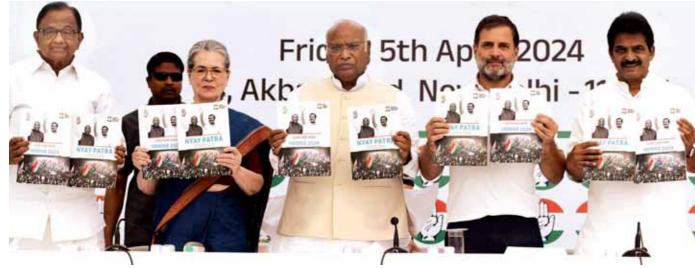


Congress releases Nyay Patra manifesto



Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, along with senior party leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, P Chidambaram and KC Venugopal, releases the party's manifesto ahead of the Lok Sabha elections in New Delhi on Friday Ranian Dimri/Pionee

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday released its manifesto for the general elections 2024 focusing on equality, youth, workers, women, farmers, Constitution, economy, federalism, national security, environment, jobs creation and nonetheless inclusion of more reservations in various segments and work on caste census.

Right to apprenticeship, a legal guarantee for MSP, passing a constitutional amendment to raise the 50 per cent cap on reservations Agnipath scheme are also among

the promises made by the party in manifesto released at the AICC headquarters in the presence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi. Invoking Rabindranath Tagore's "Where the mind is without fear

and the head is held high", the grand old party made a fervent appeal to people to repose faith in the party in the Lok Sabha polls and promised greater faster freedom, growth and justice for all.

growth. Widespread

unemployment, high inflation and falling consumption debilitated even this modest growth. While the poor and the middle classes have been hit below the belt and the atmosphere in the country has become hate-filled and divisive," the party alleged.

"It is time to remind ourselves of Tagore's immortal words in Gitanjali: Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high...Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake, the manifesto concluded.

for SCs, STs and OBCs, a nation- "The economy has In the 45-page document wide caste census and scrapping of registered less-than-satisfactory titled 'Nyay Patra', featuring pictures of Kharge and Rahul and

Bharat Jodo Yatras, the Congress said it would implement 10 per have cent quota in jobs, educational institutions for economically weaker sections (EWS) for all castes, communities without discrimination if it comes to power.

The party also promised full Statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, besides giving special status to Andhra Pradesh, full Statehood to Puducherry, and to amend the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991, to declare that Lt Governor shall act on the aid and advice of Council of Ministers of NCT, Delhi.

It also promised to fill nearly 30 lakh vacancies in sanctioned posts at various levels in the Central

Government and said the Rajasthan model of cashless insurance of up to ₹25 lakh will be adopted for ensuring universal healthcare across the country. The Congress will pass a constitutional amendment to raise

the 50 per cent cap on reservations for SC, ST and OBC if it comes to power in the general elections beginning April 19, the party promised

The party also said it will conduct a nationwide socio-economic and caste census ensuring equitable distribution among all sections as per their population. It said it will review all laws that interfere with the right to privacy and make suitable amendments to various laws to uphold the right to privacy. It also promised to restore the voters' trust in the election process by amending election laws and ensuring that VVPAT slips are tallied with EVMs. The Congress said it will review the new education policy brought by the NDA.

It also promised to enact a law on bail that will incorporate the principle that 'bail is the rule, jail is the exception' in all criminal laws. It further promised to introduce comprehensive prison reforms. It said it guarantees a new 'right to apprenticeship act' to provide oneyear apprenticeship to every diploma holder or graduate below age of 25, under which apprentices will get ₹one lakh a year. It also promised to provide financial assistance of ₹one lakh cash transfer to a woman of poor households under the Mahalakshmi scheme.

Continued on Page 2



BJP dubs Congress manifesto bundle of lies

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday tore into the Congress manifesto for Lok Sabha elections 2024 and dubbed it a "bundle of lies" and alleged that the party, which ruled the country for several decades, did not fulfil any of the promises made in its earlier manifestos for the

Assembly and Parliamentary elections. The BJP further stated that the seriousness of it could be understood from the fact that photos of New York and Thailand were used in

it. The BJP said the Congress has come with such a poll manifesto to create confusion and mislead voters.

'The Congress manifesto is a bundle of lies. It has been prepared to create confusion among voters," BIP national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi told reporters. The BJP leader said it is an irony

that the Congress is seeking the people's mandate with the promise that it will "do wonders" this time

if voted to power again. "After remaining at helm for several decades, they are now promising that they will do wonders this time if voted to power. The Congress has titled its manifesto 'Nyay Patra', which

means it admits that it has done 'anyay' (injustice) during its 55-60 years rule in the country," he charged. Trivedi said the Congress, which ruled the country for several

decades, is talking about 'nyay' (justice) today, but its Governments did not do justice when in power. The Congress on Friday released its manifesto for the Lok Sabha elections, making a host of promises including the right to apprentices including the guarantee for MSP, and raising the 50 per cent cap on reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs.

Continued on Page 2

Returning officer Anil tenders unconditional apology to apex court

PTI NEW DELH

Anil Masih, the returning officer for the Chandigarh mayoral election whose result was overturned by the Supreme Court in February v tendered unconditional apology to the apex court for his conduct. He had faced the wrath of the Supreme Court which ordered his criminal prosecution for allegedly making a false statement before it and his "misdemeanour' during the counting of votes. Masih said he would withdraw



District administration officials with transgender community people during a meeting organised to employ the

Frequent candidate list changes leave SP supporters baffled

BISWAJEET BANERJEE 📕 LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party (SP) in Uttar Pradesh finds itself amidst a whirlwind of candidate changes, swapping seven candidates across six constituen ies in the crucia past fortnight, prompting worries over the party's leadership indecisiveness. While the party attributes these changes to local requests and voter sentiment, supporters are left bewildered and disheartened by the frequent alterations. Party elders, however, maintain that decisions are reached after extensive consultations with stakeholders in each constituency. "A quick succession of candidate changes sends a negative message. It indicates a lack of confidence and could have detrimental effects on the party's image," remarked a P SAMA senior SP leader. In Meerut, the EPOB situation took a curious turn as the candidate changed



preferred candidate, Asim Raja, was sidelined in favour of Maulana Moibullah Nadvi, the Imam of Parliament Street Jama Masjid in Delhi. Speculations even surfaced regarding the potential candidacy of Akhilesh Yadav's India denies nephew, Tej Pratap Yadav, from Rampur. Baghpat, Gautam Budh Nagar, and Bijnor also saw candidate targeted killings changes amidst speculations and strategic considerations, unsettling party members. In Baghpat, Amarpal Sharma was initially declared as the SP of terrorists in Pakistan candidate but was replaced by Manoj Chaudhary. In Gautam **PIONEER NEWS SERVICE** Budh Nagar, Mahendra Singh NEW DEI HI Nagar gave way to Rahul Awana, only to be reinstated by SP leadership on March 30. Similarly, in Bijnor, Yashvir Singh was replaced by Deepak Saini, son of sitting SP MLA India has termed as "false and malicious propaganda" reports claiming the country's involvement in targeted assassinations in Pakistan after the 2019 Ram Avtar Saini from Noorpur.



the earlier affidavit which stated that he was reeling under depression and anxiety and wherein he denied allegations of tampering with ballots. "A purported video recording of the election process was leaked online on January 31. Thereafter, the respondent (Masih) was subjected to incessant criticism, name-calling and ad hominems by members of political parties as well as social media. This put the respondent, including his family members, under immense mental trauma and stress," he had said in the affidavit.

Continued on Page 2

Transgender Ambassadors to boost voter turnout

ARCHANA JYOTI 📕 NEW DELHI

Determined to reverse the trend of low voter turnout Gonda Dlow voter turnout, Gonda administration in Uttar Pradesh has come out with a unique inclusive initiative: It has roped in transgender as polling booth ambassadors. The brainchild of District Magistrate Neha Sharma, the novel idea engaging the third gender has been met enthusiastically from the transgender community too as well as senior officials and law enforcement authorities which have now chalked out a comprehensive strategy in this regard.

From composing catchy songs to staging street plays, transgender ambassadors have been asked to leverage their creativity and enthusiasm to educate the public and shed light on their long standing demands as well.

Polls will be held on May 20 in the phase five in the district which is home to 25.30 lakh registered voters, including a small contingent of 94 third-gender individuals. Located approximately 120 km from Lucknow, Gonda has faced persistent challenges with low voter participation compared to the State average.

However, now with the involvement of the transgender in the poll process, the district officials are hoping to bring the voters to the polling booth and exercise their electoral rights. "This initiative capitalises on the unique perspective and outreach potential of the transgender community to raise awareness about the importance of voting and encourage public participation," Amruta Soni, a Government officer and transgender spokesperson told a news agency here. Continued on Page 2

thrice, culminating in Sunita Verma, former mayor, filing her nomination on the last day on Thursday. Initially,

advocate Bhanu Pratap Singh was declared the candidate, only to be replaced by Sardhana MLA Atul Pradhan. Despite Pradhan filing his nomination. Verma

ultimately took his place. Moradabad witnessed a similar perplexing scenario when sitting MP ST Hasan was replaced by Ruchi Veera, a choice of veteran leader Azam Khan. Efforts to reinstate

Hasan before the nomination deadline proved futile.

Similar perplexity gripped Rampur, where Khan's election

Noorpur. RLD chief Jayant Chaudhry criticised the SP's approach, referring to it as a "musical Pulwama terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir. The strong denial from Ministry of External Affairs chairs" game in a social media (MEA) was given to the UK daily, *The Guardian*, in response to the report. The report quoted intelligence post. He wrote a post on X saying, "Congratulations to the "lucky ones in the Opposition (who) will get a chance, for a few hours" to operatives in India and contest in the 2024 general Pakistan to claim that India's move was part of a wider **Continued on Page 2** strategy to eliminate terrorists

living on foreign soil. The Ministry also underlined

from

previous statement by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in which he said targeted killings in other countries were "not the policy of the Government of India." The Guardian mentioned denial by the MEA. The report claimed Delhi "has implemented a policy of targeting those it

considers hostile to India". According to the report, documents shared by some Pakistani investigators indicated India's intelligence agency, RAW (Research and Analysis Wing) allegedly carried out 20 such targeted killings on foreign soil as part of an emboldened approach to national security after the 2019 Pulwama terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir, which killed 40 Indian Pakistan-based soldiers. terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed later claimed responsibility for the attack. Continued on Page 2

Tea to elephants: Poll campaign expenses fixed by EC

RAJESH KUMAR MEW DELHI

From fixing the rates for hiring of elephants and horses to campaign, to ascertain the rates of chai, kachoris, samosa besides size of garlands and several campaign related paraphernalia, the Election Commission (EC) has fixed rates for the campaign related items to be used by the contesting candidates and political parties during their election campaign in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections

The candidates now will have to maintain a record of expenditure among things, on how many samosas, kachoris and cups of tea/coffee a candidate has

Name of item/work	Quantity/measurement	Rate (in ₹)	
Cholle Kulche	Per plate	43	
Cholle Bhature	Per plate	49	
Samosa	Each	12	
Kachori	Each	19	
Pakoda (Mix)	Per plate	36	
Tea	Per disposal cup	12	
Lunch (Veg)	Each	118	Presenter Property
Dinner (Veg)	Each	119	
Charges of elephant	Per day	6,150	
Charges of horse	Per day	3,075	

and supporters, and how workers and voters liquor, many garlands of various but the rate list did not sizes were put around the mention netaji's neck during Interestingly, candidates will The rate for a samosa is fixed have to pay $\gtrless 12$ for a cup of at $\gtrless 12$ in Delhi; $\gtrless 10$ in Noida Interestingly, parties and tea in Delhi, $\gtrless 10$ in and Ghaziabad and $\gtrless 15$ in Charit the same state of the same offered to his/her workers candidates often offer Ghaziabad,

Gautambudh Nagar, ₹15 in Punjab and ₹5 in Madhya Pradesh. alcohol.

Noida, Punjab.

In Delhi, the Election Commission has fixed charges of 1,34 items that will be used during the campaign which include ₹43 for per plate chhole kulche, ₹49 per plate chhole bhature; ₹40 per plate puri sabzi; ₹12 per samosa, ₹19 per kachori, per samosa, 17 per kachor, ₹16 for bread pakoda, ₹28 for sandwich, ₹12 per cup (disposal tea), ₹19 per water bottle (one litre), ₹15 per piece ladoo and gulab jamun, ₹118 for vegetable thali at lunch and ₹119 per thali at dinner.

If candidates want to hire elephants for their campaigning, they will have to pay $\overline{\mathbf{\xi}}_{6,150}$ per day; for horses, it will be $\overline{\mathbf{\xi}}_{3,075}$, according to the Election Commission.

RBI to enable cash deposits in banks through UPI soon

PTI MUMBAI

In a major decision, the Reserve Bank on Friday said it will soon facilitate cash deposit facility in banks through use of the popular UPI, an instant real-time payment system for interbank

transactions through mobile phones.

The Central bank also decided to permit linking of Prepaid Payment Instruments

(PPIs) through third-party Unified Payments Interface (UPI) applications.

Announcing the first bimonthly monetary policy of the current financial year, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das **Continued on Page 2** | said cash deposit machines

(CDMs) deployed by banks enhance customer convenience while reducing cash-handling load on bank branches. The facility of cash deposit is presently available only through use of debit cards

"Given the popularity of UPI as also the benefits seen from the availability of UPI for card-less cash withdrawal at ATMs it is now proposed to facilitate cash deposit facility through use of UPI," Das said. Operational

instructions will be issued shortly, the RBI said. The RBI has also proposed to permit linking of PPIs through thirdparty UPI applications to provide more flexibility to users.

Two heavily armed terrorists | Didi used offensive language against PM: BJP to EC SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA gunned down by Army in Uri

MOHIT KANDHARI 📕 JAMMU

wo heavily armed terrorists I from Pakistan were gunned down by the alert troops of the Indian army along the line of control in the Uri sector of North Kashmir's Baramulla district on Friday.

This is the first major infiltration bid attempted from across the line of control in the runup to the Lok Sabha polls beginning from April 19.

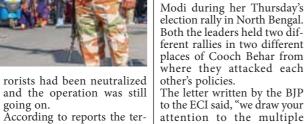
According to a statement issued by the Srinagar-based Chinar Corps. "Alert troops deployed on LoC foiled an Infiltration bid on Friday at Sabura Nala, Uri Sector where two terrorists have been eliminated".

According to reports, soon after detecting the suspected movement of infiltrators near the line of control the troops challenged them and in the initial exchange of firing one terrorist was gunned down. The second terrorist was neutralized as the operation to flush out the



infiltrators progressed during the day. During searches in the area, the troops also recovered 02xAK Rifles, 04xHand Grenades, and other war-like stores in the forward area. Inspector General of Police, Kashmir range VK Birdi briefing a news agency in Srinagar

said, an infiltration bid was foiled in the Hathlanga area of Uri early Friday morning by the alert troops of the 5 JAK rifles. IGP said, according to the initial ground reports two ter-



and the operation was still going on.

According to reports the terrorist handlers sitting across the line of control were waiting for the mountain passes to clear due to the accumulation of snow in the North Kashmir district of Baramulla. The terrorist handlers rely on

launching pads located closer to the Line of Control to push small groups of infiltrators inside the Indian territory.



Commission, Smt Mamata Banerjee resorted to use offensive vocabulary even when referring to the Hon'ble Prime Minister..

It was shocking to hear the use of the offensive word, the letter read adding how following in the footsteps of the TMC chief the lesser leaders of that party too were using bad words against sitting saffron MPs like Locket Chatterjee. Requesting "immediate and appropriate action against the erring leaders, the BJP wrote

paigners of other political party(ies)," adding, "In com-plete disregard and disrespect how "following in the footsteps of their party supremo we have noticed many TMC camto the majesty of the

paigners using foul and offensive language, in some cases even when referring to a lady. As an example, we draw your attention to derogatory remarks made on 4th April by TMC MLA for Chunchura Shri Asit Mazumder, referring to our Lok Sabha candidate Smt Locket Chatterjee MP... at a public gathering.

Curiously senior BJP leader Dilip Ghosh had earlier been censured by the ECI for using offensive language against the Chief Minister. He had raised questions about her ancestry. Reacting to the BJP's letter TMC spokesperson and out-

oing Rajya Sabha MP Shantanu Sen said that the Chief Minister had used "no bad word," adding "there is always a difference between a slip of tongue and an intentional bad word ... besides if a person immediately realizes that and withdraws it you cannot call the word offensive." He also reminded how the Prime Minister had in 2019 'made offensive remarks against the Chief Minister who is a woman by calling her "Didi o Didi" That the BJP did not take any action against Ghosh for using foul words against the Chief Minister also should be taken into consideration he said.

Meanwhile, a day after the Prime Minister hard-hitting speech from an election rally at Cooch Behar, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday hit him back daring him on the issue of corruption to make a comparative study between what and how things were like in Trinamool Congress-ruled Bengal and BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat." They talk about corruption in Bengal ... but I

Paper on the issue taking States like Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh in it ... they only talk of Bengal ... why don't they look at U.P." Banerjee said from a second rally in North Bengal.

Referring to the Prime Minister's reference of Sandeshkhali where lands of poor people were grabbed and their women were subjected to sexual assault Banerjee said it was an isolated affair. "Sandeshkhali is an isolated case and in no way can be equated to Nandigram and Singur ... but here the people are unnecessarily trying to play politics with it ... and besides we have immediately taken action at Sandeshkhali by arresting the accused persons and returning the lands of the people ... this is because the TMC Government always stands for what is right," Banerjee said.

Incidentally, a renowned sephologist in a recent interhad said that view Sandeshkhali was going to play a big role in Bengal elections and that the BJP would benefit the most out of it.

Bengal Governor orders judicial probe into university functioning

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

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m T}^{
m he\ battle\ between\ Raj}_{
m Bhawan\ and\ Nabanna}$ (State secretariat) intensified in Bengal with State Governor CV Ananda Bose directing a judicial inquiry into the affairs of the State-funded universities. There are about 30 government-universities in the State. According to a State official "the governor has realised that all state-run university campuses have become mini-Sandeshkhali. Today, he ordered a judicial enquiry into corruption, violence and misuse of university campuses in West Bengal for electioneering and political purposes." The news filtered out of the Governor's House on Friday. Before ordering the judicial inquiry the Governor reportedly alleged that the affairs in the State-run universities in Bengal resembled the situation of Sandeshkhali where a band of TMC strongmen and leaders had been engaged in land grab and sexual assault.

The allegations of corruption, violence etc would be looked single mittee of a retired-High Court Judge The Friday's development comes a day after the Governor directed the State Government to sack Education Minister Bratya Basu with whom he had not been enjoying cordial relationship for quite some time. Bose had even alleged earlier

that the Basu was destroying the relationship between him and Chief Minister Mamata

Baneriee. According to sources Basu was ordered to be removed from the Cabinet following reports that he had held a meeting with TMC leaders inside the campus of the State-run Gour Banga University. Though both Basu and Speaker

Biman Banerjee have reacted to Bose's action saying his actions were ultra vires the powers that has been accorded to a Governor of the State, no word has come from the Chief Minister's office as yet.

'The Governor is the constitutional head and has certain limits within which he has to function ... he is not the authority to direct the removal of a minister who enjoys the trust of the Chief Minister and the House ... this is beyond the scope of his constitutional power," Basu earlier said alleging Bose was not acting as the Governor of the State but as the messenger of the BJP and the Raj Bhawan was functioning as

a BJP's party office. ler the too said that "despite differences it would have been better had the Governor not initiated certain actions ... there are certain constitutional obligations and procedures that require to be followed." There was no reaction coming from other opposition parties

Vaiko outburst against Nehru, Indira upsets TN Congressmen

guidelines issued by the

Commission on maintaining

dignity of the campaign.

Repeated advisories have been

issued to refrain from use of

inappropriate, abusive at times,

vocabulary against star cam-

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN CHENNA

he DMK-led front in The DMK-Ieu IIon II. Tamil Nadu has successfully completed the allocation of seats among its alliance partners but there is widespread discontentment among Congressmen across the State. To make matters short, Congress leaders and activists in Tamil Nadu are upset with MDMK leader Vaiko for humiliating and insulting former Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi.

Vaiko, whose original name was Vaiyapuri Gopalasamy, blamed Indira Gandhi in a recent speech for handing over the 285 acre Katchatheev islet to Sri Lanka.

He accused Indira Gandhi of cheating the State of Tamil Nadu by offering Katchatheevu to the island

nation in 1975. Earlier, he had blamed Jawaharlal Nehru for goofing up Kashmir issue and had lambasted the first Prime Minister of the country for cheating India.

Congressmen in Tamil Nadu by Vaiko as blasphemy but they are afraid to question the party High Command for accommodating the MDMK leader in the INDI alliance. When we pointed out the issue to the party leaders in New Delhi, they replied that the MDMK was an alliance partner of the DMK and the



Congress has nothing to do with Vaiko and his MDMK," a senior Congress leader told The Pioneer.

In 2019, Vaiko had lambasted Jawaharlal Nehru for the backwardness of the country and the Kashmir imbroglio. Though the then TNCC President K S Alagiri warned Vaiko for the low quality speech, the latter reportedly scoffed at him and asked who cares the TNCC chief.

"It is unfortunate that a person like Vaiko is resorting to spread lies and misinformation.

This is not going to help the DMK-led front or even the MDMK," said C D Meyyappan, AICC leader who is the Congress-incharge of the Andhra Pradesh

the DMK-led front Thol Thirumavalavan (VCK leader) had declared many times that his mission was to destroy the Congress, the GOP has given him the pride of place in the INDI alliance. "A person who can never hope of winning an election on his own is sitting as a VIP in the alliance meeting convened to decide the future of the country," said a former TNCC leader. Interestingly, both Vaiko and

Thirumavalavan are diehard devotees of Veluppillai Prabhakaran, the slain LTTE leader who ordered the execution of Rajiv Gandhi, the former Prime Minister. The trial court in India had declared Prabhakaran as an absconder and he was killed in an encounter with the sri Lankan defence forces in 2009.

The Vaiko-Thirumavalavan duo observe the death anniversary of Prabhakaran every year by lighting lamps and singing songs composed in praise of the LTTE chief. But the Congress suffers the humiliation silently because it has nowhere else to go.

challenge them to issue White Christians in Kerala to ignore diktat by Church heads and vote for BJP

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN KOCHI

Notwithstanding the stern warning issued by the spiritual heads of the Latin Catholic community under Archdiocese of Trivandrum and the Diocese of Changanachery that controls the Catholics, asking the laity not to vote for the BJP-led NDA in the Lok Sabha poll, the Christian Alliance for Social Action, an umbrella organization of all Christian sects came out with a declaration on Friday that the Christians in the State would vote for BJP and its allies.

"What the nation needs at this hour is a leader like Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He alone would be able to hold the country together and bring in the communal harmony about which other political leaders sing about," said the announcement issued by Kevin Peter, president, CASA on Friday.

Kevin Peter said the decision of CASA was taken in the backdrop of the unprecedented economic and social progresses registered by India last under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The massive investment made by the Centre in infrastructure development and various schemes launched in social sector has benefitted all deserving sections of the society irrespective of caste, creed and religion. Thanks to the



measures launched by the country's internal security system, all Indians can live and sleep peacefully. Not a single incident of communal violence have been reported from anywhere in the country though there were attempts by some sections to portray Manipur violence as genocide. Though there was violence and riots in Manipur which resulted many people losing their lives and property, the BJP or Sangh Parivar forces have no roe in them," said Kevin Peter who alleged that some vested interests were spreading falsehood

away with all benefits which are to be allocated to all minority communities. The Christians are left high and dry by both the Congress and the Communists and this has to end. We will be able to live in this country with dignity only under a leader like Narendra Modi who works on the slogan Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas," said the CASA declaration. A Jayasankar, author and political commentator, said that the Good Friday declarations made by the archbishops and bishops not to trust the BJP have to be taken inch of salt. made the announcement to impress u[pon other political parties that they were nit pitching for Modi or the BJP. But the tone of their speeches and body languages make it clear that they do not have any ill will towards the BJP or its Hindutva politics," said Jayasankar.

Though all Congress leaders with whom The Pioneer spoke to expressed their resentment over Vaiko, none was willing to come out in the open lest they annoy M K Stalin, the DMK chief who is the State's Thalapathy (Tamil for commander). Another alliance partner of

the MDMK candidate from Tiruchi Lok Sabha constituency.

If the Congress, which has a considerable presence in the constituency, silently pulls the rug out from Dorai's feet, it would lead to the Vaiko junior's New Delhi dreams getting shattered.

with the intenti ing the image of India.

The CASA has come down heavily on the Congress-led UDF and the CPI(M)-led LDF for playing the Muslim card in their efforts to appease one particular community. "Though the Muslims constitute 26 per cent of the population in the State, they walk

In a significant development,

Shivpal Yadav's son, Aditya

Yadav, is poised to enter

electoral politics, potentially succeeding his father as the

party's candidate for the

Baduan parliamentary seat.

This follows a resolution from

the Gunnaur Assembly

segment, indicating a shift

towards younger leadership

Party had already declared

Shivpal Singh Yadav, Chacha

candidate from Budaun, but

Aditya's entry further enhances the Yadav clan's

political influence in Uttar

Pradesh, with several family

members already holding

significant positions within

Akhilesh Yadav as

within the party.

of

the State.

From Page 1

Congress releases Nyay Patra...

From Page 1

"We will reserve one-half (50 per cent) of Central Government jobs for women starting in 2025. We will increase the wage under MGNREGA to Rs 400 per day. MGNREGA funds and workers may also be deployed to build public assets such as classrooms, libraries and primary health centres," the party said.

Besides, it said it will give legal guarantee to Minimum Support Prices (MSP) announced by the Government every year as recommended by the Swaminathan Commission.

It said it will launch an urban employment programme guaranteeing work for urban poor in reconstruction, renewal of urban infrastructure. The party said in the document that it would abolish the Agnipath programme and direct the Armed forces to resume normal recruitment to achieve full sanctioned strength.

Rahul said this Lok Sabha election is a fight between forces who are trying to "destroy" the Constitution and democracy in the country and those protecting them. He said it is a much closer contest than propagated by the media, and expressed confidence of winning the polls.

Tea to elephants...

From Page 1

The commission has also fixed Rs 10 for per chair, Rs 25 for per table, Rs 110 per stage sofa, Rs 60 for desert cooler, Rs 2- per tubelight, Rs 21 per meter ladi light, Rs 7360 for hiring public address system including loudspeaker with amplifier and microphone, cord, Rs two per sticker, Rs 1,107 per videographer, Rs 4,000 for drone per event and Rs 12,000 for bus, Rs 2,460 for hiring a Tata 407. In Ghaziabad, Vegetarian

thali for Rs 100, a samosa or a cup of tea for Rs 10, kachori for Rs 15, a sandwich for Rs 25, and a kilogram of jalebi for Rs 90 is fixed by the poll body. Similarly, a farmhouse will cost Rs 22,000 per day

while a marriage lawn will cost Rs 11,000. The administration has set a standard rate for each article of furniture such as chair (Rs 13 per piece), sofa (Rs 80), and bed (Rs 40). Rates have also been set for rose garland (Rs 120), marigold garland (Rs 12), and a bouquet (Rs

180). Those wishing to rope in the service of a DJ would have to ensure the cost does not exceed Rs 4,200 per day. The administration has also fixed the rate of items such as bucket (Rs 4), plastic glass (Rs 2), tray (Rs 7), and jug (Rs 4).

For advertisement, a steel frame hoarding will cost Rs 29.50 per square feet, a wooden frame hoarding Rs 12.29, and simple hoarding (3x2) Rs 100 per piece. Among electronic items, the rate of one drone camera per 15 minutes has been fixed at Rs 16,000.

Under the refreshment heads, rates of a total of 26 items have been fixed including non-vegetarian thali (Rs 180), puri sabzi (Rs 30 per plate), sandwich (Rs 25) and cashew barfi (Rs 700 per kg). In terms of vehicles, a Tata safari or a Honda City

(including fuel) will cost Rs 3,500 per day. While the rate for running advertisements in multiplex

cinema houses has been fixed at Rs 463 per screen per second per week, the rate of printing advertisements per square centimetre in various newspapers ranges from Rs

21.41 to Rs 291.85. According to EC, in most States, including Andhra Pradesh, the expenditure ceiling for a Lok Sabha candidate is set at Rs 95 lakh. However, in Arunachal Pradesh, Goa and Sikkim, the limit is slightly lower at Rs 75 lakh per candidate.

Transgender **Ambassadors** to boost...

From Page 1 She lauded the initiative's transformative impact, emphasising its potential to promote inclusivity and recognition of transgender rights. Gonda's Chief Development Officer M Arunmozhi echoed her sentiments, highlighting the initiative's broader mission of empowerment and engagement with marginalised groups.

Importantly, the transgender community's involvement in the voter awareness campaign remains non-partisan, underscoring their commitment to fairness and transparency. While amplifying civic engagement, they have made it clear that there was no question of endorsing any political parties, emphasising their dedication to a neutral and equitable electoral process. Gonda's Superintendent of Police Vineet Jaiswal was of the opinion that the sensitisation efforts will also help address the diverse challenges faced by the transgender community, including healthcare and access to Government

schemes. This collaborative endeavour represents a significant step towards fostering a more inclusive and participatory democracy in Gonda.

India denies targeted killings...

From Page 1

Targeted assassinations increased significantly in 2023, with sources in Pakistan's intelligence accusing India of involvement in the suspected deaths of about 15 people, most of whom were shot at close range by unknown gunmen, the report said. According to Pakistani

investigators, these deaths were orchestrated by Indian intelligence sleeper cells mostly operating out of the United Arab Emirates.

The report was supported by recent claims by Canada, alleging the involvement of the Indian Government in the killing of Khalistani terrorist, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was shot dead outside a gurdwara in Surrey on June 18, 2023.

BJP dubs Congress manifesto...

From Page 1

"The Congress did not fulfil any of its promises and not fulfil any of its promises made in its earlier manifestos for the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections," he charged. Describing the Opposition party's poll promises as "lies", the BJP leader said Congress president Malikariun Kharge president Mallikarjun Kharge has promised to roll out a scheme to provide Rs 1 lakh to every woman every year,

Quoting an unnamed Indian intelligence operative, the report also claimed India had inspiration from drawn intelligence agencies such as Israel's Mossad and Russia's KGB, which have been linked to extrajudicial killings on foreign soil. He also said the killing of the Saudi journalist and dissident Jamal Khashoggi, who was murdered in 2018 in the Saudi Embassy, had been directly cited by RAW officials.

Ties between India and Pakistan have been strained for the past many years owing to Pakistan sponsoring terrorism, allegedly providing shelters to India's declared terrorists and its illegal occupation of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

Returning... Frequent...

From Page 1

He stated that his "privacy and mental health was intruded upon" due to the media coverage and reportage during the period preceding his

appearance in court. The apex court, which in February declared defeated AAP-Congress alliance candidate Kuldeep Kumar as the new mayor of the Union Territory while setting aside the January 30 poll result, had said Masih had put marks on eight ballot papers to create a ground for treating them as invalidly cast.Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Masih, told a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud that he has tendered an apology which is completely unconditional.

whereas none of the Congress-ruled States implemented Rahul Gandhi's earlier promise of Rs 76,000 to people every year. "Which are the Congress-

ruled States where Rahul's promise of giving Rs 76,000 to people been has

implemented?" he asked. He alleged that the Congress, when in power, had not done justice with India's youth and to the country's economy, industry, military and security. "Those who did not do justice to India's cultural pride, social harmony and capacity have reappeared in disguise and are promising to do justice today," he charged.

Trivedi alleged that the Congress remained successful in "misleading" people in the past when the "media was not free, literacy rate was low and communication mediums were not so strong." "But time mediums has now changed. It's not possible to create a veil of lies," he said.

Trivedi said the BJP formed its Government for the first time at the Centre in 1998 when the country's literacy rate was about 50 per cent and the party formed its Government with a clear majority under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership when the country's literacy rate went up to about 60 per cent.

"Now when the country's literacy rate is going above 75 per cent, we are also moving forward to achieve the target of securing 400-plus seats (in this Lok Sabha election)," he said, adding that the Congress is on its way to go into "oblivion".

'Recently the social media chairperson said she was not aware who was handling her social media account. At least the party should know who was making their manifesto at least," Trivedi said. Showing the photo used in the environment section, Trivedi said the photo was from the favourite destination of Rahul --- Thailand.

capital 03



LG, Minister spar over lack of basic amenities in hospitals

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena and Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bhardwaj have yet again entered in a war of words, with the former blaming the AAP leader for 'utter lack of basic consumables' in Delhi Government hospital on Friday while the latter inviting the Centre appointed LG to visit the hospitals where majority of patients come from BJP ruled Uttar Pradesh and Harvana. Launching a scathing attack on the ruling AAP government, the LG said, "I am writing with reference to your U.O note number Min health/2024/1182 dated 4th April 2024 drawing attention to the utter lack of basic consumables in Dr Hedgewar Arogya Sansthan

and Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya."

Claiming that 'the much touted 'Delhi Model' of health service delivery lies in shambles', the Centre appointed LG said that he is appalled at the pathetic state of affairs prevailing in Delhi government hospitals. I am surprised that hospitals in the national capital run by the Delhi government are not equipped even with basic consumables like cotton," he said. He said that the minister is 'avoiding' his responsibility In the letter while accusing him of making it a recurrent practice to cast blame for deficiency solely on the officers. Hitting back at him, Bhardwaj

said, "I will be pleased to take you to the hospitals of Delhi Government where more than 50% patients are from neigh-

and Health Secretary are misleading the AAP ruled Delhi government by submitting that there is no scarcity of medicines & consumables. "However, instead of solving the issue, the Chief Secretary

and Health Secretary are misleading the Government by submitting that there is no scarcity of medicines & consumables. You have yourself agreed in your communication that there is scarcity of medicines & consumables in hospitals," Bhardwaj said.

bouring Uttar Pradesh." He

said that the Chief Secretary

Meanwhile, Śaxena claimed that over the last one decade, there has been a complete lack of oversight in the health sector. "Infrastructure is grossly inadequate in some cases, while it is nonfunctional in others,"



"I had written to the chief minexisting hospitals, addition of beds was badly delayed," LG ister way back in June last year, that apart from construction of claimed, while saying that only one new hospital at Bhardwaj disregarded his invi-Siraspur, which had huge time tation to discuss issues of puband cost overruns, no new lic importance related to hospitals have been established healthcare by giving 'frivolous

He said that instead of taking

the issues in healthcare head on, Bhardwaj consistently choses to 'shoot off misleading missives and indulge in media blame game', claiming that the High Court was so 'anguished with the miserable situation of the health infrastructure, that the division bench threatened the AAP leader in open court with imprisonment'.

Saxena reminded the Minister that 'health is a subject which is wholly transferred to the elected government under the constitutional scheme of things in GNCT of Delhi'. He said, "Ăs minister in charge, you should not shy away from taking decisions of portfolios assigned to you in the council of ministers. This grave situation should ideally have been discussed

way back in the council of ministers, which is the highest deliberative policy making body of the government."

In a bid to hit back at LG, the AAP leader shared multiple news reports where it is claimed that LG has initiated enquiries. He said, "It's nowhere mentioned that CM led NCCSA has ordered those enquiries."

While stating that the health conditions in the national capital are bad, Saxena remarked "High Court had to step in recently and constitute a committee of doctors to get a proper assessment of health facilities and a roadmap for invoking correctives." Further, he said that this is a sad reflection on the performance of the executive, if judicial action is required to step in.

He shared, "several public representatives, eminent doctors and the real 'aam aadmi' of Delhi, whom I meet every day, have shared innumerable experiences which highlight the virtual collapse of government health infrastructure."

Hitting out on AAP over announcements of augmentation of beds in hospitals and construction of new hospitals, he said, "Sadly, announcements which were made with much fanfare were not followed up with the zeal and urgency that

Delhi Minister in his response to LG asked several questions including "Why is LG not saying even a word about initiation of enquiry against the Chief Secretary Secretary?" and Health

was warranted."

EC issues show cause notice to Atishi

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Election Commission $T_{(EC)on}^{he \ Election}$ Friday issued a show-cause notice to Delhi minister and AAP leader Atishi, asking her to back with facts her statement that the BJP approached her to join the party. She was asked to reply by Monday. The BJP moved the commis-

sion earlier against her claim that the party reached out to her through someone close and asked her to join it.

The notice issued by the Election Commission read, ...You are a minister in the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi and leader of a national party. The electors tend to believe whatever is being said from public forum by their leaders and in that sense the statements made by them affect the campaign discourse."

The poll panel said it expects that there must be a "factual foundation" to the statements to her through email.



made by the AAP leader and Atishi said that news was since the veracity of the stateflashed at 11:15 AM on Friday ments made has been conthat she has been issued a tested, she must be able to notice by the EC whereas she back it with a factual basis. The got it through email at 11:45 AAP leader has been asked to AM. "It means the news of EC respond by Monday noon. notice was first planted to the "Now, therefore, you are heremedia by the BJP and then the by called upon to furnish your EC gave the notice. I want to para wise response to the matask the Election Commission ter...," the notice added. of the country - have you Reacting to the notice, Atishi become a subsidiary organialleged that the notice was sation of the BJP," she said. leaked to the media by the BJP The senior AAP leader said she will reply to the notice and remind the Election an hour before the EC sent it

Commission of the neutrality and non-partisanship expected of it in conducting free and fair elections in the country.

The Election Commission has been given a very big responsibility by the Constitution to save democracy in the country, she said. Atishi said the present three election commissioners had predecessors like T N Seshan, and added, "You are running an Election Commission that is looked up to by the whole world and praised for. No question is ever raised on the impartiality of elections in a country like India?

"I want to appeal the EC not to bow down before the BJP and its central government. The three election commissioners will be remembered by the country for 100 years for all the wrong reasons if they do not allow level-playing field and free and fair elections," she said.

The BJP lodged a complaint with the EC on March 4 and the poll body within hours issued the notice to her. Atishi claimed and asked why no notices were sent to the central agencies for their action against opposition parties and leaders during elections. Delhi BJP President Virendra

Sachdeva said Atishi has crossed all limits of political and administrative decorum by raising fingers on the independence and fairness of the election commission.

The political conduct and her repeated attacks on the constitutional bodies clearly shows that Atishi is a product of school of naxalism. Sachdeva said it would have been better if before raising finger towards Election Commission and reminding the commissioners N Seshan, Atishi about T could have asked Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to follow the precedent of Madan tions. Lal Khurana who resigned on being just named in a politically motivated case diary unlike Arvind Kejriwal who has been arrested in the huge liquor scam. cases," the counsel said.

ED opposes Kejriwal plea seeking more time with lawyer

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

more time with his lawyer, say-

ing special privileges cannot be

extended to him merely

Monday.

The ED opposed Kejriwal's prayer for five meetings with his lawyer every week, saying Enforcement Directorate on Friday it was was against the jail opposed the plea moved by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind manual. The central probe agency told Kejriwal before a city court for

the court that Kejriwal was already allowed to have two meetings with his lawyers instead of one which is the general practice.

because he wants to run the "When a person is in jail his stature outside is irrelevant government from inside the jail. The ED made its submissions before the special judge and he is treated equally (like for CBI and ED cases Kaveri other prisoners). They have already been allowed two Baweja, who reserved the meetings in a week. One of the order on Kejriwal's plea for consequences of JC (judicial Kejriwal's counsel told the custody) is that your exposure judge that multiple cases were to the outside world is limitpending against the politician ed and in accordance with law. and that one hour a week was 'Merely because someone insufficient for a person to chooses to run the governunderstand and give instrucment from the prison he cannot be treated as an exception and cannot be granted the privilege," the ED's counsel 'This is the most basic legal right that I am asking to meet my advocate. Sanjay Singh told the judge. He alleged that was granted three meetings legal interviews were being when he had only five or eight misused by Kejriwal for pur-

poses other than consulta-

tion. Kejriwal has issued some instructions on matters related to governance from behind bars. His Aam Aadmi Party has asserted he will run the government from jail.

If you are under valid judicial custody, certain rights are curtailed. You don't have absolute rights... They are curtailed in accordance with the jail man-uals," the ED said. The ED's submissions were opposed by

the defence counsel. "People are unequally treated and you have to balance them. Here is a person who has 30 cases going on against him.... Can I be equated with someone who has one case against them?" Kejriwal's counsel said.

Kejriwal had moved the application claiming that two meetings every week with his lawyer, as permitted by the court, was not sufficient since he was facing multiple cases in various states and needed more time for consultation.

Will meet you soon outside, Sisodia writes letter from Tihar STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

 A^{AP} leader Manish Sisodia has written a letter from Tihar Jail to the people of his Assembly constituency, comparing his plight with the atrocities committed by the Rritishers against fighters and asserting his commitment to education. The former Deputy Chief Minister, who has been arrested in connection with the Delhi excise policy scam case, also expressed hope that he will be out of jail soon. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) shared the letter, written in Hindi, on X. "Will meet you soon outside. The British rulers also had arrogance of power and they sent people to jail in false cases," he said and added that Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela, who spent many years in jail, were his inspiration. Sisodia's bail hearing is scheduled in a Delhi court on Saturday.



BJP leadership conspired to put Kejriwal behind bars: Sanjay

AP MP Sanjay Singh on Friday said the senior lead-ership of the BJP hatched a conspiracy to put Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal behind bars in the excise policy case. Addressing a Press conference two days after coming out of jail, Singh accused urising Ragha : DJP 01 L Magunta, who is an accusedturned-approver in the Delhi excise policy case, into giving a false statement against Kejriwal



Sanjay violating bail conditions, claims BJP STAFF REPORTER Arvind Kejriwal and former

said.

The BJP on Friday accused remain in jail, Bhatia said.

NFW DFI HI

deputy CM Manish Sisodia, the two party leaders who Singh has been making factu

ally incorrect statements to

mislead people, the BJP leader

In the letter to people of his

assembly constituency Patparganj in east Delhi, Sisodia, said a struggle for good education and schools is underway like people fought for freedom of the country. "Education revolution Zindabad. Love you all," Sisodia, who also served as education minister in the Kejriwal government before his arrest, said in the letter. Sisodia said his love for the peo-

strength. Despite the dictator ship of the British rulers the dream of freedom was realised. Similarly, every child will get a good education one day, Sisodia said. Good education is nec-

essary for a developed country, he added. Reacting to the letter, Delhi BJP Secretary Harish Khurana and Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor have said that Manish Sisodia's letter from the jail ple of his constituency has coming after a long time seems

increased while being incarto be an effort to prove his politcerated and that they were his ical existence.

The Delhi chief minister was arrested on March 21 in connection with the excise policylinked money laundering case. Singh, who was also arrested in connection with the case, said action was taken against Raghav Magunta's father --YSR Congress Party Lok Sabha MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy -- on September 16, 2022.

"He was pressurised into giving a false statement against Keiriwal but when he refused. his son Raghav Reddy was arrested. After continuous

The court asked the member

secretary of Delhi State Legal

questioning, Raghav Reddy

changed his statement against Kejriwal and became a part of a larger conspiracy," Singh alleged. The Rajya Sabha MP is responsible for the liquor said there is a person Magunta scam and the senior leadership Reddy, who gave three stateof the party is involved in ments, and his son Raghav this," he charged. No immedi-Magunta gave seven stateate reactions from either the ments. The father and the son BJP or the Reddys were availgave 10 statements (to ED). able. When ED asked him (Magunta Singh further said Kejriwal is Reddy) on September 16, 2022

an honest leader and wants to did he meet Arvind Kejriwal. provide the best healthcare and education to the people of He said he met Arvind Kejriwal regarding the land for a chari-Delhi. "Kejriwal has led a life of table trust. After that his son honesty... He aims to provide Raghav Magunta is arrested good education to the children and he is put in jail for five and good health facilities to the months and then he (Magunta people of Delhi," Singh said.

Sanjay Singh of violating his bail condition that he will not speak about the Delhi excise scam case in which he was arrested, and asserted that his action will have serious consequences.

BJP national spokesperson and senior advocate Gaurav Bhatia told a press conference that Singh's lawyer had given an undertaking in the Supreme Court that he will not speak about the case but he has been referring to the matter in his interaction with the media and has been claiming that no scam has happened.

The AAP MP is also giving "clean chit" to other accused, including Delhi Chief Minister

"It will have consequences and they will be very serious," he said, accusing him of "contempt" of the apex court. Singh has alleged that witnesses were made to make statements against the AAP leaders under coercion, he said, noting that many of these statements have been made before a magistrate under Section 164 of the CrPC. There can't be any coercion in statements made before a magistrate, Bhatia added. It is in the character of the AAP to violate constitutional provi-

sions and commit contempt of courts, he alleged.

HC directs inspection of coaching centres in Mukherjee Nagar

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Triday directed inspection of the coaching centres operating in the Mukherjee Nagar area by a team of lawyers and the fire services here while seeking a report with respect to their status and safety.

A bench headed by Justice Yashwant Varma also asked the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) to file a status report stating the total number of coaching centres in the locality.

The court's order came on a batch of cases concerning the operation of coaching centres in the area, including a case registered by it on its own after taking suo motu cognisance of a fire that broke out at a coaching centre there in June 2023. During the hearing, the counsel for MCD informed the court that six coaching centres have been sealed on account of being non-compliant with the applicable regulations and action would be taken against other defaulters as well



Dudeia, ordered.

said

amicus curiae Gautam

compliance (with the applica-

ble regulations)," it further

The court was also informed that around 21 centres have closed down on their own and notice of sealing has been issued to over 20.

Amicus curiae advocate Gautam Narayan said that although some centres have closed their operation, new centres might have come up in their place.

"In view of the aforesaid, we call upon the MCD to submit a fresh status report setting out the total number of coaching centres which may be operat-

Services Authority to nominate five empanelled lawyers to assist Narayan in the exercise. "We further direct Delhi Fire Services to undertake an independent exercise of verification of the area in question and submit a report on non-confirming coaching centres that may be identified," the court said, while directing that the matter be listed for hearing after 3 weeks. The court said it would also hear on the same date a petition by the Coaching Federation of India assailing the inclusion of coaching cening in Mukherjee Nagar as on date," the bench, also comtres in the definition of "eduprising Justice Ravinder cational buildings", thus requiring them to employ certain We also additionally constispecific measures for fire safetute an independent team ty etc.

In February 2020, DDA modwhich would be headed by ified its Unified Building Bye Laws-2016 (UBBL-2016) Navaran and which would independently inspect the area including Coaching Centres in and submit a report on coachthe definition of 'Educational ing centres operating there Buildings'. and now many of them are in

Counsel for the federation said the coaching centres want the children to be safe but their inclusion as "educational insti-

tute" was arbitrary. The federation has earlier argued that under the UBBL educational institutes are required to have several features such as two staircases and a playground which may not be possible in an already existing residential building. Last year, the high court had

registered a case on its own by taking suo motu cognisance of a fire that broke out at a coaching centre in Mukherjee Nagar in June and saw students climbing down the building

using ropes. A preliminary inquiry sug-gested that the fire started from an electricity metre board in the five-storey building, the officials said.

According to the police, around 250 students were attending classes at the building — Bhandari House — at the time. The high court has earlier ruled that "fire safety is a must" and all coaching centres must either comply with their statutory requirements under the Delhi Master Plan, 2021 and other applicable regulations or face closure.

Man kills wife, minor daughter, commits suicide in Nihal Vihar

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Aly committed suicide after killing his wife and a four year old daughter in a building in outer Delhi's Nihal Vihar area on Friday. The three bodies were discovered by the accused's 22 year old son Kushal upon returning from work.

Deceased has been identified as Ajay who was found hanging from the ceiling fan, having blood over his body. The wife Teena, aged 38 years, was found with her daughter with blood over their bodies lying

The accused Ajay's body was first discovered by his son when he returned home after work on Friday morning and found the house locked in the Nihal Vihar area in outer Delhi. Upon checking from a window, he found his father hanging and informed the landlord, who then approached the police around daughter aged four years with blood over their bodies lying on the bed."

They were killed using some sharp weapon, the police said. The door of the room was found locked from inside. Crime team and the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team were called on the spot. Deceased worked as a halwai and his son Kushal, who discovered the bodies, worked as an electrician. The family 'When we checked further,

Deputy am, Commissioner of Police (outer) Jimmy Chiram said. The police officials reached the spot immediately.

DCP said, "It was found that a male person namely Ajay S/o Ram Chandra Age 42 Yrs was found hanging from ceiling fan, who was having blood over his body. A female namely Teena W/o Ajay Age 38 Yrs was found with her

lived on the ground floor of the building while the house owner lives on the first floor. Teena was found with her daughter Varsha with blood over their bodies lying on the bed. Prima facie, it seems that they were killed using some sharp weapon," said the DCP, adding that a case under section 302 Indian Penal Code (Punishment for murder) has been registered. The motive of the crime is not clear yet and further investigation is going on.

48-year-old man alleged-

on the bed.

9.30

Reddy) changes his statement. "A big conspiracy has taken place to put Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal behind bars. The BJP

nation 04



EC plans intervention in 266 constituencies to improve voter turnout

RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

In a move to increase voters' turnout for the Lok Sabha elections, the Election Commission (EC) has identified around 266 Parliamentary Constituencies including 215 in rural areas and 51 urban areas, which recorded low turnout in the previous elections , and is now planning targeted inter-vention. The Commission has held a meeting with municipal commissioners from major cities and select district elections to discuss the voters' apathy and how to motivate voters to cast their votes. Polling for the seven-phased Lok Sabha polls begins on April 19.

As per a data shared by the EC, at least 11 States/UTs namely Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, NCT of Maharashtra, Delhi Uttarakhand, Telangana, Gujarat, Punjab, Rajasthan,

J&K and Jharkhand had a voter turnout lower than the national average of 67.40% in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Out of the total 50 rural polling centres across 11 states identified with lower voter turnout than the national average in 2019, 40 polling centres (PCs) are from Uttar Pradesh (22 PCs) and Bihar (18PCs). In UP, 51-Phulpur PC recorded the low-est turnout of 48.7%, while in Bihar, 29-Nalanda PC recorded lowest turnout of 48.79%. "Of the 50 PCs with the lowest voter turnout in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, 17 were found to be in metropolitans or major cities reflecting an unfortunate trend of urban apathy. The same trend has been seen in the past few state assembly elections. In the Gujarat Assembly polls in 2022, Gandhidham assembly constituency in Kachchh district, which has

industrial establishments, recorded lowest polling percentage of 48.14 percent, a sharp decline of almost 6 percent than the last election in 2017, recording a new low". "Similarly, Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in Himachal Pradesh in 2022, the Shimla assembly constituency in Shimla District (State Capital) recorded the lowest polling percentage of 63.48 percentagainst the State Average Poll % of 75.78%. It has been observed that all rural assembly constituencies have voted more in percentage terms than urban assembly constituencies of Surat. The difference in lowest urban assembly constituency of Surat with highest rural assembly constituency is as much as 25%. Similarly, in the State Legislative Assembly Election of Karnataka 2023, AC Bommanahalli in Bangalore



(Bangalore South) recorded the lowest VTR of 47.5% as compared to State Average VTR of 73.84 percent," the Commission said.

The parliamentary constituencies in Bihar where voter turnout was lower than the national average in the last Lok Sabha polls include Patna Sahib (45.80 per cent), Nalanda

(48.79 per cent), Karakat (49.09 per cent), Nawada (49.73 per cent), Jahanabad (51.76 per cent) and Arrah (51.81 per cent). Aurangabad (53.76 per cent), Madhubani (53.82 per cent), Mahrajgang (53.82 per cent), Buxar (53.95), Sasaram (54.72 per cent), Siwan (54.73 per cent) and Munger (54.90 per cent) are also on the list.

In Delhi, voter turn out was recorded 62.78 percent in Chandni Chowk, 63.86 percent in North East Delhi, 61.70 percent in East Delhi, 56.91 percent in New Delhi, 58.97 percent in North West Delhi, 60.82 percent in West Delhi and 58.75 percent in South Delhi. Chennai North, Chennai South and Chennai Central were also recorded 64.26 percent; 57.07 percent and 58.98 percent voter turn out in the previous elections.

Addressing the participants, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar stressed that 'one size fits all' approach will not work and different strategies have to be worked out for different areas and segments.Kumar emphasised on a three-pronged strategy of providing facilitation at polling stations, such as queue management, sheltered parking in

congested areas; targeted outreach and communication; and involvement of critical stakeholders including RWAs, local icons and youth influencers to persuade people to come to polling stations on voting day. Kumar emphasised on a threepronged strategy of providing facilitation at polling stations, such as queue management, sheltered parking in congested areas; targeted outreach and communication; and involve-ment of critical stakeholders including RWAs, local icons and youth influencers to persuade people to come to polling stations on voting day. He told officials to prepare a booth-wise action plan for enhanced participation and behaviour change.

He asked the participants to prepare different strategies for urban and rural areas and plan interventions accordingly for

Congress promises Rajasthan

different target audiences Urban specific hurdles to increased voter turnout were identified and targeted city-specific interventions were planned. The officers were encouraged to develop tailored, region-specific outreach programs that resonate with the unique needs and demographics of their constituencies. The Commission recalled that nearly 29.7 crore eligible voters did not vote in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections "underscoring the scale of the problem which calls for proactive measures". In the last Lok Sabha elections, of the 50 seats with the lowest voter turnout, 17 were in metropolitans or major cities. It said recent elections across various states have highlighted trends of urban apathy towards the electoral process, warranting targeted interventions and collab-

orative endeavours.

ment medical college-cum-hospital in each district. "All

vacancies in medical and

paramedical posts in public

health institutions and all

vacancies in medical colleges

will be filled in three years,"

'No hospital or medical col

unless 75 per cent of the med-ical, paramedical and teaching

posts are filled," it said. The National Medical

Commission Act shall be

reviewed, and the anomalies

and deficiencies removed, the

the manifesto said.

Coast Guard rescues 27 stranded Bangladeshi fishermen

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a swift operation, Indian Coast Guard (ICG) rescued 27 Bangladeshi fishermen on Thursday stranded on their fishing boat at sea, officials said here on Friday. The rescued fishermen were later handed over the Bangladesh Coast Guard.

Giving details, they said at about 1130 am, Indian Coast Guard Ship Amogh during patrol at Indo-Bangladesh International Maritime Border Line (IMBL), sighted a Bangladeshi fishing boat (BFB) Sagar II, adrift inside Indian waters.

During investigation it was revealed that the boat had a steering gear breakdown for the last two days and had been adrift since then, which lead to the boat drifting inside Indian waters.

The Indian Coast Guard technical team tried to identify and rectify the defect, but it was observed that the rudder of the boat was completely damaged



plan of action.

BFB.

BCG

and could not be repaired at

sea. As the sea state and weather conditions were conducive, it was decided that the distressed boat will be towed to the Indo-Bangladesh IMBL and handed over to another Bangladeshi fishing boat operating across IMBL or to Bangladesh Coast Guard Ship, in accordance with

the

Kamaruzzaman arrived near the IMBL at about 6.45 pm and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ICGS Amogh handed over the Indian Coast Guard and 27 Bangladeshi fishermen alongwith their boat to BCG Bangladesh Coast Guard. In the Meantime Indian Coast ship Kamaruzzaman.



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DEI HI

Acourt here on Friday allowed the CBI to inter-rogate BRS leader K Kavitha, arrested in the Dehi excise policy-related money laun-daring cases in Tihor jail dering case, in Tihar jail, rais-ing the likelihood of her arrest in the scheduled offence of corruption.

Kavitha was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) Guard Regional Headquarters in a money laundering case at Kolkata established comlinked to the alleged excise munication with Bangladesh policy scam on March 15. She Coast Guard and informed is currently in judicial custody. them about the incident and Special Judge for ED and CBI cases Kaveri Baweja permitted Bangladesh Coast Guard Ship the agency to interrogate (BCGS) Kamaruzzaman was Kavitha. deployed by BCG for towing of

The order was passed on the plea filed by the Central Ship Bureau of Investigation (CBI) seeking the court's permission to interrogate Kavitha in judi-

cial custody. The CBI, in its application, sought the court's permission

model of cashless insurance

to "interrogate/quiz and record the statement" of Kavitha regarding WhatsApp chats recovered from coaccused Buchi Babu's phone and documents related to a land deal after which Rs 100 crore was allegedly paid to the Aam Aadmi Party in kick-

backs. Since Kavitha is already in judicial custody, the court's permission was required to question her in jail. Ŕavitha's advocate Nitesh Rana

said the application was neither served to the accused nor the information about the hearing given to the defence counsel. The order is passed without

the opportunity of hearing given to the accused," Rana said. Kavitha had urged the court on Thursday for enlarging her on interim bail on account of her 16-year-old son's exams for which he needed his mother's "moral and emotional sup-

port". The judge has the reserved order on her plea.

PNS 📕 NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday promised that if it comes to power, it will adopt the previous Ashok Gehlot Government's 'Rajasthan model' of cashless insurance of up to Rs 25 lakh for universal healthcare.

In its manifesto for the Lok Sabha polls, the Congress promised that healthcare will be universal and free in public health centres such as hospitals, clinics, primary health centres, mobile healthcare units, dispensaries and health camps. "Free healthcare will include examination, diagnostics, treatment, surgery, medicines, rehabilitation and palliative care," the party said. The party said if it comes to power, Primary Health Centres (PHC) will be upgraded according to Indian Public Health Standards, and diagnostics will be added to each PHC.

"We will encourage the introduction of health insurance schemes in the private sector

and public sector. The current universal healthcare programme will be redesigned for different sections of the people and will allow enlistment of private hospitals, non-prof-it health facilities and health centres under the schemes," the manifesto said.

lege shall be permitted to be opened or allowed to function The party promised maternity benefits to all women. "All employers shall mandatorily grant paid maternity leave for their employees. Budget allo-cation for Health will be increased step by step every year to achieve 4 per cent of total expenditure by 2028-29," the Congress said in the manifesto.

The Congress said it will double the hardship allowance of doctors serving in rural areas, and provide suitable residence facilities. "The contribution of the central government to the pay of frontline health workers (such as ASHA, Anganwadi, Mid-Day Meal cooks, etc.) will be doubled," it said.

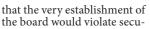
The party also promised that it would establish a governparty said. The Congress also promised that it would pass a law to make acts of violence against doctors and other health professionals performing their duties an offence. The manifesto, focusing on five "pillars of justice" and 25 guarantees under them, was released at the AICC headquarters in the presence of

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi.

SC stays HC order scrapping UP Board of Madarsa Education Act | NIA identifies key accused, co conspirator

PTI NEW DELHI

Tn a breather to about 17 lakh Imadarsa students, the Supreme Court on Friday stayed an order of the Court scrapped the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 calling it "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism. Observing that the issues raised in the petitions merit closer reflection, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud issued notices to the Centre, the Uttar Pradesh government and others on the pleas against the high court order. "The object and purpose of Madarsa board is regulatory in nature and the Allahabad HC is not prima facie correct that establishment of board will breach secularism," the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said. The top court said the high court "prima facie" misconstrued the provisions of the Madarsa Act, which does not provide for any religious instruction. "The finding of the high court



larism appears to conflate Madarsa education with the regulatory powers of the board.



Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for Uttar Pradesh, submitted that the state government defended

the question here," he added. The top court has posted the petitions for hearing in the second week of July. The high court had on March the Act but has accepted the 22 declared the Uttar Pradesh

in Bengaluru blast PNS NEW DELHI

Shareef, a resident of Khalsa, aiuru,

extended logistics support to

the main accused persons,

was arrested on March 26 and

was examined in police cus-

tody, the spokesperson said.

The agency declared rewards of

Rs 10 lakh on information

leading to the arrest of each of

the absconders on March 29.

and examining all acquain-

tances, including college and school friends, of the abscond-

ing and arrested accused per-

sons to gather evidence and

information in the case, the

It being a terror incident,

any information on the iden-

tity of the witnesses may put

them in risk in addition to

hampering investigation.

Also, unverified news items

hamper effective investiga-

tion in the case, the agency

spokesperson said.

The NIA has been summoning

that the students of Madarsas receive quality education, the remedy would not lie in striking down the Madarsa Act but in issuing suitable directions to ensure that the students are not deprived of quality education," the bench said. The apex court said the high court, while striking down

the provisions of the Madarsa Act, directed relocation of the students.

This would affect 17 lakh students....We are of the view that direction of relocation of students to other schools was not warranted," it said. "State shall file counter on or before June 30, 2024. SLP be listed for final disposal in 2nd week of June 2024. The impugned order and judgement of the high court dated March 22, 2024, shall remain stayed," the bench ordered.

At the outset, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the Managers Association Madaris, a body of Madarsas,

submitted that the Madarsa regime, which had existed for 120 years, has now been disrupted suddenly, impacting 17 lakh students and 10,000 teachers

Terming the reasons given by the high court as "astonishing", Singvhi said it did not examine the locus standi of the petitioner who challenged the Act.

Refuting the high court's contention that modern subjects were not taught in Madarsas, Singhvi submitted that Maths, Science, Hindi, English and other subjects were taught

there. He said it was wrong to assume that only religious education was imparted at Madarsas.

"We also have very famous Gurukuls in Haridwar and Rishikesh which are doing very good work. My father had a degree from there. Do you shut them down saying they are places of religious instruction?

"A regime is there uninterrupted for 120 years. 17 lakh students and 10,000 teachers cannot be absorbed with the academic year ending as it would create chaos," Singhvi struck down the law. 'When the state accepts the

judgement, the state cannot be burdened to bear the expenses of the legislation now. The State is competent to repeal the legislation as well. If the matter requires consideration, then I am not coming in the way," Nataraj said, adding that no Madarsa is being shut down by the government. Nataraj said the UP govern-

ment bears a financial burden of Rs 1,096 crore every year in aid to Madarasas.

Attorney General Venkataramani said the high court's judgment does not have the impact of paralysing the Madarsas and the only consequence would be that there won't be any State aid for them."In the facts presented before the High Court, I could not persuade myself to say that the High Court order was incorrect. We are on the entanglement of religion. Any entanglement of religion is

Act, 2004, "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism, and asked the state government to accommodate students in the formal

The high court had declared the law ultra vires on a writ petition filed by advocate Anshuman Singh Rathore. It had said the state has "no power to create a board for religious education or to establish a board for school education only for a particular religion and philosophy associated with it.

Act, 2004, is violative of the principle of secularism, which is a part of the basic structure of the Constitution of India," the high court had said. The petitioner had challenged the constitutionality of the UP Madarsa Board as well as objected to the management of Madarsas by the Minority Welfare Department instead of the education department.

¬he National Investigation The National Investigation of the Na fied Mussavir Hussain Shazib as the key accused who carried out the blast at a cafe in Bengaluru on March 1 and Abdul Matheen Taahaa as the co-conspirator.

As part of the efforts to locate and arrest the absconding accused persons, the NIA has conducted searches at 18 locations in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, an NIA spokesperson said.

In the Rameshwaram Cafe blast case, the NIA has identified the accused person who carried out the IED blast as Mussavir Hussain Shazib and the co-conspirator as Abdul Matheen Taahaa, both residents of Thirthahalli in Shivamogga district of Karnataka. Several people were injured in

said. The NIA sought the cooperthe blast at the cafe located at ITPL Road, Brookefield, ation of all for the arrest of the Bengaluru. Further, as part of absconding accused persons, the investigation, Muzammil the spokesperson said.

NCERT drops references to Babri Masjid, Gujarat riots, Manipur from textbooks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

¬he Education Ministry text L book and research arm, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has revised the class 11 and 12th Political Science books by dropping references to the demolition of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, the killing of Muslims in Gujarat riots and Hindutva and has tweaked the reference to Manipur's merger with India. While NCERT did not comment on the topics being dropped, officials said the tweaks are part of the routine updation and are not linked to the development of new books as per the New Curriculum Framework (NCF). The changes have been made in Political Science textbooks of

classes 11 and 12, besides others.

According to a document detailing the changes prepared by the curriculum drafting committee of the NCERT, the references to the Ram Janmabhoomi movement have been tweaked "as per latest development in politics". Chapter 8 on Secularism in class 11 textbook earlier said, "More than 1,000 persons, mostly Muslims, were massacred during the post Godhra riots in Gujarat in 2002."

It has been changed to "more than 1,000 persons were killed during the post Godhra riots in Guiarat in 2002". The NCERT's rationale behind the change is "in any riots people across communities suffer. It cannot be just one community". Pakistan-occupied On

Kashmir, the earlier textbook

area is under illegal occupation. Pakistan describes this area as Azad Pakistan". The changed version says, "However, it is the Indian territory which is under illegal occupation of Pakistan

and called as Pakistan occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJK)." The NCERT's rationale behind the alteration is that the "change that has been introduced is in complete concurrence with the latest position of the Govt of India in regard to Jammu and Kashmir".

stated "India claims that this

On Manipur, the earlier text-book stated, "The Government of India succeeded in pressurising the Maharaja into signing a Merger Agreement in September 1949, without consulting the popularly elected Legislative Assembly of Manipur. This caused a lot of anger and resentment in



Manipur, the repercussions of which are still being felt." The changed version says, "The Government of India succeeded in persuading the Maharaja into signing a Merger Agreement in September 1949."

In chapter 8, Recent Developments in Indian Politics, references to the "Ayodhya demolition" has been dropped.

"What is the legacy of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and the Ayodhya demolition for the nature of political mobilisation?" has been changed to "What is the legacy of the Ram Janmabhoomi

The earlier paragraph read: "Fourth, a number of events culminated in the demolition of the disputed structure at Ayodhya (known as Babri Masjid) in December 1992. This event symbolised and triggered various changes in the politics of the country and intensified debates about the nature of Indian nationalism and secularism. These developments are associated with the rise of the BJP and the politics of 'Hindutva."

This was changed to: "Fourth, the centuries old legal and political dispute over the Ram Janmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya started influencing the politics of India which gave birth to various political The changes. Ram Janmabhoomi Temple Movement, becoming the central issue, transformed the direction of the discourse on secularism and democracy. These changes culminated in the construction of the Ram Temple at Ayodhya following the decision of the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court (which was announced on November 9, 2019)." In chapter 5 titled "Democratic

Rights", a reference to the Gujarat riots was dropped in the caption to a news collage. The earlier version was - "Do you notice references to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in the

news collage on this Page? These references reflect the growing awareness of human rights and struggles for human dignity. Many cases of human rights violations in diverse fields, for instance, Gujarat riots, are being brought to the public notice from across India." This was changed to 'Many cases of human rights violations in diverse fields are being brought to the public notice from across India." The NCERT had last week communicated to CBSE schools that new textbooks have been developed for classes 3 and 6 while the textbooks for other classes as per NCF remain unchanged. However, the series of changes will now be introduced in the books which are yet to hit the market even as the new session has already begun.

movement?". In the same chapter, references to the Babri Masjid and the politics of Hindutva were dropped.

schooling system.

'We hold that the Madarsa

the pioneer SALLC BALLC Work done in 10 years just an appetiser, main course yet to come: Modi

BJP came to power, not only

has the project been approved

but work has also started on it, he added. "Whatever the BJP

"Unlike other parties, the BJP

NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the

says, it fulfils."

PTI JAIPUR

Highlighting the work done by his government in the last 10 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said it was just an "appetiser" and the main course is yet to come.

Addressing a rally in Churu, his second election rally in Rajasthan in three days, Modi also accused the Congress of insulting the Army and dividing people and said this represented the "identity" of the opposition party.

He further said that the country now is a "new India", which strikes within enemy territory - an apparent reference to counterstrikes in Pakistan after terror attacks in India. "Naya Bharat ghar mein ghus kar maarta hai?

'Today even the enemy knows that this is Modi, this is the new India," the prime minister added.

"No matter how much has happened, whatever has happened till now is a trailer. What Modi has done so far, it was just an appetiser and the main course is still to come." he said. "There is a lot to be done... There are a lot of dreams. We have to take the country far ahead?

Attacking the Congress, Modi said the country was in a bad condition when the party was in power.

"The economy had collapsed due to the Congress' big scams and loot. India's reputation in the world was declining... Even after so many decades of Independence, people were struggling for basic necessities of life," he added.

"People thought that nothing could change, everyone was immersed in despair. In this despair and frustration, in 2014, you gave a chance to the son of the poor to serve you. Disappointment and frustration cannot come close to Modi. I decided that the situation has to change," the prime minister said, adding that India is his family.

In a big crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic when the whole world thought India would be ruined, "we Indians made the country the fifth-largest economy in the world", he said.

"I could have also said that the whole world has faced a disaster, what should I do? Maybe the countrymen would have ac cepted it but Modi did not choose that path," the prime minister added. Today, "Modi's guarantee" is



how Modi's guarantees were fulfilled and at what speed. gave a guarantee that ۳I cylinders for the poor will be cheaper, it has been fulfilled. An inquiry will be conducted against the Congress paper leak industry, it has been completed," Modi said. The former Congress

government in the state had stalled the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project but after the



I, Aamir Javed, S/o. Javed Ahmed Naziri, R/o. F-3, 1st Floor, Abul Fazal Enclave Part-1, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025, declare that my father'sN name has been wrongly mentioned in my 10th class marksheet & certificate Registration No. D115/75937/0443 as Javed Ahmad instead of Javed Ahmed Naziri.

PD(345)A I, Laiba Javed, D/o. Javed Ahmed Naziri, R/o. H NO-FA-44, F/F, Thokar No-4, Abul Fazal Enclave Part-1, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025, declare that my father's name has been wrongly mentioned in my 10th class marksheet & certificate Registration No R113/09234/0324 as Javeed Ahmad instead of Javed Ahmed Naziri. PD(346)A

I, Sadiqa Javed, D/o. Javed Ahmed Naziri, R/o. F-3, 1st Floor, Abul Fazal Enclave Part-1, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025, declare that my father's name has been wrongly mentioned in

most of the promises made in the BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' in 2019 have been kept. He also attack the Congress corrupt," Modi alleged. for its stand on the Ayodhya Ram temple issue. "Just now journalists were saying that the Congress has

issued an advisory. They are so scared, they have told all Congress units to keep their mouths locked whenever Ayodhya Ram temple is discussed," the prime minister claimed. "Unko lagne laga hai ki Ram

ka naam liya toh pata nahi kab Ram-Ram ho jaye (They feel if they take the name of Ram, it can become 'Ram-Ram' for them)," Modi said. Targeting the opposition INDIA bloc, he said, "I say does not just issue 'Ghoshna Patra', it brings 'Sankalp Patra', 'Modi said, adding that remove corruption, they say save corruption."

"The people of the 'Ghamandiya Gathbandhan' are not holding rallies for the election but to save the

The ED alone has seized assets worth more than Rs 1 lakh crore in 10 years, the prime minister said and asked people whether such action against the corrupt should not be taken. "No matter how many lies the

opposition parties spread against me, I am not afraid," he said. "The Congress and the INDI Alliance have their own

interests. They have nothing to do with the welfare and respect of the poor, Dalit and underprivileged people. These are the same people who did not respect Baba Ambedkar," Modi said.

Congress treated poor as votebank: Haryana CM

PTI CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Friday alleged that the Congress, during their rule, used to treat the poor only as votebank whereas the Narendra Modi government initiated several schemes for their benefit and brought smiles on the faces of the poor. The Congress only exploited the poor. They gave the slogan of 'garibi hatao' but took no steps towards poverty

alleviation, he said. "The Congress only gave lollipop to the poor. They failed to do anything for their development, interests, despite being in told reporters here after a meeting with BJP national vice president Saudan Singh. "As against this, during the past 10 years, Modi has brought smiles on the faces of the poor," said Saini.

He also said more than 25 crore Indians have been pulled out from poverty during the Modi government's time. So many schemes have been started for the poor by the

BJP-led NDA government at the Centre which the Congress cannot digest. Their problem is why Modi is so concerned about the welfare of the poor, he said.

Saini targeted the opposition for their over their claims that the ruling BJP may change their power for a long time," Saini Lok Sabha candidates on a few

seats in Harvana and said they were speaking lies. The opposition is feeling jittery, he

REPORT

said. 'They have been unable to field their candidates and now they are coming out with this propaganda and speaking lies. They want to divert public attention," Saini said.

When BJP Hisar Lok Sabha candidate Ranjit Singh Chautala was asked there are speculations that the party could change him from the seat, he said some people deliberately spread such rumours.

Ranjit Chautala told reporters in Hisar on Thursday that as long as the elections last, such rumours will be spread by some people.

PUBLIC NOTICE	FORM NO. 5	FORM NO. 5
I, MOHINDER SAHNI, S/O VINOD SAHNI, HOUSE	DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL	DRT/ LKO
N0.260, GROUND FLOOR, BLOCK-C, POCKET-1,	600/1, University Road,	
SECTOR-11, ROHINI, DELHI-110085, I HAVE		DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
LOST MY ORIGINAL PROPERTY DOCUMENT,	Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226 007	600/1, University Road, Near
ALLOTMENT LETTER, POSSESSION LETTER,		Hanuman Setu Temple,
PHYSICAL POSSESSION SLIP (SITE	(Ares of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)	Lucknow- 226 007
POSSESSION) & BANK CHALLAN OF PROPERTY		(Area of Jurisdiction- Part of
NO. 260, GROUND FLOOR, BLOCK AND POCKET-	Summons for Filing &	Uttar Pradesh)
C-1, SECTOR-11, ROHINI, DELHI, DATED	Appearance by Publication	SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY
10/10/2023, We tried to trace the same a lot but	O.A. No. 1199/2023	& APPEARANCE BY
not succeed.	Date 11/03/2024	PUBLICATION
Complainant's Details: SO No: 430/2014,	[Summons to defendant under	O.A. No. 1059/2022 Summons to defendant under
Delhi Police P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi.	section 19(3) of the Recovery	Section 19(4), of the Recovery
LR No:1616160/2024, Date: 05/04/2024.	of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993	of Debts due to Banks and
PUBLIC NOTICE	read with Rules 12 and 13 of	Financial Institutions Act, 1993
Notice is hereby given on behalf of my client Smt	the Debts Recovery Tribunal	read with Rules 12 and 13 of
Notice is hereby given on behalf of my client Smt. Ramwati Devi W/o Late. Sh. Mahabir Singh R/o	(Procedure Rules, 1993]	the Debts Recovery Tribunal
229/28-F/1, Railway Colony, Mandawali Fazalpur,		(Procedure) Rules, 1993]
Delhi – 110092 also at 230/10, Gali No.3, Railway Colony, Mandawali Fazalpur, Delhi – 110092 for the	ICICI BANK LTD Applicant	O.A. No. 1059/2022
revocation of General Power of Attorney in respect of	Versus	ICICI BANK LTDApplicant
property bearing 229/28-F/1, Railway Colony, Mandawali Fazalpur, Delhi – 110092 admeasuring 100	VANDANA TRIPATHI & OTHERS	
Sq. Yds (herein after referred to as "the Property").	Defendants	Versus
My client is the owner of the Property. In the year 2009,	To,	Mr. Vijay Singh & Others
my Client age was of around 60 years and not keeping	Defendants :-	Defendants
good health, my Clients' elder son Sh. Krishan Pal under the pretext of looking after the Property (like	1. VANDANA TRIPATHI	То,
collection of rent from tenants, filing of various bills to	W/o GYANESHWAR MANI	Defendants :-
the concerned Govt. Dept., to deal with any kind of issues arises with the tenants or before the concerned	TRIPATHI (ADULT)	1) Mr. Vijay Singh, son of Shri
Govt. Dept. and for doing other things) in the Property	R/o E-246, 1st Floor, Sector-15,	Ram Dev Singh, Resident of
requested my Client to execute one General Power of	Noida-201301, (U.P.)	House No. 7/11, Sector- 2,
Attorney so that he can do the above mentioned things without any hindrance. Having faith upon his words, my	Also At-	Rajendra Nagar, Sahibabad,
Client executed General Power of Attorney and the	Flat No. 1202, 12th Floor, Tower-	Ghaziabad- 201 005 (U.P.).
same was registered as Registration No. 4,349 in additional book No.4, Vol No. 3,060 on pages 9 to 11	A6, Casa Greens-1, Plot No. Gh-	2) Mr. Naosad Ali, Resident of
dated 13/05/2009 before SR-VIII.	04a, Sector-16, Greater Noida,	House No. WZ-61, Khampur,
That after the death of my Clients' husband in the year	Noida-201307, (U.P.)	West Patel Nagar, Central Delhi-
2023, Sh. Krishan Pal started troubling my Client and	2. GYANESHWAR MANI	110 008. (GUARANTOR)
claiming himself as the absolute owner of the Property by virtue of the above mentioned documents. My Client	TRIPATHI	In the above noted application,
came to know about the said misrepresentation and	S/o AJIT KUMAR	you are require
wrongful registration of the above mentioned	(ADULT) R/o E-246, 1st Floor,	In the above noted application, you
documents in the last week of January, 2024 when for the first time she received the documents from Sh.	Sector-15, Noida-201301, (U.P.)	are required to file in Paper Book
Krishan Pal and showed the same to one of his known	Also At-	form in two sets along with
person who is aware about of english language as my Client is unable to read or write english. That,	Flat No. 1202, 12th Floor, Tower-	documents and affidavits (if any),
even the witnesses who appeared and dave their	A6, Casa Greens-1, Plot No. Gh-	personally or through your duly the
witnesses at the time of registration of above	04a, Sector-16, Greater Noida,	authorized agent or legal
mentioned documents were informed by Sh. Krishan Pal that he is getting the documents registered only for	Noida-201307, (U.P.)	practitioner in this Tribunal, after
the purpose of looking after the Property. My client is	In the above noted application, you	serving copy of the same on the
contemplating legal action against Sh. Krishan Pal for	are required to file in Paper Book	applicant or his counsel/duly
unscrupulously and fraudently got the above mention document registered and trying to take undue benefit	form in two sets along with	authorized agent after publication
by misleading the public.	documents and affidavits (if any),	of the summons, and thereafter to
That by way of this Public Notice, my Client is revoking	personally or through your duly the	appear before the Tribunal on
the General Power of Attorney dated 13/05/2009 executed in favour of Sh. Krishan Pal. My client came to	authorized agent or legal	11/07/2024 at 10:30 A.M. failing
know from her reliable resources that Sh. Krishan Pal is	practitioner in this Tribunal, after	which the application shall be
about to sell the Property. There for any person(s) having any dealing with Sh. Krishan Ballia relation to	serving copy of the same on the	heard and decide in your absence.
having any dealing with Sh. Krishan Pal in relation to the Property is advised to be cautious about any such	applicant or his counsel/duly	Registrar
misleading representation as Sh. Krishan Pal has no	authorized agent after publication	Debts Recovery Tribunal
right to do so. My client, therefore, further inform the public at large is hereby cautioned not to deal with Sh.	of the summons, and thereafter to	Lucknow
Krishan Pal for the Property and any dealing with the	appear before the Tribunal on	
Property will not be binding on my client, whatsoever	25/09/2024 at 10.30 A.M. failing	
maybe the cause or reason, if anyone chooses to deal with the Property it shall be at his/her on risk and Peril	which the application shall be	

which the application shall be

heard and decide in your absence

Kumar

PUBLICATION DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL

Registra Debts Recovery Tribuna Lucknow (Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh) 600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, ucknow - 226 007 DRC NO. 100/2023 FOR PUBLICATION NOTICE UNDER RULE 2 OF FORM NO. 1 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH SECTION 29 OF THE 600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, RECOVERY OF DEBT DUE TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993 Lucknow- 226 007 (Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh) ICICI BANK LTD. DRC NO. 671 OF 2020 Vs MR. RAKESH RANJAN Notice under Rule-2 of the IInd Schedule of Income Tax Act 1961, read with Section 29 & OTHERS 1. Mr. Rakesh Ranjan of The Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 B 7, 1st Floor, Sector-50, Mayfield Garden, Near Baani Square, Gurgaon- 122 001. ICICI BANK LTD. V/S Also At : Flat No.706, 4th Floor, Durva SWAPNA ROY & ORS. 1. Swapna Roy, W/o. Sri Harish Greens, Plot No. Gh 08a Sector Chi-V, Greater Noida-201307. R/o. Flat No. 1501, Emarald Tower, 2. Mrs. Tulika Ranjan Arihant Apartment, Crossing Republic, Ghaziabad- 201 016 B 7, 1st Floor, Sector-50. Mayfield Garden, Near Baani Square Gurgaon- 122 001. 2. Harish Kumar, S/o. Sri Raiinder Kumar Also At : R/o. Flat No.1501, Emarald Tower Flat No.706, 4th Floor, Durva Arihant Apartment, Crossing Republic, Ghaziabad- 201 016 Greens, Plot No. Gh 08A Sector Chi-V, Greater Noida- 201 307. 3. M/s. Primrose Infratech Pvt. Ltd. 3. M/s Kamrup Housing Project Registered office at Flat No. 251-B, 1st Floor, LIG Flats, Pocket 13, Jasola, New Private Limited L-1/7, Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi-110017. ...Defendant ...Defendants Delhi- 110 025 This is to notify that a sum of Rs. Also at Corporate Office 87,77,189/- (Rupees Eighty H-56, Sector 63, Noida (UP) Through its director Seven Lacs Seventy Seven Thousand One Hundred and A. This is to notify a sum of Rs. 29,57,907 (Rupees Twenty Nine Lac Fifty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Seven Only) **Eighty Nine Only)** together with pendentelite and future interest @ 9.00% per annum from the date of filling. 30-08-2019 original together with pendent lite and future interest @ 12% per annum application till full realization is made has become due from you as simple from the date of filling of the per the Certificate bearing No. 100/2023 dated 02-06-2022 in original application i.e. **31.12.2018** till further realization become due Original Application No. 1302/2019 passed against you by from you as per Certificate Bearing No. 671 of 2020 dated-27/01/2020 in O.A. No. 1683 of the D.R.T. Lucknow. 2. You are hereby directed to pay the sum within 15 days of the receipt of this Notice, failing which 2018 passed against you by Hon'ble DRT, Lucknow. B. You are hereby directed to pay the sum within 15 days of receipt of this notice, failing which the the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of recovery shall be made in Debts Due to Bank and Financial accordance with the Recovery o Debts and Bankruptcy Act 1993. Institution Act, 1993. 3. You are hereby ordered to C. You are hereby ordered that leclare on affidavit the particulars of assets on or before **02.07.2024** declare on Affidavit the particulars of asset on or Before 22/5/2024 4. You are hereby ordered to You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on ppear before the undersigned on 22/05/2024. at 10:30 A.M. 2.07.2024 at 11 A.M. In addition to the sum aforesaid . In addition to the sum aforesaid you will also be liable to pay the ou will also be liable to pay the following Costs. Details of costs:polication fee Rs. 32.000/ Application fee Rs. 93,000/-Advocate fees Rs. NIL Publication charges Rs. NIL Advocate fees Rs. Publication charges Rs. liscellaneous Expenses Rs. NIL Rs. 32,000/ Miscellaneous Expenses Rs liven under my hand and seal Given under my hand and seal at t Lucknow this 15th day o farch, 2024. Lucknow this 29th day of Feb. 2024 Recovery Officer- II Debts Recovery Tribunal Lucknow Registrar Officer- I Debts Recovery Tribunal Lucknow



PICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh. Delhi- 110005



applied to the Company for issue of duplicate Certificate(s) for the said shares Any person who has a claim in respect of the said shares should lodge such claim with the Company at its Registered Office of ATLAS COPCO LIMITED, at Svea Nagar Dapodi, Pune , Maharashtra-411012. within one month from this date else the company will proceed to issue duplicate Certificate(s).

Date: 6th April 202

Whiteland Corporation Private Limited Unit no. 1001, 10th Floor, Worldmark Tower, 1, Maidawas Rd, Sector 65, Gurugram, 122001, Haryar 0124-6690100 <u>PUBLIC NOTICE</u> Whereas, Whiteland Corporation Private Limited is the process of undertaking of development of a Gro. Housing Colony in Sector 76 Gurugram over an ar-admeasuring 14.2759 acres in the revenue estate Kherki Dhuaia Gurugram in accordance with the provisi of License No. 92 of 2022, and License No. 17 0.9 of 072022, atel 12.07.2022, uncel No. 91 of 2022 dated 12.07.2022, and License No. No. 91 of 2022 dated 12.07.2022, and License No. 17. of 2023 dated 52.68.2023, granted by Director General. Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh. And whereas, several individuals have made bookings entered into purchase agreement for allotment of plot property in the said colony (hereinafter referred as allottees). nd whereas, the layout plan earlier approved at the ti f grant of license for the said colony is now propos

of grant of license for the satu work y a term to be revised. And whereas the office of Director General, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigan has required seeking o objecton against the revision of layout plana as a pre-conditor for allowing such revision in the layout plan. Accordingly, vide this public notice objections are hereb invited from any of the allotes in the said colony on th proposed revision of the layout plan of the said colony. copy of the carlier approved layout plan bearing Merchanobast constructions and the allotest and bear to 12,023 & th

lopy of the earlier approved layout plan bearing wern ayout plan now proposed to be revised bearing Mem No. ZP-1607-II/PA(DK)/2024/11345 dated 03-04-2024 i available for perusal on our websile www.wicorp.com, The said layout plan can also be perused at the office of undersigned at Whiteland, The Aspen, Village Kherki Dhuala, Sector 76, Gurugram, Haryana as well as in the office of Senior Town Planner Sector 14 Gurugram Haryana. Any allotee having any objection on revised layout plan, may file his objection in the office of Senior Town Planner Sector 14 Gurugram Haryana within 30 days of the publication of this notice, tailing which it shall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed revision in the layout plan. Directors ailable for perusal on our website www.wlcorp.cor

Place: Gurugram Date: 06.04.2024

Whiteland Corporation Private Limite

16.04.2024 Registered office Unit no. 1001, 10th Floor, Worldmark Tower,

aidawas Rd, Sector 65, Gurugram, 122001, Haryana

NOTICE

CIN: U70109HR2021PTC09290

PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLIC NOTICE I Anii Kumar Bhatia and Archana Bhatia living And Running Business at 17 SOUTH PATEL NAGAR NEW DELHI 110008 From Last About 33 Years The Landload Shri Kewai Krishan Chopra Expired On 05.05.2007 At America Wilhout Any Legal Heirs In India I Am Filing An Adverse Possession Suit Before Appropriate Court To Claim Ownership Of My Possession In Suit Premises As Mentioned Above. If Any Body Has Any Sort Of Objection To II Heishe Or Any Other May Contact The Undersigned Persons Wilhin 1 Month From The Date Of Advertisement Appears In The News Paper. ngh Bhatia & (2) Mr. Tirath Singh Bhatia are the owner o

Appears In The News Pape Anil Kumar Bhati S/o Shri Chetan Ram Bhatia Bhatia W/o Anil Kumar Bhatia

17 SOUTH PATEL NAGAR NEW DELHI 110008 OFFICE OF THE DIGP. GROUP CENTRE, C.R.P.F., DADRI ROAD,

GREATER NOIDA-201306 Dated, the 04/04/2024

It is informed that requirement of Lady Headmistress, Teacher & Aaya for Nursery and KG for the academic Session 2024-25 at Montessori School of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Group Center, CRPF, Dadri Road, Sutlana, Greater Noida-201306 purely on temporary and contractual basis (from 01/07/2024 to 31/05/2025). Applications are invited from eligible Indian

SI No.	Post	Number of Post	Honorarium per month	Age	Education Qualification
01	Headmistress	01	15,000/-	30-40	Graduation with at least 50% Marks ar B.Ed or Two year Diploma in Elementa Education or B.T.C or equivalent and fiv years teaching experience in Bas School.
02	Teacher	04	12,500/-	21-40	Graduation with at least 50% Marks ar B.Ed or Two year Diploma in Elementa Education or B.T.C or equivalent.
03	Aaya	04	10,000/- (2 post for Creche)	18-30	Passed class V or equivale examination with Hindi.

Note:- The number of above mentioned posts can be reduced and increased at any time without

informing.
02. <u>Application form/mode of application:-</u> (A) Application form has to be submitted in the following format (1) Name/paste photo of applicant (2) Name of the father/nusband of the applicant (3) The post for which the application is made (4) Applicant's permanent address (5) Applicant's current correspondence address and mobile number (6) Applicant's citizenship (7) Applicant's date of birth (8) Applicant's easte (9) Applicant's sectored in (10) Applicant's class runsery educational experience (11) Any other information (12) Signature of the applicant (B) Method of applying:-Application of interested candidates, for the appointment to the said posts can till date 23/04/2024 (11) 1500 hts; to Office of Denvity Inspector General of Police, Ground Leordre, Central Beserve Police Application of interested candidates, for the appointment of the sald posts can till date 29/04/2024 (11) 1600 hrs. to Office of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Group Centre, Central Reserve Police Force, Dadri Road, Greater Noida-201306 and Candidates qualifying to the post will be called appear for the interview on **05/05/2024** at 10:00 hrs at the Office of Deputy Inspector General of Police, Group Centre, CRFP, Dadri, Greater Noida-201306. Note:- Detailed advertisement can be on the website of CRPF <u>www.crpf.gov.in.</u>

Sd/- (04/04/2024) with the Property, it shall be at h Deputy Inspector General of Police, dd: P-14/B,L.G.F.,JANGPURA EXTENSION NEW DELHI - 11001 Group Centre, CRPF, Greater Noida

being discussed in the country, he said, adding that Rajasthan is an example of

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client Shri Shyampal S/o Shri swami R/o A-33, NIHFW Campus New Delhi, Has ended/sever all Munrika, relationship with his son namely Rahul his wife Neha and their children and also disown/debarred/ousted them from all moveable and immoveable properties due to their misbehavior and dishonest intention, if any one deals with them in any manner whatsoever my client and his family members shall not be responsible for any illegal activities. Sandeep Tyagi (Advocate), Ch.No,C-118. C.L. Joseph Block, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi-54

16/27, F, Flor, Near Gurudwara Geeta Colony Delhi-110031 declare that my name is mentioned in my sevral doucment as Sushila Kumari or Susheela Kumari my correct name is Susheela Mehta Hence Susheela Mehta and Sushila Kumari or Susheela Kumari are the same and one person. PD(349)C

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, रायगढ़ (छ.ग.) Phone No.:- 07762-222911, Fax No.:07762-222923 Email :- nraigarh@ymail.com, website-www.nagarnigamraigarh.com कमांक 56/जल वि./न.पा.नि./2024 रायगढ. दिनांक 04/04/2024

-: ई-निविदा आमंत्रण संशोधन सूचना :-

कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम रायगढ़ में सि.नि. क्र. 154031, 154035, 154039, 154041 निविदा जारी की गई है जिसकी अंतिम तिथि 03-04-2024 है को संशोधित करते हुए दिनांक 18-04-2024 तक वृद्धि की जाती है एवं सि.नि. क्र. 154215 निविदा जारी की गई है जिसकी अंतिम तिथि 09-04-2024 है को संशोधित करते हुए दिनांक 18-04-2024 तक वृद्धि की जाती है। शेष नियम एवं शर्ते यथावत रहेगी हस्ता∕- कार्यपालन अभियंता

नगर पालिक निगम

रायगढ़ (छ.ग.)

NORTHERN RAILWAY **OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE** The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender fo the following work 1 Name of work : Annual maintenance of water supply complex rapid sand filter cleaning of onward U/G tank & supply of chlorine in the S/o SSE/W/DLI unde ADEN/DLL 2 Approx. cost of work : Rs. 92,63,940.36/- (Rupees Ninety Two Lakh Sixty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Forty and Thirty Six paise only) 3 Earnest Money to be deposited : Rs. 1.85,300/- (One Lakh Eighty Five

Thousand Three Hundred Rupees) 4 Cost of tender document : Rs. 0.00/-

5 Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender : 30.04.2024 at 15:00 Hrs

6 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen : www.ireps.gov.in

7 Allocation : 04-400-32

The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender syste For all terms and conditions please refer tender document.

No manual offers are acceptable

- Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net
- banking or payment gateway only.
 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT/04/2024-25/W-3 Dated:- 05.04.2024
 1012/24
 No.: 128-W/280 SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

my 10th class marksheet & Registration certificate No.U615/09234/0064 as Javed Ahmed instead of Javed Ahmed Naziri.

PD(347)A I, Susheela Mehta W/o. Shri Om Prakash Mehta R/o.

NOTICE is hereby given that the following shares Standing in the name(s) of MR. DEVENDRA KUMAR MITTAL & MRS. NDIRA MITTAL has/have been lost of nislaid and the undersigned has/have applied to the Companies for issue of luplicate Certificate(s) for the following hares 147 Equity Shares of Glaxosmithkline Pharmaceuticals Limited, Folio No. 0290013, Dist. No.-66151153-66151299, Cert. No.-1122778 (**Reg.** Office-GSK House, Dr. Annie Besar Road, Worli, Mumbai, Maharashtra

400030) 80 Equity Shares of Hexaware Technologies Limited, Folio No.-01164023, Dist. No.-288905100-288905179, Cert. No.-52497, (Reg. Office-152, Millennium Business Park,

Sector -III, 'A' Block, TTC Industrial Area, New Mumbai, Maharashtra-400710).

33 Equity Shares of Aptech Limited Folio No.-01164023, Dist. No.-140757 -140780, Cert. No.-4401 (**Reg. Office**-Aptech House, A-65, M I D C MAROL,

Mumbai, Maharashtra-400093). ny person who has a claim in respect of the aid shares should lodge such claim with the Companies at their Registered Office's ithin one month from this date else the ompany will proceed to issue duplicate Certificate(s)

Date: April 06, 2024 Place: Gurgaon Deepak Kumar (Legal Heir Date 6th April 2024

ER CUM E-AUCTION FOR 3

[See proviso to rule 8(6)] Notice for sale of immovable assets

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis as per the brief particulars given hereunder

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction	
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)	
1.	Vibhore Kumar (Borrower), Anuradha Jasuja (Co-Borrower) Lan No. LBGUR00004983636	Unit No. G-68, Ground Floor, Spaze Palazo Sector 69, Village Fazilpur Jharsa, Haryana Gurgaon- 122001 Admeasuring an Area of 394 Sq. Fts.	Rs. 1,00,51,831/- as on March 21, 2024	Rs. 50,00,000/- Rs. 5,00,000/-	April 20, 2024 From 12:00 Noon to 02:00 PM	May 03, 2024, From 12:00 Noon onwards	

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-https://disposalhub.com) The Mortgagors/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till May 02, 2024 before 05:00 P.M failing which, this/these secured asset/s will be sold as per schedule.

. The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd FloorShal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh. Delhi- 110005 on or before May 02, 2024 before 05:00 P.M and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before May 02,2024 before 05:00 P.M along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd FloorShal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh. Delhi-110005 on or before May 02, 2024 before 05:00 P.M. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/ Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission o tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited On 8126013708/8584874809

Please note that Marketing agencies 1.M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augeo Asset Managemen Pvt Ltd 3. Hecta Proptech Pvt Ltd have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property. The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

AICICI Bank Branch Office: :ICICI Bank Ltd 4/10, Mythree Tower, Bommanhali Hosur Main road Bangalore -560068.

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice

					Debts and B	
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outsta- nding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date	C. You are declare on a of assets on	
	Court Colony Near Hanuman Temple Vanasthalipuram Delhi- 500006/	Property Address : Flat No:201, 2nd Floor, Plot No: 53, Sri Lakshmi Apartment, Boduppal Village & G.P. Ghatkesar Mandal, R R District, Hyderabad, Kukatpally-500072. Schedule A of Property All The Plot No.53, In Survey No.212, Adseasuring 267 Sq. Yds., or 223 Sq.mtrs., Situated At Boduppal Village And Grampanchayat, Ghatkesar Mandal, Ranga Reddy District And Is Bounded By: North : Plot No.61. South : 30. Wide Road, East : Plot No.52, West : Plot No.54 Schedule "B" Property All That Semi-Finished Residential Flat No.201, In Second Floors of "sri Lakshmi Apartment" Along With Plinth Area of 574 Sqft., Including Common Area and Scooter Parking, Together With Undivided Share of Land Adseasuring 21 Sq. Yds. Ar 17.55 &q.ntrs Out of Total Adarasuring 267 Sq.yds., Constructed Plot No.33, In Survey No.212, Situated At Boduppal Village And Gram Panchayat, Ghatkewar Handal, Ranga Reddy District And Bounded As Follows: North ; Corridor, South : Open to Sky, East ; Open to Sky, West : Flat No.202.	30.01.2024 Rs. 7,42,380.00/-	04/11/ 2023	D. You are appear befoi 02.07.2024 a E. In addition you will also following: Application 1 Advocate fe Publication of Miscellaneo Total Given unde	
The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security InterestAct, 2002.						
			Authorized (ICICI Bank L		Debt	

NEW DELHI | SATURDAY | APRIL 6, 2024

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

At crossroads

Desertions continue to plague Congress even as it releases its election manifesto

he just-released Congress manifesto heralds the vision for a new era of governance, promising radical changes to the existing political landscape. Led by party president Mallikarjun Kharge, along with former chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul, the manifesto emphasises the need for a paradigm shift in governance, particularly in light of the BJP's decade-long rule. Much to its consternation, however, its rank and file are making a beeline to the camp of its arch-rival, the BJP. Undeterred by the desertions, the Congress put up quite a show to launch its manifesto, where the key highlights are the party's commitment to conducting a nationwide socio-economic and caste census. This move, aimed at gaining a comprehensive understanding of India's diverse population, is intended to make policies tailored to address the needs of every segment of society. Additionally, the manifesto guarantees a constitutional amendment to raise the cap on reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs to 50 per cent, signalling a commitment to social



justice and inclusivity. This is perhaps its best shot as the Congress and its allies can harness disgruntled backward votes and corner the BJP on caste census. The manifesto promises to adopt the Rajasthan model of cashless insurance, providing coverage of up to ?25 lakh for universal healthcare. It also pledges to address the issue of unemployment by filling nearly 30 lakh vacancies in sanctioned posts within the Union Government. The party vows to provide a legal guarantee for Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for agricultural produce, as recommended by the Swaminathan Commission, underlining its commitment to farmers' welfare.

The biggest challenge right now for the 'grand old party' is to keep its flock together and deal with internal dissent. The relentless wave of defections threatens to undermine its unity and electoral prospects. As if to stall this trend, the name of Robert Vadra for the Amethi constituency is doing the rounds. The Congress has proposed amendments to the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, making defection an automatic disqualification from membership in an Assembly or Parliament. Despite these efforts, the party finds itself embroiled in a battle to retain its members, with several prominent leaders defecting to rival parties in recent weeks. The timing of these desertions underscores the internal turmoil and challenges facing Congress. Attacking the BJP in its manifesto, the Congress underscores its commitment to protecting personal freedom, promising not to interfere with individual choices regarding food, dress, love, marriage, travel and residency within India. This assertion of personal liberties is aimed at resonating with a diverse electorate and emphasising the party's commitment to democratic values. As the Congress prepares to present its manifesto to the electorate, it also faces the internal struggle to maintain cohesion and unity within its ranks. The road ahead is laden with obstacles, yet the party seems resolute in its commitment to forge a fresh path.



Afghanistan under Taliban rule

HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Continuous obliteration of women's rights goes hand in hand with export of terrorism

ot content with robbing Afghan women of all their rights, the Taliban are pressing forward with measures that would victimise and humiliate them further. The latest indication of this is provided by a verbal outburst by its chief, Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada, who said, towards the end of March, 2024, in a voice message carried by Afghanistan's state television, "You say it is a vio-lation of women's human rights" but "we will soon implement the punishment for adultery. We will flog women in public. We will stone them to death." The report (datelined March 26, 2024) by Akhtar Makoii in The Telegraph of the United Kingdom, which carries the above quote, further cites Akhundzada, who was addressing Western officials, as saying, "These are all against your democracy but we will con-tinue doing it. We both say we defend human rights-we do it as God's representative and you as the devil's."

What Akhundzada said deserves attention for two reasons. It indicates that fresh barbarous steps against Afghan women are on the anvil. Second, his use of the expression 'representatives of the devil" reflects the visceral hatred that he and the Taliban harbour towards the Western democracies. Further, the indication that the Taliban would fight against the West until sharia rule is established there as well, is implicit in his statement, also quoted in the same report in The Telegraph, 'I told the Mujahedin that we tell the Westerners that we fought against you for 20 years and we will fight 20 and even more years against you.... We will bring Sharia to this land."

The Taliban are proceeding apace in implementing the provisions of Sharia law all over Afghanistan. At this rate, why should it take 20 years "and even more" to complete the process? It would take, at the most, not more than several years. The time span Mullah Akhundzada mentioned makes sense only if he was thinking of

establishing Sharia rule beyond Afghanistan—a move that would

lead to conflict. Against this, at the

Taliban's first official news confer-



ence in Kabul on 17 August 2021, two days after taking the city over, Zabihullah Mujahid, their spokesman, had said that they wished for peaceful relations with other countries and no group would be allowed to use Afghan territory to attack other nations.

The Taliban, however, have not always acted according to their pronouncements. Mujahid had also said at the same press conference, "The Islamic Emirate doesn't want women to be victims. They should be in the Government structure according to Shariah law." What has happened in practice is well-known. Since the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021, women have been wholly excluded from public office, the judiciary and NGO employment. Women and girls are required to adhere to a strict dress code, covering themselves from head to toe, and are not permitted to travel more than 75 kilometres without a close male relative belonging to the category of mahram—one in front of whom a woman does not nave to wear a nijad. Giris nave

banned from entering amusement parks, public baths, gyms and sports clubs.

Those believing in the Taliban's profession of its desire to avoid conflicts, can refer to the fact that, as of now, the Taliban cannot win a conventional war against the West. This, however, is a reality that a rational person will recognize. The Taliban are fanatics. If nothing else, their unquestioning allegiance to their INDEED, obscurantist and perverse ver-AFGHANISTAN sion of Islam is proof thereof. Besides, their fanatical belief in MAY AGAIN their ultimate triumph against the West seems to have been **BECOME A** reinforced by their ascent to power in Afghanistan after 20 GLOBAL years of war with the United **EXPORTER OF** States and its allies.

The Taliban's conflict with the TERRORISM West may, doubtless, take the form of an asymmetrical EVEN IF THE rather than a conventional TALIBAN war, with terror strikes at the US, its allies and their inter-ARE NOT ests on their own soil or abroad, as the principal INVOLVED weapon. Indeed, Afghanistan may again become a global exporter of terrorism even if the Taliban are not involved.

As the 13th report of the

Analytical Support and

Sanctions Monitoring Team

(ASSMT) of the UN Security

Council, submitted on May

25, 2022, states, the relationship between al-Qaeda and the Taliban remains close and is underscored by the presence, both in Afghanistan and the region, of al-Qaeda core leadership and affiliated groups, such as Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS). That this was right was proved by the killing in Kabul of the al-Qaeda supremo, Ayman al-Zawahiri, by a drone strike by the US on July 31, 2022. Terrorist outfits like Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Islamic State of Khorasan Province (ISKP) are also active in Afghanistan. The former has been targeting Pakistan and the latter has claimed responsibility for the recent attack at the Crocus City Hall concert venue outside Moscow on March 22, 2024, which killed 140 people.

Contrary to Zabihullah Mujahid's assurance mentioned earlier in this column, Afghanistan is becoming a launching pad for ter-rorism abroad. The world must take serious note of this, as it must of the plight of Aignan women. (The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal)

slims attend an 'Iftar' during the Ramadan at the Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Dargah, in Aimer

Yoga-based training to enhance athletic performance



Drawing from ancient yogic principles, this approach not only enhances performance but also fosters holistic wellbeing

The mental and emotional well-being of athletes is just as crucial as their physical fitness for optimal performance and overall health. Both professional and amateur athletes encounter numerous stressors in their training and competitions, which were further heightened by the pandemic, impacting their access to resources and support systems.

It is essential to approach athletic training with the lens of integrative healthcare to enhance mental and emotional resilience. In competitive environments, athletes face significant psychological stressors such as injuries, performance pressure, high expectations, and demanding training regimens, often leading to sleep disturbances, eating disorders, sports anxiety, and other serious issues. Sudden cardiac arrests (SCAs) are also a leading cause of death among student-athletes, with at least 1 in 300 young individuals having underlying cardiac abnormalities. Therefore, the ability to manage and recover from stress, known as resilience, is crucial



for success in sports and other endeavours, improving endurance, agility, discipline, and overall quality of life. Integration of yoga-based resilience training can facilitate athletes' journeys by enhancing their mental and emotional well-being. Clinical Impact of Yoga:

Yoga-based Resilience Trainings offer numerous benefits to athletes through various underlying mechanisms. One key mechanism is the regulation of stress hormone levels, particularly cortisol, which is essential for the body's response to stress. Practices such as deep breathing and meditation help regulate cortisol release, and improve emotional stability. Additionally, yogic modalities promote neural plasticity, enhancing cognitive function and motor skills vital for sports performance. Such mental health interventions also stimulate the autonom-

relaxation and reducing physiological stress markers. Efficacy of Yoga-Based **Resilience Training** Resilience training methodologies, rooted in ancient Indian Knowledge Systems,

combine yogic, breathwork, and meditation techniques. The principles align with sports psychology, emphasizing mental resilience, focus, and emotional regulation among athletes for peak performance. Through noninvasive meditative protocols, athletes develop heightened awareness of their breath and emotions, enabling them to navigate competition pressures calmly and clearly. Studies involving cricketers have shown yoga's positive impact on physical fitness, speed, and accuracy. Embracing Challenges and Opportunities: The integration of Yoga-based Resilience Training into sports presents both challenges and opportunities. Scepticism among athletes and coaches enables the traditional prioritisation of physical conditioning over

well-being. mental Additionally, cultural misconceptions may hinder ic nervous system, inducing acceptance in sports cultures

unfamiliar with yoga-based practices. Logistical hurdles, including access to qualified resources and suitable facilities, further impact widespread adoption.

However, these challenges also offer opportunities for dialogue, education, and collaboration. Open discussion and evidence-based education can dispel scepticism and foster understanding within the sports community. Collaboration across disciplines-such as yoga, sports psychology, and sports science-can tailor yoga-based programs to athletes' specific needs. Innovation in training methods, supportive environments within sports organisations, and ongoing research into their effectiveness are also vital. Addressing these challenges and embracing opportunities can allow sports communities to harness the full potential of yogabased interventions to enhance athlete resilienceand elevate athletic excellence.

(The writer is a mental health researcher and Founder of Yoga of Immortals; views are personal)

THE EDITOR

INDIA'S MARITIME DOMAIN VITAL

been barred from joining sec-

ondary schools and women

from tertiary education.

Women and girls have been

Madam - Apropos the news article "A Tribute to India's Maritime Legacy" published on April 5, this is my response. National Maritime Day on April 5th holds profound significance, marking India's journey from maritime history to modern prowess. The maiden voyage of SS Loyalty in 1919 symbolised India's maritime aspirations, laying the groundwork for economic growth and global connectivity. With sovereignty over vast marine areas and rich biodiversity, India's maritime domain is vital for trade and livelihoods. As we celebrate, it's crucial to acknowledge the contributions of seafarers and maritime organizations. Gunter Pauli's 'Blue Economy' offers insights for sustainable development, aligning with India's goals. Amidst climate concerns and security threats, proactive measures are vital. India's initiatives like Sagarmala and Bharatmala

signify progress, but more is needed. Modernising ports, enhancing infrastructure, and embracing technology can bolster India's maritime competitiveness. By promoting responsible practices and international collaboration, India can secure its marine resources and emerge as a global maritime leader. The future of India's maritime sector hinges on strategic vision and concerted efforts to navigate challenges while harnessing the vast potential of the seas.

Khirabdi Tanya Nayak | Noida

CONGRESS MANIFESTO

Madam — Apropos the news article "Congress launches Ghar Ghar campaign ⁶ published on April 4, this is my response. Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday, 3 March, launched the party's 'Ghar Ghar Guarantee' initiative under which it aims to reach out to crores of households across the country and make them aware of its "guarantees".Kharge launched the initiative from Usmanpur, Kaithwada, in the North East Delhi parliamentary constituency and distributed pamphlets on the party's 'Paanch Nyay

A statesman's departure



propos the news article "A Dignified Liberal" Apublished on April 5, this is my response. The editorial in the Pioneer pays homage to the illustrious career of Dr Manmohan Singh, a figure whose influence on India's economic and political landscape is unparalleled. Singh's journey from an academic economist to the Prime Minister's office is a testament to his intellect,

Pachees Guarantee.' The Congress' poll pitch is centred around 'Paanch Nyay' or five pillars of justice, namely 'Yuva Nyay' Naari Nyay', 'Kisaan Nyay', 'Shramik Nyay and 'Hissedari Nyay' as well as the guarantees made by it to the people under these heads as the Guarantee of the BJP have failed which has become bogus and misleading.

The Congress will release its manifesto for the Lok Sabha elections in New Delhi on 5 April with sure Guarantees to the people who have been deprived of promises and the Guarantees for the last 10 years to force them to suffer and struggle by voting for the BJP to bring them to power.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

THE RISE OF 'WATER AUNTIES'

Madam — Apropos the news article "The rise of 'water aunties' and sustainable solutions" published on April 4, this is my response. The recent water crisis in Bangalore sheds light on the pressing need for water conservation efforts throughout India. Exacerbated by factors like deficient southwest monsoon rains in 2023, this crisis underscores the precarious balance between water availability and population

integrity, and dedication to public service. His tenure as the Chief Economic Adviser and later as the Finance Minister during the economic crisis of the early 1990s showcased his boldness in implementing liberalization reforms that propelled India onto the global stage.

Despite facing criticism during his tenure as Prime Minister, Singh's commitment to inclusive growth and secularism remained unwavering. His departure from the Rajya Sabha symbolises the end of an era in Indian politics, leaving behind a legacy that will continue to shape the country's future. The editorial rightly praises Singh's contributions, acknowledging the profound impact he has had on India's economic trajectory and global standing

Neha Gupta | Delhi

density. India, with only 4% of the world's freshwater resources accommodating 18% of the global population, faces a daunting challenge in ensuring water security. Understanding the intricate interplay between clean water access, conflict, cooperation, and climate change is crucial for ensuring sustainable water security. Collaborative management of shared water resources, coupled with international treaties and agreements, offers a promising alternative to conflict.

Empowering communities, particularly women, plays a vital role in addressing water security challenges. Initiatives like the iJal Network demonstrate the effectiveness of community-driven solutions in providing sustainable water access. Managed predominantly by women, these initiatives not only empower local leadership but also leverage their expertise and understanding of water needs. Replicating such mod-

els nationwide can significantly contribute to achieving sustainable water security and fostering equitable water management frameworks across India.

Amarjeet Kumar | Hazaribagh

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FIRSTCOLUMN I AM THE **ULTIMATE REALITY**

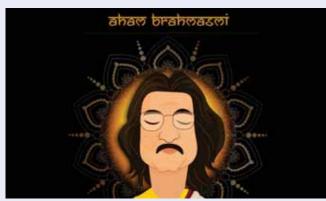
'Aham Brahmasmi' encapsulates the essence of Vedanta philosophy



SWAMI CHARANASHRIT

n the vast tapestry of Hindu philosophy, the principle of "Aham Brahmasmi" stands as a profound declaration encapsulating the essence of existence. This ancient Sanskrit phrase, often translated as "I am Brahman," carries profound implications within the context of Vedanta, one of the six orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy. It is a declaration of identity, affirming the indivisible connection between the individual self (Atman) and the ultimate reality (Brahman). Let's delve deeper into the meaning and significance of Aham Brahmasmi.

At its core, Vedanta explores the nature of reality and the individual's relationship with it. It posits that the universe is an interconnected web of existence, and understanding this interconnectedness is crucial for realizing one's true nature. Central to Vedanta is the concept of Brahman, the ultimate reality, which is formless, infinite, and beyond attributes. Brahman is the underlying substratum of the universe, the source from which all phenomena arise and into which they dissolve. Conversely, each individual possesses an inner essence known as Atman, often translated as the "self" or the "soul." Atman is not bound by the limitations of the body or mind; it is eternal, unchanging, and identical to Brahman in its essence. However, due to ignorance (avidya), individuals identify themselves with their bodies, minds, and egos, thereby experiencing a sense of separateness from the divine. Herein lies the significance of Aham Brahmasmi. When one declares, "I am Brahman," they are asserting the fundamental truth of their existence-that their true nature is divine and inseparable from the ultimate reality. It is a recognition of the underlying unity that pervades the cosmos, transcending the boundaries of individuality and ego.



The journey towards realizing Aham Brahmasmi is a central theme in Vedantic philosophy. It involves the process of self-inquiry (Atmavichara) and spiritual practice (sadhana), aimed at transcending the limitations of the ego and realizing one's innate divinity. Through meditation, introspection, and the study of sacred texts such as the Upanishads, aspirants seek to directly experience the unity of Atman and Brahman. Moreover, the realization of Aham Brahmasmi brings about a profound shift in consciousness. It leads to the dissolution of the illusion of duality (dvaita) and the recognition of the underlying unity of all existence (advaita). This realisation is not merely intellectual but experiential, akin to the metaphorical tasting of honey rather than merely reading about its sweetness. The significance of Aham Brahmasmi extends beyond the realm of philosophy; it has practical implications for daily life. When one recognizes the divine nature within themselves, they naturally extend that recognition to all beings, fostering a sense of compassion, empathy, and interconnectedness. This realisation serves as the foundation for a life lived in harmony with the universe, guided by principles of love, truth, and righteousness. In conclusion, Aham Brahmasmi encapsulates the profound truth of Vedanta philosophy-that the individual self is not separate from the ultimate reality but is, in fact, identical to it. It is a declaration of oneness, unity, and divine identity. Through self-inquiry and spiritual practice, one can realize this truth and live a life in alignment with the eternal principles of Vedanta. As the ancient sages proclaimed, "Tat tvam asi"-"Thou art That.'

Power propaganda nexus: A symbiotic bond



analys s 07

John Pilger's quest for truth amidst the cacophony of official narratives remains ever-relevant, urging us to scrutinise media's role in shaping perceptions

mongst other great minds, last year we lost another exceptional man who was larger than life. But he left us with the essence to comprehend how the media evolved and aligned with the power to elim-inate the powerless. He is John Pilger, who endeavoured to make others understand the everyday bitter truth about propaganda. I believe it's important to borrow some of his ideas and pen a few thoughts needed for today.

Not only the noise and disturbing content, but also our day-to-day news suppliers and other social media users conveniently monetize oppression and, as Huxley says, 'adore the technologies that undo their capacities to think'. Consequently, the state, as the regulatory body based on ethics and morals, has been weakened. Take our food supply, for example. A few companies are controlling everything by hurting small producers. What they don't realize is that by the time regulation gets enacted and filters down to the farm level, it always hurts small producers and helps the large produc-ers. It's the revolving door. Don't eat healthily; only eat junk. There's only a small group of companies that control the entire food production. They're not only putting everybody out of business but also prioritizing profits over equal distribution. They are systematically manipulating the very right to food of living beings. Propaganda is the vein that follows the blood of this manipulation.

The same goes for others. The First World War, a catastrophic bloodbath claiming 20 million lives and leaving 21 million wounded, saw a desperate thirst for truth amidst relentless propaganda. Prime Minister David Lloyd George confided to C.P. Scott, editor of The Guardian, that if the public truly grasped the reality of the conflict, it would cease of authentic information, clamoured for genuine news amidst the flood of official narratives.

In today's era of incessant news cycles, wars and armed conflicts persist unchecked serving as grim realities. Delves into the unseen dimensions of modern conflict, scrutinising the role of media, particularly in the West and other liberal democracies that hailed to protect and promote the emancipation of mankind, in perpetuating and justifying rapacious wars, is the need of the moment. Edward Bernays, a pioneer in propaganda, highlighted the power of manip-ulating the masses and shaping public opinion through covert means. His involvement in the US Committee on Public Information during World War I heralded the birth of modern propaganda machinery, cementing the insidious influence of media in shaping perceptions of war and governance. Edward Bernays' ingenious manipulation tactics disregarded facts in favour of emotional manipulation, pioneering a strategy to sway public opinion by tugging at unconscious desires. Utilising symbols like the Statue of Liberty in ruins or associating smoking with women's liberation, he forged powerful connections in consumers' minds, irrespective of truth. His legacy endured, evolving into a sophisticated machinery of war propaganda exemplified by numerous conflicts orchestrated by powerful nations such as the United States. The media, once heralded as a beacon of freedom, became entangled in the Pentagon's webs, complicit in disseminating illusions and false narratives. Had journalists rigorously questioned authori-



ty rather than regurgitating official statements, perhaps the calamity of war could have been averted.

The Iraq invasion, as Pilger observed, orchestrated through the doctrine of shock and awe, aimed to instil terror and dismantle the country's infrastructure akin to the devastating impact of atomic bombs on Japan. However, this campaign of destruction was veiled in layers of deception, with embedded journalists serving as conduits for the sanitised narrative dictated by the Pentagon and the Ministry of Defence. Despite sporadic glimpses of truth, the pervasive influence of embedded journalism and the echo chamber of 24-hour news perpetuated illusions and distorted realities, enabling the war machine to operate unchecked.

The toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue hailed as a symbol of liberation, concealed the brutal conquest underway, meticulously orchestrated to exploit media optics and control the narrative. The complicity of journalists, embedded within military units, stifled dissenting voices and prioritised official narratives,

Today's Gaza, under Israeli control, where just a few days ago seven aid workers, along with other unarmed civilians, were killed, is a continuation of this pattern and a consequence of media behaviour. The prime responsibility of media as voices for the victims, shedding light on the untold suffering amidst the sanitised narratives propagated by mainstream media, has been systematically veiled. In contrast to embedded journalists, who may inadvertently perpetuate propaganda, independent reporters like Wilfred Graham Burchett have historically challenged official narratives, uncovering truths that authorities sought to conceal.

omitted from mainstream coverage.

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked not the end of conflict, but the beginning of a nuclear arms race and the era of the Cold War, characterised by the perpetual threat of annihilation. Secret conversations, such as the exchange between President Nixon and Henry Kissinger, reveal the willingness of leaders to contemplate the unwittingly, become accomplices to such crimes, contributing to the dissemination of propaganda. Despite illustrious careers, figures like Dan Rather acknowledge the presence of fear within newsrooms, stemming from concerns about job security, institutional pressures, and patriotic labels. Rather's admission reflects a broader need for introspection within the journalism community, urging a courageous examination of past failures to uphold truth and integrity in reporting. This is what we keep forgetting, or rather, delib-

erately ignoring. Indifference to learn from history, led us to this recurrence of catastrophes and keeping the powerful in power. Learning from history isn't merely a quaint idea; it's an imperative for societies striving to advance and avoid catastrophic missteps. Herodotus, the revered 'Father of History', echoes across the ages, reminding us of the historian's solemn duty to rectify distortions of truth.

Yet, in today's world saturated with mass media and communication tools, the dissemination of factual

(Writer is a spiritual guide;views are personal)

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shielding the public from the grim realities of war. In the fog of misinformation and propaganda, critical scrutiny faltered, allowing the machinery of war to proceed unabated, casting a shadow over journalistic integrity and the pursuit of truth.

During the symbolic event of the Americans' arrival in Baghdad, the manipulation behind the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue went untold, emblematic of the control exerted over media optics. The image of an American soldier draping the flag over the statue's face signified America's assertion of dom-inance over Iraq, echoing the sentiments of ownership and conquest. Meanwhile, the invasion hailed as a triumph by Blair and Bush, failed to depict the grim reality of civilian casualties and destruction on the ground, with atrocities like the assault on Fallujah largely

use of nuclear weapons, underscoring the gravity of the global situation.

Despite the absence of a clear nuclear threat from Iraq, the Bush administration, bolstered by sensationalist rhetoric from figures like Colin Powell, and Victoria Nuland in the Biden administration manipulated public perception to justify the invasion or covert operations for "regime change", with mainstream media outlets perpetuating false claims and contributing to the dissemination of propaganda. The journalistic failures in scrutinising government narratives reflect a broader failure to uphold the truth and challenge authority, ultimately leading to disastrous consequences. The repercussions of events in Syria, followed by Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya surpass personal sentiments, constituting a colossal crime. Aren't we experiencing the same in Ukraine? Journalists, albeit

information morphs into a battleground. Cicero's sagacity warns against the folly of ignorance, spotlighting the perpetual infancy of those who dismiss the lessons of the past. Marx's incisive analysis cautions of history's cyclical nature, where tragedies replay as farces if wisdom remains unheeded. Santayana's sombre reflection underlines the dire consequences of historical amnesia, dooming societies to repeat their blunders. Churchill's declaration accentuates the peril awaiting those who ignore historical counsel.

Even Twain's astute observation, that history may not repeat itself verbatim but often rhymes, highlights the urgency of identifying patterns to avert folly. But what if we are truly entertaining ourselves with this folly?

(The writer is a Sri Lankan *journalist. Views are personal)*

Soft power as comparative advantage for India

Soft power stands as a compelling force, often wielded through economic or cultural influence to shape global perceptions and agendas

noft power is a persuasive Sapproach to interna-tional relations, typi-cally involving the use of economic or cultural influence. India has the potential to create its credibility using this non-tangible power. India is sometimes labelled a "soft power by default" (Wagner, 2010), and is believed to have substantial potential in this field. It was one of the first countries to pursue a soft power strategy, under the leadership of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, long before the term was coined

However, after the defeat in the 1962 war with China, India gradually shifted towards a hard power approach, and its foreign policy became more prag-



KAJLEEN KAUR

matic and driven by realpoliunited, and vibrant culture,

The Chanakya Niti of nonaggressive settlements; Gandhi's non-violence movement; the Panchsheel pact of peaceful advancement and a good friendly policy towards its neigh-bours all exemplify India's comparative advantage in soft power. The notion of

soft power for Indians dates back to the Upanishads with thought the of 'VasudhaivaKutumbakam'. We can still vouch for our soft power assets in terms of the widespread acceptance of Buddhism; the populari-ty of yoga and Ayurveda; and belief in ancient universities which draws scholars and learners to India.

topography, cuisine, archi-tecture and history attract heavy tourism. Not to forget, Indian cinema has helped popularize not just Indian actors but also the vibrant culture and craze for ethnic clothes. Besides, the only common religion of India 'Cricket' has empowered the dreams of every youngster in India and has helped create

sports arena. Our present prime minister Narender Modi has recognised soft power as an asset and has instigated several of these which have helped in the popularization of our nation abroad. The huge success of India's tenure as G-20 president has been To date, our rich, diverse yet well-acknowledged the

India in the international



meaning to the age-old

also popularized India across

world over. Modi's catch- to redefine and give better phrases like 'now is not the time for war', drew international applause.

Similarly, Atmanirbhar, Make in India and Swachh Bharat have become nation-

reviving ties with regional groups ASEAN, BIMSTEC, and SAARC along with strengthening and intensifying with Eastern and South Asian countries through the East Policy Act, and the Neighborhood First Policy Act. These have helped draw commercial and strategic benefits for India. Ironically, even after recog-nizing the huge potential and benefits of soft power,

we have several limitations in deriving maximum

advantages from it. There is a lack of formal inclusion of soft power in foreign policy or its nature Pleonasm policies, and have and scope. It takes a back the world. Besides he has seat to other important economic and security conplayed a major role in cerns or the hard power increasing the number of al slogans and have been able embassies abroad and also components. Moreover, soft

power has only drawn limited attention from scholars and policymakers. Even after a rich and diverse diaspora, culture and media, we have not made noteworthy efforts to formalize any policies in literature.

India being an emerging economy, will take time to stand tall against other developed nations in terms of hard power. But recognizing its strengths in soft power in varied forms, it should work towards further enriching its assets and using it for international trade, thus creating a niche for itself.

(The writer is an Assistant Professor Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi; views are personal)



'Israeli aid offers to Gaza may fall short'

AP LEUVEN

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday that the measures the Israeli government has announced to expand the flow of aid into Gaza are welcome but may not be enough to meet the Biden administration's demands for dramatic improvements in humanitarian conditions in the territory

Blinken said that opening more border crossings, if fully implemented, has the potential to surge assistance to Palestinians caught in the fighting between Israel and Hamas However, the US also wants to see tangible steps to bolster the protection of civilians and aid workers, he said

In addition, he called for an "independent, thorough and fully publicized investigation" into the recent killings of aid workers. Seven employees of the charity World Central Kitchen, including six international volunteers, were killed in multiple Israeli airstrikes on their three-car convoy in Gaza late Monday.

The military announced Friday that it dismissed two officers and reprimanded three others for their role in the strikes on the convoy, saying they had mishandled critical information and violated the army's rules of engagement. The attack on the convoy was a "grave mistake," the military said. The speed of the investigation and swift punishment of senior officers was highly unusual for the military, where charges against troops for alleged wrongdoing are rare.

The findings are likely to renew skepticism over the Israeli military's decision-making. Palestinians, aid groups and human rights organizations have repeatedly accused Israeli forces of firing recklessly at civilians throughout the conflict a charge Israel denies

The incident sparked international outrage and put Israel on the defensive about its conduct in its six-month-old war against Hamas.

" I welcome that steps that have been announced by Israel," Blinken said. "These are positive developments but the real test is results and that's what we're looking to see in the coming days and the coming weeks." At the same time, he

Iran vows to

regime'

said the US wanted to see a "better system for de-conflic-tion and coordination" so that aid can be safely delivered and distributed inside Gaza.

"All of these things are critical and that really needs to be measured by results," Blinken told reporters in the town of Leuven, outside Brussels, where he was meeting with US and European trade and commerce

officials. Israel's military has promised to conduct a speedy investigation into the killing of the aid workers. In initial comments, the Israeli army chief said earlier this week that the strikes were a result of misidentification, but did not elaborate. Israeli Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu's office announced early Friday that Israel would act to improve conditions, including reopening a key border crossing into northern Gaza, just hours after President Joe Biden told him in a Thursday phone call that future US support for the war

did not elaborate on quantities

that reaching an "immediate cease-fire" in exchange for the estimated 100 hostages that are still being held in Gaza was "essential" and urged Israel to reach such an accord "without delay," the White House said. Israel declared war on Hamas in response to the October 7 attack, in which the militants killed about 1,200 people in Israel and took about 250 hostages. Israel's blistering air and ground offensive has killed more than 33,000 Palestinians in Gaza, about two-thirds of them women and children, according to the Health Ministry in Gaza, an enclave that in parts remains under Hamas control.

Israeli ambassador summoned AP WARSAW

Poland's deputy foreign minister handed a diplomatic note on Friday to Israel's ambassador protesting the killing of a Polish aid worker in an attack earlier this week on a convoy of aid workers in Gaza.

After the meeting, Deputy Foreign Minister Andrzej Szejna told reporters in Warsaw that he handed the protest note to Ambassador Yacov Livne after he was summoned because of the deaths of the World Central Kitchen workers

Szejna described the Polish stance during the meeting as 'firm." "At the beginning, the ambassador apologised for this unprecedented event in the history of the civilized world, that is the bombing of a car in a humanitarian con-

in Gaza depends on Israel taking more action to protect civilians and aid workers. Netanyahu's office said the Erez crossing between Israel and Gaza, which was partially destroyed in Hamas' October 7 attack on southern Israel, would temporarily reopen. It also said Israel would allow its Ashdod port, 22 miles (37 kilometers) north of Gaza, to be used to process aid shipments bound for the territory and allow increased Jordanian aid shipments through another land crossing. The announcement

or types of items to be let in. Biden also told Netanyahu

voy heading with humanitar-ian aid to the famine-affect-ed Gaza Strip," Szejna said. Livne said on social media that during the meeting he expressed his "personal deep sorrow and sincere apolo-gies" for the deaths of the

World Central Kitchen workers, including Polish citizen Damian Soból "We share in the grief of the families from the bottom of our hearts. I assured the Deputy Minister that Israel is fully committed to a transparent and thorough investigation of this grave tragedy,"

Livne said. He said findings from the Israeli military published Friday "show our ongoing commitment to investigate what had happened in Gaza and take all appropriate measures to prevent such tragedies in the future."

The Israeli military said Friday that it dismissed two officers and reprimanded three others for their roles in drone strikes in Gaza that killed seven aid workers on a food-delivery mission, saying they had mishandled critical information and violated the army's rules of engagement. Szejna, who spoke to reporters before the dismissals were reported, said

Poland expected a transparent investigation and compensation for the victim's family if it wants it. He also said Poland wants the

district prosecutor's office in Przemysl, where the Polish aid worker was from, to be allowed to participate in the investigation "and in the entire criminal and disciplinary procedure against the soldiers responsible for this murder.'

Turkiye arrests 2 more spying suspects

Ankara (AP): Turkish authorities have arrested two people suspected of providing information to the Israeli spy agency, a top official said Friday, in the latest in a series of such arrests in Turkiye. Interior Minister Ali Yerlikaya said the suspects allegedly gathered information about people and companies of interest to Israel and passed on the data and documents to Israeli intelligence officials. Six other people who were also detained in the operation, code-named "Mole-3," were released following questioning, Yerlikaya said in a statement posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. We will never allow espionage activities that target our national unity and solidarity to take

place within the borders of our country," Yerlikaya said.

Ex-Trump officials lead opposition to WH return House," said Trump campaign

AP WASHINGTON

Former Defense Secretary Mark Esper has called him a "threat to democracy." Former national security adviser John Bolton has declared him "unfit to be president." And former Vice President Mike Pence has declined to endorse him, citing "profound differences.

As Donald Trump seeks the presidency for a third time, he is being vigorously opposed by a vocal contingent of former officials who are stridently warning against his return to power and offering dire predictions for the country and the rule of law if his campaign succeeds.

It's a striking chorus of detrac-tors, one without precedent in the modern era, coming from those who witnessed firsthand his conduct in office and the turmoil that followed. Sarah Matthews, a former Trump aide who testified before the House Jan. 6 committee and is among those warning about the threat he poses, said it's "mind-boggling" how many members of his senior staff have denounced him. "These are folks who saw him up close and person-al and saw his leadership style,"

Matthews said. 'The American people should listen to what these folks are saying because it should be alarming that the people that Trump hired to work for him a first term are saying that he's unfit to serve for a second term."

Yet the critics remain a distinct minority. Republican lawmakers and officials across the party have endorsed Trump's bid — some begrudgingly, others with fervor and enthusiasm. Many aides and Cabinet officials who served under Trump are onboard for another term, something Trump's campaign is quick to highlight. The majority of the people who served in President Trump's cabinet and in his administration, like the majority of Americans, have overwhelmingly endorsed his candidacy to beat Crooked Joe Biden and take back the White

cannot support his candidacy Those who worked with Donald Trump at the most senior levels of his administration believe he is too dangerous, too selfish and too extreme to ever lead our country again — we agree," said Biden campaign spokesman Ammar Moussa. In many ways, the schism among former Trump officials is an extension of his time in the White House. Friction was constant as Trump's demands ran into resistance from some officials and aides who refused requests that they found misguided, unrealistic and, at times, flatly illegal. Firings were frequent. Many quit.

spokesman Steven Cheung. Still, the Biden campaign has

trumpeted the criticism of for-

mer Trump officials in state-

ments and social media posts

hoping to convince at least

including those who backed

other candidates during the

GOP primary — that they

some Republican voters -

Staff upheaval was particularly intense in the chaotic weeks after the 2020 election as Trump worked to overturn his election loss to Biden. Trump summoned supporters to Washington on Jan. 6, 2021, as his falsehoods about a stolen election became the rallying cry for supporters who violent-ly breached the U.S. Capitol. Many people serving in the administration quit in protest, including Matthews.

Trump's attempt to remain in office included a bitter pressure campaign against Pence, who as vice president was tasked with presiding over the count of the Electoral College ballots on Jan. 6. Trump was adamant that Pence should prevent Biden from becoming president, something he had no power to do. Pence had to flee the Senate chamber on Jan. 6 as rioters stormed the building to chants of "Hang Mike Pence!" Pence recently said he "cannot in good conscience" endorse Trump because of Jan. 6 and other issues, despite being proud of what they achieved together.

Israel dismisses two officers over drone strikes on aid workers

AP TEL AVIV

¬he Israeli military said Friday that it has dismissed two officers and reprimanded three others for their roles in drone strikes in Gaza that killed seven aid workers on a food-delivery mission, saying they had mishandled critical information and violated the army's rules of engagement. The findings of a retired general's investigation into the Monday killings marked an embarrassing admission by Israel, which faces growing accusations from key allies, including the US, of not doing enough to protect Gaza's civil ians from its war with Hamas. The findings are likely to renew scepticism over the Israeli military's decision-making. Palestinians, aid groups and human rights organisations have repeatedly accused Israeli forces of firing recklessly at civilians throughout the conflict — a charge Israel denies. "It's a tragedy," the military's

spokesman, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, told reporters. "It's a serious event that we are responsible for and it shouldn't have happened and we will make sure that it won't happen again."

With pressure mounting on Israel to hold itself accountable, Hagari and other officials late Thursday shared with reporters the results of the military's uncommonly speedy and detailed investigation.

It was unclear whether the punishments and the apology would calm an international outcry over the deaths of the World Central Kitchen workers or reassure international aid groups that it was safe to resume operations in Gaza, where nearly a third of the population is on the brink of starvation. The food charity itself called

the investigation and disciplinary actions "important steps forward." "However it is also clear from

their preliminary investigation

that the IDF has deployed deadly force without regard to its own protocols, chain of command and rules of engagement," the statement said. "Without systemic change, there will be more military failures, more apologies and more grieving families.

According to what spokespeople said were the Israeli army's rules, targets must be visually identified as threats for multiple reasons before they can be hit. But the investigation determined that a colonel had authorised the series of deadly drone strikes on the convoy based on one major's observation — from grainy dronecamera footage — that someone in the convoy was armed. That observation turned out to be untrue, military officials said.

The army said the colonel and the major were dismissed, while three other officers were reprimanded. It said the results of its investigation were turned over to the military's advocate

general, who will decide whether the officers or anyone else involved in the killings should receive further punish ment or be prosecuted.

The killings were condemned by Israel's closest allies and renewed criticism of Israel's conduct in the nearly 6-monthold war with Hamas.

The aid workers were three British citizens, a Polish citizen, an Australian and a Canadian American dual citizen, all of whom worked for World Central Kitchen, the international charity founded by celebrity chef José Andrés. Their Palestinian driver also was killed.

that cars, not aid trucks, would transporting militants.

Indian-origin doctors union chief Yellen calls for level playing field for US **'punish Zionist** confirm end of pay strikes in UK

Tehran (AP): The commander of Iran's powerful Revolutionary PTI LONDON Guard warned Friday that "our The Indian-origin chair of the Zionist regime," escalating threats against Israel for an airstrike that killed seven of the group's members, including two Iranian generals, earlier this week The strike, widely attributed to Israel, destroyed the consular section at the Iranian embassy in Syria. The attack on an Iranian diplomatic compound was a significant escalation in what has been a long-running shadow war between the two archenemies, and Israel has been bracing for an Iranian response. The tensions flared against the backdrop of the six-month-old Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, and raised renewed fears of a widening regional conflict. The Islamic militant group Hamas, which has ruled Gaza for 17 years, is one of Iran's proxies, along with Lebanon's Hezbollah militia and Yemen's Houthi rebels. Both Hezbollah and the Houthis have carried out attacks along the fringes of the Gaza war, with Hezbollah engaging in daily cross-border exchanges with Israel and the Houthis frequently targeting Red Sea shipping. On Friday, thousands joined a funeral procession in Tehran for the seven slain Guard members chanting "death to Israel" and "death to America." Marchers held up banners with the photos of those killed in the attack Other banners read: "We will make the wicked Zionist regime regret this crime, with the power of God."The protesters then headed to Tehran University where the head of the Revolutionary Guard, Gen. Hossein Salami gave his speech before the weekly Friday prayers. "Our brave men will punish the Zionist regime," he said, adding that "no enemy act against our holy system will go unanswered." "The collapse of (the Zionist regime) is very possible and close with God's grace," Salami said, adding that the US has become "wildly hated by the world, especially in Muslimdominated countries" for sup porting Israel.

domestic market can absorb. The massive scale of producignited price wars for green technologies, a boon for consumers and efforts to reduce global dependence on fossil fuels. But Western governments fear that that capacity will flood their markets with low-priced exports, threatening American and European jobs. Yellen, the first Cabinet-level official to visit China since President Joe Biden met Chinese leader Xi Jinping last November, told the vice premier and the governor of Guangdong province in separate meetings that it is impor-tant for the U.S. and China to have open and direct commu-AP/PTI nication on areas of disagreement.

AP GUANGZHOU

T TS Treasury Secretary Janet

The investigation found two major areas of wrongdoing. It faulted officers for failing to read messages alerting troops carry workers from the charity away from the warehouse where aid was distributed. As a result, the cars that were targeted were misidentified as

world 08

British Medical Association's (BMA) Consultants Committee on Friday confirmed the end of year-long strike action after senior National Health Service (NHS) doctors accepted the

government's pay offer. Dr Vishal Sharma said the agreement is "the end of the beginning" in consultants' efforts to restore their pay to 2008 levels and stressed it is ing," he added. "imperative" for the review body to utilise its independence to prevent future pay disputes. Around 83 per cent of NHS consultants who took part in a three-week referendum scale. It now includes a 2.85 per tabled by the BMA doctors' cent (GBP 3,000) uplift for union voted in favour of acceptthose who have been consuling the offer on behalf of the tants between four and seven

profession years who, under the original The last year has seen consuloffer, received no additional tants take unprecedented strike uplift. The upgrade is in addiaction in our fight to address tion to the 6 per cent pay uplift our concerns about pay and how the supposedly indepenawarded during the review body's process last year and is separate from the pay award foldent pay review process was

operating," said Sharma. "After lowing the outcome of the

years of repeated real-term pay review body process for 2024-

"We've reached this point not interference and a failure of the pay review process, consultants just through our tough negotihave spoken and now clearly feel ations with the government, but thanks to the resolve of consulthat this offer is enough of a first tants, who took the difficult step to address our concerns to end the current dispute," he said. decision to strike and did so "However, it's now imperative that the DDRB [Doctors' and safely and effectively, on multiple occasions, sending a clear message that they would not back down," said Dr Sharma."At Dentists' Remuneration Body] utilises its independence to the heart of this dispute was our restore doctors' pay and prevent any further disputes from arisconcern for patients and the future sustainability of the NHS. Without valuing doctors, we The BMA said the latest offer reflects an improvement on the lose them. Without doctors, we have no NHS and patients government's previous proposal to reform the consultant pay suffer. But the fight is not yet

over," he said. This is only the end of the beginning, and we have some way to go before the pay consultants have lost over the last 15 years has been restored. Therefore, all eyes will be on this year's pay review round, recommendations from the DDRB and response from the government," he added.

U Yellen called on China on Friday to address manufacturing overcapacity that she said risks causing global economic dislocation, and to create a level playing field for American companies and workers.

Starting a five-day visit in one of China's major industrial and export hubs, she raised what the U.S. considers to be unfair Chinese trade practices in talks with senior Chinese officials. 'The United States seeks a healthy economic relationship with China that benefits both sides," she said ahead of a meeting with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in the southern city of Guangzhou. "But a healthy relationship must provide a level playing field for firms and workers in

both countries. Earlier, she said at an an event hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in China that there are "Chinese

9

workers and firms during China visit

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, left meets with Wang Weizhong, deputy party secretary and governor of Guangdong, center at the Baiyun International Conference Center (BICC) in southern China's Guangdong province, Friday.

practices that are tilting the playing field away from High on Yellen's list is the overcapacity issue. Chinese American workers and firms." government subsidies and other policy support have encouraged solar panel and EV He didn't get into specifics in his remarks before the media but said that both sides "need makers in China to invest in to properly respond to key factories, building far more concerns of the other side." production capacity than the

This includes the issue of China's industrial overcapacity, which the United States and other countries are concerned can cause global spillovers," she said during her meeting with the governor.

Sunak unveils GBP 35 million investment to widen schools participation in cricket

PTI LONDON

ishi Sunak, who has often spoken of his love for cricket and described hitting a few balls with the England cricket team in the Downing Street garden as a highlight of his tenure as British Prime Minister, on Friday unveiled GBP 35 million investment in grassroots cricket facilities and widening access to the sport within schools. 43-year-old The

Southampton-born leader of Indian heritage spoke of wanting to tap into the huge potential of the "magic of cricket" as part of a wider drive to get one million more young people active by 2030.

The total government investment is expected to deliver around 2,500 pieces of new equipment to every school involved in the programme playing cricket over the next



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak takes part in a cricket practice session whils meeting participants in the ACE Programme, during a visit to the Oval cricket ground in south London, on Friday

and help to get 930,000 pupils \five years. "I love cricket, that's no

secret... I first experienced the magic of cricket watching Hampshire play at my local ground in Southampton as a child," said Sunak.

"For young people watching their first match today, the draw of getting outside and enjoying the game is just as strong, particularly as we look forward to hosting the women's and men's T20 World Cups. There remains huge potential to grow the sport even further and open it up to everyone, from all back-grounds and in all parts of the country," he said.

"That is why I am so proud we are making a major GBP 35 million investment in grassroots cricket today, to widen the participation in schools, encourage healthy lifestyles and provide world-class, allyear-round facilities for local communities," he added.

Taiwan's quake survivors recall harrowing moments of tremors

AP HUALIEN

Taiwan residents endured harrowing experiences on Wednesday when the ground shook with the strongest earthquake to hit the island in 25 years. People saw rocks tumble onto roadways, watched parts of their homes fall around them and waited for rescuers to free them from rubble.

The historic quake killed at least 12 people and injured more than 1,000. Several hundred people remained stranded after vital highways were damaged and the walls of some structures cracked.

The quake's epicentre was just off the coast of eastern Hualien County, a rural area known for tourism and rice paddy fields, but also the site of frequent earthquakes and tsunamis. Taiwan's earthquake monitoring agency said the quake was

7.2 magnitude while the US Geological Survey put it at 7.4 These are the recollections shared by some survivors of the disaster: LIU ZHONG-DA, ROAD MAINTENANCE WORKER

Liu Zhong-da had been driving in an open tunnel that winds through the mountain-ous Taroko National Park when he saw a giant rock crash down in front of the tunnel's end. Liu and his colleague, Bai Fu-sheng, worked for a company in charge of road maintenance. They immediately turned the car around but found the entrance blocked by a rockslide.

They were trapped, but alive. "That tunnel has a very good structure, so there are a total of four cars there," he said. "It had protected us. Rocks were falling in front of us and behind us."

Liu was no stranger to earth-

quakes. Every year, we'd go up there to work, and when we go up, there would be some rocks falling down but in a localized fashion," he said. "This time, the entire thing fell down, and though the window was shut, the rocks fell so much they cracked the windows."

HSIAO-EN, HUANG HUALIEN RESIDENT

Huang Hsiao-en, a Hualien resident and college student, said she had just woken up and was about to leave home."When I came out I felt the shake and thought I still haven't woken up," she said. "At first it started shaking from right to left, and then it started shaking from bottom to top. The TV fell down, all the things that could fall, all fell down. The glass from the TV cabinet, and the bowls and plates in the kitchen cabinet all fell down?



Ukraine destroys Russian warplanes in drone attack

Ukrainian officials claimed on Friday they used a barrage of drones to destroy at least six military aircraft and badly damage eight others at an airfield in Russia's Rostov region. Russian defense officials, however, claimed they intercepted 44 Ukrainian drones and that only a power substation was damaged in the attack. The Associated Press could not independently verify either side's claims.

The assault appeared to be one of Kyiv's biggest air attacks in the war, coming as its forces stepped up their assaults on Russian soil. Russia has also escalated attacks on civilian infrastructure, including Ukraine's power plants, in recent weeks, signalling a new and potentially dangerous phase in the conflict as both sides struggle to achieve significant advances on the ground. The overnight attack targeted a military airfield near Morozovsk in Russia and was conducted by Ukraine's Security Service in cooperation

with the army, Ukrainian intelligence officials told the AP. They said around 20 members of the airfield's personnel were killed or injured. Morozovsk airfield was used by

Russian bombers that have been launching guided aerial bombs at Ukraine's cities and frontline positions, the officials said. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the operation.

If true, the attack would be among Ukraine's most successful cross-border strikes. Last October, Ukraine claimed it destroyed nine Russian helicopters at two airfields in Russian-occupied regions using longe-range ballistic missiles donated by the United States. Last August, Ukrainian media, citing unidentified intelligence sources, claimed that drone attacks hit parked Russian bomber aircraft at air bases deep inside Russia.

In a conflicting version of events, Russia's Defense Ministry said a total of 44

Russian officials again try to link Moscow attack with Ukraine

Kyiv that commemorates a

moment early in the 2022

invasion when Ukrainian sol-

diers reportedly issued a defi-

ant expletive at a Russian war-

ship. The committee also said

one of the suspects sent images

of access roads and entrances

to the concert hall to their han-

dler on February 24 — the sec-

invasion of Ukraine.

ond anniversary of Russia's

The findings "may indicate

between the terrorist attack

committee said, using the

Kremlin's euphemism for the

war. The agency's claims could-

n't be independently verified.

On the day after the attack,

four men in the Bryansk

region that borders Ukraine

and alleged they had carried

The four, identified as Tajik

nationals, appeared in a

Moscow court on terrorism

severe beatings. A number of

accomplices in several Russian

regions, and detentions of peo-

ple possibly linked to the

attackers were reported in

The Russian defense ministry

said nine more drones were

intercepted over the border

regions of Kursk, Belgorod,

Krasnodar and the nearby

Saratov region, bringing the total of attack drones deployed

by Ukraine overnight to 53.

Drone warfare is a key feature

of the war, which has extend-

ed into a third year since

Russia's full-scale invasion of its

neighbor. On the 1,000-kilome-

ter (600-mile) front line, where

fighting is largely bogged down,

to warplanes.

AP

were headed for Ukraine.

Tallinn (Estonia): Russian lar postage stamp issued by authorities on Friday again tried to link the deadly attack on a Moscow concert hall to Ukraine, saying one of the detained suspects had photos on his phone depicting troops in camouflage uniforms with

the Ukrainian flag. Ever since the March 22 mass shooting and fire at the Crocus City Hall concert venue that killed 145 people, Russian officials have sought to blame Ukraine for the massacre, even and the carrying out of the spe-cial military operation," the though Kyiv has denied any involvement and an affiliate of the Islamic State claimed responsibility.

including Authorities President Vladimir Putin, have provided no evidence for the link as they sought to shift the authorities said they captured narrative from the failure by security services to prevent the attack. Russia's top law enforcement agency, the Investigative out the shootings. Putin and Committee, said in a statement other officials claim the four Friday that authorities found photos in one of the suspects' phones depicting "people in camouflage uniforms with the Ukrainian flag against the background of destroyed houscharges and showed signs of es." The phone also bore an others have been arrested as image of a Ukrainian postage stamp with an obscene message, the committee said. It did not release the image, but it Tajikistan, as well. could be referring to a popu-

drones were "intercepted and destroyed" in the Morozovsky district, more than 100 kilometers (60 miles) from the border. The attack damaged a power substation, Rostov Gov. Vasily Golubev said, adding that eight people near the airfield were injured.

Usually well-informed Russian military bloggers confirmed an attempted attack by Ukrainian drones on a military air base in Morozovsk but claimed there were no casualties at the base and no damage

low-cost drones are used by both sides to knock out expensive military hardware.

The Kremlin's forces have used large numbers of Iraniandesigned Shahed drones to bombard urban areas of Ukraine. Kyiv, in turn, has developed a small but fastgrowing defense industry where drones, including deadly unmanned sea vessels, are proving effective.

Russian authorities have long accused Ukraine of launching regular drone attacks on power plants, oil refineries and other targets in western regions of Russia near the border. Last month, Ukraine fired a barrage of 35 drones at such targets, Russia said. Some attacks have reached deep into Russia, including Moscow and as far as 1,200 kilometers (745 miles) east of Ukraine.

Ukraine cannot match the scale of Russia's military, however. Last week, Moscow launched a mass barrage of 99 drones and missiles against Ukraine's energy infrastructure, hitting

regions across the country. Meanwhile, Ukraine's air force said it intercepted 13 Russian drones launched overnight at the southern regions of Odesa, Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropetrovsk, but five mis-

siles got through. Authorities did not report any casualties. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he held a meeting with his top brass focused on the production of attack drones and the manufacture of electronic warfare equipment to intercept incoming drones.

He said late Thursday that the meeting put together "clear written agreements with manufacturers, clear financing and clear delivery deadlines? Authorities will next turn to

"robust and increasing" missile production, he said, as military support from Western partners falls short of what Kyiv hoped for. Zelenskyy said an assess-ment of frontline positions found that Ukraine has "managed to stabilize our positions" despite being outgunned and outnumbered by the Russian army.

reforms 8 B Karachi (PTI): A month after

Pakistan's Supreme Court observed that the conviction of former prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was the result of a mistrial, his grandson and exforeign minister Bilawal Zardari Bhutto has said that the time had come to introduce judicial reforms.

Last month, Pakistan's Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa-led Supreme Court bench concluded that Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) founder Bhutto's conviction in 1979 was the result of a mistrial. The hearing was based on a special case sent in 2011 by then president Asif Ali Zardari to the Supreme Court to revisit his father-inlaw Bhutto's conviction for abetment in a murder case and his eventual hanging in 1979. Addressing party workers and supporters at an Iftar on Thursday in Larkana district on the occasion of the 45th death anniversary of the late Bhutto Bilawal said that the PPP would ask the new federal government to undertake such judicial reforms. "It is time to initiate judicial reforms. The PPI will ask the federal government to undertake these reforms,'

the PPP chairman told the gathering We want to provide speedy justice to the people. We want

to fulfil our promise," Bilawal, the PPP chairman was quoted as saying by The Express Tribune newspaper. Bilawal recalled that his moth-

er and former prime minister late Benazir Bhutto had made the judicial reforms an integral part of the Charter of Democracy (CoD), which was signed with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif in May

2006

Bhutto calls No evidence of Bushra Bibi for judicial being poisoned, says doc

PTI ISLAMABAD

Imran Khan's wife Bushra Bibi has not been given any poisonous substance, her personal physician has said follow-ing a medical checkup after allegations by the ex-prime minister that the former first lady was poisoned while incarcerated at his private residence which was turned into a subiail

On April 2, Khan during the hearing of the 190 million pound Toshakhana corruption case in Adiala jail informed Judge Nasir Javed Rana that there had been an attempt to poison the former first lady and added that she had marks on her skin and tongue as a side effect of the "poisoning".

"I know who is behind it," the 71-year-old former prime minister said, without naming anyone. He said that if any harm came to 49-year-old Bushra, the Pakistan Army chief (Gen Asim Munir) should be held responsible as members of an intelligence agency were con-

trolling everything at his Bani Gala residence in Islamabad and Adiala jail in Rawalpindi. "At this time, there is no evidence of Bushra Bibi being poisoned," Dr Asim Yousuf said while speaking to Geo News, adding: "We are not conducting any medical test to ascertain administration of any poisonous substance to Bushra Bibi as no such symptoms are detected?

The physician said that Bushra Bibi's health deteriorated after taking a meal two months ago. However, she started consuming less food due to health issues, he added. The physician added that he was unaware of her actual health issues that happened two months back. Dr Yousuf said that medical tests should be conducted by keeping given her age and to check for any health problems

including stomach-related issues. He said that he would meet Khan, the founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party the incarcerated founder on Saturday.

Regarding Khan's health, Dr Yousuf confirmed that the former premier was doing well now, however, his appetite was not normal after recovering from a minor illness.

world 09

During her interaction with journalists before the court appearance, the former first lady had also claimed that "three drops of toilet cleaner" were mixed in her food on the eve of Shab-e-Meraj.

She said the food and water served by the jail authority tasted bitter. Responding to a question, Bushra said that "someone" had told her in jail that toilet

cleaner was mixed in her food. She, however, refused to disclose the name of the official. "My eyes swell up, I feel pain in my chest and stomach," the for-

mer first lady had claimed. Earlier in January, Khan and Bushra Bibi were sentenced to 14 years in jail in the Toshakhana corruption case about the illegal sale of state gifts which the former premier received during his term.

has affected our families' lives

every day since. He will forever

live in our hearts. We are thank-

The family of Moore also

released a statement declaring

ful justice was served today."

US man executed for killing Indian national and another person in '02

PTI HOUSTON

41-year-old man convicted A⁴¹-year-old man convector of shooting and killing two people, including an Indian, in the US state of Oklahoma in 2002 has been executed, the state's first execution of the year. Michael Dewayne Smith was executed on Thursday by lethal injection at the Oklahoma State Penitentiary in McAlester town, Oklahoma Attorney General Gentner Drummond said in a statement. Smith had been on death row for the murders of 24year-old Indian store clerk Sharath Pulluru and 40-year-old Janet Moore in separate inci-dents on February 22, 2002. Oklahoma Attorney General released a statement after Smith was declared dead, saying: "I am grateful that justice has been

served." "I pray that today brings some measure of peace for the fami-lies of Janet Miller-Moore and

Sharath Pulluru. It has been a long and difficult 22 years for their loved ones, and my heart aches over the agony they have

endured," he said. "I want the people of Oklahoma to know that the victims of Michael Smith Michael Smith were good and decent people who did not deserve their fate," Drummond said. "Sharath, a bright young man with a generous spirit, was the first in his family to come to the United States to pursue an education. He was fun to be around, was an inspiration to his family, and had a promising future," he said.

He added that the two were murdered because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time. "That was all. I am grateful that justice has been served," he said. In a statement, the Pulluru family said, "Sharath was the life of our family. We are a very close family and his sudden death in such a violent manner

China, Vietnam navigate

through SCS differences

amid heightened conflict

that "justice has been served" and thanking authorities for pursuing the punishment over the past 22 years. "It does not go unnoticed or in vain, as we were constantly reminded this is justice for a loss that has caused a ripple for generations to come,' the family wrote. When asked if he had any last words, Smith responded, "Nah, I'm good," the US media reported. Before his execution, Smith said in a statement: "My life is on the line. Despite new evidence, my attorney Mark Henricksen has informed my family that he will be filing no further appeals on my behalf. I am releasing this statement to demand that Mr Henricksen do his job and fight for my life?

Kishida seeks stronger military Apple lays off more than ties with Washington, others 600 workers in California

AP TOKYO

strengthen military

White House on Wednesday

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said Friday he wants to streamther it: increasingly which Japan considers a security threat. Japan, working to acquire what it calls a "counterstrike" capability, has purchased 400 US Tomahawk long-range cruise missiles. After prohibiting almost all weapons exports, it has relaxed export guidelines twice in recent months, allowing the sale of lethal weapons to countries from which they were licensed and overseas sales of a fighter jet it's co-developing with the UK and Italy The changes have also allowed Japan to ship Japanese-made PAC-3 missiles to the United States to help replace those contributed by Ŵashington to Ukraine. The two leaders are also expected to agree to start discussions on establishing a unified command on each side,

AP WASHINGTON

consolidation.

pany's first big wave of post-

broader wave of tech industry

The iPhone maker notified

losing their jobs, with the lay-

slashed their workforces over the past two years. There was Apple is laying off more a massive surge in hiring dur-ing the COVID-19 pandemic, en people spent ore time

Shehbaz on visit to S Arabia visit from today

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will embark on his maiden three-day visit to Saudi Arabia Saturday to meet the Saudi leadership and discuss issues of mutual interest, it was announced here on Friday. Sharif, who assumed office as Pakistan's prime minister for a second time last month, will also perform Umrah (in Makkah) and offer prayers at the Masiid Nabwi Al-Sharif (in Medina) during the visit from April 6 to 8 during the last days of Ramadan, according to the Foreign Office. The Prime Minister will be accompanied by ministers for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Finance, Information and Economic Affairs, it said.

PTI BEIJING hina and Vietnam on Friday tried to navigate resisted by Beijing. The coast through their bitter differences guard ships of both countries over the South China Sea as ostled to assert their claim their foreign ministers held which both claim as part of talks here amid heightened their territory. On the Foreign Ministers talks tensions between Beijing and Manila over the maritime dis-Vietnamese official media pute. Bui Thanh Son, the reported that Son and Wang affirmed the leading impor-tance of the Vietnam - China Foreign Minister of Vietnam, held talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi as the two relations in each country's for sides reaffirmed their comeign policy, stressing the need mitment to the code of conduct to enhance coordination and agreement in the South China effectively carry out the high-Sea (SCS) besides bolstering level agreements and common trade ties. perceptions to unceasingly

assert its claim over the Second Thomas Shoal in the South

and weapons development cooperation with the United States as well as with other countries such as the Philippines, as he prepares for a visit to the US next week to meet with President Joe Biden.

"Defense industry cooperation between Japan and the United States, as well as with likeminded countries, are extremely important," Kishida said in an interview Friday with selected foreign media, including The Associated Press, at the Prime Minister's Office.

"Within the Japan-US alliance, I do hope to steadily improve deterrence and response capability," he said. Kishida said Japan hopes to promote security cooperation in areas including defense equipment and technology. "By building multi-layered networks of cooperation, we can further expand and

followed by a trilateral summit with Philippine President Ferdinando Marcos Jr. the next day. Kishida is the first Japanese leader to visit Washington as a state guest since then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2015, who revised the interpretation of Japan's pacifist Constitution to allow its self-defense-only principle to also cover its ally, the United States. Japanese officials hope to showcase a rock-solid Japan-US alliance in a number of areas, but a deepening of security and defense ties and an expansion of arms co-development are expected to top the agenda for Kishida's visit. Since adopting a more expansive national security strategy in 2022, Kishida's government has taken bold steps to accelerate the country's military buildup and seen as a major structural change

hopes to show it's willing and

capable of elevating its security

offs becoming effective on May 27, according to reports to regional authorities. The workers were cut from eight offices in Santa Clara, according to the filings under the state's Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act, also known as WARN. But it's not clear which departments or projects the employees were involved in. Apple did not immediately

respond to a request for comment early Friday. The Cupertino, California, compato enhance interoperability and ny had been a notable exception as other tech companies

and money online, and big pandemic job cuts amid a tech companies are still larger than they were before the pandemic. Still, as growth slows, companies are focusing 614 workers in multiple offices on cutting costs. on March 28 that they were

In a recent regulatory filing, Apple said it had about 161,000 full-time equivalent employees.

Amazon announced earlier this week a fresh round of layoffs, this time at its cloud computing business AWS. In recent months, video game maker Electronic Arts said it's cutting about 5 per cent of its workforce, Sony said its axing about 900 jobs in its PlayStation division, Cisco Systems revealed plans to lay off more than 4,000 workers and social media company Snap, owner of Snapchat, announced its slashing 10 per cent of its global workforce.

The Prime Minister is expected to meet the Crown Prince Minister and Prime Mohammad bin Salman and discuss issues of mutual interests. The leaders will also exchange views on regional and global developments.

Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Taiwan besides China have counterclaims over the South China Sea and Beijing remains the central focus of the dispute as it claims most parts of the area are hotly contested by the rest. Both China and Vietnam ruled by their respective Communist parties fought a bitter war in 1979 besides periodic tensions between their navies over the South China Sea dispute. China seeks to maintain close ties with Vietnam with bilateral initiatives pacifying Hanoi not to ratchet up the tensions over the South China Sea.

Son's visit is taking place amid a bitter conflict between China and the Philippines as Manila backed by the US is trying to

'With regard to sea-related issues, the two sides underlined the importance of seriously implementing the agreements and common perceptions reached between the two Parties and countries' leaders on properly controlling and settling differences," a report in the VN Express said. Wang told Son that both sides should jointly safeguard international equity and justice and continue to support each other on issues concerning major common interests. It is necessary to be vigilant against engaging in camp confrontations in the region and cobbling together various "small circles" to under mine regional peace and stabil-

ity, Wang said.

develop bilateral ties.

New mass graves reveal cracks in reconciliation efforts

AP HUYE (RWANDA)

The diggers' hoes scrape the brown soil, looking for and often finding — human bone fragments. The women then wipe the bone pieces with their hands as others watch in solemn silence.

The digging goes on, a scene that's become all too familiar in a verdant area of rural southern Rwanda, where the discovery in October of human remains at the site of a house under construction triggered another search for new mass graves believed to hold victims of the 1994 genocide against Rwanda's Tutsi.

In the months since, Rwandan authorities say the remains of at least 1,000 people have been found in this farming community in the district of Huye, a surprisingly high number after three decades of government efforts to give genocide victims dignified burials. As Rwanda prepares to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the geno-

cide next week, continuing discoveries of mass graves are a stark reminder not only of the country's determination to reconcile with its grim past but also of the challenges it faces in aiming for lasting peace. Speaking to The Associated

Press, the head of a prominent genocide survivors' group and several other Rwandans said the discoveries underscore that more needs to be done for true reconciliation.

Rwanda has made it a criminal offense to withhold information about a previously unknown mass grave. For years perpetrators of the 1994 genocide, including those who served prison terms and were later released, have been urged to speak up and say what they know. Yet the mass graves are still mostly found by accident, leading to new arrests and traumatising survivors all over again. The October discovery led to the arrest of Jean Baptiste Hishamunda, 87, and four of his relatives. After the remains

of six people were discovered under his home, diggers started going through his entire property, finding dozens and then hundreds more remains as their search extended to other sites in Huye.

response capability.

An estimated 800,000 Tutsi were killed by extremist Hutu in massacres that lasted over 100 days in 1994. Some moderate Hutu who tried to protect members of the Tutsi minority also were targeted.

The genocide was ignited on April 6 when a plane carrying President Juvénal Habyarimana, a member of the majority Hutu, was shot down in the capital Kigali. The Tutsi were blamed for downing the plane and killing the president. Enraged, gangs of Hutu extremists began killing Tutsi, backed by the army and police. The government of President Paul Kagame, whose rebel group stopped the genocide and whose party has ruled the East African country since 1994, has tried to bridge ethnic

divisions. The government imposed a tough penal code to punish genocide and outlaw the ideology behind it, and Kagame has fostered a culture of obedience among the country's 14 million people. Rwandan ID cards no longer identify a person by ethnicity and lessons about the genocide are part of the curriculum in schools.

Hundreds of community projects, backed by the government or civic groups, focus on uniting Rwandans and, every April, the nation joins hands in sombre commemorations of

the genocide anniversary. Today, serious crimes fuelled by ethnic hatred are rare in this small country where Hutu, Tutsi and Twa live side by side but signs persist of what authorities say is a genocidal ideology, citing concealing information about undiscovered mass graves as an example. Then there are incidents of villagers asking mass-grave investigators if they are search-

ing for valuable minerals or dumping dog carcasses at memorial sites, according to Naphtal Ahishakiye, executive secretary of Ibuka, the genocide survivors' group based in Kigali. "It's like saying, What we lost during the genocide are dogs," Ahishakiye said. There are still those who resist coming forward to say what they witnessed, he said. "We still need to improve, to teach, to approach people, up to (when) they become able to tell us what happened." As more mass graves are dis-

covered, Tutsi survivors "start to doubt" the good intentions of their Hutu neighbours, he said. Their pleas for information about relatives lost in the killings go unanswered. In the village of Ngoma, where shacks roofed with corrugated

sheets dot lush farmland, diggers come across decaying shoes and pieces of torn clothing among skulls and bones. The survivors are traumatised all over again.

"I have tried very hard to for get," said Beata Mujawayezu, her voice catching as she recalled the killing of her 12-year-old sister at a roadblock on April 25, 1994.

The girl pleaded for her life with militiamen, going down on her knees in front of a gang leader whom she addressed as "my father." She was hacked with a machete.

'She was a lovely girl," Mujawayezu said of her sister as she watched the digging at a mass grave site on a recent afternoon in her Tutsi-dominated neighbourhood. "One day, hopefully, we will get to know where she was buried." Augustine Nsengiyumva, another survivor in Ngoma, said the new mass grave discoveries have left him disappoint ed in his Hutu neighbours, whom he had grown to trust. "Imagine sleeping on top of genocide victims," he said, referring to cases where human remains are found under peo ple's homes.

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money 10

he said.

"Further, the actual outflow

rates for some of the saving

deposits may also be higher

than 5 per cent and hence the

proposal to review the LCR framework is positive from the

liquidity risk management of

Parijat Agrawal, Head — Fixed

Income at Union Mutual Fund,

expects interest rate cuts in the third quarter of the fiscal. He

also said the RBI is expected to keep liquidity neutral so that

further transmission of higher

Nilesh Shah, MD at Kotak Mahindra AMC, said the RBI

has achieved the objective of

Growth is higher than market expectations, Shah said, and

added the market trusts the

RBI to lower the inflation to

stability, trust and growth.

banks," Gupta said.

rates can continue.

midpoint.

RBI decision shows resolve to ensure price stability: Experts adverse development at a bank,

PTI MUMBAI

eserve Bank's monetary Receiping the key interest rate unchanged and focus on moderating inflation shows a resolve on the part of the central bank to ensure price stability and sustained economic growth, experts opined on Friday.

NEW DELHI | SATURDAY | APRIL 6, 2024

The RBI kept the benchmark interest rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the seventh time in a row, citing concerns over food inflation in view of IMD's prediction of above-normal maximum temperatures from April to June

As the central bank held key policy rates steady, the EMIs on home and auto loans are likely to remain stable for some more time. The RBI has kept interest rates unchanged since February 2023. RBI's

by 'We stand commitment for 'unwavering focus on price stability' to ringfence the economy from global headwinds, including geo-political situation and the

disruptions," Assocham Secretary General Deepak

the pioneer

Sood said. The central bank has successfully shielded the from economy global uncertainties over the past few years, he added. President of industry body PHDCCI Sanjeev Agrawal too said the RBI's decision on its

policy rates will propel economic activity and boost economic growth. "We expect a repo rate cut as

and when headline inflation softens around 4.5 per cent," he said.

The RBI also retained its growth and inflation forecast for the current fiscal at 7 per cent and 4.5 per cent, respectively. Raoul Kapoor, Co-CEO of Andromeda Sales and Distribution, the RBI governor highlighted how inflation is gradually decreasing and

emphasised the robust growth in India's economic landscape. "These domestic conditions of diminishing inflation and

chain promising growth prospects ssocham Deepak cut. We anticipate that in the upcoming MPC meetings, the RBI will likely announce a rate cut ranging from 25 to 50 basis points, provided the current conditions continue improve," he said.

Commenting on the monetary policy, S K Narvar, Group Chairman of Trident Realty, said the RBI's decision reflects a strategic approach aimed at nurturing economic recovery and fostering stability. "This move is set to benefit

potential homebuyers by ensuring affordability and sustaining momentum in the housing market. With consumer demand driving the real estate sector, especially in luxury housing, the decision to maintain the repo rate status feasible quo supports macroeconomic indicators and encourages new homebuyers to invest in property," Narvar said

HS Bhatia, managing director, Kelwon Electronics and Appliances Pvt Ltd, the



Patra, M Rajeshwar Rao and T Rabi Shankar arrives for a Press conference after delivering the Monetary Policy Statement, at the RBI headquarters in Mumbai

manufacturing partner of Daewoo India, opined that while the RBI's decision to hold the repo rate is positive for consumer durables, a waitand-watch approach might emerge. "Consumers may prioritise

concern. However, a strong 7 per cent GDP growth (projection) is a confidence booster," he added. Ayush Lohia, CEO of Lohia

Auto, was of the opinion that

essentials if inflation remains a offers a sense of steadiness within the broader economic framework

Within the EV sector, stable interest rates can have a favourable influence on the accessibility and financing of the central bank's decision electric vehicles, stimulating

Bank, NBFC stocks gain after

greater consumer adoption of cleaner transportation alternatives. This corresponds with our objective of advancing sustainable mobility and mitigating emissions," he added. carbon

While unveiling the monetary RBI policy, Governor Das Shaktikanta also announced several other developmental and regulatory measures. Das announced that certain modifications to the Liquidity Coverage (LCR) framework Ratio are proposed towards facilitating better management of liquidity risk by banks.

Anil Gupta, Senior Vice President, Co Group Head-Financial Sector Ratings at ICRA, said typically the savings deposits attract a lower outflow rate of 5 per cent in the next 30 days while calculating the LCR.

However, the saving deposits mobilised through higher interest rates on saving accounts are not only interest sensitive but may also be prone to higher run-off in any

The Reserve Bank will be releasing the minutes of the MPC meeting on April 19. The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled during June 5 to 7, 2024. India exports register

European, Latin American

inroads

and

Latin

trade

been

healthy growth to

nations in 2023

India forex kitty jumps PTI NEW DELHI to new all time high

PTI MUMBAI

India's foreign exchange reserves increased USD 2.951 billion to USD 645.583 billion for the week ended March 29, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Friday.

This is the sixth consecutive week of a jump in overall reserves. The kitty had increased USD 140 million to USD 642.631 billion in the previous reporting week.

The country's forex kitty had in September 2021 reached an all-time high of USD 642.453 billion. The reserves took a hit as the central bank deployed the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments since last year.

For the week ended March 29, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased USD 2.354 billion to USD 570.618 billion,

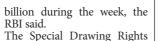
PTI MUMBAI

kets.

data released on Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound, and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves increased USD 673 million to USD 52.16



The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down USD 73 million to USD 18.145 billion, the apex bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF was also down USD 2 million to USD 4.66 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed

Interest-rate sensitive bank and

NBFC stocks gained on Friday after the Reserve Bank kept the benchmark interest rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the seventh time in a row.

Among the banking counters, Kotak Mahindra Bank jumped 2.09 per cent to end at Rs 1,785.25 and HDFC Bank went 1.41 per cent higher to finish at Rs 1,549.40 apiece on the BSE. Also, State Bank of India grew 0.67 per cent to end at Rs 764.35 each, IndusInd Bank climbed 0.66 per cent to settle at Rs 1,554 and ICICI Bank rose 0.51 per cent to finish at Rs 1,082.35. However, Bank of Baroda fell 0.24 per cent to close at Rs 268.70 per piece on the exchange

The BSE Bankex increased 451.11 points or 0.83 per cent to

Sensex gains marginally to scale new peak



Also, shares of LIC Housing Finance rose 0.14 per cent to settle at Rs 645 apiece on the BSE. On the other hand, shares of Bajaj Finance declined 1.48 per

cent to close at Rs 7,175.65. The BSE Financial Services jumped 97.52 points or 0.92 per cent to end at 10,679.39. The Nifty Bank climbed 432.25 points or 0.90 per cent to settle at 48,493.05. Bouncing back from the early fall, the 30-share BSE Sensex

selling

TOP GAINERS

202 Kotak Bank

Bajaj Finserv

HOFC Bank

climbed 20.59 points or 0.03 per cent to settle at 74,248.22 points. The broader Nifty ended with a marginal loss of 0.95 points at 22,513.70.

On Friday, the Reserve Bank of India said it has kept the benchmark interest rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the seventh time in a row, citing concerns over food inflation in view of IMD's prediction of above normal maximum temperatures during April to June

As RBI has held key policy rates steady, the EMIs on home and auto loans are likely to remain stable for some more time. The central bank has kept interest rates unchanged since February 2023. While unveiling the first bi-monthly monetary policy for the current financial year, RBI has retained its growth and inflation forecast for the current fiscal at 7 per cent and 4.5 per cent, respectively. "After a detailed assessment of

the evolving macroeconomic and financial developments and the outlook, it (MPC) decided by a 5 to 1 majority to keep the policy reporate unchanged at 6.50 per cent," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said.

He further said that the sixmember MPC would remain focused on withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns with the target, while supporting growth.

Germany's DAX and London's FTSE 100 lost 1.57 per cent and 0.90 per cent, respectively, while CAC40 of France went down by 1.36 per cent. The US markets closed largely lower in the commisted to do on Thursday

overnight trade on Thursday.

The global sentiment was dampened by the rise in oil prices and tensions in the Middle East. Investors remain attentive to S non-farm payroll and uper ployment data, seeking clarity on the Federal Reserve's future rate path," Nair said. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,136.47 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. On Thursday, the BSE benchmark Sensex surged 350.81 points or 0.47 per cent to set-tle at its lifetime high of 74,227.63. The NSE Nifty also hit its fresh peak of 22,514.65, gaining 80 points or 0.36 per cent.

recorded healthy have growth in European nations like Romania, Czech Montenegro, Republic, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Luxemburg, Iceland, Ireland, and Austria. 'The growth points towards India's trade resilience and desnite rowth lino uncertainties and deceleration of the economies in Europe," the official added. Similarly, in Latin American countries, India's exports registered high growth in 2023 in Cuba, Uruguay, Paraguay, Guyana, Peru, Mexico, and Guatemala

the low of 73 946 92 The broader NSE Nifty ended with a marginal loss of 0.95 points at 22,513.70. As many as 28 components of the 50-share benchmark ended in the red.

BSE Sensex Change ____+20.59 74,227.63 74,350

In contrast, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finserve, HDFC Bank, ITC and SBI bucked the trend and ended the session with a gain of up to 2.09 per cent. BSE 1 ined 0.1

PTI NEW DELHI Indian exporters made further inroads in European American nations in 2023, registering healthy growth in countries such as Romania, Montenegro, Austria, and Guatemala, an official said on Friday. India's merchandise export rose 2.1 per cent to the European Union (EU) in

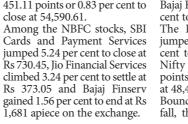
2023 despite headwinds being faced by large developed markets like the EU and the UK due to high cost of living, weak external demand, and monetary

tightening, the commerce ministry official said. "India's expansion challenges in 2023," the official said.

India's merchandise exports

export

has



Bank of India (RBI the benchmark interest rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the seventh time in a row It also expressed concerns over food inflation given IMD's prediction of above-normal maximum temperatures during Aprillune

Equity benchmark index Sensex regis-tered marginal gains to hit fresh lifetime

high on Friday after the Reserve Bank

maintained the status quo on key interest

rates amid a negative trend in global mar-

The six-member rate-setting panel of the

The 30-share BSE Sensex inched up 20.59 points or 0.03 per cent to settle at a fresh record of 74,248.22. The index oscillated between the intra-day peak of 74,361.11 and

the RBI po icv meet ed as anticipated, concerns over food inflation and warnings of a heat wave tampered sentiment," said Vinod Nair. Head of Research, Geoiit Financial Services. Among the Sensex constituents, 18 stocks closed in negative with UltraTech Cement, L&T, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finance and Tech Mahindra being major laggards.

Other heavyweights like Asian Paints, Maruti, Titan and JSW Steel also saw heavy



midcap and smallcap indices rose 0.50 per cent

Global oil benchmark Brent crude advanced 0.11 per cent to USD 90.75 a barrel.

Asian markets were lower, with Japan's Nikkei 225 losing 1.96 per cent and Hang Seng of Hong Kong declining 0.01 per cent. South Koran index Kospi fell 1.01 per cent. European markets were trading in the red.

BUSINESS BRIEF

GGSIPU SIGNS MOU WITH UNIVERSITY OF LADAKH

New Delhi: Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University (GGSIPU) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with University of Ladakh (UoL) to foster research and education programmes for students, scholars and faculty members. As per the MoU, both the universities will mutually plan and conduct lectures/ workshops/conferences at the state/national/international level. The students will undertake field visits, trainings, internships, placements, etc. They will jointly undertake study/research projects, and collectively develop MOOCs and learning modules in the area of Information and communication technology, Entrepreneurship and value-added/skill enrichment programmes for students.



THE COTTAGE NEW CARPET GALLERY INAUGURATED

New Delhi: Rachna Shah, IAS Secretary (Textiles) inaugurated the New Carpet Gallery at "the Cottage " on April 4 in the presence of Manoj Lal, Managing Director, The Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India Ltd, Ajay Gupta, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, Amrit Raj, Development Commissioner (Handicrafts), Dr M Beena, IAS, Development Commissioner (Handlooms). The Indian carpets are prized possessions of any Art Connoisseur.

India will need huge pool of company secretaries Rupee rises 9 paise to close



PTI SINGAPORE

 $A^{\,\rm s}$ the Indian economy progresses bound of the USD 5 trillion target over the next two years and the USD 10 trillion target by 2030, the demand for company secretaries will be tremendous to manage the inflow of capital both from the Indian and international investors, a top domain expert said on Friday.

"We have to increase the pool of Company Secretaries (CS) to 95,000 by 2030 and to 1.4 lakh by 2047, the year of Viksit Bharat economy driven by capital flow and the government-initiated development," infrastructure Narasimhan, President of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), said here.

Currently, ICSI has around 70,000 CS members and over 2 lakh students, he told PTL

aspects resonating with the Indian economy. "We, as CS, are the most recognised profession in the capital market, handling compliances across the board of listed and unlisted companies. SEBI has appointed us as the compliance offices and it is mandatory," he said. Called the Governance professionals, Company Secretaries are at the forefront

of managing capital flow from the market, he elaborated.

The company secretaries ensure that the governance is properly done by all corporations across India.

Narasimhan is confident of the Indian economic progress, which though was slowed down by the COVID-19 pandemic over the past two years. But he was quick to add that the economic

growth pace was being accelerated. Further, India is the only fast-paced growing economy which is giving investors the best rate of return on Narasimhan gave an insight into the investments, he pointed out, adding that

funds will come as investors are looking at ways of ploughing their monies and India, for that matter, has become the best destination for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI).

To sustain 8 per cent GDP growth, the huge infrastructure development will continue, the manufacturing sector will be boosted and exports will be increased through the global supply chain, he said. Narasimhan also explained that ICSI holds international conferences to gain insight into the global markets and take insight into the global markets and take on rich pickings for members.

on rich pickings for members. "We are building synergies and raising the capabilities of the CS profession through global interactions," he said. Officiating at the two-day conference, the Indian High Commissioner to Singapore, Dr Shilpak Ambule, highlighted India's role on the global platform platform

He said: "The theme of the conference is particularly apt, as fostering resilient and sustainable economies is crucial for both India and Singapore. ICSI plays a pivotal role in ensuring good corporate governance"

"By equipping Company Secretaries with the necessary knowledge and skills, ICSI fosters ethical conduct and compliance within companies, which in turn contributes to a more robust and sustainable financial ecosystem," he said. The envoy further added that Company Secretaries act as guardians of transparency, facilitating effective boardroom practices and ensuring accurate disclosures to stakeholders. ICSI's Immediate Past President Manish

Gupta informed more than 100 delegates at the conference and over 3,000 logged into the event through live streaming on ICSI's initiatives for equipping professionals beyond boundaries for strengthening the basic structure of Corporate Governance.

at 83.30 against US dollar PTI MUMBAI

 $T^{he\ rupee\ appreciated\ 9\ paise}_{to\ close\ at\ 83.30\ (provision-al)\ against\ the\ US\ dollar\ as\ the}$ Reserve Bank of India on Friday kept the benchmark interest rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the seventh time in a row. However, a strong US dollar against major rivals overseas and elevated crude oil prices capped sharp gains for the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.44 against the greenback. The unit hit an intraday high of 83.26 and a low of 83.45.

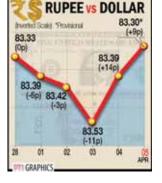
The local unit finally settled at 83.30 (provisional) against the dollar, 9 paise higher from its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee recovered 14 paise to close at 83.39 against the US dollar.

The rupee gained as the RBI's monetary policy remained the focus. The central bank kept CPI and GDP projections for FY25 unchanged at 4.5 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively, said Anuj Choudhary Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. After a detailed assessment of

the evolving macroeconomic and financial developments and the outlook, it (MPC) decided by a 5 to 1 majority to keep the policy repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said. He further said that the six-

However, an optimistic eco-nomic outlook by the RBI Governor and any intervention by the central bank may support the rupee at lower levels," Choudhary added.



member MPC would remain focused on the withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns with the target while supporting

growth. While unveiling the first bimonthly monetary policy for the current financial year, the RBI has retained its growth and inflation forecast for the current fiscal at 7 per cent and 4.5 per

cent, respectively. We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias on risk aversion in global markets and a strong US dollar. The surge in crude oil prices and FII outflows may also weigh on the rupee.

"Renewed geopolitical tensions in the Middle East may put

downside pressure on risk assets.

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he pioneer

ART & CINEMA vacity 11

CINEMA REDISCOVERS

SWATANTRA VEER SAVARKAR is a commendable work of art that sheds light on an important, yet largely neglected, chapter of India's historic struggle for Independence from British Raj says SAKSHI PRIYA

he film Swatantra Veer Savarkar, directed by Randeep Hooda, who is also the eponymous protagonist of the narrative, tells the untold story of the freedom fighter Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, portraying his journey from heroism to imprisonment. The movie depicts Savarkar's evolution from a hero to a prisoner and highlights his strong ideology and the challenges he faced in the Kaala Paani jail in the Anadamans.

Randeep Hooda has clearly excelled himself in portraying Savarkar, taking his acting skills a notch higher. The movie masterfully depicts the jail scenes where Savarkar's struggles are laid bare to a generation that may be



unfamiliar with India's tirelessly and selflessly fought freedom struggle.

The attention to detail sets Veer Savarkar apart in a league of its

own Hooda's unbelievable physical transformation (the actor is supposed to have lost 30 kgs to fit into his character), enhances the overall authenticity of the

portrayal. Hooda's exceptional acting notwithstanding, the film does suffer from some directorial shortcomings, but they seem too minor given the audience's reaction to the film. Ankita Lokhande's portrayal of Yamma Bai is impactful despite her short screen time. Overall, the film underlines Randeep Hooda's tremendous potential as an artist. Swatantra Veer Savarkar explores different aspects of the freedom fighter, both from his own standpoint as well as that of Mahatma Gandhi's. While the film has been hailed for its historical authenticity, some feel it is rather slow-paced and that better directorial intervention would have curtailed the shortcomings. For a film that

stretches for three full hours, it could have done a bit more to break the monotony. That pace and drama was missing. Also, there is a general view that the film did not really delve deep enough into Savarkar's history because most of it has been either ignored or erased.

Swatantra Veer Savarkar in the final analysis is a commendable effort and a work of art that sheds light on an important yet largely neglected chapter of India's historic struggle for Independence from British Raj. It is a mustwatch for anyone interested not just in the life of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar but also the inexplicable mystery that surrounds this historical figure.

BOLD ATTEMPT, WEAK DELIVERY

Bollywood's *Crew* boasts of a stylish takeoff but is grounded by an uneven plot, says SAKSHI PRIYA



The recently released Crew promises a glamorous, global A adventure with a talented cast. However, the story line hits some bumps immediately upon take off to not really reach the heights it intended to. The film follows three flight attendants -Jasmine (Kareena Kapoor Khan), Geeta Sethi (Tabu), and Divya Rana (Kriti Sanon) who are tired of their monotonous routines and yearn for financial freedom.

The undeniable strength of Crew lies in its leading ladies. Kareena Kapoor Khan delivers a captivating performance as Jasmine, the mastermind behind the operation. She seamlessly blends ambition with desperation, creating a character that's both strong and vulnerable. Tabu brings her signature elegance to Geeta Sethi, the seasoned flight attendant with a hidden adventurous streak. Kriti Sanon completes the trio as Divya Rana, injecting the film with wide-eyed innocence and a determination to prove herself. Their on-screen chemistry is the heart and soul of the film. Their hilarious mishaps during their escapades are where Crew truly shines.

Director Rajesh A Krishnan creates a visually stunning portrayal of the airline industry in Crew. Luxury airplane cabins, breathtaking aerial views, and carefully designed flight attendant uniforms all contribute to a sense of escapism. These visuals complement the film's central theme, which explores the allure of a life far from

ordinary. The biggest missed opportunity in Crew is the heist itself. The plot unfolds too quickly, lacking the tension and intricate planning that make a daring heist film exciting. The stakes could have been higher, with a

more elaborate execution, to create a thrilling experience for the audience. Instead, the film seems a remake of the real life misadventures of Vijay Mallya and Kingfisher airlines. The plot as much as the climax could have been more engaging, with more complex challenges to grab the audience's attention. The supporting oles, such as Diljit Dosanjh's love interest, feel underdeveloped and their stories incomplete, leaving viewers wanting more depth in their narratives. Kapil Sharma's comedic talents are underutilized in a brief and somewhat forgettable appearance.

The film feels like a promotional tool for brands, with numerous brands featured heavily. It seems almost like a game to remember all the brand names after watching the movie. Brands like Wow Momo make an appearance, but the movie script itself feels anything but "Wow." Other brands like Zomato, Amul, and Ajio are also prominently featured. Despite this, Crew offers a refreshing perspective on a female-driven heist genre. It celebrates female empowerment and the strength of female friendships. Kareena Kapoor Khan, Tabu, and Kriti Sanon deliver strong performances that hold the film together, even when the plot falters. The heart of the film lies in the mutual trust between these women, showcasing their resilience and unwavering support for each other. While the narrative could have been more refined, the movie boasts a perfect cast. It's a female-centric film, and everyone plays their roles perfectly. The lighthearted moments, message of female empowerment, and stylish fashion-the ladies look amazing throughout the movie-make Crew an albeit enjoyable, uneven, entertainment ride.

LOSE YOURSELF IN A MAZE OF COLOUR

The recently concluded Art Maze by the KIRAN NADAR MUSEUM OF ART celebrated people-to-people connection as much as it celebrated the beauty of art itself, writes SAKSHI PRIYA





you got to create something special together. The event celebrated people-to-people connection as much as it celebrated the beauty of art itself. The Art Maze stands out as a wonderful example of how the

⊣he Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA) opened its doors in 2010 as the first museum in India focused on modern and contemporary art. It was special because it helped people learn about art and how it connects to our exhibitions, culture through publications, and educational programs.

Last month, KNMA recently embarked on a collaborative project with Nexus Select Citywalk for a one-of-a-kind experience called the Art Maze. This was not any ordinary exhibition. It was a journey inspired by the works of Indian legends like Lakshman Pai, Raja Ravi Verma, Jamini Roy, SH Raza, and Vivan Sundram. And as one walked through this mesmerising maze, art came alive to gently embrace you and make you a part of that artistic experience.

The Art Maze was designed to spark the participants' creativity and let

their inner selves shine. It was an inspiring gift for aspiring artists, as it allowed them to indulge themselves for an hour, paint with colours from their imaginative palette and share their artistic vision. To the credit of the organisers, the ambience was magical, and it encouraged people of all ages to pick up brushes to create and colour their own masterpieces. Be it a seasoned artist or a rank beginner, the Art Maze

truly provide space for one's artistic expressions to run unbridled. Everyone and anyone was invited to this artistic adventure with families, especially kids, exploring their creativity amid fun and relaxation. The Art Maze was not just about making art; it was about making memories. It was a place where families and friends could bond over their shared love of art. Whether you came with your families, your best friend, or simply by yourself, artist within us never fades away. Seeing people colouring the maze was mesmerizing and therapeutic. It was an art platform where everyone got to express themselves. Imagine a maze, but getting lost in it instead. One even got to paint the walls! Kids, parents, grandparents - everyone grabbed a brush and added their splash of colour. Like a never-ending Holi celebration, even the walls came alive with a burst of colours, alongside creativity.

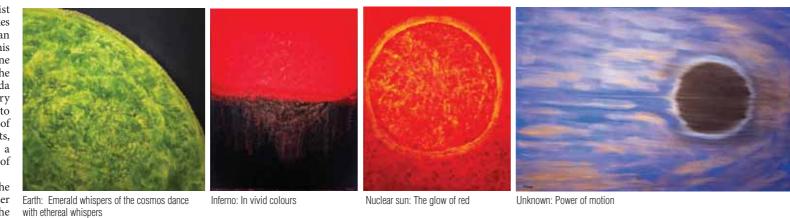
The exhibition travelled beyond the narrow realms of the term itself to turn into an immersive journey of creativity, imagination, and the enduring spirit of art. An impact that will definitely last a lifetime, reminding us of the power of art to inspire, unite, and uplift.

A voyage through cosmos and inner self

The Divine Elements Vol I, an art exhibition unveils the cosmic fusion of artistry by DIVYAMAN SINGH

enowned artist Divyaman Singh is takes Rart enthusiasts on an ethereal odyssey through his latest exhibition, "The Divine Elements Vol I," curated by the discerning Shahzada Khurram. This visionary promises collection to seamlessly merge the realms of astronomy, earthly elements, and spirituality into a captivating exploration of artistic expression.

Set against the backdrop of the Kalamkar Gallery in Bikaner House, New Delhi, the exhibition opens its doors today, offering attendees the exclusive opportunity to immerse themselves in Singh's innovative creations and delve into the depths of the artist's creative process.



Recognized for his remarkable enigmatic mysteries of the ability to harmoniously blend universe with the tangible and spiritual facets of human diverse elements within his artwork, Divyaman Singh existence. presents a collection that Elements Vol I" serves as a intricately weaves together the visual symphony, inviting

viewers to contemplate the profound connections between the celestial and terrestrial "The Divine realms.

In Singh's own words, painting becomes a dialogue between

the medium to blend the the essence of spirituality. It's akin narrates

the artist and his canvas, mingle with earthly elements, wherein oil on canvas becomes forging a connection between vast universe and beauty of space with the humanity. Each brushstroke tale of to a cosmic dance, where stars interconnectedness, inviting

spectators to behold a vibrant world where the visible and invisible converge in sublime harmony.

The curator behind this extraordinary exhibition, Shahzada Khurram, brings his keen eye for artistic subtlety and a dedication to showcasing avant-garde voices in the art "The Divine Elements world. Vol I" stands as a testament to Khurram's unwavering commitment to curating exhibitions that transcend conventional boundaries and spotlight artists whose work eaves an indelible imprint on the cultural landscape. "The Khurram observes,

Divine Elements Vol I

seamlessly mixes spirituality

and earthly elements on

canvas. Singh's adept use of oil

painting crafts a mesmerizing journey where the celestial and terrestrial realms unite seamlessly.

Singh's mastery shines through his symbolic portrayal of celestial bodies and earthly elements, weaving a visual narrative that prompts introspection. The color palette, blending celestial blues with earthy hues and golden accents, elevates each artwork to a spiritual realm. This exhibition transcends artistic confines, encouraging viewers ponder to interconnectedness of the

cosmos. "The Divine Elements Vol I" isn't merely a collection; it's a visual masterpiece orchestrating a cosmic ballet of beauty and spirituality," he adds.

sports 12



Mumbai Indians get Suryakumar boost

PREMIER LEAGUE

PTI MUMBAI

n a big boost for struggling Mumbai Indians, world number one T20 batter Suryakumar Yadav trained with the team here on Friday after a long injury layoff and unleashed his trademark shots without any visible discomfort, raising hopes that he could compete in the team's next IPL match against Delhi Capitals. Five-time champions Mumbai Indians are languishing at the bottom of the 10-team table, having lost all three matches so far and if Suryakumar plays, the Hardik Pandya-led team will hope that his presence helps them with the anticipated turnaround.

the pioneer

The 33-old aggressive batter has been out of action since January. He underwent a surgery to treat sports hernia and was also nursing an ankle injury which he had sustained during India's tour of South Africa late last year.

Suryakumar was the first to arrive for the training session at the Wankhede Stadium, more than an hour before his teammates came for the afternoon session.

Struggling Royal Challengers Bengaluru and high-flying Rajasthan Royals bizarrely have

similar worries to address when

they face each other in the

Indian Premier League here on

The eighth place where RCB are

currently on the 10-team table

is a fair indication of their trou-

bles, but Rajasthan's all-win

record so far and the resultant

second place do not necessari-

the intertwining factor between

The RCB top-order comprising skipper Faf du Plessis, Glenn

Maxwell, Cameron Green and

Rajat Patidar is a storehouse of

talent and explosiveness. But

none of them have fired either

in isolation or in unison, except

star batter Virat Kohli, the cur-

rent Orange Cap holder with 203 runs, who has made two

ly mirror their turmoil

PTI 📕 JAIPUR

Saturday

them.

fifties.



Suryakumar walked into one of the two nets and batted for more than an hour, not looking to exert himself but getting his body in rhythm and getting his strokes going a few days after he was given the clearance to join the Mumbai Indians' squad by the National Cricket Academy (NCA) staff.

The right-handed batter unleashed strokes in all parts of the ground while batting against throwdown specialists and MI spinner Kumar Kartikeya. He hit the ball exactly the way he wanted, middling most of his strokes and also practiced his trademark flick shot over the fine-leg region.

The team is coming off a short break after taking a trip to Jamnagar following its third straight loss in the ongoing tournament, the last one being a six-wickets defeat Rajasthan Royals on April 1. Meanwhile, in the adjicent path Dalhi Royals on April 1. Meanwhile, in the adjacent nets, Delhi Capitals and Australia batter David Warner had a long hit among the others. Mumbai's Ranji Trophy bowler Mohit Awasthi was also seen bowling to the Delhi Capitals' batters during their training.



Virat under lot of pressure this IPL

PTI 📕 MUMBAI

Virat Kohli is "under a lot of pressure" in the ongoing IPL owing to the collective failure of Royal Challengers Bengaluru Challengers Bengaluru batters, feels former Australia captain Steve Smith who wants the Indian superstar's RCB teammates to come good

in the supporting act. Kohli has waged a lone battle for RCB this IPL season with 203 runs in four matches at 67.66 with two fifties. The second-best batter, Dinesh Karthik, is way behind with 90

runs in as many games. Despite Kohli's consistency, RCB have faltered with three losses in four matches throwing them as far back as the seventh spot in the points table. The likes of Glenn Maxwell, skipper Faf du Plessis and Cameron Green have been underwhelming so far with the bat.

"He needs the other key batters to stand up with him, and if they do that, they can turn things around for their season. But, at the moment, they're not so a lot of pressure is on Virat," Smith, a member of the Star Sports Incredible Star Cast, told PTI in an exclusive interaction at the channel's studio here.

out and put extra pressure on himself. He'd just go out and play and see what happens in

that game." Smith rubbished the criticism which Kohli has faced time and again in his career over his batting strike-rate saying that no player in the world can read situations as well as the Indian batter. Kohli has been

What he does really well, and probably better than most people in the world, is (that) he sums up the conditions and

grounds," he added.

I'm not fussed about the strike

Smith also touched upon another controversy-mired sub-plot in the IPL — Hardik Pandya's captaincy of Mumbai Indians and the fan backlash he is facing. He understands why Pandya has been subi cted to ieering three matches so far, but also wants fans to stop holding on to the past.

An underwhelming top-order is Yashasvi Jaiswal entered this iteration of IPL on the back of some excellent recent efforts, but the left-handed opener has made just 39 runs from three matches, and Jos Buttler offers a similar story.

RCB, RR look to tackle similar

The England T20 captain is yet to be in his intimidating self, and has managed 35 runs from three outings and his strike-rate across these matches is a mere

owed a glimpse of his aroun



The lone missing piece in Rajasthan's bowling, rather sur-prising at that, is the patchy form of Ravichandran Ashwin, who has taken one wicket from three matches while giving away 8.3 runs per over.

But the seasoned off-spinner can turn that around quickly, and he has a fine record against RCB as well However, going by their last four matches, RCB seem to be lack-

The Royals' batting has largely ing the variety or strength in Samson (109 runs, one fifty) and the highly-improved Riyan Parag (181 runs, 2 fifties) and at some point, the duo will require solid support from others. However, Rajasthan have an edge over their opponents in the bowling department. Pacers Trent Boult and Nandre Burger and veteran leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal have worked up a nice early rhythm and have shared 16 wickets between



Kuldeep advised rest as precautionary measure for groin niggle

PTI MUMBAI

Indian spinner Kuldeep Yadav is nursing a groin niggle and has been advised rest as a precautionary measure by the Delhi Capitals team management in the ongoing Indian Premier

World Cup hopeful, National Cricket Academy's sports science and medical team will have a big say in Kuldeep's injury and rehab management.

It is mandatory for franchises to report niggles and injury concerns of an India player to Although he has been travelling with the side for all the clashes, his participation in DC's upcoming tie against Mumbai Îndians on Sunday remains doubtful. Kuldeep has picked up three

that and support Hardik. He's a wonderful player. He had a lot of success at Gujarat (Titans). He's back (as) captain of the side at Mumbai

hitting at over 140 in this year's IPL.

the situation of the game and plays accordingly," he said.

'If he needs to strike big, he does. If he needs to bring it back a little bit and build some partnerships...You don't need 180 on every ground; 150-160 might be enough on some

"Virat sums up the conditions really well and the situation. rate," Smith continued.

Smith

now. "The senior players need to help him out," Smith said. Being a subject of severe being a subject of better international scrutiny as Australia captain back in 2018 following the ball-tampering incident in Cape Town which led to him being banned for one year, Smith shared some insights on what it takes to

come out. "While all this negativity is out there, he has got to find ways to cope with it and mechanisms to deal with it,"

Smith said. "Everyone is different (in) the way they do that. For me, personally, I just block everything out. I don't listen to anything; I don't listen to any comments, or boos, or anything like that.

"It's difficult to say, but you kind of just have to let it be. Block it out as much as you can, and just get on with the job at hand. I think the best way for him to turn people around is if Mumbai start winning, that's the key thing," Smith said.

Patida clean shot-making abilities while registering 29 in their 28-run defeat against Lucknow Super Giants, but he needs to do a lot more to prop up the RCB middle-order.

The Bengaluru outfit will hope for a reversal at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium, a venue that carries similar traits as RCB's home - Chinnaswamy Stadium - in terms of a smooth pitch and a blistering outfield adding value

to the batters' shots. But the aforementioned RCB quartet has company in the Royals' ranks.

them The out of touch Bengaluru bat-ters might just find it tough to tackle the trio at its home turf.

ir howling to exploit chinks in Rajasthan batting. Left-arm pacer Yash Dayal and off-spinner Glenn Maxwell lead their wicket-takers' chart with four wickets apiece but even that really is an inflated picture as the duo hasn't been able to make any real impact on the proceedings. The modest form of experi-enced pacers has really hurt them as Mohammed Siraj has leaked over 10 runs an over while Alzarri Joseph and his replacement Reece Topley have given away more than nine

runs an over for meagre returns.

The 29-year-old left-arm spinner picked up the niggle after DC's second game of the season against Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur, which the

team lost. The player was forced to miss out on the next couple of contests where veteran pacer Ishant Sharma returned to the playing XI. "It will take some time for

him to be match fit," an IPL source told PTI when asked about Kuldeep's status. Since he is a centrally-

contracted player and a T20

wickets in two matches at an economy of 7.62. He has been on a wickettaking spree, coming off a great performance in the five-

Test series against England that concluded last month, where he claimed 19 wickets in four meetings at an average of 20.15.

"I doubt he'd be putting extra pressure on himself. (But) some of the other top-order and middle-order (batters) need to help Virat," he said. Smith warned that Kohli is not going to score runs in every match and RCB batters must get their act together.

"He started the campaign really well in the IPL and he needs some support. He's not going to score runs on every occasion," he said.

"But, I doubt he'd be thinking that way. I don't think he'd go

'Yes and no. Obviously, there was that (booing) going on in the first two games. It sort of becomes a bit of a thing, if that makes sense. But, it was unfortunate, I think. I'd love to see them supporting Hardik. Obviously, there's a lot of huge Rohit fans out there,"

he said. "A lot of people are a bit annoyed that he's not the captain of the side. But, everyone needs to let go of

however suggestions that the off-field drama has been a factor in MI's three successive losses.

"One thing about the Mumbai Indians is (that) they're notoriously bad starters in the tournament. They've done it on numerous occasions," he said. "I don't think they'd be too

worried just yet. But, they will have to turn things around really quickly. It doesn't look good, 0-3 at the bottom of the table. They have to turn things around really quickly," he added.

OTHERS GAME

Shot put legend Valerie to grace World 10K India ready for Australia challenge

PTI BENGALURU

egendary New Zealand shot putter Valerie Legendary New Zealand shot putter Valerie Adams was on Friday named the 'International Event Ambassador' for the 16th TCS World 10K Bengaluru to be held on April 28

Adams had won shot put gold in the 2008 and 2012 Olympics, besides bagging a silver (2016) and bronze (2021) before retiring.

"The increasing enthusiasm for running in India is both motivating and inspiring," stated Adams, a four-time consecutive world champion, in a press release.

"I am excited to witness the boundless energy and passion that participants will bring to the race.

Since retiring from competitive athletics, the 39-year-old has passionately taken on the role of a spokesperson for women in sports.

Currently, she holds the office of Chair of the World Athletes Commission, where she continues to champion the rights and welfare of athletes globally.

Adams is also closely involved in the Paralympic sphere, collaborating with her sister, Lisa and other athletes, providing support and guidance.

"As one of the most accomplished athletes in the world, Valerie embodies determination, perseverance, and excellence," said Vivek



Singh, Jt MD, Procam International.

"Her remarkable achievements in the field and her commitment to the advancement of sports, particularly for women and paraathletes serve as an inspiration to athletes worldwide. We look forward to together celebrating athleticism and our community spirit at the TCS World 10K Bengaluru."

Adams also boasts of being a four-time world indoor champion and a three-time Commonwealth Games winner.

She is only the third woman to win world championships at youth, junior and senior levels. In 2014, she was honoured with the IAAF World Athlete of the Year title

PTI PERTH (AUSTRALIA)

The in-form Indian men's hockey I team will look to pass the "litmus test" that the formidable Australian side will pose at home when the two face off in a five-match Test series beginning here on Saturday.

The series offers India a chance to gauge their strengths and capabilities ahead of the Paris Olympics.

"This series serves as a litmus test for our team's preparedness ahead of the Paris Olympics. We aim to fine-tune our strategies and identify areas for improvement to ensure we are in peak form for the mega event.

"Our focus will be on executing our game plan effectively and adapting to the challenges posed by the Australian side," chief coach Craig Fulton said.

The away assignment offers the ideal chance for India to break their decade-long dry spell against Australia and secure a Test series win. Notably, India won the last away Test series against Australia back in 2014. Fresh from their impressive performances in the FIH Pro League in February, the Indian squad, under



the leadership of Harmanpreet Singh, is approaching this assignment with confidence. India's exceptional abilities and

evident as they clinched victories in

three out of four matches in

Bhubaneswar (within regulation time)

and remained unbeaten in Rourkela

determination were

unwavering

matches against Australia.

showdown in Paris Games.

"We are geared up for the challenge that lies ahead. Every match is an opportunity for us to showcase our skills and make our nation proud. We are aware of the tough competition Australia presents, but we are confident in our abilities and our preparations," captain Harmanpreet said.

"As a team, we are united and determined to give our best on the field. Our goal is to not only perform well in this series but also to learn and grow as a unit, laying a strong foundation for our campaign in the Paris Olympics."

India and Australia have clashed on the hockey field a total of 43 times since 2013, according to data from the FIH Data Hub.

Among these match-ups, Australia have emerged victorious 28 times, while India have celebrated triumph in eight games. Additionally, seven

matches have concluded in a draw. With India ranked fourth and Australia fifth in the current world rankings, the stage is set for a gripping battle between two hockey powerhouses.

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(also within

With the two sides drawn in the same group at the Olympics, the Test series provides the perfect platform for both to gauge each other's strengths and weaknesses before the

regulation time). However, they had lost both their

ultimate