**OPINION 6** 

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UNFOLDS OVER GYANVAPI

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RATTLE TAIWAN

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RANCHI, WEDNESDAY APRIL 24, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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# Modi takes Hanuman Chalisa dig at Congress



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by BJP leaders during a public meeting for Lok Sabha elections in Tonk district Rajasthan on Tuesday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

JAIPUR/RAIPUR/NEW DELHI In his two different election rallies on Tuesday, Prime Narendra Modi continued his attack on the Congress, addressing the current controversy over wealth redistribution, a dispute over forced Constitution in Goa, and alleging that the grand old party never allows the recitation of Hanuman Chalisa and the celebration of Ram Navmi within the Congress-ruled States. In his Rajasthan tour, Modi said the Congress tried to extend reservation on the basis of religion and give it to Muslims, and once again accused the party "deep of hatching a conspiracy" to snatch

people's wealth and distribute it among "select" people. Modi also charged that it is difficult to follow one's faith under the Congress and that even listening to

Hanuman Chalisa becomes crime under that party's rule. His remarks come on a day when the country is celebrating Hanuman Addressing an election rally in Tonk, the Prime Minister said as soon as the Congress formed the

> task was to reduce the SC/ST reservation in Andhra Pradesh and give it to Muslims. "Modi is giving you a guarantee with an open heart that reservation for Dalits and backward tribals

Government at the Centre

in 2004, one of its first

will neither end nor will it be allowed to be divided in the name of religion," he said. Amid a row over his 'redistribution of wealth' remarks, the Prime Minister again charged that the Congress will snatch people's wealth and distribute it to select people.

Modi said the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had given a speech in which he had said that Muslims have the first right on the resources of the country.

There was a pilot project which the Congress wanted to try in the entire country. Between 2004 and 2010, the Congress tried to implement Muslim reservation in Andhra Pradesh four times but due to legal hurdles and the awareness of the Supreme Court,

Modi claimed.

Modi claimed.
"In 2011, the Congress tried to implement it throughout the country. They played a game of snatching away the rights given to SC, ST and OBC and giving them to others for vote bank politics. The Congress did this deliberately and without caring about the Constitution and B R Ambedkar," he said.

Modi alleged when the BJP Government in Karnataka got an opportunity, the first thing it did was to abolish the Muslim quota which was created by snatching it from ST and SC. The Prime Minister said the constitutional limit for reservation was ending in 2020 and he had extended the reservation of Dalit and tribals for another 10 years. The Congress and INDIA Bloc, Modi said, were peeved after he exposed their vote bank and appeasement politics in his recent address in Rajasthan's Banswara.

Attacking the Congress, Modi said, "Even listening to Hanuman Chalisa becomes crime under Congress rule" and referred to an incident in Congress-ruled Karnataka where a shopkeeper was beaten up for listening to Hanuman Chalisa. He said during the Congress rule in Rajasthan, those who pelted stones on Ram procession were given protection and restrictions were imposed

on such procession. However, after the formation of the BJP Government in the State, no one has the courage to question faith.



Gusty winds swept the national Capital as parts of Delhi received light rain on Tuesday, bringing

#### Asia worst hit by disasters in 2023: WMO report

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Last year, Asia faced the most disasters in the world as 79 events associated with extreme weather, climate, and water-related hazards, affecting over nine million people in the region and claiming over 2,000 lives, a new report by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has said.

Thus, underscoring the urgent need for concerted action to mitigate impacts of climate change and protect our planet for future generations.

The report 'State of the Climate in Asia 2023' which was released on Tuesday on 'World Earth Day' noted that Asia has warmed faster than the global average and the warming trend has nearly doubled since the 1961-1990 period. The accelerating rate of key climate change indicators such as surface temperatures, glacier retreat and sea level rise will have major consequences for Asia, its economy and ecosystems, the report

In India alone, severe heatwaves in April and June resulted in about 110

reported fatalities due to heatstroke in 2023, said the report adding in August, some States in India experienced a record-high monthly mean temperature, as well as an unprecedented rainfall deficit for the

Continued on Page 2

#### **Delhi hit by** freak weather

NEW DELHI: Strong winds and rains that lashed the national Capital on Tuesday provided much-needed relief for Delhiites, offering respite from the scorching hot weather.

The sudden atmospheric change brought down the temperature, even as the weather officials have predicted no heat wave conditions for the next seven

The Met office has forecast partly cloudy sky with light rain/thunderstorm with hail and squall on Wednesday.



#### DGCA directs airlines to let kids sit with parents

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has asked airlines to ensure children below the age of 12 are seated with at least one of their parents or parents/guardians who are travelling on the same PNR.

The directive comes against the backdrop of instances of children below the age of 12 years were not seated along with their parents or guardians during flights.

"Airlines shall ensure that children up to the age of 12 years are allocated seats with at least one of their parents/guardians, who are travelling on the same PNR and a record of the same shall be maintained," the DGCA said. In this regard, the DGCA has revised the Air Transport Circular titled, 'unbundle of services and fees by scheduled airlines' as per which, some services like zero baggage, preferential seating, meals/snack/drink charges, charges for carriage of musical instruments etc. have been allowed.

"Such unbundled services are provided on "opt-in" basis by airlines and are not mandatory in nature. There is also a provision for auto seat assignment to the passengers who have not selected any seat for web checkin before scheduled departure.

## Kejriwal given insulin in Tihar jail



SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal was administered a "low dose" of insulin on Tuesday in Tihar jail after his blood sugar level spiked. Meanwhile, a Rouse Avenue court on Tuesday extended the judicial custody of Kejriwal and BRS leader K Kavitha in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise scam till May 7.

"Kejriwal was given two units of low dose insulin on Monday evening on the advice of AIIMS doctors", a Tihar official said. His blood sugar level reading was found to be 217 around 7 pm, following which the doctors at Tihar looking after him decided to give him the insulin, the official said. The AIIMS specialists, during a video conference with the Chief Minister on doctors that insulin could be given to him if his sugar level crosses a certain

level, officials added. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) welcomed this news received on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti and said the development was the result of the blessings of the deity. Delhi Cabinet minister Atishi said in a post on X in Hindi, "Jai Bajrang Bali! Good news received on Hanuman Javanti. Tihar administration finally gave insulin to Arvind Kejriwal. This the result of the blessings of muman ii and the struggle o people of Delhi. Even in this time of struggle, the blessings of Bajrang Bali remain on all of us.

Meanwhile, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva alleged that the AAP leaders' "only political hope" was to "create public sympathy" over the health of Kejriwal in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

No doubt Arvind Kejriwal is a diabetic but his sugar is under control in jail as he didn't raise demand for insulin in the video consultation with the doctors of AIIMS," he said.

Rebuking the charges, the CM, in a letter to the jail administration, said he has raised the issue of insulin for 10 days, every day, multiple times.

Delhi Cabinet Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj who participated in an event in his constituency to celebrate Hanuman Jayanti. A person dressed as Lord Hanuman was carrying vials of insulin with Bharadwaj carrying a mace ('gadaa') as they travelled in the April 20, had advised the Tihar area atop a vehicle. Vials of insulin were stuck on the mace.

## **UNCONDITIONAL PUBLIC APOLOGY**

In wake of on going matter before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India (Writ Petition C. No. 645/2022), we in our individual capacity as well as on behalf of the Company, unconditionally apologise for the non-compliance or disobedience of directions/ orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

We unconditionally extend the apology for holding meeting/press conference dated 22.11.2023. We earnestly apologize for the mistake made in publishing our advertisements and it is our wholehearted commitment that such errors will not be repeated. We undertake to abide by directions and instructions of the Hon'ble Court with due care and utmost sincerity. We undertake to uphold the majesty of the court and comply with applicable laws and directions of the Hon'ble Court of law/relevant authorities.

Sincerely,

Patanjali Ayurved Limited, Acharya Balkrishna, Swami Ramdev, Haridwar, Uttarakhand

## Two Christian sects not with BJP

With hardly four days to go for the Lok Sabha election in Kerala, two prominent Christian sects have come out against the BJP-led NDA Government at the Centre.

On Monday, Joseph Mar Gregorios, the head of the Jacobite Church, declared that the followers of his sect would vote en masse for candidates fielded by the CPI(M)-led LDF. "The LDF Government in Kerala have always supported and helped the Church. The CPI(M) has stood with the demands of the Church and hence we are obliged and bound to help them by electing the LDF candidates," said the Jacobite Church.

But he was evasive when asked about the Congress candidate Benni Behanan, the



Congress candidate and a The interests of the Church member of the Jacobite should prevail," He also said the Iacobite Church has a

Church who is pitted against two Hindu candidates fielded by the CPI(M) and lot of issues regarding Chalakkudi control Churches and it is the CPI(M) that had constituency. "Let always stood with the the believers take their own decision after sect. Meanwhile, the Latin studying the ground realities. Catholic Church, a dominant

support the BJP. The Kerala Latin Catholic Council, the apex decision making body of the sect declared on Monday that the Central Government has subverted the missionary (proselytisation, evangelisation indoctrination) by holding back the funds meant for the Latin Catholic Church. Even after assuring that the

section along coastal Kerala declared that it would never

funds meant for the Church would not be held back, the Central Government has withheld two more accounts and this has made missionary works impossible.

The training of young pastors and priests too have been stuck because of the delay in releasing the funds," said the KRLCC in a release issued on Monday.

## BJP gains momentum in Khunti as Arjun Munda files nomination

n a significant moment in the political landscape of Khunti, Union Minister Arjun Munda filed his nomination for the Khunti Lok Sabha seat. Amidst the auspicious aura of blessings sought from Maa Durga and Bhole Baba, Munda's candidacy resonated deeply with the public, drawing a massive crowd of supporters and party workers. The vibrant display of solidarity underscored the growing momentum behind the BJP in the

The atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm as hundreds of party workers and senior leaders from Jamshedpur rallied behind Munda, reaffirming their commitment to the BJP's cause. Among them stood senior party leader and former party spokesperson Amarpreet Singh Kale, whose presence further galvanized the spirits of the attendees.

In an address to the gathering, Kale lauded Munda not only as an astute politician but also as an exemplary human being, endearing him to the hearts of the people



Arjun Munda Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Khunti Lok Sabha candidate Arjun Munda, State BJP President Babulal Marandi, AJSU Party Chief Sudesh Mahto along with others during a road show after filing his nomination papers for Khunti Lok Sabha election

ed affection and trust that the public holds for Munda, expressing confidence that the compassionate and diligent citizens of Khunti would once again extend their unwavering support and blessings to him. Beyond the local context, Kale shed light on the broader national sentiment, highlighting the prevailing faith and rever-ence towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He articulated the widespread belief among countrymen that under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Modi, India is destined to emerge as a developed nation, brimming with happiness, peace, and prosperity.

The event served as a testament to the growing influence and appeal of the BJP in Khunti, with Munda's nomination symbolizing a beacon of hope and progress for the constituents. As the election season unfolds, all eyes are on Khunti, where the winds of change blow in favor of the BJP, propelled by the collective aspirations for a brighter future under the leadership of Arjun Munda and Prime Minister Narendra Modi

#### Prowatch Revolutionizes Smartwatch Market with Debut of Prowatch ZN and Prowatch VN

PNS ■ Ranchi

Prowatch, a sub-brand of International, proudly announces its entry into the smartwatch arena with the unveiling of two models: Prowatch ZN and Prowatch VN.

Prowatch ZN: Elevating Performance and Style Prowatch ZN sets a new standard in the smartwatch industry with its revolutionary features and unmatched performance. Boasting a segment-first CORNING® GORIL-LA® GLASS 3 protection and a high-accuracy PPG sensor for continuous heart rate monitoring, this marvel of engi- durability for daily wear.

neering is designed to empower users in their pursuit of a healthier lifestyle. With a starting price of just Rs. 2,599, Prowatch ZN delivers advanced features, comprising a sleek circular dial with a practical rotating crown, a vivid 1.43-inch AMOLED display boasting a resolution of 466\*466, comprehensive health tracking capabilities, an extensive array of over 110 sports modes, 150 customizable faces, seamless smart notifications, charging for continuous usage, and a sturdy metallic build ensuring

## XITE College students gain practical insights during industrial visit



PNS ■ Jamshedpur

tudents from the Department of Economics at XITE College, Gamharia, had a remarkable opportunity to bridge

their academic knowledge with real-world industrial operations during an educational visit to Bhalotia Auto Products Pvt. Ltd., located in the bustling Adityapur

Accompanied by esteemed faculty member Dr. Radha Mahali, the final year students were hosted by the company's diligent team including N. Saran, Purchasing & Storing Manager and Ashwini Kumar, Technical Manager. The visit centered around an in-depth tour and presentation of the manufacturing processes involved in the production of brake drums, a critical component in automotive manufacturing.

The visit was meticulously organized to provide the students with a comprehensive look at the various stages of the brake drum pro-

ous stages of the brake drum production process, including:
- Sand Preparation, Mixing and Moulding: Initial steps involving the preparation and casting of moulds. Melting and Pouring:
The use of an induction furnace to melt materials and the techniques of molten metal handling.
Cooling and Knock-Out: Critical cooling times and methods for removing excess material. Shot-

Blasting and Machining: Advanced cleaning processes and precise machining for product refinement. Balancing, Painting and Packing: The final stages of production ensure quality and market readiness.

Saran provided valuable insights into the complexities of managing industrial operations, emphasizing the importance of efficiency and quality control in the competitive auto manufacturing sec-

This visit forms part of XITE College's commitment to provide its students with practical experiences that complement their rigorous academic curriculum. "Such industrial visits are crucial in helping our students understand the practical challenges and innovations in the manufacturing industry," said Dr. Radha Mahali. It bridges the gap between class-room theory and practical business operations, preparing our students to be industry-ready.

## Loyola School observes World Earth Day

PNS ■ Jamshedpur

oyola School's students commemorated World Earth Day with deep dedication and a sense of responsibility. The day commenced with a special assembly, featuring a prayer where students vowed to safeguard the planet Earth.

The event included a captivating presentation by students, shedding light on the urgency of combating climate change and advocating various methods of environmental conservation. A poignant dance per-formance further underscored the imperative for collective action in preserving our ecosystem and mitigating the impacts of

global warming. Father Vinod Fernandes, Principal of Loyola School, commended the



students for their initiatives. In his address, he emphasized the universal significance of Earth Day, stressing the school's commitment to the Tarumitra project aimed at instilling environmental awareness

Additionally, the occasion served as a tribute to ten distinguished alumni who graciously volunteered their time to conduct classes for students, facilitating continuity in education amidst teacher absences due to board paper evaluations.

#### First 4G BTS commissioned in Jharkhand

PNS ■ Ranchi

Bank, a leading national level mobile service provider, is ready to serve various areas of the country with 4G built with completely indigenous technology. In this series, the first 4G BTS in Jharkhand circle was also commissioned on 22.04.2024 in Kuchu, a remote village of Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, by Chief General Manager Sanjay Kumar in the presence of circle head of TCS and TEJAS, in which 40 Mbps speed was found. This 4G BTS has been manufactured by the indigenous company TCS. On this occasion, other senior officials PGM CFA Ashish Kumar Das, PGM CM Ramashray Prasad, GM BA Umesh Prasad Sah, GM EB Vijay Kumar Maurya were present. Another BTS has been commissioned under Saturation Project village block Koolmara Musabani Jamshedpur on Tuesday. This indigenous 4G BTS was inaugurated by Vijay Kumar, General Manager,

General Jamshedpur.



BSNL has so far constructed 633 towers under the 4G Saturation Project which is spread in remote areas in every corner of the state where even today there is no signal of any operator. All these towers will be started sequentially. Apart from this, BSNL will upgrade its 2G/3G service to 4G on all towers. A target has been set to make 400 BTSs operational with 4G service by the month of May. BSNL Jharkhand circle has always been ready to pro-

vide better service to the people of the state. In the successful commis-

sioning of 4G BTS, Vidyabhushan Deputy Manager, General Rameshwar Prasad Mahato Deputy General Manager, Rakesh Kumar Assistant General Manager, Ramesh Kumar Assistant General Manager, Uttam Kumar Sub

ivianager, Uttam Kumar Sub Divisional Engineer, Nikhil Kumar Singh Sub Divisional Engineer and the team of Ranchi and Jamshedpur played an important role.

#### Three sentenced to 4-yr jail under Arms Act in Garhwa forest and bushes. On ask-

**Nityanand Dubey ■** Garhwa

The court of Chief Judicial Magistrate, Garhwa Kumar Vipul sentenced four year imprisonment to three accused, on Tuesday. Court also imposed a fine of Rs. 10 thousand to each accused under Arms Act.

The three persons sentenced to imprisonment were identified as Ravi Tiwari, Atul Dhar Dubey and Anjan alias Ashish Dhar Dubey of Hasker village under Garhwa Police

According to the FIR lodged in Garhwa police station, a police team was on patrol on the morning of 28 June 2023. In the same sequence, a robbery took place near Pachpadwa village and a cordon was laid to catch the robbers. In the same sequence, on the information of the villagers, the police tried to stop a black Scorpio car coming from Korwadih. But on seeing the police, three people sitting in the car started run-

ning.
Police ran and caught one of them. While two people were successful in escaping by taking advantage of the

ing the name and address of the arrested person, he told his name as Ravi Tiwari. During the search, a loaded magazine and a countrymade pistol were recovered from his left waist. On removing the magazine, five rounds of live cartridges were recovered from it and 80 notes of Rs 500 were recovered from Ravi's pocket. During the search, another loaded country-made pistol was recovered in a black plastic from the rear seat of the car. When asked about this, Ravi did not give a satisfactory answer. He told the names of the two people who ran away as Atul Dhar Dubey and Anjan Dhar Dubey. On the basis of his confession statement, those people were also accused and Ravi Tiwari was sent to judicial custody. Later, the other two accused were also arrested and sent to jail. After this, the police conducted an investigation and submitted a charge sheet against these accused under section 394 IPC. Charges were framed against the accused and the evidence of witnesses was presented in the court by

#### 7 candidates file nomination papers from Lohardaga on the 5th day **BJP's Sameer**

Oraon, independent **Chamra Linda to** file nomination on

VINOD PRASAD ■ Lohardaga

n Tuesday, the fifth day of the Lohardaga nomination process, three candidates for the Lohardaga Lok Sabha conreserved for Scheduled Castes attended the room of Gumla Returning Officer Karan Satyarthi and filed their nomination forms. Which includes Bharat Adivasi Party candidate Marianus Tigga, independent candidate Pawan Tigga, inde-pendent candidate Shania Oraon. Whereas today another candidate has purchased the nomination paper. Whereas four candidates had filed their nomination forms on Monday, April 22 by presenting themselves in the room of Returning Officer Karna Satyarthi. These include CPI's Mahendra Oraon, Partner Party's Independent Stephen Kindo Jar People's Party of India



(Democratic)'s Bhagat. First, CPI's Mahendra Oraon had come to file nomination with his supporters. All the supporters and party workers were holding the red flag of their party in their hands and were walking shouting slogans. All the party workers were stopped on the way to the Collectorate near the court. The administration court. The administration deployed barricades and

police here. Representatives of the administration deployed on the spot said that only five people including the candidate will be able to go ahead for nomination. The second nomination was filed by partner party candidate Mani Munda. At the third position, independent candidate Stephen Kindo had come to file his nomi-



Bihari nation. His supporters had come to file their nominations, playing drums and shouting slogans. On the other hand, the fourth nomination paper was filed by People's Party of India (Democratic) candidate Bihari Bhagat. All the candidates reached the office room of Returning Officer cum Gumla DC Karan Satyarthi and filed their nomination According to the information, seven candidates have filed their nomination papers from Lohardaga Lok constituency. Whereas so far 15 people have purchased nomination papers from Lohardaga Lok Sabha constituency. It was told that BJP candidate Sameer Oraon, MLA Chamra Linda will file their nomination papers on 24th.

#### Joba Majhi files nomination papers for Singhbhum Lok Sabha Seat



PNS ■ Jamshedpur

n a significant development for the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, Joba Majhi, the joint candidate nominated by the INDIA Bloc, officially entered the electoral fray by filing nomination papers for the Singhbhum Lok Sabha constituency. The event, held in the vibrant presence of Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren

and Kalpana Soren, wife of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader and former CM Hemant Soren, garnered immense attention and enthusiasm from supporters and onlookers alike. Joba Majhi's candidature, backed by the collaborative efforts of the INDIA Bloc, signifies a united front aimed at addressing the diverse needs and aspirations of the constituency. With a strong emphasis on inclusive development and grassroots empowerment, Majhi's candidacy has struck a chord with voters

across the region.
The presence of Jharkhand CM Champai Soren and Kalpana Soren further underscored the collective endorsement and support extended to Joba Majhi's candidacy. Their presence not only symbolized the backing of the JMM but also highlighted the collaborative spirit within the political landscape of Ĵharkhand.

The nomination filing ceremony, held in West Singhbhum district, marked the commencement of a spirited electoral campaign characterized by a commitment to serve the people and uphold the democratic ideals of the nation. As the election season unfolds, all eyes remain on Joba Majhi and the INDIA Bloc, as they strive to secure a mandate that reflects the collective aspirations of the people of Singhbhum Lok Sabha constituency.

#### **Elephants create ruckus** kill man in Lohardaga went to drive away the ele-

phant.

the prosecution.

PNS ■ Lohardaga

herd of wild elephants A has once again wreaked havoc in Kudu. On Monday late night around 10:30 pm, a person was crushed to death by wild elephants in Chadra village of Kakargarh Panchayat of the block. The deceased has been identified as Mahayir Orang identified as Mahavir Oraon (35 years), son of Shukra Oraon, resident Chandalaso village of the block area. According to the information, at around 10:30 pm on Monday night, villagers in Badmada Itara village received information about a herd of 20 to 25 wild elephants coming towards the village. After receiving the information, the villagers united with torches, bombs and firecrackers and set out to drive away the elephants. Meanwhile, Mahavir Oraon, who was irrigating his field near the dam located on the

border of Badmara and

Chandalaso villages, also

Then the villagers and the herd of elephants came face to face near Mahavir Bhagat's crusher. Seeing the elephants in front, people ran here and there in panic to save their lives while Mahavir fell on the ground and was crushed to death by the elephants. Shortly after the accident, the villagers took Mahavir to Kudu Community Health Centre, where the doctors declared him dead after examination. Apart from his wife, the deceased has four

Commissioner Dr Waghmare Prasad Krishna immediately took cognizance of the incident, after which a compensation of Rs 25,000 was given to the wife of the deceased by DFO Lohardaga as temporary relief. After this accident, the villagers of the area are angry with the working style of the Forest Department.

#### Former Maoist cum ex-MP Kameshwar Baitha files nomination PNS ■ DALTONGANJ

ormer Maoist cum former MP Kameshwar Baitha today filed his nomination paper. He described himself as a BSP candidate.

It was in 2007 that Baitha had contested his first Lok Sabha election on the BSP election in 2007.

He had given a very tough fight to the RJD candidate Ghuran Ram in 2007 who had finally won this lok sabha seat defeating Baitha by just 20, 000 votes or so. In the general election in 2009 Baitha crossed the floor and joined the JMM. He contested the 2009 Lok Sabha election on the JMM ticket and routed his rival Ghuran Ram of the RJD by around 23, 000 votes.

Baitha thus became the first former naxal to become lok sabha member in India. He got rave reviews. Many saw in him the light of new

democracy then. He was

hailed as a harbinger of

Mâny believed then that there would be more such former naxals joining electoral politics. But nothing like that happened. Baitha too flew high in the air. Baitha had little over 11 percent of the vote share in the 2009 victory of him. Come 2014 and Baitha again switched to another political party. He joined the TMC of

polled less than 40,000

Mamta Banerjee. This election proved disastrous. He

In 2014 lok sabha election Baitha's poll share slumped over to little over 2 percent from little over 11 percent that he had in 2009 lok sabha election that he had

The wise Baitha did not contest the 2019 Lok Sabha

He has filed his nomination paper today after 10 years of sitting, watching and roaming around the constituency politically in



## BJP develops society and country, INDI Alliance family: Rajnath Singh

'Migration and displacement of tribals is the contribution of Congress'



**Arjun Munda Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers** Welfare and Khunti Lok Sabha candidate Arjun Munda and State BJP President Babulal Marandi during a road show after filling his nomination papers for Khunti Lok Sabha election 2024 in Khunti on Tuesday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

nion Defense Minister Rajnath Singh participated in the nomination of Lok Sabha candidate and Union Minister Arjun Munda in Khunti on Tuesday and addressed a huge public meeting organized there. During this, he fiercely attacked the constituent parties of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Congress and Indi alliance. He said that the Indi alliance wants to gain sup-

the people. BJP wants their support through love, affection and respect. Politics cannot be done for long by lying and throwing dust in the eyes of the public. The people at Indi Alliance are

doing the same thing.
Singh said that after the formation of Jharkhand, BJP had three CMs. None of them were tainted with corruption. A CM of Jharkhand is a guest of the government. For the first time I had heard of a CM going missing for one and a half days. He was also

The Union Home Minister said that the people of Indi alliance do politics for the family. They do not make society and country. BJP does politics to build society and country. The PM has dedicated his entire life to the people of the country. He still works 18 hours a day. It is because of PM Modi that India is being celebrated all over the world today. India's respect in the world has increased.

Singh said that the



**Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** addresses public meeting in Khunti Lok Sabha on Tuesday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

Bharatiya Janata Party has done the work of honouring Bhagwan Birsa Munda. Prime Minister Modi did the work of bringing Jharkhand into limelight. He heard the voices of people living on the last rung of society. A separate Tribal Welfare Ministry was created in the government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Its budget has increased manifold during the tenure of PM Modi. He said that during the tenure of the BJP government, 25 crore people have come out of the poverty

The Home Minister said that Congress wants to conduct a survey of people's property. It says that minorities have the first right on the country's resources. Bharatiya Janata Party does

Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians. All sections are getting the benefits of Government schemes equally. Everyone is also getting 5 kg free rice. He appealed to make Arjun Munda win by more than three lakh votes

Former Chief Minister and State President of BJP Babulal Marandi said that the people are watching the condition of Jharkhand. Hemant Soren has looted everything in the state. His crime is recorded in the ED charge sheet. Prime Minister Modi talks about developed India. These people are working to develop their home and family. In the formation of Jharkhand, BJP



**Arjun Munda Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers** Welfare files his nomination papers for lok Sabha poll in presence of State BJP President Babulal Marandi. BJP senior leader Kariya Munda and AJSU party Chief Sudesh Mahto in Kunti on Tuesday. Pix by Vinay Murnu

of 23 years. Till date, no tribal land has been looted during the tenure of BJP. These people allege that if BJP comes to power, they will snatch the land. Spread false propaganda. He appealed to the people to take a pledge that Arjun Munda will be elected from Khunti.

Union Minister and NDA candidate from Khunti Arjun Munda said that BJP government will be formed at the Center on the strength of the people. It will be a tribute to the sacrifice of Lord Birsa

Munda. Till date, Narendra Modi is the only Prime Minister in history who came to the land of Birsa Munda. BJP knows how to respect ber of votes. martyrs. People should On this occasion, Lok pledge that on this occasion they will send 14 lotus flow-

AJSU chief and former Deputy Chief Minister Sudesh Mahato said that this election is to choose a leader for the country. The people of Khunti will also elect such a leader who will work with Prime Minister Modi ji. At present

ers from Jharkhand to Delhi.

there is no alternative to Prime Minister Modi. NDA candidate Arjun Munda has to be sent from Khunti after winning with a record num-

Sabha in-charge Ravindra Karmaveer Rai, Pradhan, Vimala Satyanarayan Singh, Rakesh Prasad, MP Vidyut Varan Mahato, MLA Neelkanth Singh Munda, Koch Munda, Ramchandra Chandravanshi, Chandrashekhar Gupta and

## BJP trying to snatch rights of tribals, we will not bow down: Kalpana Soren

CM Champai Soren along with senior leaders attend Joba Majhi;s nomination

F ormer CM Hemant Soren's Kalnana Care Murmu today said that the BJP wants to suppress the voice of tribals and snatch their rights, but the people of the tribal community are brave enough to thwart such an attempt.

Addressing a public meeting in Chaibasa on the occasion of nomination filing of candidate from Singhbhum Kalpana said that in the land of Singhbhum people are like lions. They don't bow before anyone. They neither bowed before the British nor before the dictatorial government.

"We have to uproot B.IP which wants to snatch away the rights and privileges of the tribal people. You saw what happened in Manipur. They talk about tribals but when their massacre took place, the BJP leaders did not set foot there. This is their tribal love. There are a lot of catchphrases but vou have to see who thinks about the interest of Jharkhand. When the proposal was made to include the language in the 8th Schedule as soon as the government is formed in the state, the Home Ministry said that it will think later. They rejected the Ho language. They also rejected the Sarna religious code," she



"They want to end reservation. Would you choose such people? Will you elect such people who do not talk about your rights and entitlements in Parliament? A big program took place in Ranchi. Popular leader Arvind Kejriwal, who was doing public welfare work, was also put in jail. The people sitting at the center want to suppress you. They think you are insects. Will you tolerate it?,"

asked Kalpana. "Joba Manjhi is one among you. Her tenure has been excellent. You have to strengthen them. If she wins, Guruii and Hemant Soren will stronger. India become Alliance government will be formed at the centre. The sloganeers are raising slogans. Who started Sarvajan Pension. BJP people will sav that it was started by the



JMM candidate for Singhbhum Lok Sabha Joba Majhi files her nomination papers in presence of Chief Minister Champai Soren and JMM leader Kalpana Soren in Singhbhum on Tuesday. PNS

Centre. But it is the responsibility of you to go to the village and tell the people that Hemant Soren has given pension to everyone," she said.

JMM candidate from

Singhbhum, former minister and MLA Joba Manjhi filed her nomination on Tuesday. During this time, Kalpana Chief Minister Soren. Champai Soren, many MLAs including Rajya Sabha MP Mahua Maji, Minister Deepak Central General Barua. Secretary of JMM were present. CM Champai Soren while addressing the gathering said that the people's turnout for this election has proved that our victory will be certain in the first phase of elections. We had not allowed BJP to

open its account in Kolhan in the last assembly. This time also we will win 14 seats. We did a lot for the development of Jharkhand. BJP never thinks about tribal interests. It doesn't think about the welfare of the natives. It doesn't think about the welfare of

They don't have an issue. They have been doing jumlabazi since 2014 till date. This time too there is a promise of guarantee. But, we don't know what the guarantee is. BJP betrayed the public in Jharkhand. Our government gave the scheme in the remote area of the forest. It gave benefits to every family. Pension given to the people after the age of 50 years.

Champai said that BJP relaxed the forest rights law. It does not respect the village head. We have fought for water, jungle and land for years. Manki Munda was relaxed in the double engine government. Our government is giving Manki Munda scholarship. A playground was built in the name of Poto Ho.

He said that there are elec-

tions not only in Jharkhand but across the country. On one side is the party of the capitalists. On the other hand, there is a party of poor Dalits, tribals and minorities. In 2019. the government was formed under the leadership of Hemant Soren with absolute majority. Since then, BJP has been continuously trying to topple the government. During this period, Hemant Soren kept making welfare schemes. The tribals continued working for the welfare of the natives. Appointments to government posts also contin-

BJP conspired and put Hemant Soren in jail and is still plotting and trying to change the Constitution. Our rights and entitlements are contained in it. Efforts are being made to relax them. Today, Hemant is in jail so I had to come among you. I have brought his message to you. You have to make him win to get your rights secured.

## JPSC releases results in record 35 days

Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) has released the Preliminary Test result of Combined Civil Competitive Examination-2023 in just 35 days which is a record. The result was released late Monday evening. A total of 7011 candidates have been successful in the examina-

A total of 1159 female candidates were successful in this examination. Under horizontal reservation, 16 candidates from primitive tribe, 60 from sports quota, 62 from

intellectually disabled were selected. Commission Chairperson,  $\operatorname{Dr}$ Mary Neelima Kerketta Member Bhattacharva, DrAjita Member, Dr Jamal Ahmed, Secretary, Akshay

Controller of Examinations, Asim Kispotta played a role in the publication of the result.

The Preliminary Test was held on March 17 for 342 posts. 3,20,661 candidates had appeared in it. For the fixed posts, 15 times that is 5130 candidates were to be selected in the main examination, but due to similar marks of many candidates, the number reached 7011. The main examination can be held on 22, 23, 24 June. The Commission has released the PT result in a record time of 35 days. It is noteworthy that the Commission had taken the PT examination on March 17.

#### JHALSA takes cognizance in Morabadi road accident

visually disabled, 46 from

deaf disabled, 45 from walk-

ing disabled and 48 from

PNS: RANCHI

Jharkhand High Court (HC), Judge and acting chairman of Jharkhand Legal Service Authority (JHALSA), Sujit Narayan Prasad has taken cognizance of the road accident that took place late Monday night near Morabadi under Lalpur police station area.

The High Court Judge has given instructions to District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) for proper treatment of the people injured in this accident. After this, DLSA Secretary, Rakesh Ranjan and Ranchi Civil Court Judge, Kamlesh Behera went to RIMS late in the night and met the injured and directed the RIMS management to provide better medical facilities to the

An uncontrolled car crushed a woman near the residence of JMM President, Shibu Soren in Morhabadi, Ranchi on Monday night. The woman died on the spot. Six other people were injured after being hit by the car. As soon as the

information about the incident was received, the police reached the spot and seized the car. According to eyewitnesses, the car hit many people from Museum Chowk in Morhabadi to the residence of former Chief Minister Shibu Soren. Local people said that the uncontrolled car stopped near Shibu Soren's residence after hitting an electric pole, crushing the woman. After the accident, the people traveling in the car including the driver left the vehicle and ran away. The police have seized the car. The car is



#### **SCS celebrates World Book Day**



celebrated Surendranath Centenary School on 23rd April 2024 to promote the enjoyment of books and reading. The literary Club of the school in

collaboration with the Community Outreach club organised a book donation campaign under the project RAHAT, where the students of classes I to V donated books to the needy ones. The students also made bookmarks and designed the cover page of their favourite book. In the senior wing the students of class VIII participated in a program titled 'Meet the Author' and got an opportunity to interact with a student of class X whose book 'Strings of a Mind' was recently released. The students of class X participated in a book review session and lively discussion.

#### **LSAT**—India<sup>™</sup> 2024 registration window open till 2 May

NEW DELHI: The LSAT—India™ May registration window is now open and will be accepting registrations until 2 May 2024. Designed by world leaders in law school admissions, the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), and delivered by Pearson VUE, the LSAT—India<sup>TM</sup> is one of the leading law school entrance examinations for prospective candidates seeking to secure a place at institutions across India. Eighteen institutions across the country accept LSAT—India™ exam scores, informed Deepu Krishna, Head Admissions and Outreach, BITS Law

### Loo alert in many districts of State

The Meteorological Centre has forecast loo in Jharkhand for four days from April 24. This will impact many districts of the state. An alert has been issued regarding this. The information was given by the Ranchi Meteorological Center on 23 April.

According to the Meteorological Center, there is no possibility of any major change in the maximum temperature during the next 24 hours in the state. After this, it is likely to gradually increase by three to five degrees Celsius in the next four days

According to the Centre, heat wave conditions may be seen at isolated places in East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum and Seraikela Kharsawan districts on April 24 and 25.

On April 28, heat wave conditions can be seen at places in East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum,



A woman covers herself to get protection from scorching sun on a hot summer day in Ranchi on Tuesday. Pix by Vinay Murmu

Seraikela Kharsawan, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Jamtara, Pakur Sahibganj districts.

On April 27, heat wave may prevail at isolated places in East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum, Seraikela Kharsawan, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Deoghar, Jamtara, Dumka, Pakur, Godda and Sahibganj districts.

It has been advised to avoid going out in the sun between 12 noon and 3 pm and drink enough water. Further it has been asked to wear light, light-coloured, breathable cotton clothing and use protective glasses umbrella/hat or slippers while going out in the sun.

### Ranchi Police seize 3950 kilograms of Doda

PNS: RANCHI

Ranchi Police has seized 3950 kilograms of Doda being sent from Ranchi to Rajasthan. The market value of the seized Doda is around Rs 6

On the basis of secret information received by Ranchi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Chandan Kumar Sinha, the police team has caught a truck loaded with Doda near Huvaghatu School of Namkum police station area. The Police have also arrested truck owner cum driver Harpal Singh. The SSP gave this information in a press conference on Tuesday.

During the press briefing Sinha said that on Monday information was received that Doda was being loaded in a truck and being sent to Rajasthan. "This information was given to the rural



SP. Taking immediate action on the information; the Rural SP formed a team. The team raided and seized a truck laden with 3950 kg of doda from near Huvaghatu School and also arrested one person. The arrested person has been

identified as Harpal Singh, a resident of Haryana. Along with being the truck owner, he is also the truck driver. DSP One and Namkum police station team and other officials were present in the formed team," he added.

# Modi has never done politics on basis of religion: Rajnath

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has never done politics on the basis of religion or by dividing the society and stressed that his predecessor Dr Manmohan Singh had in 2006 talked about extending reservation for the Muslims.

The defence minister made the remarks at an election rally in Greater Noida in support of BJP's Gautam Buddh Nagar Lok Sabha candidate Mahesh Sharma.

Prime Minister Modi on Sunday suggested that if the Congress comes to power, it would redistribute wealth of people to the Muslims and cited Dr Singh's remark that the first claim on the country's resources.

Addressing a rally in Rajasthan's Banswara, Modi also alleged the Congress plans to give people's hard-earned money and valuables to "infiltrators" and "those who have more children".

Addressing a gathering at Bisahda village in Greater Noida, the defence minister attacked the opposition for creating a ruckus at this time and trying to put a question mark on Prime Minister Modi. "Sisters and brothers, it's not that I know the prime minister from today. We have had very good relations for a long time. He has never done politics of Hindu, Muslim and Christian. Our prime minister never thought of doing politics by



dividing the society," Singh

"He (Modi) said at one place that Congress has said in its manifesto that we will get the properties surveyed. If it is said in the manifesto then why should people have any objection to it. What do you want to do by getting the properties surveyed? Do you want to distribute the country's resources equally? What do you want to do?" he asked. The veteran BJP leader also

asked the Congress to clear its position on the matter. "Dr Manmohan Singh ji was the prime minister of India. I respect Dr Manmohan Singh ji even today, I have respect for him, brothers and sisters. Dr Manmohan Singh himself

in the meeting of the National Defence Council at the Vigyan

had said that if anyone has the first right on the property of this country, it is the minority and especially he had said that it belongs to the Muslims," Rajnath said."Sisters and brothers, whatever property and whatever resources there are in this country, everyone should have equal rights, he had said this, we did not say this. Now when the prime minister said this, these people created an

uproar over it," he added. Rajnath said the Congress-led government had in the past formed several commissions, which had recommended in their report that out of the 27 per cent reservation for the OBCs, 6 per cent should be for the Muslims and 2 per cent should be for the minorities. "We did not make this com-

Escalating his attack on the Congress, Rajnath said, "It did not stop at this. If someone from the Scheduled Caste converts, he should be given reservation despite the change of religion. Not only this, they (Congress) also ended the reservation of SC-ST in Jamia

Millia Islamia and Aligarh

Muslim University." 'These people have formed the government by dividing the country equally on the basis of Hindu and Muslim," he alleged. The senior BJP leader stressed that his party does not want to make the country by dividing it on the basis of caste, creed, religion, Hindu, Muslim or Christian, but wants to make India a great country of the world by keeping everyone

## Government focussing on research, learning and innovation in big way: Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said his government is focusing on research, learning and innovation in a big way, a day after QS president Nunzio Quacquarelli lauded the performance improvement in Indian universities

Indian universities demonstrated the highest performance improvement among all the G20 nations this year, a significant 14 per cent yearon-year improvement in their average ranking, Quacquarelli said in a social media post.

Tagging his post, Modi said on X, "This is encouraging to see! Our Government is focussing on research, learning and innovation in a big way. In the coming times, this emphasis will deepen even



further, thus benefitting our Yuva Shakti."

Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) was the highest ranked university in India in the coveted rankings announced earlier this month by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), the London-based higher education analytics firm. The university was ranked at 20th position globally for development studies.

IÎM-Ahmedabad figured among the top 25 institutions globally for business and management studies while IIM-Bangalore and IIM-Calcutta were among the

#### India, Oman review collaboration in combating illegal activities at sea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ndia and Oman on Tuesday here reviewed their collaboration in combating transnational illegal activities at sea and promote regional co-operation during the fifth Annual High-Level Meeting between the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard (ROPCG). Giving details, officials said

this meeting follows the insti-tutionalized mechanism as outlined in the Memorandum

Understanding (MoU) between the ICG and ROPGG.

A delegation from the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard led by Colonel Abdul Aziz Mohammed Ali Al Jabri, Commanding,



arrived in New Delhi on Monday to participate in the meeting. The high-level discussions were led by Director General Coast Gueard Rakesh

The meeting focused on bolstering bilateral engagements through capacity-building programme, cross ship's visit, implementation of Sea Rider programme, establishing professional linkages between pollution reporting centers and other collaborative

arrangements.

Both sides expressed their commitment to enhancing mutual cooperation in addressing

maritime challenges, thereby

strengthening the maritime

safety and security framework in the region.
A meeting between the Royal Oman Police Coast Guard delegation and representatives from Society of Indian Defence Manufacturer (SIDM) is also planned on

Wednesday here to acquaint with India's shipbuilding capabilities 'Atmanirbhar Bharat.' The 5 th Annual ICG-**ROPCG High-Level Meeting** underscores the commitment of both the Coast Guards to jointly address maritime chal-

lenges and foster regional

cooperation, ultimately con-

tributing to the safety and

security of the maritime

domain in the region.

fake online programmes PIONEER NEWS SERVICE qualification, is specified by the UGC, with the previous The University Grants Commission (UGC) has

UGC warns public against

warned the public against fake online programmes with abbreviations similar to recognised degree nomenclature, officials said, flagging a particular "10-day MBA" course. 'Some individuals or organ-

isations are offering online programmes and courses with abbreviated forms similar to the higher education system's recognised degree programmes. One such programme to which the attention of the commission has been drawn is a '10 Days MBA'," University Grants Commission (UGC) Secretary Manish Joshi said. "The nomenclature of a degree, including its abbrevi-

approval of the central government, through the publication of a notification in the official gazette," he added. The UGC secretary clarified that only a university, estab-lished or incorporated by or under a central act, provincial act or state act, or an institution deemed to be a university or an institution specifically empowered by an act of Parliament, has the right to confer a degree. "Higher eďucation institu-

tions are also required to obtain approval from the UGC to offer any online degree programme in terms of the UGC regulations. A list of recognised HEIs (higher education institutions) to offer online programmes and of permitted online programmesis available on deb.Ugc.Ac.In," Joshi said.

#### BJP rolling back pro people measures in Rajasthan: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Congress on Tuesday said its previous government in Rajasthan introduced schemes that provided crucial protection to vulnerable popwhy the current BJP dispensation is "rolling back" those "pro-people" measures.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh posed questions to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of his election rally in Tonk-Sawai Madhopur.

Questions for the PM as he heads to Tonk-Sawai Madhopur today: Why is the BJP scaling back INC's propeople schemes? How much corruption has the BJP committed in the ERCP? How long will families displaced by the Isarda Dam be denied compensation by the BJP?" Ramesh said in a post on X.

Elaborating on what he said were "jumla details", Ramesh said when the Congress party was in power in Rajasthan, it passed a series of "visionary" laws that would meaningfully improve the quality of life of thousands in the state.

"The Rajasthan Minimum Guaranteed Income Act, the addition of 25 extra days for MGNREGA (Rural) over and above the sanctioned 100 days, the Indira Gandhi Shahari Rojgar Yojana Act which guaranteed 100 days of employment to families residing in urban areas, the Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare Act), Workers

and the Right to Health Act which provided universal health coverage - all these schemes provided crucial protections to vulnerable populations in the state," he said.

"Instead of these acts being implemented, we are now seeing a breakdown of governance since the BJP came to power in December 2023," Ramesh said. At least 15.5 lakh pensioners in

Rajasthan have stopped receiving their pensions since January this year due to "verification" issues, he claimed.

The government also attempted to reduce the health coverage from Rs 25 lakh under the Congress' Chiranjeevi Yojana to just Rs 5 lakh under the BJP's



Ayushman Bharat, Ramesh

"In their vindictiveness, why is the BJP government rolling back the INC's pro-people schemes?" he said. Ramesh said, BJP leader and

Rajasthan Agriculture Minister Kirodi Lal Meena has "accused his own government of corruption" in connection with the Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP). "He (Meena) alleged that the

Water Resources Department and the ERCP Commission have colluded with a Delhibased company to scam the government of Rs 35 crore. "According to a letter that

Meena wrote to the Rajasthan CM, land worth Rs 50 crore was sold to the Delhi company for just Rs 9 crore, and Rs 35 crore was pocketed by government officials. He also alleged irregularities in the auction of land located near the Alwar main road for the ERCP project," Ramesh said.

"One can only imagine how deeply corrupt the BJP has become for its own leaders to now be crying foul. Are they just following the example of the PM and his Rs 4 lakh crore Chanda Do Dhandha Lo model of corruption?" the Congress leader said.

Ramesh said the Isarda Dam is now 75 per cent complete but the BJP government is yet to rehabilitate and resettle the 37 villages that were submerged by the dam.

"Farmers from Tonk and Sawai Madhopur have now submitted hundreds of representations to the government demanding fair compensation but all their efforts have been in vain.

"The leader of the Kisan Mahasabha highlighted that compensation had not been determined by the district collector as per law, physical verifications were never conducted, and the farmers have not been adequately compensated for their immovable properties," Ramesh said.



 $T^{\text{he popularity of mechanical bull riding at places like}}$ amusement parks and corporate events is on the rise in India too. But with this fun activity comes some serious risks, especially for kids. A study by health experts at Loma Linda University Children's Health has shown are, revealing that kids are getting hurt way too often when riding mechanical bulls.

They're getting hurt so much that experts are calling for stricter safety rules and regulations to make sure everyone stays safe while having fun. Titled "Mechanical Bull Injuries in Pediatric Patients: A Call for Safety Regulations,"

highlights the urgent need for enhanced safety measures and regulations.

The findings are published in the journal Children's Health Care and revealed that mechanical bull riding poses a significant risk to children, with traumatic brain injuries being the most common out-

"Mechanical bulls, even when advertised as 'children friendreal public health concern," said Martin G. Rosenthal, MD, assistant professor of surgery at Loma Linda University Children's Hospital (LLUCH) and corresponding author of

LLUCH has identified up to 35 cases over seven years, each resulting in severe injuries. Over 65% of these cases



involved severe brain injuries, and more than half of all children required immediate surgical intervention. "Our study, one of the largest examining mechanical bull riding injuries

in children, reveals that most injuries occur at private events where mechanical bulls are rented from vendors," said Sina Asaadi, MD, MBA, a research fellow and lead author of the study. "This suggests that the actual number of injuries may be higher than reported, indicating potential underreporting."Long-term consequences of brain injuries include memory issues, severe headaches, nausea, seizures, and possible learning disabilities, to name a Rehabilitation for these patients

is intensive, involving physical, occupational, and speech therover months and years.

"Several other studies from southern California have reported similar findings and there appears to be a proclivity of these injuries occurring in our own backyard," said Rosenthal.

The machine replicates the sensation of riding a bull and is designed to dismount the rider, although most are thrown off to land on inflatable or padded flooring. Mechanical bull riding is typically reserved

for adults; however, there are modified versions of the machine for children. Yet another study, 'No more bull: pediatric head injuries as a result of mechanical bull

rides', says that mechanical bulls have an inherent risk of high-force trauma. "We patients who suffered head injuries/skull fractures caused by mechanical bull riding, many of which required surgical intervention. We recommend the introduction of increased safety measures and better age guidelines to restrict children from riding these machines," said the authors of

#### Army Chief outlines Indian Army efforts towards self reliance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

rmy Chief General Manoj Army Cinci General Army here outlined the Indian army's efforts towards self-reliance in enhancing its military capabilities and underscored the significance of comprehensive national power in a country's

Making this assertion at All Management Association's National Leadership Conclave, he said while economic strength serves as the foundation of growth, military prowess is essential for safeguarding national interests.

He underlined the evolving geostrategic landscape characterized by rapid changes and geopolitical power plays, reaffirming the relevance of hard power in ensuring national security.

Stressing upon the Indian Army's role as a deterrent against conflict and its pre-paredness to respond to threats across the spectrum of conflict, the Army chief highlighted the importance of self-reliance in defence.

He cited the disruptions in the global supply chain during the pandemic and the lessons drawn from ongoing conflicts, emphasizing the imperative for India to reduce its



dependency on external sources for defence require-

In pursuit of self-reliance and modernization, General Pande outlined the Indian Army's transformation initiatives, which encompass force restructuring, modernization, improvement of systems and processes, human resource management, and promotion of jointness and integration with sister ser-

He emphasized the need to embrace disruptive technologies and foster an indigenous defence-industry ecosystem to achieve self-reliance. The Indian Army's vision for the future involves trans-

and technology-enabled force

ning wars across various domains of operation. He highlighted the impor-

tance of absorbing and indigenizing critical technologies to bridge the gap between imported and indigenous defence systems. General Manoj Pande reiter-

ated the Indian Army's commitment to "Swadeshikaran Se Sashaktikaran" (empowerment through indigenization) and called for collective efforts from all stakeholders to strengthen India's defence capabilities. He also called for the need for

a partnership approach between the defence industry and the armed forces to realforming into a modern, agile, ize India's vision of selfreliance in defence.

#### Ministry seeks report on spice bans by Singapore, Hong Kong

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Days after the Singapore and Hong Kong red flagged four spices products manufactured by the Indian firms MDH and Everest recalling them from the market, the Union Commerce Ministry has directed Indian embassies in both the countries to send a detailed report in the matter. In a statement posted on its

website on April 5, the Hong Kong's food regulatory authority, Centre for Food Safety (CFS), said that three spice products of MDH -Madras Curry Powder (spice blend for Madras Curry), Sambhar Masala (Mixed Masala Powder), and Curry Powder (Mixed Masala Powder) — along with Everest's Fish Curry Masala contain "a pesticide, ethylene

Recalls have been initiated, and the CFS has instructed vendors to cease sales and remove affected products from shelves. Meanwhile, the Singapore Food Agency (SFA) has ordered a recall of Everest's Fish Curry Masala for similar reasons, as per

#### Former Vice President Naidu calls for end to freebies in elections

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

 $F^{ormer\ Vice\ President\ M}_{Venkaiah\ Naidu\ on\ Tuesday}$ said the "frequent" party-hopping by political leaders was a "disturbing trend" and called for strengthening the antidefection law. Speaking at a function at his

residence here after receiving the Padma award, Naidu said announcing "freebies" during elections without listing out funds mobilisation is an unhealthy trend which should be discouraged and people should question the leaders and parties making such lofty promises. Naidu was awarded the Padma Vibhushan award on Monday evening by President Droupadi Murmu at a function at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

"Defections are being encouraged. We should strengthen the anti-defection law," he asserted. "Now, the worry is that there is a fall in the standards in public life. In political parties, people often change their parties. The latest trend is people are in one party in the morning and join another party in the evening and then they criticise your leader and say things left and right. Some of them are

favoured with tickets also. "This is a very disturbing trend and people should avoid it. People should work at parties and prove their credentials. If anybody wants to change parties, one should resign from the post given by that party and then only join another party. One can understand making

abusing," Naidu said. He said another unhealthy trend is that people are making promises left and right, without considering where the money will come from, as there is no

accusations, but what is hap-

pening is not accusing but

"Political parties must come out with a manifesto and secondly, should come out with

schemes supported by the financial health of the state and third, how they are going to mobilise resources and then whatever they want to spend," the former vice president said He wondered how it was possible to give everything for free as "money does not come from trees". But then some of the leaders and parties are making promises left and right even when the financial health of the state is weak, he

Attempts by the Congress and the pro-CPI(M) Asianet News channel to derail the electoral fortunes of BJP's Rajeev Chandrasekhar who is contesting as a candidate from Thiruvananthapuram Sabha constituency fell flat on Tuesday as Kerala High Court dismissed a public interest litigation petition filed by the Congress challenging the returning officer' decision to accept the nomination papers

that Rajeev Chandrasekhar, a union minister of state, had filed false affidavits along with his nomination paper and these were accepted by the Returning Officer. Their grievance was that the union minister, one billionaires in the country, had suppressed details of his taxable income and hence his nomination paper should not

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN KOCHI

The face off between the CPI(M)-led LDF and the Congress-led UDF in Kerala took an ugly turn on Tuesday with a Marxist leader demanding a DNA test of Rahul Gandhi, the scion of the Nehru-Gandhi

scion of the Nehru-Gandhi

clan and its endorsement by

the State's most powerful person, Chief Minister

(DeoxyRiboNucleic Acid)

test is carried out to the

confirm the original paternity of a person. "Rahul

Gandhi's genes are quite different from that of the

Nehru-Gandhi family and

this has to be confirmed

through DNA test," said P V Anvar MLA, a controversial

CPI(M) leader told while

Palakkad where the party's

prime ministerial candidate

A Vijayaraghavan is engaged

"We do have strong doubts

about the lineage of Rahul

Gandhi. His links with the

Nehru-Gandhi family could

be established only by subjecting him to a DNA

test," said Anvar in a speech

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said he fully

endorsed the views of Anvar

even the BJP leadership.

in a triangular contest.

meeting

addressing a

election

Pinarayi Vijayan.

The petitioner had contended

of the BJP candidate.



be accepted. A Bench of Justices VG Arun and S Manu accepted the argument of the Election Commission of India (ECI) that once the nomination of a candidate is accepted by the returning officer, the remedy for the aggrieved person is to file an election petition before the High Court and not a PIL. "As rightly contended by counsel for Election Election counsel Commission of India, the

CPM leader DNA remark against

as there were doubts about

the antecedents of the

Gandhi scion. Vijayan had

called Rahul Gandhi as

Pappu during an election campaign on Sunday. Anvar went one step further and described AICC General secretary K C Venugopal as a

low quality Congress leader who advises Rahul Gandho

in all important national and

With the polling day

approaching fast, quality of

narratives between the two

major fronts in the State are

taking a new low, said many

observers. "The fact that BJP

is maintaining a quality in

commentator and a veteran

campaign specialist based in

feature

discourse and

Damodaran

international issues.

ing

political

Sudheer

which is being described as their discourses is a

Rahul triggers political row

remedy of the petitioner, if aggrieved by the acceptance of

the affidavit filed by one of the

candidates is to challenge the

same in an election petition," the Court said in its order. Avani Bansal, the petitioner, argued that though she had lodged a complaint with the Returning Officer pointing out the discrepancies in Raieev Chandrasekhar's affidavits, there was no "reasoned decision" rendered

Interestingly, both the Congress and the CPI(M) are constituents of the INDI

Alliance, an umbrella organization formed by Opposition parties to defeat

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Hindutva

forces in this edition of General Election. Television

channels

newspapers miss no chance

in publishing video images and pictures of Rahul

Gandhi hugging and kissing

Communist leaders Sitaram

Yechury and D Raja though Prakash Karat keeps the

On Sunday, Vijayan had

declared that Rahul Gandhi

would not be a prime ministerial candidate, giving

enough hints that Vijayaraghavan would the

CPI(M) nominee for the top

political observer.

Congress

20 seats in Kerala

according to Jayashankar, author and

appiness with

former at a safe distance.

and

that complaint.

"Where is the statutory provision that says that a reasoned order must be given by the returning officer on complaints given to them," the Court asked the petitioners and ordered the rejection of the petition.

Sources close to the minister

told The Pioneer that Asianet News, a channel owned by the former was giving him sleepless nights by telecasting anti-Narendra Modi reports and stories. "Only anti-Modi reports are being aired by the said news channel giving an impression that Rajeev Chandrasekhar is han in glove with the staff. If he dares to take action against the editorial staff, all of them would strike work and the channel would go off the air. The editorial staff members are hardcore CPI(M) fanatics and one of them is a plant by the Church itself," said the

#### 16 candidates in fray in two Lok Sabha seats in Goa

PTI PANAJI

Eight candidates each are in Efray for the two Lok Sabha seats in Goa after the withdrawal of nominations, as per the Election Commission data. In North Goa, the prominent candidates include sitting BJP MP Shripad Naik and former Union minister Ramakant Khalap fielded by the Congress.

In South Goa, the BJP has officer Viriato Fernandes. withdrawal

third phase of polling. In North Goa, the BJP has CPI(M) and Congress leaders wine and dine together once the go put of the State, the duel between the two is being seen as a faced to cover their links as both are fighting it out in the parliamentary State. While Vijayan claimed that the LDF would sweep all the 20 seats at stake, strongman Ramesh Chennithala despite High Command said on respectively, while Tuesday that the I.N.D.I. Alliance would win all the

fielded industrialist Pallavi Dempo, while the Congress has nominated former naval Monday was the last day for

nominations. Goa, which has two Lok Sabha seats, will vote on May 7 in the

renominated its sitting up Naik, while the Congress has fielded former Union minister Khalap Manoj Parab, who heads the fledgling Revolutionary Goans Party (RGP), is also contesting Journalist Milan Vaigankar and Sakharam Naik have been nominated by the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the three independent candidates are also contesting in the North

## Rajeev Chandrasekhar gets a breather | Congress wants to implement Sharia law in country: Yogi

Escalating

Adityanath alleged,

Congress manifesto says that

they will take people's

property and distribute it. Do

you want to allow the Congress and Samajwadi

Party to loot your property?'

'Look at the condition of

these shameless people. On

one hand, they are eying on

your property and on the

other hand they are making

the mafia and criminals their

necklace and reciting Fatiha

Referring to a comment

made by former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan

Singh in 2006, Adityanath said, "When Dr Manmohan

Singh ji was the Prime

Minister, he had said that

Muslims have the first right

'So where will our Dalits,

Kharagvanshis, Pals, poor and farmers go? Where will

on the country's resources...

backward

in their name," he added.

PTI ■ AMROHA (UP)

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday made serious allegations against the Congress and said the grand old party has in its election manifesto expressed its intention to implement the 'Sharia law' in the country and redistribute people's

Addressing an election rally in Amroha, Adityanath said, The Congress and its allies have betrayed the country and have once again come to you with their false manifesto. If you look at the Congress' manifesto, they say that if they form a government, we will government, we wimplement the Sharia law."

"You tell me, will this country be run by the Constitution made by Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar or by Shariat?" he

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has in his election rallies said the Congress has included redistribution of people's property in its manifesto.

"Congress people talk in their manifesto that they will implement 'vyaktigat kanoon' (personal laws). That means Sharia law will be implemented because Modi ji stopped the practice of triple talaq," Adityanath said.

"They say that we will again restore personal law. These people will implement Sharia



the mothers and sisters go, where will the youth go?" he asked.

The chief minister claimed that terrorism has been finished in India during the tenure of the government.

There was an atmosphere of fear and terror in the country 10 years ago, people were afraid. After 2014, terrorism was controlled and by 2019, Modi ji did such a thing that the root of terrorism Jammu Kashmir's Article 370 was abolished. Today terrorism has been destroyed in India," he said.

Adityanath claimed that now whenever there is a loud burst of firecrackers somewhere, Pakistan clarifies that it has no involvement. "Pakistan is afraid that even

by mistake, a terrorist incident takes place in India and some innocent citizen is killed, they will have to face consequences," he said.

Two women BJD leaders quit party ahead of LS, Assembly polls

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Two prominent women BJD leaders have quit the ruling party, weeks ahead of the simultaneous Lok Sabha and assembly elections in the

state. While Hindol MLA Simarani Nayak resigned from the BJD on Monday, former legislator Sambalpur Raswswari Panigrahi announced her decision to

quit on Tuesday.

Nayak resigned from the primary membership of the party, hours after being denied a ticket to contest the assembly polls. She was replaced by Dhenkanal MP

Mahesh Sahu. In her resignation letter to BJD president Naveen Patnaik, the two-time MLA cited personal problems as the reason behind her move. Navak had won the seat in

2019, defeating BJP candidate

Ashok Kumar Nayak by almost 19,000 votes. Panigrahi said she quit after the BJD leadership fielded candidates who were from outside the district.

The BJD initially fielded former MP Prasanna Acharya from Bargarh for the Sambalpur assembly seat, but later named Rohit Pujari from Rairakhol as its candidate for

## Baharampur may not be a cakewalk for Adhir Chowdhury

classes,

PTI KOLKATA

Unemployment workforce migration continue to remain major issues in heavyweight Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury's bastion, the constituency in West Bengal's Murshidabad district, and seems to have triggered 'anti-incumbency' for the five-time MP from the seat.

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) sprung a surprise by bringing in former India all-rounder Yusuf Pathan from challenge to Chowdhury, the son of the soil who has been winning the seat without a break since Besides Pathan, Chowdhury is also taking on BJP's Nirmal Chandra Saha, a popular doctor from the region, where polls are becoming the repository for Besides the religious spread, scheduled on May 13.

supplying skilled labour to the 13.2 per cent of the total

"Although we consider Adhir da as our leader, we did not see his required involvement in Baharampur's development



in the last decade. We had higher expectations from him," Sudhir Sengupta, a local businessman, told PTI.

According to Lakshman Hazari, a resident of Amar Chakraborty Road Baharampur town for the last 55 years, the entire district seems to have earned the dubious distinction of rest of the country at a low

"What has this TMC government done other than

bring back migrant workers home during the Covid-19 pandemic?" Hazari asked.

While Baharampur is dominated by over 66 per cent Muslim population, the constituency is also inhabited by minorities like Christians (0.25 per cent), Jains (0.04 per cent) and Sikhs (0.01 per cent).

population in Baharampur belong to the Scheduled Castes (SC) category and 0.9 per cent to Scheduled Tribes

constituency has assembly segments Kandi, Burwan Rejinagar, Bharatpur, Beldanga, Baharampur, Naoda — all in Murshidabad district. As a mark of making political

inroads into one of the last remaining Congress strongholds of the state, the TMC managed to win six of those seven seats in the 2021 state Assembly elections, losing just one — the Baharampur assembly segment — to the BJP. While the TMC has never

won the Baharampur Lok Sabha constituency, local party leaders appeared to be taking heart from Chowdhury's declining vote share, which has dipped by over 11 per cent since the 2009 general elections.

that despite five consecutive wins, Chowdhury has failed to cement the Congress foothold in Baharampur.

## Thrissur Pooram, mother of festivals, leave a trail of pathos

The decision of the Kerala Government to call off Thrissur Pooram, rated as mother of all festivals, has upset the followers of Sanatana Dharma and believers of temple rituals. The 19 April festival was called off by the police without furnishing any reason despite the fact the event was held without any disturbance. Nandakishore, cine artist and R K Damodaran, poet, termed the police action as an indication of things to come in future targeting the Hindu festivals. Nandakishore said

among devotees that the display of Lord Rama's and the Ayodhya Temple pictures in the decorative umbrellas would have upset some political parties and religions and this could be the reason for the decision to cancel the Pooram.

Following intervention by Suresh Gopi, the BJP candidate contesting from Thrissur constituency and constituency and Mission, an integration, the Lok apolitical organization, the police was forced to backtrack from its decision after hours of stand of. The customary



fireworks, which marks the conclusion of the year's Pooram was held 24 hours later on Saturday, a hitherto unheard development. The CPI(M) which was

caught with its pants down condemned the "communal BJP" and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Friday night's confusion though it did not elaborate on the role

K Muraleedaran, the Congress candidate fighting against Suresh Gopi, alleged that the commotion was yet another proof of the BJPjoint venture to defeat Congress candidate

Harikiran Meanwhile, Muraleedharan, a young advocate in Thrissur filed a petition with Ombudsman, Travancore Kochi Devaswam Board, against the Kerala Police for using footwears in the Lord Mahadeva Temple by the Kerala Police. "This was in violation of the High Court order DBP-83/2003

inside temple premises and hence an action of contempt of court," said Harikiran in his petition. He wanted strict action against this high handed behavior of City Police Commissioner Ankit Ashokan and his team of cops for hurting the religious sentiments of the believers. "Every year the Pooram with memories of light, sound and the rhythm with which more than 500 percussionists create colorful music. But 2024 Pooram concluded with a sense of pathos," said

concludes

Nandakishore.

#### Congress cheated Himachal Pradesh with false promises: Union Minister Anurag Thakur

Union minister Anurag Thakur on Tuesday accused the Congress of cheating the people of Himachal Pradesh with false promises and the youths in the state are still waiting for five lakh jobs.

meetings in Hamirpur and Una district, he said the Congress and its guarantees

"In Rajasthan, atrocities against women were highest in the country and 19 Party's K Venkata Rosaiah in

recruitment exam papers were leaked. In Chhattisgarh, only the family members of the chief minister used to get government jobs," the BJP candidate from Hamirpur alleged. During the Congress rule, the Mahadev App scam came to light in Chhattisgarh while crores of rupees and gold were recovered from the secretariat of Rajasthan, he alleged.

The Congress came to power in Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka by giving false guarantees, the Union guarantees, the Union minister claimed, adding that the party completely failed to fulfill even a single promise in Himachal

### Citizenship big issue in Barak Valley, CAA key to resolving it: BJP

PTI SILCHAR (ASSAM)

Citizenship has been a major issue in the two Lok Sabha constituencies of Barak Valley, and the CAA will go a long way in resolving it, BJP's Silchar (SC) candidate Assam and minister Parimal Suklabaidya

said.
The BJP took steps to bring in a law, which will help people who came to the valley from Bangladesh, he told PTI in an interview.

In the two constituencies, which share a 129-km border with Bangladesh, there is a sizeable population of Hindu Bengalis, displaced from the neighbouring country, who entered the valley over a period of time. "The Citizenship (Amendment) Act was enacted as a law by Parliament, but soon after the framing of the rules, the Model Code of Conduct came into force and not much work could be done in this regard," Suklabaidya, the Minister for Excise, Transport Fisheries, said.

The citizenship problem was created due to partition, and no political party took any step to solve it for 70 years, he claimed.

"It is true that some people are finding it difficult to apply online, and there are issues related to submission of documents, but Union Home Minister Amit Shah has been

apprised of the matter. He has assured that the process will be simplified after the MCC is lifted," the BIP leader said. "Problems may arise in its implementation, but we are committed to resolving those," Suklabaidya said, adding that political parties were making "unnecessary

noise" over the matter. All the bottlenecks will be taken care of in the next six to eight months, with support from the state government, he

Opposition parties have alleged that many people were not applying on the CAA portal, as they have to upload relevant documents issued by Bangladesh to prove they were displaced from that country.

Communication connectivity were the other key issues in the Barak Valley, the BJP nominee said.

Suklabaidya said it was former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who had taken the initiative for the East-West Corridor from Silchar to Gujarat, but after that the Congress government was in power for 10 years and it "neglected" the project.

"After Narendra Modi became the prime minister in 2014, he took up the initiative again and the project is nearing completion. It will help in reducing the travel time to the state capital to a great extent,"

#### **PTI** ■ AMARAVATI Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) had earlier TDP's candidate for Guntur Lok Sabha seat P former Sekhar Chandra captured headlines after he declared his family assets both movable immovable — at Rs 5,785

crore, in his election affidavit, potentially making electoral race.

him one of the wealthiest contestants in the current According to an affidavit filed by him, his individual assets stood at Rs 2.448.72 crore while his wife Sriratna Koneru has Rs 2,343.78 crore worth assets and children have nearly Rs 1,000 crore.

A press release by

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath's son Nakul Nath topped the richest contestants list in the Phase-I of the Lok Sabha polls held on April 19, with nearly Rs 717 crore worth of assets. Chandra Sekhar's family has a liability of Rs 1,138 crore to JP Morgan Chase Bank of USA in the form of Line of Credit. From Burripalem village in Andhra Pradesh to working as physician teacher at Johns Hopkins University Sinai Hospital to founding UWorld (online learning and study resources platform), Chandra Sekhar's journey 2010 to support several

was truly fascinating.

With ₹5785 crore assets, TDP LS contestant

Chandra Sekhar stirs election attention

The Doctor-Entrepreneur-Politician completed his MBBS at NTR University of Health Sciences Vijayawada in 1999 and pursued MD (Internal Medicine) from Geisinger Medical Center in Danville, Pennsylvania in 2005.

He secured 27th rank among 60,000 students who took the EAMCET medical entrance examination (MBBS) in the state which was considered most competitive examination in the country. Chandra Sekhar with an interest in public service, has been working on behalf of the TDP's NRI wing since welfare programmes of the Though he desired to contest

the Lok Sabha polls from Narasaraopet segment in 2014, TDP allotted the ticket to R Sambasiva Rao due to political issues. In a joint filing with his wife, he declared Rs 605.57 crore as per US Tax Cycle Year January 2022 to December 2022 in that country. He has investments and shares in several US-based firms. He also possesses luxury cars such as Rolls Royce Ghost, Mercedes Benz and Tesla in the USA. Chnadra Sekhar will take on YSR Congress

the elections.

## **PTI** ■ HAMIRPUR (HP)

election Addressing

have failed in the entire country which is why, the party was not voted back to power in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.

Pradesh.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

## **Weather vagaries**

It is as bad as predicted: Extreme events of 2023 were triggered by a much warmer climate

The year past us was characterised by a slew of extreme weather events. Now, a new study has shed light on a disquieting correlation: Many of these occurrences were in line with predictions of a warmer world due to climate change. The study, by a team of atmospheric scientists, analysed the unprecedented frequency and intensity of extreme weather phenomena across the globe in 2023: From devastating wildfires to record-breaking heatwaves, and from erratic precipitation patterns leading to floods and droughts to powerful tropical storms. One of the key findings is the undeniable alignment between these extreme events and the long-standing predictions made by climate scientists. As greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, Earth's climate system is being pushed to its limits. While it has long been established that a warming climate exacerbates the intensity and frequency of such events, the empirical evidence underscores the urgency of addressing climate change mitigation. Also, the ramifications of these



events extend far beyond environmental concerns, encompassing socio-economic, humanitarian and geopolitical dimensions. Vulnerable communities bear most of the brunt, and disruption of essential infrastructure and supply chains amplifies the challenges. In the face of these sobering revelations, concerted action is imperative to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This entails not only reducing greenhouse gas emissions through transitioning to renewable energy sources and implementing sustainable land-use practices, but also investing in adaptation strategies to cope with the unavoidable effects of a changing climate. One such initiative is the issuance of tailored advisories

by meteorological agencies to assist farmers in mitigating the impacts of climate variability on agricultural productivity. In this regard, the IMD has taken proactive steps, leveraging advanced forecasting techniques and agronomic expertise. By harnessing datadriven insights and employing localised approaches, these advisories offer valuable guidance to farmers regarding optimal planting schedules, irrigation management, pest and disease control and crop selection. The IMD's initiative exemplifies the importance of integrating scientific knowledge with practical solutions to address the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change. By empowering farmers with actionable information and tools, such initiatives not only enhance agricultural resilience but also contribute to sustainable livelihoods and food security. As we navigate the complexities of a changing climate and its far-reaching implications, collaboration and innovation emerge as indispensable pillars for building a more resilient and sustainable future. By heeding the warnings conveyed by atmospheric science studies and embracing proactive measures at local, national and global levels, we can strive for a world where the impacts of extreme weather events are mitigated, and communities are empowered to thrive in harmony with nature.



Devotees arrive at Jakhu temple to offer prayers on the occasion of 'Hanuman Jayanti', in Shimla

# Historic legal battle unfolds over Gyanvapi



Amidst the legal wrangling, a deeper narrative emerges, one of contested ownership, religious desecration and the enduring scars of history

he legal hearings, whether in the court at Varanasi or the Supreme Court, over the past many months regarding the worship at Gyan Vapi, carry ethical interest. The statures of the lawyers of both sides in these courts appear to be comparable. It has occurred to neither lawyers nor laymen that one side argues in defence of their clients' rights of worship; the puja in the tehekhana, whereas the opposing side also has argued that they have been the owners of the edifice in question. Also, it has not occurred to the judges, leaders and clients; in fact, no one else that the property is an acquisition by dacoity; i.e., loot in whatever sense. There was no mosque in that vicinity at all, until 17th century Mughal emperor Aurangzeb via a firman (a royal decree) had the Kashi Vishwanath Temple destroyed, except for the western side, which still unmistakably bears the evidence of the structure being originally a temple, in the form of its carved walls.

The fervent followers of the Mughal emperor are not embarrassed that the Hindu devotees of Kashi Viswanath since the mid-17th century and even in independent India, have to worship in a small temple, because of lack of any more space. For over three centuries then, an illegitimate structure stands, welcoming the followers of Aurangzeb's bigoted ideology. The judges in this case should soon begin trials. It should be declared that this is a trial over a place of worship that was robbed and desecrated, not a dispute between two equals. The law of adverse possession cannot apply here.

The Europeans should clearly understand that this spirit of Mohammedanism is unchangeable and that, if by any mischance, India should again come into the possession of men of this creed, all the churches and colleges and all the Mission institutions, would not be worth a week's purchase". So wrote Reverend Mathew Atmore Sherring, an English offiiai. The Muslims did not narm the Christians of British India. But it is unlikely that there are he was so upset at the vandalism he saw in Banaras that he could not help speaking out.



Reverend Sherring was a devout, maybe slightly bigoted evangelist member of the London Missionary Society, dead against idol worship. And yet he said it would not be difficult to find twenty temples in all Banaras of the age of Aurangzeb (1658-1707). This is the case throughout the whole of northern India.

His description of the desecration of temples by the thousand and their blatant conversion into mosques, mausoleums, dargahs, palaces or pleasure houses has to be seen to be believed. In his view, if there is one thing about the Mohammedan period that Hindus remember better than another, it is the insulting pride of the Musalmans (sic), the outrages that they perpetrated upon Hindu religious convictions and the extensive spoliation of their temples and shrines. "When we endeavour to ascertain what the Mohammedans have left to the Hindus of their ancient buildings in Banaras, we are startled at the result of our investigations. Although the city is destrewn with temples, many which are old".

Reverend Sherring continued, that the diminutive size

India — except for the south that exist is another testimony to the stringency of the Mohammedan rule. It seems clear that Mughal emperors forbade the Hindus to build spacious temples and forced them to erect only small structures, of the size of cages, for their idols and those of no pretensions to beauty. The consequence is that the Hindus of the present day, blindly following the example of their predecessors of two centuries ago, commonly build their religious edifices of

the same dwarfish size as for-

merly. These observations

speak volumes about the trau-

ma that the Hindu psyche has

built at the behest of Rani

suffered as a result of the JERUSALEM, THE impact of Islam. HINDU HEART GOES Sherring writes that just as Muslims yearn to visit Mecca OUT TO BANARAS. IF and the Christians, Jerusalem, the Hindu heart goes out to THE HINDUS REFER Banaras. If the Hindus refer to any one city as their holiest, it TO ANY ONE CITY AS is Banaras. Aurangzeb tried to THEIR HOLIEST. change its name to 'Muhammadabad'. The tem-IT IS BANARAS ple of Bisheswar, regarded as the god of all gods, was systematically demolished by Aurangzeb during the 17th century. The new temple was

HERRING WRITES

MUSLIMS YEARN TO

VISIT MECCA AND

YEARN TO VISIT

THAT JUST AS

**CHRISTIANS** 

of nearly all the temples in Ahilyabai Holkar long after Aurangzeb's desecration. As already explained, all the temples built during the Mohammedan rule in Banaras had to be diminutive in size. It transpires that the demolition of temples was inspired not only by a hatred for idolatry or greed for loot but also by a desire to humiliate the Hindus. Or, else, how does one explain that the masjid built by Aurangzeb is bang next to the Gyan Vapi or the well of knowledge? Sherring has also referred to

Al Baruni, an important source of Indian history of the medieval period. He came to India with Mahmud of Ghazni. Although Sherring casts doubts on Al Baruni's contention, nevertheless, he mentions that Ghazni reached as far as Banaras during his ninth incursion into India. In 1194 AD, Shahabuddin, better known as Muhammad Ghori, after defeating the Kannaujian monarch, Jaichand, marched to Banaras where he is reported to have destroyed a thousand Hindu

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

#### **WEATHER WOES** Madam — Apropos the news article, The rising power of "India grapples with erratic weather", published on April 22, this is my response. nano influencers

Unlike their macro and celebrity counterparts, they embody the authenticity of everyday people, fostering genuine connections with their audience

n the ever-changing world of social media marketing, Inano influencers are becoming a significant presence, giving brands a different way to connect with consumers that focuses on being genuine and establishing personal relationships. Nano influencers, who usually have between 1,000 and 10,000 followers, provide a unique mix of community-focused influence and relatability that sets them apart from larger accounts like macro and celebrity influencers.

Nano influencers are similar to regular people — they are our friends, family and colleagues who share their lives and interests on social media without the polished image usually seen in professional influencer marketing. This authentic form of influence relies on real connections and trust, characteristics that are becoming more important in a crowded marketplace filled with advertisements and endorsements from celebrities.

Authenticity and Engagement is at the core of Nano Influencers

Nano influencers are suc-



uine relationships with their followers, who see them as peers rather than distant celebrities. This authenticity makes their product recommendations more effective and trustworthy. By leveraging personal connections, nano influencers can have a significant impact on their audience.

Why are Brands Leaning Towards Nano Influencers? Smaller brands are starting to see the benefits of working with nano influencers for a few reasons. To start, nano influencers tend to have much higher engagement rates compared to influencers with bigger audiences. This shows that nano influencers have real and personal relationships with their followers. On top of that, collaborating

with nano influencers is usu-

means brands can get more

ally more affordable, which

gets while still connecting with their target audience.

1. Hyper-Targeted Marketing: Small-scale influencers typically concentrate on particular niches, enabling brands to reach individuals with specific interests, resulting in more impactful marketing initia-

2. Cost-Effectiveness: With reduced hopes for payment, companies have the opportunity to collaborate with numerous nano influencers using the same amount of money they would typically spend on just one macro or celebrity influencer.

3. Higher Quality of Engagement: Nano influencers tend to spark more genuine engagement, resulting in increased levels of interaction such as comments, likes and shares.

4. Authentic Product Endorsements: Recommendations from nano influencers hold the same weight as recommendations from friends and can greatly influence buying choices.

5. Increased Brand Visibility and Community Building: cessful because of their gen- out of their marketing bud-Nano influencers play a cru-

cial role in connecting brands with tightly-knit communities, increasing brand exposure and building a strong sense of connection with potential customers. The Challenges

Although there are many benefits to working with nano influencers, there are also some challenges to consider. It is important to find influencers who truly connect with the brand's values and message. Additionally, brands will need to deal with the logistics of working with a larger group of influencers to reach their target audience effectively.

Brands are always looking for more genuine ways to connect with consumers and nano influencers are becoming a popular choice. These influencers focus on building real relationships and trust with their followers, creating a more authentic connection. This approach is resonating with consumers who are growing tired of traditional advertising and celebrity endorsements.

(The writer is the founder and CEO of iCubesWire; views are personal)

The recent weather fluctuations across India present a stark reminder of our vulnerability to nature's whims. While Delhi anticipates relief from the scorching heat, Odisha and Himachal Pradesh face contrasting challenges. Odisha grapples with a relentless heatwave, prompting necessary precautions, including school closures. Conversely, Himachal Pradesh reels under heavy rain and snow, causing infrastructure havoc. These extreme conditions underscore the urgency of climate resilience measures.

Moreover, the IMD's forecast of above normal monsoon rainfall signifies hope amid uncertainties. However, the spectre of increasing extreme weather events, as highlighted by recent research, casts a shadow over the future. Regions like the Indus and Ganges plains are particularly at risk, threatening millions of lives. This serves as a clarion call for proactive measures, from robust disaster management strategies to sustainable practices. As citizens, it's imperative to heed warnings, adapt to changing climates and advocate for broader environmental stewardship to mitigate future crises

Rahul Kapoor | Delhi

#### **POWER PRICING PREDICAMENT**

Madam — Apropos the news article, "With power freebies, debt comes calling", published on April 22, this is my response. RK Singh's stance on power pricing echoes a common-sense truth: electricity isn't free. His call for States to bear the financial burden of free power initiatives highlights a critical issue plaguing the sector. The practice of offering free electricity distorts the market, undermines the financial health of distribution companies and ultimately hampers economic growth. The complex dynamics of tariff setting, with subsidies for certain consumer segments, exacerbates the problem. While

#### THE EDITOR **Kejriwal's health report**

propos the news article, "Kejriwal stopped Ataking insulin months back: Tihar", published on April 21, this is my response. The revelations about Arvind Kejriwal's health present a perplexing narrative. On one hand, the Tihar jail administration claims he ceased insulin under a Telangana doctor's advice, contradict-

ers through such measures, the long-term repercussions are dire. Delays and partial reimbursements only deepen the financial woes of discoms, leading to a vicious cycle of debt and inefficiency.

The solution lies in structural reforms, freeing discoms from undue State control and allowing market forces to determine pricing. Direct financial support to targeted beneficiaries would ensure transparency and sustainability. Such reforms are essential for fostering a resilient and competitive electricity sector, benefiting both consumers and the economy at large. Vivek Rao | Mumbai

**MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES** Madam — Apropos the news article, "Brain Wellness", published on April 22, this is my response. The staggering statistics on childhood development and the economic ramifications underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions. The formation of the National Task Force on Brain Health, spearheaded by esteemed professionals, marks a signifipolitical parties may win favour with votcant step towards bridging critical health-

ing his court Statements. The tug-of-war between AAP and BJP adds political spice. Amidst allegations of a "conspiracy," one wonders about the truth's cloak. If Kejriwal indeed stopped insulin, was it wise? The report's assertion of no alarming sugar levels suggests a bal-

anced picture, yet doubts linger. The stringent dietary restrictions, though, raise eyebrows. Are they necessary or punitive? The bureaucratic tangle over hospital referrals muddles clarity. Amidst these complexities, Keiriwal's medical saga becomes a microcosm of larger political battles. As a concerned citizen, one hopes for transparency and genuine concern for his health above political theatrics. The saga demands more than just a casual glance; it beckons scrutiny and empathy amidst the whirlpool of accusations and coun-

Aisha Khan | Chennai

care gaps. Dr RK Dhamija's insights illuminate the task force's holistic approach, emphasising inclusive healthcare from grassroots to tertiary levels.

The task force's focus on equitable access and awareness aligns with global initiatives, acknowledging the profound impact of neurological disorders on society. By evaluating existing infrastructure and policies, the panel aims to catalyse transformative change, recognising the intertwined complexities of brain health and socioeconomic factors. India's healthcare landscape mirrors global challenges, with disparities magnified in rural areas. The task force's mandate to submit actionable recommendations reflects a commitment to prompt action. However, sustained efforts beyond policy formulation are crucial to translating vision into tangible improvements, ensuring every individual has access to quality brain health-

Natasha Reddy | Vijayawada

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneér@gmail.com facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

#### **FIRST COLUMN** THE MYSTERIES **OF AFTERLIFE**

The Upanishads offer profound insights into the enigmatic realm of the afterlife



**SWAMI CHARANASHRIT** 

he Upanishads, ancient philosophical texts that form the foundation of Hinduism, offer profound insights into the nature of existence, consciousness and the ultimate reality. Among the myriad themes they explore, the concept of the afterlife occupies a significant place. Delving into the Upanishadic thoughts on the afterlife unveils a tapestry of ideas, reflecting deep contemplation on the nature of existence beyond the mortal realm.

The Transient and the Eternal: Central to the Upanishadic understanding of the afterlife is the distinction between the transient, ephemeral aspects of existence and the eternal, unchanging essence of the self (Atman). These texts assert that the physical body is subject to birth and death, bound by the cycles of samsara (the cycle of birth, death and rebirth), while the Atman transcends these cycles, being eternal and

The Doctrine of Karma: Integral to the Upanishadic worldview is the doctrine of karma, which holds that every action, thought and intention produces consequences that shape one's future experiences. According to this doctrine, the quality of one's actions determines the nature of their existence in this life and beyond. The Upanishads emphasise that the consequences of karma extend beyond the confines of a single lifetime, influencing the soul's journey through successive rebirths.

The Journey of the Soul: The Upanishads envision the soul's journey through samsara as a process of spiritual evolution aimed at realising its true nature and attaining liberation (moksha) from the cycle of birth and death. This journey is characterised by the accumulation of karma, which propels the soul through various life experiences and incarnations. Each lifetime presents opportunities for growth, learning and self-realisation, ultimately leading the soul closer to its divine source



The Concept of Rebirth: Rebirth, or reincarnation, is a fundamental tenet of the Upanishadic philosophy. It is believed that the soul undergoes multiple births, inhabiting different bodies and experiencing diverse life circumstances based on its past actions. The Upanishads describe the process of rebirth as governed by the law of karma, wherein individuals are born into specific situations that reflect the consequences of their previous deeds. Liberation from the cycle of rebirth is attained when the soul transcends its attachment to worldly desires and realises its essential unity with the divine.

The Ultimate Goal: Moksha: At the heart of the Upanishadic teachings on the afterlife lies the concept of moksha, or spiritual liberation. Moksha represents the culmination of the soul's journey, wherein it breaks free from the cycle of samsara and merges with the ultimate reality, known as Brahman. Achieving moksha involves transcending the ego, relinquishing attachments and realising the eternal truth of one's identity as Atman. identical to Brahman. In this state of liberation, the soul experiences eternal bliss, beyond the confines of time, space and individual identity. Conclusion: The Upanishads offer profound insights into the nature of

the afterlife, presenting a holistic worldview that encompasses the transient nature of earthly existence and the eternal essence of the self. Through the exploration of concepts such as karma, rebirth and moksha, these ancient texts provide a framework for understanding the soul's journey beyond mortality and its quest for spiritual realisation. Ultimately, the Upanishads invite us to contemplate the deeper mysteries of life and death, quiding us towards the realisation of our divine nature and the attainment of ultimate liberation.

(Writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

# A timeless inspiration for India's reform agenda

Amidst the jubilant celebrations of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, the legacy of Jyotirao Phule, a pioneer in social reform, resonates deeply



ndia has had a rich treasure of social reformers who contributed immensely to bringing about change in the lives of the people, especially the subaltern class. Jyotirao Phule is one of them who was born in Maharashtra on 11th April and is remembered as a social reformer, author and activist. Though he was born in the 19th century his ideas are still relevant in the 21st century. Throughout his life, he worked tirelessly to bring change in the lives of deprived groups, especially women, Shudras and Dalits. He was a visionary par excellence who realised very early that for a nation to progress, the marginalised groups need to be given due recognition.

As Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav is being celebrated, it is high time to take a pause and introspect as to what initiative has been undertaken to realise the dream of reformers like Phule. In recent years, the Jovernment nas initiated a series of wei fare measures like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Balika Samridhhi Yojana, Sarva Shikha Abhiyan etc. and a series of direct benefit transfer schemes meant for the poorer segment of the population. These schemes are the furtherance of Phule's ideas as he visualised long back that these groups/ communities needed to be made self-reliant.

He cudgelled his brain to find the solution to remove the inequalities based on caste, class, gender and religion from society. He understood very early in life that People were kept in the dark and they had been dragged into following the vacuous customs and norms without adequate understanding. He envisioned the furtherance of everyone's rights through social empowerment.

Phule's philosophy was conceptualised against the backdrop of the polity and society in pre-colonial Maharashtra, which was in a deteriorated state. His critique of the Brahminic religion, scriptures and theories, the founding of



PHULE REVAMPED

THE TRADITIONAL FAMILY AND MARRIAGE SYSTEM AND REFUTED THE **HACKNEYED** VIEWS ON THE **PRESCRIBED** TYPECAST ROLES OF MAN AND WOMAN. HE **SUPPORTED** CONTRACT

MARRIAGE AS, FOR HIM. MARRIAGE IS NOT A HOLY SACRAMENT BUT A HOLY CONTRACT

Satyashodhak Samaj (truth-seeking society) for the upliftment of the downtrodden to the 'new moral community' and his radical writings which pioneered a reformation movement in Hindu society deserve special attention. He gave the people a voice and a vehicle by establishing the Satyashodhak Samaj which was the first of its kind for social empowerment. It promoted cast equality and was devoted to securing social justice and human rights of low-caste people. Throughout his life, he fought to emancipate women from the clutches of rigid patriarchal order and found education as a tool to address such evils. He rejected the system of regressive hierarchy which engineered divisions and schism among the oppressed

Undoubtedly, the action against all age — long traditions was the result of the hard work, grit, determination and tenacity of Phule. Phule's dour expression and laconic persona had a longlasting effect on people's minds. It is palpable that Phule in his writings had discussed the eclectic range of ideas and concerns about the socio-cultural milieu additionally, giving the solution of establishing an alternative model of Hindu Social order, which was earlier brimmed with hierarchies and pluralities

He engineered the strategy to free society from myriad inequalities, with elan and consequentially, influencing the upcoming reformers in the offing. Phule revamped the traditional family and marriage system and refuted the hackneyed views on the prescribed typecast roles of man and

woman. He supported contract marriage as for him; marriage is not a holy sacrament but a holy contract. Additionally, he also rejected the priesthood system. He was far ahead of his time as he opened an orphanage for helpless widows who got pregnant. He left an indelible impression in the field of women's education as he found it a 'remedial whipcord' for 'nauseating wrong done to the women'. He insisted on compulsory and free primary education and per-

suaded the British Government to make education compulsory till the age of 12 years. He was also the pioneer of the language formula in schools which was ultimately adopted by the Indian Government after independence. He opined that mother tongue His advocacy for women's educa-(local language); Hindi and English were the three languages that every person should know. He also suggested that schools should provide education based on vocational skills. He believed that such a course would attract students and help them in gaining employment.

To maintain the high quality of education, he thought that the curriculum of primary education should meet the needs and requirements of society. The same is also emphasised in the New Education Policy, 2020. Even the United Nations has advocated inclusive, equitable and quality education which Phule emphasised long back.

His ideas and thoughts will remain relevant in the 21st century as he always believed in establishing an egalitarian social order which is the core of any

The same is being emphasised by the Government through its various welfare policies. It would be a befitting tribute to him if his ideas of inclusion of those who are at the periphery like women; and marginalised groups were given adequate attention. As seats are reserved for women from Panchayat to Loksabha still they are lagging far behind men in terms of their representation. To put it succinctly, it can be said that mainstreaming the periphery should be the motto of Government and by doing so it can fulfill the dream of Mahatma

Phule's establishment of the Satyashodhak Samaj provided a platform for social empower-ment and caste equality. tion and rejection of regressive customs reshaped societal norms. Phule's foresight extended to educational reforms, advocating for vocational training and multilingual education, ideas that resonate with modern policies like the New Education Policy, 2020. In today's pursuit of an egalitarian society, Phule's principles remain indispensable. Prioritising the inclusion of marginalised groups, especially women, aligns with his vision of social justice. As we honor Phule's legacy, let us commit to mainstreaming the periphery, ensuring that every citizen's voice is heard and valued. In doing so, we honor the spirit of Mahatma Phule and pave the way for a truly inclusive society. (The writer is Assistant

Professor in Department of History Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University; views are personal)

## Jallianwala Bagh: A turning point in India's freedom struggle

The aftermath of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre not only claimed the lives of over 1,000 innocents but also ignited a fervent spirit of resistance

**⊣**he Jallianwala Bagh massacre or the Amritsar massacre, a peaceful socio-political gathering of the native population dealt with a violent administrative response on 13th April 1919 by the then British Government killing above 1000 children, women and men firing 1650 gunshots, received strong criticism and gave the Indian freedom movement a clear direction for complete freedom from the foreign rule. The incident underlined the secular and all-inclusive character of the freedom movement. While in other parts of India, there were religious conflicts, in Amritsar the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs had decided to celebrate their religious days (eid ul-fitter on April 01, Ram Nowmi on April 08 and



Baisakhi on April 13) together to communicate the message of united freedom struggle against the foreign rule. The dead bodies of those, including Hindus, killed by the police while they were protesting against the arrest and deportation of the two local leaders Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr Satyapal to some unknown place, according to the local narratives, were kept in the Khairuddin mosque February 1915 on the lines of tee's recommendation, the

before their final funeral rites. Earlier on the occasion of Ram Nawmi on April 9, 1919, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims drank water using the same tumbler. These events caused fear among the British rulers. In the background of what happened on April 13, 1919, was the rising unrest among the people caused by the postworld-war inflation, heavy taxes and other repressive policies of the British Indian Government. During the world war between

1914 and 1917, though the British forces were supported the British-India Government and principalities, the Gadhries in Punjab had planned a mutiny by the Indian soldiers serving in the British Indian Army for 1857 mutiny, opposing the colonial Government antipeople policies which due to weak planning could not succeed. Yet, given a strong andcolonial-Government atmosphere in Punjab and Bengal, in particular and in India, in general, on ardent advocacy by the then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, Michael O'Dwyer, the British India Government passed a 'Defence of India Act 1915' curtailing the civil and political liberties. În 1918, suspecting revolt with support from Russian

Bolsheviks, the Government appointed a committee headed by Sidney Rowlatt to assess the German and Bolshevik links to the militant movement in India, especially in Punjab and Bengal. On the commitAnarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, popularly called the Rowlatt Act, was passed on 21st March 1919 further limiting civil liberties and granting special powers to the Government enabling up to 2 years' detention of purported political agitators without trial. Breaching their promise for post-war political reforms in exchange for India's resoures the Government hurriedly passed the Act, ignoring opposition by the Indian members of the Imperial Legislative Council, who all in resigned protest. Muhammad Ali Jinnah wrote to the Viceroy: "I, therefore, as a protest against the passing of the Bill and the manner in which it was passed tender my resignation ... a Government

a law in times of peace forfeits

its claim to be called a civilised Government". The Act, seen as a betrayal, enraged the Indian leaders and citizens. Mahatma Gandhi gave a call for Satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act urging for a peaceful participation in Hartals (strikes), economic boycott and non-cooperation. The anti-Rewlatt Act sentiment was so strong in the whole country, especially in Punjab, that in response to the Satyagraha call on April 6 "practically the whole of Lahore was on the streets". Following the events on April 9 and the detention of the local leaders Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr Satyapal on April 10, 1919, a large crowd gathered to demand the release of Dr that passes or sanctions such Satyapal and Dr Kitchlew. In Baisakhi, in Jallian Wala Bagh

the protest, 20-25 Indian and spread over 6-7 acres of vacant four British were killed while land surrounded by residential others were injured. The By April 13, most parts of atmosphere in Amritsar was so tense that on April 11, Marcella Sherwood, an elderly English missionary was attacked by an angry mob in the Kucha Kurrichhan. Although she was rescued by some residents in

the same street, enraged at the

assault, Brigadier General

R.E.H. Dyer, ordered every

Indian passing through the

street to crawl its length on his

hands and knees as a punish-

ment. He also authorised the

indiscriminate public whip-ping of locals. The local lead-

ers of the freedom movement,

in a meeting held on April 12

at the Hindu College, planned

a peaceful public protest gath-

ering on April 13, the day of

Punjab under put under martial law. Civil liberties were curtailed and the assembly of more than four people was banned. The orders of banning public meetings and gatherings were not being widely and properly communicated. After celebrating Baisakhi many people relaxed in the Bagh, waiting to join the peaceful protest against the arrest and deportation of Dr. Satya Pal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew. Rest as they say is history. (The writer is retired professor

of Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar and member, governing council, INTACH, New Delhi; views are personal)

## Cluster of quakes rattle Taiwan | UK pledges \$620 million in

Acluster of earthquakes struck the island republic of Taiwan early Tuesday, the strongest having a magnitude of 6.1, according to the US Geological Survey.

There were no reports of casualties in the quakes, although there were further damages to two multi-story buildings that had been evacuated following a magnitude 7.4 quake that hit the island earlier this month, killing 13 people and injuring over 1,000. That earthquake was centred along the coast of the rural and mountainous Hualien County. It was the strongest earthquake in the past 25 years in Taiwan and was followed by hundreds of after-shocks According to the USGS, shocks According to the USGS, Tuesday's quake of 6.1 magni-tude had its epicentre 28 kilo-metres south of the city of Hualien, at a dept of 10.7 kilo-metres. The half-dozen other quakes ranged from magnitude 4.5 to magnitude 6, all near Hualien. Taiwan's own earth-quake monitoring centre put quake monitoring centre put the magnitudes of the initial quake at 6.3. Such small discrepancies are common between monitoring stations. The largest among them were two earthquakes of magnitude 6.0 and 6.3 that occurred at 2:26 am and 2:32 am Tuesday. respectively, according to the Taiwan centre. Numerous of the scores of aftershocks could be felt on the upper floors of a apartment buildings in the capital Taipei, about 150 kilo-



In this image from a video, roads in Hualien, Taiwan are cordoned off after a cluster of earthquakes struck the island early

metres across steep mountains to the northwest.

The Full Hotel in downtown Hualien partially collapsed during the quakes and was left leaning at a severe angle, However, it had been undergoing renovations and was unoccupied at the time. The nearby Tong Shuai Building was also empty, having been Taiwan is no stranger to pow-marked for demolition after erful earthquakes yet their toll

being heavily damaged in the April 3 quake.

Schools and offices in Hualien and the surrounding county were ordered closed on Tuesday as hundreds of aftershocks continued to strike on land and just off the coast in the Pacific Ocean, the vast majority below magnitude 3.

on the high-tech island's 23 million residents has been relatively contained thanks to its excellent earthquake preparedness, experts say. The island also has strict construction standards and widespread public education campaigns about earthquakes. In 1999, a magnitude 7.7 earth-

quake in Taiwan killed 2,400

# new military aid for Ukraine

AP WARSAW

The UK on Tuesday pledged an additional \$620 million in new military supplies for Ukraine, including long-range missiles and four millions rounds of ammunition, at a time when Ukraine is struggling to hold off advancing Russian forces on the eastern front line of the war, now in its third vear.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday morning to confirm the assistance and "assure him of the UK's steadfast support for Ukraine's defence against Russia's brutal and expansionist ambitions," Sunak's office said.

Sunak was travelling to Warsaw later Tuesday to meet with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg for talks about further aid for Ukraine.

Ahead of the visit, the UK government said Sunak would announce 500 million pounds (\$620 million, 580 million euros) in new British military supplies, including 400 vehicles, 60 boats, 1,600 munitions and 4 million rounds of ammunition. The shipment will include British Storm Shadow long-

range missiles, which have a range of some 150 miles and have proved effective at hitting Russian targets. "President Zelenskyy thanked

the Prime Minister for the

UK's continued support, saying the new military assistance would make a material difference to ordinary Ukrainians fighting on the front line to defend their country," Downing Street said. The announcement comes three days after the US House of Representatives approved \$61 billion in aid for Ukraine, as American lawmakers raced to deliver a fresh round of US support to the war-torn ally.

However, Downing Street did not indicate whether the aid would be immediately available for delivery. Zelenskyy has repeatedly pleaded for greater international assistance, warning that his country will lose the war without

Ammunition shortages linked to the aid holdup over the past six months have led Ukrainian military comman-ders to ration shells, a disad-vantage that Russia seized on this year — taking the city of Avdiivka and currently inching towards the town of Chasiv Yar, also in the eastern Donetsk region.

#### 2 Indian students killed in traffic collision

Two Indian students in the United States were killed on the spot in a head-on traffic collision near Lake Pleasant in Arizona, according to police. The victims, reportedly from Telangana, have been identified as 19-year-old Nivesh Mukka and 19-year-old Goutham

The two Indians were enrolled as international students at Arizona State University. According to the Peoria Police. officers responded to a report their injuries on (the) scene",

of a collision around 6:18 pm on April 20 on Castle Hot Springs Road, just north of State Route 74.

The multiple-vehicle collision involved two vehicles - a white 2024 Kia Forte and a red 2022 Ford F150 — that had collided head-on.

Preliminary investigation shows that the driver of the red F150 was travelling southbound on Castle Hot Springs Road while the white Kia Forte was travelling northbound. Mukka and Parsi "died from

while the driver of the car in which they were travelling was transported to a local hospital with serious injuries and has since been released.

The other car's driver, the sole occupant of the vehicle, was also taken to a local hospital with serious injuries and has been released, the statement

The area was closed for several hours during the investigation but was reopened for normal traffic Sunday morning. "The cause of this collision is still being investigated," the Our thoughts are with the vic-

tims, their families, and every-body who rendered aid during this tragic incident," the Peoria Police Department said.

The Arizona State University said the International Students and Scholars Centre is working with the dean of students, counselling services and housing representatives to identify the student groups, friends and roommates of the victims so that they can offer any needed

## Russian strike on Kharkiv's TV tower part of intimidation campaign: Zelenskyy

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said a Russian missile strike that smashed a television tower in Kharkiv was part of the Kremlin's ongoing effort to intimidate Ukraine's secondlargest city, which in recent weeks has come under increasingly frequent attack.

The strike sought to "make the terror visible to the whole city and to try to limit Kharkiv's connection and access to information," Zelenskyy said in a Monday evening address.

The northeastern Kharkiv region straddles the approximately 1,000-km (600-mile) front line where Ukrainian and Russian forces have been locked in battle for more than two years since Moscow's fullscale invasion of Ukraine. The front line has changed little drones and trenches.

Since late March, Russia has stepped up the pressure on Kharkiv, apparently aiming to exploit Ukraine's shortage of air defense systems. It has pounded the local power grid and hit apartment blocks.

On Monday, a Russian Kh-59 missile struck Kharkiv's 250-metre (820-foot) -high TV tower, breaking it roughly in half and halting transmissions. A Washington think tank said Russia may be eyeing a ground assault on Kharkiv.

"The Kremlin is conducting a concerted air and information operation to destroy Kharkiv City, convince Ukrainians to flee, and internally displace millions of Ukrainians ahead of a possible future Russian offensive operation against the city or elsewhere in Ukraine," the

during a war of attrition, Institute for the Study of War focused mostly on artillery, said in an assessment.

The expected arrival in Ukraine in coming weeks of new military aid from its Western partners possibly has prompted Russia to escalate its attacks before the help arrives, the ISW said, adding that try-ing to capture Kharkiv would be "a significant challange" for be "a significant challenge" for the Kremlin's forces.

Instead, the Russian military command "may attempt to destroy Kharkiv City with air, missile, and drone strikes and prompt a large-scale internal displacement of Ukrainian civilians," it said. The US Senate was returning to

Washington on Tuesday to vote on \$61 billion in war aid to Ukraine after months of delays. Zelensky said US President Joe Biden assured him the aid would include long-range and artillery capa-

Four priorities are key: defense of the sky, modern artillery, long-range capacity, and to ensure that packages of American aid arrive as soon as possible," Zelenskyy said. Also Tuesday, Britain pledged

500 million pounds (\$620 million, 580 million euros) in new military supplies for Ukraine, including 400 vehicles, 60 boats, 1,600 munitions and 4 million rounds of ammunition The shipment will also include British Storm Shadow longrange missiles, which have a range of about 150 miles (240 km) and have proven effective at hitting Russian targets, the

British government said. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak spoke with Zelenskyy on Tuesday morning to confirm the new assistance. He was due to announce the aid later

# 2 Malaysian military helicopters collide and crash while training, killing 10

**AP** ■ KUALA LUMPUR

wo Malaysian military heli-Two Malaysian minum, copters collided midair and crashed during a training session on Tuesday, killing all 10 people on board, the navy said. The helicopters were rehearsing at a naval base in northern Perak state for the navy's 90th anniversary celebration next month when the accident occurred, the navy said in a brief statement.

"All victims were confirmed dead on site," it said, adding that the remains have been sent to the hospital to be identified. A video circulating on social media showed several helicopters flying low in a forma-tion. One of the aircraft veered sideways and clipped the rotor of another helicopter, causing both to plunge and crash. A local police officer who Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim declined to be named because said the nation mourned over



he isn't authorised to speak to the media confirmed that the video footage is genuine.

The choppers were mangled beyond recognition. Rescue workers sifted through the debris to find the bodies. The victims included three women and seven men, police said.

tragedy" and that the navy will immediately carry out an investigation to determine what caused the accident.

Seven crew members were aboard the AW139 maritime operation helicopter, the navy said. That aircraft is produced by AgustaWestland, which is a subsidiary of the Italian defense contractor Leonardo. Three other crew members were on a Fennec lightweight helicopter, manufactured by European multinational defense conglomerate Airbus.

Local media reported that the AW139 crashed at a sports complex at the naval base, while the Fennec hit a nearby swimming pool.

## Musk accuses Australia of censorship

**AP** MELBOURNE

Tech billionaire Elon Musk accused Australia of censorship after an Australian judge ruled that his social media platform X must block users worldwide from accessing video of a bishop being stabbed in a Sydney church.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese responded Tuesday by describing Musk as an "arrogant billionaire" who considered himself above the law and was out of touch with the

X Corp., the tech company rebranded in 2023 by Musk after he bought Twitter, announced last week it would fight in court Australian orders to take down posts relating to a knife attack on Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel in an Assyrian Orthodox church as a service was being streamed online on April 15.

The material was geoblocked from Australia but available elsewhere But the regulator that made the itself as the world's first government agency dedicated to keeping people safer online, successfully applied to the Federal Court in Sydney for a temporary global ban on sharing the video of the bishop being stabbed.

In an after-hours hearing Monday, Justice Geoffrey Kennett suppressed the footage from all X users until Wednesday, when an application for a permanent ban will be heard. Hours later, Musk posted on his

personal X account a cartoon that depicted a fork in a road with one path leading to "free speech" and "truth" and the other to "censorship" and "propaganda." Musk cited Albanese telling

reporters Monday that other social media platforms had largely complied with the regulator's orders to take violent content down.

"I'd like to take a moment to

orders, Australia's eSafety Commission, which describes itself as the world's first governseveral television interviews Tuesday

> 'We'll do what's necessary to take on this arrogant billionaire who thinks he's above the law, but also above common decency," Albanese told Australian Broadcasting Corp. "The idea that someone would go to court for the right to put up violent content on a platform shows how out of touch Mr. Musk is. Social media needs to have social responsibility with it." Albanese told Sky News, "This is a bloke who's chosen ego and showing violence over

> common sense This isn't about censorship. It's about common sense and common decency. And Elon Musk should show some," Albanese told Seven Network.

The regulator's lawyer, Christopher Tran, had argued Monday in court that geoblocking Australia did not meet the definition of removal of the thank the PM for informing the footage under Australian law.

Tran said the footage was a "graphic and violent video" that would cause "irreparable harm if it's continuing to circu-

X's lawyer, Marcus Hoyne, said he was unable to get instructions from his San Franciscobased client because it was early Monday morning in the United States.

Musk has described eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant as the "Australian censorship commissar."

Albanese said on Monday that social media posts, misinformation and dissemination of violent images had exacerbated suffering from the church attack, which the two clerics survived, as well as a knife attack at a Sydney shopping mall two days earlier that killed six people.

X's Global Government Affairs team said Saturday that Inman Grant ordered it to remove some posts that commented on the church attack, but it said the posts did not violate X's rules on violent speech.

X said the Australian regulator had demanded the platform "globally withhold these posts or face a daily fine of USD 785,000."

"X believes that eSafety's order was not within the scope of Australian law and we complied with the directive pending a legal challenge," the Global Government Affairs account said. "While X respects the right of a country to enforce its laws within its jurisdiction. the eSafety Commissioner does not have the authority to dictate what content X's users can see globally."

"We will robustly challenge this unlawful and dangerous approach in court," it added. The live feed of the church attack and social media posts that followed attracted a crowd of 2,000 people and fuelled a riot against police, who barricaded the young suspected attacker inside the place of worship.

The rioting injured 51 police officers and damaged 104 police vehicles, officials said.

#### German EU lawmaker's aide held on suspicion of spying for China

**AP** ■ BERLIN

man who works for a Agerman lawmaker in the European Parliament has been arrested on suspicion of spying for China, German prosecutors said Tuesday. The detention came less than 24 hours after three people were arrested for spying for China in a separate German case.

The suspect, identified only as Jian G in line with German privacy rules, was arrested Monday in the eastern German city of Dresden, federal prosecutors said in a statement. They said that he has worked for a German lawmaker in the European Union's legislature since 2019

The statement didn't specify which lawmaker employed him, but German news agency dpa reported, citing unidentified security sources, that he works for Maximilian Krah of the far-right party Alternative for Germany. Other German media also linked the suspect to Krah, who is the party's top candidate in the European Parliament election in early

Jian G, a German national, is accused of working for a Chinese intelligence service and of repeatedly passing on information on negotiations and decisions in the European Parliament in January. Prosecutors allege that he also snooped on Chinese dissidents in Germany. German Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said the spying allegations were "extremely serious." "If it is confirmed that there

was spying for Chinese intelligence from inside the European Parliament, then that is an attack from inside on European democracy," Faeser said in a statement.

"Anyone who employs such a staff member also carries responsibility," she added. "This case must be cleared up precisely. ... All the connections and background must be illuminated." News of the arrest came a day after three Germans suspected of spying for China and arranging to transfer information on technology with potential military uses were arrested in a separate case. Also on Monday, British pros-ecutors said a former researcher working in the UK Parliament and another man

were charged with spying for China. Asked in Beijing about the latest arrest in Germany, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said that "the recent reports in Europe about Chinese spying are all hyping up with an aim to smear and suppress China." Beijing urges "the relevant parties to stop spreading disinformation about China's spy threat and stop political manipulation and malicious smears against China," he added.

## Poll outcome shows Maldivians want to preserve sovereignty & freedom: President Muizzu

rmed with a 'super majority' in Athe parliamentary polls, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu has said the international community will now understand where the Maldivians stand, especially on the issue of sovereignty and

The pro-China Maldivian president's statement came at a celebratory event on Monday, a day after the People's National Congress (PNC), led by him, won 68 out of 93 seats in Sunday's polls and its coalition partners Maldives National Party (MNP) and Maldives Development Alliance (MDA) won

taking the total to more than two-

thirds in the People's Majlis. A majority in Parliament would mean that Muizzu's party has control not just over lawmaking but also over the legislature which ratifies the laws; which till now had two opposing coalitions and saw several instances of a conflict between the government and the legislature.

The PNC's "super majority" in parliamentary elections is being seen as a strong endorsement of his pro-Beijing foreign policy, as both India and China closely watched the outcome of the polls in the strategically-located archipelago nation in the Indian Ocean.

Muizzu, 45, rode to power last year one and two seats, respectively, on the 'India Out' plank and since

assuming office in November 2023. has visited China and cemented Male's ties with Beijing, including in the defence sector.

Ahead of the parliamentary elections, the main opposition Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), led by pro-India former president Ibrahim Mohamed Solih had advocated restoring ties with India. The MDP, however, won only 15 seats. Muizzu, who has forced the repatri-

ation of 88 Indian military personnel manning three aviation plat-The parliamentary election result forms gifted by India to the Maldives, two of the three batches was also to prove that the have already left, said, "We are a Maldivians want "autonomy in choosing their future, without forproud nation that loves sovereigneign coercion," President Muizzu ty and freedom, which we have



them to let go of dissidence, now that the elections are over," the president said. "To everyone outside of Maldives .. To everyone in the international

said, without naming any country,

according to the Sun.mv news por-

tal. "It has also become evident for

those with other hidden agendas,

what the Maldivians want. So, I urge

community .... It must be clear now. That we want to decide our own matters by ourselves," he was quoted as saying by Adhadhu.com. Even when he did not name any

Muizzu and other leaders from his

PNC had repeatedly claimed that

India influenced internal affairs in

country during the victory speech, in the run-up to Sunday's polls,

The President said he and his team would use the majority in Parliament to fulfil the demands of the people and fulfil the pledges made by the government," the portal said.

Muizzu also "very respectfully" called on political leaders and all parties to move forward with the work of developing the nation; said the country belongs to all Maldivian citizens, and said he would work harder than in the past five months. These past five months were nothing. You would now have to stay awake for 24 hours. I'm saying seriously. I want to bring develop-

ment as the public wanted,

quoting the President as saying while addressing the newly elected lawmakers, cabinet ministers, and senior officials of state-owned enter-During Monday's celebratory event,

Muizzu also claimed that the election outcome is proof that the Maldivians want to uphold and sustain the Islamic faith and its guiding principles as a core identity in shaping the country's future. Meanwhile, Speaker Mohamed

Aslam has announced that the new members elected to Parliament in Sunday's election will be sworn in on May 28.

Speaker Aslam, who has served four consecutive terms in the Majlis, Adhadhu.com said on Tuesday failed to defend his seat.

slogan of "God, fatherland and

family," has insisted she won't

roll back the 1978 law and merely wants to implement it

fully. But she has also priori-

tised encouraging women to

have babies to reverse Italy's

Italy's birthrate, already one of

the lowest in the world, has

been falling steadily for about

15 years and reached a record

low last year with 379,000 babies born. Meloni's conserv-

ative forces, backed strongly by

the Vatican, have mounted a

campaign to encourage at least

500,000 births annually by

2033, a rate that demogra-

phers say is necessary to pre-

vent the economy from collaps

ing under the weight of Italy's

Meloni has called the left-wing

opposition to the proposed amendment "fake news," recall-

ing that Law 194 provides for

measures to prevent abortions, which would include coun-

selling pregnant women about

alternatives. The amendment

specifically allows anti-abortion

groups, or groups "supporting motherhood," to be among the

volunteer groups that can work

in the counselling centres.

aging population.

demographic crisis.

# Nothing will stand in way of **Rwanda flights: PM Sunak**

**PTI** LONDON

 $B^{\rm ritish\,Prime\,Minister\,Rishi}_{\rm Sunak\ on\ Tuesday\ wel-}$ comed the passage of his government's controversial Safety of Rwanda Bill by Parliament overnight and pledged that nothing will stand in the way of illegal migrants being flown out to the African country. A day after he revealed a time-

frame between 10 and 12 weeks for the first flights taking off from an undisclosed airfield via chartered planes lined up, Sunak described the passage of his "landmark" bill as a "fundamental change" in the handling of global migration. On Monday night, the House of Lords finally gave way to the legislative primacy of the Commons at the end of a lengthy back and forth demanding amendments on a bill drafted to prevent legal

"The passing of this landmark legislation is not just a step forward but a fundamental change in the global equation on migration," Sunak said in a statement issued by Downing

challenges.

"We introduced the Rwanda Bill to deter vulnerable migrants from making perilous crossings and break the business model of the criminal gangs who exploit them. The passing of this legislation will allow us to do that and make

Britain's plans to send some

asylum-seekers to Rwanda

were swiftly condemned by

international humanitarian

rethink its plans because of

concerns that the legislation

undermines human rights

protections and fears that it

will damage international

cooperation on tackling the

global migrant crisis.
"The new legislation marks a

it very clear that if you come here illegally, you will not be able to stay," he said.

"Our focus is to now get flights off the ground, and I am clear that nothing will stand in our way of doing that and saving lives," he added.

The government is banking on bringing down soaring illegal migration numbers as a result of the "deterrent effect" of the bill, which will become law after Royal Assent from King Charles III. Under the law, migrants arriving illegally on UK shores would be deported to Kigali for their asylum

claims to be processed. It came as French media reported on Tuesday morning that five people have died attempting to cross the English Channel towards the UK from an area near the town of Wimereux in France. The French coastguard has said they could not say how many people were involved but that there were several "lifeless bod-

Sunak has made stopping such boats from making dangerous journeys across the Channel one of his priorities ahead of a general election expected later this year. In a Downing Street press briefing on Monday, he declared there were "no ifs, no buts" about using the Rwanda legislation "come what may" to ensure such migrants can be deterred once the message goes

#### 5 dead while crossing English Channel

At least 5 people have died while crossing the English Channel, according to French media, hours after the UK approved the migrant deportation bill.

The Voix du Nord newspaper said the bodies were discovered at the Wimereaux beach in northern France on Tuesday. The rescue operation is ongoing and helicopters and boats have been deployed, according to the regional newspaper.

About 100 migrants have been rescued and placed aboard a French navy ship. They will be taken to the port of Boulogne, the paper said. This came only hours after British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's latest effort to send some migrants on a one-way ticket to Rwanda finally won approval from Parliament.

those who enter the country illegally as a deterrent to migrants who risk their lives in leaky, inflatable boats in hopes that they will be able to claim asylum once they reach Britain. Human rights groups have described the leg-

The UK government plans to deport some of

islation as inhumane and cruel. Both the United Nations refugee agency and the Council of Europe called on the UK Tuesday to rethink its plans for fears they could damage international cooperation on tackling the lobal migrant crisis.

Aigrants trying to cross the busy English Channel face drownings and sinking among other deadly incidents, often aboard crowd-

An estimated 30,000 people made the crossing in 2023, according to UK government fig-

out that they would not be able to stay on in the UK.

These flights are going to Rwanda. We are going to deliver this indispensable deterrent, so that we finally break the business model of the criminal gangs and save lives," he said. Without going into "operational details", the British Indian leader said his government was prepared for the next steps with increased detention spaces to house around 2,200 such migrants and 200 trained dedicated caseworkers lined up to process the paperwork. To deal with any legal cases "quickly and decisively", the UK judiciary have made available 25 courtrooms and identified 150 judges who could provide over 5,000 sitting

"I can confirm that we've put an airfield on standby, booked commercial charter planes for specific slots and we have 500 highly trained individuals ready to escort illegal migrants all the way to Rwanda, with 300 more trained in the coming weeks. This is one of the most complex operational endeavours the Home Office has carried out. But we are

boats soared to 45,774 in 2022

from just 299 four years ear-

lier as people fleeing war,

famine and economic hard-

ship paid criminal gangs thou-

sands of pounds to ferry them

Albanians to their home

Former Prime Minister Boris

ready. Plans are in place," he declared.

He also ruled out any foreign court intervention, implying that the UK was ready to reconsider its membership of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) if required.

The law has come under fierce criticism from Opposition parties, senior peers and rights groups who fear the impact on torture survivors and at-risk refugees who seek asylum in the UK and question the country's approach towards interna-

## N Korean leader leads rocket drills that simulate a N-counterattack

procedure.

Abortion returns to spotlight in

Italy 46 yrs after it was legalised

ping away of abortion rights

that opponents warned would

follow Meloni's 2022 election.

'The government should

realise that they keep saying

they absolutely do not want to

boycott or touch Law 194, but

the truth is that the right-

wing opposes women's repro-

ductive autonomy, fears

women's choices regarding

motherhood, sexuality, and

abortion," Cecilia D'Elia, a

Democratic Party senator, said

at a protest this week against

Under the 1978 law, Italy allows

abortion on request in the first

12 weeks of pregnancy, or later

if a woman's health or life is

endangered. It provides for publicly funded counselling

centres to advise pregnant women of their rights and ser-

vices offered if they want to ter-

But easy access to abortion isn't

always guaranteed. The law

allows health care personnel to

register as conscientious objec-

tors and refuse to perform

abortions, and many have,

meaning women sometimes

have to travel far to have the

Meloni, who campaigned on a

minate the pregnancies.

the  $l\bar{e}gislation$ .

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised salvo launches of the country's "super-large" multiple rocket launchers that simulated a nuclear counterattack against enemy targets, state media said Tuesday, adding to tests and threats that have raised tensions

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni's far-right-led govern-

ment wants to allow anti-abor-

tion groups access to women

considering ending their preg-

nancies, reviving tensions around abortion in Italy 46

years after it was legalised in the

overwhelmingly Catholic

The Senate on Tuesday was

voting on legislation tied to

European Union COVID-19

recovery funds that includes an

amendment sponsored by

Meloni's Brothers of Italy party. The text, already passed by the

lower Chamber of Deputies,

allows regions to permit groups "with a qualified experience

supporting motherhood" to

have access to public support

centres where women consid-

ering abortions go to receive

For the right, the amendment

merely fulfil the original intent of the 1978 law legalising abor-

tion, known as Law 194, which

includes provisions to prevent

the procedure and support

For the left-wing opposition, the amendment marks a chip-

counselling.

motherhood.

country.

in the region. The report by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency came a day after the South Korean and Japanese militaries detected the North firing what they suspected were multiple short-range ballistic missiles from a region near its capital, Pyongyang, toward its eastern seas.

Analysts say North Korea's large-sized artillery rockets blur the boundary between artillery systems and ballistic missiles because they can create their own thrust and are guided during delivery.

The North has described some of these systems, including the 600mm multiple rocket launchers that were tested Monday, as capable of delivering tactical nuclear warheads. KČNA said Monday's launches represented the first demon-

stration of the country's nuclear-weapons management and control system called "Haekbangashoe," or "nuclear trigger." The report described the drill

as aimed at demonstrating the strength and diverse attack means of North Korea's nuclear forces amid deepening tensions with the United States and South Korea, which it portrayed as "warmongers" raising tensions in the region with their combined military exer-

State media photos showed at least four rockets being fired from launch vehicles as Kim watched from an observation post. It said the rockets flew 352 kilometres before accurately hitting an island target and that the drill verified the reliability of the "system of command, management, control and operation of the whole nuclear

#### organisations after Parliament across the channel. Filippo Grandi said in a stateapproved legislation allowing Small boat arrivals dropped to ment. "Protecting refugees the deportation flights to begin requires all countries - not Parliament raises major issues 29,437 last year as the governlater this year. Both the UN refugee agency just those neighbouring crisis ment cracked down on people about the human rights of asyzones - to uphold their obliglum seekers and the rule of smugglers and reached an and the Council of Europe on Tuesday called for the UK to agreement to

UK's long tradition of provid-

ing refuge to those in need, in

breach of the Refugee Convention," UN High

Commissioner for Refugees

The statement came just hours after Britain's House of Lords dropped its attempts to amend the legislation, paving the way for it to become law. Michael O'Flaherty, the

Council of Europe's commissioner for human rights, criticised the legislation for preventing asylum-seekers from asking the courts to intervene when they are threatened with being sent back to the countries they are fleeing.

Human rights groups condemn deportation

'The adoption of the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill by the UK law more generally," O'Flaherty said in a statement. "The United Kingdom government should refrain from removing people under the Rwanda policy and reverse the bill's effective infringement of judicial independence." The number of migrants

Johnson first proposed the Rwanda plan more than two years ago, when he reached an agreement with the East African nation to accept some arriving in Britain on small asylum-seekers in return for

country.

aid. Implementation has been held up by a series of court challenges and opposition from migrant advocates who say it violates international law. The Rwandan government welcomed approval of the bill, saying it underscores the work it has done to make Rwanda "safe and secure" since the genocide that ravaged the country 30 years ago. "We are committed to the migration and economic development partnership with the UK and look forward to welcoming those relocated to Rwanda," government spokesperson Yolande Makolo

millions of pounds (dollars) in

# Munir discuss border issues

ranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Iranian President Ediami. Pakistan Army chief General Asim Munir discussed regional peace, stability and border security, months after the two neighbours carried out tit-for-tat air strikes against alleged terrorist hideouts on rival lands.

Gen Munir called on Raisi, the first head of state of any country to visit Pakistan after the February 8 general elections, and emphasised the need for "improved coordination" against the terrorists, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan Army said

General Munir described the Pakistan-Iran border as the "border of peace and friendship", emphasising the need for improved coordination along the border to prevent terrorists from jeopardising the longstanding brotherly relations between the two neighbouring countries, it said. The statement said that the discussion between the two dignitaries focussed on matters of mutual interest, notably regional peace, stability, and border security.

"Both sides concurred on the necessity to bolster bilateral cooperation while jointly striving for regional stability and

The Iranian President on Tuesday morning arrived at Lahore's Allama Igbal International Airport and was received by Punjab Chief Minister Marvam Nawaz.

The Foreign Office had stated earlier that Raisi would visit Lahore and Karachi and meet with the provincial leadership. On Monday, Raisi was welcomed by

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister House. Both the leaders held wide-ranging talks and agreed on joint efforts to eradicate terrorism and discussed ways to promote bilateral ties at political, economic, trade and cultural levels

During their talks, President Raisi and Prime Minister Sharif agreed on joint efforts to eradicate terrorism, state-run Radio Pakistan reported

The two leaders also held discussions to increase trade and communication links between their countries.

In the presence of Raisi and Sharif, the Iranian and Pakistani officials signed eight documents for promoting cooperation in various fields.

Addressing a joint press conference, President Raisi said that Iran and Pakistan have decided to increase the economic prosperity," said the ISPR trade volume to USD 10 billion.

#### Iran Prez Raisi & Pak Army chief | Khyber Pakhtunkhwa CM seeks peace with TTP militants

return

PTI PESHAWAR

ontrary to Pakistan's federal gov-Contrary to Pakistans rederal government policy of not holding "meaningful dialogue" with the banned Pakistani Taliban, Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur of the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has called for negotiations with the dreaded terrorist group to maintain lasting peace in the restive region.

After the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) called off its ceasefire in November 2022, Pakistan has been hit by a wave of terrorism, mostly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but also in Balochistan and Punjab, which borders the province. Terror attacks have also reached as far as Islamabad and

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, Gandapur said talks with the militants are necessary for ensuring peace in the province and a viable strategy at the national level should be evolved to halt further damage to the

"We fully support meaningful dialogue with the militant organisation to improve the law and order situation in the province," he said. Evolving a national-level strategy is a

must to end the menace of terrorism.

Dialogues with the militant outfit should be held within the parameters of the outlined national security strategy to end the problem on a sound footing, the chief minister from jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party,

Formal talks were held with the TTP leadership when Imran Khan was in power. Many delegations from Pakistan visited Kabul for talks. However, all efforts remained incon-

After the regime change in Islamabad in 2022, the government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif discontinued the talk process with TTP and decided to go for military operations against the terrorists.

In 2023, Pakistan decided not to support the Afghan Taliban's case at the international level or extend any other assistance following Kabul's failure to neutralise the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terror group. The TTP, which has ideological linkages with the Afghan Taliban and is also known as the Pakistan Taliban, was set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007. Its main aim is to impose its strict brand of Islam across Pakistan.

## Dubai Airport operating at full capacity again: CEO

PTI DUBAI

The Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, is operating at full capacity, authorities announced on Tuesday, a week after unprecedented torrential rains lashed the Arabian Peninsula and flooded many areas in the UAE. Starting last Tuesday evening,

tens of thousands of air passengers were stranded at the waterlogged Dubai International as it became impossible to move from or towards the airport as roads turned into massive rivers due to the unprecedented floods.

"After the heaviest rainfall the UAE experienced in 75 years Dubai Airports is making remarkable strides in restoring and normalising operations at Dubai International Airport (DXB)," a statement from Dubai Airports said. Dubai Airports owns and

manages the operation and

development of both of Dubai's airports - Dubai International (DXB) and Dubai World Central (DWC). Paul Griffiths, CEO of Dubai Airports, said since Monday, ahead of its recovery schedule, DXB returned to its normal flight schedule and is back to

operating around 1,400 flight

movements a day.

"With roads in and around the airport 100 per cent clear of water accumulation, our manpower, logistics and facilities are operating as usual again. To have the airport back up and running is no small feat. 2,155 flights were cancelled and 115 were diverted," he

"It has been the most challenging adverse weather event we've had to navigate, and our people and partners worked tirelessly to keep the operation running and to assist our guests," Griffiths added. He said that 31 flights were

diverted to Dubai World Central (DWC), and by April

19, all guests at the airport were successfully supported and continued onwards to complete their travel plans. "Guest welfare remained a key priority throughout the disruption and although there

were initial challenges in transporting supplies with road closures around DXB and DWC, over 75,000 food packs were delivered across both airports," the statement Extremely heavy rainfall starting on April 15 (Monday) drenched Dubai and other

parts of the UAE with 20 mm rainfall. It intensified through April 16 (Tuesday) and by the end of the day, it was over 140 mm in 24 hours, far more than the average yearly rains of 94.7 mm at the Dubai International Airport site. Experts say that the rainfall Dubai received from April 15

to April 16 surpassed "anything documented since the start of data collection in

### **Baltimore leaders accuse ship's** owner, manager of negligence

T he owner and manager of the massive container ship that took down the Francis Scott Key Bridge last month should be held fully liable for the deadly collapse, according to court papers filed Monday on behalf of Baltimore's mayor and city council.

The two companies filed a petition soon after the March 26 collapse asking a court to cap their liability under a pre-Civil War provision of an 1851 maritime law — a routine but important procedure for such

will ultimately decide who's responsible and how much they owe in what could become one of the most expensive maritime disasters in history. Singapore-based Grace Ocean Private Ltd. owns the Dali, the vessel that veered off course and slammed into the bridge.

A federal court in Maryland

manager. In their filing Monday, attornevs for the city accused them of negligence, arguing the companies should have realised the Dali was unfit for its voya competent crew, among other issues

A spokesperson for the companies said Monday that it would be inappropriate to comment on the pending litigation. The ship was headed to Sri

Lanka when it lost power shortly after leaving Baltimore and struck one of the bridge's support columns, collapsing the span and sending six members of a roadwork crew plung-

cargo ships made thousands of trips every year under the Key Bridge without incident," the city's complaint reads.

#### Imran's party alleges 'blatant rigging' in bypolls PTI ISLAMABAD provincial assembly seats, according to the unofficial Nawaz did not "believe in Barrister Gohar Khan said. results and announced a series "Gates of polling stations were of protests starting Friday. transparency"

**▼**ailed former Pakistan premier Imran Khan's party has alleged that "blatant rigging" took place in the recently held by-elections in which the ruling PML-N got the lion's share, as it announced a plan for countrywide protests, a media report said on Tuesday. By-elections were held on

Sunday to 21 national and provincial assembly seats amidst tight security and suspension of cellular and internet services in specific districts of Punjab and Balochistan to

maintain law and order. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharifled ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) won at least two national and 10 results on Monday.

Leaders of 71-year-old Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Monday said that April 21 will be remembered as a "black day" in the history of Pakistan, as "open and blatant violations of law" of a magnitude never observed in the country's history were witnessed, the Dawn newspaper reported.

'[The] day of election is considered an accountability day, and people cast their votes with great zeal. However, on April 21, open and blatant violations of law were observed. The magnitude of the rigging and violation of law has never been observed in the history of Pakistan," party Chairman withhold the notifications of

closed, and at some polling stations, more votes were polled than the total registered votes," Gohar said, addressing a press conference. He alleged that the "mandate thieves" resorted to shameful tactics to manipulate the electoral process, including stuffing ballot boxes before voting even began and coercing people as well as officials to rig the by-polls in the presence of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) representatives, The Express Tribune newspaper reported. Gohar said such actions were unheard of even in the darkest

The party urged the ECP to

days of dictatorship.

leader Omar Ayub visited various polling stations and witnessed flagrant rigging firsthand. He said that even after the electoral watchdog was informed about the rigging incidents in Gujrat, no action had been taken despite 24 hours passing, the report said. "The Constitution, democracy, and the rule of law were virtually suspended in the country," he was quoted as saying in the

Addressing the press conference, Ayub said that pre-poll rigging began with the suspension of the internet, alleging that Prime Minister Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam

Gohar said that he and party

On Saturday, the federal government announced that cellular services would remain temporarily suspended in specific

districts of Punjab and Balochistan during the by-elections. Ayub said police officials told them that intelligence agencies were not allowing voters to enter polling stations. He said that Sunday's by-elections could not be called transparent as it was a complete farce in which only taxpayers' money was wasted on a futile exercise. Claiming that Sharif got fewer votes during the general elections than the candidate contesting on the PML-N ticket in the by-election, Ayub said, "This is beyond comprehension."

## **AP B**ALTIMORE

Synergy Marine Pte Ltd., also based in Singapore, is the ship's

age and manned the ship with

ing to their deaths. "For more than four decades.

# **India leads in GenAl** adoption, says report

Investment trends likely to rise in coming years: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $\begin{matrix} I_{\text{adopting}} & \text{leads globally in} \\ \text{GenAI} \end{matrix}$ technologies as a vast percentage of organisations incorporate GenAI operations, and a majority of the populace expects increased investments and budget allocations towards Gen AI in the next 2-3 years, according to a recent report. Search analytics firm Elastic on Monday released the Generative AI Report that gathered insights from 3,200 IT decision-makers and influencers across sectors in the US, Europe, and Asia-Pacific. In the Asia Pacific and

According to the report, 81 per cent of Indian organisations have already implemented GenAI, making India the leader in adopting generative artificial intelligence technologies.

Japan region, 1,200 were surveyed, including 300 from

The study also predicted promising investment trends in near future, with about 94 per cent of respondents anticipating increased and investments budget allocations towards GenAI initiatives in the next 2-3



However, almost all of the respondents expressed concerns about processing and using their data.

"As many as 99 per cent of respondents expressed concerns about processing and using their data, highlighting the need for organisations to work with GenAI providers who can safeguard sensitive information. The report further observed that 73 per cent of respondents in India confident conversational data search capabilities significantly enhance

GenAI has captured the imaginations and budgets of India's IT and data leaders, as seen by India's lead in GenAI adoption," said Karthik Rajaram, area vice president and general manager, India, Elastic.

"However, commitment of many organisations to quickly harness the transformative opportunity of GenAI to drive innovation and efficiency is exciting, it's businesses that adopt search-powered GenAI grounded by business context that will lead and uncover the insights needed to securely innovate, build more efficient operational efficiency.

"The disruptive potential of customer experiences." businesses, and pioneer new

# Markets climb for 3rd day on firm global cues

 $E_{\text{Sensex}}^{\text{quity benchmark indices}} \\ \text{Sensex and Nifty closed} \\ \text{higher for the third session in}$ a row on Tuesday, following gains in telecom, tech and consumer durable shares amid a firm trend in the global markets.

After rallying over 400 points, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 89.83 points or 0.12 per cent higher at 73,738.45. During the session, it jumped 411.27 points or 0.55 per cent

Trimming most of its early gains, the NSE Nifty ended



up at 22,368. During the day, it climbed 111.15 points or 0.49 per cent to 22,447.55.

index heavyweight Reliance Industries, mainly due to profit

Reliance lost over one per cent to end at Rs 2,918.50 per

the Sensex basket, Bharti Airtel, Nestle, Maruti, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies, NTPC, Asian Paints and State Bank of India were the major gainers. Sun Pharma, Reliance

Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards. In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower.

trading with gains. Wall Street ended in positive territory on

Monday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.41 per cent

to USD 87.36 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,915.23 crore on Monday after a day's breather, according

exchange data.

The BSE benchmark climbed 560.29 points or 0.77 per cent to settle at 73,648.62 on Monday. The NSE Nifty went up by 189.40 points or 0.86 per cent to 22,336.40.

## Reliance Industries shares climb nearly one per cent post earnings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reliance hares Industries Ltd on Tuesday climbed nearly 1 per cent after the company's annual earnings hit a record high. The stock advanced 0.85 per cent to Rs 2,986.05 on the

At the NSE, it climbed 0.92 per cent to Rs 2,987 apiece. market The company's valuation stood at 20,07,346.55 crore.

Reliance Industries Ltd on Monday reported an almost flat March quarter net profit,

while its annual earnings hit The profit was, however, a record high on the back of a recovery in core oil and petrochemicals business and sustained momentum across consumer-facing telecom businesses

oil-to-telecom-and-The retail conglomerate's consolidated net profit stood at Rs 18,951 crore, or Rs 28.01 per share, in January-March quarter of the 2023-24 fiscal, compared to Rs 19,299 crore, or Rs 28.52 a share, a year ago, according a company's stock exchange filing.

higher quarter-on-quarter when compared to Rs 17,265 crore in October-December period.

For the full fiscal FY24 (April 2023 to March 2024), Reliance posted a record net profit of Rs 69,621 crore, as compared to Rs 66,702 crore earnings in the preceding financial year.

Reliance also became the first Indian company to hit Rs 10 lakh crore turnover in FY24 when revenue from operations rose 2.6 per cent from Rs 9.74 lakh crore in

## Rupee rises 3 paise to close at 83.33 against \$



The rupee appreciated by 3 paise to close at 83.33 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday on positive domestic markets and a soft American currency.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.37 against the greenback. The unit hit an intra-day high of 83.28 and a low of 83.39 against the greenback.

The domestic unit finally settled at 83.33 (provisional) against the dollar, 3 paise higher from its previous

On Monday, the rupee appreciated by 8 paise to close at 83.36 against the US dollar

Tuesday on weak US dollar positive domestic markets. However, a recovery in crude oil prices and FII outflows capped sharp gains," Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.01 per cent lower at 106.06, on easing tensions between Israel and Iran.

Brent crude futures, the

benchmark. advanced 0.29 per cent to USD 87.25 per barrel.

'We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias on improved global risk sentiments and easing of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East," Choudhary

Easing dollar on strong euro and pound amid mixed to positive PMI data from Europe also supported the

"However, aggressions in the Middle East may cap sharp upside. Traders may take cues from PMI data from US. Investors may remain cautious ahead of inflation data from US later this week. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a Choudhary added.

On the domestic equity market front, advanced 89.83 points, or 0.12 per cent, to settle at 73,738.45 points. The Nifty rose 31.60 points, or 0.14 per cent, to close at 22,368.00 points.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Monday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 2,915,23 crore, according to exchange

#### Karnataka, Gujarat lead India's clean energy transition race: Report pumps for agricultural needs, electricity and recommends

Zarnataka and Gujarat Karnataka and Continue to lead the race to clean energy transition, but states like Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh need to step up efforts, according to a new report released on Tuesday. The joint report by research

organisation, Institute for Economics Financial Analysis (IEEFA), and clean energy think tank Ember evaluates the clean electricity transition preparedness at the subnational level.

The report's authors said Karnataka and Gujarat continue strong performance across effectively dimensions. integrating renewable energy sources into their power in decarbonisation.

But states like Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh need to improve. While these states are in the early stages of their transition, they now need to focus on increasing renewable energy deployment, enhancing short term market participation and strengthening their distribution companies.

The report launch coincides with a spell of intense heat wave sweeping parts of India, leading to the Ministry of



Power preparing projected peak power of several parameters at the demand of 260 gigawatts. state level. A purely national Harsh summers also offer the overview chance to utilise more clean energy like solar power. at the state level, which may Although, this requires preparedness of states to transition to clean sources of electricity.

"Cyclical weather conditions coupled with faster economic activity is pushing India's peak electricity demand higher every year. While the central government is taking steps to integrate more renewable energy into the grid, states, too, need to be prepared to do so. Gauging sub-national progress now

for a requires constant monitoring stymie the country's electricity transition," the report's contributing author, Vibhuti Garg, Director, South Asia, IEEFA, said.

While the national-level progress towards electricity transition is progressing well, it is far more uneven at the state level.

"Some states have developed progressive steps, such as decentralised boosting renewable energy deployment, promoting solar

enhancing storage solutions to ensure more renewable energy in their electricity systems. But, the transition to clean electricity is still in its infancy in many "These states should look to

accelerate efforts to access benefits of a transition to clean electricity and to ensure they are not left too far behind the better-performing states," the report's contributing author, Aditya Lolla, Asia Programme Director, Ember, said.

One of the striking findings from the analysis for the 2024 report is that several states are exhibiting preparedness to embrace electricity transition. They perform well in the "Readiness and Performance of the Power Ecosystem" and dimensions but need to the improve in Decarbonisation"

dimension. "Delhi's power system is wellprepared for decarbonisation, while Odisha has robust market enablers to support

decarbonisation in the power sector. However, their actual decarbonisation progress so far does not match their strengths in these aspects, highlighting the importance of performing well in both dimensions to effectively

goals," co-author Neshwin Rodrigues, Electricity Policy Analyst, Ember, said. The report also notes that

state-level decarbonisation can be further accelerated by strengthening the power ecosystem and having right enablers. Some states that are decarbonising well also lack the right market enablers, others struggle with the readiness of their power ecosystems.

Kerala, Haryana, Andhra Punjab Pradesh. Maharashtra all exhibited considerable progress in certain aspects but also lower performance in other aspects. For example, Kerala

and Punjab need to improve when it comes to market enablers for decarbonisation, need to shift focus from while Andhra Pradesh and national-level to state-level the readiness of their power ecosystems, according to coauthor Tanya Rana, Energy Analyst, IEEFA. "Despite achieving relative

success in decarbonising the sector thus far, states must address deficiencies in readiness and market enablers to sustain their momentum, says Saloni Sachdeva Michael, Energy Specialist, India Clean Energy Transition, IEEFA. The report recognises the

considerable efforts that states making towards

strengthening of state-level regulatory ecosystems. This not only ensures compliance but also promotes growth,

some key steps to accelerate

recommend

the pace of transition.

data tracking and monitoring, and a conducive environment for business," Michael said. "India has formulated many central and state-level policy schemes to reinforce its goal of energy independence by supporting various reforms and regulatory interventions

across the value chain. However, implementation has not been adequate and transparent," she added. The report also calls for a

studies to understand the nuances of the electricity transition in India fully. "Each state faces unique

challenges in decarbonising power necessitating tailored policy interventions. By tracking decarbonisation progress, assessing the power system's readiness for transition, and monitoring the advancement of market enablers, statespecific challenges and potential interventions can be better understood," Rodrigues

Tata Power Delhi Distribution

Razorpay announces UPI Switch in partnership with Airtel Payments Bank

#### **Growth in housing prices may moderate this** fiscal to five per cent annually: India Ratings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Housing demand and prices are likely to moderate this fiscal on a high base effect with sales expected to rise 8-10 per cent and rates by around 5 per cent annually, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said on Tuesday.

The rating agency has maintained a neutral outlook for the residential real estate sector for the 2024-25 fiscal. "Absorption and prices are likely to be supported by affordability and stability of interest rates. However, given the high base of FY24, the growth rates are likely to taper down," Ind-Ra said in a statement.

The residential real estate market registered a strong performance during the first nine months of the 2023-24 fiscal where the sales growth exceeded 25 per cent year-onyear (Y-o-Y) for the top eight real estate clusters, despite price increases and sticky interest rates.

most regions witnessing a surge in prices, Ind-Ra expects the pre-sales growth to moderate to 8 to 10 per cent yoy in FY25. Inventory levels have also



risen over FY24 in the premium and luxury launches increased encouraged by the sharp rise in sales and realisations," said Mahaveer Shankarlal Jain, Director,

Corporate Ratings, Ind-Ra. The rating agency said the prices have been higher 22 per cent Y-o-Y at the end of FY24 and would be subdued at around 5 per cent Y-o-Y for FY25, due to the base effect and large amount of new launches planned.

With most of the old-stock cleared and existing inventory largely liquidated along with a continued pick-up in demand and a spike in commodity prices due to geopolitical tensions, prices surged by report significant growth.

almost 14 per cent Y-o-Y in FY23 along with an increase in land prices and rental vields," it said.

Ind-Ra noted that demand is getting shifted towards mid Upper-mid income segments from luxury and

premium segments.
While the premium and luxury segments witnessed sharp demand growth in the first nine months of the last Ind-Ra said the fiscal, demand would cool down due to the high base as the unsold inventory levels remain elevated and are the highest over the past five

The rating agency also expects tier II and III cities to

#### PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fintech company Razorpay on Tuesday launched its own UPI infrastructure with 'UPI Switch', a cloud-based innovation in partnership with Airtel Payments Bank, and said the solution is geared to ensure smoother and faster transactions.

Boosting success rates by 4-5

per cent, the solution is

designed to handle up to

second (TPS) at any given time, according to a release. The 'UPI Switch' will also enable 5 times faster access to UPI (Unified Payments Interface) innovations for businesses, it added.

"Today, Razorpay launches its own UPI infrastructure with UPI Switch, a nextgeneration innovation, in partnership with Airtel Payments Bank, according to a release. 10,000 transactions per Khilan Haria, Head of industry's leading stack.

Payments Product at Razorpay, said India has Payments always been at the forefront of innovation in the digital payments ecosystem and its possibilities compounded in the last few years, with the versatility of UPI.

"This venture into UPI cloud-based infrastructure marks a strategic move to manage the end-to-end merchant experience and provide the

"With latency below 100 milliseconds, a 4-5 per cent increase in success rates, and features customised to suit business needs, our switch is crafted to enrich the payment experience and ensure that businesses can now manage the surge in UPI transactions on any sale or non-sale day," Haria said. Ganesh Ananthanarayanan, Chief Operating Officer of Airtel Payments Bank, said integration

Razorpay's UPI Switch, a cloud-based infrastructure for the most advanced UPI Stack, ensures 99.99 per cent uptime and enables up to 10,000 transactions per second.

"As transactions continue to surge, our collaboration sets a new standard payments, aligning perfectly with the vision of a digital India," Ananthanarayanan

### None of G7 economies on track to meet 2030 mitigation targets

None of the G7 members are on track to meet their existing emission reduction targets for 2030, according to a new analysis released on Tuesday. The analysis by Climate Analytics, a global climate science and policy institute, comes ahead of the G7 climate, energy, and environment ministers' meeting in Venaria Reale, Italy, during April 28-30.

The G7 collectively aims to achieve a 40-42 per cent the world's richest countries,

but existing policies suggest that it will likely achieve only 19-33 per cent by the end of this decade, the analysis showed. This is at best around half of what is needed and would lead to greenhouse gas emissions in 2030 exceeding a 1.5 degrees Celsius compatible level by around four gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

Such a shortfall in ambition does not provide the leadership signal needed from

emission reduction by 2030 making up around 38 per cent of the global economy and responsible for 21 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions in 2021, the researchers said. The G7 economies need to slash their emissions by 58 per cent by 2030 compared to the 2019 levels to do their part to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, they said. These economies, who make

up 38 per cent of the world's GDP, are not pulling their weight: they have both the technology and the finance to up their game."

#### appoints Gajanan Kale as CEO **STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Kale as its new Chief

Executive Officer, effective

 $D_{\text{Distribution Ltd on}}^{\text{elhi Tata Power Delhi}}$ Monday announced the appointment of Gajanan S

April 19. Before joining Tata Power-DDL, Kale served as the Chief Executive Officer of Tata Western Odisha Power Distribution Limited

(TPWODL) since 2021. He also served as the CEO of Tata Power Ajmer Distribution Ltd (TPADL) from 2018 to 2020, a company

statement said.Kale, an M-Tech in Integrated Power Systems from NIT-Nagpur, has been with Tata Power group since 2003, it said. Praveer Sinha, CEO & MD, Tata Power, said, "With his (Gajanan S Kale) extensive experience in the distribution domain, I am confident that he will lead Tata Power DDL to new heights of success." Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL) is a joint venture between Tata Power and the Government of

NCT of Delhi. It distributes electricity in North Delhi and serves a populace of 7 million.

# Serie A title, second star and derby Inter takes it all with win over Milan

inning the derby ended up being the cherry on top of a special night for Inter Milan. Holding off AC Milan 2-1 on Monday clinched for Inter the Serie A title that had been sign-posted for weeks, and earned a coveted second star on its jersey for winning a 20th Italian league title, breaking a tie with its fierce city rival

"I told the guys, We find ourselves in a situation that's never happened before," Inter captain Lautaro Martínez said. "We needed to take advantage of this opportunity, because look around, the entire stadium is ours now." Not even the pouring rain could dampen the spirits of the Nerazzurri and their fans. Francesco Acerbi and Marcus Thuram scored and, although Fikayo Tomori's late goal for AC Milan threatened to delay

remaining. At the final whistle, a Lautaro and beaming teammate Federico Dimarco climbed onto the top of the

the celebrations, Inter held on

for the win that stretched its

lead to an insurmountable 17

points over second-placed

Milan, with five rounds

goal frame at San Siro. Flares and fireworks were set off in the stands, and the Inter players danced raucously in front of their fans. A banner was unfurled saying in Italian: "Repeat it to the Madonnina, who are the champions and who the crybabies

The Madonnina is the statue on top of Milan cathedral that overlooks the city, and which



the derby is named after. After winning eight other trophies, Simone Inzaghi claimed his first league title as a coach.

"Winning the league with five matches left - more or less won with nine matches left, making

mathematically certain - in a derby, with Milan the home team, that is something that will remain with us," Inzaghi

"Everyone gave their very valuable contribution so that we could reach goals like

alongside veteran Sharath

Yashaswini Ghorpade and

Archana Kamath held on to

their 99th and 100th spot in

Sharath continues to be the

top-ranked male player,

occupying the 37 spot in the rankings while G Sathiyan and Manav Thakar have

interchanged places to be

National champion Harmeet

Desai's, who was the top

ranked Indian a couple of

months a ago, descent continues as he dropped to

the 64th spot. India has

already qualified for the team

events at the Paris Olympics.

Two singles entries in men's

and women's singles will be decided by the Table Tennis

Federation of India by May 16

after considering the world

rankings at the time.

60th and 61st respectively.

the rankings.

A star is awarded for every 10 Serie A titles. Only Juventus has won more, with a record 36 and thus three stars on its jersey.

Despite the rain, the stars aligned for Inter to wrap up Serie A, another star and the Derby della Madonnina on one night at San Siro, the stadium both teams share. Inter was technically the away team and only one end of the stadium was reserved for its black-and-blue-clad support. Inter had won the past five derbies, including both legs of Champions League

semifinal last year and a 5-1 humiliation of Milan earlier this season in Serie A.

And the Nerazzurri went in front in the 18th minute when Benjamin Pavard nodded on Federico Dimarco's corner for an unmarked Acerbi to head in from close range.

Lautaro should have doubled Inter's lead seven minutes later when he was also left woefully unmarked but the league's top goal-scorer inexplicably fired over the bar from point-blank range. Milan seemed to draw confidence from that miss

and Rafael Leão had a great chance to level following a rapid run counterattack from Tomori, but he fired straight at Inter goalkeeper Yann Sommer.

It was end-to-end action and Milan captain Davide Calabria also forced a great save from Sommer at the end of the first half.

But clinching the crown seemed inevitable less than four minutes after the restart when Thuram ran onto a long Alessandro Bastoni ball over the top and feinted around his marker to cut in from the left broke out in stoppage time

along the edge of the area and drill into the near bottom

The finale became tense when Milan pulled one back 10 minutes from time. Sommer did brilliantly to parry Mattia Gabbia's header onto his post but Tomori nodded in the rebound. Tomori grabbed the ball and gestured frantically to teammates as he raced back to the center circle, desperate to get the equalizer that would prevent Inter from securing the title.

As tempers flared, a scuffle

Hernandez and defender Denzel Dumfries were sent off. Calabria was also shown a red card five minutes later following another scuffle.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RACE

Bologna consolidated fourth place with a 3-1 win at Roma to inflict Daniele De Rossi's second league defeat as coach of the capital club. Bologna moved seven points

above fifth-placed Roma and eight above Atalanta - both of which have a game in hand. Spanish women among top Laureus winners and Djokovic is world sportsman

of the year Madrid, Apr 23 (AP) Spain's first Women's World Cup triumph last year earned two more major plaudits at the Laureus World Sports Awards

on Monday. Spain was chosen world team of the year for 2023 and midfielder Aitana Bonmatí was picked as the best sportswoman.

Novak Djokovic received the sportsman of the year at the ceremony in Madrid, and American gymnast Simone Biles was given the comeback of the year award.

Real Madrid forward Jude Bellingham earned the breakthrough prize, and Rafael Nadal won the sport for good award thanks to his foundation.

The Spanish women's World breakthrough last Cup August in New Zealand and Australia was tarnished in the following weeks because of an unwanted kiss of forward Jenni Hermoso by

Luis Rubiales after the final. Laureus rewarded Spain as the first all-female team to win the team award.

Before the World Cup, Bonmatí also helped Barcelona win a second Women's Champions League. She's the first female soccer player to win the Laureus, after also receiving the Ballon d'Or and FIFA best player

award. "I want to thank all my teammates and the staff of my club and national team who have helped me a lot, and because of them I am here today," Bonmati said.

Djokovic won his recordequalling fifth Laureus sportsman award - tying Roger Federer - after titles at the Australian Open, French Open and U.S. Open to reach a record 24 Grand Slam singles triumphs. NFL great
Tom Brady presented
Djokovic the award.

Biles made a record-breaking return to competition last year when she won four gold medals at the world championships, including a record sixth all-around title. Nadal's foundation was rewarded for helping more than "1,000 vulnerable young people in Spain and India, according to Laureus.

Teenager Arisa Trew won the action sportsperson award after becoming the first female skateboarder to land a 720 in competition.

Dutch wheelchair player Diede de Groot was selected as the sportsperson of the year with a disability after winning her third straight calendar tennis Grand Slam.



### Sreeja surpasses Manika as India number one TT player

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

¬WG mixed doubles **∪**champion Sreeja Akula on Tuesday became the topranked Indian woman table tennis player after rising to career-high rank of 38 in latest ITTF Chart, replacing Manika Batra.

Sreeja climbed a spot while Manika who had been India's number one TT player for a while now, slipped two places to 39 in the latest update.

The 25-year-old Sreeja has enjoyed a good run this year, winning the WTT Feeder Corpus Christi and WTT Feeder Beirut titles in January and March respectively besides reaching the quarterfinal of the WTT Star Contender in Goa.

Sreeja had won the mixed doubles gold medal at the 2022 Commonwealth Games

#### **ISL** final to be played at home ground



▲ (ISL) on Tuesday said that the 2023-24 season final, scheduled on May 4, will be played at the home ground of the higher-ranked team in the league among the finalists. Mohun Bagan pipped Mumbai City FC in a thriller

on April 15 to win the League shield, with FC Goa finishing third.

Kolkata, Mumbai and Goa are therefore in contention to host the ISL final. Tickets for the match will go on sale once the venue is confirmed.

Odisha FC and FC Goa emerged victorious in their knockout matches against Kerala Blasters FC and Chennaiyin FC respectively, securing their places in the ISL 2023-24 semi-finals.

The semi-final action kicks off with Mohun Bagan Super Giant facing Odisha FC in Bhubaneswar on April 23. The following day, on April 24, Mumbai City FC will clash with FC Goa in the first leg of their semi-final matchup in Goa.

## Shotgun shooter permitted to compete in national trials despite not meeting criteria

PTI NEW DELHI

The national shooting I federation, which fighting a court battle to uphold its selection criteria in the ongoing trials for Paris Olympics, seems to have bent the rules for one marksman recently, allowing him to participate despite lower-than-

Trap marksman Karan missed the National Rifles Association of India's (NRAI) criteria for shotgun selection trials by two points but was allowed to compete, while several others, who shot identical scores during last year's National Championships, were not considered.

A letter issued by NRAI in November announcing "Selection Trials as per Shotgun Selection Criteria 2024 & Olympic Selection Criteria 2024 for Shotgun event" states that shooters with a score of 110 in senior men's trap during the 66th National Championship (October-November, 2023) were eligible for the exercise held between December, 2023 and March

Karan, an Army marksman, shot 108 in the National Championships but his was the only recommendation accepted by the NRAI, while the same exception was not made for a dozen more shooters, who shot identical



scores. The shooter competed in a series of four selection trials and is currently ranked 15th, thus failing to make the national squad.

NRAI secretary Rajiv Bhatia told PTI that since Karan is a "budding" shooter and his "recommendation had come from the Army", an exception was made for him.

"We did give an exception as he is a budding, good shooter. There was a difference of just two points and he has been shooting good scores. That's why we introduced him in the trials for selecting the teams for World Cups, Championships, everything (including Olympics)," said Bhatia.

"We cannot simply go by the rule book (lakeer ke fakeer nahin ban sakte). There was a recommendation from the Army to allow him (for national trials) because he had shot very well at the National Games (in Goa).

Karan, representing Services Sports Control Board, was the first to be eliminated in the trap finals at the National Games in Goa, finishing sixth. The NRAI, ironically, is locked in a legal battle with some Olympic aspirants in the Delhi High Court, where it is insisting that no more than top five shooters in rifle and pistol would be allowed in the ongoing trials.

The process has come under criticism from no less than former national coach and legendary pistol shooter Jaspal Rana, who has said that the federation is not following international norms

Asked why the trials were not opened for marksmen who shot identical scores at the Nationals, Bhatia said, "I think we allowed him under a special criteria because of his previous scores." Bhatia added that giving an exception in trials didn't mean he was selected in the national squad for international competitions like the World Cups and World

Championships.
"So, was he selected for the World Cups? 'No', we just gave him an opportunity," he said. "Every state recommends shooters to be included (in trials), and we go by the merit. A marksman can shoot a bad score in a competition. One Asked what NRAI would have done had he topped the trials, Bhatia said, "If somebody is performing, then why not (name him in the Olympic squad). How can we not consider him (for Olympics if he had performed)? Aim is to select the best athlete.

"But he is not going for any competition. As on today, he is nowhere in the national ranking. I think his ranking is very low (after the trials). But if he had beaten the field, he would have been contention).

He added that an exception had also been made for the shooter to promote shotgun shooting as it is not as popular as pistol and rifle.

"Shotgun, we have to promote as (the numbers are very less) compared to pistol rifle and other categories... It was a recommendation of the Army Marksmanship Unit, which is an affiliate unit of the NRAI. "It was only one case, we did not open it for everybody. Just



#### Man City vs Man United FA **Cup final time** CUIIIIIIIICU

AP LONDON

The FA Cup final between Manchester City and Manchester United will kick off at the traditional time of 3 PM (14.00 GMT) on May 25, the Football Association said Tuesday.

In a repeat of last year's final, holder City will play rival United at Wembley Stadium. The FA said the kick-off time had been agreed with both clubs, the local authority, safety advisory group and broadcasters.

It is the second straight year that the final will start at 3 PM. In recent years, it has had an early evening time slot. City beat Chelsea 1-0 on

Saturday to secure its place in the final Meanwhile, United needed

penalties to overcome second-tier Coventry on Sunday after blowing a 3-0 lead to draw 3-3 through

## Olympic gold medallist Gray hopes to be part of US 3x3 team in Paris Games

AP SPRINGFIELD (US)

Allisha Gray is glad to be back playing 3x3 for USA Basketball with an eye towards being a member of the team at the Paris Olympics this summer.

She's the only player returning from the foursome that took home the gold at the Tokyo Games three years ago. That was the inaugural appearance of the sport at the Olympics.
"To be the first team to do it and it

being the first time in the Olympics, it was amazing," Gray said. "It's great to be back and get back

into the groove of things. Gray was one of eight players selected from the 15-person training camp over the weekend to participate in a 3x3 tournament in Springfield, Massachusetts at The Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame. She's on a team with Dearica Hamby, Cameron Brink and Linnae

Brink and Harper helped the US win the 2023 FIBA 3x3 World Cup. Hamby made her 3x3 debut winning the gold at the Women's

AmeriCup the same year. The other US team in the tournament features Burdick, Rhyne Howard, Lexie Hull and Hailey Van Lith. Burdick and Van Lith were also on that World Cup team last year. Howard has the least 3x3 experience, only playing in USA Basketball nationals in 2019. She's also in the Olympic 5-on-5 national team pool.

"I think 3x3 is more intimate and it really tests your patience a little bit because you have to think about what you're doing in order to get good looks," Howard said.

You don't have a lot of people to help you get open so you have to create for yourself a lot."



Hull began her 3x3 career in 2016 and also medalled in the sport in 2022 and 2023.

The Americans will eventually choose the four player roster for Paris. Two of the players must be in top 10 for points accumulated for the U.S. The other two players on the team either have to also be in the top 10 or have played in at least one official FIBA 3x3 competition between January 1, 2023 and June 24, 2024. National team coach Jennifer Rizzotti said that the selection committee will have a tough job picking the four players to compete in Paris.

"What makes it hard is there are also some women who have committed to this game for four

years," she said. They've earned the points for the US and earned the points for themselves. They've done all the groundwork and laid the foundation for us to be able play in the Olympics and not all of them will get to go. We tried to find a way to make them know that they are part of the process and you try to keep them here as long as you can. The 3x3 game is played on a half court with a 12-second shot clock and the winner is the first team to score 21 points or to be leading at the end of a 10-minute period. Baskets inside the arc are worth one point and shots outside it are worth two. Rizzotti said USA Basketball had a 3x3 camp last May that featured a lot of the college players who were playing the game for the first time. She's seen a lot of growth from them. "It's impressive to see in a short amount of time and limited repetitions of playing that they've picked things up," she said. Made us really have a competitive

camp in a way that I wasn't really

# Pant captaincy under lens as DC eye improved bowling effort against GT

ishabh Pant's leadership skills will be under scrutiny as a struggling Delhi Capitals would seek a much-improved performance from their bowlers when they take on an inconsistent Gujarat Titans in the IPL here on Wednesday.

It was not an ideal homecoming for Pant as after two consecutive wins, DC slumped to a 67-run loss against a marauding Sunrisers Hyderabad at home on Saturday. The loss saw DC slip to the eighth position with three wins and five defeats. They very well know they can't afford to falter if they want to

keep their play-off hopes alive. Against SRH, Pant erred in his decisions a few times, starting from the toss as he misjudged the dew factor at the Arun Jaitley Stadium and decided to bowl first.

Pant's decision to hand the second over to Lalit Yaday, was even more contentious as SRH were off to a blazing start, scoring a record 125 for no loss in the powerplay. On the personal front, Pant wasn't

in his element as he struggled for timing en route a painstaking 44 off 35 balls while chasing a mammoth score.

To chase a target of 267, a team needs its openers to fire from ball one but Prithvi Shaw and David haven't been too Warner successful.

Jake Fraser-McGurk Young smashed 65 off just 18 balls to keep DC in the hunt but he lacked support from the other end, even though Abhishek Porel (42 off 22) tried his best.

DC bowlers were taken to the cleaners by SRH and they need to pull up their socks.

Left-arm seamer Khaleel Ahmed's, whose career has been dogged by inconsistency, decision to employ short stuff in the opening over completely backfired

With short boundaries at the Kotla, DC bowlers need to pitch it up. Pace spearhead Anrich Nortje has been completely off-colour this season and DC would be desperately hoping veteran Ishant

last game due to a back spasm.



Kuldeep Yadav has been DC's best bowler in the season so far with 10 wickets from five games at an economy rate of 7.60. But he didn't have a very good outing against

Even though he had the highest number of dot balls (8) among DC bowlers, he also conceded the maximum numbers of sixes -- 7.

GT have also been equally inconsistent under new skipper Shubman Gill. But the three-wicket win over Punjab Kings in their last game has helped the former champions move up slightly in the pecking order at sixth spot from four wins and as many losses.

They would be hoping to continue the winning momentum to scale up the leaderboard and be in contention for a play-off berth. The onus would be on Gill to lead from the front.

The likes of Sai Sudharsan, David Miller and Azmatullah Omarzai also need to let their willow do the talking while Rahul Tewatia would look to continue his pyrotechnics towards the end stage of their On the bowling front, the likes of veteran Mohit Sharma, Noor Ahmad and Rashid Khan will be expected to deliver the goods. TEAMS (FROM):

**Delhi Capitals:** Rishabh Pant (c&wk), David Warner, Abishek Porel, Ricky Bhui, Yash Dhull, Shai Hope, Prithvi Shaw, Tristan Stubbs, Kumar Kushagra (wk), Swastik Chikara, Ishant Sharma, Jhye Richardson, Rasikh Dar, Vicky Ostwal, Anrich Nortje, Mukesh Kumar, Kuldeep Yadav, Praveen Dubey, Khaleel Ahmed, Sumit Kumar, Axar Patel, Lalit Yadav, Jake Fraser-McGurk.

Gujarat Titans: Shubman Gill (c), David Miller, Wriddhiman Saha, Sai Sudharsan, Shahrukh Khan, Matthew Wade, Kane Williamson, Azmatullah Omarzai, Abhinav Manohar, Rashid Khan, Vijay Shankar, Rahul Tewatia, Spencer Johnson, Kartik Tyagi, Joshua Little, Darshan Nalkande, Noor Ahmad, Ravisrinivasan Sai Kishore, Mohit Sharma, Jayant Yadav, Umesh Yadav, Sushant Mishra, Sandeep Warrier, Sharath BR Manay Suthar

#### That door is now closed: Narine rules out T20 World Cup amid purple patch in IPL

Former West Indies bowling Rall-rounder Sunil Narine, who is having a terrific IPL season, won't be reversing his retirement decision for the upcoming T20 World Cup in the Caribbean and USA, insisting that the "door is now

The 35-year-old last played for the West Indies in a T20 International in August 2019

international cricket in November last year to focus on franchise T20 leagues around the world.

But owing to his sensational form with both bat and ball for Kolkata Knight Riders this IPL season, attempts were being made to convince Narine to reverse his decision for the T20

World Cup. "I'm truly flattered and humbled that performances recently have moved many people to publicly express their wish for me to come out of retirement and play in the upcoming T20 World Cup," Narine wrote in

Instagram post. He asserted that he has made peace with his decision and will be supporting the team from home. "I have made peace with that decision and

Letting go of Yuzvendra Chahal is something Royal

Challengers Bengaluru could

regret for the longest time and

the franchise's former director

of cricket, Mike Hesson on

Tuesday insisted they failed to

retain the leg-spinner due to a

miscalculation at the last IPL

On Monday, Chahal scripted

history by becoming the first player in IPL to have taken 200

"Yuzi is one I will be frustrated

with until I have finished my

career and probably beyond.

He is an outstanding bowler. I

guess when it comes to every

cycle, you have got to decide

"It was one of those things

where if you only retain three

players, you give yourself an

extra 4 crore in the auction.

who you are going to retain.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

auction.

wickets.

whilst I never wish to disappoint, that door is now closed and I will be supporting the guys who take the field in

June for West Indies.

"Guys who have worked hard over the past few months and deserve to show our wonderful fans that they are capable of winning another title. I wish you all the best," he added.

Narine, who has been a key member of KKR since 2012, is seventh on the list of leading season, having scored 286 runs, including an unbeaten century against Rajasthan Royals last week -- his maiden T20 ton.

With the ball, the off-spinner is KKR's joint-leading wickettaker with nine scalps at an average of 22.11 and an economy rate of 7.10.

Narine's purple patch has compelled West Indies captain Rovman Powell to encourage the spinner to come out of retirement for the home World

"For the last 12 months, I've been whispering in his ears, he's blocked out everyone. Asked (Kieron) Pollard, (Dwayne) Bravo, (Nicholas) Pooran, hopefully before they select the team, they can crack his code," Powell had said last

## You need big heart when bowling at the death: Sandeep

**PTI** ■ JAIPUR

you have to have a big heart Y when bowling at the death while trying to execute your plans, insisted Rajasthan Royals medium pacer Sandeep Sharma after recording the ongoing IPL season's best bowling performance.

Bowling after a three-week injury layoff, the 30-year-old Sharma wreaked havoc in the Mumbai Indians camp with a splendid 5 for 18 on Monday. "In this year's IPL, batters are going big and with the impact player rule, there is an extra batter so the games are highscoring. You have to have a big heart while bowling at the death and try to execute your plans and bowl good balls," he said after RR's nine-wicket win over MI.

Sharma, who started off as a new-ball exponent in the IPL, has been tasked to bowl the death overs by the Royals in the three games that he has played this season. "Even today you ask me where

I feel comfortable, I'll say it's with the new ball. With the old ball, you have to adapt and evolve as a bowler," he said. Sharma returned to the RR playing XI after recuperating from a side strain that kept him out for close to a month.

"I was working hard towards my fitness for the last three weeks. I had two practice sessions before the game, my main focus was to execute the variations that I did tonight."



Against MI, Sharma's scalps included the dangerous Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, the big hitting Tim

Gerald Coetzee.

He took three wickets in the final over, restricting MI to 179 despite a 99-run stand between "If you're bowling at the death, it can go both ways. Sometimes, you go for runs, and when you're lucky enough you end up getting a wicket. When we started, the wicket was low and slow. My plan was to keep bowling those cutters and it came off nicely tonight." he said.

MI OPTIMISTIC DESPITE LOSS TO RR: Mumbai Indians fell to their fifth loss of the season but young batter Nehal Wadhera remained optimistic about the five-time chances champions' qualifying for the playoffs.

MI need to win all their games from here and we need to tighten our socks. We need to raise our game and figure out where we have been going wrong or where we have been going right so that we can rectify our mistakes whenever we return," Wadhera said after the match.

The 23-year-old, who smashed a splendid 24-ball 49, pointed out that MI aren't new to being involved in a mid-table muddle, having risen from the proverbial ashes time and

'We have been in such a situation in earlier seasons as well, and we have, you know, upped our game from there and qualified.

"So, we are optimistic even right now. We will continue the process we are following and win the games for the team. We win as a team, and we lose as a team," Wadhera added.

### We have got a little bit of improving to do, both with bat and ball: Warner



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Capitals opener David Warner has no qualms in admitting that the team is left with no option but to win all their remaining matches to stay in the reckoning for a play-off berth in the ongoing IPL. Having lost five out of their eight matches,

DC will be desperate to turn things

around when they take on Gujarat Titans

here on Wednesday. "We're not where we want to be for the team's sake. We'd like to win a few more games. But we've got to win the next remainder to obviously compete in the

'So for us, it's about doing as best as we can. Hopefully, we can play each game like we did against Gujarat," Warner said during a media interaction.

The seasoned campaigner from Australia added, "We've got a little bit of improving to do, both with bat and the ball. If we can the totals it would be grea then if we bat first, try and put a big total

on the board and defend it. Warner further highlighted that DC have a dangerous bowling attack that bowled out GT for 89 in their first leg match.

"Cannot fault the way the guys are training and preparing. It's just sometimes in the games that the execution isn't there. And we know when we take wickets up front and early, we're a very dangerous bowling

Asked about two youngsters in the team who have impressed him this season, Warner said, "Jake's (Jake Fraser-McGurk) been very good. We know he's always had the talent. Abishek Porel has been outstanding as well.

"Abishek wasn't even going to play in the first game, but we'd lost early wickets and

then came in as an impact player. "I think he had nine balls or something and he got 30-odd runs. That changed the

game and then the other day as well, he played very well. He is going to be a very good player," he concluded.

Jaiswal batted with maturity against MI, played cricketing shots: Lara

PTI NEW DELHI

Impressed with the maturity **⊥**shown by Yashasvi Jaiswal, West Indies cricket legend Brian Lara said the youngster's knock against Mumbai Indians was well put together as he perfectly balanced taking his time with shots while still maintaining a high strike-rate.

Jaiswal ended a barren run by his lofty standards with his first ton of this IPL to power Rajasthan Royals to a nine-wicket win over MI here.

Yeah, beautiful. But the fact of the matter is, he's taking his time, looking at the ball right from up at the back, and he's playing cricketing shots. He's got all the stuff, he doesn't have to worry about it," Lara said on Star Sports Cricket Live. Jaiswal struck nine fours and seven sixes to make an unbeaten 104 from only 60 balls, a knock which was replete with powerful shots



to have him back.

on the leg side and crispy

"And when you do get on top

of the bowlers, that's when you take it back, because

that's what I love about

"It was well put together, great

cricketing shots, he's managed throughout the

innings, and anyone knows, if

you're chasing such a good total, at Jaipur and you bounce through the innings,

you're soon as going to get

"So he's shown a lot of responsibility, a lot of maturity, and I'm very happy

Yashasvi.

#### CHANGE OF NAME

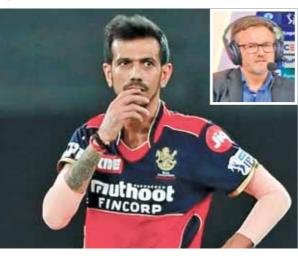
I, Rupesh Kumar Verma S/o Late Shyama Kant Verma R/o 3D Panchratna Hill Bank Colony Chiroundi Boreya Road Vidya Vikas Public School Chiroundi Boreya Ranchi Jharkhand-834006 have changed my-minor daughter's name Bhargavi Raj Verma to Bhargavi Verma

## Once we got Hasaranga that meant we could not go for Yuzi: Mike Hesson

chance to get both Harshal and Yuzi," Hesson told former India batter Robin Uthappa on Jio Cinema. Hesson said Chahal's name came pretty late in the auction and by that time, the franchise had already bought ace Sri Lankan spinner

Wanindu Hasaranga.
"... Then the order of the auction came up and Yuzvendra Chahal was at no. 65. Because we had retained that many players we were going to get bullied. After Yuzi there was no other spinner we were interested in.

"We were obviously interested in Hasaranga as another option if we did not get Yuzi. So we That potentially gave us the



bid for him upfront and then once we got Hasaranga that meant we could not go for Yuzi," he added.

In 153 matches, Chahal has taken 200 wickets at an average of 21.60, with the best figures of 5/40. He has taken six fourwicket hauls and a five-wicket haul in his IPL career.

Chahal reached the milestone during the match against Mumbai Indians in Jaipur on Monday. Hesson served as the franchise's director of cricket from 2019-2023. Meanwhile, former Australia

pacer Brett Lee praised RR seamer Sandeep Sharma for returning excellent figures of

5/18 against MI and said picking a five-for in a T20 match is equivalent to scoring 120 runs with the bat.

"They say a 4-fer is worth 100 runs in a T20, so a 5-fer for a bowler is definitely worth 120 for a batter, it's quality bowling... To pick up 5/18 in his comeback game, just makes you feel like you are part of the team again. "It will do a lot for his confidence. You can see in the list of TATA IPL 2024's best figures and he's sitting pretty

सेन्ट्रल माईन प्लानिंग एण्ड डिजाईन इन्स्टीच्यूट लिमिटेड AmhRadacCompany (A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited) (कोन संग्रेटण मिरिटेड के एक अनुभी कंट्सी) Gondwans Place, Kanke Road, Ranchi-330 पढ़ी, Jharkhand, MDIA

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