OPINION 6

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BJP GUARANTEES VIKSIT BHARAT

2024: Narendra Modi to focus on GYAN



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Nirmala Sitharaman and JP Nadda release the party's election manifesto Sankalp Patra

RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

ith just four days ahead of the first **V** Phase of the polling, the BJP's manifesto for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls Prime Minister Narendra Modi released in the presence of party president JP Nadda, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other leaders, on Sunday featured India's Olympics bid in 2036, bringing a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), making "One Nation, One Election" a reality, implementing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) making India the third-largest economy in the world, free ration for the poor for the next for "Viksit Bharat" (developed five years under the Prime India), the BJP's manifesto is Minister Garib Kalvan Anna replete with the word "Bharat" Yojana, implementation of North East policy, building Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over the world and

law against paper leaks, among other promises. It has promised to accelerate development of robus infrastructure along the Indo-China, Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Myanmar borders. This comes on a day of the birth anniversary of BR

Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution.

and "Bharatiya", instead of India and Indian. While the BJP manifesto did include the

ord "India", the prevalence of "Bharat" far outweighed its usage. The BJP's manifesto looks like a balance between two Indias — a socialist India, which needs hand-holding, while aspiring to be the next superpower that will call the shots.

In its 76 pages Modi ki Gaurantee-2024" Phir Ek Baar Modi Sarkar" Sankalp Patra, With its focus on a roadmap the BJP's manifesto listed out a

comprehensive overview of the NDA Government's achievements. It also charted out the vision for building a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047. The manifesto's promises are

categorised under 10 social groups, including the poor, middle class, women, youth, senior citizens, farmers, fishermen, labourers, traders and traditionally deprived sections like the SC and ST, and 14 issues, including secure India, prosperous India and ease of living in cities among others.

The document also talks about expanding the 5G networks and taking the lead in the development technology, making India a

- Implementing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA)
- Making India the third-largest economy in the world Free ration for the poor for the next five years under the
- Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana The party will continue to provide free and quality healthcare services of up to ₹5 lakh to poor families under the
- Avushman Bharat scheme Efforts to empower three crore rural women to become Lakhpati Didis
- Modi ki Guarantee on good governance
- A transparent Government recruitment system
- Enactment of a law to prevent paper leaks
- Free electricity to poor households under the Prime Minister Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana
- Inclusion of autorickshaw, taxi, truck drivers and other drivers in all social security schemes
- Facilitating Digital Revolution by 6G Expanding Bullet Trains
- Theatrisation of Military Commands
- Preserving and Promoting the Legacy of Lord Ram

global manufacturing hub, organising Ramayan festivals globe to the "Pran the commemorate Pratishtha of Ram Lalla", and working towards bringing back "Bharatiya idols and artifacts that were taken away

illegally from Bharat". It also spoke of considering bullet trains in north, south and east India and expanding "new age" trains like Vande Bharat, Amrit Bharat and Namo Bharat.

Continued on Page 2

Amid West Asia escalation, PM says strong Government need of the hour

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Amid the West Asia Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called for a strong Centre given the prevailing uncertainty and tension on a global scale, particularly in areas of conflict.

"The BJP steadfastly takes bold and challenging decisions in the nation's interest, prioritising the country over the party itself," the Prime Minister said at the party's poll manifesto release, referring to the several conflicts the world is grappling with. Modi exhorted people to

give another mandate to his party to shape India's destiny for the next 1,000 years and the need for a stable Government with full majority was necessary when the world is passing through uncertain times.

India called for immediate de-escalation of the situation after Iran launched dozens of drones and missiles at Israel in a retaliatory attack. New Delhi favoured diplomacy and dialogue to defuse tension.

This appeal came hours after Iran launched drones and missiles at Israel and India said it is concerned over escalating hostilities between

Air India suspends flights to Tel Aviv

NEW DELHI: Air India

has temporarily suspended

its flights from Delhi to Tel Aviv amid the escalating tensions between Israel and Iran following Tehran's missile and drone attacks on Saturday night. An official said the direct flights between Delhi and

Tel Aviv will be suspended for now. Israeli airlines said on Sunday that the operations were returning to normal, a day after the country's airspace was following closed overnight attack by Iranian drones and missiles. Flag carrier El Al, which had cancelled 15 flights to Dubai Europe, Moscow scheduled for Sunday, said they have resumed operations. PNS

the two sides that threaten regional peace and security. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday called for an immediate de-escalation. He also called the situation a "matter of deep concern".

He shared these views in an exclusive conversation with a private television channel. Continued on Page 2



Bansuri ignites Delhi campaign with Sushma Swaraj's spirit

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

Draped in the saree once worn by her mother, former Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj, BJP's youngest candidate for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections in 2024, Bansuri Swaraj, said the scent lingering from it transports her to a comforting embrace, evoking fond memories of her mother's aanchal as she begins the campaign trail.

Bansuri grew up in Delhi and said she is a 'dadi nani ke haathon se khilaya bachcha' (fed with the hands of maternal and paternal grandmothers). "My friends and teachers kept me grounded throughout. Both my parents ensured that I have a very normal upbringing," said Bansuri, who grew up in a family of politicians and lawyers.

The fierce leader, with the oratory skills of her mother, lights up the brightest

when she talks about her 'co-conspirator' and her 'favourite human being in the world'.

Calling her mother's loss irreparable, she said, "I wish my mother was here for my life. No matter what age you lose

your parents, it's never

enough time. And I'll be honest, I don't miss Sushma Swaraj 'the neta'. I miss Sushma Swaraj, the mother. For me, she was always a mom. She was a Minister outside the house." Bansuri shared her mother's anecdote about the combination of sarees and sports shoes. "Meri ma kehti thi agar ek nari saree k neeche sports shoe pehn le, then she means business. (My mother used to say if a woman wears sports shoes beneath a saree, she means business). These sarees that I wear are actually my mother's. It's literally like being wrapped in her 'anchal," she said.

An Oxford educated lawyer, Bansuri marked her 17th year as a litigator. She describes herself as 'innately a lawyer' and 'not a politician. However, when asked the reason to leave her illustrious career, which includes being the Additional Advocate General for Haryana and enter the political fray as BJP's candidate on the New Delhi seat, she quipped, Continued on Page 2

Opposition says BJP Manifesto a jugglery of words

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Ceveral Opposition party Sleaders from Congress, TMC, RJD, Left parties on Sunday dismissed the BJP sto titled Guarantee, asking what the Prime Minister's guarantee means. The Congress trashed the BJP's poll manifesto as a "jumla patra" full of rhetoric, with party chief Mallikarjun Kharge saying Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guarantee is a "warranty of jumlas" as he has failed to fulfil his past promises.

The Opposition party also accused Modi of not honouring his promises made on jobs, doubling farmers' income and tackling inflation, and alleged that the Prime Minister is now shifting the goalposts by talking about 2047. The Congress said the BJP manifesto should have been named "maafinama" and Modi should have apologised to farmers, youngsters, poor people and Dalits for not fulfilling the promises made in the last 10 years.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi said, "Two words are missing from the BJP's manifesto and Modi's speech inflation unemployment."

"INDIA's plan is very clear recruitment in 30 lakh posts and a permanent job of Rs 1 lakh to every educated



Congress fields Kanhaiya from North East Delhi

NEW **DELHI:** on Sunday 10 more Congress announced candidates for the Lok Sabha polls. The party has fielded veteran politician J P Agarwal from Chandni Chowk against BJP's Praveen Khandelwal and Kanhaiya Kumar from North East Delhi against BJP's sitting MP Manoj Tiwari while Udit Raj is to contest from North-West Delhi against Yogendra Chandolia. BJP's The party has also fielded former Punjab Charanjit Singh Channi from Jalandhar — SC Lok Sabha seat.

youngsters. This time the youngsters are not going to fall into Modi's trap. They will strengthen the hands of the Congress and bring an 'employment revolution' in the country," Rahul said in a social Press conference, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said in the manifesto for the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, Modi had promised to bring back black money by forming a special task force, but electoral bonds were introduced instead. Asked about the Ram temple issue, Khera said, "Ram is an issue of faith and not of politics. We will not allow the BJP to drag him into politics." Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also said the BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' is just a "sham".

'Their real manifesto is the 'Samvidhan Badlo Patra'. In every street, state after State, BJP leaders and candidates are roaming around with the 'Samvidhan Badlo Patra' and talking about changing Babasaheb's Constitution in their speeches...," she said in a post in Hindi on X.

Communist Party of India general secretary D Raja said Modi's guarantee is nothing but "degradation" of the country. "In a way, Modi's guarantee shows commitment of the BJP-RSS combine to communal, fascist dictatorship.

Continued on Page 2



People take part in a procession to celebrate Bengali New Year, Poila Baishakh, in Kolkata, on Sunday

Rising food prices cast a pall over festive celebrations

SAMAR PANDEY/RISHABH MALIK

While yet another round of two-month-long election festivities is underway, a sudden surge in the prices of all edible items — groceries, vegetables, fruits — has dampened the household spirit during the ensuing Navratri, Poila Baishak,

Bihu, and Baishaki festivals.

Prices of any green vegetable, be it okra, beans, bottle gourd, or bitter gourd, are not less than ₹100 per kilogram. Even the usually affordable vegetable like cabbage is selling at ₹60 per kilogram, while potatoes have risen to ₹30 per kilogram and onions to ₹40 per kilogram across the national Capital.

During the festive season of Chaitra Navratri, the markets are witnessing a surge in fruit prices, such as banana, apple, and papaya, primarily driven by the increased demand for these fruits. Bananas, being both affordable and nutritious, are the preferred choice for devotees fasting during this period.

Bananas, which typically sell at ₹40-50 per dozen, are now priced at ₹70 per dozen. Similarly, prices of apples, oranges, grapes, and papayas have gone up. Apples, once sold at ₹100-120 per

kilogram, now come for ₹150-180, while oranges are priced between ₹80-100 per kilogram, up from ₹30 per kilogram. Grapes, pomegranates, and papayas have also seen notable price increases.

Praveen, a shopper, expressed concern over the price hike, noting that prices surge even before Navratri begins. Wholesale and retail prices have

gone up, with people residing in different cities also facing hardship as India's favourite staple pulse — arhar dal — is burning a hole in the pockets at ₹180 per

Continued on Page 2

Desolate railway tracks transformed into a verdant oasis

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA NEW DELHI

 $\begin{array}{ccc} B {\rm looming} \ {\rm at} \ {\rm the} \ {\rm confluence} \ {\rm of} \\ {\rm New} \ {\rm Delhi} \ {\rm Railway} \ {\rm Station} \ {\rm to} \end{array}$ Nizamuddin and another towards Ghaziabad, a sprawling haven of green with blossoming flowers has been developed. Once a haven of crime where the administration struggled to identify victims of crimes on the railway tracks and its periphery, it has now been transformed. Christened as 'Evergreen Nursery', the 2,500 square metres patch of land which can be viewed from the railway

bogies, the elevated metro and

now the Bharatmandapam, the



Vivid varieties and species of patch with millions of plants has ferns, Bougainvillea, Erica Palm,

pots and the land that has been made fertile. However, the plants are not for sale and for any business but are rented out to railway stations, other Government buildings, convention halls etc. Plants nourished here now also

adorn some of the country's

border points and coastal areas as part of the beautification drive of the Central and several State Governments and PSUs. The drive is totally inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

Dicffenbachia Tiger,

Philochemdrum Plant, Victoria,

Government buildings all appear clean and green. The patch near Pragati Maidan used to be filth once upon a time and with the initiative of incumbent Railway Minister (Ashwini Vaishnaw) several railway properties are being redeveloped as per the environmental needs. And all require people's support and hence many more such initiatives will come in near future," said Deepak Kumar, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO), Northern Railways. Continued on Page 2

Swachhata Mission.

WORLD 8 INDIAN STUDENT SHOT DEAD IN CANADA'S VANCOUVER

the plant 1864 the stablished 1864

₹one crore single plant with come up in partnership with maximum of them imported Delhi Division of Northern Railway and the private party from south East Asian countries and primarily from Thailand. Evergreen Nursery adjacent to Once a barren land full of filth, garbage, human and animal

Pragati Maidan Railway

Money plant, rose, bonsai, Oleander (Nerium Indicum), Snake Plant besides the exotic shrubs like Redermachera sinica Thai, Pachira plant Thai, Podocarpus, Aglaonema red

anywhere you go, not only the railway premises but other Boracia, Ficis Lyrata, Draco Stem, Rhapis palm are some names nurtured in the flower

Citizenship Act a person born



the pioneer SALLIE

Chandrasekhar woes increase

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

s the election day Aapproaches fast, two interesting facts stand out in Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram Lok Sabha constituency against the BJP candidate Rajeev Chandrasekhar. The union minister of State for IT and skill development is blamed for destroying the family of TPG Nambiar, the soft spoken industrialist from Kerala who had made the BPL brand name a household entity in the country.

Nambiar is the father-in-law of Rajeev Chandrasekhar and the latter had ousted Nambiar and his son Ajit from the company, one of the largest conglomerates manufacturing fast moving consumer goods. How a person born into an ordinary middle class family became a multi billionaire in a short span of time gives life to the quote by Balzac that behind every fortune there is a major crime.

The story being spread by Congress activists speak how



the union minister of State through shrewd maneuvers ousted his father -in-law and brother-in-law from BPL and usurped their properties. The Nambiar family has totally withdrawn from their enterprises and leading a peaceful life in Bangalore.

Though Ajith is married to the daughter of M K Narayanan, former IB chief who went on to become the National Security Advisor of India, the latter failed to take note of the avalanche in the form of Rajeev Chandrasekhar which struck the TPG clan.

Interestingly, Rajeev bought over the TV news channel Asianet News from its founder Rajji Menon through the former's holding company Jupiter

Media. This channel is the unofficial TV channel of the CPI(M) and is in the forefront in attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and the BJP. Though there were complaints from BJP's State leadership against the channel for spreading falsehood and distorting news, Rajeev Chandrasekhar has not interfered in the functioning of the channel.

Avani Bansal, a lawyer from Madhya Pradesh who is also a Congress leader, has filed a complaint with the Election Commission of India against Rajeev Chandrasekhar whom she alleges that he gave wrong information about his taxable income in the affidavit. The ECI has ordered the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) to thoroughly examine the affidavits suffered by the BJP leader.

Interestingly, a BJP leader in Kerala, who does not see eye to eye with Chandrasekhar is the one reportedly behind the complaint to the ECI.

In Kerala literary awards are reserved for comrades

When there are mafias specialized in smuggling of gold and narcotics, sand, sex, private schools and colleges, liquor, hospital and land can literature lag behind? The literary award mafias in Kerala have their tentacles over the selection committees that decide the winners of the State-controlled Kerala Sahitya Akademy and Ezhuthachan Award Committee (the highest award in Malayalam). Literary lovers were perplexed when this year's "Vilasini"

Award was conferred on P K Pokker, a self-styled postmodernist writer who is a hardcore CPI(M) activist. "Though he has authored more than a dozen books on literary criticism ,nobody in the field of criticism has bothered to touch these books with the barge of a pole. To put it briefly, all his works belong

to the genre known as trash,"

C K Anandan Pillai, chief edi-

tor, Sahitya Vimarsam, told The Pioneer. Pokker was awarded the Vilasini Prize by the Kerala Sahitya Akademy in violation of all guidelines specified for



this prestigious honor. The award was instituted by Vilasini (the pen name of one of the all time greats of Malayalam literature, M K Menon) with the intention of honoring authors who undertake comprehensive study on novels published in Malayalam. Menon is the author of many classic novels including The Inheritors, the longest novel ever written in

When he came to know that there were no writers specializing in studies of novels in Malayalam, Menon, a journalist-turned-novelist set apart a corpus fund and instituted an award to encourage those who take up serious studies in Malayalam novels. He had set three conditions while instituting the award. The honor should be named after O Chandu Menon,

novelist and his name should not find mention anywhere in this connection. Menon also put a stringent condition that collection of articles should not be considered for this award. "This was to encourage serious study on a particular novel which would elevate the status of such novels to global standards. What the Sahitya Akadeny Award jury has done is to throw the guidelines into trash bin and select a fourth grade book full of grammatical mistakes and literary aberrations," wrote noted critic A B Raghunathan Nair in a research paper published in Sahitya Vimarsam.

Nair has pointed out hundreds of such mistakes in Pokker's book "Blue Light of Creativity, a collection of essays on the literary works of Vaikkom Muhammed Basheer. There are so many factual as well as grammatical errors in Pokker's work. The basic requirement to be considered for the prize is that it should be a comprehensive study on the novel. What Pokker has done is to write some articles and got it published as a collection," writes Nair.

Didi too asking for citizenship proof for jobs?

SAUGAR SENGUPTA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee may be crying hoarse against the Citizenship Amendment Act asking the people to get themselves enlisted at their own peril her own Government has reportedly demanded citizenship credentials for appointment to various posts at the panchayat levels sources have said.

According to members of Samvidhan Bachao Manch Joint Action Committee for Bengali Refugees the State Government in the month of February advertised vacancies at various levels in panchayats in which they asked for proof of citizenship.

"Out of 14,000 vacancies they are taking people for 6,552 posts but in all the cases the candidates will have to prove their Indian citizenship ... which is no different from what the central government is saying," said Manch president SR Biswas. According to him the advertisement asks the candidates to apply and prove their citizenship as per the conditions given in Part II of the Constitution.

before July 1, 1987 will not have to produce any credential if one has the birth certificate ... where he is born in India ... again if one is born between July 1, 1987 and December 3, 2004 the candidate has to provide in addition to his birth certificate the birth certificate of either of his parents ... and a person who is born after that date will have to produce the birth certificate of both the parents," the Manch members say adding the present advertisement of the government tends to demand proof which would put the job-seekers in problem. The members however could not make it clear as to why the Government would not demand requisite certificates of citizenship. "Most candidates today have their parents born after Independence and perhaps after 1950 and they do have their school certificates to prove their birth and residentship ... so where is there a problem in providing copies of such certificates said Amalesh Pradhan a TMC leader from Ranaghat in Nadia district where the Citizenship Amendment Act has been a

DPAP fielding candidate from Udhampur Doda at behest of BJP:

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

 $F^{
m ormer\ Chief\ Minister\ and}_{
m Jammu\ and\ Kashmir}$ National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah Sunday accused Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad of fielding a candidate from the Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha constituency at the behest of the BJP to divide the secular votes in the Chenab Valley region.

Joining the joint campaign in support of the Congress party candidate Choudhary Lal Singh in the Ramban district, Omar, accompanied by JKPCC Chief Vikar Rasool Wani addressed a series of BJP" meetings during the road-

Targeting the 'unholy alliance between the DPAP and BJP Omar said, "BJP MP represented the seat for 10 years but today they need someone for help... Why did the DPAP field a candidate only from Udhampur? Why not from Jammu where they could have fielded a Hindu candidate to

Omar said they have not fielded him (GM Saroori) to win the seat as otherwise, Azad himself would have contested from there".

Regretting Azad's decision to play into the hands of the BJP" Omar once again reminded him that his father, Farooq Abdullah, was very close to the DPAP chairman It was the National Conference that facilitated the entry of Azad, a former Congress veteran, into the Rajya Sabha twice, Abdullah

"He (Azad) was among the tallest leaders and we thought that he might be the country's president or vice president in case Congress comes to power," Abdullah said.

Abdullah said the Congress gave Azad everything and he used to be a leader of national stature. But he ruined his political career and reduced



himself to a leader of a par-"The duration for which he liamentary constituency, he was a member of the Congress

Committee is more than my age. When he left the Congress, he announced the formation of a national party but how many candidates he fielded in the Lok Sabha elections? When his party announced his candidature from the Anantnag-Rajouri seat, he said on record that he was not consulted," the 54year-old Abdullah said. The reality is when the NC

fielded its candidate, Mian Altaf, from the seat, Azad's legs began shaking and he got the signal from the BJP to pull back, Abdullah claimed.

The NC vice president said the PDAP candidate in Udhampur will only "weaken

go to Lotus (BJP) which destroyed Jammu and Kashmir by dividing it into two Union Territories, taking away our identity, honor and constitutional rights," he said, criticizing the administration for not announcing a holiday on Eid-ul-Fitr and shifting an Imam of Hazratbal shrine

who had converted a man to

the voice" of the people.

"Remember to vote for the

hand symbol (of Congress) as

voting for other symbols will

The Congress party candidate Lal Singh is pitted against Union minister and BJP candidate Jitendra Singh in the Udhampur-Doda parliamen-

Islam during Ramzan.

to polls in the first phase of the Lok Sabha election on April 19. DPAP's G M Saroori is among 10 others in the fray. Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee president Vikar Rasool Wani accompanied Abdullah during the roadshow in the Khari area of Banihal.In his speeches, Vikar Rasool said DPAP is not organising election rallies in Kathua, and Udhampur but only in Khari, Sangaldhan, Doda, Bhallesa, and Bhaderwah to divide the secular vote. He warned the electorate to stay alert and defeat these forces who have a vest-

tary constituency, which goes

major election issue.

Miscreants open fire outside Salman's Bandra residence

n a development that **▲** sparked fresh concerns over Bollywood actor Salman Khan's security, two unidentified motorcycle-borne misrounds of fire outside his Bandra (west) residence "Galaxy Apartment" in northwest Mumbai in the early hours of Sunday. The two miscreants, who were reportedly wearing helmets, sped away immediately after firing four rounds in the direction of the actor's residence

Following the incident that took place at 5 am, the police have beefed up security in and around "Galaxy Apartments", where Salman lives with his parents, brothers and other family members.

It was not immediately known if the actor was at home or was away from Mumbai on a weekend holiday after the Ramzan Eid celebrations.

Fifty-eight-year-old Salman and his father Salim Khan have been facing threats to their lives allegedly from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, after the 1998 blackbuck poaching incident in Rajasthan.



After initial inquiries the city

crime branch personnel have taken over the investigations into the firing incident. The investigators are scanning CCTV footage from the cameras installed near the actor's residence to identify the miscreants involved in the inci-

A forensic team and ballistic experts were also at the crime scene in the afternoon to collect evidence. Informed police sources said that the investigators found one bullet mark near the gate of "Galaxy Apartments³

Earlier in the day, Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde spoke to Salman over the phone and made enquiries about the incident. Later on, the chief minister discussed the issue with Mumbai Police Commissioner Vivek Phansalkar and directed the latter to enhance the actor's

From Page 1

The Prime Minister said the manifesto focuses on four pillars of Viksit Bharat -women power, youth power, farmers and the poor. The Prime Minister handed over copies of the manifesto to the representatives of the four broad groups -- Gareeb, Yuva, (GYAN) who -were beneficiaries of Government's schemes.

The BJP promised implement the Uniform Civil

"Bringing Uniform Civil Code: Article 44 of the Constitution lists Uniform Civil Code as one of the Directive Principles of State Policy. The BJP believes that women will only get equal rights, and the BJP reiterates its stand to draw a Uniform Civil Code, drawing upon the traditions best and harmonising them with the modern times," it said.

Notably, the 2019 manifesto carried the same paragraph. The manifesto makes no mention of the National Register of Citizens (NRC). The BJP manifesto said it will implement One Nation, One Election a Reality. "We have set up a High Powered

Committee to examine the of conducting simultaneous elections and will work towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee," the document said. The manifesto promised

to make provisions for a common electoral roll for all levels of elections.

The party has also promised to expand the Government's flagship infrastructure and programmes, welfare including the road, housing, Ujjwala gas connection and Ayushman Bharat health announced free electricity for poor households. Touching on its cultural

agenda after having fulfilled its decades-long promise of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, the BJP said its Government will undertake "significant new projects" across the country to develop religious and tourist sites inspired by Kashi Vishwanath corridor model. It promised holistic development of Ayodhya, the establishment of "Bharatiya Sanskriti Kosh" for the preservation of ancient civilisational traditions and culture and promoting "wed in India" by developing select destinations as wedding

venues. On the preserving and promoting the legacy of Lord Ram, the BJP will launch a global outreach programme for documenting and promoting the tangible and intangible legacy of Lord Ram in all countries. "We will celebrate Ramayan Utsav with great fervour across the globe to commemorate the Pran Pratishtha of Ram Lalla," the document read.

Bansuri ignites Delhi...

From Page 1

"To be very honest, I was given my marching orders (from the party) and I marched."

She believes that politics gives her a tool to amplify what she was doing as a lawyer. "In litigation, you end up making a difference to somebody's life a report card in front of the making that difference to an individual's life, or to a family's life. Politics gives you the tool to actually amplify that benefit," she said.

Bansuri, who is making her debut this time, said the strength she finds to campaign all day long is fuelled by the love and adoration people have towards Narendra Modi and towards his vision for of a better Bharat."

She described her party's campaign as 'positive' and one that is not about the 'detriment of anybody' while calling 'Modi the epitome of promise fulfilment'. "Whether it is abrogation of

Article 370, or bringing 33 per cent reservation in favour of women by passing of the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, or bringing CAA, construction of Ram Mandir, everything enunciated in our manifesto has already been fulfilled.

"And on the other hand, there is a vision of a Viksit Bharat, a developed Bharat, which has been articulated by Prime Minister Modi. And he has already started working

towards it," Bansuri said. While describing the issues of general elections 2024 this time to be Bharat pervasive, Bansuri asserted that the Modi Government has a

decade worth of work which they, as MPs, are taking forward to the people, putting people to decide to vote for Expressing pride on Modi

leveraging technology and uplifting women from every sphere of life, she dwelled on policies like 'Namo Drone Didi. "We talk about the rural economy. There is a tectonic shift in psychology when you see a Namo Drone Didi as a drone pilot contributing to the agrarian economy. Modi is talking about empowerment of the nation under the leadership of women. That's why he's coined the term of women-led

development, you development," she said. youth-led On how she will approach the young female voters in her constituency, who are at large more aware and exposed to different ideas, she elaborated on a big chunk of beneficiaries under Mudra Yojana and PM Jan Dhan Yojana being women. "They're aware that Modi ki guarantee hai that in the next Modi 3.0, India's economy is going to actually become third largest in the world," said Bansuri, adding that these policies will help

new female voters decide.

Opposition says BJP...

"They don't respect democracy, Parliament, Constitution," he said. Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien took a jibe at the

ruling party's slogan, and said, "What Manifesto? Modi Guarantee = Zero Warranty.

He also shared an article authored by him where he questioned the BJP on its promises of creating 25 crore jobs, doubling farmers income, and bringing back black money among other

Government over issues like job creation.

There is no mention of jobs and employment anywhere in the BJP manifesto. Nor is there any mention of eliminating or reducing inflation, unemployment and poverty," he said.

"There is nothing in it for the development and uplift of backward and poor States. There is nothing for the development of the states from which the maximum number of Lok Sabha MPs come. They have completely forgotten jobs, employment, youth, farmers, soldiers and villages in their manifesto," he said.

Desolate railway tracks...

From Page 1 Proprietor of the Evergreen Nursery Kalicharan said he, along with his 100 odd gardeners working to curate the nursery, consider this to be their baby, not just a plant. "A year ago I began as a professional but now I can't imagine my life without these green species. You may call it my profession or hobby but I consider this my religion and a spiritual connection. Millions of life in the form of plants here grows which keeps me happy always. Passengers crossing this area in trains point towards the huge bonsai, exotic shrubs and many more and this keeps me going," said Kalicharan who thanked the entire railway authorities for being cooperative in this 'business'. In fact railways gave the land for developing a green patch in lieu of a nominal rent which has also become bread and butter for the lives of workers of the Evergreen Nursery. Sources in the Northern Railway said it has partnered with the Evergreen Nursery for a period of seven years to begin with "We have leased for a green cover for a term of 7 years which may be extended or curtailed based on the requirement of the land by the

Rising food prices cast...

"Day by day, essential items like pulses, once affordable for all are becoming less accessible, while the prices of fruits and vegetables continue their upward climb. Families now find themselves facing difficult decisions and an uncertain future in challenging economic times. These days we do not get customers buying items about a quarter of a kilogram or even less than that," said Mukesh Saini, a departmental store owner in South Delhi's Kalkaji.

Vikas Kumar, a vegetable shop owner in Rohini, said due to Bhandara (community feast), more people are consuming vegetables like potatoes and tomatoes. "Potatoes are selling for up to Rs 30 per kilogram and tomatoes for Rs 70-80 per kilogram," he said, adding that after Navratri, onion prices are likely to be hiked up to Rs 60-70 per kilogram.

Sellers attribute the rise in prices of essentials to weather conditions and the farmers' protest. They said the production of vegetables was hit due to bad weather and rain, whereas supply is less and demand is more. The average price of arhar dal is Rs 180 per kilogram, which

was Rs 110 per kilogram a year ago on February 12, 2023. The average price of arhar dal has increased by more than Rs 70 in one year. The current average price of Urad dal is Rs 130 per kilogram, which was Rs 105.1 per kilogram a year ago. The price of urad dal has increased by Rs 25 per kilogram, and

the price of moong (chilka) dal is Rs 120, and chana dal is Rs 80 per kilogram. Fruits such as watermelon and melon saw a decrease in prices. Watermelon prices dropped from Rs 50 to Rs 30-40, and melon from Rs 70 to Rs 40-50.

Amid West Asia escalation, PM says strong Government...

From Page 1

"It is a matter of deep concern because it represents an escalation in this situation, something which worries all of us," Jaishankar said.

We have for some time been concerned about the situation there starting with the October 7 attack on Israel, escalating into other dimensions and other zones which is deeply worrying. We have particular stakes in that region," he added.

"Right now we have advised people not to travel to Israel or Iran. We have asked those who are already there to take utmost precaution. That's the sensible thing to do right now.

further and if we have to issue advisories or take steps, we will do that," Jaishankar said. Iran carried out the attack on Israel in response to a suspected Israeli strike on its consulate in Damascus on April 1 in which seven Iranian Revolutionary Guards personnel, including two generals, were killed.

We will watch what happens

New Delhi said its embassies in the region are in close touch with the Indian community in the region. "We are seriously concerned at the escalation of hostilities

between Israel and Iran which

threatens the peace and

security in the region," the

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. 'We call for immediate de-

escalation, exercise restraint, stepping back from violence and return to the path of diplomacy," it said. The MEA said India is closely monitoring the evolving situation in West Asia. "We

allies have intercepted the majority of more than 300 are closely monitoring the evolving situation. Our drones and missiles fired by Embassies in the region are in Iran. US President Joe Biden said close touch with Indian community," it said in a statement. "It is vital that security and

stability are maintained in the region," it added. On Saturday, the Iranian military seized a cargo ship

the American military helped Israel take down nearly all of the incoming drones and missiles launched by Iran. "Earlier today, Iran and its proxies operating out of

Yemen, Syria and Iraq,

Israeli military said it and its

with Israeli links near the launched an unprecedented Strait of Hormuz. The ship has air attack against military 17 Indian crew members. facilities in Israel. I condemn India is in touch with Iran to these attacks in the strongest secure the release of Indians possible terms," he said in a onboard the Portuguesestatement. flagged vessel 'MSC Aries'. "At my direction, to support Following Iran's attack, the

the defence of Israel, the US military moved aircraft and ballistic missile defense destroyers to the region over the course of the past week," Biden said.

"Thanks to these deployments and the extraordinary skill of our service members, we helped Israel take down nearly all of the incoming drones and

missiles," he said. The US president also spoke to Israeli Prime Minister

Washington's "ironclad" commitment to the security of Israel. "Tomorrow, I will convene my fellow G7 leaders to

Netanyahu and reaffirmed

railways," said a NR official.

coordinate united a diplomatic response to Iran's brazen attack. My team will with engage counterparts across the region," Biden said. "And we will stay in close

touch with Israel's leaders. And while we have not seen attacks on our forces or facilities today, we will remain vigilant to all threats and will not hesitate to take all necessary action to protect our people," he said.

Minor girl stabs neighbour to death over water, held

The Delhi Police on Sunday A arrested a 15-year-old girl for allegedly stabbing a neighbour to death in a fight over water from a common tap in the Delhi's Farsh Bazar area on Friday. According to the police on Sunday, The victim identified as Soni, a 34-year-old woman, was declared dead on arrival by doctors

She received several cuts in her left hand and a stab wound in the stomach. According to the police, on Friday at 10.59 pm, a PCR call was received with the caller saying that his wife had been stabbed in the stomach and needed an ambu-

"Acting on the call, the police team reached the spot which was Gali no 2, Bhikam Singh Colony and found injured Soni in her room. She was having two-three cut marks on her left hand and a small wound on her stomach," DCP Shahdara Surendra Choudhary said.



Hedgewar Hospital where she was declared dead on arrival by doctors. During the probe, it was revealed that Soni and her husband Satbir had a fight with their neighbours.

According to the police, there are four rooms on the first floor of the house. Three rooms are occupied by three separate families and the owner kept a room for his use. All the occupants of these four rooms use a common toilet and a common tap. There is a small space near the tap which is used by all the tenants for washing clothes and uten-

On the day of the incident, the mother of alleged CCL was filling water in a tub for washing clothes but the deceased also wanted to wash her utensils so she removed the tub before it got filled. As the mother of alleged CCL had to leave for her work soon, she wanted to wash her clothes whereas the deceased wanted to use the same space for washing utensils at the same

time and an argument happened between the two. În the evening, the argument again started when the deceased's husband Satbir came home and started abusing the family of alleged CCL

ing the family of alleged CCL after consuming liquor.

"During the verbal spat, Soni twisted the girl's hand, prompting the girl to seek treatment at Hedgewar Hospital. The girl was treated as a non-Medico Legal Case (MLC) patient, and an X-ray of her hand was conducted. hand was conducted.

"Subsequently, the girl and her mother returned to their home and engaged in another altercation with Soni and her husband Satbir. During this second altercation, Soni was stabbed by the girl," said the The officer said the girl has

been apprehended and will be

produced before the Juvenile

Justice Board. A case under section 302 (attempt to murder) has been registered and investigation in the matter is

Atishi writes to LG seeking suspension of DJB CEO **STAFF REPORTER** NEW DELHI

Delhi minister Atishi has written to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena asking him to suspend the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Delhi Jal Board (DJB) within 24 hours after a woman was killed following a quarrel with her neighbour over taking water from a common tap in Farsh Bazar area in north-east Delhi here area in north-east Delhi here. In the note, Atishi, who also holds the water portfolio, urged Saxena to "institute an independent enquiry into the acts of omission and commission of Chief Secretary, as well as officers of Finance Department, Urban Development Department

She claimed their actions have "led to DJB being starved of funds" in the 2023-



24 financial year and therefore "unable to execute essential works like installation of borewells".

"For more than a year ... Chief minister had given clear directions and a road map for improving water supply in

"For the last six months, the undersigned gave repeated directions (enclosed) to the CEO of Delhi Jal Board and augmentation of water supply, so that there is no shortage of water when the onset of summer happens.

"However, despite repeated directions, no action has been taken to prevent this water crisis in Delhi," she alleged.

Delhi Police on Sunday apprehended a 15-year-old girl for allegedly stabbing her 34-year-old neighbour to death following a dispute over filling water from the common tap, officials said.

"In light of this shocking incident of the death of a woman in Farsh Bazar following violence due to water shortage, Hon'ble LG is requested to immediately suspend the CEO of Delhi Jal Board within 24 hours as this criminal negligence has taken place under his watch.

"Initiate a disciplinary action

DIB and other departments of GNCTD responsible for nonaugmentation of water supply for summers of 2024," Atishi

The actions and inactions of officers of the Delhi government have led to the loss of life in Delhi, she alleged.

"Being incharge of Services and Vigilance, swift and strong action must be taken

strong action must be taken by the Hon'ble LG to give a message to all officers that such negligence will not be tolerated. The people of Delhi will be looking towards the Hon'ble LG for immediate

In the last few weeks, many reminders were given to the CEO of DJB and the chief secretary to ensure that the water supply is augmented through tube wells and water tankers,

action," she said.

Delhi BJP leaders welcome party 2024 election manifesto

Delhi BJP leaders on Sunday here welcomed the BJP's 2024 election manifesto presented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said unlike other parties, the party (BJP) delivers what it promises, with a strong resolve. Delhi BJP president Virendra

Sachdeva said the manifesto is based on the achievements of the Modi Government over the past 10 years and outlines the roadmap for the development of the next two and a half decades. Lauding the manifesto, Sachdeva also said the desire to host the Olympics in India has motivated the youth of India. Moreover, the promise to hold the Olympics has increased the sense of national pride among the youth, he said.

Sachdeva said Prime Minister Modi, by giving the first copy of the 2024 manifesto to "Hawker Raghuvir Chhole Kulche Wala" of East Delhi, has signaled significant changes in the lives of Delhi's poor street vendors and other labourers.

He said in the past decade, Prime Minister Modi has controlled corruption and has



promised to tighten the screws on corrupt individuals in the future, which will build a transparent India.

The proposal to issue E-Shram cards to auto-rickshaw, cab drivers, domestic workers, and small laborers will integrate urban poor into the mainstream. Also, it is now certain that every elderly person in Delhi over 70 years old will benefit from the Ayushman Yojana,

Sachdeva said.

The Delhi BJP President said while a lot of work has been done in the past decade to provide housing to the poor under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme, the thought of providing housing to the middle class under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme has brought waves of happiness among the people of Delhi.
Sachdeva said where this man-

ifesto showcases the thinking of infrastructure development in developed India, it also talks about the collective development of society in four categories - the poor, the youth, the farmers, and women.

Dedicated to building a self-reliant, self-employed, clean, and successful India, this manifesto of the BIP envisions India in 2047 and is determined to take the BJP beyond the 400-

Delhi BJP Secretaries Bansuri Swaraj and Harish Khurana, along with Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor have in a joint statement said the BJP's manifesto for 2024 is a commitment to the development of youth, urban poor, and women, which will make India a bright India by 2047.

BJP leaders have said the BJP's manifesto for 2024, dedicated to public welfare, is showing clarity to Aam Aadmi Party leader Atishi and her Congress allies, who are now trying to criticize the manifesto amidst political

BJP leaders said Atishi should understand that India today belongs to the youth who want to see an end to corruption and who want to be job creators rather than being job seekers. The BJP's manifesto is a document that creates selfemployment opportunities according to the aspirations of the vouth.

Atishi should understand that the proposal of hosting the Olympics in India kept by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has increased the sense of national pride among the youth.

Document has no mention of promises made by Centre in last 10 years: AAP

STAFF REPORTER

The AAP on Sunday termed the BJP's Lok Sabha poll manifesto a "jumla patra" and said the document has no mention of the promises made by the Centre in the last 10 years. The "Sankalp Patra" of the saffron party talks about making "one nation, one election" a reality, preparing common electoral rolls, abolishing waiting lists for train travel, expansion of 5G networks and organising Ramayan festivals the world over.

Addressing a Press conference, senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi said the manifesto of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is nothing but a "jumla patra (document of rhetoric)".

"It presents a clear picture of

AAP leaders read Preamble to Constitution

the same Prime Minister Narendra Modi whose first election promise to the youth before 2014 elections was 'Bahut hui berozgari ki maar, abki baar Modi sarkar'. In 2014 as well Modiji's rhetoric was that we will give 2-crore jobs every year. But after 10 years in their jumla patra (manifesto) of 2024 they aren't ready to give any figures on jobs. In this 75-page document Modi ji hasn't mentioned that in the last 10 years how many youths have been given employment, she added.

Atishi said the second biggest slogan or rhetoric of PM Modi was 'bahut hui mehangai ki maar, abki baar Modi sarkar'. 'In his manifesto, he can't give the figures of how much infla-tion has reduced. But consumer price index in the last 10 "It presents a clear picture of the unfulfilled promises of the BJP in the last 10 years. This is "years shows, cumulative dear-ness has increased by 70 per-cent in India, which is the sec-

ond highest after Turkey in the world. India is not at higher position in terms of employment, economic development, GDP, but PM Modi made India bag the second position in the world in dearness," she

Youngsters are worried because of unemployment, she said, adding that the price of LPG cylinders has risen from Rs 300 to Rs 1,200 while the price of diesel has gone up from Rs 55 to Rs 90 per litre. "Every family is facing difficulties in meeting their expenses. No one will trust the jumla patra released by the BJP," the minister in the Delhi government said.

Modi released the BJP's Lok Sabha poll manifesto at the party headquarters here on Sunday. The manifesto has a special focus on the poor, youngsters, farmers and

CEO announces paid leave to employees on day of election in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

¬aking a crucial step towards 1 enhancing voter turnout and participation in the electoral process, Chief Electoral Officer of Delhi P Krishnamurthy announced the implementation of Election Commission of India (ECI) Order which grants paid holiday to employees on day of poll in NCT of Delhi under Section 135B of the RP Act 1951. Delhi will go to polls on May 25.

As per the order, all eligible employees, be it public or private, who are voters in the NCT of Delhi are entitled to a paid holiday to exercise their democratic right to vote on the polling day. Besides, it is to state that voters of neighbouring cities Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan working in Delhi to also be given a paid holiday on the day of voting and vice versa for voters of Delhi working in neighbouring cities as per their polling dates. This initiative underscores the importance of voter turnout and the fundamental role of every citizen in the bolstering the electoral process. By grant-



ing a paid holiday, the CEO of Delhi under the guidance of ECI aims to facilitate unhindered participation and spreading voter awareness among the residents of Delhi.

Further, employers of concerned public, private or any other establishments are urged to comply with this order and ensure that their employees have the opportunity to participate in the democratic process without any hindrance. It is to state that non-compliance to this order amounts to fine as well as punishment under the provisions speci-

The CEO of Delhi appealed to the youth and young voters in the NCT of Delhi to utilize this opportunity and cast their vote on polling day.

1.26 lakh booked for stop line violations in 2024

EC releases **Voters in Q** app: Officials

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

o increase voter participa-I tion and expand voting opportunities for eligible voters, the Election Commission has released a Voters-in-Q App, officials said.

With this App, voters can get information about the crowd at polling booths on the day of voting. This app will prove to be very helpful in increasing the voting percentage, they

District Election Officer and Commissioner Deputy Gurugram, Nishant Kumar Yadav said that the Election Commission of India has started many special plans to increase the vote percentage for the upcoming Lok Sabha general elections.

He said that now voters can download the app on the day of voting and see the crowd at the polling stations live. So that voters can vote at their conve-

He said that many times voters see the crowd and go back without casting their vote, and information about polling stations will be available through

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

AP leaders read out the AP leaders read out the Constitution on the occasion of Babasaheb Ambedkar's birth anniversary on Sunday. Workers and leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) gathered at the party headquarters here on Rouse Âvenue to take part in the "Samvidhan Bachao, Tanashahi Hatao" oath-taking ceremony.

Addressing the party workers, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said, "Till the time the AAP is there, its workers will keep fighting to protect the Constitution till their last breath. The BJP wants to



amend the Constitution." Singh asked people to vote for candidates in all seven seats of

the INDIA opposition bloc

Delhi in the upcoming Lok

Minister) Arvind Kejriwal to walk out of jail, you have to ensure that the BJP candidates lose their deposits in all the seven seats in Delhi. You have to ensure the victory of the AAP and Congress candidates in all the seven seats," he said. Slogans of "Jai Bhim" and "Babasaheb Amar Rahenge"

were raised at the event. Kejriwal, the national convenor of the AAP, has been arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a moneylaundering case linked to the alleged excise policy scam in the national capital and is currently lodged in Tihar Jail. He will be in judicial custody till Monday.

Rights of Dalit class people are gift of Congress and Babasaheb: Jai Kishan

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

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m F}^{
m our}$ time Congress MLA from Sultanpur Majra Jai Kishan paid tribute to Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Ambedkar on his 133rd birth anniversary at his residence on Sunday while claiming that 'the right's of the Dalit class people are the gift of Congress and Baba Saheb'.

Kishan, dignitaries of Delhi Sangharsh Samiti, followers of Baba Saheb from Buddhist Mahasabha and other organisations were also present who paid tribute to Baba Saheb. Hundreds of Congress workers were present on this occasion. Former MLA Kishan, while paying his tribute to Baba Saheb, said "The rights of the Dalit class people are the gift of Congress and Baba Saheb. Baba Saheb's contribution and struggle cannot be forgotten. History is witness to the power and reservation that Congress and Baba Saheb gave to Dalits and equal rights and power to men

He asserted that it is because of Ambedkar that people of the Dalit class are living with their heads held high. "Otherwise they did not have the right to even spit on the ground, offer procession on a mare or drink water from a well," the Dalit leader said while paying his

Kishan claimed that apart from Congress, leaders of other parties had even called Baba Saheb a stooge of the British for their political gains. "The Central Government is making huge life-size statues of other leaders. But neither any statue of Baba Saheb nor any tourist place is built where people can roam in

his memory," he said while attacking the BJP regime.
Remembering former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, he said Gandhi followed the footsteps

gave the youth the right to vote at the age of eighteen, women empowerment, Panchayati Raj and computer revolution. Other security, planning, and right to education were given to the country. This is the contribution of Congress only," he added. He attributed the Congress for respecting Baba Saheb and making him a member of the Constitution Committee and the Law Minister of the country. "Non-Congress parties had conspired to break the Constitution made by Baba Saheb in the name of constitutional review.

The rights of Dalit classes, women, youth, labourers, farmers and minorities are safe only during the rule of Congress. Leaders of other parties exploit them," he said. On this occasion, clothes and sports materials were distributed to poor women, elderly people and children living in

Ambedkar ideals specifically against dynastic politics: LG

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

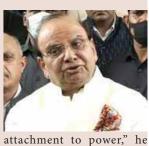
Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena on Sunday paid tribute to Baba Saheb Ambedkar on his birth anniversary and rued that "total distortion and subjugation" of every value he stood for is being witnessed just to cling to

In a series of posts on X, Saxena said Ambedkar's ideals were specifically against "dynastic politics".

power.

"Baba Saĥeb's ideals of constitutional/democratic morality, though not mentioned in the text of our constitution, because he thought of them to be enshrined in our hearts & heads, were specifically against dynastic politics and illusionary attachment to seats of

power," the LG posted. "His sense of detachment militated against unprincipled



"Alas, what we are witnessing

today, is total distortion and subjugation of every value that he stood for, just to cling on to a position of power at any cost," he said without naming anyone. His remarks come in the backdrop of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal refusing to resign from his post following his arrest in a money laundering scam.

The LG also asked people to embrace Ambedkar's thoughts and not only his picture.

year during the same period. According to data compiled by the Delhi Traffic Police, from January 1 to March 31 in 2024, the Traffic Police booked 1,26,084 violators, compared to 1,05,317 in 2023, indicating a significant rise of approximately 20 percent in the number of prosecutions issued for stop line

violations compared to the same

period last year.

More than 1.26 lakh commuters have been booked

for stop-line violations in the first

three months of 2024, which is

20 percent higher than the last

Delhi Traffic Police has observed a significant increase in prosecutions for stop line violations across various intersections within the city. The stop line violations, which involve motorists disregarding the designated stop lines at traffic signals, have been a persistent concern contributing to road safety hazards and traffic congestion," a senior officer of the Delhi Traffic Police

A thorough analysis of the top 10 traffic circles with the most challans issued in 2024 shows the maximum violations happening in Defence Colony area with

"In the first quarter of 2024, the 24,716 issued, followed by 13,285 challans issued in Mayur Vihar and 12,552 in Safdarjung Enclave. "By highlighting the regions with the highest frequency of traffic infractions, this study enables focused enforcement actions to increase road safety and adherence to traffic regulations," the statement by the Delhi Traffic Police

Other areas in the analysis show violations happening in Lajpat Nagar (8,275), Dwarka (8,247), Tilak Nagar (5,800), Punjabi (5,460), Model Town (4,655), Madhu Vihar (4,272) and Civil Lines (4,172).

and women."

tribute.

of Ambedkar. "Rajiv Gandhi

Modi exhorts people to give another mandate to his party

2024" for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections which which has a special focus on the poor, youth, farmers and women, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday exhorted people to give another mandate to his party to shape India's 'destiny' for the next 1,000 years.

Describing the party's 'Sankal Patra' as a document of his guarantee, Modi highlighted the achievements of 10 years of his government at the Centre and said the BJP has delivered on every promise it made so far and asserted that the need for a stable government with full majority was necessary when the world was passing through uncertain times.

"The need for a stable majority government increases at a

through uncertain times," the prime minister said, referring to the several conflicts the world was grappling with.

"This 'Sankalp Patra' strengthens the four strong pillars of a 'Viksit Bharat': 'Yuva Shakti', 'Nari Shakti', poor and farmers,' he said. "I had said from the ramparts of the Red Fort that 'Yahi Samay hai, Sahi Samay hai' to shape India's destiny for the next 1,000 years...I present this Sankalp Patra to the people of the country as 'Modi ki guarantee' for their blessings. The country's 140 crore people's ambition is Modi's mission," he

"Bless us, give us more strength for the welfare of crores of citizens of Maa Bharati, to realise the vision of 'Viksit Bharat', to implement this 'Sankalp Patra' at faster pace," he said, adding that in times of prevailing unrest in different parts of the



government with an unequivocal majority in India becomes even more pronounced. The prime minister stated that

the BJP's focus is on the dignity and quality of life, as well as investment and employment. "Simultaneously, in the realm of digital infrastructure, efforts are underway to expand the reach of 5G technology while also laying the groundwork for advancements like 6G," he said.
"The Sankalp Patra emphasizes

both the quantity and quality of opportunities, with a focus on infrastructure development for generating employment on one hand, and promoting startups and global centers for highvalue servicing on the other. I present this Sankalp Patra to the 140 crore citizens as a testament to 'Modi ki guarantee'. The BJP has formulated this Sankalp Patra to transform the dreams

"The BJP's Sankalp Patra will swiftly initiate its course after June 4, with the government already underway on its initial 100-day action plan. BJP has enacted the Nari Shakti Act, revoked Article 370, and implemented the CAA nationwide. Upholding the principles of Reform, Perform, and Transform, India is poised to advance rapidly," Modi said. During the unveiling of the Sankalp Patra, a film was show-

cased by the BJP, illustrating the welfare and transformative initiatives undertaken in the past 10 years, as well as the resolutions adopted by the party to propel the nation towards 'Viksit Bharat' in the forthcoming years. This film depicted how the BJP has, over the past 10 years, implemented every point of its Sankalp Patra as a guarantee on the ground. Speaking on the occasion PM nificant day as there is fervor for the New Year in many states across the country.

BJP also aims to extend the Vande Bharat train network to every corner of the nation, introducing three models: Vande Bharat Sleeper, Vande Bharat Chair Car, and Vande

Bharat Metro. The construction of the Ahmedabad-Mumbai Bullet Train is progressing, nearing completion. The party has pledged to operate a bullet train in all four directions of India, marking a significant step towards self-reliance. Speaking on the occasion, BJP

president J P Nadda said the government's achievements over the last 10 years, such as the abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution and the women's reservation law, were made possible due to the clear mandate given to the party by

BJP promises global outreach to promote legacy of Lord Ram

 $T^{he\,BJP\,in\,its\,Lok\,Sabha\,poll}_{\,manifesto\ released\ on}$ Sunday expressed its commitment to a "holistic" development of Ayodhya and promised to launch a global outreach programme for promoting the legacy of Lord

The party also promised that it will celebrate 'Ramayan Utsav' across the globe to commemorate the 'Pran Pratishtha' of Ram Lalla at the recently built temple in Ayodhya if it retains power.

"As millions of devotees from around the world visit Shri Ram Lalla in Ayodhya, we are



committed to the holistic development of the city," the BJP stated in its 'Sankalp Patra, which was released here by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the presence of BJP chief J P Nadda and Union ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, and Nirmala

"Ramayan is celebrated across

identifying biomarkers early

on, we can intervene sooner,

providing targeted support

Responding to the study out-

come, Shweta Sharma,

Psychologist at Manipal Hospitals, Gurugram con-

curred that "experiencing abuse or neglect as a child can

profoundly impact psycho-

logical and physiological development. Psychological

theories suggest that adverse childhood experiences can disrupt attachment patterns,

leading to difficulties in reg-

ulating emotions and behav-

She was of the opinion that children who experience abuse or neglect often have

disrupted attachment rela-

tionships with caregivers, and

individuals may develop mal-

adaptive coping mechanisms

such as overeating, substance

abuse, or engaging in risky

behaviors. Overeating, in par-

ticular, can lead to obesity

over time. Also, said Dr

Sharma, who also happens to

be General Secretary of Indian Association of Clinic

Psychologists, childhood trauma can lead to chronic

stress, which dysregulates the

body's stress response system,

including the hypothalamic-

pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis

and the sympathetic nervous

"Dysregulation in these sys-

tems can lead to increased

inflammation in the body, as

stress hormones such as cor-

tisol can impact immune

function. Overall, the combi-

nation of disrupted attach-

ment, maladaptive coping mechanisms, chronic stress, epigenetic changes, and health behaviors contributes

to the increased vulnerabili-

ty of individuals who have experienced childhood abuse

or neglect to obesity, inflam-

mation, and trauma through-

out their lives," she conclud-

Consultant

to those who need it most."

the world, particularly in South and South-East Asia. We will launch a global outreach programme for documenting and promoting the tangible and intangible legacy of Lord Ram in all countries. We will celebrate Ramayan Utsav with great fervour across the globe to commemorate the Pran Pratishtha of Ram Lalla," it

The BJP in its poll manifesto also promised that it will collaborate with other countries to restore and revitalise sites of "Bharatiya civilisation" and establish a "Bharatiya Sanskriti Kosh" to ensure the preservation and protection of "ancient Bharatiya civilization", classical languages, culture, and traditions through the extensive use of technology if it is voted to power again.

"We will undertake significant new projects to develop religious and tourist sites inspired by the Kashi Vishwanath corridor model, across the length and breadth of our country," the party proposed in its man-

The ruling party also promised that it will continue to digitise all "Bharatiya manuscripts and epigraphs" in mission mode for their preservation and study and establish a dedicated scholarship programme to research ancient Bharatiya manuscripts and epigraphs if it gets another mandate to rule at the Centre.

BJP underscores commitment to defend Indian citizens from threats of terrorism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

¬he BIP on Sunday under-The BJP on sunday and scored its commitment to defending India's citizens and interests at "home and abroad from all threats of terrorism" as it cited surgical and air strikes during the first term of the Modi government to highlight its zero-tolerance.

"In the last ten years, we have taken a firm stand on protecting our country and citizens from the threats of terrorism and naxalism. We have followed a zero-tolerance policy on terrorism. We remain committed to keeping our country and citizens safe," the party said in its manifesto for the Lok Sabha polls.

It said, "We are committed to defending Bharat's citizens and interests at home and abroad from all threats of terrorism."

The BJP government will establish military theatre commands for more efficient operations following the creation of the position of the Chief of Defence Staff for better coordination in the military, the

With the BJP projecting India's global rise as among the success of the Modi government, the manifesto includes a section on "Modi ki guarantee for Vishwa Bandhu Bharat" to deliver a "Bharat first" foreign It promises to consolidate the

country's position as a voice of the Global South and its commitment to seeking permanent membership in the UN Security Council to "elevate Bharat's position in global decision-making."

"We will continue our efforts to create a consensus among all members of the United Nations on the Comprehensive Convention International Terrorism and other such efforts to combat terrorism," it said.

Blaming the "gross neglect" by

previous governments for poor infrastructure in border areas, the party said the Modi dispensation has corrected this grave error".

We will accelerate the development of robust infrastructure along the India-China, Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Myanmar borders. We will introduce technological solutions on fenced portions to make fencing smarter," the manifesto said.

The section under "Modi ki guarantee" for 'safe India' affirms the party's commitment to eliminate the threat of drugs and Left Wing

Childhood abuse takes profound toll on victim health: Study



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F_{ ext{endured childhood abuse}}^{ ext{or many of us who}}$ or neglect, the scars aren't just emotional — they're physical, lingering long after the traumatic events themselves. While this has been a known fact, it was not yet well understood why this risk persists many decades after the illtreatment first happened.

Now, a new study has validated the profound toll this early-life adversity takes on the health, from brains to bodies of the victim of abuse. Published in the 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences', the study delved into the experiences of over 21,000 adults aged 40-70, including their histories of childhood maltreatment and their current health status.

They analysed this data from the UK Biobank along with their body mass index (BMI), C-reactive protein levels (that reveal signs of inflammation) and their experiences of childhood ill-treatment and By studying brain scans of

adults, the researchers from the University of Cambridge, UK found that there were widespread changes in the brain structure such as increased thickness and reduced volume, associated with obesity, inflammation and repeated trauma stemming from childhood ill-treatment.

These structural changes, therefore suggested physical damage inflicted on the brain cells that affected their functioning, said Professor Edward Bullmore, Department of Psychiatry, University of Cambridge, and author of the study.

"We've long known that childhood maltreatment increases the risk of mental illness. But now, with this deeper understanding of the physical changes it induces in the brain and body, we're

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Ceeking to connect with the people of Tamil Nadu where his party is trying to gain a foothold, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday announced that the BIP will work towards building Thiruvalluvar cultural cen-

tres all over the world. 'We will build Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over the world. The world's oldest Tamil language is our pride. BJP will undertake every effort to enhance the global reputation of Tamil language," Modi he BIP's manifesto for the Lok Sabha

Thiruvalluvar was a noted

Tamil poet and philosopher. The prime minister has in the past asked the youth to read Thiruvalluvar's book "Kural", a celebrated Tamil text which offers wisdom on ethics and morality in different aspects of For the BJP, Tamil Nadu is an

unconquered frontier along with neighbouring Kerala, which sends 20 MPs to the Lok Sabha.Both states go to the polls in the first two phases of the general election, on April 19 and 26. Often considered a fringe play-

er in Tamil Nadu's electoral arena dominated by the resurgent BJP in Tamil Nadu has seen it's stock rising much beyond its expectations this



BJP to build Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over world: Modi

time, thanks to an assertive together have 130 seats. and aggressive K Annamalai The BJP won only 29 in the who is steering the party. The BJP has made no bones about its intentions to make good electoral inroads in the Dravidian heartland and is hopeful of turning the positive wave into votes for the April 19 general election. Unlike the AIADMK or the DMK, which alternately come to power in the state banking on their iconic leaders, the BJP lacks

women or other sections. The five southern states of Tamil Nadu (39 seats), Telangana (17) and the Union territory of Puducherry (1)

traditional vote banks either

from the minorities, fishers,

2019 general elections, of which 25 were from Karnataka alone and four from Telangana. The party drew a total blank in

the 85 seats in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry. The prime minister has made

more than half-a-dozen visits to Tamil Nadu as the BJP aims to strike it big in the Lok Sabha elections where it has set a target of more than 400 seats for the ruling NDA coalition.Union Minister Nitin Gadkarihad said southern get of more than 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections.

President, Vice President, PM pay floral tributes to Ambedkar on birth anniversary



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla offered floral tributes at the statue of Babasaheb Ambedkar in the Parliament House Complex on the occasion of his birth anniversary on Sunday.

Union ministers, members of Parliament, former lawmakers and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion. Later, several dignitaries also

offered floral tributes at Ambedkar's portrait in the Central Hall of the Samvidhan Sadan, the old Parliament building.Secretaries-General of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, Utpal Kumar Singh and P C Mody respectively, also offered floral tributes to Ambedkar in the Central Hall. Ambedkar's portrait was unveiled in the Central Hall by the then Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh on April 12, 1990.

On the occasion of the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, the architect of our Constitution

and one of the most eminent nation builders, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to all fellow citizens," the president said in a statement. Babasaheb, a great son of Bharat, was not only the architect of the Indian Constitution but also a champion of social justice. He pioneered social change to build an egalitarian India, through a constitutional framework promoting rule of law, civil liberties, gender equality and empowerment of marginalised sections," Dhankhar Birla hailed Ambedkar as a

great nation builder and said his life was synonymous with a unique struggle for social jus-

"He was the vocal voice of the exploited and deprived sections of the society and always dedicated to protecting their rights. In the form of the Constitution, he has given us an inspiring guide which is a model for all democratic countries. His works guide us even today. It is our responsibility to follow the path shown by him and contribute to achieve the resolution of creating an inclusive society and a developed India," the Lok Sabha speaker said.

Trials for indigenous portable anti tank missile carried out successfully



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Giving a further boost to self-reliance in defence manufacturing, the Indian Army has successfully carried out field trials of indigenouslydeveloped man-portable antitank guided missile (MPAT-GM) weapon system, paving way for its induction into the force's armoury.

The weapon system has been designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), officials said here on Sunday. The overall system consisted of the MPATGM, launchers, target acquisition device and a fire control unit. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has complimented the DRDO and the Indian Army for the successful trials of the system, terming it as an important step towards achieving self-reliance in advanced technology-based defence system development. The MPATG weapon system has been field evaluated in different flight configurations sev-

ministry said.

"The warhead flight trials were successfully conducted at the Pokhran Field Firing Range on April 13. Missile performance and warhead performance were found to be remarkable," it said on Sunday. It said an adequate number of missile firing trials have been successfully conducted towards achieving compliance of complete operational envelope as stipulated in the General Staff Qualitative Requirements.

Penetration trials of the tandem warhead system of MPAT-GM have been successfully completed and it is found capable of defeating modern armour protected main battle tanks," it said.

The weapon system is wellequipped for operation in both day and night. "The dual mode seeker functionality is a great value addition to the missile capability for tank warfare. With this, technology development and successful demonstration have been concluded and the system is now ready for final user evaluation trials leading towards its induction into eral times with an objective of the Indian Army," the ministry proving the technology with said, Chairman DRDO Samir V high superiority, the defence Kamat congratulated the teams associated with the trials.

Upcoming poll is about protecting Ambedkar accomplishment



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

¬ongress on Sunday Caccused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of orchestrating a systematic campaign to do away with the Constitution framed by B R Ambedkar and said the upcoming Lok Sabha election is about preserving and protecting Ambedkar's magnificent accomplishment.

Ambedkar's birth anniversary was celebrated on Sunday. "Today our country celebrates the 133rd birth anniversary of the extraordinarily multifaceted Dr B R Ambedkar -at a time when calls for doing away with the Constitution of India, which is his greatest legacy, are getting shriller. This is undoubtedly part of a systematic campaign orchestrated by none other than the Prime Minister himself," Congress chief spokesman general Jairam Ramesh said in

a statement. "The strategy is simple but full of hypocrisy: keep up the pretence of upholding that legacy while undermining it daily and getting drum-beaters to call for a new Constitution," he

This is what the 2024 election is fundamentally all about -the preservation and protection of Dr Ambedkar's magnificent accomplishment along with the values in which it is anchored and principles in which it is grounded," Ramesh said.

Mallikarjun Kharge paid homage to Ambedkar and visited Deekshabhoomi in Maharashtra's Nagpur, where the Dalit icon had embraced Buddhism. Today, on the auspicious

occasion of the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, we again pledged to protect the Constitution and democracy at the historic Deekshabhoomi in Nagpur. The entire country has to unite to save the Constitution," Kharge said.

Earlier in the day, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said the ultimate aim of the ruling BJP at the Centre is to alter the basis structure of the Constitution and that is why the leaders of the party keep talking about "400 paar" (winning more than 400 seats) in the Lok Sabha polls.

Congress spreading lies: Shah

BJP will never allow reservations to end, says Home Minister

PTI KHAIRAGARH (CHHATTISGARH)

Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the BJP will never allow reservations to end and nor will it let Congress do so. Speaking at a rally in Khairagarh in Chhattisgarh,

Shah also asked people to give Narendra Modi a third term as prime minister so that the menace of Naxalism can be eliminated in the state in the

next three years. Modi had finished Maoist violence in his 10-year rule but continues in Chhattisgarh, Shah said in Khairagarh, which is part of

Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat, where BJP's Santosh Pandey is up against former Congress chief minister Bhupesh Baghel. "Today is the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Ambedkar. The entire nation is remembering him for his work towards upliftment of Dalits, Adivasis, backwards and the poor.

On this day, people work to the take the spirit of the Constitution drafted by him to the grassroots but even on such a day the Congress is busy spreading lies," Shah said. Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge is claiming the Constitution will be changed if Modi becomes prime minister and again



functionaries allege BJP will end reservations after coming to power, Shah said. I want to make it clear that till

BJP is in politics, we will not let anything happen to reservations. We will not allow Congress to end it either," the Union Home minister asserted.

Prime Minister Modi has strengthened the country and safeguarded it from terrorism, Saleguarded it from terrorism, Shah said, adding the NDA government in its 10-year rule had eliminated Naxalism. "However, its tail is left in said. Targeting former CM Baghel, Shah said the country was witness to several scams committed by the Congress but none of them had been named after a god, a reference to the multi-crore Mahadev betting app scam that is being probed by agencies.

"Baghel did not spare the name of Mahadev and committed a scam of Rs 508 crore. Keep the anger of Mahadev betting app in mind and press the lotus (BJP symbol) button with such force that the tremors are felt till Italy," he said in a swipe at the Italian origin of Congress leader Sonia Gandhi.

Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat will witness voting on April 26.

"We should have nuclear weapons to protect our country; those

saying otherwise can't protect

Modi further hit out at the

Congress saying no sooner the son

of a poor family became prime minister, the grand old party

spread rumours that the Constitution and democracy were

'Modi has reached here due to the

Constitution scripted by Babasaheb," he said on the birth

he said.



Samajwadi Party releases fresh list of seven candidates

PTI LUCKNOW

The Samajwadi Party on Sunday declared seven more Lok Sabha poll candidates for Uttar Pradesh, with the party fielding former MP Bhishm Shankar 'Kushal' Tiwari from

Domariyaganj seat. With this, the Akhilesh Yadav-led party has announced the names of 57 candidates in the state, party leaders

According to the list released by the SP on X, sitting MP from Shravasti and former BSP leader Ram Shiromani Verma has been fielded by the party

from the seat. Besides, former MLA Laxminath alias Pappu Nishad has been named as party

candidate from Sant Kabir Nagar Lok Sabha seat. The SP has also given the ticket to Babu

Singh Kushwaha, a former close aide of BSP chief Mayawati. He has been made the SP candidate from Jaunpur, party spokesperson Rajpal Kashyap said. Ramashankar Rajbhar, a former BSP MP from Salempur, has been made the candidate by the SP in this election. He

Sabha from 2009 to 2014. Apart from this, the SP has also fielded Amarnath Maurya from Phoolpur and Priya Saroj from Machhlishahr.

had represented Salempur in the Lok

Kashyap said Domariyaganj candidate Tiwari was the MP from Sant Kabir Nagar from 2009 to 2014, and from Khalilabad from 2007 to 2009. Tiwari was then with the BSP, and he joined the SP in December 2021.

Kushwaha's Jan Adhikar Party was a part of the coalition Bhagidari Parivartan Morcha in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. The party failed to win any seat in the election.

Chhattisgarh. Give Modi a third term as PM to ensure Naxalism can be eliminated in Chhattisgarh in three years," he

Omar rules out contesting Assembly elections till JK is UT

PTI SRINAGAR

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah has ruled out contesting the assembly elections till and Kashmir Jammu remains a Union territory. "I don't fancy my chances for anything. I don't aspire to the office of the Chief Minister. And I most certainly do not aspire to lead a Union Territory.

"I have made it abundantly clear that in the current situation that J-K finds itself in, I am not contesting assembly elections. I have said this all the way back from 2020 onwards and my position has not changed," Abdullah told PTI in an interview here on Saturday. Asked about the rationale behind leaving the family bastion of Srinagar Lok Sabha seat to contest from Baramulla, Abdullah, who has been elected to Lok was not his habit to take the easv road.

"Why should I shy away from a fight? Yes, the political wisdom would suggest that I fight from Srinagar because God forbid a setback for me would be a setback for the entire party. But this is not the first time that someone from the family has fought from a seat other than Srinagar," he said.

Abdullah recalled his grandmother Akbar Jehan winning from Anantnag constituency in the 1984 Lok Sabha polls. "I still remember as a child

campaigning with my grandmother from Anantnag in 1984 after the murder of democracy when MLAs were bought, defections were engineered and my father's government was brought down. "My grandmother fought education.

a former Salwa Judum leader.

Defying the odds, he studied

MBBS in Kyrgyzstan. Now,

this man from a sleepy village

in Chhattisgarh's insurgency-

hit Bijapur district has entered

the fray for the upcoming Lok

Meet Prakash Kumar Gota, an

independent candidate from

Though the polls in Bastar are

primarily a contest between

the BJP and Congress, Gota

claims he holds sway over

Talking to PTI, Gota said

tribals constitute 32 per cent

of the state's population, yet

somehow, they have not been

able to reap the benefits of

development works and

schemes.

tribal youths in the region.

reserved

Sabha elections.

Scheduled-Tribe

Bastar Lok Sabha seat.

and won from Anantnag," he added. Abdullah said his fight in the Baramulla Lok Sabha

seat was not against a particular candidate but against the "might of the central government and the BJP".

"The biggest onslaught of Delhi that we are seeing is in north Kashmir. The maximum effort to cobble unnatural alliances is in north Kashmir. "If you remember last

Friday, while coming out of Hazratbal, the leader of Apni Party Altaf Bukhari while referring to Sajad Lone, was a little insulting. "He had called him do *eenton ki imarat* (a building of two bricks). No sooner had he uttered those words, senior BJP leader Tarun Chugh came running to Srinagar, went straight to Altaf Bukhari's residence, and summoned up this alliance.

'So, I am not fighting against an individual. My fight in north Kashmir is against the BJP, it is against the support it is giving to people on the ground," he

On the claims made by the BJP about development in Jammu and Kashmir post abrogation of Article 370, the former chief minister said by any measure of human development, J-K is far better than some of the so-called developed states of the country.

"In terms of the quality of life, I-K ranks above even the states like Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh. In terms of basic things like the matrix that makes up the human development index, in terms of infant mortality, mortality, maternal development, girl child's

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday mocked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, terming him a "royal magician" over his remark to eradicate poverty "with a single stroke" and said the country doesn't take him seriously.
Addressing a rally at Pipariya town in Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad Lok Sabha constituency, Modi also targeted the opposition INDIA bloc over one of its constituents

being in favour of nuclear disarmament and said they cannot protect the country.
He also said the Congress always insulted Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar,

PTI HOSHANGABAD (MP)

'The Where was this royal magician missing for so many years? His grandmother (former PM Indira Gandhi) had given the slogan of



Modi dubs Rahul royal magician over his remark to remove poverty instantly

'Garibi Hatao' 50 years ago," Modi said without naming Rahul Gandhi.

The country does not take him seriously, the PM said.

statements and have become a laughing stock. It is a joke on the

said a constituent of the INDIA bloc has called for nuclear disarmament -- referring to the CPI(M) manifesto.

'In the manifestoes of INDI dangerous promises were made. One of its partner's manifesto has poor," he said. promised nuclear disarmament of Without naming any party, Modi the country," he said.

anniversary of Dr Ambedkar. "The Congress always insulted Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, we have honoured him," the PM said.

Pointing to the current derelict condition of the

Baan Theatre (old), the ABUSS president said, "The

condition of this theatre

reflects the state of politics in

our country. We are still hopeful that there will be

Grandson of Padmanath

Gohain Baruah, Sanjay, also

government should do more

"We always request the

government for more focus

on the cultural sector, but we

haven't seen much been

done. My one appeal to the

new government will be to

lend a helping hand to the

Also, questioning the timing

of the election, he added

"Our question is why are

elections always held during

the Bihu? It hampers our

traditional celebration of

'Saat Bihu' (Bihu for seven

days). Those in government

jobs cannot be at home. Why

can't this message from Assam go to the Central

government that election

should not be held here

Tezpur was itself a Lok Sabha

constituency till last year,

when post-delimitation it

was brought under the

newly-carved Sonitpur seat.

during the Saat Bihu?.

for the cultural sector.

development.

artists," he said

India."

in danger.

He also said the Congress never recognised the contribution of adivasis (tribals), but the BJP government has honoured them. Because of the Constitution given

by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, a tribal woman became the President of India, the PM said, referring to Droupadi Murmu's election to the country's top constitutional post.

Entire world sure of Modi win: Rajnath

PTI ■ JAMUI (BIHAR)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been receiving invitations for functions scheduled abroad next year, which shows that the "entire world believes his return to power is inevitable".

Addressing an election in Bihar's Jamui district, the former BJP president said, "Election season is known to be volatile everywhere. People view these times with a degree of consternation, but not so in the case of India. The entire world believes PM Modi will be back for a third consecutive term in office."

He is already being invited abroad for functions that are to be held next year, Singh

PUBLIC NOTICE

claimed. The Defence Minister asserted that under Modi, India has transformed into a power "capable of repulsing crossborder terrorism as was seen during the surgical strikes".

"Another example of India's rise in global stature was the release of retired navy officials, who were awarded death sentence by a court in Qatar, Modi to the head of the West Asian state," said Singh. Speaking hours after the

release of BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' in Delhi in the presence of the PM, Singh, who headed the manifesto committee, said, "Unlike other parties, we fulfil the promises we make, be it Ram temple at Ayodhya or abrogation of Article 370."

ATHE PIONEER O

I, Agyakar Singh S/o Sh Mohinder Singh R/o 10 B, First Floor, Almeria Apartmants, Sector-84, Sikanderpur Badha, Gurugram, Haryana-122004 do hereby declare that in service records of my wife Smt. Pawan Chowdhary my name has been mentioned wrongly as A.K. Singh whereas my correct name is Agyakar Singh in the same way in the birth certificate of my son Sh. Angad Singh my name has been mentioned wrongly as A.K. Singh whereas my correct name is Agyakar Singh. That Agyakar Singh and A.K. Singh is same and one

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Madhu Bisht W/O Harpal Singh R /O FF -2, PLOT NO.

218 NITI KHAND -1, INDIRAPURAM Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201014 have changed my Name from Madhu Bisht to Madhavi Bisht for all purpose.

PD(366) C

The party that cannot strengthen but the BJP government has honoured him. They ran the government by itself, can it strengthen the shehzada Congress remote control for 10 years before country? he asked. 2014. Now they have found a mantra instantly. They made such announced to eradicate poverty with a single stroke. It is laughable. alliance partners, a number of

Appeal for equal focus on politics, culture from Assam old rang manch

of the century-old Baan Theatre in Tezpur in Assam on Sunday to celebrate Rongali Bihu, politics took the backseat even as the town prepares to vote for its new MP in less than a week. As the crowd partook in the

As over a hundred people gathered in the courtyard

conscious that culture and politics cannot be completely disassociated though the timing of the Lok Sabha election was a matter of 'disappointment'. "Politics and culture are two

different things, but then the political aspirations of the people must reflect its cultural aspirations also," Pradip septuagenarian Kumar Bhattacharjya said as he enjoyed the celebrations seated in the shade of a balcony.

He maintained that a political party or ideal must represent the culture of the place it originates in, and more so in a place like Tezpur which has a unique standing and is often referred to as the 'cultural capital' of Assam. Baan

Theatre, established in 1906 by Asamiya Bhasa Unnati Sadhini Sabha (ABUSS), is

of cultural importance in Tezpur. When the old premise was

devastated in a storm in 1953, the Baan Theatre was relocated to another place in the town from where it has been functioning since then. The new premise is currently being re-developed with state-of-the-art facilities by the state government. The Bihu celebration was

held at the old Baan Theatre premise, which witnessed performances by cultural icons like Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, Bishnu Prasad Rabha and Phani Sarma.

Santanu Baruah, president of ABUSS which runs the Baan Theatre (old), said, "Since Independence, politics and culture have been two sides of the same coin, especially in Assam. This is the first 'rang

Assam and stalwarts like Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Bishnu Prasad Rabha, Purna Naravan Sinha and others were related to it.

He pointed out that just as these prominent people were icons of the cultural field, they were equally involved in the political sector also, and advocated equal participation in both spheres. advocated

Baurah rued the fact that even today children have to be lured to schools with the promise of free food, people have to be told how to vote and free ration is availed by 80 crore people in the country.

He maintained that it indicated that the people were 'not culturally and politically conscious, as he urged the politicians to work for preserving and taking forward culture and among the oldest, landmark manch' (stage or theatre) in literature also, along with

M/s. Medical Products Service (A Registered Partnership Firm)

The General Public is hereby informed that a Partnership Firm namely M/s. Medical Products Service having its Principle Place of Business at 59, 3rd floor, Indu House, Rama Road Industrial Area, Delhi - 110015, is duly registered with Registrar of Firm vide a Partnership Deed dated 18th February, 2021 and bearing Registration No. Firm/West/2022/1647 It is hereby informed that one of the partners of M/s. Medical Products Service namely Lt. Sh. Surinder Saini passed away on 12th March, 2024, transferring his 1/3 rd share in the partnership firm in equal ratio between both the remaining partners i.e. Pradeep Kumar Saini and Virender Saini

It is hereby informed to the general public that Pradeep Kumar Saini and Virender Saini are now the only partners of M/s. Medical Products Service and they shall continue the business of Partnership Firm as per the clauses of the duly registered Partnership Deed

Pradeep Kumar Saini Virender Saini (Partner)

सार्वजनिक सूचना

मैं प्रमोटर मैसर्स एससीसी बिल्डर्स प्राइवेट लिमिटेड व्यक्तिगत कारणों से उ०प्र० रेरा में पंजीकृत परियोजना SCC BLOSSOM (PMAY) PH-3 BLOCK-A and BLOCK-B पंजीयन संख्या UPRERAPRJ507767 का सरेन्डर / कैन्सिलेशन / निरस्तीकरण करा रहा हूँ। किसी व्यक्ति / संस्था आदि द्वारा इस परियोजना में यदि कोई बुकिंग करायी गई हो तो कृपया अपना क्लेम / दावा प्रस्तुत करें। उक्त क्लेम / दावा को विवरण सहित 15 दिनों के अन्दर उ०प्र० रेरा की ईमेल आईडी contactuprera@up-rera.in पर भी भेजा जाए तथा क्लेम / दावा विवरण को सचिव, उ०प्र० रेरा मुख्यालय, नवीन भवन, राज्य नियोजन संस्थान, कालाकांकर हाउस, हैदराबाद, लखनऊ—226007 को प्रेषित किया जाए।

SCC BUILDERS PRIVATE LIMITED E-mail: coordinator@sccgroup.in

Slain Salwa Judum leader son enters LS poll fray "The two leading parties have was not good. I have four brothers and two sisters. I am National Examination for eligibility to always disappointed the people of Bastar, which is why He was just 19 when Naxalites killed his father, the second eldest. My mother

the region," he said. The 32-year-old member of the Muria tribe hails from Farsegarh village in Bijapur and is currently staying in a rented house in Jagdalpur, the headquarters of Bastar district, due to elections.

decided to enter the poll

battle to bring real change in

His father, Chinna Ram Gota, an active leader of Salwa Judum, an anti-Maoist civil militia disbanded in 2011, was shot dead by Naxalites at his farm in Kukrel village, around 2 km away from Farsegarh in

Maoists also killed his father's older brother in a similar attack in 2013.

Gota said his father had worked with late Congress leader Mahendra Karma, popularly called 'Bastar tiger'

for his tough stand against Naxalites during the Salwa Judum movement

Karma was killed in the Jhiram valley Naxalite attack the Congress's Parivartan Yatra in 2013.

"I was a first-year student at a nursing college when my father was murdered. I had to quit my studies midway as my family's financial condition

is a housewife", Gota said. Gota worked as a subcontractor for construction works in the area and tendu leaf collection, and this helped him fund his medical studies

in Kyrgyzstan. "In 2016, I went to Kyrgyzstan MBBS. unsuccessfully to avail an education loan. The struggle continued as I had to return home during the COVID-19 pandemic due to my family's

financial condition," he said. Gota again worked as a subcontractor and managed to resume his medical studies in Kyrgyzstan and returned to India in June 2023 after completing his MBBS. He has, however, not appeared

for the Foreign Medical Graduates Examination

(FMGE) conducted by the

practice medicine in India Another tragedy struck my family in August last year when Naxalites abducted my

older brother Mahesh Kumar, who was the chief of the publicity wing of the BJP's Bijapur district unit," he said. Mahesh was later traced to a forest and admitted to a hospital in a critical condition. He has been in a coma ever since, he said. Asked why he did not join the

BJP like his brother, Gota said he did not want to be in politics and wanted to take up There is a provision for a safe settlement and a government

job under a rehabilitation

scheme for victims of Maoist violence, but we did not get any of this. After all this, I was disappointed with the BJP and Congress," he said.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Promises to keep

The BIP unveils its Lok Sabha poll manifesto with emphasis on 'GYAN' and development

he ruling BJP has unveiled its long-awaited manifesto, 'Sankalp Patra', for the Lok Sabha elections, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasising the party's commitment to the welfare of 'GYAN' — Garib, Yuva, Annadaata and Naari Shakti (the poor, youth, farmers and women). Accompanied by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and BJP chief JP Nadda, the Prime Minister presented the manifesto at the party headquarters in New Delhi. Modi outlined that the paper's thrust areas were centred around the concept of 'Viksit Bharat' — empowering the youth, women, farmers and the economically disadvantaged. He stressed the importance of enhancing both the dignity and quality of life for all citizens, promising initiatives such as providing piped gas to every household and supplying free electricity through solar power. The manifesto pledges to extend the Centre's free ration scheme and prioritise self-reliance in essential food items like pulses, edible oils and vegetables to stabilise



prices and ensure food security. Additionally, it vows to expand flagship schemes like Ayushman Bharat and the PM Awas Yojana while ensuring access to clean drinking water in every home. In agriculture, the BJP promises to continue providing annual financial assistance of Rs 6,000 to farmers, enhance crop insurance through technology and implement periodic increases in the Minimum Support Prices. It also addresses the party's commitment to implementing a uniform civil code, One Nation One Poll initiative, expansion of 5G networks, bolstering national security and abolishing waiting lists for train travel. The main rival Congress' manifesto, on the other hand,

focuses on social welfare, economic reforms and addressing inequality through targeted interventions such as healthcare expansion, agricultural support and a caste census. In contrast, the BJP emphasises national security, infrastructure development and cultural issues, with a lesser emphasis on caste-based policies and regional grievances. Nadda reiterated the commitment to fulfil all promises encapsulated in 'Modi Ki Guarantee', the BJP's slogan for the elections. Responding to the BJP's manifesto, the Congress has criticised it over alleged shortcomings. Party spokesperson Pawan Khera labelled it a 'maafinama' or apology, highlighting unfulfilled promises from previous elections. Supriya Shrinate accused the BJP of misleading the public and ignoring critical issues such as ethnic violence in Manipur and protests in Ladakh. As the mudslinging match between the arch-rivals continues, it is for the people to judge who kept promises and who did not. Manifestos are no commitment and, therefore, not legally binding. Nonetheless, these do spell out a party's ideology and the direction it wants to take the country in. As the campaign gains momentum, the debate over competing policy agendas is likely to intensify, shaping the discourse leading up to the polls. An informed voter would better not judge a party by its manifesto but by its track record.



woman applies vermilion to another woman on the occasion of the Satuani festival, in Patna

Unravelling the Roy family's legacy

The recent mudslinging between the TMC and BJP has highlighted a historical narrative concerning the role of the Roy family in the downfall of Bengal's Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula

ith the campaign for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections heating, mudslinging isn't left behind, although one wishes this weren't so. The Trinamool Congress has abused Smt. Amrita Roy, the BJP's KrishnanagarLok Sabha candidate, for belonging to the family of Krishna Chandra Roy, who had sided with the East India Company to take down Bengal's Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula in 1757. The current Rajmata of Krishna Nagar has justified her family's act, saying had they not done so, Sanatana Dharma and Bengali culture under the tyrannical Siraj would have ceased to exist. Moreover, Raja Krishna Chandra Roy, Amrita's forefather wasn't alone; Jagat Seth, Raja Naba Krishna Deb and above all Mir Jafar and many others wanted to see the end of Siraj-ud-Daula. Such was the ill-will he had generated.

What would have been Bengal's fate had these merchant princes not contrived to overthrow Siraj? More than likely, Nadia district and today's West Bengal might have gone to Pakistan and subsequently Bangladesh. Pakistan's first President Iskander Mirza was a direct descendant of Siraj-ud-Daula. The family lived in Murshidabad, but on the morrow of Partition, promptly migrated to Karachi, then Pakistan's capital. Iskander first became defence secretary and then Pakistan's president in March 1956.

To go back to Murshidabad, Siraj-ud-Daula came to the throne in 1756. He soon showed his colours by dismissing his chief minister RaiDurlabh, picked by his grandfather Nawab Alivardi Nawabhumiliated the wealthy state banker Jagat Seth by publicly slapping him in the durbar and threatening him with sunnat, i.e., circumcision (see Plassey to Pakistan by HumayunMirza, son of IskandarMirza). The merchant princes were resentful of the rule by people of Central Asian stock and wanted more say in governance for the local people. However, they lacked the military organisation to effect an over-throw. Come 1757, upon the



The nawabate's merchant princes saw this as a rare opportunity to do away with this odious regime. British arms and Bengali money as well as contacts would ensure victory. Clive had only about 3,000 men, whereas Siraj-ud-Daula had an army of a lakh, plus a cavalry and elephants. This large army had to be truncated in numbers. Mir Jafar, who commanded half the army of the Nawab, was promised that if he helped to overthrow Siraj-ud-Daula, he would be made the Nawab. Consequently, over half of Siraj's army did not fight. The Battle of Plassey on June 23, 1757, ended the saga of Sirajud-Daula and his life.

At the time we are talking about, there were two cultures in Bengal, namely Bengali and Islamic. Since the 12th centu ry, the region had been slipping out of Bengali influence and had become two-thirds orders of the East India Arabized. The Battle of Plassey



MIR JAFAR, WHO **COMMANDED HALF** THE ARMY OF THE NAWAB, WAS PROMISED THAT IF HE HELPED TO **OVERTHROW** SIRAJ-UD-DAULA, HE WOULD BE MADE THE NAWAB. CONSEQUENTLY, OVER HALF OF SIRAJ'S ARMY DID

in 1757 was the first decisive setback. After Siraj was defeated and killed and his nawabate erased, Hindus for the first time in many years could celebrate puja openly. A grand Durga Puja was held at the palace of Raja Naba Krishna Deb, where the chief guest was Robert Clive. Imagine if Bengal had remained on the Islamic track, there would have been no historic renaissance for which Bengal is justly renowned and respected. There would have been no Raja Rammohan Roy, no Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, no Rabindranath Tagore, no Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda, no Yogi Aurobindo, no Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and certainly no Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. One can only imagine what this region might have become. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, more than a hundred years ago, had famously said "What Bengal thinks today, India thinks tomorrow". But if the likes of Siraj-ud-Daula had continued on the throne, there would not have been a Bengal today. Gandhi did awaken Indians to

of 1942 having failed. The former British Prime Minister in reply quoted several reasons, principal among them being the erosion of loyalty to the British Crown among the Indian army, navy and air force, as a result of the action of Subhas Chandra Bose. Atlee's reply to Chakraborty's question on how much the non-violent satyagraha of Gandhi had influenced the British to free India, was "mi-n-i-m-a-l", with emphasis on each letter and a contemptuous smile. Had there been no

was admitted and affirmed by

none other than Clement

Atlee, Prime Minister of

Britain from 1946 to 1951 the

British leader who signed the

Indian Independence Act of

1947 heralding India's inde-

pendence. After relinquish-

ing office, Atlee came to India

and was a guest of the then

West Bengal Governor Justice

During a dinner conversa-tion, Chakraborty asked his guest why the British quit

Índia in a hurry in 1947, when

there was no immediate cause,

with the Quit India movement

P.B. Chakraborty.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha; views are personal)

Bengal, there wouldn't have

been a Netaji in the first piace

National Army (INA). This HE EDITOR

Constitutional morality: The pillar of India's democracy



Central to India's dynamic democracy is the principle of constitutional morality, serving as a compass guiding the nation's advancement and growth

very Quadrennial year, the election season in India sets a stage for new hope, a new batch of electorates and especially a power in each electorate to exercise their right of adult universal suffrage. News channels are brimming with discourses and the candidates are doing their best to secure a seat in the political engine of society. The vibrancy of the largest democracy was foreseen by the members of the constituent assembly who wanted the ruling ideals to rise from the Constitution itself to guide the coming of a new independent nation. The father of the Indian Constitution, Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar defined Constitutional morality as a paramount reverence for all the forms of the Constitution, enforcing obedience to authority and acting within these forms in addition to the habit of open speech and action subject only to definite legal control. He believed that constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment rather it needs to be cultivated consciously. In contemporary times, it has become a prin-



hands of the judicial wing of our country. Unlike other ideals of brotherhood, equality, fairness, non-arbitrariness, etc. which sprung from the need for pre-independent India, constitutional morality had to be injected into the bloodstream of the country. The Judiciary has brought back the discourse on constitutional morality through a slew of judgments in contemporary times. Thereby reinstating the nature of the Indian Constitution, an organic and living document, pulsating life into a more than half-century-old Manga Carta of India.

The CJI of India, D.Y. Chandrachud speaking in the same vein said that judges go by the values derived from the Constitution that the courts are intended to espouse such as human dignity, personal liberty, equality, fairness,

Supreme Court is final not because they(judges) are right, but they are right because they are final. Transformational jurisprudence on constitutional morality is a pre-constitutional concept.

For Instance, practice, which was within the bounds of the then — prevailing social morality, was abolished and this act was a part of constitutional morality, even though the constitution was drawn up years later. Post Independence may not have found an explicit place in the text but it is embedded in the essence of constitutionalism. It demands morality to be objective based on the prevailing dynamics of society. The conscience-keepers are duty-bound to draw a balance between individual/class liberty and societal acceptance of change

From LGBTQ+ rights recognition in Navtej Singh Johar vs. Union of India to the striking down of section 497 of IPC, 1960, dealing with the law of adultery in Joseph Shine vs. Union of India, the Judiciary has advocated its cipal tool of activism in the etc. He also added that the mandate to include constitu-

in the socio-legal and politi-

tional morality over majoritarian or popular morality. Constitutional morality is derived from public morality, however, slightly divorced from it and sifted through constitutional idealism.

The intersectionality of social and religious belief systems entangles it further, for instance, in the Sabarimala judgment, the debate circled between the popular socioreligious belief and the fundamental right of freedom of religion of a class of women (menstruating women) under Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, is a worthy example in this regard. Constitutional morality may also at times be at a crossroads with Jus naturale.

Euthanasia as a practice or the Right to Abortion, both were initially entrenched in belief systems to be against societal morality. It was not until the Supreme Court of India balanced the interests of the right seekers and the opposers, allowing both the above practices in a judicially permissible manner, that it found its acceptance.

The writer is a research scholar; their views are personal)

BJP'S SOUTHERN STRATEGY

Madam - Apropos the editorial, "Southern Comfort", published on April 12, this is my response. I fully agree that "Modi's forays into the southern parts of the country may bear some fruits but it would be naive to think that the results will be immediately delivered; it will happen perhaps only sometime in future. Indeed, the BJP has managed to break ice in the northeast and southern India but that has taken considerable time and effort. Of course, efforts done now in the south would not go in vain and will pave the way for success in future elections".

He talks to the people about the failures of the incumbent DMK Government. In Kerala, the BJP is crazy to open its account. It is to be seen on 4th June. In Telangana, it fared well in the Assembly elections in 2023 improving its tally. It is quite encouraging for the party. In AP, the BJP party needs to do a lot of groundwork. Along with Naidu, it may get a few seats. In Karnataka, the BJP is equally poised with the Congress. Modi's guarantees that the corrupt will be jailed in his third term may fetch the party some votes for in the south almost all the incumbent state Governments are mostly corrupt. So, the BJP is to open its gateway to the south in this scenario. More cannot be expected. It has to wait for a little more time to make its dent in the south as it did in the north-

N R Ramachandran | Chennai

THE UAE'S SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE Madam — Apropos the news story,

"Swaminarayan Temple: The UAE's Monument of Harmony", published on April 13, this is my response. The tale of the Swaminarayan Temple in Abu Dhabi encapsulates more than just an architectural marvel; it speaks volumes about the convergence of faith, diplomacy and persever-

The journey from prophecy to reality, spanning nearly three decades, mirrors the shared commitment of India and the UAE towards fostering cultural understanding

Fix accountability

the value of freedom, politics,

soul and economics, but the

find winner was Netaji Subhas

Chandra Bose and his Indian



propos news article, "Drunken driving leaves six school children dead", published on April 12, this is my response. Six children were killed and 20 injured after a school bus carrying them overturned in Mahendragarh. Shockingly the driver was allegedly drunk and the bus did not have the fitness certificate. This is atrocious, after the accident they are finding fault. Many schools don't follow Government rules. Hundreds of school buses are in the same condition. But who

and global harmony. Prime Minister Modi's pivotal role, alongside the visionary leadership of HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan, underscores the significance of diplomatic collaborations in shaping monumental endeavours.

Beyond its aesthetic allure, the temple stands as a symbol of inclusivity, with its design echoing the ethos of unity amidst diversity. The meticulous craftsmanship and innovative solutions employed in its construction exemplify human ingenuity overcoming geographical and climatic challenges. In essence, the Swaminarayan Temple in Abu Dhabi is not merely a place of worship; it's a testament to the transformative power of collaboration, bridging nations and cultures in a shared pursuit of peace and progress.

Ishana Arya | Thane

REFLECTIONS ON JALLIANWALA BAGH

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Honouring the martyrs of Jallianwala Bagh", published on April 12, this is my response. The tragedy of Jallianwala Bagh continues to echo through history, with its

bothers? Administration wakes up from the slumber only when poor kids lose their lives.

Dismiss the district administration for not following inspection beforehand remove them from the job and do criminal proceedings against them why shouldn't the city Traffic Police, Police Department & Transportation Department be made a party in the case for their negligence (since 2017 when the bus was operating without paying Road Tax, even the bus unfit to run. What are the RTO officials doing since 2017?), but this will never happen. People want to know, were the local traffic police sleeping till this mishap happened? Now they are saying the gross violation but no one checked & impounded the bus for these violations before the mishap? It's a pity that their timely action would have saved precious lives. RIP the departed soul may the lord give their parents the desired strength to overcome the loss.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad 105th anniversary drawing sombre reflec-

tions on the atrocity committed on April

The massacre, orchestrated by Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, stands as a stark reminder of the brutality of British rule in India. The unjust firing upon unarmed civilians, amidst peaceful protests against the Rowlatt Act, left hundreds dead and wounded and condemnation both nationally and internationally. The reactions of prominent figures like Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Jawaharlal Nehru underscore the magnitude of the tragedy and its profound impact. Their calls for peaceful resistance and condemnation of British colonialism reflect the resilience of the Indian spirit in the face of oppression. As we remember the lives lost at Jallianwala Bagh, it serves as a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made in the pursuit of freedom and justice, urging us to never forget the

lessons of history Bahadur Shah | Dhanbad

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FIRST COLUMN

SPIRITUAL SOLUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Limiting procreation is perhaps the most significant step towards sustainability



oday the world that we live in, people are-trying to do small, small good things, so that we can conveniently escape away from the fact that there is something humongously evil that we are doing. Most people are habituated towards consumption, it is not consumption per se that is the problem; it is the mad and blind consumption of stuff that is anyway not going to do you any good. That's the problem. So, wisdom or spiritual wisdom is not about the renunciation of consumption altogether. There are signs which clearly show the impact of various activities on climate change. For example: going car-free, avoiding transatlantic flight; choosing green energy; switching from an electric car to car-free; choosing a vegan diet; replacing a typical car with a hybrid; washing clothes in cold water rather than hot water; recycling; hanging dry clothes; upgrading to energy-efficient light bulbs. And the title of the graphic is 'Tonnes of CO2 equivalent saved per year for one person undertaking each action' (Wynes & Nicholas, 2017; Environmental Research Letters, Volume 12, Number 7). But these are 10 activities that are popular where all the do-gooders are busy doing all these ten activities and they walk around with great missionary zeal and even greater missionary pride.

And then there is this huge bar that corresponds to around sixty tonnes of CO2 which comes from doing a single action — which is, having one child. We don't talk about the largest contributor to climate change because this is where our ego lives, this is where the physical and bodily tendencies live. You must be wondering why I am speaking about this thing regarding procreation, regarding having kids. It's because this is the single most important issue facing you and me and the planet



and the millions of species today. This is the one thing that man immediately needs to address at this moment. There is no greater challenge in front of mankind — not the Third World War, not nuclear proliferation, nothing at all. This is the biggest challenge. Can you please either stop or limit having babies? This is the one challenge that nobody wants to talk about. If you can address this, then everything will be addressed. For every urge for development, you will see linkages between body identification, consumption, procreation and followed by devastation. When the global temperatures rise by three degrees or four degrees, all these baby flowers will wilt. Anyway, not too many species of flowers are going to remain to be planted. How much is climate change to blame? It affects at least 10,967 species on the IUCN Red List and projections suggest that if global temperatures increase by 2°C by 2100, about 18 per cent of all species on land will face a high risk of going extinct.

And this cannot be addressed merely by way of litigation. You require a spiritual movement; you require a deeply spiritual consciousness to understand what I am saying and act on what I am pointing to. You cannot limit the number of kids without first putting an end to this bodyidentification. As long as your material body is there, you will continue to consume, you will have to consume. We do not see the linkage between body-identification, consumption, procreation and devastation; we look at them as different things. This urge for development — what do you think, it has nothing to do with the devastation of this planet? What is exactly the definition of development? That which brings pleasure to you; that which brings comfort and convenience to you, right? That's how you define development. In the history of mankind, the time has come when without addressing that root problem, you cannot address any of the problems. And if you do not address the root problem now, there is going to be no tomorrow.

(The author is a Vedanta teacher, author and the founder of Prashant Advait Foundation; views are personal)





While the nation's GDP is poised to surge by 7.6 per cent in the current financial year, concerns loom large over the sluggish pace of private consumption



uring the current financial year, the Indian economy is expected to register a growth of 7.6 per cent in real gross domestic product or GDP. Coming on top of growth of 9.1 per cent during 2021-22 and 7.2 per cent during 2022-23, India's performance is spectacular. Emboldened by this trend and Modi's commitment to pursue economic reforms with greater vigour during its third term, analysts are hoping for growth of above 7 per cent on a sustainable basis. But, there

Private consumption which accounts for as much as 55 per cent of the Indian economy has acted as a major drag. For instance, during FY 2023-24, it is expected to grow by a meagre 3 per cent (even lower than 4.4 per cent as given in the first advance estimate). This is the slowest growth in private consumption since FY 2002-03 when growth was 2.9 per cent. It is impossible to sustain an overall GDP growth of 7-8 per cent in the years to come if the most important component (read: private consumption) is growing at less than half this rate.

What is private consumption?

Apart from essential consumption items such as food, shelter, clothing, education, health etc, it includes spending by people on a host of discretionary items such as consumer durables viz. ACs, refrigerators, washing machines, TVs, automobiles, mobiles and so on. The demand for these goods depends on the 'purchasing power' of the people at large which requires that at least all working-age persons (18 years to 60 years) have adequate incomes. This brings us to another stark reality namely the distribution of income and wealth.

Where does India stand? According to a report 'Time to Care' by Oxfam that came ahead of the Annual Meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) held in January 2020 'India's richest one per cent hold more than four times the wealth held by 953 million people who make up for the bottom 70 per cent of the population". It also showed that there were a total of 63 Indian billionaires (billionaire is a term used to describe a person having wealth over US\$ one billion) and their combined total wealth was higher than

PRIVATE CONSUMPTION, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR AS MUCH AS 55 PER CENT OF THE INDIAN ECONOMY, HAS ACTED AS A MAJOR DRAG.

FOR INSTANCE, **DURING FY** 2023-24, IT IS **EXPECTED TO GROW BY A MEAGRE**

3 PER CENT

India's Union Budget for the FY

Another Oxfam report, "Inequality Kills", released ahead of the WEF meeting held in early 2022, mentioned that the number of Indian billionaires grew to 102 by March 2020 and further to 142 in November 2021. During this period, their wealth increased from Rs 2300,000 crore to Rs 5300,000 crore. At the same time, the income of 84 per cent of households declined and the share of the bot-tom half of the population in national wealth was a mere six per

Meanwhile, a report titled 'Survival of the Richest' released by Oxfam International at the 2023 annual meeting of the WEF in Davos, Switzerland, says that 'the wealthiest one per cent of individuals in India possess over 40 per cent of the nation's total wealth. Juxtapose this with the bottom half of the population getting a mere six per cent of the nation's wealth, we end up with glaring inequalities.

now does it impact demand? Let us look at India's population of around 140 crore and nominal GDP of about Rs 300,00,000 crore. Apply Oxfam percentages to these

The wealthiest one per cent or 1.4 crore individuals have 40 per cent of GDP or Rs 120,00,000 crore whereas a vast 50 per cent of the population or 70 crore individuals have a mere 6 per cent of GDP or Rs 18,00,000 crore. On per per-person basis, those in the wealthiest category have annual purchasing power (PP) of Rs 85 lakh each whereas others in the bottom 50 per cent have a PP of a mere Rs 25,000 each.

Such an income distribution pattern is far from conducive to boosting demand on a sustainable basis. There are inherent limits to how much a wealthy person can buy. On the other hand, if a good portion of the money with him is

distributed among those who are not so blessed (read: the bottom 50 per cent), this would give a big

boost to private consumption. We hear loud voices from various quarters including from industries and businesses asking the Government to formulate policies, reduce taxes even give direct income support. But, there isn't even a whisper of 'why inequalities in income arise in the first place. An analysis of the financials of India's largest companies—those comprising the BSE 500 index gives us some clues.

The profits of corporations included in this index went up from Rs 480,000 crore during FY 2017-18 to more than Rs 1000,000 crore during FY 2021-22 - an increase of over 100 per cent, whereas their revenue growth was only 47 per cent during this period. This means that payments to factors of production other than the owners of capital (read: shareholders) such as to employees/workers, purchase of inputs, interest payments, etc., nave been kept under a tight leash, resulting in a disproportionate boost to profits.

The aggregate dividend paid by these firms increased from Rs 176,000 crore during FY 2017-18 to Rs 302,000 crore during FY 2021-22, which is an increase of 72 per cent. In each of the last five years, they paid at least 30 per cent of aggregate net profit as dividends. Cumulatively, the companies distributed 34 per cent of profits as dividends. This is an unusually high payout ratio even higher than 30 per cent paid by the world's largest companies included in America's S&P 500. Thus, the companies have done little to reinvest the profits

Whether profits, albeit extraordinary, to the company or high dividends to shareholders, they have been paid for or come at the cost

1000,000 crore profits of firms in the BSE 500 index during FY 2021-22 came at the cost of undermining the purchasing power of millions of consumers. If even 50 per cent of this amount or Rs 500,000 crore had remained with the latter, aggregate demand would have gone up manifolds. Likewise, look at the Rs 302,000 crore dividend paid to shareholders during FY 2021-22. An overwhelming share of this went to the promoters and other minority shareholders. If, instead of filling their coffers-the money that merely adds to their cash balances or is spent on a few

discretionary/luxury items-more of it were to be distributed in higher salaries to their employees, particularly at the lower rung, imagine what it would do to demand. Several businesses enjoy pricing power. For instance, those operating in metals such as copper and zinc, or in hydrocarbons like oil and gas, enjoy a natural monopoly. Leveraging this, they charge high prices, resulting in windfall gains for themselves. Enterprises in the chemical, petrochemicals, pharmaceutical and agrochemical sectors have hugely benefited from a protective policy environment.

Over 60 million small and medium enterprises (SMEs) also ape large enterprises when it comes to distributing the wealth generated. Their owners spend the least on payments to workers. To conclude, all businesses are structured to result in the concentration of income in the hands of their owners or those who wield power and influence. Instead of deflecting the ball to the Government, they need to bring about a fundamental change in the way they operate. They need to shed over zealousness for profits, charge less from consumers, distribute more to workers and pay more taxes.

(The writer is a policy analyst;

Indian political discourse plummets: Standards in free fall

Elections serve as a litmus test for the health of a nation's democracy, revealing the true character of leaders

¬he narrative that happens during the time of the General Election is an indicator of the quality of democracy practiced in a country. Leaders, especially the star campaigners, should set a standard for the public discourse through their speeches and interviews with the media persons. They should bear in mind that every word they utter is being recorded digitally with cameras and audio instruments. Whatever they speak is under public scrutiny and any aberrations would lead to major

mishaps. The campaign speeches in India took a new low during the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister (1984-1989). Rajiv, who took over the post of Prime Minister following



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

the assassination of his mother Indira Gandhi, was a refreshing change from the image of conventional Congress leaders spotting the ear-to-ear smile and perverted smile. But that did not last long as the Government he headed was enmeshed in corruption charges ranging from Bofors Gun to HDW submarine deals. It was futile to expect the truncated Opposition to sit idle while the This made Rajiv furious and

whole world was discussing the gun contract. Rajiv Gandhi, who was upset with the charges, went to the extent of describing the opposition as political limpets. This is a term coined by a speech writer of Rajiv who always flouted his Indian Foreign Service background to play one-upmanship against old-time Congress

On seeing that Rajiv Gandhi was upset with the allegations corruption, Ram Jethmalani, the doyen among the country's lawyers launched a fusillade of questions at the Prime Minister. "Ill ask you ten questions each day about the Bofors deal and if you claim that there is no corruption involved in it, please answer my questions," said Jethmalani.

he shot back saying that he lized words, it was futile to would not answer barking dogs. Ram Jethmalani was a highly respected lawyer and social activist and the general public did not take the comments of the then Prime Minister lightly. Ram Nath Goenka, the

founder of Indian Express, who had said in a signed front-page editorial in his newspaper that he could die peacefully with Rajiv Gandhi occupying the Prime Minister's chair had to make a retreat and wrote that the earlier Rajiv Gandhi goes the better for the country. The Congress alone was responsible for the falling standard in the national narrative during the election. When the Congress made use of public discourses with unparliamentary and unciviexpect the opposition to sit back and suffer silently. Barring leaders like A B Vajpayee, L K Advani, Murali Manohar Joshi, George Fernandes and

Chandrasekhar, the opposition too had an array of leaders capable of spitting venom and fire at the rivals.

Though many seasoned statesmen like Nani Palkhivala and J R D Tata cautioned the nation about the falling standards in the quality of debates and discussions, it did not make any impact as politicians continued their harangues with the sole purpose of scoring brownie points. The result was that the political campaigns that should have served as a source of knowledge and information got degraded into

speeches full of chosen abus-

The present-day Congress leaders are no different. Manmohan Singh, the former Prime Minister said in a media meeting on 4 January 2014 that it would be disastrous for the country to have Narendra Modi as Prime Minister. Now it is for the people of India to decide whether Narendra Modi's decade-long regime was disastrous or not.

President Congress Mallikarjun Kharge is no different from M M Mani, the Marxist leader of Kerala when it comes to "showering" rivals with the choicest of abuses. Being the president of the GOP, Kharge has the major responsibility to ensure the dignity of the narratives. But the kind of words he has used and is using do not augur well for the position he holds.

Politics is a profession that requires dignity, decency and decorum. One could not speak or behave in a manner that would put hooligans to shame. A politician should be able to control the language and mannerisms while he interacts with the people. The behaviour of former union minister Dayanidhi Maran (grand nephew of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin) who is in politics only because of his

hensible as well as condemnable. When he was asked about K Annamalai, the state chief of Tamil Nadu BJP, Maran went to the extent of describing him as a joker and said he does not know any Annamalai. This is

family connections, is repre-

the zenith of arrogance as Annamalai is the most talked about person in South India as of date. His rise in BIP was not because of his family background while his educational and professional qualifications are sufficient to make one say My My.. Maran and his ilk need sensibility to cherish the beauty of Annamalai's qualifications.

In his decade-long service as an IPS officer, Annamalai earned encomium from all his seniors while Maran was dropped from the Manmohan Singh-led Government with-in three years of being sworn in following corruption charges against him. This much for dynasty politics.

(The writer is special correspondent with The Pioneer; views are personal)

Israel hails 'success' in blocking Iran's unprecedented attack

srael on Sunday hailed its air Israel on Sunuay named and defences in the face of an and the law Iran unprecedented attack by Iran, saying the systems thwarted 99 per cent of the more than 300 drones and missiles launched toward its territory.

Regional tensions were high amid fears of an Israeli counter-strike that could fuel further escalation. US President Joe Biden said he would convene a meeting Sunday of the Group of Seven advanced democracies "to coordinate a united diplomatic response to Iran's brazen attack." The US made clear it would not participate in any offensive action against Iran.

"We don't seek a war with Iran. We're not looking for escalation here," White House national security spokesman John Kirby told NBC.

Iran launched the attack in response to a strike widely blamed on Israel that hit an Iranian consular building in Syria earlier this month and killed two Iranian generals. Israel said Iran launched 170 drones, more than 30 cruise missiles and more than 120 ballistic missiles.

By Sunday morning, Iran said the attack was over, and Israel reopened its airspace. "We will build a regional

from Iran, in the way and at the time that suits us," said a key member of Israel's War Cabinet, Benny Gantz. The two foes have for years been engaged in a shadow war marked by attacks such as the Damascus strike. But Sunday's assault, which set off air-raid sirens across Israel, was the first time Iran has launched a direct military assault on Israel, despite decades of enmity dating back to the country's 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Israel has over the years established — often with the help of the United States — a multilayered air-defence network that includes systems capable of intercepting a variety of threats, including longrange missiles, cruise missiles. drones and short-range rockets.

That system, along with collaboration with the US and others, helped thwart what could have been a far more

Sunak flays Iran's attack coalition and collect the price from Iran in the way and at the deploys jets

> London (PTI): Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has condemned Iran's attack against Israel as "reckless" and pledged that the UK would stand up for security in the region after Tehran launched dozens of aerial drones and cruise missiles overnight on Saturday and into Sunday.

The UK's Ministry of Defence (MoD) said late on Saturday that several additional Royal Air Force (RAF) fighter jets had been moved to the region to help intercept the drone attacks. The aircraft and airfuelling tankers are being deployed as part of the UK's ongoing Operation Shader against the Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist group in the



In this image provided by the White House, President Joe Biden, along with members of his national security team, receive an update on an ongoing airborne attack on Israel from Iran, as they meet in the Situation Room of the White House in Washington

devastating assault at a time when Israel is already bogged down in its war against Hamas in Gaza and engaged in lowlevel fighting on its northern border with Lebanon's Hezbollah militia. Both Hamas and Hezbollah are backed by Iran.Israeli and US officials praised the response to the aerial assault

"Iran launched more than 300 threats and 99 per cent were intercepted," said Rear said none of the drones and

Adm. Daniel Hagari, the Israeli military spokesman. "That is a success." Asked if Israel would respond, Hagari said the country would do what was need

cruise missiles reached Israel and that only a few ballistic missiles got through. Of the cruise missiles, 25 were shot down by the Israeli air force, he said. Hagari said minor damage was caused to an Israeli airbase, but he said it was still functioning. Rescuers said a 7-year-old girl was seriously wounded in southern Israel, apparently in a missile strike,

though police were still inves-tigating the circumstances. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu posted a message on X: "We intercepted. We blocked. Together, we will win." Defence Minister Yoav Gallant thanked the US and other countries for their assistance. Schools remained closed around Israel, and traffic on the first day of the workweek was lighter than usual as many people stayed home.

Gen. Mohammad Hossein Bagheri, the chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, said the operation was over, the staterun IRNA news agency reported. "We have no intention of continuing the operation against Israel," he was quoted as saying. Iran said it targeted Damascus strike.

Iran's president, Ebrahim Raisi, claimed Iran had taught Israel a lesson and warned that "any new adventures against the interests of the Iranian nation would be met with a heavier and regretful response from the Islamic Republic of

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard issued a new threat against the US. The terrorist US government is warned any support or participation in harming Iran's interests will be followed by decisive and regretting response by Iran's armed forces," said a statement carried by IRNA. Israel may be particularly proud of the success of its defense because it stands in sharp contrast to the failures it endured during Hamas' attack on October 7. Facing a far less powerful enemy in Hamas, Israel's border defences collapsed, and the military took days to repel the marauding militants — an embarrassing defeat for the Middle East's strongest and best-equipped

Biden team pledges 'support' for Israel

 $P^{\text{resident Joe Biden and his}}_{\text{national security team}}$ monitored Iran's aerial attack against Israel on Saturday as US forces joined efforts to down explosive-laden drones launched by Tehran. With tensions at their highest since the Israel-Hamas war began six months ago, Biden pledged that American support for Israel's defense against attacks by Iran and its proxies is "ironclad." US forces shot down some Iran-launched attack drones flying toward Israel, according to a US defense official and two other US officials who spoke Saturday on the condition of anonymity to discuss the mat-ter. The US and Israel had been bracing for an attack for

generals in the Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force. The US defense official said the effort to intercept Iran's

days after Iran vowed to retal-

iate for a suspected Israeli

strike this month on an

Iranian consular building in

Syria that killed 12 people,

including two senior Îranian

attack was continuing. Biden cut short a weekend stay at his Delaware beach house to meet with his national security team at the White House on Saturday afternoon, utes before Israeli officials confirmed that they had detected drones being launched toward their territo ry from Iran.

He convened a principals meeting of the National Security Council in the White House Situation Room to discuss the unfolding situation, the White House said, before speaking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu late Saturday

The attack marked the first time Iran has launched a direct military assault on Israel, risking a wider regional conflict.

The Pentagon reported that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin had spoken with his Israeli counterpart "to discuss urgent regional threats .. and made clear that Israel could count on full US support to defend Israel against any attacks by Iran and its regional proxies." National security adviser Jake Sullivan

also spoke with his counterpart to reinforce Washington's "ironclad commitment to the security of Israel.

National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a Saturday statement that "Iran has begun an airborne attack against Israel." She added: "The United States will stand with the people of Israel and support their defense against these threats from Iran.

Biden on Friday said the United States was "devoted" to defending Israel and that "Iran will not succeed." Asked by reporters what his message was for Iran, the president's only reply was: "Don't." He ignored a question about

what would trigger a direct US military response, and when asked how imminent an Iranian attack on Israel was, Biden said he did not want to get into secure information. "but my expectation is sooner than later.'

The US, along with its allies, have sent direct messages to Tehran to warn against further escalating the conflict.
During the Israel-Hamas war

in Gaza, there have been neardaily exchanges of fire between Israeli forces and the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group along the Israel-Lebanon border. US officials ed more than 150 attacks by Iran-backed militias in Iraq and Syria on US forces at bases in those countries since war started on October One attack in late January killed three US service members in Jordan. In retaliation, the US launched a massive air assault, hitting more than 85 targets at seven locations in Iraq and Syria.Meantime, on Saturday, commandos from Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard rap-pelled from a helicopter onto an Israeli-affiliated container ship near the Strait of Hormuz and seized the vessel. Watson.

the NSC spokesperson, said the US strongly condemned the seizure and urged Iran to release the ship and crew immediately."We will work with our partners to hold Iran to account for its actions." she said.Also Saturday, the Israeli-occupied West Bank

Aus Police identify attacker who killed 6

 $P^{\text{olice identified Sunday the}}_{\text{assailant who stabbed and}}$ killed six people at a busy Sydney shopping centre before a police officer fatally shot him. New South Wales Police said that Joel Cauchi, 40, was responsible for the Saturday afternoon attack at the Westfield Shopping Centre in Bondi Junction, in the city's eastern suburbs and not far from the world-famous Bondi Beach. Assistant Police NSW

Commissioner Anthony Cooke told reporters at a media conference on Sunday that Cauchi suffered from yet unspecified mental health issues and police investigators weren't treating the attack as terrorism-related. We are continuing to work

through the profiling of the offender but very clearly to us at this stage, it would appear that this is related to the mental health of the individual involved," Cooke said.

'There is still, to this point... no information we have received, no evidence we have recovered.



no intelligence that we have gathered that would suggest that this was driven by any particular motivation — ideology or otherwise," he added.

The attack at the shopping mall, one of the country's busiest and which was a hub of activity on a particularly warm fall afternoon, began around 3:10 pm and police were swiftlv called. Six people — five women and

one man, aged between 20 and 55 — were killed in the attack. Another 12 were injured and remain in hospital, including a 9-month-old child whose mother was killed in the attack. The male victim was a security guard at the shopping centre and was later identified as 30-year-old Faraz Tahir from According to a written state-

ment Sunday from the Muslim Ahmadiyya Community of Australia, Faraz had been in Australia for a less than a year and was a "cherished member of our community." Video footage taken by a witness showed many people fleeing as a knife-wielding Cauchi ran erratically through the shopping mall and lunging

"When I took my footage it, was about 15 seconds maybe before he was shot by the police officer and he'd already killed a number of people at that point but we didn't know and we had no idea what was going on," said Rohan Anderson, who had entered the shopping center just moments before the attack. We just saw a person on the level below us, with a knife, running around and you just sit in disbelief that this is happening in Australia, in Bondi," he said

Other footage showed a man confronting the attacker on an escalator in the shopping center by holding what appeared to be a metal pole. Inspector Amy Scott, who was

the first emergency responder on the scene, shot and killed Cauchi.

Speaking to reporters on Sunday, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the officer was "certainly a hero" whose actions had saved many more lives. 'The wonderful inspector who

ran into danger by herself and removed the threat that was there to others, without think ing about the risks to herself,"

Indian student shot dead in Canada's Vancouver

AP OTTAWA

A²⁴-year-old Indian man who went to Canada in 2022 to pursue higher education was shot dead in his car in Vancouver city, police said on Sunday. The Vancouver Police Department in a press release said officers were called to the scene around 11 pm on April 12 after residents heard the sound of gunshots.

Chirag Antil was found deceased inside a vehicle in the area, police said. No arrests have been made and the investigation remains ongoing, it

The incident happened within a block of the route for Saturday's Vaisakhi parade and festival, police said.

The body was found in a vehicle in the area around 11 pm Friday, according to police spokesperson Const. Tania Visintin, CBC News reported. Visintin did not say if the killing was connected to gang



a fundraiser on GoFundMe with a goal of Canadian dollars 40,000 to repatriate his body to India.

"Hi, my name is Anurag Dahiya, and I'm seeking help or donations for my younger brother," the fundraiser says "Chirag Antil, an international student from Harvana, India, who arrived in Vancouver in 2022 for his studies, tragically lost his life due to a recent murder in the city," it said.

declined comment on the news

Media urges Biden, Trump to commit to 2024 election debates

AP ■ NEW YORK

welve news organisations tive presidential nominees Joe Biden and Donald Trump to agree to debates, saying they were a "rich tradition" that have been part of every general election campaign since 1976. While Trump, who did not participate in debates for the Republican nomination, has indicated a willingness to take on his 2020 rival, the Democratic president has not committed to debating him

Although invitations have not been formally issued, the news organisations said it was not too early for each campaign to say publicly that it will participate in the three presidential and one vice presidential forums set by the nonpartisan Commission on Presidential Debates.

"If there is one thing Americans can agree on during this polarised time, it is that the stakes of this election are excepalso saw some of the worst tionally high," the organisations violence since Hamas' attack said in a joint statement.



Former U.S. President Donald Trump greets attendees during a campaign event in Schnecksville, Pa., Saturday.

"Amidst that backdrop, there is simply no substitute for the candidates debating with each other, and before the American people, their visions for the

future of our nation."
ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, PBS, NBC, NPR and The Associated Press all signed on to the letter.

Biden and Trump debated twice in 2020. A third debate was cancelled after Trump, then president, tested positive for COVID-19 and would not debate remotely.

Asked on March 8 whether he would commit to a debate with Trump, Biden said, "it

depends on his behaviour." The president was visibly miffed by his opponent in the freewheeling first 2020 debate, at one point saying, "will you shut up.'

Trump campaign managers Susie Wiles and Chris LaCivita said in a letter this past week

ed President Trump is willing organisations' letter, pointing to to debate anytime, any place the president's earlier stateto start these debates is now." They cited the seven 1858 Illinois Senate debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, saying "certainly today's America deserves as much." The Republican National Committee voted in

that "we have already indicat-

2022 to no longer participate in forums sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates. The Trump campaign has not indicated it would adhere to that, but did have some conditions. The campaign managers said the commission selected a "demonstrably anti-Trump moderator" in then-Fox News host Chris Wallace in 2020 and wants assurances the commission debates are fair and impartial. The Trump campaign also

wants the timetable moved up,

response from the Trump campaign. But on Saturday, Trump held a rally in northeast Pennsylvania with two lecterns set up on the stage: one for him to give a speech, the other to symbolise what he said was Biden's refusal to debate him. The second lectern had a placard that read, "Anytime Anywhere. Anyplace." Midway through his campaign speech, Trump turned to his right and pointed to the second lectern. "We have a little, look at this, it's for him," he said. "See the podium? I'm calling on Crooked Joe Biden to debate anytime, anywhere, any place. Right there. And we have to debate because our country is going in the wrong direction so badly and while it's a little bit typically early we have to debate. We have to explain to the American people what the hell is going on," Trump said. C-SPAN, NewsNation and

saying that many Americans will have already voted by September 16, October 1 and October 9, the dates of the Univision also joined the letter three debates set by the commission. The Biden campaign calling for debates. Chicago shooting kills 7-year-old girl, hurts 7

Landslides hit Indonesia,14 die, 3 missing

Tara Toraja (Indonesia) (AP) Torrential rains triggered land slides on Indonesias Sulawesi island, killing at least 14 people and leaving three others missing, officials said Sunday. Mud fell from surrounding hills onto four houses just before midnight Saturday in the Tana Toraja district of South Sulawesi province, said local police chief Gunardi Mundu. He said a family gathering was being held in one of the affected houses. Dozens of soldiers, police and volunteers joined the search in the villages of Makale and South Makale, in a remote, hilly area, Mundu said Rescuers early Sunday managed to pull out two injured people including an 8-year-old girl, and rushed them to a nearby hospital.

Scholz arrives in China on visit marked by trade tensions Despite that, China remained had discussed the "massive"

Perman Chancellor Olaf Scholz arrived in China on Sunday on a visit focused on the increasingly tense economic relationship between the sides and differences over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Scholz's first destination was

the industrial hub of Chongqing, where he and his delegation of ministers and business leaders were to visit a partially German-funded company and other sites in the vast city, which is a production base for China's auto and other industries.

Scholz is also scheduled to visit the financial hub of Shanghai during his three-day visit, before travelling to the capital, Beijing, to meet with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang. German companies such as BMW and Volkswagen are



highly reliant on the Chinese market, but Beijing's support for Russia creates frictions with the West.

Germany's economy has benefited from China's demand for investment and manufactured items from cars to chemicals but those ties have frayed amid increasing competition from Chinese companies and tightened regulations. Political interference has also been blamed for a sharp drop in foreign investment

German companies have argued they face unfair market barriers in China and the government has pushed for a policy of "derisking" to reduce reliance on the Chinese market and suppli-

Germany's top trading partner for the eighth straight year in 2023, with 254.1 billion euros (USD 271 billion) in goods and services exchanged between the sides, slightly more than what Germany traded with the US but a 15.5 per cent contraction from the year before. German exports to China totalled 97.3 billion euros (USD 104 billion), according to Germany's Federal Statistical Office, although figures have varied depending on exchange rate fluctuations and rounding of numbers.

Chinese state broadcaster CCTV showed Scholz descending from his plane in Chonqing and leaving in a motorcade, but did not carry any comments made to the welcoming delega-

Prior to his arrival, Scholz posted on social platform X that he

Russian air attacks on civilian energy infrastructure with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saturday, and declared that Berlin will "stand unbreakably by Ukraine's side." China has refused to criticise Russian aggression. It has maintained trade relations

with President Vladimir Putin's government and aligned its for eign policy with Moscow in opposition to the US-led liberal political order, while touting its authoritarian one-party sys tem as a superior alternative. After visiting a hydrogen motor production facility run by German firm Bosch, Scholz toured the city with young architects and was to go on a boat cruise on the famed Yangtze River, one of two

mighty waterways that partly surround the city perched on

overlooking cliffs.

Side on Saturday night.
The 7-year-old girl was shot in the head and died, while a 1-year-old boy and a 7-yearold boy were each shot multiple times and listed in critical condition, Chicago Police Department Deputy Chief Don Jerome said in a news briefing at the scene on a block of 52nd Street near

AP ■ CHICAGO

Damen Avenue. Police responding to a gunfire alert around 9 p.m. applied tourniquets and chest seals to victims, who also included adults between the ages of 19

and 40, Jerome said. The victims, who were standing outside at a family gathering at the time of the shooting, were transported to area hospitals

the Chicago Fire

 $E_{\text{including a young girl who}}^{\text{ight people were shot}}$ was killed in what Chicago police believe was gang-related violence on the city's South Department. The investigation was still in

the preliminary stages but witness accounts described two possible shooters on foot, Jerome said. 'This was not a random act of

violence. It was likely gang-related," Jerome said. 'Regardless of the motivation for this incident, three innocent children were struck tonight and one of them tragically succumbed to her wounds. The offenders actions, make no mistake, are horrific and unacceptable in our city.

Second batch of Indian Army personnel leave Maldives

The second batch of Indian military personnel manning a helicopter gifted by India to the Maldives has left the island nation as demanded by him Precident ed by him, President Mohamed Muizzu has said. Muizzu, a pro-China leader, also reaffirmed that foreign ambassadors in Male will not wield authority over him emphasising that ultimate power rests with the citizens. Last month, he had alleged that his predecessor Ibrahim Mohamed Solih operated on the orders from "a foreign ambassador" without naming any country.

He announced the withdrawal of the second Indian milial of the second Indian mili-tary contingent from the Maldives while speaking dur-ing a campaign event for the ruling People's National Congress party candidates ahead of the parliamentary elections scheduled for April 21. "The first team has already gone. Now, on April 9, the sol-

have also been withdrawn," Muizzu, who has been demanding the withdrawal of foreign soldiers from the Maldives during his election campaign last year, was quoted as saying by the local media

on Saturday. Muizzu had set March 10 as the deadline for the with-drawal of the first group of Indian military personnel from his country.

Under an agreement between Maldives and India in February, New Delhi agreed to replace the Indian military personnel stationed in Maldives to oversee the operations of the military aircraft the country has gifted with trained civilians also from

Muizzu also said the Indian soldiers on the last aviation platform would also leave the Maldives before May 10 deadline set by him and that would mark the fulfillment of his pledge to remove Indian soldiers from the island nation.

left. As the two countries have already signed, they [the remaining Indian military personnel] will also be recalled ahead of May 10. They will leave," Muizzu was quoted as saying by Edition.mv news

portal on Saturday. He did not provide details of the number of the second the number of the second batch of Indian military per-sonnel who have left the Maldives. He also did not clarify whether the soldiers had been replaced by trained Indian civilians. Neither the Maldives Defence Minister Maldives Defence Ministry nor India have commented on the latest withdrawal of Indian military personnel from this country

According to the Maldives government, 88 Indian soldiers were stationed in the Maldives to operate helicopters in Addu and Laamu Kadhdhoo and a Dornier aircraft in Hanimaadhoo. The figure also includes doctors at the Senahiya military hospital, according to local media

The first group of Indian soldiers left the Maldives on March 11. The Defence Ministry said 26 soldiers based in Addu were replaced by 26 Indian civilians. India also replaced the old helicopter in

Addu with a new one.
Relations between Maldives and India have deteriorated since Muizzu came to power in November last year while closer ties are maintained with China. He also travelled to China in January and met top Chinese leaders, including

President Xi Jinping.
China and the Maldives recently signed a defence cooperation agreement and several other infrastructure development projects.

The Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and occupies a special place in its initiatives like 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and the 'Neighbourhood First Policy' of the Indian government.



Merrymakers take part in the second day celebrations of the Myanmar New Year water festival Sunday, April 14, outside the city hall in Yangon, Myanmar

More civilians die in Ukraine Polish opponents

Think tank warns delays in US aid will hamper **Kyiv's forces**

More civilians died across Ukraine Sunday as analysts warned that delays in US military assistance would see Kyiv struggle to fight off

Russian offensives. One man was Sunday killed after a Russian drone hit the truck he was driving in the Sumy region, the local prosecutor's office said. Officials in the Kharkiv region also said Sunday that they had retrieved the bodies of a 61-year-old woman and a 68-year-old man killed by a Russian strike the previous day. Ten Russian Shahed-type drones were shot down over the Kharkiv region overnight, the Ukrainian Air Force said Sunday.

Force said Sunday.

Meanwhile, shelling in the Russian-occupied Kherson region killed two civilians Sunday, said Moscow-installed leader Vladimir Saldo. Ukrainian drones were also reported in Russia's Krasnodar and Belgorod regions and over the Black Sea, the Russian Defense Ministry said.

The news came as Washingtonbased think tank the Institute for the Study of War warned that delays in Western military assistance would increasingly hamper Ukraine's ability to fight back Russian advances. With the war in Ukraine entering its third year and a vital US aid package for Kyiv stuck in Congress, Russia has used its edge in firepower and person-nel to step up attacks across eastern Ukraine. It has increasingly used satellite-guided glid-ing bombs — dropped from planes from a safe distance — to pummel Ukrainian forces beset by a shortage of troops and ammunition.

In its report, the ISW said that Russian forces were prioritizing grinding, tactical gains with operational-level efforts focusing on the cities of Lyman, Chasiv Yar, and Pokrovsk.

"The Russian military command likely assesses that Ukrainian forces will be unable to defend against current and future Russian offensive operations due to delays in or the permanent end of US military assistance," the think tank said. Ukraine's military chief, Gen Oleksandr Syrskyi, said Saturday that Ukraine's battlefield situation in the industri-al east had "significantly worsened in recent days," as warming weather allowed Russian forces to launch a fresh push along several stretches of the more than 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) - long front line.

of abortion march against steps to liberalise law Warsaw (AP): Polish opponents of abortion marched in

Warsaw on Sunday to protest recent steps by the new government to liberalise the predominantly Catholic nation's strict laws and allow termination of pregnancy until the 12th week. Poland's Catholic Church has called for Sunday to be a day of prayer "in defence of conceived life" and has supported the march, organised by an antiabortion movement.

'In the face of promotion of abortion in recent months, the march will be a rare occasion to show our support for the protection of human life from conception to natural death," a federation of anti-abortion movements said in a statement.

They were referring to an ongoing public debate surrounding the steps that the 4-month-old government of Prime Minster Donald Tusk is taking to relax the strict law brought in by its conservative predecessor.

Last week, Poland's parliament, which is dominated by the liberal and pro-European Union ruling coalition, voted to approve further detailed work on four proposals to lift the near-ban on abortions. The procedure, which could take weeks or even months, is expected to be eventually rejected by conservative President Andrzej Duda, whose term runs for another year.

State Bank of Pakistan repays USD 1bn in Eurobonds

PTI ■ KARACHI

The State Bank of Pakistan has repaid USD 1 billion in Eurobonds as the cashstrapped country prepares for a new long-term bailout from the IMF to help manage its external financing needs and economic recovery, a media report said here on Sunday. Pakistan's central bank announced that it met the dollar bond payment on Friday for the 10-year bond launched in 2014 maturing

this month. Ahead of the April 15-20 meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in Washington DC, Pakistan government has decided to formally approach the IMF for a medium-term Extended Fund Facility (EFF) with the possibility of augmenting through climate finance.

The Eurobonds repayment comes amid Asian Development Bank's (ADB) apprehension that Pakistan's economic outlook remains uncertain

"The SBP has successfully executed the repayment of USD 1 billion Pakistan's International Bond on April 12, 2024 (principal plus interest). The pay-

bank for onward distribution to the bondholders," the Bank said in a statement on Saturday. This bond has rallied by 84 per cent so far this year, The News International said on Sunday quoting the Bank statement.

"In response to growing worries, the country's assets came under pressure last year when its foreign exchange reserves dropped below USD 3 billion in February 2023 due to the delayed IMF programme. This stoked concerns about a possible bond payment default," it said, adding that the country managed to secure a USD 3 billion IMF stand-by arrangement last summer.

Now, after the general elections were held in February 2024, Islamabad is reportedly ready to begin talks with the global lender for a new loan programme, the newspaper said. Pakistan's short-term financial prospects are cautiously optimistic. Concerns remain, nevertheless, over its capacity to pay off its long-term debt. The country has to pay back USD 4.3 billion in external debt in the last quarter of this fiscal year, the report said.

"After repayment of 2024 bond, Pakistan's total outstanding international bonds/Sukuks

ment was made to the agent are USD 6.8 billion (6.8 per bank for onward distribution cent of public external debt) with the next maturity amounting to USD 500 million in September 2025," it said quoting Shahid Ali Habib, the CEO at Arif Habib Limited.
The central bank's foreign

exchange reserves have fallen following the latest bond repayment.

However, it seems likely that with the USD 1.1 billion final IMF tranche, which is expected to be released after the glob-al lender's board meeting later this month, FX reserves will increase to USD 8 billion, the newspaper said.

"As of March 29, the SBP had USD 8.04 billion in foreign reserves. The USD 3 billion IMF stand-by arrangement ended on Thursday," it added. On April 11, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) said that Pakistan's economic outlook remains uncertain, as political instability would remain a key risk to the sustainability of stabilisation and reform efforts.

The Manila-based lending agency in its 'Asian Development Outlook' said if reforms are implemented, growth is forecast to restart gradually this fiscal year and improve slightly next year.

Baloch militants behind killing of 11 people

Islamabad (PTI): Baloch militants claimed responsibility for killing 11 people in separate attacks in Pakistan's restive southwest, according to a media report on Sunday. Nine young men, hailing from the Punjab province, were killed in the Noshki area of the Balochistan province on Saturday when gunprovince on Saturday when gun-men forced them off a bus they were travelling in and kidnapped them after verifying their Punjabi ethnicity. Later, they killed them and dumped their bodies under a nearby bridge.

In a separate incident, two peo-

ple were killed on the same high-way when gunmen fired at their car after they tried to break through their cordon. The banned Balochistan Libe-r-a-tion Army claimed respo-nsibility for the killings, the Dawn newspaper reported. The nine people from Punjab were on their way to Iran, from

where they were planning to enter Europe via Turkiye, according to the report. They left their towns on April 7 with visas stamped for Iran and Iraq but had no plans to stay in these countries. Quoting local people, the report said that their actual destination was Europe, which they wanted to reach via Turkive but had procured valid visas for Iraq and Iran to avoid Iranian immigration authorities.

South African President Ramaphosa urges Muslim community members to join active politics

Johannesburg (PTI): South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has called on the members of the Muslim community, many of them of Indian origin, to join active politics like their forebears to make the country a place of equality, shared prosperity and true freedom. Ramaphosa was speaking at a huge Eid gathering in the Indian township of Laudium, near the capital Pretoria. "It is regrettable that over the years one of our once vibrant and politically active communities has retreated into the background of our national life," he said on Thursday. "Much of our politics has come to be

defined by internal squabbles and regrettably by racial and other forms of chauvinism. This has led to some of these communities questioning their place in South Africa today," Ramaphosa said ahead of next month's general elections. He was indirectly referring to increasing concerns among minority communities such as the 1.6 million South Africans of Indian origin, who have increasingly been concerned about laws and policies on issues such as employment equality and quotas at educational institutions sidelining them in favour of the Black majority population.

Sri Lanka hopes for productive talks at IMF, WB spring meetings

Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka is looking forward to making progress in ending the ongoing debt restructuring negotiations at the IMF and the World Bank's spring meetings scheduled to begin from Monday in

Washington. Shehan Semasinghe, the state minister for finance, will lead the government delegation along with Central Bank Governor Nandalal Weerasinghe and Treasury Mahinda Secretary Siriwardena. "Through partnership and collective efforts, Sri Lanka would be able to achieve enhanced growth," Semasinghe said, adding that the talks would be important in securing the next tranche of

International Monetary Fund bailout. Semasinghe said the funds would benefit lowincome families with the extended relief programme 'Aswesuma'. Over 182,000 such families will be credited their cash handouts by the end of

> this week. Sri Lanka aimed to strike debt restructuring deals with private creditors and sovereign bondholders by June to meet the IMF bailout programme targets. "We expect fruitful engagements that will pave the way for unlocking the next tranche of essential funding and a speedy debt resolution which will enhance economic stability, confidence, sustain

able growth, restore debt sustainability and ultimately, improve the welfare of every Lankan citizen," Semasinghe said in a post on X. The IMF and World Bank meetings will take place in the background of both the World Bank and the ADB warned last week that detailing all hard economic reforms in the election year could hamper the recovery. It's been two years since Sri Lanka declared its first-ever default on sovereign debt. The negotiations for debt

The island nation goes for a presidential election in the last quarter of this year, while the parliamentary election is due mid-next year.

restructuring continue.

Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif felicitates Sikhs on Baisakhi

PTI ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday felicitated the Sikhs on the occasion of the Baisakhi festival as about 3,000 Indian Sikhs arrived in Punjab province to participate in the celebrations. In his message, Prime Minister Sharif described Baisakhi as the "symbol of spring season and the festival of spreading love and happiness".

He said "Pakistan is a beautiful blend of different faiths and cultures" and the colour of Baisakhi further added to this beauty. Sharif said that the Government of Pakistan and its provincial governments will

provide all-out facilities to Sikh pilgrims coming from all over the world to perform Baisakhi rituals. The main event of the Sikh religious festival, Baisakhi Mela, will be held at Gurudwara Panja Sahib in Hasan Abdal on Sunday. Thousands of Sikh pilgrims from all over the world, including India will participate. Minority leaders will also participate in the event.

Pakistan has extended visas to 2,843 Indian Sikh pilgrims, granting them the opportunity to engage in the festivities of Baisakhi Mela and Khalsa Janam Din.

The pilgrims would attend the main event of Baisakhi Mela at the completion of their 10-day the Gurudwara Panja Sahib in pilgrimage.

Punjab province on Sunday. Subsequently, on April 15, the pilgrims will travel to Nankana Sahib from Hasanabdal, where they will pay homage to Sacha Sauda (Farooqabad) during their stay.

This will be followed by a visit to Gurudwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur (Narowal) on April 18. The pilgrimage will continue with a visit to Gurdwara Rori Sahib (Eminabad) on April 20, where the pilgrims will spend a day in contemplation. The culmination of the spiritual journey will see the Sikh pilgrims bidding farewell to Pakistan on April 22, marking

China detains two over tourist boat capsizing that killed 12 people

Beijing (AP): Two people have been detained following the capsizing of a tourist boat on a river in northeastern China that led to the drowning deaths of 12 visitors, state media reported on Sunday. The accident occurred Saturday afternoon outside the city of Qinhuangdao near the coast of Hebei province, a few hour's drive from the capital Beijing. A total of 31 people were thrown into the water. The boat was made by local villagers and was unequipped with life jackets or other safety equipment, according to the Xinhua News Agency. The boat's owner and

investigation into the accident was underway. China is a nation of powerful rivers and such deadly accidents used to be common before major safety improvements in recent years China's tourist industry, and the economy in general, has struggled to recover following the partial lifting of heavy restrictions imposed by the authoritarian Communist Party in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Rural communities have long struggled to generate jobs and revenues, spurring the working age popu-

lation to migrate to cities. Sudan war: Aid groups warn of mass death from hunger

On a clear night a year ago, a dozen heavily armed fighters broke into Omaima Farouq's house in an upscale neighborhood in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum. At gunpoint, they whipped and slapped the woman, and terrorized her children. Then they expelled them from the fenced two-story house.

"Since then, our life has been ruined," said the 45-year-old schoolteacher. "Everything has changed in this year.

Farouq, who is a widow, and her four children now live in a small village outside the central city of Wad Madani, 136 kilometers (85 miles) southeast of Khartoum. They depend on aid from villagers and philanthropists since international aid groups can't reach the village. Sudan has been torn by war for a year now, ever since

simmering tensions between its military and the notorious paramilitary Rapid Support Forces exploded into street clashes in the capital Khartoum in mid-April 2023. The fighting rapidly spread across the

The conflict has been overshadowed by the war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza Strip, which since October has caused a massive humanitarian crisis for Palestinians and a threat of famine in the territory. But relief workers warn Sudan is hurtling towards an even larger-scale calamity of starvation, with potential mass death in coming months. Food production and distribution networks have broken down and aid agencies are unable to reach the worst-stricken regions. At the same time, the

conflict has brought wide-

spread reports of atrocities

including killings, displace-

ment and rape, particularly in the area of the capital and the western region of Darfur.

Justin Brady, head of the UN humanitarian coordination office for Sudan, warned that potentially tens or even hundreds of thousands could die in coming months from malnutrition-related causes.

This is going to get very ugly very quickly unless we can overcome both the resource challenges and the access challenges," Brady said. The world, he said, needs to take fast action to pressure the two sides for a stop in fighting and raise funds for the UN humanitarian effort.

But the international community has paid little attention. The UN humanitarian campaign needs some \$2.7 billion this year to get food, heath care and other supplies to 24 million people in Sudan – nearly half its population of 51 million. So far, funders have given only \$145 million, about 5%, according to the humanitarian office, known as OCHA. The "level of international

neglect is shocking," Christos Christou, president of the medical charity Doctors Without Borders, or MSF, said in a recent statement. The situation in fighting on the

ground has been deteriorating. The military, headed by Gen Abdel-Fattah Burhan, and the commanded by Gen Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, have carved up Khartoum and trade indiscriminate fire at each other. RSF forces have overrun much of Darfur, while Burhan has moved the government and his headquarters to the Red Sea city of Port Sudan.

The Sudanese Unit for Combating Violence Against Women, a government organization, documented at least 159 cases of rape and gang rape the past year, almost all in Khartoum and Darfur. The organization's head, Sulima Ishaq Sharif, said this figure represents the tip of the iceberg since many victims don't speak out for fear of reprisal or the stigma connected to rape.

In 2021, Burhan and Dagalo were uneasy allies who led a military coup. They toppled an internationally recognized civilian government that was supposed to steer Sudan's democratic transition after the 2019 military overthrow of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir amid a popular uprising. Burhan and Dagalo subsequently fell out in a struggle for

The situation has been horrific in Darfur, where the RSF and its allies are accused of rampant sexual violence and ethnic attacks on African tribes' areas. The International Criminal

Court said it was investigating fresh allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the region, which was the scene of genocidal war in the 2000s. A series of attacks by the RSF and allied militias on the ethnic African Masalit tribe killed between 10,000 and 15,000 people in Geneina, the capital of West Darfur near the Chad border, according to a report by United Nations experts to the Security Council earlier this year. It said Darfur is experiencing "its worst violence since

With aid groups unable to reach Darfur's camps for displaced people, eight out of every 10 families in the camps eat only one meal a day, said Adam Rijal, the spokesman for the Coordination for Displaced Persons and Refugees in Darfur.

In Kelma camp in South Darfur province, he said an

average of nearly three children die every 12 hours, most due to diseases related to malnutrition. He said the medical center in the camp receives between 14 and 18 cases of malnutrition every day, mostly children and pregnant women.

Not including the Geneina killings, the war has killed at least 14,600 people across Sudan and created the world's largest displacement crisis, according to the United Nations. More than 8 million people have been driven from their homes, fleeing either to safer areas inside Sudan or to neighboring countries.

When fighting reached his street in Khartoum, Taj el-Ser and his wife and four children headed west to his relatives in Darfur in the town of Ardamata. Then the RSF and its allies overran Ardamata in November, rampaging through

said they killed many Masalit and relatives of army soldiers. "Some were shot dead or burned inside their homes," he said by phone from another town in Darfur. "I and my family survived only because I am Both sides, the military and RSF, have committed serious

the town for six days. El-Ser

violations of international law, killing civilians and destroying vital infrastructure, said Mohamed Osman, Sudan researcher at Human Rights Watch. Food production has crashed, imports stalled, movement of food around the country is hampered by fighting, and staple food prices have soared by 45% in less than a year, OCHA says. The war wrecked the country's healthcare system, leaving only 20 to 30% of the health facilities functional across the country, according to MSF.

DIGI YATRA

Stakeholders working to

address tailgating issue

Finance Ministry for enhanced KYC to check fraud

n a bid to check incidence of BoB World app scam Land other such financial frauds, the finance ministry makes a case for an enhanced KYC procedure and extensive due diligence by banks and financial institutions for onboarding merchants to safeguard customers against cyber risks, sources said.

"Appropriate due diligence of merchants and Business Correspondents (BCs) who offer banking services in rural and remote areas is necessary not only to check frauds but also to fortify the financial ecosystem, sources said.

"According to sources, there is a need to strengthen data security and data protection at the level of merchants and compromise are higher at that



'Therefore, sources said, RBI may advice banks and financial institutions to review the concentration of BCs in cyber fraud hotspots

their onboarding, blocking of micro ATMs found to be involved in

suggestions made at an interministerial meeting held recently with the objective of furthering cyber security and checking financial fraud,

"During 2023, as many as 11,28,265 cases of financial cyber fraud worth Rs 7,488.63 crore were reported, as per the data compiled by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

"To strengthen the mechanism to deal with cyber crimes in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, the central government, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, has set up the 'Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre' (I4C) to deal with all types of cyber crime in the country. "As part of its efforts to curb growing cyber fraud, the Reserve Bank is considering setting up a Digital India Trust Agency (DIGITA) to stop the mushrooming of illegal lending apps.

"The proposed agency will enable verification of digital lending apps and maintain a public register of verified apps, sources said.

"Meanwhile, the Reserve Bank of India has shared a list of 442 unique digital lending apps with the IT Ministry to whitelist with Google. 'Besides, Google has removed

over 2,200 digital lending apps (DLAs) from its app store from September 2022 to August 2023.

August 2025.
"The search giant has updated its policy regarding the enforcement of loan apps on the Play Store, and allowed only those apps which are published by the RBI's regulated entities (REs) or those working in partnership with REs. 'This policy change by

Google has happened at the request of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Department of Financial Services (DFS) under the

DIGI YATRA Stakeholders, including the Digi Yatra Foundation, are working on ways to address tailgating at airports through the Digi Yatra gates, an issue that has been flagged by aviation security wefficials BCAS, according to officials.
"Digi Yatra, which uses Facial
Recognition Technology
(FRT), provides contactless and seamless entry into

airports through e-gates. "Broadly, tailgating refers to an additional person getting through a gate whereas the credentials for access have been used for only one person. "As part of the routine review

of various security aspects, an official in the know said the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) has flagged tailgating at Digi Yatra gates and that discussions are going on to address the issue. "In a recent interview, Digi Foundation CEO Suresh Khadakbhavi told PTI that stakeholders are discussing the best way forward to address the issue

of tailgating.
"Currently, Digi Yatra is available at 14 airports and is expected to be rolled out at 14 more airports by the end

of April. "When asked tailgating, Khadakbhavi said it has to be ensured that there is a balance between passenger safety and security. "If someone is tailgating, then technology can be used to stop it by closing the gate

fast. However, it will be a problem if there is a genuine reason for the delay. The Digi Yatra gates are closed at an optimal speed and if it is closed fast, there could also be a chance of someone getting an injury, he noted. "According to him, people

have to go in a systematic

manner to enter the airport

and tailgating is something being discussed with various stakeholders. ""We should have systematic process... This (tailgating) is something

being discussed on the best way forward," he said. "Digi Yatra has nearly 5

million users and the foundation is also working to make the facility more user friendly. It provides for contactless and seamless movement of passengers at various check points at the airports. interview,

Khadakbhavi also said the foundation does not have any passengers' data.

Telecom department to seek Trai view on satcom spectrum allocation

PTI NEW DELHI

Department Telecommunications (DoT) is expected to approach Trai this month to seek the regulator's views on method and pricing for allocation of spectrum and scope of licences to be issued for satcom services, according to sources. "The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) had floated a consultation paper on "Assignment of Spectrum for Space-based Communication Services" on April 6, 2023 but returned the reference back to DoT after announcement of new Telecommunication Act. ""DoT will seek views of Trai on pricing and methodology to

allocate spectrum for space communication based services. It may also look to fine-tune existing licences to bring in full clarity on the kind of services that satcom companies allocated administratively

spectrum can provide," a source, who did not wish to be named, told PTI.

satellite "Satcom or communication technology enables service providers to ensure internet connectivity in remote areas or difficult Bharti OneWeb and Reliance Group Jio Satcom have been issued GMPCS (satellite telephony) and VSAT licence for the

"Elon Musk-owned Starlink has also applied for the permit to start satcom services in

"With constellation of 4,000 low earth orbit (LEO) satellites,



"OneWeb has over 600 LEO "According to the source,

VSAT licence has norms that are not in sync with the provisions Telecommunication Act and therefore need to be fine-"Under

Telecommunications Act 2023, satellite communication companies can get spectrum without auction for point-topoint communications.

"However, there are provisions that allow a VSAT service operator to provide internet services to multiple independent subscribers, differently than envisioned in the Telecommunication Act

""Hence, there is a need felt to fine-tune licences for satcom services. A decision will be taken based on Trai's recommendation on the permits that should be issued to satcom service providers,'

India adds record 18 GW renewable energy capacity in FY24 renewables by 2030. "Union Power and projects per annum to meet the

India has added a record renewable energy capacity of 18.48 GW in 2023-24, which is over 21 per cent higher than 15.27 GW a year ago, according to the latest data of the Ministry of New & Renewable

"However, industry experts said there is a need to add at least 50 GW of renewable energy capacity annually for the next six years to meet the ambitious target of 500 GW of

tech professionals with

global job opportunities

Technology startup SkillsCapital has launched

a programme to connect

technology and SAP professionals, mainly from

Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, with

global job opportunities, a statement said on Sunday.

"The NCR-based startup has introduced AI-powered Talent

Cloud, which allows companies across the world to access technology talent for

their projects remotely, SkillsCapital said. "The startup

has created a talent pool of

more than 14,000 technology

are available for various projects, it added. "SAP is a

leading enterprise resource

Talent Cloud, which uses AI-

algorithms

identification, evaluation and

matching processes, reduces

significantly the time to hire for

companies, SkillsCapital said.

talent

planning (ERP) software.

Startup to connect

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"According to the data, India's installed renewable energy capacity is 143.64 GW as of March 31, 2024, excluding 47 GW of large hydropower capacity (each plant is more than 25 GW or above).

"They pointed out that

renewable energy capacity stood at around 190 GW, including large hydro projects, years or at an average of 50 GW

"Union Power and Renewable Energy Minister RK Singh, in a recent interview with PTI, said, "You see, my installed capacity of RE is about 190 GW, I have 103 GW under construction, that makes it 290 GW. I have 72 GW under bids, so I am already at about 360 GW. I will reach it (target of renewable energy capacity of 500 GW by 2030) before time as I reach all

ambitious target of 500 GW. "The data showed that solar installations of 12.78GW led the renewable energy capacity addition of 15.27 GW in 2023-

24, followed by 2.27 GW of

wind energy.
"Among the renewable energy capacity, the total solar installed capacity tops the chart at 81.81GW, followed by about

Impresario to add 10-15 Social outlets every year "The company is adopting a strategy of having different formats of outlets, depending

"Currently, standalone stores in key neighbourhoods, mall outlets

'It also operates various cloud kitchen brands like Boss mainly operates from Social premises offering a variety of

"Today, a strong leg of our revenue comes from these cloud kitchen brands and is currently 10 to 12 per cent of our overall business," he said. "Besides, it also operates restaurants Slink & Bardot, a French diner and cocktail bar

LIC sees 59 per cent jump in value of investments in

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Adani stocks

T IC, the state-owned seen a 59 per cent rise in value of its investments in Adani group companies in 2023-24 year after the conglomerate made a smart hammered by a damning short seller report. "The value of LIC's investment in seven Adani group companies has soared from ₹38,471 crore as on March 31, 2023 to ₹61,210 crore on March 31, 2024, registering an increase of

"Last year, the insurance giant faced intense scrutiny over its decision to invest in the Adani group amidst a political slugfest after allegations of stock manipulation fuelled by Hindenburg report.

₹22,378 crore, according to

stock exchange data.

"Adani group denied any wrong doing.

"Adani Group's stocks, which at lowest point took a beating of about USD 150 billion, have staged a remarkable comeback fuelled by robust profit growth

across its diverse businesses. 'Facing political pressure, LIC strategically reduced its exposure to two of the group's flagship companies — Adani Ports & SEZ and Adani Enterprises — only to witness their shares surge by an

impressive 83 per cent and 68.4 per cent, respectively. 'Despite trimming ownership, LIC investments saw a 59 per cent surge in value in FY24, according to stock

exchange data. "While the domestic investor

faced pressure, overseas investors wasted no time seizing the opportunity, with heavyweights like the Qatar Investment Authority, Abu Dhabi based IHC, French giant TotalEnergies, and US based GQG Investment, collectively pouring close to ₹45,000 crore into Adani stocks.

in Adani Enterprise Ltd soared from ₹8,495.31 crore as on March 31, 2023 to ₹14,305.53 crore a year later, the data

46 GW of wind energy, 9.43 and therefore, India needs to Besides, the MNRE is also GW of biomass cogeneration add 310 GW in the next six targeting bidding of around 50 GW of renewable energy and 5 GW of small hydro (up to 25 MW capacity each).

Impresario Entertainment and Hospitality, which operates the restaurant Chain 'Social', is looking to add 10 to 15 new brand outlets annually, especially in tier-2 cities, as part of its expansion plan, said its founder and MD Riyaaz Amlani.

"The company, which also operates restaurant brands like Smoke House Deli and Mocha, remains bullish and optimistic about its growth in India, led by various factors, such as demographic dividend and increasing appetite premium experiences.
""In the overall food services

market, quick restaurants (QSR) a dining restaurants (CDR) are the strongest lever of growth. Our trailblazer brand, Social, sits at the confluence of a cafe and a bar and comes under the CDR category, with immense potential for growth in this segment," Amlani told PTI. "Impresario is planning to open 10-15 new Social outlets

annually on the back of its

seen a double-digit revenue growth this year (FY24) by going deeper into existing compared to FY23, he noted. markets to reach more ompared to FY23, he noted. markets to reach more "We remain bullish and are neighbourhoods".

optimistic about our growth in India, and will continue to outlets in newer markets like expand Social to newer neighbourhoods in the coming Hyderabad.

"Impresario has a network of over 60 restaurants in over 20 Indian cities. "According to data accessed through the business intelligence platform Dehradun, and Faridabad; we Tofler, Impresario's total are bullish on expansion and consolidated revenue was Rs are looking to expand to new 573.66 crore in FY23.

"Over expansion, Amlani said the company is adopting a opportunities where we can two-fold strategy "by growing

experience. The company has into new tier-2 towns and focussing on state capitals, and "In 2023, it opened Social

Dehradun, Kolkata and

cities - Mumbai, Bangalore, New Delhi, Pune, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Indore, Chandigarh, cities this year. "We will expand into

differentiated yet

on the region, and various other factors.

and some of our outlets in Bangalore and Mumbai are present inside corporate parks as well. We will continue to innovate with our design and spaces to adapt to the region and neighbourhood we are entering," said Amlani.

Burger, Lucknowee and Aflatoon by SocialL, which

Bandra Born and Prithvi Cafe

Godrej Locks eyes 50 per cent market share

Locks and secure, company Godrej Locks ocks and security solutions has said it aims to increase market share from 30 per cent to 50 per cent in three years, riding on a new range of affordable products and reduced prices of existing

"Shyam Motwani, business head for Godrej Locks and architectural and systems, said the company's newlylaunched products are over 50 per cent affordable than the existing locks, while efforts have been undertaken to make the existing locks cheaper by 7-8 per cent. "The company will rely on

new affordable range and price cuts in the existing locks to achieve the objective of having the dominant market share in around three years, Motwani told PTI.

"The target is to grab 50 per cent market in the segment from the current 30 per cent, Motwani said, adding that the company sees a massive opportunity for its products in the tier-2,3, 4 cities and towns.

"He further said the newlylaunched locks have been designed and developed inhouse, keeping in mind the needs and aspirations of "rurban" (rural-urban) population without compromising on



products' effectiveness. Founded in 1897, the company which has become a household name for its reliable products is looking at deepening its distribution in smaller cities.

"Motwani said the "rurban" areas account for just over a fifth of the company's revenues at present, while the larger chunk comes from top eight cities of India.

'The company's reach is limited to over 340 towns in tier-2, 3 and 4 cities, and plans are afoot to double it to over 700 towns or having a presence in every district, he

"The company, a part of Godrej and Boyce, is profitable and has registered a turnover of Rs 1,200 crore in FY24, he said, adding that it has doubled in the last three

Share of affordable homes, priced up to ₹45 lakh, shrinks: PropTiger

streamlining

Share of affordable homes
-- priced up to Rs 45 lakh
each -- in total housing sales more than halved to 22 per cent during January-March across top eight cities amid strong demand for luxury flats, PropTiger. according

"Share of affordable homes 85,840 in total housing sales stood at 48 per cent in the January-March period of 2023 calendar year.

"Housing brokerage firm PropTiger.Com data showed that housing sales grew by 41 per cent to 1,20,640 units during January-March 2024 across top eight cities from

corresponding period of the previous year. "In the total sales of 1,20,640 units during January-March, the 2024 as against 23 per cent. The sales was 15 per share of homes, priced less than Rs 25 lakh each, was 5 per cent.

"In the same period last year, the share of this low-cost housing category in total

share in the corresponding period of the previous year.

"There has been a remarkable shift post the pandemic towards high-end properties," PropTiger said

Commercial AC market has

Insight Residential January-March 2024'. "The share of properties priced Rs 1 crore and above

has increased to a significant 37 per cent in the first quarter of 2024, significantly higher than 24 per cent in the same period of 2023, the

Automobile exports from India dip 5.5 per cent in FY24

NEW DELHI: Automobile exports from India declined 5.5 per cent in FY24 due to the monetary crisis in various overseas markets, according to the latest data shared by industry body SIAM.

"Overall exports stood at 45,00,492 units in the last fiscal compared to 47,61,299 units in FY23. "Commenting on the drop in

overseas shipments last fiscal, President Vinod SIAM Aggarwal said the situation remains volatile in various overseas markets.

"Some of the countries, where we are very strong with commercial vehicle and twowheeler exports, have been facing foreign exchangerelated issues," he noted.

significant growth potential PTI ■ NEW DELHI ommercial

conditioning (AC) market holds "significant promise" and is witnessing growth, driven by rapid urbanisation, infrastructural development and growing emphasis on comfort in commercial spaces, said Sunil Vachani, president of electronics and appliances manufacturers' CEAMA. "The commercialC (Heating,

Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) segment is witnessing a shift with its wide array of applications, with infrastructure growth including offices, retail spaces, healthcare facilities, hospitality establishments, and educational institutions,

Consumer Electronics and Appliances Manufacturers Association (CEAMA). "Moreover, factors such as

increasing awareness of quality, sustainability mandates, and the integration of IoT (internet of things) and building automation systems are also reshaping the commercialC landscape, offering avenues innovation and market

expansion, he said. "In terms of growth potential, the commercialC segment holds significant promise, with opportunities for both traditionalC systems and emerging technologies like variable refrigerant flow (VRF) systems and chilled beams," Vachani told PTI.



climate control solutions.



commercialC segment, Vachani said it varies across regions and sub-segments but generally substantial, reflecting the scale of commercial infrastructure and the need for effective 'Overall, the commercial air-

represents a dynamic and evolving segment with considerable growth potential, driven by ongoing urbanisation trends and the imperative for energyefficient, smart, customisableC solutions," Vachani said. "According to reports, the

"However, he added that this segment could face "some nuances" due to Quality Control Orders (QCOs) issued by the government.

IndianC industry is projected to reach a market size of USD approximately billion. "When asked about the room air-conditioner segment, he also Vachani said anticipates a "steady growth" for the segment.

'The value of LIC's investment



ARCHANA JYOTI spoke to doctors about the Parkinson's Disease that affects millions worldwide including India. Medical interventions and lifestyle adjustments, such as diet, exercise, crucial for its managment

stress management, and social engagement, are PARKINSON'S MOES

arkinson's Disease (PD) is one of the most common movement disorders, affecting individuals over the age of 60. The number of PD cases worldwide has significantly increased in the last two decades, with 0.58 million people affected in India alone. This number is expected to rise in the coming decades. PD, along with multiple sclerosis and chronic neurological illnesses, is now recognized as a disability under the recently passed Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2016.

Yet, misconceptions surrounding this condition persist, hindering support and understanding, said Dr. Debasish Chaudhary, Head of Department of Neurology, GB Pant Hospital, Delhi Below are some of the myths surrounding this progressive neurological condition.

MYTH 1: PD is Untreatable

Fact: Although there is no cure, many treatments exist to manage symptoms and improve the quality of life. Medications, therapies like physical or speech therapy, and surgical options like deep brain stimulation can help. With proper management, many individuals can lead active lives.

MYTH 2: PD Affects the Elderly Only.

Fact: Although PD is commonly diagnosed in older adults, it can affect people of any age, including younger adults and children. Early-onset Parkinson's, diagnosed before the age of 50, is significant. Recognizing this variability in the age of onset is crucial for timely diagnosis and intervention.

MYTH 3: PD is Just a Movement Disorder

Fact: While movement difficulties like tremors, stiffness, and slowness are hallmark symptoms, Parkinson's is a complex condition with diverse symptoms. These include cognitive changes, mood swings, sleep problems, and gastrointestinal issues. Understanding this complexity is vital

MYTH 4: PD is Always Hereditary Fact: While genetics can contribute, most cases are sporadic with no clear genetic link. Environmental factors like toxin exposure may also play a role. Recognizing that not all cases are

hereditary, and anyone can be affected, is essential.

MYTH 5: PD is a Death Sentence Fact: While chronic and progressive,

Parkinson's isn't necessarily lifethreatening. With proper care and lifestyle adjustments, many individuals can live decades after diagnosis. Support from healthcare professionals and caregivers is

JOURNEY PD

Tough Fight Which Needs To Be Done Right

By Sunandita Dasgupta

It was early 2017. I was buying a bottle of perfume from a Delhi shop, when I noticed something odd. I tried to smell the ittar. But all I drew through my nostrils was a blank. "Is it very mild?," I asked the shopkeeper. "No ma'am," he replied, surprised. "You cannot smell it at all?" I told him probably I have a blocked nose, but had niggling doubts in my head.

A few months later, the junior doctor at a reputed neurological institute in Bangalore, filling up a long questionnaire, enquired, "can you smell"?

Í was there to confirm my diagnosis as a patient of Parkinson's Disease, the degenerative disorder that causes tremors, rigidity of muscles and movement problems, a few of which I was already experiencing. Doctors in my workplace Delhi and hometown Kolkata had told me I fall in the category of "Early Onset" patients (as PD is common

among the elderly, but I was 39 then). They wanted me to start treatment, but I was hoping to get another opinion.

"No, I cannot smell, is it related to my condition," I asked the doctor. Yes, she said. It is a common symptom.

Of course, though it explains how widespread the effect of PD is, loss of smell is only a minor part of the life-changing issues brought by the disease. Walking, sleeping, working, doing simple everyday chores – it turns simple things into a battle.

years were somehow Initial manageable, but now, after seven years, I am facing a range of problems related to PD, including frequent falls, resultant fear of falling, which is damaging my confidence to go out and freezing - when you are unable to take a step for several seconds while walking. The first years were also easier in terms of keeping the disease under check medication. But now, much of my average day witnesses "offperiods" - when PD symptoms return due to effects of medicine wearing off. Life is increasingly

becoming difficult.
Though there are times of despair, Though there are times of despair, I don't want to give up hope. Yet, amidst despair, hope persists. Sound medical guidance, daily routines, and practices like yoga and meditation provide solace. Support groups offer invaluable camaraderie, despite their scarcity in India Reports of new research. in India. Reports of new research fuel optimism, while options like Deep Brain Stimulation (DBS) surgery loom as potential paths

My takeaway from life after PD? Despite the struggles, kindness abounds. From strangers to healthcare professionals, countless individuals have extended a helping hand along this journey, reminding me that even in the face of adversity, compassion prevails.

(The writer is Young Onset Parkinson's Disease (YOPD patient and working with a State Government)

crucial for navigating life with Parkinson's.

YOUNG ONSET PD

Dr Madhukar Bhardwaj, Senior Consultant and HOD, Neurology, Aakash Healthcare, talked about YOPD or Young Onset Parkinson Disease which affects individuals less than 40 years of age.

He said that YOPD usually presents with symptom/symptoms such as one sided hand tremors, slowness, postural imbalance or one sided weakness involving hand and leg. It is important to detect this since it is initially usually taken as stroke or other forms of tremors and goes undetected until a full florid form appears in a few months to years. It usually responds well to dopaminergic drugs, however in my experience the dose requirements increase over a period of time.

"These patients also go on to develop more drug induced adverse effects like dyskinesias and anxiety issues. Detailed history and Neuroimaging is important to rule out mimics. "In rare cases, it may be familial, and careful family tree must be established along with genetic testing (PARKIN gene) if a family member was found to have the symptoms at an early juvenile

IDENTIFYING SYMPTOMS

Dr. Atampreet Singh, Director of the Department of Neurology at Fortis Hospital Greater Noida, emphasized on the importance of recognizing common symptoms associated with PD in elders. These include tremors, muscle stiffness, slowed movement, and balance and coordination difficulties, which can increase the risk of falls. Dr Singh said that while there is no cure for Parkinson's, symptom management is crucial. "Treatment modalities include medications to control dopamine levels, physiotherapy to improve mobility, and, in select cases, surgical interventions such as deep brain stimulation (DBS)."

In fact, some neurologists said that therapy that holds the potential rescue to significantly enhance the quality of life for people grappling with PD.

MANAGEMENT

Dr. Praween Kumar, CEO of Fortis Hospital Greater Noida, underscored the significance of combining medical interventions with positive lifestyle changes. "Individuals with PDs can lead fulfilling and active lives by incorporating consistent physical activity, a well-rounded diet, sufficient rest, stress management, and nurturing social connections. Despite the gravity of the condition, PD should not diminish life quality," pointed out Dr Kumar.

JOURNEY WITHIN

Addressing

Feeling Cheated: CONSTRUCTIVE STEPS

If you feel cheated in a situation, it's important to address the issue calmly and assertively. Here are some tips one can follow, ARCHANA JYOTI says, drawing from the insights provided by mindful Gurus

ASSESS THE SITUATION

Reflect on the events that transpired and try to understand why you feel cheated. Identify specific actions or circumstances that contributed to this feeling. Objectively evaluating the situation can help you gain clarity on what happened.

COMMUNICATE YOUR CONCERNS

Express your feelings and concerns to the other party involved in a clear and respectful manner. Avoid blaming or accusing language, and instead use "I" statements to convey how their actions made you feel. Focus on specific behaviors or actions that contributed to your sense of being cheated.

SEEK CLARIFICATION

If there are aspects of the situation that you're unsure about or if you need more information, don't hesitate to ask questions and seek Clear clarification. communication can help prevent misunderstandings and facilitate a resolution.

NECOTIATE A RESOLUTION Work together with the

other party to find a solution that addresses your concerns. Be open to compromise and willing to listen to their perspective. Focus on finding a mutually acceptable resolution that benefits both parties involved. Document Everything: Keep records of any relevant documents, emails, messages, or conversations related to

the situation. Having

evidence and

can

NUTRITIONAL MANGO SALAD

1/4 cup pineapple chopped

1/2 cucumber (sliced)

1 to 2 tsp chaat masala

1 tsp Italian Mix HerbsSalt and pepper to taste 1 tsp Italian Mix Herbs

1/4 cup roasted cashew nuts

Chopped Pans

2 tsp lemon juice

1 large mango (peeled and sliced)
1 cup finely chopped spinach
1 green onion thinly sliced

INGREDIENTS

documentation

provide

or seek further assistance. **SEEK MEDIATION OR ASSISTANCE**

support your case if you

need to escalate the issue

If you're unable to resolve the issue directly with the other party, consider seeking the help of a mediator, arbitrator, or relevant authority. A neutral third party can facilitate communication and help find a resolution that satisfies both parties.

KNOW WHEN TO WALK

Despite your best efforts, it's possible that you may not be able to reach a satisfactory resolution. In such cases, it's important to recognize when to walk away and focus your energy on moving forward positively. Continuing to dwell on the issue may only lead to further frustration and stress.

LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE

Use the situation as an opportunity for personal growth and learning. Reflect on what you can take away from the experience and how you situations in the future. By learning from experience, you empower yourself to handle similar challenges more effectively in the future.

your well-being and mental health throughout the process. It's natural to feel upset or frustrated when you feel cheated, but by taking proactive steps to address the issue, you can work towards finding a resolution and moving forward.

MANGO MAGIC

A Mood-Boosting Recipe

for Mental Wellness

1 small red and yellow capsicum (sliced)

• 1/2 cup fresh coriander and mint

Remember to prioritize

HOPE ON THE HORIZON

IIT-M WORKS ON DBS

The Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) is working on an indigenous prototype of deep brain stimulation (DBS), a pinhole surgery method to place an surgery method to place an implant to control conditions (PD), an under-diagnosed disorder in India. The DBS is a modifiable and reversible procedure with a physical remote to help customize the patient's condition.

The DBS procedure is not complicated and costs around Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh as the equipment is only available in western countries, and the implant cost is not covered by Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS). IIT-M is developing an indigenous prototype to make this therapy accessible to everyone, but the design may take five to 10 years to complete owing to elaborate safety procedures, said a

statement here.

Study Uncovers Key Genes Behind Parkinson's in Young Indians

A team of scientists has identified key genes that raise the risk of Parkinson's disease in young Indians.

The team, led by Parkinson's Research Alliance of India (PRAI) and MedGenome, a global genomics company in South Asia, made a comprehensive analysis of rare and common genetic variations in the young Indian population, understanding of the genetic basis of Parkinson's disease.

This also opens the door for a firstever genetic screening in India for the disease in high-risk individuals and affected families, said the team of scientists in the paper published in the prestigious Movement Disorders.

"Parkinson's is not a single gene disease. It can occur due to multiple genetic mutations and multiple gene causes. Knowing what patients with Indian patients will have more impact on understanding and treatment of that," Dr. Prashanth L.K., a specialist in movement disorders from PRAI said.

According to the Global Burden of Disease Study (2018), Parkinson's has doubled across the globe over the past two decades, while India accounts for approximately 10 per cent of the global burden. This translates to nearly 0.58 million patients living with the disease in the country. first-of-its-kind study

conducted in India included 1,000 specialty Movement Disorder enters/Neurology clinics across Dr. Prashanth said the team found a

high probability of non-mutation and Parkinson's mutations are quite common in Indian patients. "We need to work on these genes

further to see how these genes can be important for the occurrence of Parkinson's disease in patients," he

Further, the expert noted that Indian patients carry a lot of BSN gene mutations. The BSN gene primarily affects gait and balance for people and is normally not reported in Parkinson's.

expression.

key nutrients or use an extract. The mango tree, especially its bark, is widely used in Ayurvedic and African medicine. It is commonly used to treat hypertension, insomnia, tumor growth, arthritis, and depression. This delicious fruit contains tryptophan, which your body converts into the "happiness

If your serotonin levels are low, then you may expérience like and

natural Regular consumption of mangoes relieves nervous tension and improves

1 tsp olive oil

In a large bowl combine all the ingredients like mango, spinach, cucumber, red and yellow capsicums, green onion, pineapple, fried cashews and capsicums, chopped coriander and mint.

SEASONING THE SALAD All you need to do is take a small

bowl and mix well black pepper, chaat masala, lemon juice, salt, Italian mix herbs and olive oil and then pour this mixture into a salad bowl

(The author is a Nutrition Coach)

ARE NATURE'S **ANTIDEPRESSANTS** Poor nutrition affects not just physical health, but mental well-being too, including conditions like depression and anxiety,

says **RAJDEEP JOSHI** as he delves into the role of nutrition in mental health, focusing particularly on the overlooked benefits of mango consumption.



Diet is the foundation of health. Poor nutrition is associated not only with depression but also with anxiety, sleep disorders, and inflammatory conditions. According to the National Institute on Mental Health, depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, environmental, and psychological factors. However, one of the biological factors that is not often discussed is nutritional imbalance. Nutrition plays a key role in the ability to manage psychological and emotional wellbeing, and deficiencies in key vitamins and minerals can compromise optimal brain function and increase stress and anxiety levels. Depression is a mental illness that causes low mood and loss of interest in interactions or activities. It can be caused by

medications, and medical problems. It is believed that many of these forces interact to cause depression. Depression affects many people, and it can change lives for the worse. Medical treatment and counseling can often help relieve symptoms, but lifestyle measures, such as a healthy diet, can also improve a person's well-being. When faced with a severe stressful situation, eating mango is good. Every time we consume this wonderful fruit, we feel how we are reorienting ourselves and opening ourselves up to opportunities to live a happy life aligned with our destiny.

many factors such as faulty mood

regulation by the brain, genetic vulnerability, stressful life events,

These miraculous fruits boost our morale and heal us when we feel lonely, sad, abandoned, rejected, or forgotten, giving us great power of

Mangoes are also rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, and have been associated with many health benefits, including potential anti-cancer effects, as well as improved immunity and digestive and eye health. Along with eating fresh mangoes, you can also add mango oil for a more concentrated dose of

hormone" serotonin.

also insomnia, depression, and anxiety. Mangoes are rich in minerals potassium magnesium, which keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. Mangoes considered antidepressant.

and mix it together. Your nutritious mango salad is ready to serve.

WE NEED EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE | RCB eye step up from under fire bowlers TO BEAT RCB, SAYS SRH COACH

unrisers Hyderabad head Scoach Daniel Vettori did not read too much into the travails Challengers Bengaluru and said it will require an "exceptional" effort from them to beat the hosts on Monday.

"The Royal Challengers are currently 10th on the IPL table with two points after winning just one out of six matches.
""I don't think anyone in any

team underestimates the quality of RCB. They're a very good team. So, it's going to take an exceptional performance from us to try and beat them. Every (IPL) game is hard and particularly when you're playing away from home," said Vettori during his pre-match press conference here on Sunday. "Vettori said RCB might have learned lessons from their

the home side could put SRH under pressure. "RCB will obviously keep learning from what's happened in the previous

games and they're going to

past defeats in this IPL and



come out pretty aggressive. We're going to be under a lot of pressure as a bowling unit for how aggressive they are going to be.

'So, we need to find ways to counter that and then keep up with our batting form which has been really good," said

"The former New Zealand captain said it would be naive to take a big score at the Chinnaswamy stadium for

granted. "I think most teams come here thinking that it's going to be a high-scoring fixture. I've probably seen a couple of surfaces this year that have

been slightly slower," he said. "The former left-arm spinner, who also had a long association with RCB as a player and coach, said teams prefer to chase Chinnaswamy because of the ease to control the backend of

the innings. 'We understand the ball travels here and the boundary sizes are small. So, I think you have to keep challenging yourself to try and take wickets because any team can score that 60-70 at the backend

""I know no score is safe (here) and I always feel like you're in the game, particularly when you are chasing. Most teams will come here and try to chase because they feel that it's easier to navigate the

endings," he explained.
"Vettori had a word of praise for SRH middle-order batter Heinrich Klaasen, who has been in fine fettle in this IPL. The South African batter has made 186 runs from five matches at a frenetic strikerate of 193.

"He's been exceptional for a long period of time and he's in that category of the likes of (Andre) Russell where teams really fear him in that backend and they set up their bowling plans to try and negate him. "But he's been so good for such a long period of time that he has allowed us to either win the games or always be in the game." he

PTI ■ BENGALURU

 $R_{\text{Bengaluru's IPL campaign}}^{\text{oyal}}$ that began in cheerfulness has melted into chaos, and their bowlers require a drastic transformation in mindset against Sunrisers Hyderabad for them to register an elusive win here on Monday.

"The Royal Challengers have players of repute and elite coaches with lofty pedigree but none of their plans have worked so far, evidenced by the team's 10th place in the standings with a solitary win from six matches.

'The RCB's trundling run in this IPL is directly linked to their bowlers' ineffectiveness. They showed a distinct lack of willingness to adapt and upskill on conditions that needed a different thinking.

"In this IPL, the bowlers have often relied on variations like knuckle balls, slow bouncers and pace-off deliveries to counter a set of ultra-aggressive batsmen.

"However, the Bengaluru bowlers have been largely unidimensional in their approach allowing batters to tackle them with ease and the match against Mumbai Indians offers a case study.

"For once, the RCB batters fired collectively to take them to 196, but MI hunted down the target in just 15.3 overs at the Wankhede Stadium as the visiting bowlers were quite magnanimous in offering freebies.

"Dew, short boundaries etc cannot be counted as excuses when a team leaks above 13 runs per over. In fact, the RCB bowlers did not have the urge or imagination to blunt a batting unit full of intent.

'That's an ominous sign against the Sunrisers, whose batting line-up is as intimidating as that of the MI. "Two Hyderabad batters -Heinrich Klaasen (186) and Abhishek Sharma (177) - are inside the top-10 run-makers and Travis Head (133) too has been consistent.

"But more than the quantity of runs, how they made it make them more dangerous as Klaasen (193), Abhishek (208) and Head (177) have torn apart the bowling unit in the Power Play and in the

middle-late overs.

uniform power allocation through batting ranks makes SRH a tall proposition for

opposition bowlers.
"This is not to say that SRH, currently fifth on the table with six points from five matches, do not have a weak point.

"Similar to RCB, bowling has been Hyderabad's soft underbelly in this tournament with spinners Ahmed Shahabaz and Mayank Markande giving away more than 11 runs in an over with minimal returns. "But the Hyderabad outfit has found a saviour in skipper Pat Cummins, their highest wicket-taker with six scalps

and he has also conceded just

over seven runs an over, a very respectable economy rate in this format. "Additionally, Cummins has also shown the flexibility to operate at various junctures of a match - with the new ball in the Power Play or bowling

middle and death overs. "The inclusion of left-arm pacer T Natarajan (5 wickets, economy: 8.6) has given their bowling a new dimension and a bit more control in the last three matches.

as second-change in the

"Having played on a shirtfront in Hyderabad, the SRH bowlers might not feel out of home at the Chinnaswamy, which has a pitch with similar

characteristics. "But can RCB exploit that above-mentioned minor chink in Sunrisers' attack?

"Star batter Virat Kohli is the

current holder of Orange Cap and fifties by skipper Faf du Plessis, Rajat Patidar and Dinesh Karthik against MI will certainly boost RCB's confidence. "But the form of Glenn Maxwell (32 runs, average: 5.3) remains a

massive concern. **Teams (from) ROYAL CHALLENGERS**

BENGALURU

Faf du Plessis (c), Glenn Maxwell, Virat Kohli, Rajat Patidar, Anuj Rawat, Dinesh Karthik. Suvash Prabhudessai, Will Jacks, Mahipal Lomror, Karn Sharma, Manoj Bhandage, Mayank Dagar, Vijaykumar Akash Vyshak, Deep, Mohammed Siraj, Reece Topley, Himanshu Sharma, Rajan Kumar,

'Cameron Green, Alzarri Joseph, Yash Dayal, Tom Curran, Lockie Ferguson, Swapnil Singh, Chauhan.

"SUNRISERS HYDERABAD Pat Cummins (c), Abdul Samad, Abhishek Sharma,

Aiden Markram, Marco Jansen, Rahul Tripathi, Washington Sundar, Glenn Phillips, Sanvir Singh, Heinrich Klaasen, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mayank Agarwal, T. Natarajan, Anmolpreet Singh, Mayank Markande, Upendra Singh Yadav, Umran Malik, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Shahbaz Ahmed, Travis Head, Jaydev Unadkat, Akash Singh, Jhathavedh Subramanyan.

Dhawan out for at least seven to 10 days: Bangar

PTI MULLANPUR

Punjab Kings skipper Shikhar Dhawan could be out for at least seven to 10 days due to a shoulder injury, the team's head of cricket development Sanjay Bangar indicated after the narrow loss to Rajasthan Royals.

"Dhawan missed the game against Royals on Saturday night. Sam Curran led the side in his absence. "He's having a shoulder injury, so he is likely to be out

for at least a couple of days, I would say. Having an experienced opener, somebody like Shikhar, who has experience of playing on becomes wickets, extremely crucial (for the

"We have to wait and see how he responds to the treatment. At the moment, it seems that he could be out of action for at least seven-ten days," said Bangar in the post match press conference.

Jitesh Sharma was team's representative at the captains' meet at the start of the season as Dhawan, who was down with fever, stayed back in Mullanpur. "Considering that, Curran

walking out for the toss was surprising but Bangar clarified that they were always clear about the Englisman's role in the side.

"No, no, he (Jitesh) wasn't the designated vice-captain. been because he attended the wanted to have a few



of the IPL. "But the thought was always that ... Because Sam has led the team in the previous year as well; he was The impression could have late to arrive from UK and he captains' seminar at the start (training) sessions, that's the

reason we couldn't send him to Chennai. Hence Jitesh was sent, because the directive was that a player has to attend. "It wasn't the case that Jitesh

was the stand-in captain. We were very clear in our mind that if at all there had to be an opening, Sam Curran will be taking over and do the job as the captain," said the former India batting coach.

"Both Dhawan and Jonny Bairstow have not been able to provide flying starts to the team which has contributed to its inconsistent run in the tournament.

"Dhawan's replacement at the top for the Saturday's game, Atharva Taide, too could not do much against Royals. "Bangar agreed it was a

"Certainly is a cause for concern that the top order is not making enough runs for us. They are trying hard - I am not saying that they are not applying themselves - but it's just not coming.

"Low-scoring games, especially at Mullanpur, the way the wicket is... that also is a factor. Because if you see, some of the scores have been "All the three games that we

have played here, in the first six overs, with the new ball, the wicket tends to just jag a little bit, and uneven bounce as well. So maybe that is also a contributing factor because, not only us, the visiting teams and their top order are facing issues.

HER SPORTS

ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Anju, Harshita reach final

final,

PTI ■ BISHKEK (KYRGYZSTAN)

Railways wrestler Anju, who had outclassed Vinesh Phogat in the recent selection trials, and Harshita put up a dominant show to reach the gold medal bouts in their respective categories at the Asian Championships, but Sarita Mor was eliminated after a shock defeat in her opening round here Sunday.

"Competing in a highly competitive 53kg weight class category, Anju logged Nethmi Ahinsa Fernando.



back-to-back wins technical superiority against Philippines' Aliah Rose Gavalez and Sri Lanka's

"She faced some resistance from China's Chun Lei before prevailing 9-6 in the semifinal

"In the final, Anju will face Korea's Ji Hyang Kim. "Harshita conceded just three points en route the

outclassing Uzbekistan's Ozoda Zaripboeva by technical superiority (13-3) and beating Kazakhstan's beating Anastassiya Panassovich 5-0. "She will fight it out with China's Qian Jiang in the

"However, a big shock was in store for the Indian squad as 2021 World Championship medallist Sarita lost her quarterfinal bout 4-8 to Mongolia's Gantuya Enkhbat. "The 28-year-old was a firm medal favourite in this category. Later Enkhbat lost her semifinal, closing the repechage route for the Indian.

"Manisha Bhanwala (62kg) and Antim Kundu (65kg) will contest for bronze medals.

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Gukesh beats Vidit Gujrathi to regain joint lead

PTI ■ TORONTO

India's D Gukesh bounced back with a finely crafted game to outwit compatriot Vidit Gujrathi and regain his joint lead with Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia after the eighth round of the Candidates chess tournament

here. "On a day when R Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with Firouza Alireza of France, Hikaru Nakamura sealed his supremacy in the all-American duel against Fabiano Caruana to come back in to reckoning for top honours. leader sole "Overnight Nepomniachtchi faltered in

ender Nijat Abasov to get away with an easy draw in the other game of the eight-player double round-robin event. "With six rounds still to come,

Gukesh and Nepomniachtchi

have 5 points apiece and they are followed by Nakamura and Pragnanandhaa on 4.5 points "Caruana is now sole fifth on four points. Gujrathi on 3.5 comes in next ahead of Alireza

on three points, while Abasov

is still at the rear of the tables

on 2.5 points. "Gukesh had his task cut out and went for a rare variation wherein he surprised Gujrathi as early as on move four. Gujrathi sank into a long the early stages to allow tail thought and ended up losing



around twenty minutes on the

clock. "In the next few moves Gukesh equalized without much ado even as Guirathi tried to make some headways on both flanks. "In the middle game, Gukesh seized control of the only open file and used his queen and

for an absolute

domination to penetrate. Vidit

tried hard to resist but the

pressure was quite unforgiving

especially when he had less

time. "The die was cast when variation that has not been defeated Caruana in the last Gukesh entered the eighth rank and it was a picturesque finish as white's king was taken for a walk before the checkmate became inevitable. The game lasted 38 moves.

"These kind of clean games are rare at this level, in the opening he did some inaacuracies and his position was unpleasant, I was in control, it was a nice game," Gukesh said when asked if he was surprised how he won as without black much counterplay.

"Praggnanadhaa could not achieve much with his white pieces. Alireza employed the Sicilian Taimanov and the

tested very regularly at the top level. "However, for once, Alireza found the going easy and equalized without many problems, thanks to some timely breakthroughs on the queen side.

The players reached an equal endgame soon after the Queens got traded on the 30th move the result was never in doubt. The draw was agreed to ten move later.

"Hikaru Nakamura stole the thunder and has clearly been a nemesis for world number two Caruana in the key encounters especially when the former had white pieces.

"It had started in Norway chess Indian went for another tournament when Nakamura

round to win and the trend had continued in the FIDE's Grand Swiss where he again won in the final round as white.

"In the eighth round game, Nakamura, one point away from leaderboard, took his chances in the closed Ruy Lopez and was duly rewarded as Caruana went for some unwarranted complications after getting a level position in

the middle game. "Caruana also ran short of time and missed out on a tactic in a difficult position. It was all over in just 35 moves.

"Abasov has not been at his best but in this round the Azerbaijani secured his first half point with the black

pieces. Nepomniachtchi transposed to an exchange French defense and the resulting position was just equal till the longest game of the day ended after 63 moves. "In the Women's section, Koneru Humpy scored a victory over compatriot R Vaishali out of a Queen pawn game to jump to 3.5 points.
"The course of the event changed a bit in this section as

Tingjie Lei of China accounted for her Chinese team-mate Zhongyi Tan to through the event open. Zhongyi's domination was halted as Aleksandra Goryachkina of Russia and Lei joined her in the lead on five points out of a possible eight.

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