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AUNG SAN SUU KYI: PRISON OR HOUSE ARREST?

WORLD 8
UKRAINE CLAIMS IT SHOT DOWN RUSSIAN STRATEGIC BOMBER

MONEY 10
STOCK MARKETS STAGE STRONG REBOUND

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol. 34 Issue 109
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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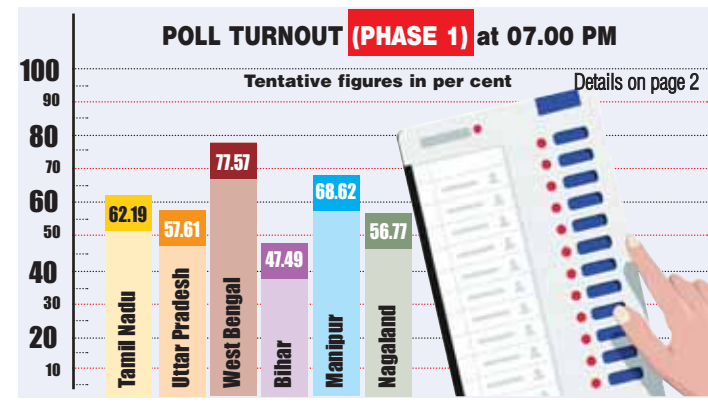
RISHABH PANT SET FOR HOMECOMING 09 SPORTS

Over 62 per cent polling in 1st phase of LS polls

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a kaleidoscope of democracy in action, voters of all ages — from wheelchair-bound seniors to newlyweds and Great Andamanese Tribe from Strait Island in South Andaman to the world's shortest woman cast their vote on Friday with an estimated 62.37 per cent turnout recorded till 6 pm in the first phase of Lok Sabha elections.

explosion of a grenade launcher shell in Chhattisgarh left a CRPF jawan dead. The highest voter turnout on the first day of polling under Phase 1 of the Lok Sabha elections was recorded in Tripura at 79.90 per cent, followed by West Bengal at 77.57 per cent and Assam at 71.38 per cent, with Bihar witnessing the lowest turnout at 47.49 per cent till 7 pm. According to officials, the prevailing heatwave condition in Bihar could be a possible reason for the low voter turnout. In strife-torn Manipur, around 68.62 per cent polling was recorded



amid incidents of shooting, damage to electronic voting machines (EVMs), threats to voters and polling agents by armed miscreants while voters in Nagaland stayed indoors following an indefinite shutdown call by an apex body of tribal organisations to press for its demand for a separate State. Tamil Nadu recorded a voter turnout of 72.09 per cent in the Lok Sabha polls with no major untoward incidents while 58 per

cent voter turnout was recorded on eight seats of western Uttar Pradesh. According to the Election Commission's Voter Turnout app, 63.29 per cent voting was reported in Saharanpur, 57.83 per cent in Moradabad, 60.39 per cent in Kairana, 59.17 per cent in Nagina, 60.23 per cent in Pilibhit, 54.68 per cent in Bijnor, 52.42 per cent in Rampur and 54.91 per cent in Muzaffarnagar. These seats fall in the Jat and sugarcane belt of the State.

The commission described the turnout as "high", noting that voting remained "largely peaceful". In the first phase of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the voter turnout was recorded at 69.43 per cent. Some of the constituencies were different then and the total number of seats which went to polls were 91. Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged voters to exercise their franchise in record numbers as the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls started with polling being held in 102 constituencies.

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THE PIONEER REPORTS FROM GROUND ZERO

TAMIL NADU
KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI
As polling in the first phase of the general election concluded by Friday 6 pm, Tamil Nadu registered a voter turn-out of 63.2 per cent till 5 pm, according to the Election Commission of India. Final figures would be released by 8 pm, said the ECI officials. Dharmapuri registered 73.51 per cent while Krishnagiri recorded 64.24 per cent (figures recorded till 5 pm). Chennai Central, from where former Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Sounderarajan was contesting recorded 41.47 per cent till 3 pm, according to Satyabrata Sahoo, chief electoral officer. Latha Ravishankar, a BJP activist in Chennai Central, had disappointment written all over her face as voters failed to make it to the polling booths despite lot of cajoling by her and other volunteers. But the DMK camp sounded positive as the low-turnout out is expected to make the prospectus of the party candidates smooth. The State has 39 constituencies while the neighboring Puducherry has one seat.

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WESTERN UTTAR PRADESH
VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■ LUCKNOW
Voter turnout of 57.54 per cent was recorded till 5 pm in all eight parliamentary constituencies of Western Uttar Pradesh where polling was held in first phase of the Lok Sabha elections on Friday. Total turnout of voters was expected to be marginally above 60 per cent. The eight constituencies where polling was held on Friday included Pilibhit, Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Nagina, Moradabad and Rampur. Of these, Saharanpur, Kairana, Bijnor, Moradabad and Rampur are general constituencies. Over 25 per cent turnout was recorded till 11 am, and it rose to an average of 37 per cent till 1 pm. By 3 pm over 47.44 per cent voters had cast their votes in the eight constituencies. The voter turnout was 54.68 per cent in Bijnor, 58.68 per cent in Kairana, 57.65 per cent in Moradabad, 54.91 per cent in Muzaffarnagar, 58.05 per cent in Nagina, 60.23 per cent in Pilibhit, 52.42 per cent in Rampur and 63.29 per cent in Saharanpur.

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WEST BENGAL
SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA
There were sufficient reasons for the Election Commission of India to heave a big sigh of relief as the first round of elections for Bengal's three parliamentary constituencies of Cooch Behar, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri passed off without any loss of life though reports of "stray incidents of clashes, stone-pelting or booth capture," came in from many areas. Polling passed off peacefully amid stray incidents of violence and complaints of booth capture by both the Trinamool Congress and the BJP, sources in the ECI said adding the three constituencies witnessed a brisk polling of about 77.5 per cent till 5 pm. The polling percentage was likely to go beyond 82 per cent as many voters were still standing in the queue. While Cooch Behar recorded a comparatively high polling rate of 77.73 per cent, about 75.54 per cent voters voted at Alipurduar whereas Jalpaiguri witnessed about 79.33 per cent voters exercising their franchise.

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NAGALAND & MANIPUR
PTI ■ IMPHAL/KOHHIMA
At least four Electronic Voting Machines were damaged at different polling booths in conflict-hit Manipur on Friday where polling was held in the first phase of Lok Sabha elections, according to sources. Meanwhile, the lone Lok Sabha seat in Nagaland recorded a voter turnout of over 50 per cent till 4 pm, the closing time for voting, on Friday, officials said. The polling began at 7 am. The polling was held, amid a call given by the Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO) to abstain from voting in six districts of the region over its demand for a separate State. People in the six districts, which have over four lakh votes spread over 738 polling stations, remained indoors in solidarity with the ENPO. Under the shadow of a long-drawn ethnic conflict, Manipur was set to go to polls on Friday for the two constituencies — Inner and Outer Manipur. Polling is also scheduled in some areas of the Outer Manipur constituency in phase 2 on April 26.

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BIHAR
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA/AURANGABAD/GAYA
Around 46.32 per cent of the 75 lakh voters in four Lok Sabha constituencies in Bihar exercised their franchise till 5 pm on Friday, officials said. The polling began at 7 am and went on till 6 pm, a senior election official said. The voters will decide the fate of 38 candidates in these four seats. Tight security arrangements were in place at Nawada and Aurangabad, besides the reserved seats of Gaya and Jamui, where a majority of nearly 5,000 polling booths have been marked as "sensitive".

Over 49.95 per cent voters have exercised their franchise in Aurangabad Lok Sabha constituency, 48.54 per cent in Gaya, 47.09 per cent in Jamui and 40.20 per cent in Nawada till 5 pm, officials said. Of the four seats, Nawada has the highest number of 20.06 lakh voters, where altogether eight candidates are in the fray though the contest is primarily between Vivek Thakur, a BJP Rajya Sabha MP seeking entry into the Lok Sabha, and RJD's Shrawan Kushwaha. Gaya has 18.18 lakh voters, but the highest number of 14 candidates. Here, former Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi, an NDA ally, who is just a few months shy of turning 80, is making yet another bid to enter Parliament.

MAHARASHTRA
TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI
More than 55 per cent of total 95,54 lakh voters exercised their franchise in five constituencies that went to polls in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls in eastern Maharashtra on Friday, with the naxalite-infested Gadchiroli-Chimur accounting for a maximum of 65 per cent polling. With no untoward incident reported from anywhere, the polling passed off peacefully in Nagpur, Chandrapur, Bhandara-Gondiya, Ramtek (SC), Gadchiroli-Chimur (ST) constituencies, as voters turned out in large numbers braving harsh temperatures. As per the polling percentages put out by the Chief Election Officer, Maharashtra at 5 pm, an average of 54.85 per cent of the total electorate in five poll-bound constituencies cast their votes. The final poll percentages (as of 5.30 pm) were expected only after 9.30 pm. The average final polling percentage in the five constituencies may be anywhere from 57 to 60 per cent. In Nagpur where the two-time sitting MP and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari is taking on Congress Vikas Thakre, there was a relatively lowest turnout of 47.11 per cent of voters. The polling percentage might have either touched or barely crossed 50 per cent when the polling ended at 5.30 pm. In contrast, the Maoist-infested Gadchiroli-Chimur recorded the highest poll percentage of 64.95, while the voter turn-outs reported from three other Lok Sabha constituencies where the elections were held were: Bhandara-Gondiya-56.87 per cent, Chandrapur-55.11 per cent and Ramtek-52.38 per cent. Nitin Gadkari, his wife Kanchan and other family members voted at a polling station near their residence in Nagpur. Talking to media persons after exercising his franchise, Gadkari expressed that the ruling BJP will cross a winning tally of 400 seats in the country, while he would win the polls from Nagpur by a margin of more than 5 lakh votes. "We are also targeting a record voting turnout this time, from 54 per cent in 2019 to 75 per cent in 2024. I appeal to all the people to step out and exercise their right to vote, and celebrate the greatest festival of democracy," Gadkari said. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Sarsangchalak Dr Mohan Bhagwat cast his vote at a polling booth near Reshimbagh in Nagpur. Dr Bhagaat was among the earliest to arrive at a polling station and waited for nearly 15 minutes before the polling started, entered to cast his vote and emerged soon thereafter, displaying his inked left-hand forefinger with pride. "I have performed my personal duty for the day and I call upon all the people to cast their vote since as citizens it is our right as well as a duty," Dr Bhagwat said. Maharashtra Congress president Nana Patole exercised his franchise along with his family members at Sukli village in Bhandara district.

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Google Doodle salutes Indian democracy

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

As India's much-awaited 2024 Lok Sabha elections' first phase unfolded on Friday, Google's iconic Doodle joined the country's democratic journey by featuring the iconic ink mark on the index finger, a hallmark of Indian democracy. A click on the Google Doodle takes the users, from across the globe, to witness the monumental scale of India's vibrant democratic process being held in the seven phases from April 19 to June 1 in the country. In the first phase, starting on Friday a total of 102 constituencies in 21 States



have gone to vote, including five constituencies from Assam. Phase 2 of the polls will be held next week on April 26, and 89 constituencies in 13 States will be voting, including five Assam constituencies. Social media platforms were already buzzing with excitement as users shared the Doodle online and expressed their thoughts on this significant moment. @RT_India_news posted on X, "Google Doodle Salutes Indian Elections — Democracy's Biggest Dance. Friday's illustration depicts a hand with the index finger marked with ink, symbolising the start of the world's largest

elections in which nearly one billion people are eligible to vote. "The first phase of India's 2024 Lok Sabha elections is currently underway, with significant participation across multiple regions," it posted. Stella Paul with @stellaglobe handle termed Google's move as "pretty cool" while one @virgojyoti02 found the move exciting "Let the festival of democracy begin!!! Google doodle". Naveen Athresh, having twitter handle @naveenathresh said, "Google Doodle with our Indian elections voting to push people to vote. A nice touch."

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Udhampur LS seat records 70 per cent voter turnout amid tight security

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Udhampur-Doda Lok Sabha seat in Jammu and Kashmir Friday recorded a healthy voter turnout of about 70 per cent amid tight security arrangements in the first phase of polling.

The high-profile Lok Sabha witnessed a close contest between MoS PMO Dr Jitendra Singh and the Congress party candidate Choudhary Lal Singh.

A total number of 12 candidates were in the fray for the seat.

Democratic Progressive Azad Party candidate GM Saroori contested the Lok Sabha seat for the first time and made all efforts to make it a three-cornered contest. The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference and the PDP had extended support to the Congress party candidate on ground zero.

According to official sources, around 16.23 lakh voters including 8.45 lakh male and 7.77 lakh female voters were eligible to vote and participate in the electoral process. Over 65 per cent of eligible voters



(10.5 lakh) had exercised their right to franchise till 5.00 p.m. According to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K 50.52 per cent male and 49.3 per cent female voters participated in the polling process. Till late evening the Election Commission had not issued the final tally of the voter turnout. Enthusiastic first-time voters, senior citizens, and women were seen lining up outside the polling booths since early morning. A newly wedded couple also visited the polling booth early Friday morning to cast their vote in Udhampur. The couple also appealed to

common voters to come out in large numbers to participate in the poll process. At several places, senior citizens including centenarians exercised their right to vote with the help of their family members. The Election Commission had made elaborate arrangements to facilitate first-time voters, physically abled citizens, and senior citizens. In the first two hours of polling, less than 10 per cent voter turnout was recorded. The voter turnout picked up as the weather conditions improved during the daytime. Both candidates visited sever-

al polling booths in Kathua to ensure free and fair polls. Choudhary Lal Singh of the Congress party also exercised his right to vote in one of the polling booths in Kathua along with his wife. Interacting with the media Choudhary Lal Singh said, "I am satisfied with the healthy voter turnout in the constituency". Out of five assembly seats in the Kathua district, the Kathua assembly seat recorded 70 per cent turnout while Billawar and Hiranagar assembly constituencies recorded over 65 and 69 per cent voter turnout respectively. Udhampur district also recorded over 68 per cent polling. Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban districts also recorded over 63 per cent polling. The rural and Urban pockets of the Lok Sabha constituency witnessed heavy voter turnout. The border belt of Hiranagar in Kathua also witnessed a healthy voter turnout since morning. Reports of peaceful voting were also received from remote areas of Bani, Billawar, Basohli, Marwah, Dacchan and Padder Nagseni.

Five poll officials suspended in Kerala for allowing CPM leader help elderly cast her vote

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Enthused and energised by the presence of Prakash Karat, Brinda Karat and Sitaram Yechury, the Big Three of the party, for election campaign in the State, the CPI(M) cadre is on a mission to subvert polling in many constituencies. Five polling officials were put on suspension for dereliction of duty on Friday as the local CPI(M) leader in Kasaragod Lok Sabha constituency was shown helping a 92-year old woman voter to cast her vote. According to Election Commission of India guidelines, senior citizens above the age of 85 could vote from their homes itself and they need not take the grueling walk from home to the polling booth and back. Devi, the nonagenarian voter in booth number 164 of Kasaragod Lok Sabha constituency preferred to cast her vote making use of this facility. But on Friday, CPI(M) cadres accompanied the polling officials to show them Devi's residence. The video images showed that



Ganeshan, local bigwig of the CPI(M) influencing and coercing Devi to cast her vote in favour of a person of his choice which she disapproved. The CCTV showed Devi getting upset over the demeanor of Ganeshan and she reportedly complained to the Wayand district police. The district level leaders of other parties stood aghast as the CPI(M) launched its mission to usurp the votes. The district election officer, based on the investigation he had ordered, put the five polling officials under suspension for dereliction of duty. The ECI rules state that polling agents of any political parties are prohibited from

assisting voters in exercising their franchise. The DEO said that the polling officials failed in maintaining the secrecy during voting. There were few more instances of similar incidents from the district of Kannur, a CPI(M) stronghold. M P Hassa, the president of KPCC told reporters that the CPI(M) were past masters in derailing and distorting the poll process to suit their convenience. Kerala goes to the polls on 26 April but the polling officials are busy calling on the senior citizens to ensure that they could cast their vote from their homes itself. The top three CPI(M) leaders, general secretary Sitaram Yechuri,

polit bureau members Prakash Karat and Brinda Karat are touring the State as part of election campaign and this has enthused the party cadre to ensure that all votes fall in their kitty. Interestingly, the CPI(M) cadres are famous for manipulating the polling process. T P Senkumar, the former State Police Chief, in his memoirs "My Life in Police Force" has written about how the CPI(M) leaders and activists cast fake votes during election. Two young IPS officers who were deputed for polling booth duties came across a woman casting 33 votes in a single booth while the presiding officers looted the other way. "When these IPS officers asked the presiding officer about the massive discrepancies, the former was asked to mind their business outside the booths. If you are particular that this complaint should be registered, it would be the end of your life," the presiding officer warned the IPS officials, writes Senkumar who was eased out of office after the polling process.

WESTERN UTTAR PRADESH

From Page 1

Uttar Pradesh's Chief Electoral Officer Navdip Rinwa said the voting figures were being tabulated and the final figures would be available in late hours of Friday/Saturday. He said the polling was free, fair and peaceful in all eight Lok Sabha constituencies and no untoward incident was reported from anywhere except incidents of scuffles among the supporters of rival candidates in some places. He said the situation was immediately brought under control by the police. The CEO said no major incident of malfunctioning of the electronic voting machines (EVMs) was reported from any of the 14, 845 polling booths spread in eight Lok Sabha constituencies which went to polls on Friday. He said 50 ballot units, 50 control units and 152 VVPAT (voter verifiable paper audit trail) machines were replaced due to malfunction. He said the polling was affected for some time and the machines were immediately replaced from the reserve machines available with sector

magistrates. The CEO said arrangements were made for the webcasting of polling in 7,500 polling booths for keeping close watch on the polling process. He said the webcasting was watched at the district control room, by the chief electoral officer at Lucknow and the Election Commission of India at Delhi. He said no major complaint about the polling process was received. He said complaints were immediately addressed and no complaint was repeated. He said the complaints were of three types - EVM malfunction, intimidation of voters and voters being prevented from casting their vote. He said voters were allowed to cast votes without showing valid identity documents in some polling booths. The polling commenced at 7 am and concluded at 6 pm. The CEO said till 11 am, 29.84 per cent voting was reported in Saharanpur, 23.35 per cent in Moradabad, 25.89 per cent in Kairana, 26.89 per cent in Nagina, 26.94 per cent in Pilibhit, 25.50 per cent in Bijnor, 20.71 per cent in Rampur and 22.62 per cent in

Muzaffarnagar. These seats fall in the Jat and sugarcane belt of the state. Among the prominent candidates in the fray in the first phase polls are Bharatiya Janata Party's Jitin Prasad from Pilibhit, Union minister Sanjeev Balyan from Muzaffarnagar and Azad Samaj Party chief Chandrashekhar Azad from Nagina. The ruling BJP has joined hands with the Rashtriya Lok Dal, while the Samajwadi Party has allied with the Congress for the Lok Sabha elections. The Bahujan Samaj Party has decided to go solo. A total of 80 candidates - 73 men and seven women - are contesting in the first phase polls. The Election Commission of India said 1.43 crore people were eligible to cast their votes in the first phase. To ensure security, 6,018 inspectors and sub-inspectors, 35,750 constables and 24,992 home guard personnel, along with 60 companies of the Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC) and 220 companies of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) were deployed.

TAMIL NADU

From Page 1

Polling in both Tamil Nadu and Puducherry were peaceful barring some routine skirmishes associated with election. The main contest in Tamil Nadu is between the three fronts led by the DMK, the AIAMK and the BJP. K Annamalai, the young president of Tamil Nadu BJP had created a sensation across the State and the first time voters were impressed with his style of politics. If the BJP manages to score 25 per cent of the popular votes, it would be a landmark event

in Tamil Nadu's political history. In the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP drew a blank having failed to win even a single seat. The AIADMK could win just on seat while the dMK-led alliance made a clean sweep by winning all the 39 seats. Kolahala Sreenivas, chief editor, Kolahala TV News Channel, is of the opinion that this time it would be entirely different. "There is a string anti-incumbency wave against the DMK and AIADMK is likely to win at least six or seven seats," he said.

MAHARASHTRA

From Page 1

Talking to media persons after he cast his vote, Patole said that the BJP-led government had "cheated" people for 10 years and they were determined to end the 10-year dictatorship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The people of Vidarbha have always stood firmly behind the Congress. We are receiving great support from the people this time as well. I am confident that we will win all the five Lok Sabha seats that went to poll today," he said. Barring Nagpur where voter turnout was the lowest, there was considerable enthusiasm

among voters in four other poll-constituencies of Chandrapur, Bhandara-Gondiya, Ramtek (SC), Gadchiroli-Chimur (ST). Lakhs of people, including large numbers of first-time voters, youth, senior citizens and transgenders, exercised their voting rights. In a heart-warming sight witnessed in Gadchiroli-Chimur constituency, nine handicapped senior citizens were brought in a 'rath yatra' by people, accompanied by a brass band playing on the roads, to cast their votes at a polling station.

NAGALAND & MANIPUR

From Page 1

According to the sources, incidents of intimidation and firing were reported from several places in the Inner Manipur constituency where voting for the Lok Sabha polls took place on Friday. Manipur has witnessed sporadic, sometimes intense, ethnic clashes since May 3 last year between the majority Meitei community and the Kukis, resulting in the loss of more than 200 lives. While the Meiteis are now concentrated in Imphal city, the Kukis have moved to the hills.

Over 60 per cent polling...

From Page 1

He especially called upon the young and first-time voters to vote in large numbers. "The 2024 Lok Sabha elections commence today! As 102 seats across 21 States and UTs go to the polls, I urge all those voting in these seats to exercise their franchise in record numbers," he said in a post on X. He added, "I particularly call upon the young and first-time voters to vote in large numbers. After all, every vote counts and every voice matters!" Modi made the appeal in various Indian languages.

West Bengal, polling was marred by violence in the Cooch Behar seat. TMC and BJP workers clashed with each other and lodged 80 and 39 complaints respectively related to poll violence, voter intimidation, and assault on poll agents, sources from both parties said. Minor EVM glitches were reported at some booths in Tamil Nadu, Arunachal Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Assam. A vehicle carrying an EVM partially sank into a river after water level rose suddenly, washing away a mechanised boat that was ferrying the SUV in Lakhimpur

constituency. The driver and the polling officer of the vehicle managed to get out before water gushed into the vehicle. Poll violence and allegations of electronic voting machines being damaged marred the polling process in Manipur, a state that has been embroiled in ethnic violence since May last year. There have been at least two incidents of gunfire close to polling stations in the Manipur valley. An altercation broke out between locals and unidentified persons in Thongju assembly constituency under the Inner Manipur Lok Sabha seat. Incidents of EVM damage were also reported from three polling stations in East Kameng, Kurung Kumey and Upper Subansiri districts in Arunachal Pradesh. From bustling city centres to remote villages, the polling stations witnessed a colourful convergence of voters spanning generations and backgrounds. Polling was seamless, based on meticulous planning and execution by the Commission and its officials in the field. In Kurung Kumey District of Arunachal Pradesh an elderly voter opted to go cast her vote at the polling station despite having the option to vote from home. Elsewhere, a first-time voter, Ms. Devaki, adorned in traditional attire, in Dindori, Madhya Pradesh, expressed her happiness by proudly striking a pose with her inked finger after casting her vote. Adding to the celebratory atmosphere, newly-married voters also

proudly took to social media to post selfies with their ink-marked fingers. The Great Andamanese Tribe from Strait Island in South Andaman also participated enthusiastically. Visuals of voters standing in long queues waiting for their chance to vote were seen across the polling stations as voting began simultaneously across 102 PCs at 7 AM on Friday. In Bodh Gaya in Bihar, Buddhist monks were seen posing with a smile and their fingers inked in a proud display. In Andaman and Nicobar Islands, voters belonging to the tribal communities came out in large numbers. Shompen tribe of Great Nicobar made history by casting their votes for the first time this elections. Dheeraj Soni and Pooja Soni cast their vote in Rajasthan's Sikar shortly after getting married. Aseem Mangotra and Vishali in Udhampur, and Dvesh Thakur and Gangotri Thakur in Chhattisgarh's Naraynapur. Rejecting the home voting facility provided to senior citizens by the commission, a 95-year-old retired Navy official went to a polling booth in Jaipur to cast his vote on a wheelchair. The world's shortest woman, Jyoti Amge, cast her vote in Nagpur in Maharashtra and appealed to people to come out in large numbers and exercise their franchise in the elections. According to EC, 56 villages in Bastar cast their vote in a polling booth set up in their own village for the first time in a Lok Sabha Election.

Voters were seen to benefit from the medical facilities at the Model Polling station in PC-163 in Bijapur. In Chhattisgarh, 63.41 per cent voters cast their votes in the Naxal-hit Bastar Lok Sabha constituency where the CRPF jawan after the grenade accidentally went off while an officer was injured in an IED blast in another incident. As per data shared by the EC, Rajasthan saw a voter turnout of close to 55 per cent was recorded in 12 parliamentary constituencies. The highest voter turnout of 62.93 per cent was recorded in the Ganganagar Lok Sabha seat while Jhunjhunu saw the lowest turnout of 47.98 per cent, it said. Jaipur recorded a poll percentage of 61.23. The voting percentage in Bikaner was 52.53, Churu 61.05, Sikar 55.06, Jaipur Rural 54.44, Alwar 55.82, Dausa 49.57, Bharatpur 50.97 and Nagaur 56.89. In the first major electoral battle in Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370, the Udhampur constituency witnessed enthusiastic voters' participation recorded more than 65.08 per cent voting till 7 pm, with officials saying the final turnout figures would be higher as data from remote locations and ballot papers are compiled. Arunachal Pradesh saw over 65.46 per cent voters exercising their franchise, Meghalaya (70.26 per cent), Mizoram (54.88 per cent), Nagaland 56.77 per cent. Though the turnout was moderate in the morning

hours in north eastern states due to inclement weather, it gathered momentum with weather conditions improving. States, including Uttarakhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu and the Union Territories of Puducherry,

Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep completed their voting process on Friday in single-phase election. Andaman Nicobar recorded 56.87 per cent voters turn out; Lakshadweep 59.02 per cent; Uttarakhand 53.64 per cent, Puducherry 73.25 per cent and Sikkim 68.06 per cent.

Poll Turnout (Phase -1) at 07:00 PM				
Tentative Figures only				
Sl No.	State	No. of PCs	Total No. of Electors	Latest Updated Poll %
1	AndamanNicobar	1	315148	56.87
2	ArunachalPradesh	2	892694	65.46
3	Assam	5	8647869	71.38
4	Bihar	4	7601629	47.49
5	Chhattisgarh	1	1472207	63.41
6	Jammu Kashmir	1	1623195	65.08
1	Lakshwdeep	1	57784	59.02
8	Madhya Pradesh	6	11309636	63.33
9	Maharashtra	5	9554667	55.29
10	Manipur	2	1544652	68.62
11	Meghalaya	2	2226567	70.26
12	Mizoram	1	856364	54.18
13	Nagaland	1	1317536	56.77
14	Puducherry	1	1023699	73.25
15	Rajasthan	12	25315541	50.95
16	Sikkim	1	464140	68.06
17	Tamil Nadu	39	62333925	62.19
18	Tripura	1	1463526	79.90
19	Uttar Pradesh	8	14401543	57.61
20	Uttarakhand	5	8337914	53.64
21	WestBengal	3	5626108	77.57
			102	62.37%

WEST BENGAL

From Page 1

The BJP had won all the three seats in 2019. Though there was no official statement coming from the ECI till reports last came in sources said by 12 pm the Commission had received more than 100 complaints from Cooch Behar alone where more than a dozen local TMC and BJP leaders had to be hospitalized following stray incidents of violence at Dinhati, Sitalkuchi. Bombs were recovered from various places including Dinhati but none died of bombing a senior police officer at Cooch Behar said. One of a voter was damaged in stone-throwing whereas a TMC booth president had to be hospitalized after he was beaten by alleged BJP men. At Dabgram Fulbari in Jalpaiguri constituency BJP local MLA Sikha Chatterjee was detained following heated exchanges with the police even as the TMC men complained that she was trying to influence voters. Chatterjee however said that she had gone following complaints of booth capture. Similar incidents took place at Sitalkuchi where the local TMC supporters raised slogans after BJP MLA Baren Chandra Burman. The saffron MLA said, "I went to the area after we learnt that the TMC had captured several booths and were casting false votes," the leader however had to beat a retreat after a

large number villagers assembled in the area. Four persons were killed at Sitalkuchi during the 2021 State Assembly elections. Meanwhile, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee lambasted Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah for allegedly "misusing the central forces." Complaining that the members of the State police had been made to sit idle Banerjee said, "both the Prime Minister and the Home Minister should remember that they are only leading a care-taker government which has no power... whereas in Bengal we are leading an elected Government... still the State police is not being used and they (Centre) are misusing the central forces... how can the central forces allow loot of votes." She said "I love central forces. But I oppose using them as BJP members. I want to ask the EC why central forces are being used in Cooch Behar in such a way? How do you expect a free and fair election in such a situation? It is a matter of shame that the EC has become a BJP commission." Her Cabinet colleague Udayan Guha who represents Dinhati sub-division in Cooch Behar said "the BJP, and CAPE, has unleashed a reign of terror to rig the elections... in many areas they have joined hands to beat up our workers."

Minor thrashed brutally outside coaching centre

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 16-year-old boy was thrashed brutally following an altercation outside of his coaching centre in Bhajanpura area of Delhi's northeast. According to the police on Friday, a minor has been apprehended in the case. According to the FIR registered on April 15, the boy suffered injuries on his head, waist, neck and hand. The Delhi Police, on Friday, said that they have registered an FIR under section 323 (Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt), 341 (Punishment for wrongful restraint) and 34 (Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of



the IPC against seven to eight people and started further investigation into the matter. According to the complainant, a student of class 10, told police that he went to his

coaching centre at 5 pm on April 15, when a person identified as Raghav abused him and upon asking to not do so, he started quarrelling with him.

"A teacher from my institute came and tried to stop the matter. He asked us to come inside the coaching. He then threatened me saying that he will teach me a lesson and said that he will bring more people with him," the FIR stated. Around 7 pm, when the victim was returning along with his friend, the accused brought seven to eight people who were also minors. He was asked to plead in front of them asking for forgiveness. However, he refused to do so. "Upon refusing to do so, they started beating and thrashing us. My friend escaped from there somehow. They all started beating me up. They had some weapons with them with which they attacked my head

and along with that I suffered injuries on my waist, neck and hand," he said, adding that the boys ran away when they saw the victim bleeding. His friend then returned to him and they went back to the coaching centre. However, the teacher at the institution handed him 500 rupees and asked them to go from there without informing his parents. Upon reaching his home, his father called the police and the victim was taken to JPC hospital where his Medico legal report was made. Police said that a team has been formed after registering a case. "We are investigating the matter and the accused will be arrested soon," a senior police officer said.

PG admissions for 2024-25 in DU to begin from April 25

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi University will start admissions for the post graduation (PG) courses for the academic session 2024-25 from April 25, varsity officials said on Friday. The registration for admissions into the PG courses will remain open till May 25, they said. Addressing a press conference, Dean Admissions Haneeet Gandhi said the Delhi University (DU) will start the admissions for undergraduate (UG) courses in the second phase after the CUET-UG examinations are over. The dates for the UG admis-



sions will be declared by middle of May, she said. According to the officials, this year admissions will be done on a total of 13,500 seats for post graduate (including Non Collegiate Women's Education Board), 120 seats each for three

B.Tech and 60 seats each for BA LLB and BBA LLB courses. The PG admissions this time will also include courses on MA Hindu Studies, MA Public Health, MA Chinese Studies, MA Korean Studies and Master in Fine Arts.

Police chiefs hold inter State meet to discuss security in view of LS polls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

An inter-state coordination meeting of police chiefs was held to discuss security arrangements and border surveillance in view of the Lok Sabha elections in the national capital. The meeting was led by Special Commissioner of Police (Law and Order), Delhi, Madhup Tewari with police chiefs of neighbouring districts of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh to discuss the issues for the general assembly elections, they said. "Inter-state collaboration in maintaining law and order during critical periods such as elections is very important,"

Tewari said during the meeting held on Thursday night. "The focus of the meeting was to discuss about the law and order situation," a senior police officer said. The officials also discussed several other matters such as deployment of additional police personnel and paramilitary forces on the state borders, vigil on flow of illicit liquor and money, and apprehension of wanted criminals, the officer said. The officer further said the meeting aimed at fostering cooperation and synergy among law enforcement agencies by seamless exchange of intelligence and extending support to ensure the sanctity of

electoral process. Apart from Delhi Police officials, senior police officers from neighbouring districts of Gurgaon, Faridabad, Noida, and Jhajjar participated in the meeting, the officer said. "Gurugram CP Vikas Arora, Faridabad CP Rakesh Arya, Noida Additional CP (ACP) Babloo Kumar, Jhajjar ACP, DCPs and Excise officers from Faridabad, and several other officers were present during the meeting," he added. Another officer of Delhi Police said the key topics discussed in the meeting were to intensify inter-state border surveillance, implementation of joint patrol and checkpoints.

Armed police personnel to use metro in emergencies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a first, the Delhi Police personnel with weapons will be seen travelling in metro trains during emergency situations to avoid getting stuck in traffic jams and reach the spot sooner, officials said on Friday. According to officials, the Delhi Police has got the go-ahead on its proposal in a recent meeting with the DMRC (Delhi Metro Rail Corporation) and CISF (Central Industrial Security Force), which is deployed at the stations for security checks. As of now, the Delhi Police personnel are not allowed to travel in metro with weapons.



According to a Delhi Police officer, the final modalities for the SOP (standard operating procedure) have been chalked out, and if possible, it may be implemented before the Lok Sabha elections in Delhi.

"We have got the approval for travelling in the metro with weapons during crisis or law and order situations from the DMRC. On April 16, a meeting was held with all the stake holders, including the

DMRC and CISF, regarding the matter," the officer said. The officer further said a group of personnel can travel without the token, but before the journey, their in-charge or head, will have to inform the DMRC about the reason and details of the personnel. A coach might be dedicated to the personnel depending on the situation, he said. "The journey will be on payment basis and each travelling personnel will be wearing the uniform," the officer added. Citing an example of riot-like situation where extra force is required, their movement in large numbers in buses becomes difficult due to heavy traffic in Delhi, the offi-

cer said. Sometime it even takes more than an hour to reach from one district to another, he said. The metro line has spread almost every parts of Delhi and it can be utilised in saving the time to reach the spot at the time of crisis, he added. Another police officer said, as per the plan, transportation will be provided to the force for 'pick and drop' from metro stations to reach the spot. This also includes the movement of paramilitary personnel, if they are to be deployed in the national capital during emergencies. Delhi has witnessed communal riots in Trilokpuri and North-East Delhi, in 2014 and 2020, respectively.

Mangoes sent from home only thrice since arrest, Kejriwal informs court

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday informed the Rouse Avenue Court that mangoes were sent from his home only thrice after he was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on March 21. Besides, Kejriwal said, he had sugar-free sweets six times. Accusing the Enforcement Directorate (ED) of being "petty" and "politicising" what he ate in jail, Kejriwal asserted before a court that the food he consumed was in conformity with the diet chart prepared by his doctor. He made the submission while the court was hearing his application to allow him to have insulin inside the jail owing to his diabetic condition. Kejriwal has also requested online consultation with a private doctor every day for 15 minutes in the presence of his wife Sunita Kejriwal. Kejriwal's counsel launched a spirited assault on the ED over its claim that the AAP national convener was eating food laden with sugar so he can fall ill and seek bail on medical grounds. "ED claimed that I want to increase my blood sugar levels to get bail. Am I going to risk paralysis to get bail? Whatever food I have is as per the diet chart prepared by my doctor prior to arrest," Senior Advocate Abhishek Singhvi told the court. Referring to the ED's claim about the politician



having food cooked at home in jail. "I only use sugar free (an artificial sugar brand) in my tea. How petty, political and ridiculous ED can be? Their statements are completely false and malicious. Just because you have a lot of influence in the media you are able to publish that I am having aaloo puri even though this meal was sent only once during pooja," he told the court. Kejriwal, who had on Thursday withdrawn a petition for consulting his doctor thrice a week about his fluctuating sugar levels, moved a fresh plea on Friday seeking consultations with his physician for 15 minutes every day. "Just because I am a prisoner do I have no right to a dignified life and good health? Am I a gangster that I cannot even be allowed to have 15 minutes VC (video conference) consultation with my doctor? We have had democracy for 75 years but I am seeing such an approach for the first time. Never seen such

kind of pettiness," Singhvi said, reproachfully. "What has ED got to do with this hearing? He (ED) is not a party. It is between me and jail and court? They are having a media trial and press is publishing anything it wants," the counsel told the court. The court reserved its order on Kejriwal's application seeking daily consultation with his doctor for Monday and directed Tihar jail authorities to file a reply, if required, by Saturday. "Moreover, Tihar Jail through ED counsel produced a chart of what food went in for Applicant to be had. However, a lot many times Applicant would leave food item and not have the same. No such details were produced to show what Applicant actually had. The real reason for continuous spike is the refusal of Jail Authorities to give insulin to the Applicant which is life-saving drug. It is shocking that ED apprehends that a person would deliberately cause such alarming hike in sugar level and risk his life - for getting medical bail. Since , jail administration has failed to give insulin to the Applicant prays for administration of insulin and to consult his regular doctor - Dr. Ravichandra Rao, MBBS, DCH, Consultant Diabetologist of WHEALTH, Centre for Excellence in Diabetes and Weight Management, through video conferencing for 15 minutes every daily," Kejriwal said in his plea.

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BJP to host mega conclave of Hindu priests, saints in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in the national capital, the Delhi BJP will host a mega conclave of Hindu priests, saints and seers to celebrate the Hindu new year and construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, at the IGI stadium on Sunday, party leaders said. Delhi goes to polls on May 25. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the event will also celebrate construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya as the consecration ceremony of Ramlalla idol at the temple is going to complete 100 days in the next few weeks. The grand consecration ceremony in Ayodhya was held in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22 this year. The saints and seers gathered for the event will also speak about the importance of "Santana Dharma", party leaders said. More than 31,000 devout Hindus, including over 5,000 saints, seers and temple priests, will gather at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in Delhi to chant the Hanuman Chalisa, said Karnail Singh, coordinator of Temple cell of Delhi BJP. Singh said several Union ministers and senior BJP leaders will also be present in the programme. Sources said Union Minister



Piyush Goel was one of the invited guests for the event. The BJP is contesting the Lok Sabha polls on all seven seats in Delhi that it has won back to back with huge margins in 2014 and 2019. The party is pitted in a direct contest on all seats on which the INDIA bloc partners -- AAP and Congress -- have fielded their candidates. The AAP is contesting four of the seven parliamentary seats while the Congress the remaining three. "Across the country, including in Delhi, people celebrate the new year, Christmas, so the Hindu new year should also be celebrated with same vigour. This event is being held to focus on Indian culture and its values by celebrating different festivals that fall in the beginning of Hindu new year," Singh said. April 9 marked the start of Vikram Samvat 2081 as per the Hindu calendar. Several renowned Hindu religious figures, including 31 Mahamandleshwars, will also attend the programme, Singh said.

To woo voters, BJP to organise nukkad natak from May 1

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP is planning to organise Nukkad Natak (street plays) in the national capital from May 1 to May 23 in a bid to woo voters by highlighting the beneficial schemes and achievements of the Narendra Modi led NDA government before the public while on the other hand expose the corruption and misrule of the Arvind Kejriwal government. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva watched a media trial show of the Nukaad Natak (street plays) to be organised by the party for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections 2024 campaign in Delhi, along with media personnel on Friday. "From Nukkad Natak to Flash Mob, Delhi BJP will use various mediums to take Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message of development to the public. While on the other hand, it will also be used to expose the corruption and misrule of the Kejriwal Government," Sachdeva said. Further, he explained that along with nukkad natak the Delhi BJP unit will also be using puppet shows, magic shows, poetry recitals, music bands, and flash mobs along with the street plays being shown in different languages to help take the message forward to more people. "Street plays influence every section of society, and since Delhi is a cosmopolitan city, this



time they are also including some shows in English and regional languages," he said. On this occasion, Election Steering Committee Chief Ajay Mahavir, Deputy Chief Yogita Singh, and Gajendra Yadav, Media Chief Praveen Shankar Kapoor, and Vikram Mittal, along with several party officials, were present alongside Anuj Sharma, Chief Member of the Cultural Committee of BJP. Emphasising that street plays influence every section of society, Sachdeva stated that this cultural campaign will commence on May 1 in the presence of senior party leaders. He further stated that prior to this, on Sunday, April 21st, at the I.G.I. Stadium in Delhi, the saffron party is organising a grand event through the Mandir Prakashth, in which renowned devotional singer Hansraj Raghuvanshi will present his performance and convey the message of a developed India. "On April 21st, in the BJP Mandir Prakashth program, Hansraj Raghuvanshi will enthrall

Man held for duping people after posing as customer care executive

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police arrested a 27 year old man for duping people on the pretext of being a customer care executive in an airline on Friday in Delhi's Dwarka district. According to the police on Friday, a man named Durga Nath Raina filed a complaint stating that he suffered an online fraud of Rs 5.50 lakh. The police have arrested a West Bengal native, who was identified as Gourab Dey. "A case was registered at cyber Dwarka police station on the complaint of Durga Nath Raina, who told police that he was booking a flight and got a number from the search engine of customer care. Later he received a call when the caller asked him to download some applications and he shared his OTP. In this way he suffered an



online fraud of Rs 5.50 lakh," Deputy Commissioner of Police Dwarka Ankit Singh said. Police said that after registering an FIR, launched an investigation and obtained bank account details of the accused and traced him in Kolkata. "During the course of investigation, call detail records of the alleged numbers used for trapping people were obtained from TSPs and bank statements & KYC details were obtained from HDFC Bank & ICICI Bank. Raids were conducted at the addresses on the bank accounts. Later, after

analysis of the CDR, the team got the mobile number of family members. On the basis of technical surveillance and analysis of Call Details Record and Bank Statements the alleged person was traced out by the team," he added. Raid was conducted and Dey was apprehended, said the DCP. The accused disclosed that he made a plan with his friends Abhishek Yadav, Rahul Ram and Sahabaj Koyal to mint easy money, for which they had to provide bank accounts. "All benefits were shared equally amongst them. He accepted that he provided his bank account kit to his friend Badsah for ATM withdrawal. They duped people by impersonating themselves as customer care executives," said the DCP, adding that further investigation into the case is underway.

DU continuously improving rankings: VC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi University's Vice Chancellor Professor Yogesh Singh on Friday said the varsity is continuously improving its rankings and it has reached the first position in India in the QS World University Rankings (Sustainability), whereas last year it was at fourth rank. Singh also expressed happiness on the achievements of former students of DU in the latest declared results of UPSC and said that this time two candidates in the top 5 are from DU. Addressing a press meet, he also said University of Delhi is a multi-faculty big institution which is providing education to the masses. This difference should be understood before comparing it with smaller sized premier institutions in terms of ranking. The Vice Chancellor said



University of Delhi will soon come in the top 10 in NIRF ranking. On this occasion, while giving information regarding admissions, the Vice Chancellor said registration for Post Graduate (PG) admission in University of Delhi will start from April 25. He informed that the portal will open for registration in post-graduate courses from April

25. Students will be able to register for admission till May 25. After this the second phase of admission will start. The Vice Chancellor said after the completion of CUET (UG) process, UG admissions will be declared by the middle of May. Dean Admissions, Professor Haneeet Gandhi, giving detailed information on admissions for 2024-25, said this year admissions will be

done on a total of 13,500 seats for postgraduate (including NCWEB), 120 seats each for three B.Tech and 60 seats each for BA LLB and BBA LLB courses. He said this time MA Hindu Studies, MA Public Health, MA Chinese Studies, MA Korean Studies and Master in Fine Arts have also been included in PG admissions. Dean Ranking Mukesh Mahlawat, while giving detailed information on DU's QS ranking, said in the QS World University Rankings (Sustainability), DU's position at the international level was 381-400 in 2023, whereas in 2024 it has become 220. In this ranking, DU is now ranked first in India, whereas last year it was at fourth position. In the QS World University Rankings 2023, DU's global rank was 521-530, which has increased to 407 in 2024. DU ranks first in the Central

University category in India. DU has focused on several aspects to improve its ranking in the last two years. The University has provided financial assistance and has sanctioned approximately Rs 70 crore to the University Science Instrumentation Center (USIC) at North Campus and the Central Instrumentation Facility (CIF) at South Campus for the purchase of various high-end research equipment. Singh also expressed happiness on the achievements of former students of DU in the latest declared results of UPSC and said that this time two candidates in the top 5 are from DU. Interestingly, there are a total of two female candidates in the top 5 and both of them have been students of DU, from Miranda House and St. Stephens College. The Vice Chancellor said that the sixth position was also occupied by a student from the DU only.

Your votes safe, EVMS 100 per cent safe: CEC to voters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar on Friday dismissed apprehensions about Electronic Voting Machines (EVMS) and assured people that their vote was safe and secure.

Kumar asserted that the EVMS were 100 per cent safe as a large number of safeguards – technological, administrative and process-oriented – were in place.

“It is a settled issue. It is 100 per cent safe. It has been raised in the honourable court also. We are awaiting judgment, nothing can happen to the machines. Every stage political parties and their candidates are involved. Mock polls are done,” he said to questions on doubts raised on the EVMS.

“There are a large number of safeguards, technological, administrative, and process-oriented. Just enjoy the voting. This is a time to enjoy the voting, not doubt anything,” the CEC said.

“Enjoy your voting, your vote is safe, secure and will be recorded as you vote,” Kumar said.

The first phase of the Lok Sabha elections got underway across 102 constituencies in 21



states and union territories on Friday.

“We are getting reports from the field that even if rains are happening, people are really coming out in large numbers. Women, youth, old age people... everyone is rushing towards the polling stations. It is really a delightful situation to see that people are dancing to the tune of democracy,” Kumar said.

He said the Election Commission has used technology to a great extent to ensure better voter turnout by reaching out to the youth and women voters by mapping parliamentary constituencies where voting has been traditionally less.

“A turn out plan was made

depending on the local context. Lots of celebrities were roped in, a number of organisations have worked with us – petrol pumps, banks, post offices in the outreach program,” Kumar said.

“We are very hopeful that people will come out to vote. It is our appeal, please join in this festival of democracy. Youth, women, transgender, PwD, all geographies... It is your right, your duty, your responsibility, your pride,” the CEC said. Kumar, along with fellow Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and S S Sandhu, was monitoring the progress of the election process from the control room set up at the Election Commission headquarters here.

India ready to take next step towards becoming science powerhouse: Journal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Science journal ‘Nature’ has said India along with being an economic power is also more than ready to take the next step towards becoming a science powerhouse, as it called for a rise in the country’s research and development spending, especially from the private sector.

The prestigious British weekly said in its editorial headlined “How India can become a science powerhouse” cited researchers to highlight that basic research has been neglected by successive governments and that a thriving research system needs much greater autonomy.

“Along with being an economic power, India is also more than ready to take the next step towards becoming a science powerhouse. This is not yet a given, but it can happen,” it said.

“In this editorial, we discuss a third aspect: how to bridge the funding gap. One thing India’s government can do is to boost science spending by encouraging businesses to contribute more, as is the case for other leading economies. If policymakers and industrialists can get this right, an opportunity to put rocket boosters under the country’s impressive scientific achievements is there for the



taking,” the journal said.

The editorial noted that in 2021-22, according to government data, India had the world’s third-largest pharmaceutical industry by volume and was the leading supplier of affordable medicines and generic drugs, some of which were “crucial” to fighting the COVID-19 pandemic worldwide.

Last year, India became the fourth country ever to achieve a soft landing on the Moon and the first to land near the lunar south pole, it said, adding that the country also has the world’s largest constellation of remote-sensing satellites.

The magazine said India is among the world’s most prolific countries in terms of research output after the United States and China.

From 2014 to 2021, the number of universities increased from 760 to 1,113. In the past decade, seven more Indian

Institutes of Technology have been established, raising the total to 23. In the same period, two new Indian Institutes of Science Education and Research were also established. “Now consider that these gains were achieved by a nation that spent just 0.64 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development (R&D) during 2020-21,” it said. Whichever political formation is elected to power in the ongoing polls, it must consider how to increase the country’s R&D spending, as well as what could be achieved with more money, it said.

Nature said around 60 per cent of India’s research spending can be traced to central and state governments and universities, and around 40 per cent to the private sector. In comparable nations, there is often much more private-sector funding.

“In 2022, the private sector contributed, on average, 74 per cent of OECD nations’ R&D spending and 66 per cent of such funding for the 27 members of the European Union. India today has many global companies in construction, information technology, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and more. They could be contributing a lot more to the nation’s research -- both in terms of funding researchers and also infrastructure,” it said.

On voting day Rahul urges voters to open Mohabbat ki Dukaan



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As polling began in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls on Friday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi urged voters to strengthen democracy and open ‘Mohabbat ki Dukaan’ in every corner of the country by defeating hatred.

“Today is the first phase of voting! Remember, each and every vote of yours is going to decide the future of India’s democracy and its generations,” Rahul Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X.

“Go out and strengthen democracy by applying the balm of your vote on the wounds inflicted on the soul of the country in the last 10 years,” he said. Open ‘Mohabbat Ki Dukaan’ in every

corner of the country by defeating hatred, the Congress leader added. Rahul Gandhi also shared a graphic of the key Congress guarantees to the people, including the right to apprenticeship, a legal guarantee of MSP and a nationwide caste census.

The 2024 Lok Sabha polls kicked off Friday with polling being held for the first phase scheduled in 102 seats spread across 21 states and Union territories. Among those in the fray are Union ministers Nitin Gadkari, Sarbananda Sonowal and Bhupendra Yadav, Gaurav Gogoi of the Congress, the DMK’s Kanimozhi and K Annamalai of the BJP. Assembly elections in Arunachal Pradesh (60 seats) and Sikkim (32 seats) are also being held simultaneously.

1992 batch IPS officer Nalin Prabhat appointed NSG chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Nalin Prabhat has been appointed as the chief of National Security Guard (NSG), the country’s counter-terrorism force, according to a Personnel Ministry order.

Prabhat, a 1992 IPS officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, is presently working as Additional Director General in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved his appointment as the Director General, NSG for a period up to August 31, 2028 i.e. The date of his superannuation, the order said.

Popularly known as the “black cats”, the federal contingency force NSG was raised in 1984. Sashstra Seema Bal (SSB) chief Daljit Singh Chawdhary



was holding the additional charge of the NSG.

The ACC has also approved appointment of Sapna Tewari as the Special Director in the Intelligence Bureau (IB). Tewari, a 1992 batch IPS officer of Odisha cadre, is currently working as Additional Director in the IB.

She has been appointed as the Special Director, IB for a tenure of two years from the date of assumption of charge of the post or up to the date of her superannuation i.e. April 30, 2026, the order said.

Civil Services topper Aditya scores 54.27 per cent in UPSC exams

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Civil services examination topper Aditya Srivastava scored 54.27 per cent in the prestigious exam conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), according to the detailed marks of the recommended candidates released by the Commission on Friday. Following closely behind is Animesh Pradhan, who scored 52.69 per cent in the Civil Services Examination 2023.

As many as 1,016 candidates -- 664 men and 352 women -- have qualified in the examination, results of which were announced on Tuesday. The civil services examination is conducted annually by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in three stages -- preliminary, main and personality test (or interview) -- to select officers for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian

Police Service (IPS), among others.

The preliminary examination consists of two objective type (multiple choice) question papers of 400 marks.

This stage is meant to serve as a screening test only, and the marks obtained in it by the candidates, who are declared qualified for admission to the main examination, are not counted for determining their final order of merit.

The merit is determined out of the total of 2,025 marks -- written or main exam is of 1,750 marks and the interview is of 275.

Srivastava (27) got a total of 1,099 marks -- 899 in the written and 200 in the personality test, according to the marks of recommended candidates disclosed by the UPSC.

A trainee Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, he hails from Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. Srivastava completed his BTech in electrical engineering from the Indian



Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur and also possesses an MTech degree. He had electrical engineering as his optional subject in the civil services exam.

Pradhan (24), resident of Talcher town in Odisha’s Angul district, scored 1,067 marks -- 892 in written and 175 in interview -- and secured the second rank.

He had chosen sociology as his optional subject in the examination. Pradhan completed his BTech in computer science from the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Rourkela and is currently an employee of the Indian Oil Corporation’s (IOC) refineries division here.

Third rank holder Donuru Ananya Reddy, who appeared

in the exam as an economically weaker section candidate, got 1,065 marks (52.59 per cent) -- 875 in the main and 190 in the interview -- and fourth rank holder P K Sidharth Ramkumar scored 1,059 marks (52.29 per cent) -- 874 in written and 185 in the interview.

Reddy (22), who has a BA (Hons) in geography from Miranda House, Delhi University, had anthropology as her optional subject. She hails from Mahabubnagar in Telangana.

Ramkumar (27) has a bachelor’s degree in architecture from the College of Architecture in Trivandrum. Ruhani got the fifth rank with a total of 1,049 marks (51.8 per cent) -- 856 in written and 193 in the interview. She completed her BA (Hons) in economics from St Stephens College, Delhi University.

The UPSC has put details of marks achieved by all the 1,016 candidates on its web-

site. The Civil Services (preliminary) Exam 2023 was conducted on May 28. A total of 10,16,850 candidates applied, of which 5,92,141 appeared in the examination. As many as 14,624 candidates qualified for the written (main) examination, which was held in September.

“A total of 2,855 candidates qualified for the personality test of the examination,” the UPSC said. Of these, 1,016 candidates were finally recommended for different government services. The government had reported 1,143 vacancies -- 180 in IAS, 37 in IPS, 200 in IPS, 613 posts in different central Group A services and 113 in Group B services -- to be filled through the civil services examination 2023, the UPSC said.

As many as 240 candidates have been put on a reserved list, it said, adding that the candidature of 355 recommended candidates has been kept provisional.

Congress raps Centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress charged Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday with protecting those responsible for the paper-leak and recruitment “scams” in Madhya Pradesh and asked him why the crime rate against Dalits is “increasing” in the state.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Centre ahead of Modi’s rally in Damoh in Madhya Pradesh. “Today’s questions for PM Modi as he heads to MP: Who is the PM protecting in MP’s paper leak and recruitment scams? Why has the BJP let down Adivasis in Forest Rights Act implementation? MP has the highest crime rate against Dalits. Why is it increasing?” Ramesh asked in a post on X. Elaborating on what he said were details of “jumlas” (rhetoric), the Congress leader said the government might have changed the name of the Employees Selection Board in Madhya Pradesh but nobody has forgotten the notorious Vyapam “scam” that rocked the state 10 years ago.

Since then, allegations of rigging have cropped up in the recruitment of nursing staff, school teachers, constables and agriculture development officers, but all that the BJP government has done is deny and subvert, he alleged.

“Just last year, allegations broke out of a scam in the patwari recruitment examination. Seven of ten toppers in the examination came from the same exam centre in Gwalior which is owned by a BJP MLA.



“A few years earlier, in 2021, three tests -- for agriculture extension officers, senior agriculture officers and nursing staff -- were cancelled when the evidence of foul play became too obvious to ignore,” Ramesh said. He said a probe subsequently found out that the papers for the exams were leaked by a private company that was already implicated in the Vyapam “scam.” Who is the PM protecting in these scams? What is PM Modi doing to ensure that our youth never face such injustice again?” the former Union minister asked. In 2006, the Congress passed the revolutionary Forest Rights Act (FRA) that granted the Adivasi and forest-dwelling communities legal rights to manage their forests, and economically benefit from the forest produce they collect, he pointed out.

“The BJP government, however, has obstructed the implementation of the FRA, depriving millions of Adivasis of its benefits. Only 47 per cent (2,94,877 claims) of the 6,27,513 individual claims filed have been granted, and land titles distributed cover only 10 per cent (5,931 sq. km) of the 57,948 sq. km eligible

for community rights,” Ramesh alleged.

Why have the successive BJP governments in Madhya Pradesh failed to provide the Adivasi communities their rights, he asked. Citing data compiled by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), the Congress leader pointed out that Madhya Pradesh has the highest crime rate against Dalits in the country.

“In 2021 (the latest year for which data is available), the crime rate against SCs was 63.6 as compared to the national average of 25.3. The state also recorded high crime rates against Dalits in 2019 and 2020 -- 46.7 and 60.8 against the national averages of 22.8 and 25 respectively. It is disgusting and shameful that the rate of crimes against Dalits has actually increased year-on-year,” he said.

“The BJP has been in power in MP for more than two decades now. Why is it that Dalits have to increasingly fear for their safety? Does PM Modi feel no shame for the countless atrocities that Dalits have endured under his watch?” Ramesh asked and said the prime minister should break his silence on the issue.

Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar to become new Navy Chief



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi will be the new Navy Chief by the end of this month succeeding incumbent Admiral R Hari Kumar. Admiral Kumar will retire from service on April 30.

Tripathi is currently serving as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff.

“The government has appointed Vice Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, presently serving as Vice Chief of the Naval Staff as the next Chief of the Naval Staff with effect from the afternoon of April 30,” the defence ministry said. Born on May 15, 1964, Vice Admiral Tripathi was commissioned into the executive branch of the Indian Navy on July 1, 1985. A communication and electronic warfare specialist, he has had a long and distinguished service spanning nearly 30 years. Prior to taking over as Vice Chief of Navy, he had served as Flag Officer Commanding-

in-Chief of the Western Naval Command. Tripathi has served in a variety of command, staff and instructional appointments. He has commanded INS Vinash. He has also held various important operational and staff appointments which include Fleet Operations Officer of the Western Fleet, Director of Naval Operations, Principal Director Network Centric Operations and Principal Director of Naval Plans at New Delhi. As Rear Admiral, he served as Flag Officer Commanding of the Eastern Fleet. He also served as Commandant of the prestigious Indian Naval Academy, Ezhimala.

An alumnus of the Sainik School, Rewa and National Defence Academy (NDA), Khadakwasla, Vice Admiral Tripathi has undergone courses at the Naval War College, Goa and Naval War College USA. He is a recipient of the Ati Vishist Seva Medal (AVSM) and Nau Sena Medal (NM).

DRDO hands over indigenous actuators, air brake modules to HAL



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)’s Aeronautics Development Agency (ADA) has handed over the first batch of the indigenous Leading Edge Actuators and Airbrake Control Module to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), marking a significant leap towards self-reliance in aeronautical technologies, defence ministry said here on Friday. Giving details, officials said Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Lucknow has already made preparations for the production of these units for the current 83 LCA Tejas Mk1A order.

The Secondary Flight Control of LCA-Tejas, comprising Leading Edge Slats and Airbrakes, now boasts state-of-the-art Servo-Valve based electro-hydraulic servo actuators and control modules. These high pressure, redundant servo actuators and control module, characterised by astute design, precision manufacturing, assembly, and testing, represent a culmination of ADA’s relentless pursuit of indigenous technological prowess.

Medical experts for reintroduction of Indian Medical Services

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Medical experts representing the public and private sector have batted for reintroduction of Indian Medical Services (IMS), akin to Indian Administrative Service, to boost the healthcare sector infrastructure, and enhance coordination in healthcare policy formulation.

Led by the Think Change Forum (TCF), a think tank, the experts submitted a five-point agenda to the government to roll-out the IMS following discussion at a recently held panel discussion titled ‘Is it time for India to resurrect Indian Medical Services?’

The deliberation highlighted the imperative of strengthening the public healthcare system and emphasised the pivotal role that IMS can play in achieving this objective. The IMS will help bring the sheen and trust back to public health sector which has been lost to private sector; help stop brain drain from public medical services by attracting and retaining the best medical talent; allow for superior healthcare outcomes with better managed facilities and processes, as no longer generalists will be managing the specialists, said the experts. Overall, the healthcare infrastructure is fractured and falls short of providing quality and effective healthcare at scale. These shortcomings primarily stem from inefficient bureaucratic management rather than lack of skills among healthcare

professionals, noted the experts.

Dr Rajesh Gupta, Additional Director, Pulmonology and Critical Care, Fortis Healthcare, Noida, said, “The majority of the Indian public relies on the private sector for healthcare services, with 60 per cent of inpatient admissions (IPDs) and 80 per cent of outpatient visits (OPDs) occurring in private facilities.”

The second point highlighted challenges in staffing the public healthcare system with skilled doctors. Lack of incentives for these highly educated professionals to work under generalist administrators has resulted in brain drain, they noted.

Dr Sharad Kr Agarwal, the immediate past national president of IMA, said, “The implementation of IMS holds the promise of enhancing service quality through induction of skilled doctors and addressing the persistent doctor shortage, especially in rural areas. Crucial to its success is equipping the cadre with ample facilities and resources comparable to those provided to IAS or IPS officers.”

“This will ensure that doctors are incentivized to join IMS, drawn by a clear career trajectory and motivated to serve communities, even in remote areas.” It was also felt that the IMS will be able to enable seamless coordination and cooperation between the central and state health departments, for improved national healthcare policies for the country.

Modi takes dig at Rahul, Akhilesh

PM says film of do shehzade already rejected by people

PTI ■ AMROHA (UP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a veiled dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday, saying the shooting of the film "do shehzade ki jodi" is on but it has already been rejected by people.

"Every time these people seek votes from the people of Uttar Pradesh, they carry a basket of dynasty, corruption and appeasement. They do not leave any chance to attack our faith," Modi said, addressing a rally here.

In a veiled attack on Gandhi and Yadav, he said, "The shooting of the film 'do shehzade ki jodi' (a pair of princes) is going on. But their film has already been rejected by people."

Hitting out at Danish Ali, the Congress candidate from Amroha, Modi alleged that he has objections in saying "Bharat Mata ki jai".

"Will a person, who cannot accept Bharat Mata ki jai, look



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a public meeting for the Lok Sabha elections, at Gajraula in Amroha, on Friday

The prime minister alleged that when he went under the sea to offer prayers in Gujarat's Dwarka, where Lord Krishna had gone from Amroha, "the prince of the Congress said there is nothing to pray under the sea. They are rejecting our faith only for their vote banks".

Hitting out at Akhilesh Yadav as well as Bihar's Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, Modi said, "Those in Bihar, who say they are Yaduvanshi, in Uttar Pradesh, the leader

who takes the benefits of being Yaduvanshi, I want to ask them, how can they sit with a party that insults Lord Krishna? How can you have an agreement with them?"

He criticised the Congress, SP and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) governments in Uttar Pradesh in the past for allegedly ignoring farmers and said those growing sugarcane were given Rs 500 crore annually during the SP's rule, whereas the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government gave Rs 1,500 crore to them.

Blaming vote-bank politics for communal riots, Modi said, "This vote-bank politics burnt western Uttar Pradesh in the fire of riots. The people of Uttar Pradesh can never forget that era of Goonda Raj. People had to migrate and leave their houses behind."

"In several western Uttar Pradesh neighbourhoods, posters with 'makan bikau hai' (house for sale) written on those were put up. But, Yogi (Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath) got rid of criminals for your safety. We must ensure that these forces are not strengthened again in any manner."

The Prime Minister accused the previous governments of cheating the Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) communities in the name of social justice, and said he is working towards achieving the dream of social reformers Jyotiba Phule, B R Ambedkar and Chaudhary Charan Singh.

"The previous governments have only cheated the people of the SC, ST and OBC communities in the name of social justice. Modi is working day and night to achieve the social justice dream of Jyotiba Phule, Ambedkar and (former prime minister) Chaudhary Charan Singh," he said. The prime minister addressed the rally as polling was underway in eight western Uttar Pradesh constituencies in the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls.

Amroha will go to polls in the second phase on April 26. The counting of votes will be taken up on June 4.

The prime minister began his speech with an appeal to people to vote.

"I appeal to everyone to exercise their right to vote given by the Constitution," he said while emphasising that youngsters should especially go out and vote to secure their future and that of the country.



People not excited about polls, claims farmer leader Naresh Tikait

PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR (UP)

Farmer leader Naresh Tikait on Friday expressed skepticism about the BJP's claim of the NDA crossing the 400-mark and claimed "there is no excitement among people" about the polls.

"If they are saying 400, then what is the need for them to contest elections? It is special that they can perceive this in advance. Do they have any astrologer who has predicted that this is going to happen?" said Tikait, national president of the Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) while speaking to PTI Videsh.

Polling in eight Lok Sabha constituencies of western Uttar Pradesh, including Muzaffarnagar, are underway on Friday in the first phase.

"People express their feelings through their votes. However, the voting is slow, and it will be like this till evening. There is no excitement among people, they are disillusioned now. Also, elections are being held in several phases... Elections should be held in a single

Vehicle carrying EVM sinks in Assam river

PTI ■ NORTH LAKHIMPUR (ASSAM)

An SUV carrying an electronic voting machine partially sank into a river after water level rose suddenly washing away a mechanised boat that was ferrying the vehicle in Assam's Lakhimpur constituency on Friday, officials said.

The driver and the polling officer of the vehicle managed to get out before water gushed into the vehicle, an official said. It was on its way to Amarpur area in Sadiya to replace an EVM after a technical glitch was detected in it as polling commenced in the morning, the official said.

A quick response team stationed at Sadiya dispatched the SUV with the EVM, accompanied by the driver and an official.

"As the vehicle was being carried by a mechanised boat across the Deopani river, its water level and current suddenly increased. The boat sank under the force of the water, and the vehicle also partially sank," the official said.

"A State Disaster Response Force team was called in to pull the vehicle out of the water. The EVM, meant for replacement, was damaged in the accident," he added.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform Mr. RAKESH KATYAL S/o C. P. Katyal R/o Flat No. 17, Nehru Nagar, New Delhi, that his presence is required in the Court of Ld. ADJ, Saket Courts Complex, New Delhi bearing Court No. 615, on 22.04.2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the Case No. CS 464/23.

Sanjeev Malik, Advocate
Chamber No 223, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi-110001 Mobile No.- 9999901123

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Mohammad Firoz is in process to purchase the Freehold Residential Plot, Area measuring 24 Sq. Yds., Out of Khadra No. 123, Situated at Sandeep Garden at Village Akbarpur Bahampur Pargana Loni Tehsil & District Ghazipur Uttar Pradesh. (availing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd) from Mr. Sanjay Barman, who acquired the same vide Sale Deed dated 06.06.2022 (Doc. No. 2892) executed by Mr. Sambhu Mishra, Mr. Mahesh Mishra, Mrs. Manisha, Mrs. Durga Bishwas, Mrs. Nimita Das all are the legal heirs of Late Sunil Mishra All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahaxumi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vashi, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client PRERNA SAXENA is in process to purchase the Flat No. 202 (L.L.G), on Second Floor, Front Side, area measuring 36 Sq. Mtrs., With roof rights built on Freehold Residential Plot No. 0156, situated in Residential Colony of Vashali, Ghaziabad, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad, U.P. (availing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Ltd) from Mrs. Jeeta Kaul, Ms. Isha Kaul, Mr. Nihal Kaul, whereas they are the legal heirs of their father Maharaj Krishan Kaul who acquired the same vide sale deed dated 4/5/2012 (Doc. No. 16459) All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahaxumi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vashi, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office- ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Ankur Sharma/ Lata Sharma/ LBMAT00005815262	House No.25, Andrun Teachers Colony Part 2, Wake Mauza Kashpur Manoharpura, Kharsa No.451, 452, 453, 454, 564, 457, 458, 466, 460, 469 And 463, Mathura, Uttar Pradesh- 281001/ April 15, 2024	October 30, 2023 Rs. 1,36,882/-	Mathura/ Delhi NCR

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

Date: April 20, 2024
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SYBLY INDUSTRIES LIMITED

REGD. OFF. : PAWAN PURI, MURADNAGAR, DISTT. GHAZIABAD (U.P.)
CIN: L17111UP198PLC009594
Phone: 01232-261521, Web: sybly.com, Email: sybly@rediffmail.com

STANDALONE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER/YEAR ENDED 31.03.2024 (₹ IN LAKH)

S. No.	Particulars	3 months ended	Year ended	3 months ended
		31.03.2024	31.03.2024	31.03.2023
1.	Total income from operations	3.41	3.41	72.83
2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Exceptional Items and tax)	-64.42	-101.39	-71.08
3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional Items)	-485.78	-473.08	-192.52
4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax and Exceptional Items)	-364.94	-352.24	-132.59
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and other Comprehensive income (after tax))	-364.94	-352.24	-132.59
6.	Paid-up equity share capital (Face value of ₹ 10/-)	915.66	915.66	915.66
7.	Other Equity	-	-830.30	-
8.	Earning Per Share (of ₹ 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)			
(a)	Basic	-3.99	-3.85	-1.45
(b)	Diluted	-3.99	-3.85	-1.45

NOTES :

- The above Audited financial results as reviewed by the Audit Committee were approved by the Board of Directors in its meeting held on 19.04.2024.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly/yearly financial results filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the quarterly/yearly financial results are available on the Stock Exchange website : www.bseindia.com & Company's website : www.sybly.com.

SYBLY INDUSTRIES LIMITED
Sd/-
(Mahesh Chand Mittal)
Managing Director
DIN : 00284866

Place : Muradnagar
Dated : 19.04.2024

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, KUSUM PALIWAL W/O NO.JC734048M & RANK NB SUB SANDEEP KUMAR R/O HOUSE No.746/29, VIKAS NAGAR SONIPAT, HARYANA, PIN-131 001 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM KUSUM TO KUSUM PALIWAL FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

PD(374)C

PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is informed that the cars with the following car numbers which have completed their life Petrol Cars 15 Years Diesel Cars 10 Years. The MCD drive was confiscated by Pine View Technology Pvt Ltd and has not been claimed by anyone till now. All these vehicle owners are informed to come to the company's office and claim the scrap value of the vehicle. Otherwise, all these vehicles will be scrapped in the next three days.

DL1C00883	DL8SAR3140	DL2SF4700
DL9C01133	DL7SAY7351	DL4SBH7098
DL8C15636	UPS3V4426	DL8S74733
DL3SBA5983	DL7SA08693	UP16A4455
DL3SXB421	DL13SC1429	DL4SBC5275
DL9S3241	UP14A74637	DL9SV970
DL7CJ4008	DL2CA9019	DL4SFB196
DL2CAK0187	DL7CK1855	DL7SAB7306
GJ6CB189	DL3SC3353	DL7SAQ4032
DL7CJ3049	HP547949	DL7SAQ9982
DL4SAW2521	DL9SA1919	DL9SK5930
PH03R2171	DL9SK0432	DL6ST0812
DL9SR9921	MA3EVB115	DL4SBK130
DL4SB8636	007305445	UP14A7K706
DL7SAR1486	DL7CK2482	DL4SB8980
TN3157017	DL3CBA2958	DL5SN4435
DL7SAQ8579	HR26A83708	DL3S20320
DL7SAQ5675	RJ271M3801	DL5SW8717
DL7SAK2090	RJ19N1086	DL4SB8980
DL7S4576	DH6KFB1972	DL8SL9130
DL7CJ3501	MH12B9530	DL9SP0987
DL9SAA1799	DL9SO5697	DL3SBE7976
DL9SL6256	DL4SAK2888	DL4SBM0909
DL9SL6539	DL9SK5269	DL5CF3859
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DL9SV4858	DL9SU4480	DL7SX2661
DL7SAK6063	DL9S21032	DL7S11107
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DL6S18907	HR21C2651	DL7SAT8539
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DL13SA9899	HP6F54246	WB34U4261
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DL13C1256	UP14AN7255	DL9X4654
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DL5S23504	DL13SC2798	DL9SU8794
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DL7SBA5695	DL7SR8960	DL4SB8965
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PAPER WITH PASSION

Theatre of the absurd

The ever-falling state of polity touches a new low, trivialising life for political gains

In the realm of politics, where governance and public welfare should reign supreme, a disturbing trend has emerged — the trivialisation of human life for the sake of political benefits. Recent events surrounding Delhi's Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal exemplify this worrying trend, where his health crisis has become a point of one-upmanship and is being used to serve narrow political narratives rather than addressing the genuine concerns of his health. The case took a curious turn when the Enforcement Directorate (ED) claimed that Kejriwal intentionally indulged in a high-sugar diet to fabricate grounds for bail. Kejriwal's colleague Atishi has countered this assertion, alleging a conspiracy to deny the jailed Chief Minister access to essential insulin and home-cooked food, potentially putting his life at risk. Both claims, while patently opposite, underscore a distressing reality — the callous politicisation of a health crisis. In the theatre of politics, where power dynamics often overshadows ethical considerations, the sanctity of human life seems to have been direly neglected. The focus has shifted from genuine concern for an individual's well-being to exploiting their vulnerabilities for partisan gains. Such a narrative not only reflects poorly on the integrity of political discourse but also raises profound questions about the moral compass of those entrusted with governance.



The ED's assertion of Kejriwal deliberately manipulating his health for legal advantage is a damning indictment of the extent to which political opponents are willing to go to discredit their adversaries. It underscores a culture where the personal struggles of individuals are weaponised for political advantage. Conversely, Atishi's allegations of a plot to endanger Kejriwal's life highlight the dangerous consequences of unchecked political rhetoric. Accusations of attempted murder, if unsubstantiated, not only sow seeds of distrust but also trivialise the gravity of such heinous crimes. At its core, the Kejriwal saga underscores a broader crisis within the polity — the prioritisation of political expediency over human dignity. In the relentless pursuit of power and influence, the inherent value of human life is often sacrificed at the altar of partisan interests. This erosion of empathy and decency not only corrodes the fabric of democracy but also threatens the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. Without delving into the merits of the case or passing judgment on who is truthful, Kejriwal, like everyone else, must be given the best treatment at the moment, even if the illness is self-inflicted. To reclaim the integrity of polity, it is imperative for political actors to realign their priorities with the values of compassion, integrity and accountability. The welfare of individuals should never be subjugated to the exigencies of political gamesmanship. Instead, leaders must demonstrate a commitment to upholding the dignity and wellbeing of every citizen, irrespective of their political affiliations. The Kejriwal saga serves as a sobering reminder of the perils of allowing politics to trump humanity.

Atishi's allegations of a plot to endanger Kejriwal's life highlight the dangerous consequences of unchecked political rhetoric. Accusations of attempted murder, if unsubstantiated, not only sow seeds of distrust but also trivialise the gravity of such heinous crimes. At its core, the Kejriwal saga underscores a broader crisis within the polity — the prioritisation of political expediency over human dignity. In the relentless pursuit of power and influence, the inherent value of human life is often sacrificed at the altar of partisan interests. This erosion of empathy and decency not only corrodes the fabric of democracy but also threatens the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. Without delving into the merits of the case or passing judgment on who is truthful, Kejriwal, like everyone else, must be given the best treatment at the moment, even if the illness is self-inflicted. To reclaim the integrity of polity, it is imperative for political actors to realign their priorities with the values of compassion, integrity and accountability. The welfare of individuals should never be subjugated to the exigencies of political gamesmanship. Instead, leaders must demonstrate a commitment to upholding the dignity and wellbeing of every citizen, irrespective of their political affiliations. The Kejriwal saga serves as a sobering reminder of the perils of allowing politics to trump humanity.

PICTALK



School students with their faces and hands painted as part of voter awareness campaign pose for photos, in Jammu PTI

Transformative trends in India's higher education

The surge in EdTech presents opportunities for democratising education but also highlights challenges such as the digital divide and ensuring quality

India's higher education landscape is undergoing a transformative shift. With initiatives like the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, skill development programs by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and the encouragement of 100 per cent FDI in education, the landscape is ripe for innovation and investment. Additionally, UGC's push for setting up international campuses in India and the Ministry of Education's focus on global learning is reshaping our educational framework. The market size of the Indian higher education system was estimated at around \$40 billion in 2023, growing at a CAGR of 15 per cent. With over 1,200 universities, 49,400 colleges and 12,600 stand-alone institutions, India hosts one of the largest higher education ecosystems in the world. Catering to more than 50 million students — a number expected to grow substantially in the next five years — these institutions are crucial in achieving an enhanced Gross Enrollment Ratio and improving the skill set of our future workforce.



Amidst this expansion, the post-pandemic era has seen a significant influx of digitalisation in learning, with universities offering online programs and various platforms providing a broad spectrum of courses online. Considering our current infrastructure and the expected demand, it is essential for the country to further explore online learning and skill development opportunities. Aligning these opportunities with the next 10-year growth plan is crucial for preparing a skilled workforce that enhances graduate employability. However, the selection of courses among students has also seen a paradigm shift. India is moving beyond tra-

ditional domains like engineering, medicine and management. Today, students are increasingly drawn to interdisciplinary programs and new-age courses that promise quicker skill acquisition and certification. There is a significant opportunity for institutions to expand their offerings in these certification/degree courses where students can learn new skills in less duration. The surge in EdTech has been transformative and represents a key area ripe for investment and innovation. By providing everything from career guidance to student counselling digitally, these platforms have democratised access to education, ensuring that students from all regions have better career opportunities. Yet, realising the full potential of these advancements requires overcoming significant challenges. Addressing the digital divide, ensuring equitable access to technology and improving internet connectivity, especially in underserved areas, are critical. Moreover, as the field rapidly diversifies, strengthening quality assurance and adapting accredita-

tion and regulatory frameworks are essential to maintaining standards and credibility. These bodies must adapt to the changing dynamics of higher education to uphold academic integrity and student outcomes. The Ministry of Education's current focus on the internationalization of higher education in India is set to have profound effects, not only on educational practices but also on the broader economy and society. This strategic emphasis will enable transnational education and student/faculty exchanges, thereby building a globally competent workforce and fostering knowledge exchange between nations. As we look ahead, the future of higher education in India is not just about scaling up but also about smart scaling. By embracing these trends and addressing inherent challenges, we can ensure that the sector not only expands but also elevates, providing every student with a world-class education and global opportunities. (The writer is the founder and director of OneStep Global; views are personal)



ARITRA GHOSHAL

Aung San Suu Kyi: Prison or house arrest?



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Concerns over Suu Kyi's whereabouts as the junta stares at defeat

The news website, *The Irrawaddy*, cites "informed sources in Naypyitaw and Yangon" as saying that Aung San Suu Kyi (78), the emblem of the Myanmar's struggle for democracy and Win Mint (72), incarcerated president of the country's democratically-elected Government ousted by the coup on February 1, 2021, remain in prison. This, indeed, is likely to be the case given the high level of credibility that the website enjoys. It would be instructive to read what it has to say in this connection. The ball, so to say, was set rolling late on the afternoon of April 16 when a pro-regime media outlet said that both had been moved to a new location. It was followed by the regime's spokesman, Major-General Zaw Min Tun telling the Burmese services of VOA and the BBC: "Not only Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Win Myint but also some [other] older prisoners were given necessary care since the weather is extremely hot." However, he did not say that Suu Kyi had been moved to a new location. When media outlets pressed him for further information, he did not provide any details. Despite this and the absence of any photographic or other evidence showing their having been moved to house arrest, both local and international and news agencies carried stories saying that it was the case.

That this is not so is further suggested by Aung San Suu Kyi's son, Kim Aris, who told Kay Burley of Sky News during a breakfast interview, "They are saying house arrest. She only has one house and she's not there." Given the utterly unsavoury reputations that the junta and news outlets which act as its mouthpieces enjoy, the confusion may, in all likelihood, have been deliberately created by both acting in tandem. If this, indeed, is the case, what purpose was sought to have been achieved? The most plausible answer would be that it was to show that the junta cared. Why suddenly?

It has been known for some time that Aung San Suu Kyi was very ill in prison and the junta was



not providing her the kind of medical attention she needed. It has also been speculated that the junta could murder her in prison and claim that she had died of old age or other natural causes. Whatever it is, it would serve the generals well to create the impression that it was not their fault if something untoward happened to her. The other reason could be differences within the junta, a section of which wants to do a deal with her to end the civil war they are losing and another would hear nothing of it.

The Sit-Tat (which and not Tatmadaw, is the real name for Myanmar Army), is now facing defeat at a none-to-distant future. It has been suffering one major reverse after another since the opposition Three Brotherhood Alliance (henceforth Alliance) launched its current offensive, codenamed Operation 1027, on October 27, 2023. The latest, the loss of Myawaddy, an important border town, on April 11, 2024, to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and Karen National Army, is clearly the most devastating blow suffered by



THE JUNTA IS REPORTEDLY PREPARING TO LAUNCH A COUNTER OFFENSIVE. WHETHER IT MATERIALISES AND, IF IT DOES, WITH WHAT SUCCESS, REMAINS TO BE SEEN

the junta since the Alliance's current offensive began. A key trading hub close to the eastern end of Myanmar's border with Thailand—the total value of imports and exports passing through it has been valued at \$ 1 billion in 2023—it is also regarded as Myanmar's opening to South-East Asian countries.

The Junta is reportedly preparing to launch a counter offensive. Whether it materialises and, if it does, with what success, remains to be seen. But even if it is successful and the Sit-Tat is able to retain the town after regaining it, the event is unlikely to be a turning point in the civil war which is going overwhelming in favour of the Alliance—comprising the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), active in the Kokang Special Region of northern Shan State, the Taang National Liberation Army (TNLA), also active in the Shan State and the Arakan Army (AA), based in the Rakhine State in the country's western part.

Acting in close cooperation opposition National Unity Government's military arm, the People's Defence Force

(PDF) and other ethnic armies like the KNLA and KLA.

At the time of writing, the AA has brought almost the entire Rakhine State under its control. By early April, it had captured some 170 junta camps and posts, several larger bases, battalion headquarters and training facilities. It seized the important town of Paletwa on January 15, 2024. Kyaukphyu, where China is developing a port and a special economic zone spread over 1,600 hectares, is about to fall. The AA is pressing hard on Sittwe, an important port town, after seizing control of the small towns around it and cutting off access to it through road and waterways. India shifted its staff from its consulate there to Yangon earlier in April, 2024. Initially, one had thought that the Junta's ouster, even though inevitable, would take a long time to come about. It now seems that it would be defenestrated much sooner than one had thought. India must bear this in mind.

(The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BJP'S STRATEGIC MANIFESTO

Madam — Apropos the news article, "A Vision for India's Global Leadership", published on April 19, this is my response. The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) manifesto signals a shift towards a policy-centric approach, departing from traditional electoral strategies. By highlighting achievements and projecting a vision for India's future, it aims to secure votes based on governance rather than populist promises. The absence of significant Pakistan-centric rhetoric suggests a nuanced understanding of foreign policy priorities, focusing instead on global engagement and regional stability. Prime Minister Modi's emphasis on "Neighbour First" and "Act East" policies reflects a proactive stance in regional diplomacy, enhancing India's influence and fostering solidarity among neighbouring nations. The manifesto's commitment to global advocacy for the Global South underscores India's aspirations for a leadership role in international affairs. However, challenges persist, particularly in integrating India into global supply chains and enhancing the rupee's acceptability. Yet, the manifesto's articulation of strategic goals and pledges for collaboration within the Indo-Pacific region portrays a coherent vision for India's role in the evolving geopolitical landscape. Sneha Gupta | Delhi

OTT LANGUAGE DEBATE

Madam — Apropos the news article, "How justified is abusive language on OTT?", published on April 19, this is my response. India's OTT platforms have reshaped entertainment, offering diverse content but facing criticism for excessive profanity. The Supreme Court's recent ruling defends free speech, sparking debates on cultural integrity. Profanity may enhance realism yet risks societal norms, especially impacting youth. While OTT isn't solely responsible, it amplifies existing trends. Education reforms emphasise cultural values, conflicting with profanity's normalisation.

Political quagmire



Apropos the news article, "Corruption and political defections: A telltale sign of democratic decay", published on April 19, this is my response. The article delves into the unsettling reality of political manoeuvring, where corruption probes seem to act as a revolving door for politicians, raising questions about the integrity of the system. It draws a

sharp contrast between the flawed current State of affairs and the ideal governance system envisioned in ancient scriptures like Manusmriti. The Manusmriti's principles, though controversial, present a compelling blueprint for a more righteous governance model, emphasising a party-less system, voter recall rights and alignment with moral principles. The chasm between this ideal and the existing political landscape is vast, highlighting the urgent need for reform. While achieving perfection may be a distant goal, even partial adoption of Manusmriti's principles could yield significant improvements, reducing electoral malpractice, corruption and divisive politics. As the nation awaits potential reforms under the Modi Government, India, with its rich spiritual heritage, can transcend its current challenges and emerge as a global exemplar of moral governance. Ishaan Shukhi | Ludhiana

INSIGHTS ON INDIAN JEWELRY

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Heritage Indian jewellery dazzles the world", published on April 19, this is my response. Dr Alka Raghuvanshi's posthumously published masterpiece, "Rendezvous with Traditional Indian Jewellery," transcends the boundaries of a mere book. It's a heartfelt journey delving into the soul of India's cultural heritage, where artistry intertwines with pro-

found symbolism. The meticulous attention to detail reveals a rich tapestry of craftsmanship, history and significance. The book's thematic chapters unravel the evolution and diversity of Indian jewellery, from the majestic influences of the Mughal era to the intricate designs of South India.

It showcases stunning visuals and explores the deep symbolism ingrained in each piece, reflecting social, religious and cultural narratives. Moreover, it sheds light on the craftsmanship and techniques passed down through generations, preserving the essence of traditional jewellery-making. Regional variations highlight the unique aesthetics across India, celebrating its diverse cultural tapestry. This book is a captivating ode to India's cherished art form, offering insights for enthusiasts, historians and admirers alike, encapsulating the beauty and legacy of Indian jewellery. Lavanya Sharma | Lucknow

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FIRST COLUMN

MIND, THE KEY TO HIDDEN FORTUNE

True wealth lies not in material possessions but in the freedom of mind



RAVI VALLURI

Once upon a time lived a woman. She was struck with an unexpected tragedy as her husband passed away untimely. The lady was now left with only one son and precious jewellery. Since she was hounded by creditors to repay the debts accrued by her husband, she conjured a trick to hide the wealth.

In sheer desperation to keep the jewellery safe from creditors, the lady wrapped the precious wealth in a piece of cloth and hid it under a tree. The mother and son lived in an impoverished State. Her mind was always disturbed by the fact that she did not share this piece of vital information with her only son. As it turned out, she carried this secret to the grave.

Consequently, the son inherited plenty of debt, a barren hut and a cot. The son had to work hard for sustenance and to repay the ever-rising liabilities. He toiled hard to survive and regretted his misfortune. 'Property is not the sacred right. When a rich man becomes poor it is a misfortune, it is not a moral evil. When a poor man becomes destitute, it is a moral evil, teeming with consequences and is injurious to society and morality,' opined Lord Acton. Indeed, the impoverishment of the poor is heart-wrenching.

One day while cutting the branches of a tree, he stumbled upon the jewellery. Dumbfounded and stupefied, the strapping youngster hid the bijouterie in a pit he dug in the hut, petrified that the creditors would appropriate the wealth. He too committed the cardinal mistake of not sharing the secret with his wife and carried it to his grave. The mother and son were not mindful and wakeful enough to be in the Present Moment and remained prisoners of their past and future.



Two Buddhist monks were once discussing a flag flapping in the wind. While one felt it was the wind moving, the other conjectured it was the flag fluttering. The imbroglio could not be resolved and they sought the intervention of a Zen Master. The master impassively said, 'It is the MIND that moves, neither the flag nor the wind.'

Humans need freedom from their past and future to be in the present. And being in the NOW or present is true enlightenment and mindfulness. The past is full of sorrows and regrets while the future brims with anxieties and worries and humans are caged in that mindset, thereby postponing their happiness quotient. To appreciate true happiness and joy, the human mind should not vacillate between the past and the future but remain in the PRESENT.

A young monk was once travelling in pursuit of happiness and truth. During his travels, he encountered a massive river that he could not cross. A short while later, he saw a senior monk on the other side of the river. He hailed him and sought assistance to cross the river to reach the other side. The senior monk pondered and replied, 'You are already on the other side.'

This fact can be appreciated only when the mind is centred. Breathing techniques such as Sudarshan Kriya, Pranayama, Yoga, Meditation and Vipassana all help in dissolving the mind so that it becomes centred. 'True happiness is not possible without freedom. We have to learn the habit of being free. We do not allow our past, the future, our projects, or our fear to get hold of us. We are free. Every step is free. Every step is nourishment. Every step is healing. Every step is joy,' says Thich Nhat Hanh.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Human-elephant conflict: The way out

To ensure the protection of these majestic creatures, it is imperative to revisit and revise legislative frameworks with a focus on ecological sustainability



BKP SINHA



ARVIND JHA

India's rich biodiversity includes a significant population of Asian elephants, which are not only an integral part of the country's wildlife heritage but also hold cultural and religious significance. However, the increasing instances of human-elephant conflict (HEC) have become a pressing concern for both conservationists and those living near elephant habitats.

The root causes of HEC are multifaceted, primarily stemming from habitat loss and fragmentation due to human activities. As India's population expands, so does the need for land for agricultural and developmental activities. This expansion often leads to encroachment into elephant territories, resulting in the destruction or fragmentation of their natural habitats. Consequently, elephants are forced to venture closer to human habitations in search of food and space. Mining activities, in particular, lead to deforestation and habitat degradation, disrupting elephant migratory routes and undermining the scope and health of elephant habitats. Similarly, urbanisation and infrastructure development often intersect with elephant corridors, pushing these gentle giants into unfamiliar and potentially dangerous territories. Climate change is another significant factor in this conflict. Changes in climate patterns can affect the availability and distribution of food and water sources in elephant habitats. Extreme weather events like droughts, floods and high temperatures can force elephants to migrate in search of these resources, often bringing them into conflict with humans. The current State of HEC in India is alarming. Over 500 humans are killed annually in encounters with elephants and more than 100 elephants lose their lives due to human-related activities, including poaching for ivory, poisoning, electrocution and collisions with trains. Train collisions are the second-highest cause of unnatural elephant deaths in the country, following accidental electrocution. Over the past decade, train collisions have claimed the lives of more than 200 elephants.

As mega-herbivores, elephants consume up to 150 kilograms of forage and drink up to 190 litres of water per day. This necessitates a large foraging area, typically spanning 100-1,000 km² for a family herd, to provide a diverse diet of grasses, shrubs and fruits. However, navigating large areas to find sufficient food and water becomes a challenge when these areas overlap with human activities. This often results in crop raiding, property damage, and, in some tragic instances, human casualties. These incidents, unfortunately, lead to retaliatory actions from humans that can be fatal for these majestic creatures, further intensifying their fear and mistrust of humans. Farmers, particularly those with limited resources struggle to cope with crop losses. This hardship breeds resentment towards elephants, undermining conservation efforts and trapping both humans and elephants in a cycle of violence.

Since 2019, there have been over 1500 human fatalities reported due to elephant attacks. In 2023-24 alone, Odisha reported 149 elephant deaths due to HEC. Mineral-rich districts like Dhenkanal, Angul, Keonjhar and Sundargarh have been hit the hardest, with Dhenkanal alone witnessing 130 elephants and 227 human deaths over the last decade.

In August 2023, three elephants were electrocuted at the Rani Tea Estate near Guwahati due to low-hanging high-voltage



WESTERN MAHARASHTRA, A REGION NOT TRADITIONALLY KNOWN FOR ELEPHANT HABITATION, SAW A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN 2002 WHEN ELEPHANTS MIGRATED FROM KARNATAKA. THIS MOVEMENT WAS LARGELY ATTRIBUTED TO THEIR DISPLACEMENT FROM THE DANDELI WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, A PLACE THEY HAD INHABITED COMFORTABLY UNTIL 1990

wires. This was not an isolated incident; back in October 2021, sagging power lines near the Dihing-Patkai National Park claimed the lives of another three elephants. The situation worsened in October 2022, when within a single week, 11 elephants across Assam lost their lives to human-related hazards including electrocution, crop poisoning and train collisions.

Western Maharashtra, a region not traditionally known for elephant habitation, saw a significant change in 2002 when elephants migrated from Karnataka. This movement was largely attributed to their displacement from the Dandeli Wildlife Sanctuary, a place they had inhabited comfortably until 1990. The construction of the Kali hydro-electric project is believed to have been the catalyst for their relocation to the districts of Kolhapur and Sindhudurg in Maharashtra, leading to notable incidents of crop raiding. A similar pattern emerged in 2022 when a herd of 22 elephants trekked from Chhattisgarh to Maharashtra, settling in the lush forests along the Wain-Ganga, Pranrita and Dina river basins. This migration has been linked to increased human encroachment, the construction of two canals in Odisha and mining disturbances in their traditional corridors.

The Wayanad region, a vital watershed for Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, is currently facing a multitude of environmental challenges such as deforestation, irresponsible tourism and unscientific development. Such activities are posing a significant threat to the ecological balance of the region, endangering the lives of both humans and wildlife. Wayanad plays a critical role in maintaining regional biodiversity. However, ongoing habitat degradation in this region could potentially intensify the water crisis in the Kaveri basin and escalate the HEC, which has tragically led to 41 fatalities already. Similarly, in the northeastern States of Assam and West Bengal, expanding tea plantations and human settlements have encroached on elephants' traditional grounds, leading to frequent HEC incidents. Addressing HEC requires a multi-

pronged approach that balances the needs of wildlife conservation with the socio-economic realities of human populations living near elephant habitats. This includes securing and restoring elephant corridors to ensure safe passage for elephants between different habitats, thereby reducing the likelihood of them entering human-dominated landscapes. Recognising this need, the Indian Government has launched an ambitious initiative known as Project Elephant. This program focuses on enhancing elephant habitats by creating a network of reserves, corridors and protected areas. To address the common issue of crop raiding in human-elephant interactions, the project employs innovative technologies such as early warning systems and elephant-proof barriers. It also implements various strategies like durable and solar-powered electric fences and biological deterrents including bio-fencing with cacti, beehive fences and chilli smoke to deter elephants.

Enhancing the natural food supply within forests is another essential strategy for preventing elephants from entering human territories. This involves improving water conservation, regenerating forests by replanting and nurturing native trees and plants, implementing fire protection and removing invasive species. Programs focused on ecotourism and livelihood diversification not only engage local communities in conservation but also provide them with sustainable economic alternatives. Success stories from the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and the Kaziranga-Karbi Anglong landscape underscore the effectiveness of community-led conservation endeavours, strategic land-use planning, trans-border collaboration and habitat restoration in diminishing conflict incidents. Kerala has also taken a bold initiative to relocate people from forest regions and reforest agricultural lands, despite the central Government's refusal to fund this Rs. 620 crore project. The State's declaration of HEC as a State-specific disaster and the involvement of the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority in

conflict management, are significant steps towards addressing this complex issue.

Statutory support is fundamental in the conservation efforts addressing the HEC. Elephants, listed as endangered on the IUCN Red List, are protected under the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

Recent amendments to the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 have raised concerns regarding their impact on elephant reserves and corridors, particularly within the 100 km strip of India's boundary where the majority of these reserves and corridors are located. These changes could potentially worsen the fragmentation and degradation of these vital habitats, thereby intensifying the HEC. The Forest Rights Act of 2006, while well-intentioned in empowering forest-dwelling communities, has also had unintended consequences. Its implementation has sometimes resulted in further encroachments and habitat fragmentation, which can force elephants to venture into new areas in search of refuge and resources, increasing the likelihood and severity of conflicts. Post-project monitoring, particularly in the mining industry, is often insufficient, leading to a neglect of wildlife protection measures that were stipulated during the project's approval. This oversight can result in significant harm to elephant populations and their habitats, undermining conservation efforts.

As we move forward, let us remember that our fates are intertwined with those of the elephants and all wildlife. Their survival is our survival. Their well-being reflects the health of our planet and their continued existence enriches our world in ways that cannot be quantified. It's high time we recognise our role and act responsibly, ensuring a future where humans and wildlife coexist harmoniously, each playing their part in maintaining the balance of our shared ecosystem.

(The writers are former principal chief conservator of Forests, UP and Maharashtra; views are personal)

Rahul Gandhi holds on to Wayanad despite speculation

The decision comes as a strategic move, influenced by a variety of factors, including local dynamics and broader political alliances in Kerala

Even as the Indian National Congress was burning midnight oil about the Lok Sabha constituency from where Rahul Gandhi would contest this time, The Pioneer has reported that the scion of the Nehru-Gandhi clan would not leave Wayanad from where he was elected with a mammoth majority of four lakh votes in the 2019 edition of the General Election. The report was prepared after speaking to a cross-section of the electorate in the Wayanad constituency who were unanimous in their opinion that Rahul Gandhi should contest from Wayanad itself.



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

made it known that Rahul should register a much bigger majority than that of the 2019 poll because the opponent happened to be Annie Raja of the CPI and K Surendran of the BJP. Annie, the spouse of D Raja, CPI's national general secretary, had rubbed Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan in the wrong way and the CPI(M) cadres consider it as a cardinal sin.

Raja too had publicly questioned the capability of Vijayan and this made the CPI(M) activists furious. Had the Congress or BJP leaders criticized Vijayan, they would not have bothered but the CPI had crossed the Lakshman Rekha (it could be Stalinist Rekha since the comrades do not accept Ramayana). The CPI(M) comrades would certainly teach Annie Raja a lesson or two in the art of politics. The truth is that the CPI(M) leaders wanted Rahul Gandhi to contest from Wayanad so that the CPI would lose one seat for sure.

The decision to field Surendran, the Kerala State president of the BJP, was made much later. Surendran himself knows that he would

lose by a big margin but he has to kowtow the party line. The information coming out of the BJP office is that he may be given a gubernatorial position even if he loses the security deposit. There are no suitable candidates in Kerala BJP to challenge the supremacy of Rahul Gandhi and the Congress. The question being asked by Wayanad voters is that how many people remember the names of the 2019 challengers to Rahul Gandhi.

What is interesting is that the animosity between the CPI(M) and Congress has come down drastically with Gandhi filing the nomination from Wayanad. Though the Congress leaders lambast the CPI(M), it is just a façade to convince the hardcore mem-

bers of these parties that there is no alliance between them. But what the people of the State see in TV channels and newspapers is the video images and pictures of Sitaram Yechury and D Raja hugging and kissing Rahul Gandhi while in Tripura former CPI(M) Chief Minister Manik Sarkar openly campaigning for the Congress party's candidates.

Kerala is the only State where they act as if they are rivals and enemies. By the next election, one can see the Congress and the CPI(M) fighting it together in Kerala against the BJP-led front (provided the Hindutva party leadership throws out all the rotten eggs from its basket). There is no difference between the Congress and

the CPI(M) as of date.

Political pundits have been asking both parties to officially legalize the ties so that the entire secular parties could be arrayed under the flag of the Congress across the country against the "communal and fascist" forces. The secular parties include the Muslim League! In Marxist parlance, they say that whoever aligns with the CPI(M) is secular while the BJP is "communal and fascist". The CPI(M) does not have any issues in accepting the former NDA constituents as allies once they call off the marriage of convenience with the BJP. Telugu Desam of Andhra Pradesh, BJD of Orissa, BSP and JD(U) are some of the major political outfits whose secularist cre-

dentials depend on their ties with the BJP.

The press meeting addressed by A K Antony, the Bheeshma Pitamah of the Congress on 9 April 2024 at Thiruvananthapuram was an indicator of how political marriages take place in Kerala. While Antony was cursing his son Anil Antony who is contesting from Pathanamthitta as a BJP candidate and asking the electorate to ensure the defeat of his son, he was waxing eloquence on Anto Antony, the Congress candidate who is pitted against Anil. The former defence minister lambasted the BJP as anti-nationalists, communalists and dictators. But what stood out was his silence on the CPI(M) candi-

dates. Antony's ties with the CPI(M) are infamous as he had sailed with the Marxists for almost two years during 1980-1983.

The CPI(M) and the Congress-led by Antony fought the 1980 general election together and ruled Kerala for almost two years. The Congress faction was pushed out of the LDF by the CPI(M) which demolished the offices of the Congress across the State with the police looking the other way. It is not without any reason political pundits say that politics make strange persons into bedfellows. Do we need more proof than A K Antony?

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

Envoy says US determined to monitor North Korean nukes

AP ■ SEOUL

The United States and its allies are discussing options "both inside and outside the UN system" to create a new mechanism for monitoring North Korea over its nuclear weapons programme, the American ambassador to the United Nations said on Wednesday.

Russia last month vetoed a UN resolution in a move that effectively abolished monitoring by UN experts of Security Council sanctions against North Korea, which prompted Western accusations that Moscow was acting to shield its arms purchases from North Korea to fuel its war in Ukraine.

"I look forward to engaging with both the Republic of Korea and Japan, but like-minded (countries) as well, on trying to develop options both inside the UN as well as outside the UN. The point here is that we cannot allow the work that the panel of experts were doing to lapse," US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told a news conference in Seoul, using the formal name for South Korea.

Thomas-Greenfield didn't provide specific details about US discussions with allies and other partners, including whether an alternative monitoring regime would more likely be established through the UN General Assembly or with an independent entity outside of the UN.

Thomas-Greenfield met with South Korean Foreign Minister Cho Tae-yul on Monday and they discussed unspecified "next steps to ensure a continuation of independent and accurate reporting" of North Korea's illicit weapons development activities, according to her office.

Thomas-Greenfield said it was clear that Russia and China, which abstained from voting on the UN resolution vetoed by Moscow, will continue to try to block international efforts to maintain monitoring of UN sanctions against North Korea. She criticised Russia for violating those sanctions with its alleged arms purchases from North Korea, and China for protecting the North from being held accountable.

Moscow and Beijing have thwarted US-led efforts to tighten UN sanctions on North Korea over its ramped-up ballistic missile testing since 2022, underscoring a divide between permanent Security Council members that deepened over Russia's war on Ukraine.

"I don't expect that they will cooperate or agree with any efforts that we make to find another path, but that is not going to stop us from finding that path moving forward," Thomas-Greenfield said. Thomas-Greenfield also briefly addressed questions about ten-



sions in the Middle East. When asked about the Palestinian Authority's request to have full UN membership, she said a UN resolution in support of that request would not contribute to finding a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"President Biden has said categorically that we support a two-state solution for addressing the situation in the Middle East, where Palestinians will have a state of their own and we are working on the ground to get to that place as quickly as possible," she said.

"We do not see that doing a resolution in the Security Council will necessarily get us to a place where we can find a... two-state solution moving forward," she added. Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are at their highest point in years, as North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has accelerated his weapons demonstrations and issued provocative threats of nuclear conflict

against rivals. The United States, South Korea and Japan have responded by expanding their combined military exercises and sharpening their nuclear deterrence strategies built around strategic US assets.

In a telephone conversation on Wednesday, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida agreed to further strengthen three-way cooperation with Washington to counter North Korean threats and other regional challenges amid "deepening uncertainties in the international situation", Yoon's office said.

The Security Council imposed sanctions after North Korea's first nuclear test explosion in 2006 and tightened them over the years in a total of 10 resolutions seeking — so far unsuccessfully — to cut funds and curb its nuclear and missile programmes. The last sanctions resolution was adopted by the council in December 2017.



The Security Council established a committee to monitor sanctions, and the mandate for its panel of experts to investigate violations had been renewed for 14 years until last month.

Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told the Security Council before last month's vote that Western nations are trying to "strangle" North Korea and that sanctions are losing their "relevance" in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the North.

In its most recent report circulated last month, the panel of experts said it is investigating 58 suspected North Korean cyberattacks between 2017 and 2023 valued at approximately USD 3 billion, with the money reportedly being used to help fund its weapons development.

Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba added: "Children must not be killed in airstrikes in modern Europe." Russia's air force is vastly more powerful than Ukraine's, but sophisticated missile systems provided by Kyiv's Western partners are a major threat to Russian aviation as the Kremlin's forces slowly push forward along the around 1,000-kilometre front line in what has become a grinding war of attrition.

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy repeated Kyiv officials' almost daily appeals for more Western air defense systems, again drawing a parallel with how Israel blunted a recent Iranian attack.

Missile and drone attacks can be thwarted, he wrote on social platform X: "This has been demonstrated in the skies over the Middle East, and it should also work in Europe."

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine's air force claimed Friday it shot down a Russian strategic bomber, but Moscow officials said the plane crashed in a sparsely populated area due to a malfunction after a combat mission. Neither claim could be independently verified.

Previous Ukrainian claims of shooting down Russian warplanes during their more than two-year war have met with silence or denials from Moscow.

Meanwhile, Russian missiles struck cities in the central Dnipro region of Ukraine, killing eight people, including a 14-year-old girl and 8-year-old boy, and injuring 28, local officials said.

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EU official von der Leyen visits Finland-Russia border to assess security situation

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

The head of the European Union's executive branch said on Friday that Finland's decision to close its border crossings with Russia over a surge in migrants was a security matter for the whole 27-member bloc to consider.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen made the remarks during a trip to the frontier, visiting a part of the border located in the Arctic. "We all know how (Russian President Vladimir) Putin and his allies instrumentalize migrants to test our defenses and to try to destabilize us," von der Leyen said.

"Now Putin is focusing on Finland, and this is no doubt in response to your firm support of Ukraine and your accession to NATO." On April 4, Finland decided to extend the closure of its border crossing points with Russia "until further notice" because of what the government says is a high risk of organized migration being orchestrated by Moscow.

Finland shares a 1,340-kilometre (832-mile) land border with Russia, running mostly through thick forests in the south, and to the rugged landscape in the Arctic north. "This is not just about the security of Finland, but it is about the security of the European Union. We are in this together," von der Leyen said



after visiting the border in Lappeenranta with Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo. "We should be more Finnish when it comes to security," von der Leyen and Orpo flew in a Finnish helicopter over the landscape of forests and towns on the border. In a statement issued after the visit, Orpo said that "the spring's warmer weather increases the risk of Russia helping people illegally try to get to Finland via the land border... outside the border crossing points."

Most of the migrants hail from the Middle East and Africa. The vast majority of them have sought asylum in Finland, a member of the EU and NATO with a population of 5.6 million. Finland joined NATO in April 2023, ending decades of neutrality after the country's defeat by the Soviet Union in World War II. In March, Sweden also became a member of the trans-Atlantic alliance. The move dealt a major blow to Putin, with a historic realignment of Europe's post-Cold War security landscape triggered by Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

More people evacuated after dramatic eruption of Indonesian volcano

AP ■ MANADO

More people living near an erupting volcano on Indonesia's Sulawesi Island were evacuated on Friday due to the dangers of spreading ash, falling rocks, hot volcanic clouds and the possibility of a tsunami. An international airport in Manado city, which is located less than 100 kilometers (62 miles) from the erupting Mount Ruang, is still temporarily closed as volcanic ash was spewed into the air.

Satellite imagery from the Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency showed that the ash has spread to the west, northwest, northeast and southeast, covering Manado and North Minahasa, according to a statement from Indonesia's Transportation Ministry.

"We are still monitoring developments in the eruption of Mount Ruang and coordinating with relevant stakeholders... to anticipate the necessary actions to ensure flight safety, security and comfort," said Ambar Suryoko, head of the regional airport authority.

More than 11,000 people were told to leave their homes and at least 1,000 have done so. A joint team from the local authorities is still combing the villages surrounding the volcano and evacuating the residents to safer areas by boat.

Officials worry that part of the volcano could collapse into the sea and cause a tsunami, as happened in an eruption there in 1871 eruption. Houses, roads and other buildings in the affected areas were covered by gray volcanic ash. Many house roofs were also broken by the materials spewed from the eruption.

Mount Ruang saw at least five large eruptions Wednesday, causing the Centre for Volcanology and Geological Disaster Mitigation to issue its highest level of alert. People were ordered to stay at least 6 kilometers (3.7 miles) from the 725-metre (2,378-foot) mountain. The observation showed on Tuesday.

"China is the fork in the road. Why? Because China has to define growth strategies for the future. China has the benefit of a particular set of policies over the last decades, export-oriented growth, but the time has come to look at domestic sources for growth, opening up more opportunities for the market to lift up these prospects," Georgieva said.

China's economy grew at 5.3 per cent in the first quarter, making a stronger-than-expected start to the year even as the downturn of its property market continued while the domestic demand remained subdued. The GDP grew 5.3 per cent year on year to 29.63 trillion yuan (about USD 4.17 trillion) in the first three months of 2024, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed on Tuesday.

IMF MD says China has to define growth strategies for the future

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Observing that China has the benefit of a particular set of policies over the last decades for its export-oriented growth, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has said that the time has come for Beijing to look at domestic sources for growth, opening up more opportunities for the market.

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The IMF sees three important opportunities for China, she said. Number one, to shift the economy more towards domestic consumption. It is actually in line with what China is aspiring to, the dual circulation economy. It would take giving consumers more confidence and offering them more services, and more things to buy.

"We know that the healthcare services in China can expand quite significantly. We know that getting the social safety nets to work more effectively would give people an opportunity to save a bit less, to spend a bit more," she said.

"Secondly, we see the reforms in China that have served the country well continuing to be needed, reforms of state-owned enterprises opening up for a more competitive environment. In the years ahead, that can help China grow more," Georgieva said. Last but not least, there are some problems right now, and how they are solved will have implications for China's growth, she observed.

"The most obvious example is the property sector. People in China rely on their homeownership as a way of saving. When prices there—as savings go down, when prices of real estate go down, that affects consumer confidence. So clearing up the problems in the sector more resolutely would certainly help China," she said.

"We see China making some important decisions around greening their growth pattern. Again, the more China does for lifting up domestic consumption, the better," the IMF Managing Director said. At a separate news conference, Krishna Srinivasan, Director of IMF Asia and Pacific Department, told reporters that on the macroeconomic aspects, China's economy is experiencing weak domestic demand. This emanates from two factors: the continued weakness in the real estate sector and the legacies of the pandemic.

and deflation risks coming down," he said.

China provides wide-ranging support to priority sectors. This includes preferential access to credit research funds and incentives for certain firms, particularly in the areas of strategic manufacturing and science and technology. "In terms of what China can do, on the first issue of misallocation of resources, we have talked about the fact that it is important to address SOE reform quite urgently, scaling back of industrial policies, which provide implicit or explicit guarantees for SOEs. So in other words, try to make it have to ensure competitive neutrality between SOEs and the private sector so that there's no misallocation of resources doesn't happen," Srinivasan said.

"That's one thing. And again, we also said that SOE reforms, some SOEs are clearly unprofitable. And the more support you provide, you keep them in business for longer than they should be. So that's something which we've called for in terms of SOE reforms. And so those are the policies which we're advocating for China both to address, to address the issue of what you talked about as over-production," he added.

child, were killed in the attack. The killers fled from the scene before police from Drabon Police Station rushed to the area. Chief Minister of the province Ali Amin Gandapur strongly condemned the attack and directed the police to arrest the attackers.

On Wednesday, Pakistani security forces killed seven terrorists trying to infiltrate the country's border with Afghanistan in the same province. There has been an uptick in terror incidents across Pakistan, especially in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province over the last two years since the Taliban-led dispensation took over the control of Afghanistan. Pakistan has consistently asked the Taliban-led interim Afghan government to ensure effective border management on their side of the border and deny the use of Afghan soil by terrorists for perpetrating acts of terrorism against Pakistan.

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Teenager charged with terror in stabbings of bishop and priest at Sydney church

Sydney (AP): A 16-year-old boy accused of stabbing two Christian clerics during a Sydney church service has been charged by police with terrorism offenses.

Authorities said the stabbing was declared a terrorist act because of the teenager's suspected religious motivation and that the boy travelled up to 90 minutes from his home to the Christ the Good Shepherd Church in Sydney's western suburbs.

The teen spoke in Arabic about the Prophet Muhammad being insulted after he stabbed Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel and the Rev. Isaac Royel during Monday night's Assyrian Orthodox service. He was later overpowered by parishioners, sustaining severe hand injuries. "Yesterday investigators attended a medical facility to interview the alleged offender where he was charged with committing a terrorist act," said Federal Police Commissioner Reece Kershaw at a press conference on Friday in Sydney.

The offense carries a maximum penalty of imprisonment for life. The matter was heard at a Sydney children's court on Friday. The juvenile, who is not being named, did not appear via video link from his hospital bed and did not apply for bail at the brief hearing.

The teen has a history of knife-related offenses and had seen three psychologists and a school counsellor, and had an appointment to see a psychiatrist, his lawyer said during Friday's court hearing. The boy's family had previously said the 16-year-old might have "anger management and behavioral issues" and a "short fuse," but had shown no signs of being radicalised. The 16-year-old's lawyer, Greg Scragg, said the boy had a "long history of behaviour" consistent with a mental illness or intellectual disability.

The magistrate made a recommendation for the boy to have a mental health assessment while in custody. He will enter remand custody at a children's detention centre once released from the hospital, until his next court hearing on June 14.

A crowd of up to 600 people converged on the church after the attack, some demanding that police hand over the boy. Hours of rioting led to 51 police officers being injured. Sydney mosques also received firebomb threats.

The bishop released an audio statement on Thursday saying that he was "doing fine, recovering very quickly" and that he forgave his attacker. He also used his statement to call for calm after the attack, which was Australia's second high-profile knife attack in a week, after a man stabbed six people to death at a busy Sydney shopping centre on Saturday before he was fatally shot.

Regarding the church attack, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said, "Clearly this was a terrorism event", and it had been disappointing to see the riots that followed.

US ambassador to UN visits Nagasaki A-bomb museum

AP ■ TOKYO

The American envoy to the United Nations called Friday for countries armed with atomic weapons to pursue nuclear disarmament as she visited the atomic bomb museum in Nagasaki, Japan.

Linda Thomas-Greenfield, who became the first US cabinet member to visit Nagasaki, stressed the importance of dialogue and diplomacy amid a growing nuclear threat in the region. "We must continue to work together to create an environment for nuclear disarmament. We must continue to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in every corner of the world," she said after a tour of the atomic bomb museum.



US Ambassador to United Nations Linda Thomas-Greenfield, left, and Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, right, shake hands during a meeting on Friday

weapons," she added, standing in front of colourful hanging origami cranes, a symbol of peace. The United States dropped the world's first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, destroying the city and killing 140,000 people. A second attack three days later on Nagasaki killed 70,000 more people. Japan surrendered on August 15, ending World War II and its near-

ly half-century of aggression in Asia. Nagasaki Gov. Kengo Oishi said in a statement that he believed Thomas-Greenfield's visit and her first-person experience at the museum "will be a strong message in promoting momentum of nuclear disarmament for the international society at a time the world faces a severe environment surrounding atomic weapons."

Five Japanese escape unhurt in Karachi suicide bombing

PTI ■ KARACHI/PESHAWAR

Five Japanese nationals had a lucky escape when their vehicle was targeted by militants in a suicide attack here in Pakistan's Sindh province on Friday, police said.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) East Azfar Mahesar said the terrorists on a motorbike attempted to hit the van of the Japanese nationals near Murtaza Chorangi in Landhi. "All five Japanese remained safe. However, the private security guard with them was injured," he said. "The Japanese nationals were on the way to the Export Processing Zone from their residence in Zamzama, Clifton," he said. Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) DIG Asif Ajiz Shaikh told Dawn News that the Japanese nationals were travelling in a van along with two security guards when two terrorists tried to hit the van. The

security guards killed one terrorist while another blew himself up in an attempt to get close to the van, the official said.

"All five Japanese nationals are safe," DIG Shaikh said. "No one has claimed responsibility so far," the DIG said, adding that the vehicle carrying the Japanese nationals was bullet-proof. Meanwhile, with the death of two more persons, the toll in Thursday's ambush on a government vehicle in Pakistan's restive Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province rose to seven, police said on Friday. The deceased include five officials and two passer-bys, including a four-year-old girl and a man. The officials from Customs Intelligence were on routine duty on Quetta Road in Dera Ismail Khan district in the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province when unknown gunmen opened fire at their vehicle, police said. On Thursday, police said five people, including a girl

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
MARINE DEPARTMENT
No.-MD/ACCTS/W/R-18/2023-415 Date: 16.04.2024
e-Tender/Call Notice (e-TCN) No. MD/ACCTS/W/R-18/2023/161 dtd.07/02/2024
Name of the Work: Hiring of 01 No. 60 ton Bollard pull tug along with manning crew for Marine Operation at SPMS and inside Harbour at Paradip for a period of 07 (seven) years. Estimated cost put to tender: Rs. 86,35,39,812/- With reference to above e-tender, revised tender document has been published in the e-procurement website with extension. Last date & time of submission of bids through on-line bidding is 17.00 Hours on dt. 07/05/2024. Technical Bids shall be opened at 16.00 hours on dt. 08/05/2024. For details, please log on to the Website: https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app. Sd/- Deputy Conservator, Paradip Port Authority PPA/PR-01/2024-2025 dtd.16.04.2024

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Engagement of manpower on contract:

VC No.	Post	No. of Vacancies
	Written test for the posts of Assistant Manager (Mechanical/Metallurgy), Assistant Manager (Electrical/Electronics), Assistant Manager (Civil) and Assistant Manager (IT/CS) advertised vide VC No 132/24-135/24 will be conducted on 05-05-2024. Last date for submission of application has been extended to 29-04-2024.	
	Written test will be conducted at Guwahati, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Gurugram, Hyderabad on 05-05-2024.	



RISHABH PANT SET FOR EMOTIONAL HOMECOMING

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

An emotional homecoming awaits Rishabh Pant when he leads Delhi Capitals out at the Arun Jaitley Stadium here, hoping to halt the marauding run of Pat Cummins' Sunrisers Hyderabad on Saturday and continue the resurgence which has come to define his life both on and off the field. The last time Pant was seen at the refurbished stadium, he needed crutches to walk but that now seems a distant memory given how remarkably well he has managed to come back both as a wicketkeeper and batter after enduring a life-threatening car accident in 2022. Capitals have had a mixed season so far, but a couple of impressive wins against Lucknow Super Giants and Gujarat Titans have put them back in the mix. In all, they have three wins and four defeats in seven outings so far. Placed fourth in the IPL points table, Sunrisers Hyderabad have set a different template altogether with two of the highest-ever totals of 277/3

and 287/3, which will require a lot of heart and skill to counter. Hence, 'Captain Pant' will have to use his resources with extreme caution and guile on a track which will have good bounce and carry for a change. Travis Head (235 runs) — IPL's foreign flavour of the season — will be keen to build on his 39-ball century and his partner Abhishek Sharma (211 runs) is no pushover either. Both have a penchant for taking the aerial route during powerplay. Head and Abhishek's intimidating strike rates of 199 and 197 respectively will pose a serious challenge for the pace trio of Ishant Sharma, Khaleel Ahmed and Mukesh Kumar. Adding to the threat is Heinrich Klaassen, who is also striking at 199, who is one of the best finishers in international cricket with propensity to hit balls out of the stadium, which gives SRH's batting a scary look. But Kuldeep Yadav's (economy of 6.06) left-arm wrist spin could well prove to be a game-changer and in Tristan Stubbs, Pant has got an ideal third spin option alongside Axar Patel (6.75). Pant, who is himself



getting back to the top of his game, wouldn't mind if he can win the toss and opt to bat. But David Warner's knuckle injury is a cause for concern for Pant and head coach Ricky Ponting although Jake Fraser-McGurk has impressed one and all in his first two matches. While SRH's batting has been top-notch on beltlers, their bowlers have suffered a lot on those tracks with only skipper Cummins (7.87) having an economy rate of less than eight runs per over, which is considered good in T20. However, the seasoned duo of Jaydev Unadkat (11.35) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (10.45), have both been average while the tweakers — wrist spinner Mayank Markande (11.23) and left-arm spinner Shahbaz Ahmed (ER 12.44) — have been sent on a leather hunt. The best option for Pant would be to open the batting and go for the jugular against SRH, putting a scoreboard pressure on the rampaging Orange Army. In case Capitals have to chase, the idea would be to keep SRH down to 210-220 which would be chaseable against an attack

which may not be able to hold its own on a good batting track.

TEAMS (FROM):

Delhi Capitals: Rishabh Pant (c&wk), David Warner, Abhishek Porel, Ricky Bhui, Yash Dhull, Shai Hope, Prithvi Shaw, Tristan Stubbs, Kumar Kushagra (wk), Swastik Chikara, Ishant Sharma, Jhye Richardson, Rasikh Dar Salam, Vicky Ostwal, Anrich Nortje, Mukesh Kumar, Kuldeep Yadav, Praveen Dube, Khaleel Ahmed, Sumit Kumar, Axar Patel, Mitchell Marsh, Lalit Yadav, Jake Fraser-McGurk.
Sunrisers Hyderabad: Pat Cummins (c), Abdul Samad, Abhishek Sharma, Aiden Markram, Marco Jansen, Rahul Tripathi, Washington Sundar, Glenn Phillips, Sanvir Singh, Heinrich Klaassen (wk), Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Mayank Agarwal, T. Natarajan, Anmolpreet Singh, Mayank Markande, Upendra Singh Yadav (wk), Umran Malik, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Shahbaz Ahmed, Travis Head, Jaydev Unadkat, Akash Singh, Jhathavedh Subramanyan



It was my dream to play sweep shot against Bumrah: Ashutosh

PTI ■ MULLANPUR (PUNJAB)

Punjab Kings' batting sensation Ashutosh Sharma said he lived a "dream" when he swept "world's best fast bowler" Jasprit Bumrah during his team's IPL clash against Mumbai Indians here. The 25-year-old Ashutosh put the Bumrah-led Mumbai Indians' bowling to sword here on Thursday when he hammered seven sixes and two fours to make 61 off a mere 28 balls, a knock which brought PBKS back from the brink after an early collapse. PBKS were 17/4 inside the powerplay but courtesy the stunning fightback from Ashutosh and Shashank Singh (41), they were able to get close to MI's 193-run target before losing by nine runs. It was in the 13th over of Punjab's chase when Ashutosh got down low on his front to convert an attempted yorker from Bumrah into a full toss and smack it for a six over backward square leg. "It was my dream to hit a sweep shot against Bumrah. I was practising for that shot but it came against the best bowler in the world - it is a part of the game," Ashutosh told the media here after the match. Ashutosh said he was confident of taking Punjab over the line. "I had belief in myself that I would be able to win the game



for the team," he said. Ashutosh credited former India player and coach Sanjay Bangar, head of cricket development at PBKS, for his improvement this season. "Sanjay sir told me that I am not a slogger and that I can play proper cricket shots. It was a small statement but carried a huge meaning for me. I am only following it - I am not a hard-hitter, I am playing proper cricketing shots and that is what has changed my game," Ashutosh said.

"Back home, I was working with my coach Amay Khurasiya who had told me that the longer you stay on the pitch, the more your team has a chance of winning," he added. The right-handed batter, who made some gestures towards the PBKS dugout after completing his fifty, said the celebrations were meant for his team management. "That celebration was for our Sanjay (Bangar) sir, I have been working a lot with him and I keep asking him

questions," Ashutosh said. "He gave me a chance, and also the entire Punjab team which showed belief in me. Our head coach Trevor Bayliss, Ashish (Tuli) paaji, Shikhar (Dhawan) paaji, everyone believed in me, so it was for all of them," he added. Punjab slumped to their fifth defeat in seven matches as well as to the ninth spot in the points table, but Ashutosh said his side has been playing well. "Winning and losing are part of the game. How you are playing is something that matters and we are playing well as a team. If we will play well, we will win," he said. Mumbai Indians' pacer Gerald Coetzee conceded his side was tense after Ashutosh's stunning onslaught. "He really brought it to us. We just wanted to be really clear tactically what we wanted to do. We executed really well to him in the back end to shut it down and win the game," the South African bowler said. "But it was tense, as I think everyone saw. But it was just all tactical discussions," he added. Coetzee conceded Mumbai Indians could've been better with their slower balls, something that PBKS used perfectly in the first half. "We just really learned from their innings. We adapted our plans and I think it worked," Coetzee added.

Impact Player not ideal for coaches but fans have last say: Ponting

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Impact Player rule in IPL might be hampering the growth of all-rounders but Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting said on Friday that fans should be able to decide on the future of this contentious system. Ponting has never been a strong advocate of the Impact Player and the debate gained momentum after Rohit Sharma in a recent YouTube podcast said that he is not a "fan of the rule" as it hurts development of Indian all-rounders. "Look, I think, I read some really, really interesting answers from Rohit Sharma on this yesterday. This Impact Player is taking the all-rounders out of the game a little bit," Ponting said ahead of DC's match against Sunrisers Hyderabad here on Saturday. "You know you can play your specialist batsman down till No. 8. Pretty much. But look, I think for a coach and for the players, it's probably not ideal, but I think you know a lot of what this game tries to do is to entertain people," Ponting explained his point of view. "The T20 game is an entertainment package and it's probably better asking the spectator what they think about the impact player, because if everyone is loving the fact that teams are making, you know, 220 up to 250 in a lot of the games, and the spectators like seeing it, then it should stay. "But if the spectators aren't



liking it as much, then there's no reason why I couldn't go back to the old," he added. "Warner is around 85 to 90% fit" David Warner, who missed the last match due to a knuckle injury, was seen batting at the nets and also hit some balls into the stands while facing throwdowns. Ponting said he is nearly 85 to 90% fit. "David did a fitness test on game day in which he got close. He's probably sort of 85 or 90% a couple days ago. We'd expect that there would be a little bit more improvement from him today. "But he will have to do a lot of batting today against some fast bowling stuff to make sure that the pain is not there anymore," Ponting replied to a query from PTL. The coach was happy with the pitch on which DC will play its first home game. "A lot more grass on the entire square than we used to see here. You know, this is the main reason that we moved away from those couple of games at the back of WPL.

Hardik Pandya fined for slow over rate against Punjab Kings

PTI ■ MULLANPUR (PUNJAB)

Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya has been fined Rs 12 lakhs for his team maintaining a slow over rate during their thrilling nine-run victory over Punjab Kings in the Indian Premier League. Mumbai Indians, thanks to Suryakumar Yadav's blazing 78 off 53 deliveries, posted a competitive 192/7 and then dismissed PBKS, despite Ashutosh Sharma's stunning 28-ball 61 and Shashank Singh's 41, for 183 in 19.1 overs. MI rose to seventh from ninth position on the points table following their third win in seven games in IPL 2024,

while PBKS dropped a spot to ninth after their fifth defeat. "Hardik Pandya, the Mumbai Indians captain, has been fined after his team maintained a slow over rate during their Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024 match against Punjab Kings at the PCA New International Cricket Stadium, Mullanpur on April 18," said an IPL statement on Friday. "As it was his team's first offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over rate offences, Pandya was fined Rs 12 lakhs," the statement added. Mumbai Indians next play Rajasthan Royals in Jaipur on April 22.

OTHER SPORTS



Group condemns searches by security at Barcelona stadium

AP ■ PARIS

The director of a group that advocates for female sports fans says she and other Paris Saint-Germain supporters were subjected to "abusive" searches while entering Barcelona's stadium for a Champions League match earlier this week. Anoush Morel, the director of Her Game Too France, told L'Equipe and RMC Sport that her breasts, buttocks and groin were touched by a female security officer during a pat-down at the Lluís Companys Olympic Stadium on Tuesday night. Other women reported similarly aggressive searches, she said. Paris Saint-Germain won the match 4-1 and advanced to the Champions League semifinals. In a letter Thursday, the organization

condemned the practice and called on "relevant authorities" to take action. "It's unacceptable that spectators, fans and women in general were particularly targeted by these intrusive and humiliating searches that constitute sexual aggression," the letter read. The group said there have been similar complaints at other stadiums in Europe, usually impacting visiting fans. It called on teams, organizers of the games and stadiums to ensure their security protocols avoid the "unfair treatment" of supporters. It asks UEFA to provide answers on whether visiting fans in particular are being subjected to more aggressive searches. A request for comment from UEFA sent on Thursday evening was not immediately answered.

Olympic organisers to use AI in sports

AP ■ LONDON

Olympic organisers unveiled their plans Friday to use artificial intelligence in sports, joining the global rush to capitalize on the rapidly advancing technology. The International Olympic Committee outlined its agenda for taking advantage of AI. Officials said it could be used to help identify promising athletes, personalize training methods and make the games fairer by improving judging. "Today, we are making another step to ensure the uniqueness of the Olympic Games and the relevance of sport. To do this, we have to be leaders of change," IOC



President Thomas Bach said at a press event at the former London Olympic Park, which hosted the Summer Games in 2012. "We are determined to exploit the vast potential of AI in a responsible way," Bach said. The IOC revealed its AI strategy as it gears up to hold the Paris Olympics, which are set to kick off in just under 100 days. The IOC's AI plans also include using the technology to protect athletes from online harassment and to help broadcasters improve the viewing experience for people watching from home. The IOC earns billions of dollars through the sale of broadcast rights for the games.



Andy Murray back on practice court

AP ■ LONDON

Three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray has returned to the practice court after confirming that he's not going to have surgery on his injured ankle. The 36-year-old Murray tore ligaments in his left ankle during a match at the Miami Open last month. Murray's team said this week he's "out of the walking boot," wouldn't be having surgery, and was "hoping to start hitting again on court soon." A short video on Murray's Instagram account on Friday showed the former world No. 1 hitting forehands on an indoor court. There was no timeline for his return announced. The two-time Wimbledon champion, who has said he's unlikely to play past this summer, has been hoping to compete for Britain again in the Paris Olympics.

Punia, Sujeet to miss Asian qualifiers

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a huge setback for the Indian wrestling contingent at the Asia Olympic Qualifiers in Bishkek, two of the country's best wrestlers, Deepak Punia and Sujeet Kalakal, will miss the continental event as they could not report for the weigh-in on time as their flight arrived late in the Kyrgyzstan capital owing to bad weather in Dubai. While both Punia and Kalkal eventually managed to reach Bishkek after being stranded at the Dubai international airport due to incessant rain and flooding, they could not report for the mandatory weigh-in on time, according to sources.



The sources added that the organisers did not allow late weigh-in despite request from the Indian coaches. Punia (86kg), who had come close to winning a medal at the Tokyo Games, and Sujeet (65kg), were on their way to Bishkek to participate in the Asia Olympic qualifiers - the second-last qualifying event for Paris

Olympics - when a majority of the flights leaving Dubai got cancelled or delayed because of the flooding of the airport. The duo, accompanied by Russian coach Kamal Malikov and physio Shubham Gupta, were forced to sleep on the floor and had no access to proper food due to the rain-induced crisis in Dubai. "They were stuck at the Dubai airport since April 16 and it seems the chance of qualifying for Paris Olympics is slipping out of their hands as they are scheduled to compete tomorrow. They are not getting any flights to Bishkek. I am worried about them," Dayanand Kalakal, Sujeet's father, had told PTI on Thursday.

India standout performer amidst sluggish global growth: IEA Secretary

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Despite a challenging global scenario, India's economy has shown robust growth over the past year backed by sustained consumption and investment demand, a top Indian official told members of a World Bank committee here.

The GDP growth estimate for the fiscal, which has been revised upwards from 7.3 per cent to 7.6 per cent in the second advance estimates, highlights the enduring strength and resilience of the Indian economy, India's Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth said while addressing the Development Committee meeting here on Thursday.

"India grew above 8 per cent for three consecutive quarters of FY24, reaffirming its position as a standout performer amidst sluggish global growth trends," Seth said.

He said that similar sentiments have been echoed by various agencies who have revised India's fiscal 24 growth

estimate closer to 8 per cent. India's proactive stance on reform and investment in sustainable growth avenues sets a benchmark for emerging economies.

The Indian delegation at the annual Spring Meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank is being represented at the official level this time. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is not attending the annual gathering of global financial leaders due to the ongoing Lok Sabha elections.

Seth told the Development Committee that India's thrust on capex continued to crowd in private investment resulting in enhanced Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) at constant prices registering a growth above 10 per cent in FY24.

India's inflation outlook appears positive with headline and core inflation trending downwards, indicating a broad-based moderation in price pressures, he said.

Seth said that on the external front, the narrowing



merchandise trade deficit and the rising net services receipts are expected to improve the current account balance in fiscal 2024.

To catalyse and democratise the Artificial Intelligence (AI) innovation ecosystem in the country, the Centre has approved the "India AI Mission" with a budget outlay of INR 103 billion for building computing infrastructure, developing indigenous AI capabilities, streamlining access to datasets, attracting AI talent, and financing AI start-ups.

"The Mission aims to establish a robust AI ecosystem through strategic programmes and partnerships across the public and private sectors. The focus on infrastructure and technology is expected to propel India to stay on the curve of technological innovation, consolidate and solidify its position in the global supply chain," he said.

Observing that the manufacturing sector registered double-digit growth in Q3 of 24 fiscal years, driven by a surge in investment, improved investor confidence, and strong domestic demand conditions, Seth said the year

also saw continued strong growth in services, led by non-contact-intensive services sectors.

Emphasising that India has the highest digital transactions globally with a share of 46 per cent of global real-time transactions in 2022, Seth noted that the monthly transactions for March 2024 stood at 13.44 billion totalling an amount of INR 19.78 trillion.

The volume of UPI online transactions witnessed a 54 per cent YoY growth in Q3 FY24, which can be attributed to convenience, security, increased financial flexibility, and avenues in ease of spending for consumers, he said.

"Today this increased mobile connectivity and its linkage with the bank accounts has become an integral part of India's inclusive economic growth story with consumers, small traders, vendors, and vulnerable populations from the lowest rung of the society, being the key beneficiaries," he said.

Stock markets stage strong rebound

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Stock markets rebounded from early lows to close higher on Friday, snapping the four-day losing streak on heavy value buying in banking and auto shares. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 599.34 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 73,088.33. The index opened lower and tanked further 672.53 points or 0.92 per cent to hit a low of 71,816.46 in early trade. However, the index rebounded in the second half on value-buying in banking shares.

The NSE Nifty jumped 151.15 points or 0.69 per cent to close at 22,147. The broader index dropped to a low of 21,777.65 in early trade before paring its losses to end in the green.

From the Sensex basket, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, HDFC Bank, JSW Steel, Maruti, Wipro, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv, IICI Bank and ITC were the major gainers. Nestle India, HCL Technologies, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Motors and Infosys were among the laggards.

Infosys declined nearly 1 per cent after the company's revenue growth guidance for FY25 failed to meet market expectations.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Hong Kong settled in the negative territory. European markets were trading in the red. Wall Street ended mostly lower on Thursday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.55 per cent to USD 87.62 a barrel.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 4,260.33 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

"Despite global weakness, Indian markets staged a strong recovery driven by large-cap stocks, buoyed by the expectation of limited



prospects of escalation following Israel's action against Iran. However, fragility persists with elevated oil prices, posing inflation risks," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

"Nifty reversed a four-day losing streak to end higher," Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 0.39 per cent and smallcap index dipped 0.04 per cent.

Among the indices, bankex jumped 1.02 per cent and metal climbed 0.85 per cent. Financial services (0.83 per cent), consumer durables (0.78 per cent) and commodities (0.54 per cent) also gained. IT, telecommunication, utilities, realty and tech were among the laggards.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark declined 1,156.57 points or 1.55 per cent and the Nifty dipped 372.4 points or 1.65 per cent. Meanwhile, the 2024 Lok Sabha polls kicked off on Friday with the beginning of polling for the first phase. The BSE benchmark tanked 454.69 points or 0.62 per cent to settle at 72,488.99 on Thursday.



Nestle shares continue to decline; mcap erodes by ₹10,610.55 crore in two days

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Nestle India continued to decline on Friday, ending the day over 1 per cent lower, amid reports that the global FMCG major sold infant milk products with more sugar content in less developed countries.

The stock declined 3.53 per cent to Rs 2,375.75 during the day on the BSE. It later ended at Rs 2,437.10 a share, down 1.04 per cent.

On the NSE, shares of the company dipped 2.13 per cent to Rs 2,410 during the day. The stock ended at Rs 2,430 apiece, reflecting a decline of 1.32 per cent.

On Thursday, shares of Nestle India had declined over 3 per cent.

In two days, the company's market capitalisation (mcap) got eroded by Rs 10,610.55 crore to Rs 2,34,974.74 crore.

Nestle India on Thursday said it has reduced added sugar on baby food products in India by up to 30 per cent, depending on variants, over the past five years, amid reports that the global FMCG major sold products with more sugar content in less developed

countries.

According to findings by Swiss NGO, Public Eye and International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), Nestle sold baby products with higher sugar content in less developed South Asian countries, including India, Africa and Latin American nations as compared to markets in Europe.

When reached out for comments, a company spokesperson said, "Reduction of added sugars is a priority for Nestle India. Over the past 5 years, we have already reduced added sugars by up to 30 per cent, depending on the variant."

The spokesperson further said, "We regularly review our portfolio and continue to innovate and reformulate our products to further reduce the level of added sugars, without compromising on nutrition, quality, safety, and taste."

Nestle India asserted that its "infant cereal products are manufactured to ensure the appropriate delivery of nutritional requirements such as protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, iron etc. For early childhood"

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बच्चों को उत्कृष्ट शिक्षा दे रहा सेंट जॉन्स स्कूल

सेंट जॉन्स स्कूल की शुरुआत श्रीमती एच.सी. द्वारा वर्ष 1982 में एक प्लेस्कूल के रूप में की गई थी। थॉमस और सुश्री जेई डेकुन्हा। वर्ष 1989 में इसे श्रीमती ई.थॉमस और श्री एस.ए.थॉमस द्वारा अधिग्रहित कर लिया गया, जिन्होंने कक्षा 8 तक अतिरिक्त कक्षाएं जोड़ीं। अब यह श्रीमती विनीता रावत के रूप में वर्तमान प्राचार्य के साथ एक प्रतिष्ठान है। इस विद्यालय का वातावरण नन्हे मुन्ने बच्चों के लिए नगर में विशेष स्थान रखता है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित सेंट जॉन्स स्कूल बेहतर ढंग से बच्चों के चहुमुखी विकास में जुटा हुआ है। अनिवार्य विषयों के अलावा अतिरिक्त विषय भी चला रहा है। जिसके चलते इस विद्यालय के प्रति नगर में लोगों का विश्वास गहरता जा रहा है। कक्षा आठवीं तक संचालित की जा रही है।

नगर का अग्रणी स्कूल सनवाल

उत्कृष्ट शिक्षा व कुशल प्रबंधन के चलते यह विद्यालय कक्षा 12वीं तक जा पहुंचा है। वर्ष 1952 में सनवाल स्कूल की स्थापना एंजेलिना ग्रेस सनवाल द्वारा की गई थी। लिहाजा सनवाल स्कूल अपने उद्देश्य को पूर्ण करता हुआ 71 साल का सफर तय करने में न केवल कामयाब हुआ है, बल्कि हजारों बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में अपनी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा चुका है। सीबीएससी बोर्ड से संबद्ध सनवाल स्कूल अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित किया जा रहा है। वर्तमान में प्रबंध निदेशक गौरव सनवाल विद्यालय का कुशल प्रबंधन का दायित्व निभा रहे हैं, जबकि ए इमेन्युअल प्रधानाचार्य के पद पर बेहतर शिक्षण कार्य रही हैं। वह कहती हैं कि विद्यालय को आगे ले जाने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध हैं और आधुनिक शिक्षा के साथ बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने हेतु दायित्व निभा रही हैं।

सफलता का पथ पर अग्रसर सेंट जेवियर

सेंट जेवियर्स स्कूल नगर के उन स्कूलों में है, जिसे ऐतिहासिक स्कूलों के समकक्ष्य शिक्षा देनी है, जो करीब डेढ़ सौ सालों से शिक्षा जगत में मजबूत स्तंभ के रूप में खड़े हैं। मगर गौर करने वाली बात यह है कि सेंट जेवियर्स शिक्षा के सभी मापदंड के साथ निरंतर प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर है। लिहाजा सफलता के बल पर यह शिक्षण संस्थान 32 साल का सफर तय कर चुका है। विद्यालय प्रधानाचार्य नईम अली खान का कहना है कि गुरुकुल रूपी इस विद्यालय को आगे ले जाने में अपना दायित्व निभा रहे हैं। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से विद्यालय का संचालन किया जाता है। कक्षा एक से बारहवीं तक आवासीय व दिवसीय विद्यालय है। जिसमें खानपान समेत आधुनिक रहन सहन व तमाम अत्याधुनिक सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं।

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अमेरिकन किड्स संवार रहा नन्हे मुन्नों का भविष्य

बच्चों के चहुमुखी विकास को लेकर अमेरिकन किड्स विद्यालय समर्पितरूप से अपना दायित्व निर्वहन कर रहा है। बच्चों के बौद्धिक व शारारिक विकास के लिए प्रत्येक सुविधाएं विद्यालय में उपलब्ध हैं, जबकि अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा बच्चों का पठन पाठन कार्य किया जाता है। जिसके चलते यह विद्यालय निरंतर विकास के पथ पर अग्रसर है। प्रधानाचार्य दीपा बिष्ट के नेतृत्व में विद्यालय का संचालन किया जा रहा है। उनका कहना है कि बच्चों के प्रति अथक स्नेह के कारण नन्हे मुन्ने बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में कई वर्षों से समर्पितरूप से अपनी जिम्मेदारी निभा रही हैं।

BUSINESS BRIEF



VITEEE-2024 KICKS OFF AT VIT-AP UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

The Vellore Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Examination (VITEEE)-2024 has officially begun today at the VIT-AP campus in Amaravati. The computer-based entrance exam, conducted annually, aims to facilitate admissions to B.Tech programs offered at VIT's campuses in Vellore, Chennai, Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh), and Bhopal. Sharing his insights on VITEEE 2024 Dr. S.V. Kota Reddy -Vice-Chancellor highlighted that the entrance examination will continue at various exam centres until April 30, 2024. Candidates hailing from 125 cities across the nation and 6 cities abroad will participate in the online entrance examination. The results are tentatively set to be available on May 3, 2024, on www.vit.ac.in. Dr. Jagadish Chandra, Registrar, said that the examination is conducted in three sessions daily, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m., and 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

INDUSTRY-ACADEMIA MEET AND EXHIBITION TODAY

The Department of Architecture, Zakir Husain College of Engineering and Technology (ZH CET), Aligarh Muslim University, is organising an Industry-Academia Meet and Exhibition on April 20, 2024, to bring together the professionals, academicians and students for interaction and exchange of ideas. AMU Vice Chancellor is the chief patron and Prof Mirza Salim Beg, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Technology and Prof MM Sufyan Beg, Principal, ZH CET are the co-patrons. The talks will be focused on the present scenario in building design and construction practices and the eminent speakers are Prof Manoj Mathur, SPA, New Delhi; Prof Rajat Ray, Ex-Dean, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, New Delhi; Dr. Arun Kapur, Amity School of Architecture, Lucknow and also Honorary Architect, Gunjan and Associates, Lucknow; Architect Gaurav Gupta, De:Cape Studio, Lucknow; Architect Manish Kr. Sahai, Sahai Architects, Aligarh; Architect Hemlata Singh, White Fox Designs LLP, New Delhi and Architect Udit Gaurav, Green Building Consultant, Greater Noida.

VRINDAVAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

VRINDAVAN PUBLIC SCHOOL was established in the year 2009 under the aegis of C.L Sah memorial education society with the aim of holistic development of tiny tots. Being a playway and preparatory school, it has been successful in bringing out the best in the students, in academics as well as extra curricular activities like dance, taekwondo, gymnastics etc The clean, green and spacious environment of the school offers all facilities for the physical and mental development of the children to give them a headstart in becoming bright and confident students. This English medium school is run successfully by dedicated staff members under the guidance of the principal, Mrs. Rakhee Sah. She says that the school is committed to provide the best atmosphere for all-round development of her beloved students.

VRINDAVAN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Under the aegis of C.L SAH Memorial Education Society, Redg. 88/2009.

- PLAYWAY
- PREPARATORY
- ACTIVITY CENTER

VRINDAVAN PUBLIC SCHOOL, Near Tallital Rickshaw Stand, Nainital

FUTURISTIC WORLD CLASS SCHOOLING IN NAINITAL



REVIVING THE LEGACY OF RAM

Ram Aagman stands as a testament to **SHOVANA NARAYAN'S** unparalleled artistry and her unwavering commitment to preserving India's cultural heritage. **GYANESHWAR DAYAL** witnessed the performance

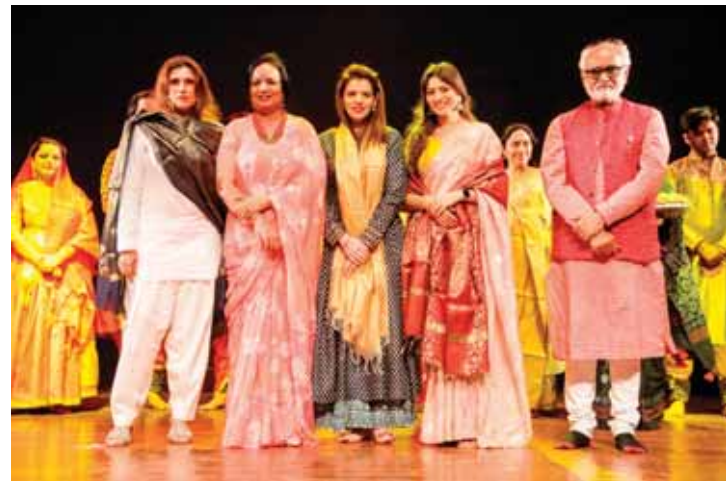
Renowned classical dancer Shovana Narayan, a Padmashree awardee celebrated for her mesmerising performances, once again captivated audiences with her scintillating dance production "Ram Aagman." Held on the auspicious occasion of Chaitra Navratri, this spectacle, presented at the Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi, was a testament to Narayan's dedication to preserving and promoting Indian classical dance forms.

'Ram Aagman,' choreographed and directed by Narayan herself along with Lalita Narayan, delved into the timeless tale of Lord Ram, from his birth to Sita's disappearance into the earth. With a team of 19 skilled dancers from her repertory ASAVARI, Narayan masterfully brought to life lesser-known incidents from Ram's life, offering a fresh perspective on the epic narrative. The event was graced by esteemed personalities such as Sangita Saxena, Meenakshi Lekhi, Dr Sachchidanand Joshi, and Dr Sandhya Purecha, among others. Their presence underscored the significance of Narayan's contribution to the cultural landscape of India.

'Ram Aagman' was not just a dance performance; it was a rich tapestry of cultural exploration. Through insightful talks by Lady Kishwar Desai and Dr. Alka Pande, the production seamlessly integrated cultural geography and visual arts, shedding light on the influence of Sri Ram's journey in Punjab and the profound symbolism present in hand-held paintings depicting his darshan.

Narayan's choreography skillfully portrayed the myriad emotions stirred by Lord Ram's arrival, from the joyous anticipation of his devotees to the impact on his family and subjects. Her commitment to social messaging was evident as she unearthed new dimensions of the Ram Katha, resonating with audiences on both intellectual and emotional levels.

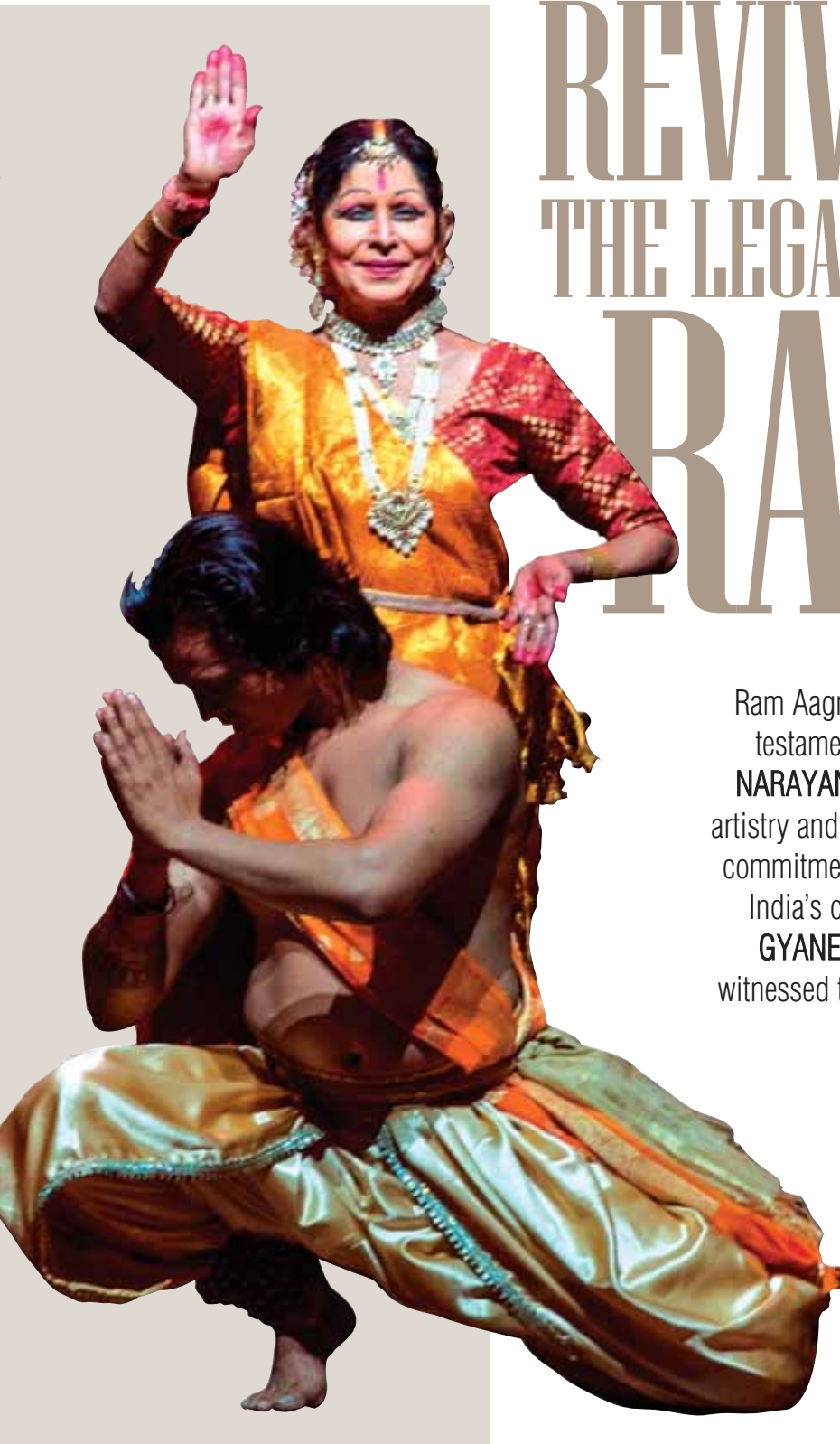
One of the distinctive elements of "Ram Aagman" was its homage to Goddess



Durga, emphasizing the celebration of divine femininity and her pivotal role in the universe. Narayan's reverence for tradition, coupled with her innovative approach, breathed new life into this timeless tale, making it relevant for contemporary audiences. The success of 'Ram Aagman' owes much to the collective efforts of the talented team behind the scenes. From the soul-stirring music composed by Pt. Jwala Prasad, Pt. Madho Prasad, and Dinesh Parihar to the meticulous lighting by Milind Srivastava, every aspect contributed to the immersive experience. Narayan's dedication to her art form is evident in every aspect of "Ram

Aagman." Through her evocative choreography and profound storytelling, she continues to inspire audiences and keep the rich heritage of Indian classical dance alive. As she eloquently puts it, "The absence or the presence of 'Ramatva' became evident through various emotions portrayed, offering food for thought to the audiences."

'Ram Aagman' stands as a testament to Shovana Narayan's unparalleled artistry and her unwavering commitment to preserving India's cultural heritage. With each graceful movement, she not only honours the legacy of Lord Ram but also enriches the cultural tapestry of our nation.



Tradition, Transformation, Empowerment

Poonam Dhillon returns in *Ek Kori Prem Katha* alongside newcomer Khanak Budhiraja, a film that tackles the sensitive subject of the Kori tradition. In this conversation with **SAKSHI PRIYA** the film's cast dwells on the gravity of sensitive social issues and the challenge of questioning outdated traditions.

Poonam Dhillon, can you elaborate on the journey your character undertakes in the film?

In *Ek Kori Prem Katha*, my character embodies the acceptance of the Kori tradition, deeply rooted in her family, village, and society, which she embraces without a question. The story progresses with a newlywed girl who enters a family, deeply in love with the son. Initially happy with the union, tensions arise in the family when the daughter-in-law refuses to participate in the Kori tradition, leading to shock and hostility where my character begins to gauge the unjust nature of the tradition and the need to refuse the perpetuation of such practices. This marks a transformation in my character, as she starts to support her daughter-in-law in opposing the Kori tradition. Together, they stand up against this outdated tradition in their powerful journey of change and empowerment. The film narrates my character's journey as she challenges outdated traditions for the greater good of evolving our cultural norms.

How did you prepare to play a character with a different perspective than your own?

Well, every time I play a character, it is different, and 99 per cent of the time she is not the real me. So, I always start with the physical attributes of the character, how she dresses, talks and walks, and slip into the role from the director's, and the writer's, point of view.

How did you feel working with Raj Babbar in this film? Working with Raj Babbar after so many years felt really good. Today, I feel our communication is much better. As an actor and a person, he is great, and in this stage in life it feels good to talk to him. I must admit, I didn't even have his phone but now we are far more comfortable and enjoy working together.

Were there any humorous moments during the shoot? Our shooting location was actually quite funny, or perhaps the set itself was, I'm not entirely sure, but I think we had our funny and sad moments. We were told that we would be shooting in a *haveli*, (a large bungalow) but when we reached the location we were surprised because in villages, they refer to old houses as *haveli*. In our minds the visual of a *haveli* is more like a grand palace, like in Rajasthan. In reality what we faced was actually humorous.

How did you handle the challenges of outdoor shoots?

Outdoor shoots come with their own set of challenges and difficulties. If we think everything should be according to our expectations and perfect that is impossible. Undue expectations

make you unhappy which disturbs the whole unit. So, one adapts and adjusts.

Khanak Budhiraja, what drew you to the role of Sabhayata, the challenges you faced in bringing her story to life, given the gravity of the film's subject?

I am an introvert and feminine by nature and I am not a sportsperson. So playing Sabhayata was a very challenging task. Like Poonam said, 99 per cent of the time you do not find a role which you relate to, thereby the challenges. Apart from learning how to ride a bus and drive a bike, my character had to be bold on-screen. In our society we still fight shy of issues like virginity. I am happy that at the outset of my career, I could play such a role.

Khanak, as a newcomer, what did you learn while filming?

I think filming everyday on the sets is in itself a learning process. We prepare ourselves for something which is poles apart from the scenes we actually shoot. As my first film, I was nervous, wondering about the surprise element in every scene. It took time, but I got used to it.

Khanak, your character fights against a regressive tradition. How did you prepare for the role of Sabhayata?

I researched, and met two victims in Rajasthan, although they were initially not forthcoming about their experiences. I did manage a conversation with one of them. It is unfortunate to see that girls continue to bear such atrocities in a society which speaks of gender inequality. Our film is about the change that is unfolding.

Is there an artist in this industry who influences you? I think Priyanka Chopra and Parineeti Chopra who was my senior in school. I am really inspired by both of them. Their journey is truly motivational. I will try my best to keep moving ahead.

Chinmay Purohit (Director), what do you hope the audience will take away from this film?

I hope the audience will understand the depth of the subject and plot, and they will take away the learning that we should not treat women like we do and what needs to be done.



Sculpting Novel Ideas

Inspired by Beethoven and her Indian roots, Niyamat Mehta, all of 23, has already carved a niche in art history, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Sculptor Niyamat Mehta is making waves in the art world with sculptures that blend traditional techniques and contemporary themes. Inspired by Beethoven and her Indian roots, her work resonates with deep historical and cultural significance. At the Venice Biennale, she became the youngest artist to showcase her talent, drawing global acclaim. Her first solo exhibit, *Meraki*, featured 27 sculptures inviting viewers to contemplate their own journeys.

At a tender age of 23, Niyamat has already etched her name in the annals of art history, hailed by *Firenze Yes Please* as the 'Emerging Artist to Invest In 2023'. Her artistic journey began at the prestigious Venice Biennale, where she became the youngest artist to exhibit at the renowned Palazzo Albrizzi, sharing space with luminaries like Anish Kapoor, Simone Leigh, and Célestin Faustin.

Niyamat's journey is a testament to the harmonious blend of diverse influences and traditions. Being the youngest artist at the Venice Biennale was not just a milestone but a transformative moment that shaped her artistic vision. Exhibiting at Palazzo Albrizzi was both encouraging and overwhelming, with the rich history and heritage of the venue enhancing her experience. The sculptor draws inspiration from Beethoven's 'String Quartets' that unveils a deep connection between music and visual art. Niyamat listens to Western classical while sculpting to stay in the creative flow and translate intangible energy into tangible texture in her sculptures. This is a systematic process that begins with clarifying what she wants to create and why. Her Indian heritage is a fundamental part of her identity, influencing her sculptures and artistic vision.



Niyamat believes that the diversity of preferences, dislikes, and opinions across various regions enriches the world, making her work inherently fascinating. When collaborating with collectors, she strives to find a balance between her artistic vision and their desires, creating something meaningful together. Mehta's training in "drawing in space" and the sight-size method is not just a technical foundation but the essence of her artistic expression. She views these techniques as languages that serve as alphabets of her craft.

Her meticulous nature extends to her creative process,



where she approaches sculptures as "landscapes," seeking diverse topography within different areas of the piece. Bridging artistic cultures, Niyamat incorporates traditional techniques in her contemporary work seamlessly. She believes that every creation must possess both technical excellence and artistic allure, a philosophy instilled in her during her training at the Florence Academy of Art. This blend of vibrant Western techniques and Indian heritage is evident in her sculptures like *Atman* and *Amor Fati*.

The young sculptor operates from her private studio, Atelier Della Firenze, located in New Delhi. Her studio is more than just a workspace; it is a sanctuary. With an atmosphere akin to heaven, it provides the perfect backdrop for her masterpieces. Here, not only does she sculpt, she also imparts her knowledge through masterclasses, nurturing a new generation of sculptors. Niyamat's sculptures are a testament to her creativity and attention to detail. Her sculptures, particularly the Dali series, are inspired by artists like Salvador Dali and

Auguste Rodin. Drawing from their styles, she strives to compose something unique of her own, blending surrealism and romanticism to create sculptures rich in expressions and emotions. Her recent solo exhibition, *Meraki*, showcased 27 sculptures that invited viewers to contemplate their own journeys. The title means putting your soul into your work which reflects the philosophy Niyamat abides by. She believes every sculpture of hers embodies a piece of her, an expression of herself. This guiding principle is evident in every sculpture she presents, imbuing them with a soulful essence.

Looking ahead, Niyamat aims to persist with commissioned work, hold solo exhibitions, and ensure that her sculptures find their way into the collections of art collectors who truly value her artistry. She wants the next generation of sculptors to approach this career without fear, embrace commissioned work, participate in exhibitions, and serve as their own most discerning critics. Niyamat is a shining example of talent and passion, notwithstanding an artist's age. Her exhibitions are not just displays of art but experiences that transcend words. Each sculpture tells a story, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in her world of creativity. A hidden artist with immense talent, the world deserves to know and appreciate her work. In a world where creativity knows no bounds, Niyamat Mehta stands out as a beacon of artistic excellence, her sculptures showcasing her talent, passion, and dedication.



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शेरवुड कालेज की देश में अलग पहचान

शेरवुड कालेज शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में इस विद्यालय का नाम देश के नामचिन् विद्यालयों में शामिल है। यह विद्यालय बच्चों का भविष्य संवारता हुआ आ रहा है। विद्यालय पूर्ण रूप से आवासीय है जिसमें बच्चों के भोजन व रहने तथा अन्य समस्त सुविधायें विद्यालय में मौजूद हैं।

पठन-पाठन कार्य अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा किया जाता है। बच्चों के बेहतर भविष्य बनाने के लिये वह सभी सुविधायें विद्यालय में मौजूद हैं जो वर्तमान में जरूरत के हिसाब से आवश्यक होती है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से यह विद्यालय कक्षा 3 से लेकर कक्षा 12वीं तक संचालित किया जाता है। वर्तमान में प्रधानाचार्य अमनदीप संधू विद्यालय का संचालन कर रहे हैं। अमन दीप शन्धु कुशलता पूर्वक विद्यालय का संचालन कर रहे हैं।

एकोर्न स्कूल बना नन्हे मुन्हे बच्चों की पहली पसंद

कक्षा पांचवी तक अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित यह विद्यालय नगर में नन्हे मुन्हे बच्चों की पहली पसंद बन गया है। स्कूल का वातावरण बच्चों को खूब भाता है। पढ़ाई का स्तर उच्च स्तरीय है। अनुभवी शिक्षिकाएं बच्चों की मनोस्थिति को समझते हुए, उन्हें शिक्षा देती हैं। विद्यालय में बच्चों के शारारिक विकास के लिए खेलकूद की समस्त सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं। तमाम सुविधाओं से सुसज्जित यह विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर है। विद्यालय का संचालन कर रही प्रधानाचार्य आशा आर्या कहती हैं कि उनका जीवन बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने के लिए समर्पित है।

Acorn

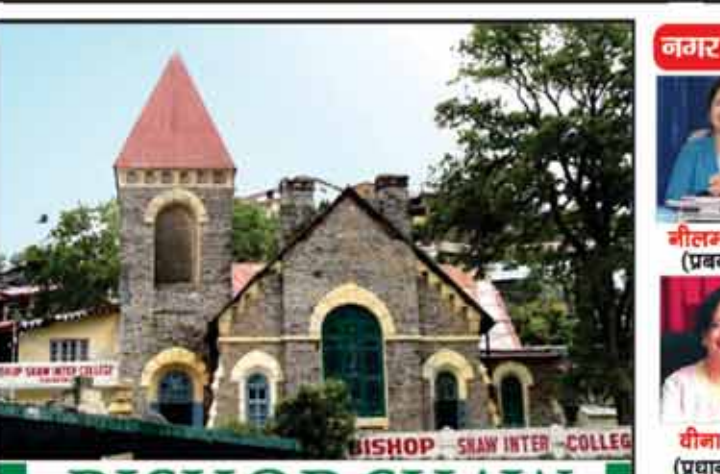
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SCHOOLS IN NAINITAL : IN QUEST OF MULTIFACETED EXCELLENCE

The peer, so to say, Truth to tell, there is hardly any state in India from where students do not come to receive education here. Not just students from India but those from foreign countries also study in these schools, given their fame as institutions which offer comprehensive education and nurturing environment. It hardly needs mentioning that many of the Nainital-based schools are more than 150 years old. Over the years, the ranking of the schools here has been included in the top-notch ten schools at the national level- a glorious tradition that continues undimmed till date.

It is thus no wonder that adorned with state of the art facilities, consummate faculty, comprehensive curriculum and a string of co-curricular activities, these schools beckon students from across the world. What is

अप्राजों का भविष्य संवार रहा एमएल साह बाल विद्या मंदिर

अप्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित यह विद्यालय नगर के विद्यालयों में खास स्थान रखता है। देश के विभिन्न प्रांतों की छात्राएं इस विद्यालय में शिक्षा लेती हैं। यह विद्यालय आवासीय के साथ दिवसीय है, जो शिक्षा के तमाम मापदंडों की पूर्ति करता है और कई देशों से शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अपना दायित्व निभा रहा है। इनका छात्राएं इस विद्यालय से अध्ययन कर अपना भविष्य संवार चुकी है। यह विद्यालय तमाम सुख सुविधाओं से सुसज्जित है। अनुभवी शिक्षिकाएं बच्चों की मनोस्थिति को समझते हुए, उन्हें शिक्षा देती हैं। विद्यालय में बच्चों के शारारिक विकास के लिए खेलकूद की समस्त सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं। तमाम सुविधाओं से सुसज्जित यह विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर है और बोर्ड परीक्षा में शत प्रतिशत रिजल्ट देता आ रहा है। विद्यालय का संचालन कर रही प्रधानाचार्य अनुपमा साह कहती हैं कि यह विद्यालय भविष्य में भी अपना दायित्व बखूबी निभाता रहेगा। प्रबंधक विनय साह के निर्देशन में विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति की ओर अग्रसर है।

बोर्डिंग स्कूल की मिशाल बना पाईन क्रस्ट

पाईन क्रस्ट स्कूल ने शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में एक अनूठी शुरुआत की है। यह विद्यालय बच्चों के भविष्य को उज्ज्वल बनाने एवं सर्वांगीण विकास हेतु प्रयासरत है। यह विद्यालय आवासीय है जिसमें बच्चों के भोजन व रहने तथा अन्य समस्त सुविधायें विद्यालय में मौजूद हैं।

पठन-पाठन कार्य अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा किया जा रहा है। बच्चों के बेहतर भविष्य बनाने के लिये वह सभी सुविधायें विद्यालय में मौजूद हैं जो वर्तमान में जरूरत के हिसाब से आवश्यक होती हैं। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से यह विद्यालय कक्षा नर्सरी से लेकर कक्षा 8वीं तक संचालित किया रहा है। प्रबन्धक संतोश कुमार विद्यालय का संचालन कर रहे हैं।

The Pine Crest Elementary School

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छात्राओं की विशेष पहचान बनाने में इतिहास रहा है ऑल्सैंट्स कालेज ने

ऑल्सैंट्स कालेज का गौरवमय इतिहास ब्रिटिश काल से रहा है। इस विद्यालय से हजारों बच्चे शिक्षा प्राप्त कर देश-विदेश में अपना भविष्य संवार चुके हैं। इस विद्यालय में वैश्विक स्तर पर शिक्षा प्रदान की जाती है। वर्तमान में प्रधानाचार्य किरन जरमाया कुशलतापूर्वक इस विद्यालय का संचालन कर रही हैं। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित इस विद्यालय की स्थापना 1869 में हुई थी तब से लेकर आज तक यह विद्यालय निरंतर प्रगति की ओर अग्रसर है। देश विदेश के बच्चे इस विद्यालय में अध्ययन करने आते हैं। इस विद्यालय से पढ़कर कई ऐसी हस्तियां हैं जो देश और दुनिया में अपना नाम रोशन कर रही हैं। इस विद्यालय में शिक्षा प्राप्त कर कई छात्राएं विश्व स्तर पर कीर्तिमान स्थापित कर चुकी हैं। श्रीमती किरन जरमाया कहती हैं कि शिक्षा के मापदंड को ध्यान में रखकर वह गुणवत्ता युक्त शिक्षा प्रदान कर रही है जिसे भविष्य में भी जारी रखेंगी।

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THE MOTHER'S HEART SCHOOL

THE MOTHER'S HEART SCHOOL Brief History and objective of the school The Mothers heart school was established on the 1st last march of 1999. in the town (Nainital) Uttarakhand. It was the need of the town where people early sought for the quality of preparatory education for their children seeking admission in the prestigious school of Nainital.

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नगर का अग्रणी विद्यालय है बिशप शॉ इंटर कॉलेज

बिशप शॉ इंटर कॉलेज उत्तराखंड बोर्ड से सम्बद्ध अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित नगर के अग्रणी विद्यालयों में स्थान रखता है और अनुभवी शिक्षकों द्वारा बच्चों का भविष्य संवारने में जुटा हुआ है। विद्यालय प्रबंधन की विशेषता है कि बेहद कम शुल्क में बच्चों को उत्कृष्ट शिक्षा प्रदान कर, शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अपना दायित्व बखूबी निभाता आ रहा है। तल्लीताल क्षेत्र में शूल के समीप विद्यालय का वातावरण शिक्षा के माकूल है। विद्यालय प्रबंधक नीलम दानी कहती हैं कि उनका प्रयास विद्यार्थियों को उत्तम शिक्षा प्रदान कर बेहतर भविष्य बनाना है। भविष्य में भी उनका प्रयास जारी रहेगा। प्रधानाचार्य वीना मैसी कहती हैं कि वह वैश्विक शिक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए आधुनिक शिक्षा प्रदान करने में जुटी हुई हैं।

देश के अग्रणी स्कूलों में सुमार विडला विद्या मंदिर

देश में बिडला विद्या मंदिर अग्रणी पब्लिक स्कूलों में अपना अलग नाम व मुकाम हासिल किया है। जिसके फलस्वरूप यह विद्यालय अपना एक अलग स्थान कायम किए हुए है। सीबीएसई से संबद्ध यह विद्यालय पूर्ण रूप से आवासीय है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित नगर के सर्वाधिक ऊंचाई वाले नैसर्गिक वातावरण में स्थित है। यह विद्यालय प्रधानाचार्य अनिल शर्मा के कुशल नेतृत्व में संचालित किया जा रहा है। देश-विदेश के कई हिस्सों से सैकड़ों की संख्या में छात्र वर्तमान में अध्ययनरत हैं। श्री शर्मा कहते हैं कि वर्तमान परिवेश को ध्यान में रखकर बच्चों का भविष्य उज्ज्वल बनाने के साथ उन्हें एक अच्छे इंसान बनाने का प्रयास रहता है। जिसे ध्यान में रखकर विद्यालय में अनिवार्य विषयों के अलावा तमाम प्रतिस्पर्धाओं में भी छात्रों को निरूपण बनाया जाता है। विद्यालय का इतिहास है कि बोर्ड परिक्षाफल शत-प्रतिशत रहा है। जिसे भविष्य में भी कायम रखा जायेगा।

छात्राओं के लिये खोले लॉगव्यू पब्लिक स्कूल ने द्वार

लॉगव्यू पब्लिक स्कूल ने छात्राओं को भी इस सत्र से प्रवेश देना शुरू कर दिया है। निःसंदेह इस स्कूल ने अल्प समय में सफलता की सीढ़ियां तय कर शिक्षा की दिशा में नवीन आयाम स्थापित करने का सफल प्रयास किया है। जिसका प्रतिफल है कि विद्यालय में दी जा रही उत्कृष्ट शिक्षा व कुशल संचालन को लेकर देश की कई संस्थाओं द्वारा सम्मानित किया जा चुका है। जिसके परिणामस्वरूप यह विद्यालय नगर व राज्य में अपना प्रमुख स्थान हासिल करने में कामयाब हुआ है। अंग्रेजी माध्यम से संचालित लॉगव्यू पब्लिक स्कूल दसवीं कक्षा तक विद्यालय का संचालन कर रहा है। विद्यालय में आधुनिक शिक्षा के साथ भावी शिक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए पठन पाठन कार्य किया जाता है। प्रधानाचार्य बीसी त्रिपाठी कहते हैं कि वैश्विक शिक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए विद्यालय का संचालन कर रहे हैं। जिसका लाभ विद्यार्थियों को मिलता है। जिसके बल पर विद्यालय प्रगति की ओर निरंतर अग्रसर है।