games, which is scheduled in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8.

**SCHEDULE:**  
**1st T20I:** August 31, Hove  
**2nd T20I:** September 2, Chelmsford  
**3rd T20I:** September 6, Derby  
**1st ODI:** September 9, Chester-le-Street  
**2nd ODI:** September 12, Northampton  
**3rd ODI:** September 14, Leicester

## Ind overtake Aus to become No. 1 Test side

IAN S ■ DUBAI

India pipped Australia to become the No.1 team in Men's Test Rankings following the annual update, that drops results from the 2019-20 season and reflects all series completed since May 2020, released by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday.

Australia's reign at the top of the Men's Test Rankings comes to an end after 15 months with India going past the Aussies ahead of next month's ICC World Test Championship Final.

India currently sits at the top of the ladder with 121 points, with Australia in the second spot with 116 points.



4-0 Ashes defeat and a 1-0 defeat in the West Indies.

The annual rankings consider all series completed since May 2020, with series completed before May 2022 weighted at 50 per cent and all subsequent series weighted at 100 per cent, according to the ICC release.

India's rating points have moved up from 119 to 121 as their 2-0 defeat to New Zealand in March 2020 no longer figures in the rankings, which assesses series completed prior to May 2022 at 50 per cent and subsequent series at 100 per cent.

Australia's home series wins over Pakistan (2-0) and New Zealand (3-0) in 2019/20 were no longer in consideration, while their 4-0 win over England in 2021/22 has its weighting halved. Consequently, Australia's ratings dropped from 121 to 116.

Australia, who take on India in the final of the ICC World Test Championship 2023 at The Oval from 7 June, were the top-ranked Test side since January 2022 while India were last at the top for a month in December 2021.