CITY 3

YOGI SLAMS CONG FOR SHIFTING

STANCE ON LORD RAM

OPINION 6

UNRAVELLING THE ROY

FAMILY'S LEGACY

WORLD 10

INDIAN STUDENT SHOT DEAD

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BJP GUARANTEES VIKSIT BHARAT

Narendra Modi to focus on GYAN



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

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

ith just four days ahead of the first phase of the polling, the BJP's manifesto for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls which Prime Minister Narendra Modi released in the presence of party president JP Nadda, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and other leaders, on Sunday featured India's Olympics bid in 2036, bringing a Uniform Civil Code (UCC), making "One Nation, One Election" a reality One Election" a reality, implementing the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), making India the third-largest economy in the world, free

ration for the poor for the next five years under the Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, implementation of North East policy, building Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over the world and law against paper leaks, among other

promises. It has promised to accelerate development of robust infrastructure along the Indo-China, Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Myanmar borders. This comes on a day of the birth anniversary of BR Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution.

With its focus on a roadmap

for "Viksit Bharat" (developed India), the BJP's manifesto is replete with the word "Bharat" and "Bharatiya", instead of India and Indian. While the BJP manifesto did include the "India",

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

prevalence of "Bharat"

In its 76 pages Modi ki Gaurantee-2024" Phir Ek Baar Modi Sarkar" Sankalp Patra, the BJP's manifesto listed out a comprehensive overview of the NDA Government's achievements. It also charted out the vision for building a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

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

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

Bringing a Uniform Civil Code

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

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

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

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

was grappling with.

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

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

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

Air India suspends flights to Tel Aviv

NEW DELHI: Air India has temporarily suspended its flights from Delhi to Tel Aviv amid the escalating tensions between Israel and Iran following Tehran's missile and drone attacks on Saturday night.
An official said the direct

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

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

He shared these views in an exclusive conversation with a private television channel. Continued on Page 8



Bansuri ignites Delhi campaign with Sushma Swaraj's spirit

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

 $D^{\text{raped}}_{\text{mother, former Foreign Minister Sushma}} \\$ Swaraj, BJP's youngest candidate for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections in 2024, Bansuri Swaraj, said the scent lingering from it transports her to a comforting embrace, evoking fond memories of her mother's aanchal as she begins the campaign trail. Bansuri grew up in Delhi and said she is a 'dadi nani ke haathon se khilaya bachcha' (fed

with the hands of maternal and paternal grandmothers). "My friends and teachers kept me grounded throughout. Both my parents ensured that I have a very normal upbringing," said Bansuri, who grew up in a

family of politicians and lawyers. The fierce leader, with the oratory skills of her mother, lights up the brightest when she talks about her

'favourite human being in the world'. Calling her mother's loss irreparable, she said, "I wish my mother was here for my life. No matter what age you lose your parents, it's never enough

'co-conspirator' and her

time. And I'll be honest, I don't miss Sushma Swaraj 'the neta'. I miss Sushma Swaraj, the mother. For me, she was always a mom. She was a Minister outside the house."

Bansuri shared her mother's anecdote about the combination of sarees and sports shoes. "Meri ma kehti thi agar ek nari saree k neeche sports shoe pehn le, then she means business. (My mother used to say if a woman wears sports shoes beneath a saree, she means business). These sarees that I wear are actually my mother's. It's literally like being wrapped in her 'anchal", she said.

An Oxford educated lawyer, Bansuri marked her 17th year as a litigator. She describes herself as 'innately a lawyer' and 'not a politician. However, when asked the reason to leave her illustrious career, which includes being the Additional Advocate General for Haryana and enter the political fray as BJP's candidate on the New Delhi seat, she quipped, Continued on Page 8

Opposition says BJP Manifesto a jugglery of words

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

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

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

the last 10 years. Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi said, "Two words are missing from the BJP's manifesto and Modi's speech inflation

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



Congress fields Kanhaiya from North East Delhi

NEW DELHI : The Congress on Sunday announced 10 more candidates for the Lok Sabha polls. The party has fielded veteran politician J P Agarwal from Chandni Delhi Delhi against Yogendra Chandolia.

Chowk against BJP's Praveen Khandelwal and Kanhaiya Kumar from North East Delhi against BJP's sitting MP Manoj Tiwari while Udit Raj is to contest from North-West BJP's The party has also fielded former Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi from Jalandhar — SC Lok Sabha seat.

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

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

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

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Rising food prices cast a pall over festive celebrations

SAMAR PANDEY/RISHABH MALIK

festivities is underway, a sudden surge in the prices of all edible items – groceries, vegetables, has dampened the fruits household spirit during the ensuing Navratri, Eid, Poila Baishak, Bihu, and Baishaki festivals.

Prices of any green vegetable, be it okra, beans, bottle gourd, or bitter gourd, are not less than ₹100 per kilogram. Even the usually affordable vegetable like cabbage is selling at ₹60 per kilogram,

per kilogram across the national While yet another round of two-month-long election of Capital. During the festive season of Chaitra Navratri, the markets are witnessing a surge in fruit prices, such as banana, apple, and papaya, primarily driven by the increased demand for these fruits. Bananas, being both affordable and nutritious, are the preferred choice for devotees fasting during this period.

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

while potatoes have risen to ₹30 kilogram, now come for ₹150-per kilogram and onions to ₹40 l80, while oranges are priced 180, while oranges are priced between ₹80-100 per kilogram, up from ₹30 per kilogram. Grapes, pomegranates, and papayas have also seen notable price increases.

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

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

Continued on Page 8

Desolate railway tracks transformed into a verdant oasis

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA NEW DELHI

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

now the Bharatmandapam, the



garden boasts of ornamental carcasses, the one year old green and garden plants worth even patch with millions of plants has ₹one crore single plant with maximum of them imported come up in partnership with Delhi Division of Northern from south East Asian countries Railway and the private party Evergreen Nursery adjacent to and primarily from Thailand. Once a barren land full of filth, the Pragati Maidan Railway garbage, human and animal Halt.

Vivid varieties and species of ferns, Bougainvillea, Erica Palm, Money plant, rose, bonsai, Oleander (Nerium Indicum), Snake Plant besides the exotic shrubs like Redermachera sinica Thai, Pachira plant Thai, Podocarpus, Aglaonema red

Dicffenbachia Tiger, Philochemdrum Plant, Victoria, Boracia, Ficis Lyrata, Draco Stem, Rhapis palm are some names nurtured in the flower pots and the land that has been made fertile. However, the plants are not for

sale and for any business but are rented out to railway stations, other Government buildings, convention halls etc.

Plants nourished here now also adorn some of the country's border points and coastal areas as part of the beautification drive of the Central and several State Governments and PSUs. "The drive is totally inspired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

anywhere you go, not only the railway premises but other Government buildings all appear clean and green. The patch near Pragati Maidan used to be filth once upon a time and with the initiative of incumbent Railway Minister (Ashwini Vaishnaw) several railway properties being are redeveloped as per the environmental needs. And all require people's support and hence many more such initiatives will come in near future," said Deepak Kumar, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO), Northern Railways.

Swachhata Mission.

Continued on Page 8

'PM implementing egalitarian society vision of Ambedkar'

PNS LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Sunday, said the inclusive vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi resonates with Babasaheb Bhimrao Babasaheb Ambedkar's vision of an egalitarian society.

The chief minister emphasised that under the stewardship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government's schemes were being implemented nationwide with the ethos of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', ensuring equal benefits for all citizens without prejudice.

Imbibing the values and ideals of Babasaheb, Prime Minister Modi is implementing welfare schemes for the poor across the schemes for the poor across the country. Every poor and needy person is being provided with free housing, toilets, health insurance, cooking gas connections and ration facilities. The Modi government is committed to ensuring a dignified life to every person by meeting their basic needs in line with Babasaheb's vision," Yogi added. Yogi was addressing the programme organised on the occasion of the birth anniverof Bharat Ratna Bodhisattva Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. He said, "People from suppressed, downtrodden and deprived classes will continue to honour Babasaheb's memory, recognising his relentless struggle for their dignity and the promise mphasised the profound



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath after paying floral tributes to Dr Ambedkar's statue in Hazratgani on Sunday

of a brighter future for generations to come." Reflecting on the enduring legacy of Dr Ambedkar, Chief

Uttarakhand Economic

Association Prof Ravi Srivastava

hailed Babasaheb as a crucial fig-

ure in Indian social reform

advocating for sustainable devel-

opment and inclusive participa-

tion for societal improvement.

The day concluded with a cul-

tural evening featuring performances by Mumbai-based singer Abhijeet Sawant.

KGMU also organised a programme to mark the occasion.

Director of the Reserve Bank of

India Dr Balu Kenchappa was

the chief guest, who highlight-

ed Dr Ambedkar's multifaceted

contributions, including his role

as the father of the Indian

Constitution and his ground-

Dr Kenchappa underscored Ambedkar's pioneering research on the devaluation of the Indian

rupee during the colonial era,

shedding light on its adverse

effects on the Indian economy. Acting Vice-Chancellor Prof

Amita Jain emphasised the

importance of learning from Dr

Ambedkar's life and legacy, urg-

ing individuals to fulfil their

responsibilities towards mar-

ginalised communities.
Vice-Chancellor of Lucknow

University Prof Alok Kumar Rai led floral tributes along with faculty, students, and staff, underscoring Dr Ambedkar's

role in championing social rights. A stall set up by the Canara Bank SC/ST Employees

and Officers Organisation in

front of Bhimrao Ambedkar

Ground in Gomti Nagar fea-

tured a message from Deputy General Manager Sanjay Kumar,

urging everyone to contribute to

the nation's uplift by following

Babasaheb's principles and

breaking work in economics

impact he has had on the marginalised sections of society. The chief minister said that Babasaheb achieved greatness through struggle, intelligence and understanding.

Reflecting on Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar's pivotal role as the architect of India's Constitution, the chief minister praised his visionary leadership, which positioned India as a global leader in democratic values. He emphasised the transformative impact of Babasaheb's advocacy for justice and freedom, igniting a sense of excitement and unity among the Indian populace. The chief minister remembered Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and offered a floral tribute to his statue. "It is his contribution that today the country's 140 crore people are working as 'Ek Bharat, Shrestha Bharat' with democratic values and rights," he said. Yogi further mentioned that Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar appealed to the oppressed and Dalit communities to become educated. "Babasaheb knew that the fight against chaos, inequality and anarchy could be fought only through education. He worked for the security, sovereignty and integrity of India through-out his life. We must embody his ideals and values and work

India," he stated. In the programme, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, Mayor Sushma Kharkwal, UP minister Asim Arun, Legislative Council Member Dr Lalji Prasad Nirmal, state president of Ambedkar Mahasabha, Pramod Saroj, and others were present.

towards building a developed

confiscated

Lucknow (PNS): The district authorities of Maharajganj and police personnel of Basti have confiscated properties of Uttar Pradesh's former minister Amarmani Tripathi and seized two rooms of his office at his residence in Nautanwa town of Maharajganj district on Saturday.

Hundreds of supporters of the former minister staged a protest and had heated arguments with revenue officials carrying out measurements. The police have to produce a report regarding the confiscation of Amarmani's properties in the court of Basti CJM Pramod Giri on April 15. The action relates to a 23-yearold case of kidnapping of a school boy, Rahul Gupta, in Basti, in 2002. The abducted child was found at a house in Lucknow that belonged to the then minister Amarmani Tripathi. The MP/MLA court of Basti had issued a non-bailable warrant against Amarmani Tripathi on October 16, 2022, and later, on March 22, 2023, the Allahabad High Court had rejected his application to cancel the non-bailable warrant and stop the confiscation process.

Earlier on March 20 this year, the Basti police officers had sought more time to recover two properties of Amarmani, one in Nautanwa town of Maharajganj district and another one in Vibhuti Khand of Lucknow, and the CJM court had granted 10 days' time and instructed the UP DGP and state home secretary to ensure that the properties were confiscated by April 15.

Properties of Amarmani Fire breaks out in hotel

 $A^{ ext{massive fire erupted in the}}_{ ext{chimney of a hotel in}}$ Charbagh on Sunday morning during cooking activities in the kitchen, presenting a for-midable challenge for fire-fighters and nearby hotel and business owners.

According to reports, the fire broke out at Balaji Grand Hotel and Restaurant on AP Sen Road, owned by Mukesh Aggarwal of Charbagh, with Ashish from Alambagh serving as the hotel manager. Situated amidst palatial buildings and government offices, the hotel occupies a 1,000

square-foot area across four floors, having a restaurant on the ground floor and nine hotel rooms upstairs. Hotel manager Ashish

informed reporters that around 9:15 am on Sunday, while chef Govind was preparing food in the kitchen, a fire

erupted in the chimney. Despite efforts by the chef and staff, the flames quickly esca-lated, prompting them to evacuate the premises and seek assistance. As smoke engulfed the hotel rooms, lobby, and gallery, ten guests found themselves trapped on the upper floor. With swift action, the hotel staff utilised fire extinguishers to contain the spread until the arrival of Chief Fire Officer Mangesh Kumar and Hazratganj Fire Station Officer Ram Kumar

Rawat, accompanied by three

All those trapped were rescued. The blaze resulted in extensive damage to the kitchen's contents, and it took over two hours for firefighters to fully extinguish it. When questioned, the hotel owner was unable to produce the necessary fire NOC (no objection certificate).

fire tenders.

Firefighters encountered dif-

ficulties accessing the site, while the police managed traffic to facilitate the fire tenders' passage, aided by the area's less dense population compared to Naka, known for its multitude of small hotels and restau-

FSO Ram Kumar Rawat stated that the fire was noticed around 9:15 pm, with firefighting equipment already installed in the hotel.

Initially, the staff attempted to contain the fire independently, but upon worsening conditions, they alerted the author-

This incident brought back memories of a tragic fire on May 19, 2018, when adjacent hotels (Hotel Viraj and Hotel SSI International) in Naka, Charbagh, claimed the lives of approximately six individuals. Following an inquiry, authorities held the hotel owners accountable for their negli-

Auto driver ends life after tiff with wife

An auto driver allegedly took his own life at his house in Chinhat on Saturday night following a disagreement with his wife. Raj Kamal, residing in Buddh Vihar Colony, was home alone as his wife Renu Devi, along with children, had gone to her parents' house in Kanpur. After her repeated calls went unanswered, Renu contacted Raj Kamal's aunt, Vijaya Verma, in Gulistan Colony the next morning. Upon arrival, Vijaya found the

house locked and informed both the landlord and police. As she entered the house in presence of police, she found Raj Kamal hanging from the ceiling.

According to Vijaya Verma, Raj Kamal was hanging from the ceiling with a dupatta tied around his neck.

Police investigations revealed that Raj Kamal had a heated argument with his wife the previous night over going to her parents' house against his wishes. The confrontation may have led to him the decision to end his life. The police have sent the body for post-mortem exami-nation and further investigations are on.

In another incident, a 45-yearold man was found dead at his house in Kaiserbagh police station area on Sunday. The deceased was identified as

Mano Sharma of Kandhari Bazaar Darbari Lal Hata locality. The incident came to light after neighbours felt a putrid after neighbours felt a putrid smell emanating from his house. Upon breaking open the doors, the police found Manoj's body lying on the bed. The body, showing signs of decay, appeared to be several days old. Manoj was said to have been unwell for some time and was living alone following the passing of his parents and sisters. Meanwhile, a woman allegedly consumed some poisonous substance to end her life in Rahimabad police station area on Sunday.

After the news reached her alleged lover, he also attempted to poison himself to death. The man was identified as Anand Yadav (34), and the two allegedly fell in love even though they were already married. Police suspect the love birds took the step after their respective families did not endorse their relationship and did not let them divorce their respective spouses. The man has been admitted to KGMU Trauma Centre where his condition is said to be critical. On Sunday, the woman's body was found lying in a semi-con-structed house around 8 am. Police reached the spot and sent the body for autopsy. The Malihabad police found a bottle having some poisonous substance near the body.

Man loses over ₹4 lakh in cyber fraud

Lucknow (PNS): A man's pursuit of earning profits through share trading turned into a costly lesson when he fell victim to cyber fraudsters and ended up losing over Rs 4 lakh, in Para police station area.

According to reports, Sumit Kumar Srivastava, a resident of Sheetlapuram Colony, was lured into a group called 'Black Rock Stock Pull Up Group', which claimed to offer accurate information about the share market and promised lucrative returns. Sumit invested Rs 4.85 lakh as instructed by the group administrator, Melisa. After initially making a profit and withdrawing Rs 60,000 in three transactions, he attempted to withdraw his principal investment from his demat account but in vain. Subsequently, he was removed from the group when the fraud-sters learned about his failed withdrawal attempts.

Sumit joined another group that purported to provide investment guidance. He deposited Rs 34,000 and withdrew around Rs 25,000 in profits from different bank accounts. However, he faced the same issue when trying to withdraw from his demat account and was ousted from this group as well. Sumit found discrepancies in his bank account balance, which showed Rs 1.51 crore instead of the actual balance of Rs 59.689.

He reported the incident to the cyber cell and was advised to file a police complaint.

Dr Ambedkar

PNS LUCKNOW

mbedkar Jayanti was cele-fervour in the city on Sunday. Various programmes were organised to commemorate the birth anniversary of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and Foundation Day of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) on Sunday.

The day began with a 'Bhim Walk' on the university campus, followed by floral tributes to Babasaheb's statue by the vicechancellor and other teachers. Subsequently, a book exhibition and photo gallery showcasing aspects of Babasaheb's life were neld at the Atal Bihari Vaipavee

Auditorium.
The day continued with the inaugural session of the 19th annual conference jointly organ-ised by the Ambedkar School of Social Sciences (BBAU) and the Uttar Pradesh-Uttarakhand Economic Association. Participants from renowned universities across the country attended the event. BBAU Vice-Chancellor Sanjay Singh emphasised the importance of collectively pursuing Babasaheb's objectives to contribute to building an inclusive society. BBAU's former vice-chancellor

G Nanchariah highlighted Babasaheb's contribution to creating equal democracy for all, emphasising the need to inte-grate social and political democracy. Former vice-chancellor of Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Prof Binayak Rath emphasised Babasaheb's role in promoting social harmony, justice, and equality, stating that his thoughts would continue to inspire. President of Uttar Pradesh-

Tributes pour in for Ayodhya to have tight security for Ram Navami festival

PNS LUCKNOW

As lakhs of devotees are expected to flock to Ayodhya for Lord Ram's darshan on the occasion of Ram Navami, the first following the consecration of Ram Lalla in his majestic temple, the Uttar Pradesh government has geared up to tighten security in and around Ayodhya for devotees' safety as well as to facilitate darshan.

The government has made elaborate arrangements to celebrate the festival on a grand note while the police administration has stepped up efforts to put all necessary security measures in place in view of the large influx of devotees, ensuring the smooth celebration of this significant

In addition to securing the incoming devotees, the police have devised plans for crowd management and darshan and have estimated devotee numbers. Notably, the Ram Navami Mela commenced in Ayodhya Dham on April 9 and will continue until Ram Navami on April 17, potential-ly attracting 25 lakh devotees. Many police personnel will be deployed at the Ram Navami Mela to ensure safety and

security.

The mela ground has been meticulously divided into seven zones and 39 sectors, while traffic management has been organised into two zones and 11 clusters.

To oversee security of devotees throughout the event, there will be 11 additional superintendents of police, 26 deputy superintendents of

police, 150 inspectors, 400 sub-inspectors, 25 women sub-inspectors, 1,305 chief constables/constables, 270 women chief constables/constables and 15 companies of PAC. Additionally, two companies for flood relief, one team from SDRF and one team from ATS have been assigned supplementary duties. An additional superinborder. tendent of police will supervise each zone, and each sector will have a designated

police or inspector. Furthermore, round-the-clock security will be maintained on the temple premises and the o ensure safe darshan experiences, 15 drop-down barriers and 13 holding areas will be established along Ram Path. Moreover, 50 locations within the mela ground will be equipped with public addressing systems, while continuous surveillance will be conducted via 111 CCTV cameras from the Yellow Zone control room.

deputy superintendent of

To ensure orderly arrangements for the Mela, the police administration has established a control room spanning from the Irrigation department guest house to Nayaghat Police Chowki. The police deployment will be strategically organised along devotee routes, primarily from Saket Petrol Pump via Lata Chowk, Saryu Ghat to Hanuman Garhi, and from Hanuman Garhi to Kanak Bhawan and Ram Lalla Temple, divided into distinct zones and sectors. Water police will oversee security along the river Saryu and Ram ki Pauri, while police and

PAC forces will be stationed at various temples and Mela grounds. The movement of vehicles and devotees will be monitored using 24 ANPR cameras installed at key locations throughout Ayodhya Dham. Additionally, the inflow and outflow of vehicles and devotees will be analysed via cameras at the Gonda CCTV cameras installed in

Ayodhya Dham will assess crowd levels and determine necessary traffic diversions at different locations. Five hundred sixty cameras will be installed in various control rooms across Ayodhya Dham to monitor devotee movement. Furthermore, real-time analysis of roads, streets and parking areas will be conducted using two tethered and eight aerial drones. Additional arrangements will

- Ambulance and rescue teams stationed at key locations such as Mela Control, Pakka Ghat, Saket Petrol Pump, Nageshwar Nath, Hanuman Garhi, Shri Ram Janmabhoomi, Kanak Bhawan, Ayodhya railway station, Ayodhya Kotwari, Bandha Tiraha, and the Control Room (Reserve).

include:

- Police assistance centres and enquiry offices will be established at Bandha Tiraha, Bada Sthan Tiraha, Pakka Ghat, Ram Ki Paidi, Ranopali crossing, Naya Ghat, and Balu Barehata parking lot.

Lost and found camps will

be set up at Tulsi Udyan, Kotwali Ayodhya, and the Mela Control Room at Naya

Keeping 'paandan' tradition alive!

 $A^{lthough \ the \ grandeur \ is}$ now no more after the Zamindari abolition, the descendants of Nawabs have succeeded in preserving their identity. One such descendant is Begum Naseema Raza, wife of Syed Masoom Raza (Advocate), who resides in Saltanat Manzil.

She is the great granddaughter of Khan Bahadur Nawab Syed Hamid Hussain Khan (OBE, MBE) and the daughter of late Nawab Syed Raza Hasan Khan. Begum Naseema Raza is fond of preserving various articles of her family belongings to the Nawabi era. One such unique, rare and invaluable collection is of 'paandan' which she has inherited from her father late Nawab Raza Hasan Khan. "Chewing paan and offering it



to guests was part of Lucknow's culture and associated with this was the collections of 'paandans' and 'khaasdans'. The begums used to prepare paan from the 'paandans' and place them in 'khaasdans' to be offered to guests by 'Nawab Saheb'. 'Paandans' are of various shapes and sizes and are made of different metals like silver,

copper, brass etc," Begum Naseema Raza said. She said that the priceless collection which Saltanat Manzil boasts of is about 100-years old silver 'paandans' and 'khaas-dans' with exquisite and unmatched filigree work.

"There are 'paandans' which were collected down the line in various shapes and sizes hexagonal, rectangular, oblong, mount-shaped. Some are so small that they can be carried in hand while others are big. The same can be said about the 'khaasdans' which are made in silver and are examples of master craftsmanship," said Naseema Raza.

Seeing such collection of 'paandans' and 'khaasdans' at one place strengthens the belief that there are some royal households in Lucknow doing their utmost to preserve their culture and heritage.

NOTICE

I Chinmay Srivastava resident E255 C1 LDA Colony Lucknow, declare that I am changing my daughter's name from Krishnavi Srivastava to Anvi Srivastava vide affidavit dated 02-04-24 sworn before notary S. Kumar

NOTICE

Notice

We Dr. Ashutosh murjani s/o Dr. Hira Lal murjani and Dr. Shyla Murjani w/o Dr. labh Awas A-54/4 Gomti Nagar extensio Lucknow (U.P.) declare that we have lost original allotment letter dated 17.4.2010 No. 1734/D.S.M./10 and Original registr date 25.01.2015 letter No. 16349 Page 261 to 290 No.583 of our foresaid Property which we have decide to sale. If an bjections in this regard may be Submi lobile No-9838620932

LDA announces plans to construct low-cost housing scheme

The Lucknow Development Authority, in collaboration with the UP Housing Development Board, has unveiled plans to construct a low-cost housing scheme on Sultanpur Road and assist the latter in selling its unsold properties. LDA VC Indramani Tripathi announced this during a review meeting on Sunday, stating that the construction work is set to commence in July. The project aims to be sold on a no-profit-no-loss basis, ensuring affordability for middle-class families with the assistance of a government subsidy. Emphasising privacy and minimal neighbour interference, the flats are designed to cater to these needs. Land acquisition,

currently at 40%, will continue

The project aims to be sold on a noprofit-no-loss basis, ensuring affordability for middle-class families with the assistance of a govt subsidy

swiftly, with no disputes reported with farmers or landholders. LDA staff is stationed to safeguard the project site from encroachment. Tripathi highlighted the success of similar schemes in Pune and anticipates its acceptance among the middle-income demographic. Discussions are underway to finalise strategies for disposing of unsold properties in upcom-

CITYBRIEFS

POILA BOISHAKH CELEBRATED

Bengali New Year 'Poila Boishakh' was celebrated at Bengali Club in city on Sunday. For the past many years, Bengali New Year has been celebrated at Bengali Club with fervour, with songs and music presented by various artistes coming from across the country. This year too, Bengali Star Jalsa's singer Soumi Ghosh from Kolkata's reality show 'Super Singer 3' cast her magical spell. The programme was coordinated by Nirmoy Mitra. Soumi Ghosh was felicitated with a bouquet by Trisha Sinha, assistant general secretary of Bengali Club. She enthralled the crowd by dishing out the famous Bengali and Hindi songs. Bengali Club president Arun Kumar Banerjee expressed extended greetings and wishes to everyone present on the occasion. Earlier, all the guests were welcomed with the famous Bengali sweet, 'darbesh'.

AWARENESS CAMP

An awareness camp on arthritis was organised at Hanuman Prasad Rastogi Girls' Inter College on Sunday. Dr Saurav Shukla was the chief guest and speaker, while Dr RP Singh and Dr Aparna Tripathi were the special guests. Dr Saurav Shukla said osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint problem that occurs in old age and causes pain and loss of stability and mobility. "This causes deterioration of the cartilage of the joints. Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disorder where the body's immune system attacks the joints, causing inflammation, pain and ulti-mately joint damage," he said. He added that traumatic injuries such as fractures, dislocations, ligament tears or meniscus tears can cause knee or hip pain. "Obesity also puts extra pressure on the knees and hips, causing pain and increasing the risk of osteoarthritis," he noted. "A study has found that back and knee pain can be

found at different ages," Dr Shukla pointed out. He said the disease can be cured to a great extent by exercise, proper diet, weight loss, rest, and treatment from expert doctors.

EQUESTRIAN DISPLAY

An Equestrian Display was conducted at Surya Khel Parisar. GOC-in-C, Central Command, Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani inaugurated the event. The display included a polo match, mule trick riding, show jumping and tent peg-ging. Sixty horses from the Remount Veterinary Corps and the Army Service Corps participated in the event and displayed their skills in the presence of 2,000 families. The event commenced with the unfurling of the tricolour by Swr Sumit and release of pigeons on horseback. It was followed by a polo match between the Surya Red and Surya Blue teams. The Surya Red team won the 'Surya Polo Trophy' by 6-4.

after prisoner's death Lucknow (PNS): Four jail officials were suspended after a convict accused in an acid

4 jail officials suspended

attack case was allegedly mur-dered inside Chaudhary Charan Singh District Jail in Meerut, police said on Sunday. This prisoner had recently entered the jail after his bail was cancelled.

The body was sent to the mortuary, where the family members created a ruckus and also accused the jail administration of negligence. Director General (Jail) SN Sabat has suspended four employees after finding them

guilty prima facie. Reports said that 30-year-old Rohit, son of Richpal of Gagol village in Partapur police sta-tion area, entered the district jail on April 9. Rohit and his accomplice are accused of throwing acid on a teacher and were sentenced to life imprisonment. However, Rohit was

released from jail for some time after getting bail from the High Court. The victim filed a petition in

the court against the bail in this case, after which Rohit was sent to jail again on April He was kept in a solitary bar-

rack. There was already a pris-

oner in the barrack. When Rohit did not wake up on Saturday morning, the security personnel on duty informed the officers. Rohit was taken to the prison hospital, where doctors pronounced him dead. Rohit's death created a stir. Late in the evening, DG Jail SN Sabat suspended two jail

warders Sanjay Singh and Saroj and two head warders Hari Shankar Tripathi and Ravindra Singh after they were prima facie found guilty. He also handed over the investigation of the case to DIG Jail Subhash Chand Shakya.

Yogi slams Congress for shifting stance on Lord Ram

Labelling members of the Congress as "impersonators", Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated on Sunday that whereas previously the party denied the existence of Lord Ram, it has altered its position following the construction of the grand Ram temple in Ayodhya after a 500-year wait and now it asserts that Ram belongs to

everyone. The Uttar Pradesh chief minister made the remark while addressing the Vijay Sankalp rally at NIT Srinagar in Garhwal Lok Sabha constituency.

He questioned, "Congress used to say that Muslims have the first right over the country's resources, then why was the partition done in 1947 in the first place? Why didn't anyone ask this question to the Congress?"

During the event, Chief Minister Yogi got engaged in an emotional conversation with the people from his birthplace. He sought public sup-port for Bharatiya Janata Party candidate Anil Baluni. He also assured that UP was going to hand over all 80 Lok Sabha seats in the state to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the upcoming general elections. Chief Minister Yogi expressed his pleasure over the opportu-

nity to engage in dialogue in the Lok Sabha constituency of his birthplace. He remarked: "Whenever I come to Uttarakhand, it is an opportunity for conversations, selfrealisation and spiritual experiences. The essence of Lord Shiva resides in every particle here, which is why it is called Devbhoomi (Land of the Gods). The holy rivers that

The chief minister further said that sometimes, some people misunderstand the zero toler-

flow from here bring prosperity to Uttar Pradesh as well."

ance policy of the UP government, fearing that criminals might run away to Uttarakhand. He assured that Uttarakhand. He assured that he will not leave the mafia and criminals in a position to even Uttarakhand has given the youth, the poor, and farmers were not part of their agenda. Their agenda was selfish and



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with BJP leaders during an election rally in Uttarakhand

think of crossing the border of Uttar Pradesh.

Contrasting Congress rule with that of the BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi said that while the former spent the money from temples on religious conversions and constructing madrasas, the latter worked for the restoration and redevelopment of those temples under government protection. The ongoing projects in Badrinath and Kedarnath are examples of this, he stated.

He said the new Ayodhya was showcasing the glimpse of Tretayug. He informed the gathering that one and a half to two lakh people were visiting Ayodhya every day.
"There is full security and

facilities for the devotees. We say we won't provoke, but we won't also spare those who harass businessmen or daughters. Some people think they will commit a crime and go to jail, but we will send them to hell before they reach jail," he

country its first and second chiefs of defence staff (CDS). This is General Bipin Rawat's birthplace. We are confident that under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the borders are secure. During the Congress era, 150 districts of the country were severely affected by Naxalism. Now, only three to four districts are

affected," Yogi asserted.
"Grant Prime Minister Modi a third term, and Naxalism will be eradicated once and for all. Terrorism has ceased in Kashmir. Just four days ago, during an election rally, it was evident that people in Jammu and Kashmir also have faith in Modi's assurance regarding the democratic mainstream,"

Yogi elaborated. Chief Minister Yogi said that he had the opportunity to be a Member of Parliament from Gorakhpur five times since 1998. "It was saddening to see the 10-year tenure of Congress as MP. They didn't have any national agenda. Women,

divisive, but in the past ten years, we have seen a changing India," Yogi said. Highlighting the improved connectivity under Prime Minister Modi's leadership,

Yogi said that train facility was made available from Dehradun-Rishikesh to Karnaprayag via Srinagar. "Connectivity in the mountains was very difficult before. Previously, it used to take 12-12 hours to travel to Badrinath-Kedarnath. Today, one can reach Kedarnath-Badrinath by helicopter in just half an hour. Kedarnath Dham has again regained the glory it had before 2013," he said.

"I have spent my childhood here. I have seen that one had to go down two-three kilome-tres to fetch water. Today, every household has a tap connection. Congress people could not even provide kerosene. Since Uttarakhand was formed, the state has made progress through the Char Dham pilgrimage," Yogi added. Drawing a parallel with the previous government, the UP chief minister said that Congress provided only one AIIMS in 60 years, whereas during Atal ji's time, six were built and during Modi ji's time, 15 more were added. He said that Uttarakhand was moving in the right direction under the leadership of the double-engine government. "The blessings of the deities in Devbhoomi will go to the positive energies, not to the negative ones," he added.

Yogi said that on Sunday morning Prime Minister Modi had released BJP's 'Lok Sankalp Patra' which aims to realise the vision of a developed India and propel the self-reliant India forward. "The foundation of this vision is the youth, women, farmers, and the poor. The BJP has released its 'Lok Sankalp Patra' to build such an India with the concept that India will establish itself as the world's greatest power by 2047," he added. The chief minister asked all BJP workers to read the 'Lok Sankalp Patra' and disseminate it among the

people. In the public meeting, BJP's Uttarakhand unit president

Country in strong hands, no longer helpless: CM

In a scathing attack on the Congress, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the grand old party saddled the nation with pressing issues, including terrorism, Naxalism, nepotism, casteism and regionalism, adding that under Prime Minister Narendra Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the country was no longer helpless, and was instead secure in strong hands. The UP chief minister addressed the Vijay Sankalp rally in Roorkee on Sunday. The rally was held in support of Bharatiya Janata Party can-didate and former chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat for the Haridwar Lok Sabha constituency. Yogi Adityanath emphasised

that the forthcoming election is a decisive choice between

Mahendra Bhatt, MP Tirath Singh Rawat, Uttarakhand's minister Dr Dhan Singh Rawat, Subodh Uniyal, BJP candidate from Garhwal Anil Baluni, MLA Rajkumar, Bharat Chaudhary, Vinod Kandari, Renu Visht and others were present. Yogi also rallied suppresent. Yogi also rallied support for Tehri Garhwal MP and BJP candidate Mala Rajyalakshmi Shah during a large-scale public gathering at Bannu Ground in Dehradun, urging voters to embrace the letter symbol ones again. Yogi

lotus symbol once again. Yogi Adityanath emphasised a unified sentiment in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand in favour of those who revere Lord Ram. He underscored the power of Ram's name as a universal remedy for all ailments, contrasting it with the Congress' lack of faith in Ram, which resulted in their political downfall. "We witness a remarkable

alignment of faith, cultural heritage, and development initiatives. Iconic sites like Kedarnath Dham, Kashi

prioritising the nation's interests over familial concerns. He underscored the sentiment prevailing across the country, expressing determination to bring back those who uphold the legacy of Lord Ram while rejecting the Congress, which, he claimed, had disregarded

the sanctity of Shri Ram. He lauded Rawat's dedication and sacrifices in his political journey. He called for a historic victory for the BJP in Haridwar and pledged that over the next five years, Haridwar would undergo development akin to that witnessed in Ayodhya.

Praising Trivendra Singh Rawat, the BJPs candidate, for being pivotal in shaping Uttarakhand's developmental trajectory, Yogi highlighted Rawat's journey since his association with the Akhil

Vishwanath Dham and Badrinath Vishal Dham are undergoing significant transformations, while the 'pran pratishthan' of Ram Lalla in Ayodhya after 500 years is a momentous occasion. In contrast to the era of Congress, where unemployment plagued the youth, substantial employment opportunities are now available. Moreover, the divisive politics of casteism have been replaced by a resurgence of national pride and unity," he remarked.

The chief minister announced plans to provide housing for three crore impoverished individuals within the next three years. He highlighted the significant progress already made, with four crore homes constructed for the underprivileged nationwide. He underscored the impor-

tance of voting for the right party, emphasising that it determines the trajectory of security, prosperity, governance and cultural heritage. Conversely, Yogi warned

Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad and subsequent roles as MLA, minister and chief minister. Yogi credited Rawat with resolving the longstanding issues inherited from the Congress era in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

Emphasizing Rawat's commitment to national development, Yogi Adityanath com-mended his decades-long dedication to the nation's prosperity and acknowledged Rawat's foundational efforts in 2017, laying the groundwork for Uttarakhand's development, which is now being advanced under Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami's leadership. Yogi Adityanath underscored the imperative for enhanced development in Haridwar and urged the public to ensure Rawat's resounding victory with record margin.

against the consequences of misguided voting, which can lead to corruption, terrorism, disorder, poor management and an erosion of national identity – a crisis he attributed to Congress.

The event saw the presence of a number of BJP leaders, including party's election in-charge for Uttarakhand, Dushyant Kumar Gautam, state election coordinator Naresh Bansal, BJP candidate Mala Rajyalakshmi Shah, and state government minister Premchand Aggarwal.

YOGI PAYS VISIT TO GORAKHNATH CAVE

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday visited Gorakhnath cave in Srinagar, Bhaktiyana of Uttarakhand.

He had darshan of Guru Gorakshanath there. Nearby, he also worshiped Lord Shiva and performed rituals.

After this, the UP chief minister visited Baba Bhairavnath and wished for the prosperity

BJP manifesto embodies country's ambition: Yogi

Adityanath said that the manifesto of the Bharatiya Janata Party released on Sunday embodied the country's ambition, achieving which was the sole mission of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Yogi Adityanath lauded the party's manifesto, which is anchored on 14 new resolutions and four pillars focusing on the welfare of the underprivileged, youth, women and farmers.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi formally released the 'Sankalp Patra' of the BJP in Delhi on Sunday.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised that this manifesto is aligned with the aspiration of building a developed India, describing it as Modi's commit-ment to the people of India, ensuring the realisation of expectations related to Dignity of Life, Quality of Life and Quality of Opportunity. He emphasised that the man-

ifesto focuses on the wellbeing of the youth, women, farmers and the underprivileged. He underscored further that Prime Minister Modi strives for a developed India through self-reliance and fostering inclusive growth for all developed India through demographics in line with the Modi's assurance.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath highlighted that over the past decade, 250 million individuals have risen above the poverty line, experiencing a transformative change in their lives. He underscored the launch of various schemes targeting the vouth under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. Alongside initiatives aimed at

aligning investment with job creation, programmes such as PM Startup, PM Standup, and the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, among others, have been included in the 'Sankalp

Furthermore, efforts have been directed towards empowering 100 million women through self-help groups committed to catalysing comprehensive transformations in their lives over the next five years, reflecting a fresh vision.

Emphasising the significance of the four pillars, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stated, "The BJP has unveiled a 'Kalyan Sankalp Patra' designed to impact every sector." He highlighted that the manifesto is poised to actualise the vision of a self-reliant and

poised to imbibe the vision outlined in the 'Sankalp Patra' as their life mission, striving to materialise the concept of a developed India. Their efforts aim to contribute to realising the nation's hopes and aspirations," he added.

Yogi Adityanath expressed confidence that the Bharatiya Janata Party will garner the support and blessings of the people in line with this resolu-

In a show of appreciation, Chief Minister Yogi expressed his gratitude to esteemed BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, party's national president JP Nadda, Resolution Making Committee Chairman and Defence Minister Rainath Singh, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, for unveiling the BJP 'Sankalp Patra' for the upcoming Lok

Sabha elections. He warmly congratulated the prime minister, the BJP nationpresident and all senior party leaders, conveying heart-felt appreciation on behalf of hundreds of thousands of party workers and the UP's 250 million people.

Mayawati promises separate statehood to western UP

Bahujan Samaj Party supremo and former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Mayawati, has raked up the old issue of separate statehood for western Uttar Pradesh.

She said that if the BSP formed its government, it would honestly work for creating a separate state in western UP.

Beginning her election campaign for western Uttar Pradesh from the GIC grounds in Saharanpur on Sunday, the BSP chief claimed that it would not be easy for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party to return to power because of the difference in their words and actions. She accused the BJP of lying to the public and working in the

interest of the powerful.

Mayawati said that if the election was conducted fairly and transparently without any irregularities in the electronic voting machines EVMs), then mere theatrics and rhetoric of the ruling dispensation would not

"For the past few years, the BJP and its allies have been in power at the Centre and in most of the states. Owing to the casteist, capitalist, narrow and vindictive policies and style of working, and due to the significant difference in their words and actions, it now seems that it would not be easy for them to return to power at the Centre, provided

these elections are free and fair,"

"The people of the country have understood that the real motive of those who promise good days to the poor is to benrun their organisations only with the support of capitalists and this has been proved through electoral bonds. Like Congress, the BJP has also politicised government investigating agencies," the BSP chief said. Mayawati said that under the rule of the Samajwadi Party in the state, the sense of brotherhood ended in UP, especially in its western parts, highlighting that there were no communal riots during the BSP tenure. She said the sense of brotherhood among Jats and Muslims was broken during the SP government's tenure. "During the

tenure of the SP government, an atmosphere of fear prevailed in Muzaffarnagar, to the extent that Muslim representatives hesitated to contest elections. Due to this, a candidate from the extremely backward class had to be fielded. To ensure representation for the Muslim community, a candidate has been fielded from Haridwar this time," she

Mayawati said that her party was contesting the Lok Sabha elections on its own instead of forging an alliance with any party and had given "appropriate share to all sections of the society" as



far as ticket distribution is concerned. She said that tickets had been given to Prajapati in Muzaffarnagar, Iat in Bijnor, Rajput in Kairana and Muslim in Saharanpur to ensure all communities got proper representation.

The BSP has fielded Majid Ali from Saharanpur and Dara Singh Prajapati from Muzaffarnagar. Majid Ali, enjoys influence over the Muslim community in the area while Dara Singh Prajapati belongs to the Other Backward Classes community. Mayawati highlighted the cur-

rent challenges faced by farmers, contrasting them with the BSP's rule when the problems of the farmers were promptly addressed, and the sugarcane prices were significantly increased.

Regarding recruitment in UP

Police and other departments Earlier in the day, Mayawati without putting any financial burden on them whereas the ignoring his followers. giving them free food items." Mayawati will address her next public meetings in Rampur and Moradabad on April 15. On April 16, she will address pub-lic meetings in Nagina and Bijnor and in Ghaziabad, Baghpat and Amroha on April 21. On April 22, she will address public meetings in Gautam Buddha Nagar and Bulandshahr. She will be in Meerut and Hapur on April 23 to address public meetings in support of the party candidates.

The elections in west Uttar Pradesh are crucial for the BSP as the area has been its traditional stronghold.

BSP national coordinator Akash Anand, whom Mayawati had announced as her successor, earlier launched the election campaign from Nagina to mobilise the cadre for the Lok Sabha elections.

According to the election schedule, eight parliamentary constituencies of UP — Saharanpur, Kairana, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Nagina (SC), Moradabad, Rampur, and Pilibhit — in UP will vote in the first phase of Lok Sabha polls on April 19. Counting of votes will be held on

during the BSP rule, Mayawati said, "We gave jobs to the youth parties of giving an "ostensible" parties of giving an "ostensible" respect to Dr BR Ambedkar and Bharatiya Janata Party govern- In a statement, Mayawati said, ment is misleading the people by "For narrow electoral interests

the ostensible respect given to Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, and ignoring his followers, exemplifies the proverb 'mooh mein ram, bagal mein chhuri'. This is an old tradition, and it is still continuing, and it is necessary to remain cautious of this illusion." Speaking about the Congress,

she said, the party's 'garibi hatao' slogan in the 1980s remained only a slogan because of lack of intention on its part. "And now, the same condition

prevails under the BJP government as the sky-rocketing inflation, poverty, unemployment and backwardness is worsening the lives of the people," she said. In a post in Hindi on X, Mayawati paid her tributes to Ambedkar on his birth anniversary and called him "a messiah of millions of poor, exploited, deprived and neglected people

of the country".
"Baba Saheb's mission is incomplete, BSP will complete it. This is not just a slogan but a firm resolve and mission with which the party was formed, and came to power four times in the state. The present Lok Sabha elections too have to be fought with this goal," she said in another post.

Erstwhile royals of UP lose sheen in electoral politics

PNS LUCKNOW

With the increasing democratisation of the electoral politics following the rapid rise in caste-based identity politics, the political par-ties appear to have lost interest in fielding erstwhile royals of Uttar Pradesh in this Lok Sabha election in constituencies where they earlier held

Former Members of Parliament Sanjay Singh, scion of the erstwhile Amethi princely state, Rajkumari Ratna Singh of Kalakankar, Kunwar Akshay Pratap Singh 'Gopalji' of Jamo (Amethi) and Begum Noor Bano of Rampur are missing from the electoral scene, as are former MLA Aridaman Singh of Bhadawar (Agra) and Noor

Bano's son Nawab Kazim Ali. Several former kings and princes took to politics after the abolition of their estates and zamindari. Many of them were accommodated by the Congress and Bharatiya Jan Sangh, the earlier avtar of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

In the Lok Sabha elections 2024, former kings and princes have not got a chance to contest as they seem to have lost their political clout.

Former Union minister Sanjay Singh, who left the Congress and joined the BJP, is not in the fray this time. An aide said, 'We were hoping that Maharaj (Sanjay Singh) would be made a candidate by the BJP from Sultanpur, but Maneka Gandhi has been declared the candidate from there again."

Sanjay Singh, a former Rajya Sabha member, won the Amethi Lok Sabha seat on a BJP ticket in 1998 and the Sultanpur seat as a Congress candidate in 2009. He lost to Maneka Gandhi in Sultanpur in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. The possibility of Ratna Singh contesting from Pratapgarh as the BJP candidate is over as the party has fielded sitting MP Sangam Lal Gupta. Katna Singh, daughter of Raja Dinesh Singh, switched to the BJP from the Congress in 2019. She represented Pratapgarh in the Lok Sabha as Congress member in 1996, 1999 and 2009. Kunwar Akshay Pratap Singh alias 'Gopalji' won the Lok Sabha election from Pratapgarh on a Samajwadi Party ticket in 2004. He was the

Jansatta Dal (Democratic) candidate for the seat in 2019 but came third. There are no indications yet of him contesting the polls this time.

Former Member of Parliament from Rampur in western Uttar Pradesh and matriarch of the erstwhile royal family, Begum Noor Bano, even at the age of 84, was being considered a contender from the Congress. However, following a seat-sharing agreement with INDIA bloc constituents Congress and the Samajwadi Party, the Rampur seat went to the latter. Her son Nawab Kazim Ali, who was expelled from the Congress, is also away from the electoral battle this time. Kazim's son Nawab Haider Ali Khan 'Hamza Mian', who is in the ruling BJP ally Apna Dal (Sonelal), also did not get a chance this time. In 2014, Nawab Kazim Ali unsuccessfully contested the Rampur

seat on a Congress ticket. The ruling BJP has mostly bet on its old candidates and MPs. Also, with the SP getting a higher seat share in its alliance with the Congress, the erstwhile royals who were with the Congress have not been able to get tickets. As part of the opposition INDIA bloc, Congress has got 17 seats in UP while West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjeeled Trinamool Congress has got one seat. The remaining 62 seats in UP are being contested by the SP.

Aridaman Singh of the Bhadawar royal family of Agra was a six-time MLA from the

Bah assembly constituency and minister in the BJP-led state government. He contested the 2009 Lok Sabha election as a BJP candidate but lost. His wife Rani Pakshalika Singh is still a BJP MLA from Bah. Pakshalika Singh had lost the 2014 Lok Sabha election from Fatehpur Sikri seat on the SP ticket.

Descendants of both Raja Ajit Pratap Singh of Pratapgarh and former prime minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh of the erstwhile royal family of Manda are no longer active in politics. Raja Ajit Pratap Singh won the Lok Sabha election from Pratapgarh in 1962 and 1980. His son Abhay Pratap Singh won the seat in 1991 but grandson Anil Pratap Singh failed despite several attempts.

SP names 7 more candidates

Samajwadi Party, on Sunday, released a fresh list of seven candidates for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. In the latest list, the SP has

named Amarnath Maurya as its candidate from Phulpur, Ram Shiromani Verma from Shravasti, Bhishma Shankar Tiwari from Dumariyaganj, Lashmikant alias Pappu Nishad from Sant Kabir Nagar, Ramshankar Rajbhar from Salempur, Babu Singh Kushwaha from Jaunpur and Priya Saroj from Machhlishahr. Earlier on Friday, the SP had announced the names of its candidates for Kaushambi and Kushinagar Lok Sabha seats. Pushpendra Saroj was made the party candidate from Kaushambi and Ajay Pratap

Singh aka Pintu Sainthwar from Kushinagar.

Pushpendra is the son of SP national general secretary Inderjit Saroj. Inderjit Saroj represents the Manjhanpur assembly seat in the Kaushambi district. Pintu Sainthwar had contested election as an SP candidate from the Deoria assembly seat in 2022. His father, late Janmejay Singh, was a Bharatiya Janata Party MLA from the same seat.

Pushpendra is pitted against Vinod Sonkar, the sitting BJP MP in Kaushambi, a reserved seat. Sonkar is seeking re-election for the third term. Similarly in Kushinagar, Pintu Sainthwar will fight against sitting MP Vijay Kumar Dubev. who has again been given a ticket by the BJP.

Ambedkar immortal champion | Kumar: Conduct frequent patrolling to of social harmony: Bansal

On the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, pioneer of social justice and a great social reformer, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers paid tribute to him. The party's national general secretary Sunil Bansal, who came to Varanasi on a two-day stay, paid homage to Ambedkar by garlanding the Ambedkar statue located at Kutchery crossing on Sunday.

Addressing the workers present on the occasion, Sunil Bansal said that Baba Saheb's contribution in removing social inequality and providing social justice to the deprived classes is incomparable. He said that the efforts made by Dr Ambedkar for the empowerment of the person standing at the last rung of the society will continue to inspire all of us and Baba Saheb dedicated his life to the eradication of untouchability and social inequality. He added that Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar was an immortal champion of

social harmony.
Addressing the workers



BJP general secretary Sunil Bansal paying tribute to Dr Ambedkar in Varanasi on

after garlanding the Ambedkar man of extraordinary talent statue, regional Bharatiya

and was also a famous politi-Janata Party president Dilip cal and social reformer who Patel said that Dr Ambedkar, born on April 14, 1891, was a tion in the making of the

Indian Constitution. He said that we also called Baba Saheb as the creator of the Constitution.

'Baba Saheb's name was used by everyone but the work of giving respect was done by the central government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said, adding that the Panch Teerth associated with Baba Saheb was constructed by

Regional media in-charge Navratan Rathi said that the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar was celebrated at as many as 30,286 booths of all the 16 organisational districts of Kashi region, including Varanasi district and city units.

MLC and Lok Sabha coordinator Ashwini Tyagi, Lok Sabha in charge and former minister Satish Dwivedi, MLAs Awadhesh Singh and Saurabh Srivastava, Mayor Ashok Tiwari, city Bharatiya Janata Party president Vidyasagar Rai, ratty president vidyasagar Rai, city programme coordinator Ashok Jatav, Jagdish Tripathi, Kishore Seth, Ashok Yadav, Rajneesh Kanojia, Sindhu Sonkar, Siddhanath Sharma, Sushil Gupta, Kamlesh Sonkar, Ratan Maurya and many others were also present.

contain dumping of bodies in canal

City Police Commissioner Akhil Kumar visited the Ramganga Canal bridge in the Sadh police station area on Sunday and directed the officials, including the ACP Ghatampur, to conduct frequent patrolling and checking to contain dumping of bodies into the canal. He also gathered some other information from the officials.

On coming to know that large number of unidentified bodies were recovered in the Sadh police station area, he asked from the ACP Ghatampur Ranjit Kumar Singh for the reason. The latter informed that the number of unidentified bodies had increased in the area as they area often found floating in the canal. The CP asked the ACP Ghatampur and Sadh SHO not to make the Ramganga canal area a body dumping



City police commissioner Akhil Kumar issuing directives to officials at the Ramganga Canal bridge on Sunday.

zone. He directed them for conducting frequent patrolling on the bank of the canal and checking of suspicious people to prevent them from dumping the unidentified bodies into the canal. He issued some other

necessary directives to cops. CP Ákhil Kumar also saw the flow of the Ramganga canal

from the Baraigarh bridge in the Sadh police station area. The CP said he had carried out the inspection of the Sadh

police station area, specially the Ramganga canal bridge, in view of the large number of unidentified bodies being recovered from there. Some other directives were also issued to the cops, he said.

worth lakhs gutted in fire and the use of loud sound sys-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Goods worth lakhs of rupees were gutted when a fire broke out in the laundry of a hotel on Mall Road under Pheelkhana police station on Sunday morning. The fire brigade brought the fire under control and rescued all the customers

As the fire broke out on the third floor of the hotel, the fire brigade had to face a tough time in controlling it. The entire laundry items were gutted in the fire. However, no casualty was reported. On receipt of information about the fire in the hotel on Mall Road, Phoolbagh crossing, six fire tenders from Latouche Road, Colonelganj, Meerpur and Fazalganj fire stations immediately rushed to the

spot. It took over two hours to control the fire. By then, the entire laundry goods worth lakhs of rupees were gutted. Chief Fire Officer (CFO) Deepak Sharma said he had received information about the incident around 10 am through the mini control room. During investigation, it was informed that some electrical work was being carried out in the hotel and the fire broke out due to a short circuit in the wiring, he

RUCKUS: Ruckus prevailed after police stopped the procession taken out on the occasion of Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar Jayanti in Maswanpur locality on Sunday. The police did not allow the procession to move ahead due to the number of vehicles exceeding the sanctioned limit

tem. After the intervention of police, followers of Baba Saheb Ambedkar staged an agitation and sat on dharna on the street. ACP Kalyanpur Abhishek Pandey and DCP (West) Vijay Dhul rushed to the spot and pacified the issue on the use of three vehicles and two sound systems on each vehicle as sanctioned by the authorities. The Bhartiya Baudh Mahasabha had been taking out the procession in Maswanpur locality of Kalyanpur police area on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti for the past several years. On Sunday immediately after the procession started with 15-20 vehicles at 10 am, it was stopped by the police on pretext of violation

duct. After the organisers agreed to use only three vehicles and two sound systems on each vehicle, the procession was allowed to move ahead. General Secretary of Bhartiya Baudh Mahasabha Mukesh Kanaujia said he used to take permission for use of 20-25 vehicles every year in the procession. But this time, due to violation of model code of conduct, the police administration

stopped the procession.

DCP (West) Vijay Dhul said due to use of more number of vehicles beyond the permission and loud noise of the sound systems, the procession was stopped. After talking to the participants, they agreed to take out the procession according to the pre-scribed norms, he said.

Programme on Mahad Satyagraha held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Aone-day programme titled Satyagraha: Review' was organised on the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti under the aegis of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (FSS BHU)), at Mahamana Auditorium, Malviya Moolya Anushilan Kendra here on Sunday. The programme was completed under the direction of Prof Binda D Paranjape, Dean of FSS BHU and Dr Pankaj Singh.

In the first session of the presented programme, the importance of Mahad Satyagraha carried out by Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar was underlined and explained by the students through short speeches and poems. The message was given that Mahad Satyagraha was a movement against social inequality and exploitation along with the right of Dalits to drink water in public places and a united struggle of the Dalit community to achieve human rights and



A programme on Mahad Satyagraha being held in Varanasi on Sunday.

dignity. After this, as the second session of the programme, bution of Dr Ambedkar. In the the Faculty of Visual Arts to

showcase the important contrian exhibition was organised in last session of the programme, the then social

Mahad Satyagraha was staged through plays.

Meanwhile, Head of Journalism and Mass Communication department, Banaras Hindu University (BHU) Dr Shobahna Nerlikar said the department will organ-ise a one-day national seminar on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr Bhim Rao Ambedkar to celebrate his contributions in the field of journalism on April 15 from 10:30 am. In the seminar Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapeeth (MGKV) Prof AK Tyagi as the will be the chief-guest and VC of Arunodaya Vishwavidyalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Prof Vishwanath Sharma will be the guest of honour. The objective of the seminar is to discuss the contribution of Dr Baba Saheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar in journalism. In this seminar research

papers will be presented by the scholars and faculty members, informed Dr Shobahna

Praveen Patel given

The Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) has once again expressed confidence in Praveen Patel, BJP MLA from Phulpur, and has declared him as its candidate from Phulpur Lok Sabha constituency. In Andawa area, Jhunsi, his supporters welcomed him by garlanding him and presenting ouquet. Pat expresse

his gratitude to the top leader-ship and stressed on making the PM's campaign i.e to make the country a developed one successful. Phulpur should play a leading role in it, he added. He said development should continue. In the coming times, as per the vision of PM Narendra Modi, we will work to strengthen the infrastructure of Phulpur region. He said today every person is standing with PM Narendra

Modi and wants him to become the PM for the third time. CME HELD: A CME on

of the model code of con-

the topic, Cytopenias and Cytosis: a potpourri of interesting haematology cases, was organised at AMA convention centre here on Sunday under the presidentship of AMA President Dr. Kamal Singh. Dr Faheema Hasan said blood is the river of life, it carries oxvgen, water and nutrients to al

organs and tissues. Any decrease or increase of cells are an indicator of disease. Reduced haemoglobin is called anaemia and can be due to a number of conditions from nutritional causes to cancer the most common being iron deficiency. Dr Hasan discussed few interesting cases on decreased and increased blood cells and on the management of

Products of OPF inspected

 $T^{\text{he officials of the Air Force}}_{\text{Inspection Service}} \text{ (AIS)}$ and their family members inspected the products of the Ordnance Parachute Factory (OPF), a unit of Gliders India Limited on Saturday. They were all praise for the products of the OPF. General Manager MC Balasubramanium said the entire team of Ordnance Parachute Factory was committed to producing quality products and will continue to so. Earlier, all the AIS officials and their family members were extended a rousing welcome on their arrival at Ordnance Parachute Factory. The team inspected the CAD-CAM (Cutting) shop and the works being carried out in the Parachute workshop. Sarika Dubey of Mahila Kalyan Samiti, Air Force, said the



products and work culture of Ordnance Parachute Factory were matchless and praisewor-

She was all praise for the cleanliness and discipline of OPF and the loyalty of its employees. Such visits by the officers and their family members will help in creating a cordial atmosphere in quality inspection in OPF. It will also help in quick certification of the products and their quality after production. The initiative will pave way for creating a good atmosphere. Joint General Manager S Banerjee, Wing Commander Vivek Dubey, Sarika Dubey, MWO SR Tewari, Poonam Tewari, Amar Deep Kumar and Pravin Chandra were present.

OPF GM MC Subramanium felicitates Sarika Dubey of Air Force Mahila

Temples witness huge crowd

Devotees thronged Lalita Gauri Temple at Lalita Ghat here on the sixth day of Vasantik (also known as Chaitra) Navratri here on Sunday. Hundreds of devotees also reached Katyayani Durga Temple located in the premises of Atma Vireshwar Temple at Scindia Ghat. Besides, heavy rush was seen through out the day as usual at Durga Mandir (Durga Kund) apart from Old Durga Mandir in Ramnagar and Sheetla Mata Mandir at Adalpura on Varanasi- Chunar (Mirzapur) road. This religious city has separate temples of all the nine Devis and nine Gauris where the devotees offer prayers on different days of Shárdiya and Vasántik respectively. Navratra Meanwhile, a large number of devotees also visited



Lalita Gauri Temple witnessed huge crowd on sixth day of Vasantik Navratri in Varanasi on Sunday.

Vindhyachal in Mirzapur district, about 65 kilometres from

INVITED: On the invitation of the international child rights organisation Child Rights and You (CRY) America, social activist couple Dr Roli and Rajeev Kumar Singh will address inspiration and motivation programmes to be organised in five major cities of the United States of America (USA) from April 19 to April 28. Rajiv Kumar Singh, general secretary and chief executive of Dr Shambhunath Singh Research Foundation, a well-known social literary organisation of the city, said that he, along with his wife Dr Roli Singh will be in in New York (US) on April 19, Houston on April 21, San Diego on April 26, Seattle on April 27 and in the Bay Area, California on April 28. They will address CRY America's annual galas in the Bay Area, California on April 28, and present the initia-

Along with them, India's famous cine actor Arjun Rampal will also encourage people to actively participate in social work. Roli and Rajeev had previously participated in this programme with actresses Pooja Batra and Abhay Deol in 2017 and 2018. On Sunday a function was organised under the chairmanship of Foundation president Vijayashree Singh in which office-bearers and workers of the organisation Gulabchand Saroj, Dr Vyomesh Chitravansh, Ravi Sonkar, Dr Madhu, Dr Kamna, Dr Shakti, Firdaus, Survabhan, Chandrabali Choubey,

Deeksha, Sulekha, Manoj, Ajay,

Prabhat and Shweta and others

wished them a successful and

pleasant journey.

tives and innovations made through the 'One Step to Stop Child Marriage' campaign.

Workshop organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A n awareness workshop was organised for the prevention of harassment of women at workplace under the aegis of the newly-formed POSH Committee under the Women Sexual Harassment Committee of Mahila Mahavidyalaya,

Kidwai Nagar on Saturday. The programme was inaugurated by Principal Professor Anju Chaudhary. Thereafter, the principal welcomed the chief guest. The members of the committee were introduced and the subject was introduced by the Committee Chairperson Professor Pratibha Srivastava. The key speaker of the programme and NGO member of the committee, Neelam Chaturvedi, while addressing all the teachers and non-teaching staff of the college, told about the purpose of the POSH Act made in 2013. If a male employee is found

with a woman, what is the provision of punishment for him under this Act and also how to keep the workplace free from sexual harassment under this law, she said. Detailed information was also given on all these aspects. If any complaint of sexual harassment is received, then how will action be taken on it and what transparency will be maintained, she said. Chaturvedi also said that it is the responsibility of the employer to make the workplace safe for its employees, especially female employees. The workshop was conducted by Professor Manisha Shukla and the vote of thanks was proposed by Professor Vandana Sharma. All the members of the committee, Dr Sangeeta Kumari, Dr Sumanlata, Dr. Saba Yunus, Preeti Shukla and Deepika Srivastava contributed in the successful conduct of the programme.

guilty of sexual misconduct

Role of information & communication tech in teaching & research discussed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The two-day training programme of Teach for BHU (TFB) fellows at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) was held in the committee room of Laxman Das Guest House here on Sunday. As many as 24 fellows participated in it on the second day. In the beginning, the participants sang Kulgeet collectively, after which the report and feedback of the previous day's sessions were discussed.

In the first session, Dr PC Abhilash discussed scientific writing and research project grants for publication in magazines. In the second session, Prof AS Raghuvanshi discussed question paper preparation, internal marking, assessment and evaluation standards. With reference to several researches, he said that it is necessary to



refine the professional skills of teachers through proper training. He said that the foremost quality of a good teacher is his/ her ability to assess and evaluate and the teacher should be capable of creating valid and reliable questions for testing so that proper discrimination can be made between those who know and those who do not know through the test.

In the third session, Dr Pankaj Singh of the Faculty of Education discussed the use

and role of information and communication technology in teaching and research. He also discussed various online platforms. In the fourth session, Prof Sunil Kumar Singh, while presenting on the life and teacher philosophy of Mahamana Malviya, said Mahamana is the embodiment of Sanatan values.

The chief guest of the concluding session Institution of Eminence (IoE) coordinator Prof Sanjay Kumar said that every student should make best contribution to the society by making full use of the training and teaching opportunities and building excellence in business career. He also received an extensive feedback from the scholars.

Prof Sunil Kumar Singh welcomed the guests while the vote of thanks was proposed by Dr PC Abhilash.

Illicit liquor recovered

 $T_{\rm with\ excise\ team\ raided}^{\rm he\ police\ in\ collaboration}$ Jalalpur under Airport police station area, Arail and Ghurpur of Naini late on Saturday night, and recovered 3,000 litres of illicit countrymade liquor. On Saturday night ACP Varun Kumar raided Jalalpur village under Airport police station area along with force and excise team. The police recovered liquor worth several lakhs which was filled in drums for supply. From here the police caught Nanhe Nishad and Ramesh Nishad, residents of Jalalpur. A case has also been registered against Puiya Nishad, Raju Nishad, Rajbali and Nanka who had escaped by jumping into the river. ACP Varun Kumar said thousands of litres of liquor has been recovered. A case has been registered against the four absconding

illicit liquor smugglers. around 11 am at Bhilor Ghat Kumar said the team of Ghurpur Police and SOG Yamunanagar has destroyed hundreds of litres of liquor by conducting a campaign. The police arrested the accused Amar Chandra Nishad, son of Kandhai, a resident of Chhota Kanjasa under Ghurpur police station area. DCP Yamuna Nagar Shraddha Narendra Pandey said apart from Ghurpur, thousands of litres of illicit liquor was been recovered from three factories in Naini and Arail. So far eight persons have been sent to jail.

In another incident one person died due to drowning on Sunday. The people informed the police about the incident. On getting the information that the state of th mation, the police reached the spot and with the help of people, took the body of the victim out from the Yamuna and sent it for the post-mortem examination. The incident took place

under Lalapur police station area. On getting information the police station in charge Lalapur along with police force reached the spot. The police station in charge Lalpur Ajay Mishra said with the help of some boatmen, the body of the person who had drowned in the Yamuna has been taken out. The deceased has been identified as Indra Raj Nishad (20) of Ghoghpur village under Maheva Ghat police station, Kaushambi. The police informed the family about the incident.

DUPED: A resident of Sohbatiabagh under Georgetown police station was deprived of ₹1.2 lakh by cyber thugs here. Based on the mobile number, the victim Prashant has filed a case at Georgetown police station. SHO Pradeep Kumar Singh that a case has been registered on the basis of the complaint.

Modi exhorts people to give another mandate to his party

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

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

through uncertain times," the prime minister said, referring to the several conflicts the world was grappling with. "This 'Sankalp Patra' strength-

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

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



world, the necessity for a stable ocal majority in India becomes even more pronounced.

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

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

The BJP's Sankalp Patra will swiftly initiate its course after June 4, with the government already underway on its initial 100-day action plan. BJP has enacted the Nari Shakti Act, revoked Article 370, and implemented the CAA nationwide. Upholding the principles of Reform, Perform, and Transform, India is poised to advance rapidly," Modi said.
During the unveiling of the Sankalp Patra, a film was showcased by the BJP, illustrating the welfare and transformative initiatives undertaken in the past 10 years, as well as the resolutions adopted by the party to propel the nation towards 'Viksit Bharat' in the forth-coming years. This film depicted how the BJP has, over the past 10 years, implemented every point of its Sankalp Patra as a guarantee on the ground.

nificant day as there is fervor for the New Year in many states across the country.

BJP also aims to extend the Vande Bharat train network to every corner of the nation, introducing three models: Vande Bharat Sleeper, Vande Bharat Chair Car, and Vande Bharat Metro. The construction of the Ahmedabad-Mumbai Bullet Train is progressing, nearing completion. The party has pledged to operate a bullet train in all four directions of India, marking a significant step towards self-reliance.

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

BJP promises global outreach to promote legacy of Lord Ram

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The BJP in its Lok Sabha poll manifesto released on Sunday expressed its commitment to a "holistic" develop-ment of Ayodhya and promised to launch a global outreach programme for promoting the legacy of Lord

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

BJP underscores commitment to defend Indian citizens from threats of terrorism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The BJP on Sunday underscored its commitment to defending India's citizens and interests at "home and abroad from all threats of terrorism" as it cited surgical and air strikes during the first term of the Modi government to highlight

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

country and citizens safe," the party said in its manifesto for the Lok Sabha polls. It said, "We are committed to

defending Bharat's citizens and interests at home and abroad from all threats of terrorism." The BJP government will

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

party said.
With the BJP projecting India's global rise as among the success of the Modi government, the manifesto includes a section on "Modi ki guarantee for

Vishwa Bandhu Bharat" to deliver a "Bharat first" foreign

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

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

infrastructure in border areas, the party said the Modi dispensation has corrected this "grave error". "We will accelerate the devel-

previous governments for poor

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

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

The BJP won only 29 in the

2019 general elections, of

which 25 were from Karnataka alone and four from

The party drew a total blank in

the 85 seats in Tamil Nadu,

Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and

Telangana.

Puducherry.

Childhood abuse takes profound toll on victim health: Study



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

Now, a new study has validated the profound toll this early-life adversity takes on the health, from brains to bodies of the victim of abuse. Published in the 'Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences', the study delved into the experiences of over 21,000 adults aged 40-70, including their histories of childhood maltreatment and their current health status. They analysed this data from the UK Biobank along with their body mass index (BMI), C-reactive protein levels (that reveal signs of inflammation) and their experiences of childhood ill-treatment and

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

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

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

hopeful for the future. By identifying biomarkers early on, we can intervene sooner providing targeted support to those who need it most." Responding to the study outcome, Shweta Sharma, Consultant Psychologist at Manipal Hospitals, Gurugram concurred that "experiencing abuse or neglect as a child can profoundly impact psychological and physiological development. Psychological theories suggest that adverse childhood experiences can disrupt attachment patterns, leading to difficulties in reg-ulating emotions and behav-

She was of the opinion that children who experience abuse or neglect often have disrupted attachment relationships with caregivers, and individuals may develop maladaptive coping mechanisms such as overeating, substance abuse, or engaging in risky behaviors. Overeating, in particular, can lead to obesity over time. Also, said Dr Sharma, who also happens to be General Secretary of Indian Association of Clinic Psychologists, childhood trauma can lead to chronic stress, which dysregulates the body's stress response system, including the hypothalamicpituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and the sympathetic nervous

iors.

system. "Dysregulation in these systems can lead to increased inflammation in the body, as stress hormones such as cortisol can impact immune function. Overall, the combination of disrupted attachment, maladaptive coping mechanisms, chronic stress, epigenetic changes, and health behaviors contributes to the increased vulnerability of individuals who have experienced childhood abuse or neglect to obesity, inflammation, and trauma throughout their lives," she conclud-

BJP to build Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over world: Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking to connect with the people of Tamil Nadu where his party is trying to gain a foothold, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday announced that the BJP will work towards building Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over the world.

'We will build Thiruvalluvar cultural centres all over the world. The world's oldest Tamil language is our pride. to enhance the global reputa-tion of Tamil language," Modi said while releasing the BJP's manifesto for the Lok Sabha

Thiruvalluvar was a noted

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

For the BJP, Tamil Nadu is an unconquered frontier along with neighbouring Kerala, which sends 20 MPs to the Lok Sabha.Both states go to the polls in the first two phases of the general election, on April 19 and 26.

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



The BJP has made no bones about its intentions to make

good electoral inroads in the Dravidian heartland and is hopeful of turning the positive wave into votes for the April 19 general election. Unlike the AIADMK or the DMK, which alternately come to power in the state banking on their iconic leaders, the BJP lacks traditional vote banks either Sabha elections where it has set from the minorities, fishers, a target of more than 400 The five southern states of tion. Union Minister Nitin Tamil Nadu (39 seats),

Karnataka (28), Andhra

time, thanks to an assertive

and aggressive K Annamalai

who is steering the party.

The prime minister has made more than half-a-dozen visits to Tamil Nadu as the BJP aims to strike it big in the Lok r the ruling NDA coali Gadkarihad said southern states will contribute in a big Pradesh (25), Kerala (20), way to achieve the NDA tar-Telangana (17) and the Union get of more than 400 seats in territory of Puducherry (1) the Lok Sabha elections.

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



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Trials for indigenous portable anti tank missile carried out successfully



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

Upcoming poll is about protecting Ambedkar accomplishment



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

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

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

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

This is what the 2024 election is fundamentally all about -the preservation and protection of Dr Ambedkar's magnificent accomplishment along with the values in which

it is anchored and principles

in which it is grounded,"

Ramesh said. Congress Mallikarjun Kharge paid homage to Ambedkar and visited Deekshabhoomi in Maharashtra's Nagpur, where the Dalit icon had embraced Buddhism.

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

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

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Promises to keep

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

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



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

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



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

Unravelling the Roy family's legacy



was admitted and affirmed by

none other than Clement

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

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

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

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



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

nawab'sorders.

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



MIR JAFAR, WHO COMMANDED HALF THE ARMY OF THE NAWAB, WAS PROMISED THAT IF HE HELPED TO OVERTHROW SIRAJ-UD-DAULA, HE WOULD BE MADE THE NAWAB. CONSEQUENTLY, OVER HALF OF SIRAJ'S ARMY DID NOT FIGHT

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

soul and economics, but the

E EDITO

in 1757 was the first decisive

Atlee, Prime Minister of Britain from 1946 to 1951 the British leader who signed the Indian Independence Act of 1947 heralding India's independence. After relinquishing office, Atlee came to India and was a guest of the then West Bengal Governor Justice P.B. Chakraborty. During a dinner conversation, Chakraborty asked his guest why the British quit India in a hurry in 1947, when there was no immediate cause, with the Quit India movement of 1942 having failed. The former British Prime Minister in reply quoted several reasons, principal among them being the erosion of loyalty to the British Crown among the Indian army, navy and air force, as a result of the action of Subhas Chandra Bose. Atlee's reply to Chakraborty's question on how much the non-violent satyagraha of Gandhi had influenced the British to free India, was "m-Siraj-ud-Daula had continued i-n-i-m-a-l', with emphasis on each letter and a contemptuous smile. Had there been no

Bengal, there wouldn't have been a Netaji in the first place. (The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha; views are personal)

find winner was Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his Indian National Army (INA). This

Constitutional morality: The pillar of India's democracy



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

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



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

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

right, but they are right because they are final. Transformational jurisprudence on constitutional morality is a pre-constitutional concept.

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

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

Supreme Court is final not tional morality over majoribecause they(judges) are tarian or popular morality. Constitutional morality is derived from public morality, however, slightly divorced from it and sifted through constitutional idealism.

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

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

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

BJP'S SOUTHERN STRATEGY

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

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

N R Ramachandran | Chennai

THE UAE'S SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE

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

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

Fix accountability



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

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

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

Ishana Arya | Thane

REFLECTIONS ON JALLIANWALA BAGH

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

bothers? Administration wakes up from the slumber only when poor kids lose their lives. Dismiss the district administration for not follow-

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

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

105th anniversary drawing sombre reflections on the atrocity committed on April 13, 1919.

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

Bahadur Shah | Dhanbad

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SPIRITUAL SOLUTION

TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Limiting procreation is perhaps the most significant step towards sustainability

ACHARYA PRASHANT oday the world that we live in, people are-trying to do small, small good things, so that we can conveniently escape away from the

Income inequalities hamper sustainable growth-



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



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

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

What is private consumption?

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

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

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

Meanwhile, a report titled 'Survival of the Richest' released by Oxfam International at the 2023 annual meeting of the WEF in Davos, Switzerland, says that 'the wealthiest one per cent of individuals in India possess over 40 per cent of the nation's total wealth. Juxtapose 55 PER CENT OF this with the bottom half of the population getting a mere six per cent of the nation's wealth, we end up with glaring inequalities.

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

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

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

distributed among those who are not so blessed (read: the bottom 50 per cent), this would give a big boost to private consumption. We hear loud voices from various quarters including from indus-tries and businesses asking the Government to formulate policies, reduce taxes even give direct income support. But, there isn't even a whisper of 'why inequalities in income arise in the first place. An analysis of the financials of

India's largest companies—those comprising the BSE 500 index—gives us some clues. The profits of corporations included in this index went up from Rs 480,000 crore during FY 2017-18 to more than Rs 1000,000 crore during FY 2021-22 - an increase of over 100 per cent, whereas their revenue growth was only 47 per cent during this period. This means that payments to factors of production other than the owners of capital (read: shareholders) such as to employees/workers, purchase of inputs, interest payments, etc., have been kept under a tight leash, resulting in a disproportionate boost to profits.

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

nary, to the company or high dividends to shareholders, they have been paid for or come at the cost of others. For instance, the Rs

1000,000 crore profits of firms in the BSE 500 index during FY 2021-22 came at the cost of undermining the purchasing power of millions of consumers. If even 50 per cent of this amount or Rs 500,000 crore had remained with the latter, aggregate demand would have gone up manifolds. Likewise, look at the Rs 302,000 crore dividend paid to shareholders during FY 2021-22. An overwhelming share of this went to the promoters and other minority shareholders. If, instead of filling their coffers-the money that merely adds to their cash balances or is spent on a few discretionary/luxury items—more of it were to be distributed in higher salaries to their employees, particularly at the lower rung, imagine what it would do to demand. Several businesses enjoy pricing power. For instance, those operating in metals such as copper and zinc, or in hydrocarbons like oil and gas, enjoy a natural monopoly. Leveraging this, they charge high prices, resulting in windfall gains for themselves. Enterprises in the chemical, petrochemicals, pharmaceutical and agrochemical sectors have hugely benefited from a protective policy environment.

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

(The writer is a policy analyst;

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

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

is the single most important issue facing you and me and the planet

are popular where all the do-gooders are busy doing all these ten activities and they walk around with great missionary zeal and even greater



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

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

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



PRIVATE CONSUMPTION. WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR AS MUCH AS THE INDIAN ECONOMY, HAS

ACTED AS A MAJOR DRAG. FOR INSTANCE,

DURING FY 2023-24, IT IS EXPECTED TO GROW BY A MEAGRE 3 PER CENT

Whether profits, albeit extraordi-

Indian political discourse plummets: Standards in free fall

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

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

The campaign speeches in the tenure of Rajiv Gandhi as



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

the assassination of his mother Indira Gandhi, was a refreshing change from the image of conventional Congress leaders spotting the ear-to-ear smile and perverted smile. But that did not last long as the Government he headed was enmeshed in cor-India took a new low during ruption charges ranging from Bofors Gun to HDW subma-Prime Minister (1984-1989). rine deals. It was futile to Rajiv, who took over the post expect the truncated of Prime Minister following Opposition to sit idle while the

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

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

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

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

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

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

speeches full of chosen abus-

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

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge is no different from M M Mani, the Marxist leader of Kerala when it comes to "showering" rivals with the choicest of abuses. Being the president of the GOP, Kharge has the major responsibility to ensure the dignity of the narratives. But the kind of words he has used

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

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

politics only because of his

family connections, is repre-

hensible as well as con-

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

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

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





Chandrasekhar woes increase

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

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

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

The story being spread by Congress activists speak how

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

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

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

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

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

fered in the functioning of the

channel.

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

In Kerala literary awards are reserved for comrades

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

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

Award was conferred on P K Pokker, a self-styled postmodernist writer who is a hardcore CPI(M) activist. "Though he has authored more than a dozen books on literary criticism ,nobody in the field of criticism has bothered to touch these books with the barge of a pole. To put it briefly, all his works belong to the genre known as trash," CK Anandan Pillai, chief editor, Sahitya Vimarsam, told The Pioneer.

Pokker was awarded the Vilasini Prize by the Kerala Sahitya Akademy in violation of all guidelines specified for



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

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

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

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

Nair has pointed out hundreds

Didi too asking for citizenship proof for jobs?

SAUGAR SENGUPTA

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

According to members of Samvidhan Bachao Manch Joint Action Committee for Bengali Refugees the State Government in the month of February advertised vacancies at various levels in panchayats in which they asked for proof of citizenship.
"Out of 14,000 vacancies they

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

the voice" of the people.

"Remember to vote for the hand symbol (of Congress) as

voting for other symbols will go to Lotus (BJP) which

destroyed Jammu and

Kashmir by dividing it into

two Union Territories, taking

away our identity, honor and

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

DPAP fielding candidate from Udhampur Doda at behest of BJP:

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

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

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

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

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

Regretting Azad's decision to play into the hands of the

Farooq Abdullah, was very close to the DPAP chairman. It was the National Conference that facilitated the entry of Azad, a former Congress veteran, into the Rajya Sabha twice, Abdullah

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

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



himself to a leader of a parliamentary constituency, he

"The duration for which he was a member of the

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

Committee is more than my

fielded its candidate, Mian Altaf, from the seat, Azad's legs began shaking and he got the signal from the BJP to pull back, Abdullah claimed. The NC vice president said the PDAP candidate in

Udhampur will only "weaken

constitutional rights," he said, criticizing the administration for not announcing a holiday on Eid-ul-Fitr and shifting an Imam of Hazratbal shrine who had converted a man to Islam during Ramzan. The Congress party candidate Lal Singh is pitted against

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

tary constituency, which goes

Miscreants open fire outside Salman's Bandra residence

T N RAGHUNATHA

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

From Page 1

Prime Minister handed over representatives of the four broad groups -- Gareeb, Yuva, Annadata and Naari Shakti -- who were (GYAN) beneficiaries Government's schemes.

implement the Uniform Civil

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

Notably, the 2019 manifesto carried the same paragraph. The manifesto makes no mention of the National Register of Citizens (NRC). The BJP manifesto said it will implement One Nation, One Election a Reality. "We have set up a High Powered Committee to examine the of conducting simultaneous elections and will work towards the implementation of recommendations of the Committee," the document

to make provisions for a levels of elections.

The party has also promised women power, youth power, to expand the Government's farmers and the poor. The flagship infrastructure and programmes, Ujjwala gas connection and Ayushman Bharat health insurance schemes, and announced free electricity for poor households.

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

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

Pran Pratishtha of Ram

Lalla," the document read.

Bansuri ignites Delhi...

From Page 1

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

She believes that politics gives her a tool to amplify what she litigation, you end up making a difference to somebody's life on a daily basis. But you're making that difference to an individual's life, or to a family's life. Politics gives you the tool to actually amplify that benefit," she said.

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

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

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

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

towards it," Bansuri said.

While describing the issues of general elections 2024 this time to be Bharat pervasive, Bansuri asserted that the Modi Government has a decade worth of work which forward to the people, putting a report card in front of the voters, which in turn will help people to decide to vote for them.

Expressing pride on Modi leveraging technology and uplifting women from every sphere of life, she dwelled on policies like 'Namo Drone Didi'. "We talk about the rural economy. There is a tectonic shift in psychology when you see a Namo Drone Didi as a drone pilot contributing to the agrarian economy. Modi is talking about

empowerment of the nation under the leadership of women. That's why he's coined the term of women-led development, you development," she said. vouth-led

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

Opposition says BJP...

From Page 1

"They don't respect democracy, Parliament, Constitution," he said.

Trinamool Congress leader Derek O'Brien took a jibe at the ruling party's slogan, and said, "What Manifesto? Modi Guarantee = Zero Warranty."

He also shared an article authored by him where he questioned farmers income, and bringing back black money among other

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, meanwhile, questioned the Government over issues like job creation.

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

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

Desolate railway tracks...

From Page 1

Proprietor of the Evergreen Nursery Kalicharan said he, along with his 100 odd gardeners working to curate the nursery, consider this to be their baby, not just a plant. "A year ago I began as a professional but now I can't imagine my life without these green species. You may call it my profession or hobby but I consider this my religion and spiritual connection.

Millions of life in the form of plants here grows which keeps me happy always. Passengers crossing this area in trains point towards the huge bonsai, exotic shrubs and many more and this

keeps me going," said Kalicharan who thanked the entire railway authorities for being cooperative in this 'business'. In fact railways gave the land for developing a green patch in lieu of a nominal rent which has also become bread and butter for the lives of workers of the Evergreen Nursery. Sources in the Northern Railway said it has partnered with the Evergreen Nursery for a period of seven years to begin with "We have leased for a green cover for a term of 7 years which may be extended or curtailed based on the requirement of the land by the railways," said a NR official.

Rising food prices cast...

From Page 1

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

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

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

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

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

The Prime Minister said the common electoral roll for all

manifesto focuses on four pillars of Viksit Bharat --

The BJP promised to

welfare including

wedding destinations as globe to commemorate the

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

From Page 1

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

said. The manifesto promised

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

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

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

in the region are in close touch with the Indian community in the region. "We are seriously concerned at the escalation of hostilities between Israel and Iran which threatens the peace and

security in the region," the

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

We call for immediate deescalation, exercise restraint, stepping back from violence and return to the path of diplomacy," it said. The MEA said India is closely monitoring the evolving situation in West Asia. "We are closely monitoring the evolving situation. Our Embassies in the region are in close touch with Indian community," it said in a statement.

"It is vital that security and stability are maintained in the region," it added.

On Saturday, the Iranian military seized a cargo ship

with Israeli links near the Strait of Hormuz. The ship has 17 Indian crew members. India is in touch with Iran to secure the release of Indians onboard the Portugueseflagged vessel 'MSC Aries'. Following Iran's attack, the

Israeli military said it and its allies have intercepted the majority of more than 300 drones and missiles fired by Iran. US President Joe Biden said the American military helped

Israel take down nearly all of the incoming drones and missiles launched by Iran. "Earlier today, Iran and its proxies operating out of Yemen, Syria and Iraq,

launched an unprecedented air attack against military facilities in Israel. I condemn these attacks in the strongest possible terms," he said in a statement.

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

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

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

Netanyahu and reaffirmed Washington's commitment to the security of Israel.

'Tomorrow, I will convene my fellow G7 leaders to coordinate united a diplomatic response to Iran's brazen attack. My team will with engage counterparts across the region," Biden said.

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

Congress spreading lies: Shah

BJP will never allow reservations to end, says Home Minister

PTI KHAIRAGARH (CHHATTISGARH)

nion Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the BJP will never allow reservations to end and nor will it let Congress do so. Speaking at a rally in Khairagarh in Chhattisgarh, Shah also asked people to give Narendra Modi a third term as backwards and the poor. prime minister so that the

Omar rules out contesting

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

has ruled out contesting the

assembly elections till Jammu and Kashmir

remains a Union territory.

"I don't fancy my chances for anything. I don't aspire

to the office of the Chief Minister. And I most

certainly do not aspire to lead a Union Territory.
"I have made it abundantly

clear that in the current

situation that I-K finds itself in, I am not contesting

assembly elections. I have said this all the way back

from 2020 onwards and my

position has not changed," Abdullah told PTI in an

interview here on Saturday.

behind leaving the family

Sabha seat to contest from

Baramulla, Abdullah, who has been elected to Lok

Sabha three times, said it

was not his habit to take the

"Why should I shy away from a fight? Yes, the political wisdom would

suggest that I fight from

Srinagar because God forbid a setback for me

would be a setback for the

entire party. But this is not

the first time that someone

from the family has fought from a seat other than

Anantnag constituency in the 1984 Lok Sabha polls.

campaigning with my

murder of democracy when

MLAs were bought,

defections were engineered

and my father's government

"My grandmother fought education.

was brought down.

easy road.

winning

grandmother

bastion of Srinagar Lok Tarun

Assembly elections till JK is UT

National Conference leader Omar Abdullah said his fight in the Baramulla Lok Sabha

Asked about the rationale sooner had he uttered those

running

said.

maternal

he added.

and won from Anantnag,"

seat was not against a particular candidate but

against the "might of the central government and the

"The biggest onslaught of

Delhi that we are seeing is in north Kashmir. The

maximum effort to cobble unnatural alliances is in

"If you remember last

Friday, while coming out of Hazratbal, the leader of

Apni Party Altaf Bukhari while referring to Sajad Lone, was a little insulting. "He had called him do

eenton ki imarat (a building of two bricks). No

words, senior BJP leader

Chugh

to Srinag

straight to Altaf Bukhari's

residence, and summoned

came

went

north Kashmir.

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

On this day, people work to the take the spirit of the Constitution drafted by him to menace of Naxalism can be eliminated in the state in the next three years.

Modi had finished Maoist Congress chief Mallikarjun violence in his 10-year rule but the tail continues in Chhattisgarh, Shah said in Khairagarh, which is part of Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat, Congress Chief Mailikarjun Kharge is claiming the Constitution will be changed if Modi becomes prime minister again and the party's functionaries allege BJP will end



reservations after coming to power, Shah said.

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

Prime Minister Modi has strengthened the country and safeguarded it from terrorism, Shah said, adding the NDA government in its 10-year rule had eliminated Naxalism.

"However, its tail is left in Chhattisgarh. Give Modi a third term as PM to ensure Naxalism can be eliminated in Chhattisgarh in three years," he said. Targeting former CM

Baghel, Shah said the country was witness to several scams committed by the Congress but none of them had been named after a god, a reference to the multi-crore Mahadev betting app scam that is being probed by agencies.

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

Rajnandgaon Lok Sabha seat will witness voting on April 26.

Delhi BJP leaders welcome party 2024 manifesto

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

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

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva

said the manifesto is based on the achievements of the Modi Government over the past 10 years and outlines the roadmap for the development of the next two and a half decades.

Lauding the manifesto, Sachdeva also said the desire to host the Olympics in India has motivated the youth of India. Moreover, the promise to hold the Olympics has increased the sense of national pride among the youth, he said. Sachdeva said Prime Minister Modi, by giving the first copy of the 2024 manifesto to "Hawker Raghuvir Chhole Kulche Wala" of East Delhi, has signaled significant changes in the lives of Delhi's poor street vendors and other labourers.

He said in the past decade, Prime Minister Modi has controlled corruption and has promised to tighten the screws on corrupt individuals in the future, which will build a transparent India.

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

Delhi over 70 years old will benefit from the Ayushman Yojana, Sachdeva said. The Delhi BJP President said while a lot of work has been done in the past decade to provide housing to the poor under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme, the thought of providing housing to the middle class under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme has brought waves of

happiness among the people of Delhi.

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

PTI HOSHANGABAD (MP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday mocked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, terming him a "royal magician" over his remark to eradicate poverty "with a single stroke" and said the country doesn't take him seriously.

Addressing a rally at Pipariya town in Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad Lok Sabha constituency, Modi also targeted the opposition INDIA bloc over one of its constituents being in favour of nuclear disarmament and said they cannot protect the country.
He also said the Congress always

insulted Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, but the BJP government has honoured him.

shehzada Congress announced to eradicate poverty with a single stroke. It is laughable. Where was this royal magician missing for so many years? His grandmother (former PM Indira Gandhi) had given the slogan of



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

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

They ran the government by remote control for 10 years before 2014. Now they have found a mantra instantly. They made such statements and have become a laughing stock. It is a joke on the poor," he said. promised nuclear dis Without naming any party, Modi the country," he said.

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

The party that cannot strengthen itself, can it strengthen the country? he asked.

"In the manifestoes of INDI alliance partners, a number of dangerous promises were made. One of its partner's manifesto has promised nuclear disarmament of

to protect our country; those saying otherwise can't protect India," he said. Modi further hit out at the

We should have nuclear weapons

Congress saying no sooner the son of a poor family became prime minister, the grand old party spread rumours that the Constitution and democracy were in danger.

"Modi has reached here due to the Constitution scripted by Babasaheb," he said on the birth anniversary of Dr Ambedkar. "The Congress always insulted Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, we have honoured him," the PM said. He also said the Congress never

recognised the contribution of adivasis (tribals), but the BJP government has honoured them. Because of the Constitution given by Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, a tribal woman became the President of India, the PM said, referring to Droupadi Murmu's election to the country's top constitutional post.

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

PTI TEZPUR

 A^{s} over a hundred people gathered in the courtyard of the century-old Baan Theatre in Tezpur in Assam on Sunday to celebrate Rongali Bihu, politics took the backseat even as the town prepares to vote for its new MP in less than a week.

As the crowd partook in the celebrations, they were also conscious that culture and Saiad Lone there to patch up this alliance. 'So, I am not fighting politics cannot be completely against an individual. My disassociated though the timing of the Lok Sabha fight in north Kashmir is against the BIP, it is against election was a matter of the support it is giving to 'disappointment'.

people on the ground," he "Politics and culture are two different things, but then the political aspirations of the On the claims made by the people must reflect its cultural aspirations also," BJP about development in Jammu and Kashmir post septuagenarian Pradip Kumar Bhattacharjya said as he enjoyed the celebrations abrogation of Article 370, the former chief minister Srinagar," he said. said by any measure of Abdullah recalled his human development, J-K is seated in the shade of a grandmother Akbar Jehan far better than some of the balcony.

from the so-called developed states He maintained that a political party or ideal must represent the culture of the place it of the country.
"In terms of the quality of originates in, and more so in a "I still remember as a child life, J-K ranks above even place like Tezpur which has a the states like Gujarat and unique standing and is often referred to as the 'cultural from Andhra Pradesh. In terms Anantnag in 1984 after the of basic things like the matrix that makes up the capital' of Assam. human development index,

The Baan Theatre, established in terms of infant mortality, in 1906 by Asamiya Bhasa Unnati Sadhini Sabha mortality. (ABUSS), is among the oldest, development, girl child's landmark of cultural



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

The Bihu celebration was held at the old Baan Theatre premise, which had witnessed performances by cultural icons like Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, Bishnu Prasad Rabha and Phani Sarma. Santanu Baruah, president of ABUSS which runs the Baan Theatre (old), said, "Since Independence, politics and

culture have been two sides of

the same coin, especially in

Assam. This is the first 'rang

manch' (stage or theatre) in

India in June 2023 after

completing his MBBS.

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

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

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

He maintained that it

indicated that the people were 'not culturally and politically conscious, as he urged the politicians to work for preserving and taking forward culture and literature

also, along with other aspects. Pointing to the current derelict condition of the Baan Theatre (old), the ABUSS president said, "The condition of this theatre reflects the state of politics in our country. We are still hopeful that there will be

Grandson of Padmanath Gohain Baruah, Sanjay, also maintained that government should do more for the cultural sector.

We always request the government for more focus on the cultural sector, but we haven't seen much been done. My one appeal to the new government will be to lend a helping hand to the artists," he

said. Also, questioning the timing of the election, he added, "Our question is why are elections always held during the Bihu? It hampers our traditional celebration of 'Saat Bihu' (Bihu for seven days). Those in government jobs cannot be at home. Why can't this message from Assam go to the Central government that election should not be held here during the Saat Bihu?.

Tezpur was itself a Lok Sabha constituency till last year, when post-delimitation it was brought under the newlycarved Sonitpur seat.

Modi win: Rajnath PTI JAMUI (BIHAR)

Entire world sure of

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

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

consecutive term in office." He is already being invited abroad for functions that are to be held next year, Singh claimed.

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

"Another example of India's rise in global stature was the release of retired navy officials, who were awarded death sentence by a court in Qatar, following a telephone call from Modi to the head of the West Asian state," said



Speaking hours after the release of BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' in Delhi in the presence of the PM, Singh, who headed the manifesto committee, said, "Unlike other parties, we fulfil the promises we make, be it Ram temple at Ayodhya or abrogation of Article 370." Referring to the law against triple talaq, he said, "We cracked down on the inhuman practice which caused untold miseries to our Muslim mothers and sisters, without worrying about criticisms from Congress and RJD which were concerned about their vote banks." Referring to RJD president

Lalu Prasad as an "old friend". Singh, however, expressed disgust over a recent controversial utterance by the former's daughter Misa

Slain Salwa Judum leader son enters LS poll fray

PTI RAIPUR

elections.

He was just 19 when Naxalites killed his father, a former Salwa Judum leader. Defying the odds, he studied MBBS in Kyrgyzstan. Now, this man from a sleepy village in Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Bijapur district has entered the fray for the upcoming Lok Sabha

Meet Prakash Kumar Gota, an independent candidate from Scheduled-Tribe reserved Bastar Lok Sabha seat.

Though the polls in Bastar are Judum, an anti-Maoist civil primarily a contest between militia disbanded in 2011, the BJP and Congress, Gota claims he holds sway over his farm in Kukrel village, tribal youths in the region. Talking to PTI, Gota said Farsegarh in 2012.

able to reap the benefits of Gota said his father had

development works and schemes.

"The two leading parties have always disappointed the people of Bastar, which is why decided to enter the poll battle to bring real change in the region," he said.

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

His father, Chinna Ram Gota, an active leader of Salwa was shot dead by Naxalites at around 2 km away from

tribals constitute 32 per cent Maoists also killed his father's of the state's population, yet somehow, they have not been attack in 2013.

worked with late Congress leader Mahendra Karma, popularly called 'Bastar tiger' for his tough stand against Naxalites during the Salwa Judum movement.

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

"I was a first-year student at a nursing college when my father was murdered. I had to quit my studies midway as my family's financial condition was not good. I have four brothers and two sisters. I am the second eldest. My mother is a housewife", Gota said. Gota worked as a subcontractor for construction works in the area and tendu leaf collection, and this helped him fund his medical

studies in Kyrgyzstan. "In 2016, I went to Kyrgyzstan MBBS. I'



unsuccessfully to avail an He has, education loan. The struggle continued as I had to return home during the COVID-19 pandemic due to my family's financial condition," he said. Examination Gota again worked as a eligibility to subcontractor and managed medicine in India. "Another tragedy struck my to resume his medical studies in Kyrgyzstan and returned to

however, not appeared for the Foreign Medical Graduates (FMGE) conducted by the National Board of Examination for practice

family in August last year when Naxalites abducted my older brother Mahesh Kumar,

who was the chief of the publicity wing of the BJP's Bijapur district unit," he said. Mahesh was later traced to a forest and admitted to a hospital in a critical condition. He has been in a coma ever since, he said. Asked why he did not join the BJP like his brother, Gota said he did not want to be in politics and wanted to take up

a job.
"There is a provision for a safe settlement and a government job under a rehabilitation scheme for victims of Maoist violence, but we did not get any of this. After all this, I was disappointed with the BJP and Congress," he said.

Over the years, Bastar has become a Maoist stronghold due to large-scale poverty, illiteracy, and lack of health facilities and amenities, Gota

"My father contributed to the fight to free the region from the Naxalite menace, and I wanted to address all these issues to bring a change in Bastar," he said, citing why he wanted to contest the elections. However, Gota's decision to

enter the fray was sudden. "When candidates had already started filing already nominations for the first phase of the polls, my friends and social workers encouraged me to throw my hat in the ring," he said. People have been voluntarily

contributing to and providing vehicles for Gota's campaign. "I cannot spend money in electioneering like big parties. I have some savings that have come in handy," he said. Gota exuded confidence about securing the support of

the youth in the region.

religions together, while the Congress's candidate Kawasi Lakhma is inactive. Both parties have ignored their dedicated workers and leaders while giving tickets," he said. Eleven Lok Sabha seats in Chhattisgarh will go to polls in three phases on April 19, April 26 and May 7, and the counting of votes will take place on June 4. Bastar will be the only seat to go to polls in the first phase. The ruling BJP has fielded

Kashyap is a communal

person and does not take all

"BJP nominee

Kashyap, a fresh face who had been an active member of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and the Congress has given the ticket to Lakhma, an MLA who has served as a minister in the previous Bhupesh Baghel-led Congress Congress government.

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

 \mathbf{I} srael on Sunday hailed its air defences in the face of an unprecedented attack by Iran, saying the systems thwarted 99 per cent of the more than 300 drones and missiles launched toward its territory.

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

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

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

By Sunday morning, Iran said the attack was over, and Israel reopened its airspace.

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

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

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

Sunak flays Iran's attack "We will build a regional against Israel, deploys jets

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

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



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

devastating assault at a time when Israel is already bogged down in its war against Hamas in Gaza and engaged in lowlevel fighting on its northern border with Lebanon's Hezbollah militia. Both Hamas

and Hezbollah are backed by Iran.Israeli and US officials praised the response to the aerial assault.

"Iran launched more than 300 threats and 99 per cent were intercepted," said Rear

Adm. Daniel Hagari, the Israeli military spokesman. "That is a success." Asked if Israel would respond, Hagari said the country would do what was needed to protect its citizens. Hagari said none of the drones and

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

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

Bagheri, the chief of staff of the Iranian armed forces, said the operation was over, the staterun IRNA news agency reported. "We have no intention of continuing the operation against Israel," he was quoted as saying. Iran said it targeted Israeli facilities involved in the Damascus strike. Iran's president, Ebrahim

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

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

Biden team pledges 'support' for Israel

President Joe Biden and his national security team monitored Iran's aerial attack against Israel on Saturday as US forces joined efforts to down explosive-laden drones launched by Tehran. With tensions at their highest since the Israel-Hamas war began six months ago, Biden pledged that American support for Israel's defense against attacks by Iran and its proxies is "ironclad." US forces shot down some Iran-launched attack drones flying toward Israel, according to a US defense official and two other US officials who spoke Saturday on the condition of anonymity to discuss the matter. The US and Israel had been bracing for an attack for days after Iran vowed to retaliate for a suspected Israeli strike this month on an Iranian consular building in Syria that killed 12 people, including two senior Iranian generals in the Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force.

The US defense official said the effort to intercept Iran's attack was continuing.

Biden cut short a weekend stay at his Delaware beach between Israeli forces and the house to meet with his national security team at the White House on Saturday afternoon, returning to Washington min-utes before Israeli officials confirmed that they had detected drones being launched toward their territory from Iran.

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

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

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

part to reinforce Washington's "ironclad commitment to the

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

will not succeed." Asked by reporters what his message was for Iran, the president's only reply was: "Don't." He ignored a question about what would trigger a direct US military response, and when asked how imminent an Iranian attack on Israel was. Biden said he did not want to get into secure information, "but my expectation is soon-

defending Israel and that "Iran

er than later." The US, along with its allies, have sent direct messages to Tehran to warn against further escalating the conflict.

During the Israel-Hamas war

in Gaza, there have been neardaily exchanges of fire Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group along the Israel-Lebanon border. US officials have recorded more than 150 attacks by Iran-backed militias in Iraq and Syria on US forces at bases in those countries since war started on October 7. One attack in late January killed three US service members in Jordan. In retaliation, the US launched a massive air assault, hitting more than 85 targets at seven locations in Iraq and Svria.Meantime, on Saturday, commandos from

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard rap-pelled from a helicopter onto an Israeli-affiliated container ship near the Strait of Hormuz and seized the vessel. Watson, the NSC spokesperson, said the US strongly condemned the seizure and urged Iran to release the ship and crew immediately."We will work with our partners to hold Iran to account for its actions," she said.Also Saturday, the Israeli-occupied West Bank also saw some of the worst violence since Hamas' attack on Israel.

Aus Police identify attacker who killed 6

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

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

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

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



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

The attack at the shopping mall, one of the country's busiest and which was a hub of activity on a particularly warm fall afternoon, began around 3:10 pm and police were swift-

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

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

at people.
"When I took my footage it, was about 15 seconds maybe before he was shot by the

police officer and he'd already killed a number of people at that point but we didn't know and we had no idea what was going on," said Rohan Anderson, who had entered the shopping center just moments before the attack. "We just saw a person on the level below us, with a knife, running around and you just sit in disbelief that this is hap-pening in Australia, in Bondi," he said.

Other footage showed a man confronting the attacker on an escalator in the shopping center by holding what appeared to be a metal pole.

Inspector Amy Scott, who was the first emergency responder on the scene, shot and killed Cauchi.

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

'The wonderful inspector who ran into danger by herself and removed the threat that was there to others, without thinking about the risks to herself,"

Indian student shot dead in Canada's Vancouver

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

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

The incident happened within a block of the route for Saturday's Vaisakhi parade and festival, police said. The body was found in a vehi-

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



Chirag Antil's family has set up a fundraiser on GoFundMe with a goal of Canadian dollars 40,000 to repatriate his body to

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

Media urges Biden, Trump to commit to 2024 election debates

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

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

"If there is one thing Americans can agree on during this polarised time, it is that the stakes of this election are exceptionally high," the organisations said in a joint statement.



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

"Amidst that backdrop, there is simply no substitute for the candidates debating with each other, and before the American people, their visions for the future of our nation." ABC, CBS, CNN, Fox, PBS,

NBC, NPR and The Associated Press all signed on to the letter.

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

Asked on March 8 whether he would commit to a debate with Trump, Biden said, "it depends on his behaviour." The president was visibly miffed by his opponent in the freewheeling first 2020 debate, at one point saying, "will you shut up?

Trump campaign managers Susie Wiles and Chris LaCivita said in a letter this past week ed President Trump is willing to debate anytime, any place and anywhere — and the time to start these debates is now." They cited the seven 1858 Illinois Senate debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas, saying "certainly today's America deserves as much." The Republican National Committee voted in 2022 to no longer participate in forums sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates.

The Trump campaign has not indicated it would adhere to that, but did have some conditions. The campaign managers said the commission selected a "demonstrably anti-Trump moderator" in then-Fox News host Chris Wallace in 2020 and wants assurances the commission debates are fair and impartial. The Trump campaign also wants the timetable moved up, saying that many Americans will have already voted by September 16, October 1 and October 9, the dates of the three debates set by the commission. The Biden campaign

organisations' letter, pointing to the president's earlier statement. There was no immediate response from the Trump campaign. But on Saturday, Trump held a rally in northeast Pennsylvania with two lecterns set up on the stage: one for him to give a speech, the other to symbolise what he said was Biden's refusal to debate him. The second lectern had a placard that read, "Anytime. Anywhere. Anyplace." Midway through his campaign speech, Trump turned to his right and pointed to the second lectern. We have a little, look at this, it's for him," he said. "See the podium? I'm calling on Crooked Joe Biden to debate anytime, anywhere, any place. Right there. And we have to debate because our country is going in the wrong direction so badly and while it's a little bit typically early we have to debate. We have to explain to the American people what the hell is going on," Trump said. C-SPAN, NewsNation and Univision also joined the letter calling for debates.

Landslides hit Indonesia,14 die, 3 missing

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

Scholz arrives in China on visit marked by trade tensions Despite that, China remained

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

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

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



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

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

German companies have argued they face unfair market barriers in China and the government has pushed for a policy of "derisking" to reduce reliance on the Chinese market and suppliGermany's top trading partner for the eighth straight year in 2023, with 254.1 billion euros (USD 271 billion) in goods and services exchanged between the sides, slightly more than what Germany traded with the US but a 15.5 per cent contraction from the year before. German exports to China totalled 97.3 billion euros (USD 104 billion), according to Germany's Federal Statistical Office, although figures have varied depending on exchange rate fluctuations and rounding of numbers.

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

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

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

government and aligned its foreign policy with Moscow in opposition to the US-led liberal political order, while touting its authoritarian one-party system as a superior alternative. After visiting a hydrogen motor production facility run by German firm Bosch, Scholz toured the city with young architects and was to go on a boat cruise on the famed

Yangtze River, one of two

mighty waterways that partly

surround the city perched on overlooking cliffs.

Chicago shooting kills 7-year-old girl, hurts 7 **AP** ■ CHICAGO and 40, Jerome said. The vic-

Eight people were shot including a young girl who was killed in what Chicago

was killed in what Chicago police believe was gang-related violence on the city's South Side on Saturday night.

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

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

tims, who were standing outside at a family gathering at the time of the shooting, were transported to area hospitals by the Chicago Fire Department.

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

violence. It was likely gang-related," Jerome said. "Regardless of the motivation for this incident, three innocent children were struck tonight and one of them tragically succumbed to her wounds. The offenders' actions, make no mistake, are horrific and unacceptable in **ARCHANA JYOTI** spoke to doctors about the Parkinson's Disease that affects millions worldwide including India. Medical interventions and lifestyle adjustments, such as diet, exercise, crucial for its managment

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

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

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

MYTH 1: PD is Untreatable

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

MYTH 2: PD Affects the **Elderly Only.**

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

MYTH 3: PD is Just a Movement Disorder

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

MYTH 4: PD is Always Hereditary

Fact: While genetics can contribute, most cases are sporadic with no clear genetic link. Environmental factors like toxin exposure may also play a role. Recognizing that not all cases are hereditary, and anyone can be affected, is essential.

MYTH 5: PD is a Death Sentence

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

JOURNEY

Tough Fight Which Needs To Be Done Right

By Sunandita Dasgupta

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

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

I was there to confirm my diagnosis as a patient of Parkinson's Disease, the degenerative disorder that causes tremors, rigidity of muscles and movement problems, a few of which I was already experiencing. Doctors in my workplace Delhi and hometown Kolkata had told

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

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

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

Initial years were somehow manageable, but now, after seven years, I am facing a range of problems related to PD, including frequent falls, resultant fear of falling, which is damaging my confidence to go out and freezing when you are unable to take a step for several seconds while walking. The first years were also easier in terms of keeping the disease under check me I fall in the category of "Early Medication. But now, much of my Onset" patients (as PD is common average day witnesses "offmedication. But now, much of my

periods" - when PD symptoms return due to effects of medicine wearing off. Life is increasingly becoming difficult.

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

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

(The writer is Young Onset Parkinson's Disease (YOPD patient and working with a State Government) crucial for navigating life with Parkinson's.

YOUNG ONSET PD

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

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

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

IDENTIFYING SYMPTOMS

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

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

MANAGEMENT

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

JOURNEY WITHIN



Addressing Feeling Cheated: CONSTRUCTIVE STEPS

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

ASSESS THE SITUATION

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

COMMUNICATE YOUR CONCERNS

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

SEEK CLARIFICATION

If there are aspects of the situation that you're unsure about or if you need more information, don't hesitate to ask questions and seek clarification. prevent misunderstanfacilitate resolution.

NEGOTIATE A RESOLUTION

Work together with the compromise and willing to listen to their perspective. Focus on finding a mutually acceptable resolution that benefits both parties involved. Document Everything: Keep records of any relevant documents, emails, messages, or conversations related to the situation. Having

documentation

provide evidence

support your case if you need to escalate the issue or seek further assistance.

SEEK MEDIATION OR ASSISTANCE

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

KNOW WHEN TO WALK AWAY:

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

LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE

Clear Use the situation as an communication can help opportunity for personal growth and learning. eflect on who take away from the experience and how you can prevent similar situations in the future. By other party to find a learning from the solution that addresses experience, you can your concerns. Be open to empower yourself to handle similar challenges more effectively in the future.

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

HOPE ON THE HORIZON

IIT-M WORKS ON DBS

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

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

Study Uncovers Key Genes Behind Parkinson's in Young Indians

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

The team, led by Parkinson's Research Alliance of India (PRAI) and MedGenome, a global genomics company in South Asia, rare and common genetic variations The in the young Indian population, which can enhance the understanding of the genetic basis of Parkinson's disease.
This also opens the door for a first-

ever genetic screening in India for the disease in high-risk individuals and affected families, said the team of scientists in the paper published in the prestigious journal, Movement Disorders.

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

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

first-of-its-kind conducted in India included 1,000 patients through a network of 10 specialty Movement Disorder Centers/Neurology clinics across Dr. Prashanth said the team found a high probability of non-mutation

and Parkinson's mutations are quite common in Indian patients. 'We need to work on these genes further to see how these genes can be important for the occurrence of

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

reported in Parkinson's.

many factors such as faulty mood

Poor nutrition affects not just physical health, but mental well-being too, including conditions like depression and anxiety, says RAJDEEP JOSHI as he delves into the role of nutrition in mental health, focusing particularly on the overlooked benefits of mango consumption.

ARE NATURE'S

ANTIDEPRESSANTS



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

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

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

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

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

If your serotonin levels are low, then you may experience also insomnia, depression, and anxiety. Mangoes rich are in minerals like potassium and magnesium, which keep your heart and blood vessels healthy. Mangoes are considered a natural antidepressant. Regular consumption mangoes relieves nervous tension and improves mood.

MANGO MAGIC

A Mood-Boosting Recipe for Mental Wellness

NUTRITIONAL MANGO SALAD

can

and

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large mango (peeled and sliced)1 cup finely chopped spinach
- 1 green onion thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup pineapple chopped • 1/2 cucumber (sliced) 1 small red and yellow capsicum (sliced)
- Chopped Pans 1 to 2 tsp chaat masala

1/2 cup fresh coriander and mint

- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1/4 cup roasted cashew nuts
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 tsp Italian Mix Herbs

Salt and pepper to taste

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

SEASONING THE SALAD

All you need to do is take a small bowl and mix well black pepper, chaat masala, lemon juice, salt, Italian mix herbs and olive oil and then pour this mixture into a salad bowl and mix it together. Your nutritious mango

salad is ready to serve. (The author is a nutritionist coach)





IN CLASH OF TITANS, CSK TRIUMPH

Pathirana, Dhoni trump Rohit's unbeaten 105 for 20-run win

PTI MUMBAI

atheesha Pathirana and an ageless MS **V** Dhoni delivered decisive blows as Chennai Super Kings outgunned Mumbai Indians by 20 runs despite Rohit Sharma making a resolute unbeaten 105 in their Indian Premier League

match here on Sunday. After Dhoni hammered three consecutive sixes in the final over bowled by Hardik Pandya to race to 20 not out off just four balls to propel CSK to a huge 206 for four, Pathirana grabbed 4 for 28 to halt the chase of MI at 186 for

Rohit produced his only second IPL century and first since 2012, hitting 11 fours and five sixes during his 63ball knock.

But his magnificent effort did not get adequate support

from the rest despite the pitch sustained acceleration and at the Wankhede Stadium some handy contributions remaining conducive for

batting.
Defending champion CSK's first away win this season also marked a fourth defeat for Mumbai Indians in six matches, keeping them at the eighth spot.

CSK, on the other hand, rose to the third with eight points in their kitty.

In a game wherein the loudest cheers were reserved for Dhoni, Mumbai skipper Pandya continued to get booed intermittently.

booed intermittently.

There were, though, a section of fans cheering him on at least once, like they did in the last game against Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

Unlike CSK, who got their majority of runs in the last 10 overs (136), Mumbai Indians remained in the hunt of in the

remained in the hunt of in the initial part through Rohit's

some handy contributions from others.

Once again, Rohit set the platform for Mumbai with a sturdy 70-run stand in seven overs with Ishan Kishan, who raced to 23 off 15 balls (3x4s, 1x6s). With MI on charge, pacer Pathirana produced a two-wicket over after the powerplay accounting for Kishan and Suryakumar Yadav (0), getting him caught at third man with Mustafizur Rahman producing a juggling act at the ropes to complete

the catch. Tilak Varma aided Rohit with a 20-ball 31 laced with five fours, adding 60 off 38 balls for the third wicket, but Pathirana's return broke their stand.

However, it was the Mumbai duo of Shardul Thakur and Tushar Deshpande tilted the game in favour of CSK,

At the end of power play, KKR

producing two tight overs which broke the back of MI's chase.

Pandya fell for just two but consumed six balls and Tim David hammered a couple of sixes but failed to capitalise. Amid all this, Rohit remained stuck at the other end watching the game slip away

despite his best effort. Earlier. Dhoni's ballistic 20 garnished forceful fifties by Shivam Dube and Ruturaj Gaikwad as Chennai Super Kings powered to a strong 206 for four.

Dube (66 not out, 10x4, 2x6) and Gaikwad (69), who milked 90 runs off a mere 45 balls for the third wicket, gave Chennai innings steam in the initial and middle passages of the play before Dhoni mesmerized a packed a packed Wankhede with vintage shot-

making.
The former CSK skipper

hammered three consecutive sixes off MI skipper Pandya (2/43) to help his side collect 26 runs off the final over.

Dhoni's stunning knock – which had the balls sailing over long-off, wide long-on and deep square leg – also pushed Chennai past the 200-run mark, which did appear tough until that final over.

Even though he could not push beyond 69, which came off 40 balls with five sixes and as many boundaries, Gaikwad

as many boundaries, Gaikwad appeared in prime form.

The CSK skipper hit through the line effortlessly to clear ropes and when the MI bowlers challenged him by angling their deliveries into his body, Gaikwad improvised to find his runs without taking any unwanted risks.

Dube remained unbeaten on 66 off 38 balls, studded with 10 fours and two sixes.

RCB eye step up from under fire bowlers

 $R^{\text{oyal}}_{\text{Bengaluru's IPL campaign}}$ that began in cheerfulness has melted into chaos, and their bowlers require a drastic transformation in mindset against Sunrisers Hyderabad for them to register an elusive

win here on Monday. "The Royal Challengers have players of repute and elite coaches with lofty pedigree but none of their plans have worked so far, evidenced by the team's 10th place in the standings with a solitary win from six matches.

"The RCB's trundling run in this IPL is directly linked to their bowlers' ineffectiveness. They showed a distinct lack of willingness to adapt and upskill on conditions that needed a different thinking. "In this IPL, the bowlers have often relied on variations like knuckle balls, slow bouncers and pace-off deliveries to counter a set of ultra-aggressive batsmen.

"However, the Bengaluru bowlers have been largely unidimensional in their approach allowing batters to tackle them with ease and the match against Mumbai Indians offers a case study.

"For once, the RCB batters fired collectively to take them to 196, but MI hunted down the target in just 15.3 overs at the Wankhede Stadium as the visiting bowlers were quite magnanimous in offering

"Dew, short boundaries etc cannot be counted as excuses when a team leaks above 13 runs per over. In fact, the RCB bowlers did not have the urge or imagination to blunt a batting unit full of intent.

'That's an ominous sign against the Sunrisers, whose batting line-up is as intimidating as that of the MI. Two Hyderabad batters -Heinrich Klaasen (186) and Abhishek Sharma (177) - are inside the top-10 run-makers and Travis Head (133) too has

REAM

been consistent. "But more than the quantity of runs, how they made it make them more dangerous as Klaasen (193), Abhishek (208) and Head (177) have torn apart the bowling unit in the Power Play and in the

middle-late overs. 'That uniform power allocation through batting ranks makes SRH a tall proposition for the

opposition bowlers. "This is not to say that SRH, currently fifth on the table with six points from five matches, do not have a weak

Similar to RCB, bowling has Hyderabad's been soft underbelly this in tournament with spinners

point.

Shahabaz Ahmed Mayank Markande giving away more than 11 runs in an over with minimal returns.

"But the Hyderabad outfit has found a saviour in skipper Pat Cummins, their highest wicket-taker with six scalps and he has also conceded just over seven runs an over, a very respectable economy

rate in this format. "Additionally, Cummins has also shown the flexibility to operate at various junctures of a match - with the new ball in the Power Play or bowling as second-change in the

middle and death overs. "The inclusion of left-arm pacer T Natarajan (5 wickets, economy: 8.6) has given their bowling a new dimension and a bit more control in the last three matches.

"Having played on a shirtfront in Hyderabad, the SRH bowlers might not feel out of home at the Chinnaswamy, which has a pitch with characteristics.

Battling lets LSG down again

PTI KOLKATA Opening batter Phil Salt's magnificent 89 not out complemented pacer Mitchell Starc's brilliant bowling show as Kolkata Knight Riders began their five-match home stretch with a one-sided eight-wicket win over Lucknow Super

Giants in the Indian Premier League here on Sunday. The IPL's record buy Starc, who copped criticism for taking just two wickets from four matches and leaking 11 runs per over, grabbed 3/28, while Sunil Narine returned with figures of 1/17 in his miserly spell as LSG scored a below-par 161/7 after KKR opted to bowl. The duo's bowling show eventually denied 20-30 runs for LSG who suffered their first

ever defeat against KKR. Salt smashed three sixes and 14 fours in his 47-ball 89 not out, while captain Shreyas Iyer overcame a wobbly start to remain unbeaten on a run-a-ball 38 as KKR chased down the target of 162 with 26 halls to spare

The win that coincided with the Bangla Nabo Barsho (Bengali New Year) catapulted KKR to second spot in the IPL table with eight points from

against Australia, Shamar Joseph capped a forgettable debut for LSG and he began by leaking 22 runs in an eventful first over in which he bowled two wides and two no-balls. Salt added salt to the injury by spanking the 24-year-old pacer over midwicket, that set the tone for his 26-ball fifty. He then smashed Arshad Khan for successive boundaries to race to his fifty, his second of the season — both coming at their home turf.

overs when he exhibited a fine display of left-arm pace bowling and took the key wickets of Sunil Narine (6) and Angkrish Raghuvanshi (7).

He also nearly disr

take KKR to 162 form 2 in 15.4 through the batter's defence before darting away. Apart from that, it was a oneway traffic with Salt in his devastating best.

were well on course with Salt's five matches.
West Indies' Gabba Test hero aggressive innings (strike rate of above 189) taking them to 58/2. Iyer initially looked out of sorts and he had some anxious moments against left-arm pacer Mohsin Khan whose deliveries troubled the KKR sskipper. With no scoreboard pressure, Salt's fluent innings also rubbed on Iyer who overcame an anxious start. Earlier, playing his 14th successive season for KKR, Narine yet

again showed his craft at Eden Gardens when he stifled LSG in the middle overs in his boundary-less show that eventually The only bright spot for LSG was Mohsin Khan's first two proved to be decisive. The Trinidadian came right

after the power play just when captain KL Rahul and Badoni were looking to capitalise with 49/2 on the board.

With the wicket gripping, he varied his pace an The duo stitched an unbroken skipper Shreyas Iyer with an the batters with his clever varie early on when the South

through his overs.

Narine gave away just nine runs in his first two overs, and completed his quota in the 15th over, dismissing Badoni (29) with Angrkrish Raghuvanshi taking a well-judged catch at

deep square leg. Under the searing sun and on a two-paced wicket, LSG struggled to hold on to the momentum after the power-play with Narine and Rana bowling with precision. Promoted to No. 4 after his 35-

ball 55 not out, Ayush Badoni struggled to rotate strike as the KKR bowler duo did well to bring the run-rate down to 7.2 at the halfway mark. Rahul, who looked at ease

against the pacers, also began to choke under pressure but he took on Andre Russell in the 11th over for an upper-cut six over deep backward point. In the next ball, he attempted a swivel shot but mistimed it

straight to Ramandeep Singh at deep midwicket to be out of 39. Under-fire Starc bore the brunt of Quinton De Kock's fury stand of 120 from 76 balls to incoming delivery that went ations and the duo chose to see African smoked him for suc-

cessive fours.

At the other end, Arora was wayward and Rahul took on the inexperienced seamer, hitting him over extra cover. Against the run of play, Arora

drew first blood in the second over, dismissing de Kock for 10 in a rather sloppy display by the South African veteran who took a thickish outside edge to hole out to Narine at short third man. Hooda's promotion to No. 3 also failed to yield desired result as he ate up a lot of deliveries, leaving Rahul stranded at the other end.

Hooda finally perished for eight in the fifth over thanks to Ramandeep's flying catch at deep backward point as KKR's fielding looked vastly improved. After being 111/5 in 14.4 overs, LSG recovered in the back end with Nicholas Pooran's counter-attacking innings.

Pooran smashed four sixes and two fours as LSG looked for a total of around 190 on the difficult pitch. Just when he was closing in on his fifty. Starc (3/28) had the last laugh in the Dhawan missed the game team). final over.

Dhawan out for at least seven to 10 days: Bangar

PTI ■ MULLANPUR

freebies.

Punjab Kings skipper Shikhar Dhawan could be out for at least seven to 10 days due to a shoulder injury, the team's head of cricket development Sanjay

against Royals on Saturday "We have to wait and see back in Mullanpur.

side in his absence.

days, I would say. Having an in the post match press experienced opener, conference. somebody like Shikhar, who Bangar indicated after the has experience of playing on representative at the narrow loss to Rajasthan such wickets, becomes captains' meet at the start of Royals.

Royals.

Royals.

Royals.

Royals. (for the

night. Sam Curran led the how he responds to the treatment. At the moment, it "He's having a shoulder injury, so he is likely to be out of action for at least out for at least a couple of seven-ten days," said Bangar

> "Jitesh Sharma was team's was down with fever, stayed

OTHER SPORTS

ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

Anju, Harshita reach final

PTI BISHKEK (KYRGYZSTAN)

 $\begin{array}{ccc} R \text{ ailways} & \text{wrestler} & \text{Anju,} \\ \text{Who} & \text{had} & \text{outclassed} \\ \text{Vinesh Phogat in the recent} \end{array}$ selection trials, and Harshita put up a dominant show to reach the gold medal bouts in their respective categories at the Asian Championships, but Sarita Mor was eliminated after a shock defeat in her opening round here Sunday.

"Competing in a highly competitive 53kg weight class category, Anju logged



back-to-back wins technical superiority against Philippines' Aliah Rose Gavalez and Sri Lanka's China's Qian Jiang in the medals. Nethmi Ahinsa Fernando.

"She faced some resistance "However, a big shock was in from China's Chun Lei before prevailing 9-6 in the semifinal.

'In the final, Anju will face Korea's Ji Hyang Kim. "Harshita conceded just

final, Uzbekistan's Zaripboeva by technical superiority (13-3) and beating Kazakhstan's beating Anastassiya Panassovich 5-0. "She will fight it out with

store for the Indian squad as 2021 World Championship medallist Sarita lost her quarterfinal bout 4-8 to Mongolia's Gantuya Enkhbat. "The 28-year-old was a firm

will contest for bronze

three points en route the medal favourite in this outclassing category. Later Enkhbat lost her semifinal, closing the Ozoda repechage route for the Indian. "Manisha Bhanwala (62kg) and Antim Kundu (65kg)

PTI BISHKEK (KYRGYZSTAN)

 $R_{\mathrm{who}}^{\mathrm{ailways}}$ wrestler Anju, and outclassed Vinesh Phogat in the recent selection trials, and Harshita put up a dominant show to reach the gold medal bouts in their respective categories at the Asian Championships, but Sarita Mor was eliminated after a shock defeat in her opening round here Sunday.

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Philippines' Aliah Rose Gavalez and Sri Lanka's Nethmi Ahinsa Fernando.

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"In the final, Anju will face Korea's Ji Hyang Kim.

"Harshita conceded just three points en route the final, outclassing Uzbekistan's Ozoda Zaripboeva by technical beating

Akshay slips at end of Round three but Scheffler moves into sole lead Anastassiva Panassovich 5-0. "She will fight it out with China's Qian Jiang in the

final.

pieces.

"However, a big shock was in store for the Indian squad as 2021 World Championship medallist Sarita lost her quarterfinal bout 4-8 to Mongolia's Gantuya Enkhbat. "The 28-year-old was a firm medal favourite in this category. Later Enkhbat lost her semifinal, closing the repechage route for the

Indian. "Manisha Bhanwala (62kg) superiority (13-3) and beating Kazakhstan's contest for bronze medals. and Antim Kundu (65kg) will

Nepomniachtchi

Gukesh beats Vidit Gujrathi to regain joint lead

PTI TORONTO

Tndia's D Gukesh bounced back with a finely crafted game to outwit compatriot Vidit Gujrathi and regain his joint lead with Ian have 5 points apiece and they Nepomniachtchi of Russia are followed by Nakamura and after the eighth round of the Pragnanandhaa on 4.5 points Candidates chess tournament

here. "On a day when R Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with Firouza Alireza of France, Hikaru Nakamura sealed his supremacy in the all-American duel against Fabiano Caruana to come back in to and went for a rare variation reckoning for top honours. "Overnight sole leader as early as on move four.

ender Nijat Abasov to get away with an easy draw in the other game of the eight-player double round-robin event. "With six rounds still to come,

Gukesh and Nepomniachtchi

each. "Caruana is now sole fifth on four points. Gujrathi on 3.5 comes in next ahead of Alireza on three points, while Abasov

is still at the rear of the tables on 2.5 points. "Gukesh had his task cut out wherein he surprised Guirathi Nepomniachtchi faltered in Gujrathi sank into a long

the early stages to allow tail thought and ended up losing



around twenty minutes on the

clock. "In the next few moves Gukesh equalized without much ado even as Gujrathi tried to make some headways on both flanks. "In the middle game, Gukesh

seized control of the only open file and used his queen and rook for an absolute domination to penetrate. Vidit tried hard to resist but the pressure was quite unforgiving especially when he had less

time. "The die was cast when Gukesh entered the eighth rank and it was a picturesque finish as white's king was taken for a walk before the checkmate became inevitable. The game lasted 38 moves.

"These kind of clean games are rare at this level, in the opening he did some inaacuracies and his position was unpleasant, I was in control, it was a nice game," Gukesh said when asked if he was surprised how he won as black without much

counterplay.
"Praggnanadhaa could not achieve much with his white pieces. Alireza employed the Sicilian Taimanov and the

tested very regularly at the top level. "However, for once, Alireza found the going easy and equalized without many problems, thanks to some timely breakthroughs on the queen side. "The players reached an equal

endgame soon after the

variation that has not been

Queens got traded on the 30th move the result was never in doubt. The draw was agreed to ten move later. "Hikaru Nakamura stole the thunder and has clearly been a

nemesis for world number two Caruana in the key encounters especially when the former had white pieces.

"It had started in Norway chess Indian went for another tournament when Nakamura

defeated Caruana in the last round to win and the trend had continued in the FIDE's Grand Swiss where he again won in the final round as white.

"In the eighth round game, Nakamura, one point away from leaderboard, took his chances in the closed Ruy Lopez and was duly rewarded as Caruana went for some unwarranted complications after getting a level position in the middle game.

"Caruana also ran short of time and missed out on a tactic in a difficult position. It was all over in just 35 moves. "Abasov has not been at his

best but in this round the Azerbaijani secured his first half point with the black

victory over compatriot R Vaishali out of a Queen pawn game to jump to 3.5 points. The course of the event changed a bit in this section as Tingjie Lei of China accounted for her Chinese team-mate Zhongyi Tan to through the event open. Zhongyi's domination was halted as Aleksandra Goryachkina of

Russia and Lei joined her in

the lead on five points out of a

possible eight.

transposed to an exchange

French defense and the

resulting position was just equal till the longest game of

the day ended after 63 moves.

"In the Women's section,

Koneru Humpy scored a

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