

OPINION 6

NOTHING 'GENTLEMANLY'
IN CHINESE DIPLOMACY

WORLD 8

TURKIYE HALTS ALL
TRADE WITH ISRAEL

MONEY 10

RUPEE RISES 3 PAISE TO END
AT 83.43 AGAINST US DOLLAR

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MUST WIN
12 SPORTSPrime Minister Narendra Modi waves at supporters on his arrival for a public meeting for Lok Sabha elections, in Krishnanagar, West Bengal, on Friday
PTI photo

Modi's advice to RaGa: 'Daro mat, bhaago mat'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
KOLKATA/NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi mocked the Congress leader Rahul Gandhi saying he had "run away" from Amethi for fear of defeat. "Today I also want to tell him, Daro Mat (don't be afraid), Bhaago Mat (don't run)," the Prime Minister sneered at three election rallies in West Bengal.

Modi's jibe came after Rahul's most often repeated remarks against the PM "Daro Mat" and accusing the BJP Government of using probe agencies to terrorise critics and political rivals. Modi also attacked former Congress chief Sonia Gandhi saying he had predicted that both mother and son would avoid contesting from their seats out of fear.

"I had said, their biggest

leader will not dare to contest. She will run away out of fear. She ran to Rajasthan and from there entered the Rajya Sabha. That is exactly what happened," he said. "I had said shehzada (Rahul Gandhi) is afraid of losing in Wayanad, and the moment voting ends, he will start looking for a third seat. Now even from Amethi, despite all his loyalists saying it, he panicked so much, he ran from there and is now looking towards Raebareli. These people keep going around telling people Daro Mat. Today I will also tell them... ji bhar ke kehta hoon. Arey daro mat, bhaago mat," the PM said in Burdwan.

Several BJP leaders seized on the Amethi-Raebareli decision, calling it a dead

giveaway that Rahul knows he can't win Amethi, where Union Minister Smriti Irani is contesting again after her win in the last Lok Sabha election. Modi also asserted that the Congress' tally in the Lok Sabha polls will be an "all-time low", as the grand old party would struggle to cross even the "half-century" mark in the hustings.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Bardhaman - Durgapur, Krishnanagar and Kolpur Lok Sabha constituencies, the PM said if the Congress is voted to power, it would "snatch" quotas meant for the Scheduled Caste, Dalits and OBCs and give those to its "jihadi vote bank" to pursue the party's "appeasement politics".



Raebareli Rahul's new battlefield

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI/RAEBARELI

On deciding to contest from Raebareli Lok Sabha constituency, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi apparently made a calculated risk to solve several anomalies within and outside the party and hence retaining the legacy of Gandhi-Nehru family.

In this scenario, neither the Gandhi scion has anything to lose, nor do the people of Raebareli, who were longing to continue their support for the grand old party's first family. The seat is currently held by longest-serving Congress chief Sonia Gandhi, who announced her retirement from electoral politics.

While Sonia has been elected to the Rajya Sabha and will continue as a parliamentarian, the Congress and Rahul, who are confident enough to secure a victory in Raebareli as well as his current Wayanad Lok Sabha seat in Kerala, where he is contesting once again, will ultimately vacate the Uttar Pradesh Lok Sabha seat to pave the way for his sibling, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

The party also appeared to have concluded that Raebareli would be the safer seat for Rahul who lost Amethi to Smriti Irani last time by nearly 50,000 votes.

Sources in the party said the plans were already there that

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra upon their arrival before the nomination filing of Rahul ahead of the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections, in Raebareli
Pioneer photo

Priyanka could be fielded from Raebareli and Rahul from Amethi which he lost in 2019 but the party decided to avoid any controversy due to the continuous pitching by Priyanka's husband Robert Vadra through various platforms of media.

Though, Vadra was part of the group that accompanied Rahul to the nomination office along with Sonia, Priyanka and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge.

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot accompanied the family. Ever since the announcement, Rahul contesting from Raebareli is considered a masterstroke for several reasons which includes taking the reins from Sonia in a real sense so that he can focus on a pan India poll campaign as he has bigger responsibility to ensure

that the INDIA Bloc wins more seats. Furthermore, with the Congress focusing more on Southern India due to declining affairs in the north, Rahul has maintained that he does not want to abandon his Wayanad constituency. In the event of losing this Lok Sabha seat again against Irani, it would have been a significant blow



White House plays down 'xenophobia'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The White House has responded to US President Joe Biden's remark calling two of his QUAD partners — India and Japan — as well as Russia and China "xenophobic" nations, asserting that none of these countries, unlike the US, welcome immigrants.

Responding to a question about the remarks made by Biden at an election fundraiser on Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that the president was making a "broader point".

"He was making a broader point. Our allies and partners know very well that — how much this president respects them," Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news conference on Thursday.

"As you know, in regard to Japan, they were just here for the state visit. The US-Japan relationship is an important relationship. It's a deep, enduring alliance," she said. "He (Biden) was making a more broad comment, speaking about this country and speaking about how important it is to be a country of immigrants and how it makes our country stronger. And so, that's what he was talking about," she said. "It relates to our relationship with our allies, that continues. Obviously, we have a strong relationship with India (and) with Japan. And the President, if you just look at the last three years, he's certainly focused on those diplomatic relationships," Jean-Pierre said.

"He was talking about who we are as a country. He was talking about the importance of being in a country of immigrants, especially as you see the attacks that we have seen very recently, in the last couple of years, those attacks on immigrants, in particular," the White House Press Secretary said, defending the president.

EC unhappy with truant city slicks, plans to entice more

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The country's election watchdog has expressed its disappointment over voter apathy in metropolitan cities, including the National Capital region (NCR) cities, noting it as a pointer to the rigid levels of apathy in India's high-tech city in the first two phases of Lok Sabha polls.

With the dismal poll average, the Election Commission has doubled up its voter participation interventions to overcome the 'small drop' in turnout in the first two phases.

Besides an exclusive action plan taken up by it, the Commission hopes that urban centres going to polls in next phases turn the tide.

The poll body has roped in celebrity endorsements featuring national icon Sachin Tendulkar, Rajkumar Rao, as well as actors Ayushmann Khurrana and Vijay Varma, alongside non-celebrity TVCs to promote voter's awareness.

Additionally, short films and videos are being produced by DD for social media and its channels. Radio jingle, Vox pop programmes, RJ Mention, celebrity interviews, influencer engagement, and social media messaging are being done on various radio station platforms. Food delivery platforms such as Zomato and Swiggy have also partnered with EC for disseminating voter awareness

messages in their unique style.

In collaboration with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the poll body has launched voter awareness messages and songs which are being played at different stadiums during IPL 2024 to encourage people to cast their vote.

The commission's social media cell has started a social media campaign "I am Election Ambassador". In another initiative, a voting day alert was sent to all Facebook users pan India to inform and inform the voters about the general elections and also to nudge them to participate in the festival of democracy.

Vast network of post offices and banking institutions was also utilised by the poll body to reach out to a wide and diverse audience across the length and breadth of the country.

The Department of Post has over 1.6 lakhs post offices and 1,000 ATMs and 1,000 digital screens while there are over 1.63 lakh bank branches and 2.2 lakh ATMs across public and private sector banking institutions.

Following the dip in turnout in phase 1, the commission had directed State Chief Electoral Officers of Maharashtra, Bihar, UP and Rajasthan and Karnataka to come up with an additional set of plans to enhance voter turnout.



Bengal gov dares TMC to assail him, sees a 'more sinister plot'



SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose on Friday rejected the allegations of sexual assault leveled against him as an "absurd drama," a political "storm" — and a conspiracy by some political parties — which he expected and which was used to facing.

A day after a woman employee at the Kolkata Raj Bhavan alleged that she was sexually harassed by the Governor, Bose blamed the political parties for the "absurd drama," adding he was expecting more such storms in the offing.

His remarks came hours after the Governor's House administration banned entry of State Police and State Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya inside Raj Bhavan.

Bose through an official statement said, "I welcome all

respect of my brothers and sisters of Bengal."

In an apparent bid to underscore the "absurdity" of the allegations, Bose a former IAS officer said that he would well be held responsible for the Famine that had hit Bengal or for the Great Calcutta Killings of 1946.

After initial bonhomie between him and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Raj Bhavan's chemistry with Nabanna — State secretary — had been on a falling track, particularly. The two sides had run-ins on a host of issues including the appointment of Vice Chancellors, corruption and rampant violence in panchayat elections.

Referring to the incident Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee flayed the BJP for using the Raj Bhavan as its party office.

Attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not sparing a single word on the allegations of molestation leveled by the Raj Bhavan staff against the Governor Banerjee said, "I am quite disturbed by this and here he (Modi) is attacking us but not sparing a single word on what happened at the Governor's House where he spent a night on Thursday."



CBSE Class XII, X results to be out after May 20

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid speculations and rumours about announcement of the exam results by CBSE, the Board on Friday issued a clarification saying the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Class X and XII results are likely to be announced after May 20.

"CBSE Class X and XII results are likely to be announced after May 20," the Board said in a note on its website. The Board exams for the two classes were conducted between February-April.

The official website of cbseresults.nic.in said, "CBSE Board results for Class X and XII are likely to be declared after May 20, 2024." The Class X, XII results will likely be declared on the same day.

Candidates who have appeared for Class X or XII Board examination can check the results on the official website of CBSE at cbsere.gov.in.

Doc's VIP treatment for Khandelwal in Chandni Chowk

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

In support of his successor, despite his two terms from the constituency coming to an end, former Union Minister Dr Harsh Vardhan made his presence felt at the grand roadshow held for the nomination filing of BJP candidate Praveen Khandelwal for Chandni Chowk on Friday.

Along with Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Khandelwal started his journey from the ancient Gauri Shankar Temple turning the atmosphere ecstatic as one witnessed conch blowing, drum beating, band playing, and party flags fluttering in the roadshow.

The sitting Chandni Chowk MP said, "The BJP is an organisation-based party, and our organisation

works not for individuals but for organisational development, and each candidate is a symbol of the organisation. We will ensure the victory of BJP candidate Khandelwal by ensuring maximum voter turnout on election day."

This support adds a stark contrast to the infighting between the Congress in the national Capital, which is now out in the open with the exit of former Delhi Congress Chief Arvinder Singh Lovely.

Slamming the INDIA Bloc, Goyal said, "The Congress and the AAP abuse each other in Punjab while they have seat-sharing arrangements in other States. The people of Delhi are intelligent enough not to be misled by such tactics," adding that the grand old

Union Minister Piyush Goyal, former Union Minister and BJP leader Harsh Vardhan with others during a 'Jansabha' in support of the party candidate from Chandni Chowk constituency Praveen Khandelwal, ahead of the third phase of Lok Sabha elections, at Chandni Chowk, in New Delhi, on Friday
Ranjana Dimri/Pioneer

party is going to be "wiped out" from the entire north India after the ongoing election.

Further, Goyal said the INDIA Bloc of Opposition parties has no vision and blueprint for making

the country a world power. "They have nothing to give to the country except fake videos and narratives," he said.

Referring to Khandelwal as a long-time friend, Goyal said he has been actively involved in finding solutions to the problems of traders, micro and small enterprises as well as consumers.

BJP candidate Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also filed his nomination for the South Delhi seat, accompanied by Uttarakhanda Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami. A large number of BJP workers carrying party flags and raising "Jai Shri Ram" and "Ek baar phir Modi Sarkar" slogans marched along the roadshow of Bidhuri, greeting people from open-top vehicles.

One witnessed people dressed in different traditional attires.

While some dressed up in South Indian attire, others wore Uttarakhanda attires in the rally. Prior to filing his nomination, Bidhuri also visited the Gopal Temple located in Prithviraj Market to seek blessings and mark the start of his road show.

Accompanying Bidhuri, Dhami said the BJP's team work is going to repeat history and the saffron party will win all the seven Lok Sabha seats in the national Capital. Dhami encouraged the party workers, saying there is no contest against the BJP and their only challenge is the hot weather.

"No matter how high the temperatures are, you have to bring the voters to the polling booths and ensure that the voting percentage does not fall," he said.

Classifieds

BEDAKHLI NOTICE

I, Bindu Rani w/o Late Rajesh kumar R/O 4258 Maloya Colony , UT, Chandigarh hereby disown my son Aniket Kumar from my all moveable/ immovable properties. He is out of my control. If anybody deal with him will do so at own risk/ responsibility. I shall not be responsible for his any deeds.

I, Dharambir Singh Duhan S/o Sahab Singh R/O H.No.21, Main Gali, near garden era public school, Banderup, Kalawati Vihar, Sonipat, Haryana has disowned my daughter Shalu Devi from my all moveable-immovable property as she is out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with her, he/she will do at their own risk.

We Jatinder Dev alias Jatinder Dev Sharma S/O Late Sh. Chandar Muni & Sunita Kumari W/o Jatinder Dev alias Jatinder Dev Sharma R/O House no 5068, Second floor, Modern Housing Complex, Manimajra Chandigarh inform that our son Mayank Sharma and his wife Taniya Sharma out of our control. We Disown them from our all moveable and immovable Properties. Anybody deal with them at their own Risk.

I, Krishna W/o Late Sh Bhola Nath R/O House no - 5534 Sector 56 Chandigarh inform that my Daughter Twinkey urf Gudia out of my control. I Disown her from my all moveable and immovable Properties. Anybody deal with her at their own Risk.

I, Chet Ram S/o Shri Kira Ram R/O House no 131, old Indira colony, Manimajra, Chandigarh inform that my son Aditya Chawla and his wife Renu out of my control. I Disown them from my all moveable and immovable Properties. Anybody deal with them at their own Risk.

I, Anil Sahu S/o Ram Kishan Sahu R/O H.No. 2082, Sector 45-C, Chandigarh declare that my son Raj Aryan Sahu is out of my control. I disown him from my movable & immovable properties. Anybody dealing with him at their own risk.

I, Dilbagh Singh S/o Khajan Singh R/O 36Z, Gujjar Gali, Ekta Vihar, Ganesh Vihar, Ambala Cantt declare that my Daughter Shikha Singh is my Daughter. So, I disown her from my all Movable / Immoveable properties in the year 2013, but because of her Good behavior now I accept her and cancel the Disown.

I, Saroj W/o Late Jai Chand R/O Village Kanipala, Tehsil Thanesar, District Kurukshetra, have evicted my son Rinku Pal, his wife Anuradha from all our moveable- immovable properties, as they are out of my control. Anybody dealing with them at their own risk.

I, Santra W/o Sh. Azad Singh R/O H.No. 779, Ward No. 10, Gali No. 06, Roop Nagar, Rohtak declare that my real Grand Daughter Kunjan is out of my control. So I disown her from my all moveable/immovable properties. Any body dealing with her at their own risk.

I, Jang Sher Singh Mulu Ram R/O #204, Phase 5 Shahi Majra, Mohali Distt Mohali Declare That My Son Jatinder Singh Is Out Of My Control. So I Disowned Him From All My Movable And Immoveable Properties. Anybody Dealing With Him On Their Own Risk.

I, Rajesh W/o Late Sh. Dinesh Kumar and D/o Sh. Jagdish R/o VPO Sunari Kalan (101), Rohtak declare that my son Vijay Singh and his wife Manisha are out of my control. So I disown them from my all moveable/immovable properties. Any body dealing with them at their own risk. I or my family are not responsible for any type of their legal or illegal acts.

I, Shri Bhagwan S/o Sh. Banwari R/o Village Atail, Teh. Sampla, Distt. Rohtak declare that my son Parveen and his wife Sandha are out of my control. So I disown them from my all moveable/immovable properties. Any body dealing with them at their own risk. I or my family are not responsible for any type of their legal or illegal acts.

I, Ranbir Singh Deol, son of Bhupinder Singh, resident of Village Ghini Wala, Tehsil, District Ferozepur, hereby inform that my son Simranbir Singh Deol and his wife Ekamjot Kaur, who are against my will, I evict them from my immovable property. Yes, I have not had any dealings with them, the lender will be responsible himself and my family will not be responsible.

I, Meena Dhawan W/o Kapil Dhawan R/O H.No 3679 Sector 46 C Chandigarh declare that my husband Kapil Dhawan is out of my control and habitual drinker anybody dealing with him at their on risk I shall not be responsible for in acts conduct and financial liability of my husband.

I, Om Parkash S/o Sahib Ditta R/O W.No. 19 Mansa Teh-Mansa (Mansa) declare that my son Jackie and his wife Mamta Kaur and grand-daughter Janat is out of my control. So I disown with them from my moveable/immovable property. If anybody dealing with them at his/her own risk.

ਅਸੀਂ, ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਪੁੱਤਰ ਚਮਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾ ਵੱਲੋਂ ਕੋਰ ਪਤਨੀ ਪਰਮਜੀਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਵਾਸੀਆਨ #235, ਲਿੰਗ ਵਾਲੀ ਡੈਂਪਿੰਗ, ਪੰਨਾ (ਲੁਧਿਆਣਾ) ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ ਕਿ ਸਾਡੀ ਲੜਕੀ ਮਨਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ ਸਾਡੇ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਕਹਿਣੇ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਰੂ ਹੈ। ਅਸੀਂ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਚੱਲ-ਛੱਲ ਜਾਇਦਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਦਖਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਇਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਹਰ ਚੌਗੇ-ਮੌਝੇ ਕੰਮਕਾਰ, ਲੈਣ-ਦੇਣ ਵਾ ਨੜੇ-ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਨੂੰ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰ ਖੁਦ ਹੋਵੇਗੀ, ਸਾਡੀ ਕੋਈ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀ ਨਹੀਂ।

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Sulakhan Singh s/o Balbir Singh r/o Singhpura Mohalla, VPO Kahnunw, Distt Gurdaspur declare that in my passport No. N4307977, my name has been wrongly written as Salakhan Singh. But correct spelling of my name is Sulakhan Singh. Concerned note.

I, Sukhdev Singh S/o Hazara Singh R/O S- 1/ 1173, Akhara Kalu, Sant Nagar, Gate Bhgta Wala, Amritsar declare that my father's name is wrongly mentioned as Hamara Singh in my Metlife insurance policy. His correct name is Hazara Singh as per documentation.

I, Harwinder Singh (Aadhar Card No. 6046-5782-2171) S/ Kuldeep Singh R/O H.No. 1124 W.No. 6 Billan Wali Chappri Khanna, Distt. Ludhiana declares that my name is Harwinder Singh. according to my documents, is correct. But due to mistake, in the matriculation record of my son, it has been recorded as Harwinder Singh Bagga, which is not correct. This should be understood as Harwinder Singh.

I, Sushila Devi mother of No. 4285152Y Hav/Clk (SD) Mukesh Kumar, resident of Village-Thikhan Bhawanipur, Po. Thikhan Teh-Areraj, Distt. East Champaram (Bihar) 845434 have changed my name from Soslita Divedi to Sushila Devi and DOB from 05-04-1968 to 01-01-1964 being wrongly mentioned in Army Record of my son.

I, Ramekbal Dwivedi father of No. 4285152Y Hav/Clk (SD) Mukesh Kumar, resident of Village-Thikhan Bhawanipur, Po. Thikhan Teh-Areraj, Distt. East Champaram (Bihar) 845434 have changed my name from Ram Ekbal Divedi to Ramekbal Dwivedi and DOB from 12-05-1966 to 01-01-1962 being wrongly mentioned in Army Record of my son.

I, B Sudharani (Old Name) W/O Baswa Praveen Kumar Resident Of Flat No 23, Sri Vasanthi Enclave, Phase 2, Near Radha Krishna Temple, Sai Lalitha Nagar, Vtc : Kukalometta Lakshmpuram (Rural), Po : Vizianagaram, Sub Dist : Vizianagaram, District : Vizianagaram, State - Andhra Pradesh, Pin Code - 535003, I Have Changed My Name From B Sudharani (Old Name) And Baswa Sudha (New Name) Vide Affidavit Dated 03 May 2024 Sworn Before Notary Public Sat Pal, Pathankot. Please Correct It.

I, No. 19006710-Y Nek Vakeel Singh unit of 24th of Sikh Regt S/o Gursewak Singh R/O Near Dana Mandi Vill: Kot Sukhian Teh-Kotkapura (Faridkot) declare that my father Gursewak Singh and mother Parmjeet Kaur & Date of Birth wrongly mentioned as 02-03-1961 and 03-03-1963 while correct DOB is 01-05-1961 and 01-01-1962 please correct.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Lata Mangashwari W/o Randhir Singh Bhandari R/O H.No. 02030, Block No. 12, Adarsh Nagar, Naya Gaon, Mohali have changed my name from Lata Mangashwari to Lata Bhandari.

I, Ravinderjit Kaur Walia W/o Mr. Yogeshwar Kumar Walia R/O House No. 736, Sector 40-A, Chandigarh have changed my name from Ravinder Jeet Kaur Walia to Ravinderjit Kaur Walia.

I, Usha Rani Mazumder Mother of Himangshu Mazumder R/O #298, Sector 47-A, Chandigarh have changed my name from Usha Rani Mazumder to Usha Mazumder vide Affidavit Dated 22-04-2024 before Notary, Distt. Court Chandigarh.

I, Gaitry Ram Sister of Himangshu Mazumder R/O #298, Sector 47-A, Chandigarh have changed my name from Gaitry Ram to Gayatry Ram vide Affidavit Dated 22-04-2024 before Notary, Distt. Court Chandigarh.

I, Bahadur Singh S/o Kartar Singh R/O VPO Tahli, PS Tanda, Tehsil Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur Pin 144202 Punjab have changed my name from Bahadur Singh to Bahadur Singh. Concerned note.

I, Mohammad Fazil s/o Alauddin, R/o # 3367, Mauli Jagran complex, Mauli Jagran Chandigarh have changed my name from Mohammad Fazil to Mohd. Fazil.

I, Lajwanti W/o Sh. Subash Chauhan R/O H No. 849, Kishangarh, Chandigarh have changed my name from Lajwanti to Lal Wati.

I, Bali, Adhar Card No.(703242338054) W/o Rajiv, R/O Village Songal, Tehsil and District Kaithal informs that, I have Changed my name from Bali to Geeta. Call me Geeta in future.

I hitherto known as Shubham S/o Jatinder Pal, R/o Jammu Colony-A, Yamuna Nagar, District Yamuna Nagar, Haryana - 135001 (Haryana), India have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Shubham Samotra.

I, Vinod Kumar S/o Kailash Sharma R/O 22, Shankar Vihar Colony, Ratoli Road, Kansapur Road, Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Vinod Kumar to Vinod Kumar Sharma.

I, Seema Devi W/o Kumar Pal R/O House No. 10, Silver Street Colony, Ambala Road, Jagadhri, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt Yamuna Nagar declare that name of father and mother has been wrongly written as Kumar and Seema in my son Anuj in his School Record. The actual name of father and mother are Kumar Pal and Seema Devi as per my son Anuj birth certificate.

I, Pankaj Arora S/o Somnath R/O 1697, NHBC, Sector 11-12, Panipat declare that I have changed my name from Pankaj to Pankaj Arora, for all future purposes.

I, Alka W/o Manoj Pandey R/O H.No. 222/223, Sodral Road, Sodral Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Alka to Alka Pandey after marriage. All concerned please note.

I, Seema Sharda W/o Lakhwinder Singh R/O House No. 973, Deep Complex, Hallomajra Chandigarh, have changed name of my minor son Ridham Sharda to Ridham Mann vide affidavit dt. 2.5.2024.

I, Lakhwinder Singh Mann S/o Kulwant Singh R/O House No. 973, Deep Complex, Hallomajra Chandigarh, have change name of my minor son Ridham Sharda to Ridham Mann vide affidavit dt. 2.5.2024

I, Lakhwinder Singh S/o Kulwant Singh R/O House No. 973, Deep Complex Hallomajra Chandigarh, have changed my name to Lakhwinder Singh Mann vide affidavit dt. 2.5.2024.

I, Neena Sharma W/o Rajesh Sharma, R/O 2402, Sector 24-C, Chandigarh have changed my name to Sakshi.

I, Subhash Sharma S/o Rameshwar # 2620, Mauli Jagran, Chandigarh have changed the name of my minor daughter from Somyia to Soni Kumar.

I, Lalla alias Lalla Parsad S/o Ram Sunder # 548, Kajheri, Chandigarh have changed my name to Lalle.

I, Kamaljit S/o Naranjan Dass R/O VPO Hukran Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed my name from Kamaljit to Kamaljit Singh. Concerned note.

I, Devinder Kaur W/o JC501911L Sub. Malkeet Singh 16 Sikh Presently residing at Village Jari, Post Office Shivnagar, Teh. Purnapur, Distt. Pilibhit, Uttar Pardesh-262122 have changed my name from Davinder Kaur to Devinder Kaur. Concerned Note.

I, Rajvir Singh S/o JC-501453A Sub. Gurmeet Singh 16 Sikh R/O Village Khutha, Teh. & Distt.Gurdaspur have changed my name from Rajveer Singh to Rajvir Singh. Concerned Note.

I, Harpreet Singh S/o Joginder Singh Village Gowara Tehsil Dera Baba Nanak Distt: Gurdaspur have changed my name Harpreet Singh to Harpreet Singh Sidhu.

I, Sourabh s/o Rakesh Kumar r/o Mankaur Singh, Gurdaspur Punjab- 143521 have changed my name from Sourabh to Sourabh Dalhotra. Concerned note.

I, Akash s/o Surinder Kumar r/o H.No. 306/4, Mankaur Singh, Gurdaspur Punjab-143521 have changed my name from Akash to Akash Dalhotra. Concerned note.

I, Malkit Singh s/o Bakhshish Singh r/o Village Rasoolpur Bet PO Purana Shalla Distt Gurdaspur Punjab PIN-143530 have changed my name from Malkit Singh to Malqiat Singh. Concerned note.

I hitherto known as Bala Devi W/O Lal Singh residing at Village kotia (15), Post Office-Kotia, District-Mahendragarh, Haryana-123027 have changed my name and I shall hereafter be known as Raj Bala.

I, Parmjit Kaur W/o Sukhchain Singh R/O H.No. 2066, Pritam Enclave, G.T Road Bypass, Amritsar, Punjab-143001 have changed my name from Parmjit Kaur to Parmjit Kaur.

I, Sunita D/o Bihari Lal W/O Krishan Gopal R/O 2756, C-Block, Ranjit Avenue, Amritsar, Punjab have changed my name from Sunita to Sunita Sharma.

I, Paramjit Singh S/o Karnail Singh R/O Gopal Nagar, Ajnala, Distt. Amritsar, Punjab-143102 have changed my name from Paramjit Singh to Paramjeet Singh.

I, Smt. Jaswinder Kaur W/o No.161325-Z Ex POME Kashmir Singh R/O Vill. Kairon Kalan PO Salfederp Tehsil Dasuya Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed my name from Jaswinder Kaur to Jaswinder Kaur Multani and my date of birth from 05-05-1974 to 03-02-1973.

I, Manoj Kumar S/o Somnath Arora R/O H.No.714, Sector 14, Sonipat Haryana have changed my name from Manoj Kumar to Manoj Arora for all future purposes.

I, Sandeep S/o Jagminder R/O Gorar teh. Kharkhoda, Sonipat have changed my name Sandeep to Sandeep Tomer for all future purposes.

I, Shanti Devi Alias Darshna Vide of Army No. 2882618W Rank NK, Unit 9 RAJ RIF, Name Rajbir Singh S/o Sh. Dale Ram R/O Vill. & PO Umra, Tehsil Hansi, Distt. Hisar (Haryana) declare that my husband service record my name is written as Shanti Devi and in other documents as Darshna. The above both names related to me and no any other lady in same name.

I, Sandeep Kumar Alias Sandeep S/o Sh. Satish Kumar R/O H. No. 84, W. No. 9, Indra Colony, Hisar-125001 (Haryana) declare that I have changed my name from Sandeep Kumar Alias Sandeep to Sandeep for all future purpose.

I, Sunil S/o Sh. Ramchander R/O VPO Sultanpur, Tehsil Hansi, Distt. Hisar (Haryana) declare that I have changed my name from Sunil to Sunil Kumar for all future purpose.

I, Surender Kumar S/o Sh. Raj Kumar Kuchhal R/O 8, Priti Nagar, Hisar (Haryana) declare that I have changed my name from Surender Kumar to Surender Kumar Kuchhal for all future purpose.

I, Gurmial Singh S/o Mohinder Singh R/o 2, Vishal Nagar, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana 135001. have changed my Name from Gurmial To Gurmial Singh.

I, Priya Rani W/o Sh. Nitin Singla R/O house No. 233 Sector 9-11 Hisar, Haryana declare that, my all document my name mentioned as Priya Rani. But in my son's birth certificate my name is Priya Rani alias Priya Singla. My name is Priya Rani and Priya Singla is one and the same person.

I, Simranjeet Singh S/o Ranjit Singh R/O H.No. 817, Abadi New Azaad Nagar, Amritsar, Punjab have changed my name from Simranjeet Singh to Simranjit Singh.

I, Pankaj Arora S/o Somnath R/O 1697, NHBC, Sector 11-12, Panipat declare that I have changed my name from Pankaj to Pankaj Arora, for all future purposes.

I, Palak Gulati D/o Sanjeev Gulati R/O H.No.2, Virat Nagar, Panipat declare that I have changed my name from Palak to Palak Gulati, for all future purposes.

I, Aman Kumar S/o Jai Bhagwan R/O Dayal Nagar Shahabad District Kurukshetra, have changed my name to Aman (Given name) and Kumar (surname).

I, Rashem Devi W/o 14616782Y HAV (ACP-1) Satbir Singh S/O Bhula Ram R/O Basant Vihar Colony, Dhand Road, Thanesar, District-Kurukshetra, Haryana-136119 have changed my name from Rashem Devi to Resham Devi.

I, Madhuri S/o Gaurav Sharma R/O H.No. 60/10, Joshiyani Mohalla, District Kurukshetra, have changed my name to Madhuri (Given name) and Sharma (surname).

I, Vikas S/o Satpal Singh R/O H.No. A-0056, Ansal Sushant City, Sector 32 Thanesar, District Kurukshetra have changed my name to Vikas (Given name) and Jaglan (surname).

I, Om Pati W/o Suraj Bhan R/O Village Sanwat Sub Tehsil Nighdu District Karnal, have changed my name from Om Pati to Om Vati.

I, Inder Singh S/o Late Jagat Singh Chawla R/O H. n.132-L, ward no. 26, opp.sadanand park, model town, Panipat have change my name from nder singh to nder singh chawla for all future purposes.

I, Pooja, wife of Sanjeev Kumar, resident of house no. 2647, New Housing Board Colony, Panipat I have changed my name from Pooja to Pooja Mangla for all future purposes.

I, Ishan S/o Sudesh Kumar R/o # 3561/1, Sector 37D Chandigarh, have changed my name from Ishan to Ishan Budhiraja.

I, Rabia W/o Ishan Budhiraja R/o # 3561/1, Sector 37D Chandigarh, have changed my name from Rabia to Rabia Budhiraja.

I, Bharat Punyani S/o Sh. Ramesh Chander Punyani R/O489/23 DLF Colony Near Pappu Bakery Rohtak declare That I have changed my minor son name from Parin to Parin Punyani in future my son will be called by the name of Parin Punyani for all purposes.

I, Sushma w/o Krishan Sharma r/o #479, Mahabir Colony, Karnal, Haryana have changed my name from Sushma to Sushma Sharma. In future I will be known as Sushma Sharma.

I, Saroj Rani W/o Sh. Sunil Kumar R/O H.No. - 325, Ward No- 7, Village Ferozabad, Tehsil Rania, District Sirsa have changed my name from Saroj Rani to Saroj.

I, Suresh Kumar S/o Ranjeet Singh R/O Village Narwalgarh (Batta), Tehsil Kalayat, District Kaithal (Haryana) declares that in the 10th Class DMC of my daughter Shruti my name is written as Suresh and her mother's name is written as Mukesh but the correct name of his father is Suresh Kumar and the correct name of her mother is Mukesh Rani which is written in their all other documents. All concerned please note.

I, No. 15685960X R/V /Hav Name Hari Ram Sanking In 15 IDSR C/O 56 APO, Have Changed My Son's Date Of Birth From 05 Jan 2006 To 02 Feb 2008 Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb11792056660927w Dated 02-04-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, Isha Legally Wedded Spouse Of No. 14927328X Hav Sanjay Kumar Presently Residing At 1513, New Harjan Colony, Babina Cantt, Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh-284401 Now At 15 Mech Inf, Have Changed My Name From Isha To Nisha Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb11791796610188w Dated 02-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, Malati Devi Mother Of No. 14932009P Hav Shashi Prakash Yadav Residing At Village Birdpur No. 12, Tola Daburipur, Po Birdpur, District Siddharth Nagar, Uttar Pradesh-272202, Have Changed My Name From Malati Devi To Malti Yadav And Date Of Birth From 29 Nov 1962 To 01 Jan 1958 Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb11791413113654w Dated 02-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, No. 14932756A Hav Rikhdev Yadav Residing At Village Bawara, Po Banjaripur, Tehsil & District Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh-233001, Have Changed My Daughter's Name From Sreya Yadav To Shreya Yadav Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb1179193385124w Dated 02-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, Nabanita Tah Legally Wedded Spouse Of No. 14932454N Hav Pintu Kumar Tah Presently Residing At Akui, Indus, Bankura, West Bengal-722201 Now At 15 Mech Inf, Have Changed My Name From Nabanita Tah To Nabanita Sahana Tah Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb11790981551536w Dated 02-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, No. 14940925L NK Afzal Ahmed Residing At Village 119, Tapariyan New Church Road, Po Babina, District Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh-284401, Have Changed My Son's Name From Aatiq Ahmed To Aatik Ahmed Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb11790663390474w Dated 02-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, Poonam Legally Wedded Spouse Of No. 14939038M NK Parmod Kumar Presently Residing At Palra (120), Hajaraj, Haryana-124103 Now At 15 MECH INF, Have Changed My Name From Poonam To Poonam Devi Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb11792211899287w Dated 02-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, Sandeep Kaur Wife Of Pavitarpal Singh Resident Of Vpo Lopoke, Tehsil Lopoke, District Amritsar, Have Changed My Name To Sandeep Is My Given Name And Kaur Is My Surname

I, Tejinder Kaur Bedi W/O Gurpreet Singh Bedi R/O H.No.529-A, A Block, Ranit Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Tejinder Kaur Bedi To Tejinder Kaur

I, Ravneet Kaur Alias Rajeshwari W/O Gurdeep Singh R/O A621 A-Block Ranjeet Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Ravneet Kaur Alias Rajeshwari To Ravneet Kaur

I, No.14688276K NK Mahala Mukesh Kumar R/O Vpo Sonasar Tehsil Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan Now At Amritsar Cantt, Distt. Amritsar Have Changed My Wife's Name From Manisha Devi To Manisha Kumar Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb10350445347356w Dt.29.04.2024 Before Notary Public Amritsar

I, Manimala Legally Wedded Spouse Of No. JC-424639F NB Sub Jhantu Paria Presently Residing At Gokulchak, Jalchak, Pingla, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal-721155 Now At 15 Mech Inf, Have Changed My Name From Manimala To Manimala Paria Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb12039761748889w Dated 03-05-2024, Before Notary Public, Amritsar.

I, Mahima W/O Kunal R/O H.No.L-13/186, Gali No.4, Guru Ram Dass Nagar, Sultanwind Road, Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Mahima To Mahima Gill

I, Agamvir Singh Alias Sunil Kumar S/O Sukhdev Singh Near Dana Mandi Vpo Majitha Distt Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Agamvir Singh Alias Sunil Kumar To Agamvir Singh

I, Satinder Kaur Bhurjee W/O Harcharan Singh Bhurjee R/O H.No.F-76, Block-A, Sandhu Avenue, Chheharta G.T Road, Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Satinder Kaue Burjee To Satinder Kaur

I Devinder Nath Sharma S/O Sh.Gopal Chand Sharma Resident Of H.No-27, Gali No 4, Kot Atma Singh, Ram Bagh Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Devinder Nath Sharma To Davinder Nath.

I Ranjit Kaur Wife Of Harpal Singh R/O 59 Vill. Manawala Khurd Distt. Amritsar Punjab. Have Declare That Kaur Is My Surname And Ranjit Is My Given Name.

I Harjinder Kaur Wife Kuljit Singh R/O Vpo. Taragarh Jandiata Guru Distt. Amritsar Punjab. Have Declare That Kaur Is My Surname And Harjinder Is My Given Name.

I Vishaldeep Singh Son Of Kuljit Singh R/O Vpo. Taragarh Distt. Amritsar Punjab. Have Declare That Singh Is My Surname And Vishaldeep Is My Given Name.

I Satwindepal Singh S/O Harbhajan Singh R/O L/13-1093 Gali No 4 Kot Baba Deep Singh Sultanwind Road Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Satwindepal Singh To Satwindepal Singh

I, Satveer Singh Bhangu S/O Tarsem Singh R/O Bhangwan, Po. Kotla Gurjran, District Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Satveer Singh Bhangu To Satbir Singh.

I, Charanjit Singh S/O Mohinder Singh R/O H.No.110 Green Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Charanjit Singh Banga

I Arvinder Kaur Banga W/O Charanjit Singh Banga R/O H.No.110 Green Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Arvinder Kaur

I, Baljinder Kaur D/O Jarnail Singh R/O H.No.4860-A, Guru Arjun Dev Nagar, Po Khalsa College Amritsar Changed My Address From Above To Village Fatehwal Tehsil Ajnala And District Amritsar

I, Jasbinder Singh S/O Prem Singh R/O Village Kirtowal Khurd Tehsil Patti District Tarn Taran Have Changed My Name From Jasbinder Singh To Sukhwinder Singh

I, Satnam Singh S/O Tara Masih R/O Gali No.6, Majitha Road, Back Side Tung Bala Aman Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Satnam Singh To Satta Masih

I, Aryan Singh S/O Satta Masih R/O Gali No.6, Majitha Road, Back Side Tung Bala Aman Avenue Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Aryan Singh To Aryan Gill

I, Santosh Kumari W/O Jugal Kishore R/O F21/274, Gali No. 1, Sandhu Colony Near Nila Nehang Gurdwara, Batala Road, Amritsar Have Changed My Name From Santosh Kumari To Varsha

I, Sukhbir Singh S/O Narayan Singh R/O Rigoli Malli Tehri, Garhwal, Uttrakhand Have Changed My Name From Sukhbir Singh To Sukhbir Singh Kandari

I, Lovepreet Kaur Khosa W/O Gurpreet Singh R/O Village Bholu Wala District Ferozepur Have Changed My Name From Lovepreet Kaur Khosa To Lovepreet Kaur

I, Tejinderpal Singh Gill S/O Jagdev Singh R/O Village Raichak Po Rai Chak Tehsil Dera Baba Nanak District Gurdaspur Have Changed My Name From Tejinderpal Singh Gill To Tejinderpal Singh

Punjab poised for packed political battleground with 12 MLAs in fray; 7 MPs, out of 13, seeking re-election

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Gearing up for the Lok Sabha elections, Punjab has emerged as a unique state where 12 legislators are set to enter the electoral fray. With the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) fielding nine MLAs out of its 13 candidates, including eight from its own ranks and one defector from the Congress, the stage is set for a fierce electoral contest.

Similarly, the principal opposition party, Congress, has also thrown its weight behind their chosen ones, with three sitting MLAs out of 13 candidates entering the electoral arena. It's evident that both parties are leaving no stone unturned in their quest for victory, and for that, they are relying on their tried and tested soldiers.

Besides the sitting MLAs, the parties have also laid their bet on the sitting MPs, with seven, out of total 13 set to seek re-election. While Congress has re-nominated its two sitting MPs — Gurjeet Singh Aujla from Amritsar, and Dr Amar Singh from Fatehgarh Sahib — out of a total seven; Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) has once again trusted three-time MP and former Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal from Bathinda. SAD (Amritsar) chief and sitting MP from Sangrur Simranjeet Singh Mann is also seeking to repeat

his performance of the 2022 bypolls.

Interestingly, three sitting MPs are contesting polls representing the BJP — the party which could win just one seat in 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Congress' two MPs — Preneet Kaur from Patiala, and Ravneet Singh Bittu from Ludhiana; and AAP's lone MP Sushil Kumar Rinku are contesting as BJP candidates, after switching their loyalties to the saffron party.

The ruling AAP, which stormed to power in 2022 by securing 92 seats in the 117-member House, has placed a hefty bet on its nine sitting legislators, including five Cabinet Ministers — Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal from Amritsar, Laljit Singh Bhullar from Khadoor Sahib, Gurmeet Singh Khudian from Bathinda, Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer from Sangrur, and Dr Balbir Singh from Patiala.

Besides, AAP MLA from Muktsar Jagdeep Singh Kaka Brar has been fielded from Ferozepur, Batala MLA Amanjot Singh Sherry Kalsi is in fray from Gurdaspur, while Ludhiana Central MLA Ashok Parashar Pappi is contesting from Ludhiana.

Congress MLA from Chabbewal Dr Rajkumar Chabbewal, who resigned from the Congress and joined AAP, is now the party's candidate from Hoshiarpur.

On the other hand, the

Congress is not far behind. With one legislator Dr Chabbewal joining AAP and two others — Sandeep Jakhar and Vikramjeet Singh Chaudhary — suspended from the party for "anti-party activities", the Congress has nominated three of its legislators for the electoral battle. The party has 18 members in the Vidhan Sabha.

Punjab Congress president and Gidderbaha MLA Amrinder Singh Raja Warring is challenging the friend-turned-foe Bittu in Ludhiana; while Bholath MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira is challenging the Cabinet Minister Hayer in Sangrur — a seat known as AAP's citadel. Former Deputy Chief Minister and Dera Baba Nanak MLA Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa has also entered the poll arena from Gurdaspur.

The decision by both the AAP and the Congress to nominate a substantial number of their incumbent legislators highlights the strategic significance they attribute to the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Punjab. By capitalizing on the popularity and grassroots connections of their legislators, both parties are aiming to gain a competitive advantage in what promises to be a fiercely contested electoral contest.

Currently, there are no constituencies where two legislators are directly pitted against each other. However, it

PARTY	SITTING MLAS	SITTING MPS
AAP	1. Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal	---
	2. Laljit Singh Bhullar	
	3. Gurmeet Singh Khuddian	
	4. Gurmeet Singh Meet Hayer	
	5. Dr Balbir Singh	
	6. Ashok Prashar Pappi	
	7. Jagdeep Singh Kaka Brar	
	8. Dr Raj Kumar Chabbewal	
	9. Amansher Singh Sherry Kalsi	
Congress	10. Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa	1. Gurjeet Singh Aujla 2. Dr Amar Singh
	11. Amrinder Singh Raja Warring	
	12. Sukhpal Singh Khaira	
SAD	---	3. Harsimrat Kaur Badal
BJP	---	4. Ravneet Singh Bittu 5. Preneet Kaur 6. Sushil Kumar Rinku
SAD (Amritsar)	---	7. Simranjeet Singh Mann

is expected that in areas where legislators emerge triumphant, by-elections will be necessitated. Moreover, the recent defection of AAP MLA Sheetal Aggarwal to the BJP, resulting in her resignation from the legislative assembly, further mandates the need for a by-election. Nevertheless, the acceptance of these resignations by Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kulwant Singh Sandhwan is still pending.

The upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Punjab promise to be a multi-cornered affair, with all major political players throwing their hats into the

ring without forming any alliances. However, the primary showdown is expected to unfold between the AAP and the Congress across most constituencies, as both parties strive to assert their dominance over the state's political terrain. It's worth noting that while AAP and Congress have joined forces in coalition efforts in various states like Haryana and Delhi as part of the nationwide opposition alliance — INDIA, their battle in Punjab remains fiercely independent. Despite concerted efforts, the longstanding allies, SAD and

BJP, have failed to reach a consensus and revive their erstwhile coalition.

The looming Lok Sabha polls represent a pivotal moment for both the AAP and the Congress. As they prepare for a heated electoral showdown on June 1, the outcome of these elections will not only reshape Punjab's political terrain but also carry far-reaching implications for the national political landscape. With stakes running high and competition intensifying, all eyes are fixed on Punjab as it braces itself for a decisive electoral face-off.

CM Mann holds roadshow in Patiala: Says BJP will get big zero in Punjab



PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Friday took out a roadshow in Patiala and claimed BJP will face a rout, saying there is no chance of 'lotus' blooming in Punjab.

Campaigning for Aam Aadmi Party candidate and Minister Dr Balbir Singh, Mann said, "Punjab banega hero, es baar 13-0 (AAP will win all 13 Lok Sabha seats in the state). The people of Punjab are ready to press the 'jharoo button' once again (vote for AAP)," he said.

Taking on the BJP, he said in last general elections, their two MPs won "but this time there is no chance of 'lotus' blooming in Punjab they will get a big zero in Punjab".

Mann said that he is grateful to the people for all the love and support that he is receiving from them, "because this love inspires me to work tirelessly". In 2022 the people of Punjab trusted him and gave him a big responsibility, the

CM said, adding that his government has so far given 43,000 government jobs, electricity bills of 90 per cent households are zero while Punjab's tail-ends are getting canal water for the first time.

Mann said that for the first time farmers are getting 11 hours of uninterrupted electricity in the daytime. On the occasion, Balbir Singh said that he has been to all nine constituencies of Patiala for election campaign, "and everywhere we are received with love and support". He said the work of our government is speaking for itself. "People often ask me to thank Bhagwant Mann ji for free electricity and giving government jobs purely on merit," he said.

POLL BUZZ

Cash, Liquor and Drugs worth Rs 34.77 Crore Confiscated in Haryana

Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Secretary T.V.S.N Prasad on Friday said that enforcement agencies have reported a staggering seizure amounting to Rs 34.77 crore. The seizures, comprising cash, liquor, drugs, precious metals, and various other items, underscore the stringent measures in place to curb illicit activities during the electoral process. He was presiding over the meeting on seizure made during ongoing Lok Sabha Election. DGP Shatruej Kapur, Principal Secretary and Chief Electoral Officer, Anurag Aggarwal, Principal Secretary, Excise and Taxation Devendra Kalyan, and other senior officials attended the meeting. According to the Election Seizure Management System's progress report, the seizures include cash worth Rs 5.91 crore, 367,561 liters of liquor valued at Rs 12.48 crore and 6015.72 kilograms of drugs/narcotics valued at Rs 12.11 crore. Additionally precious metals and freebies/other items account for Rs 1.73 crore and Rs 2.52 crore respectively. Prasad directed the senior officers to establish coordination with neighbouring states to trace the origin of seized liquor. Additionally, he emphasised the need to further enhance vigilance, especially in districts bordering Delhi and other states.

Raj Babbar, Rao Dan Singh, Arvind Sharma file nominations

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Congress candidates from Gurugram Lok Sabha seat Raj Babbar and from Bhiwani-Mahendragarh Rao Dan Singh and BJP candidate from Rohtak Parliamentary Constituency Arvind Kumar Sharma on Friday filed their nominations before the returning officer in their respective constituencies.

Raj Babbar will be facing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate -- Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, and the Jannayak Janta Party candidate -- singer-rapper Rahul Yadav, popularly known as Fazilpuria. Babbar was accompanied by senior Congress leader and former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Haryana unit Congress president Chaudhary Uday Bhan while filing his nomination.

After submitting the affidavit, Babbar along with party leaders addressed a public rally at the Old Club Ground, Civil Lines where he urged the people to vote for him. However, Captain Ajay Yadav, who has been denied the ticket this time, stayed away from the rally. People from the neighbouring Nuh district also attended the rally. On the 'outsider' banter, Raj Babbar said: "My roots are from Haryana, my relatives are living in different parts of the state."

He pointed out that he is not contesting against anyone but wants to provide basic facilities to the people of the constituency. He criticised Union Minister Rao Inderjit Singh, the sitting Gurgaon MP, and said that despite being a ruling party MP, he failed to expand the railway network in Nuh or the Metro line in Gurugram, and even failed to improve the city's overall condition. Speaking at the rally, Raj Babbar said even as he has no house in Gurugram, he wants to stay in the constituency to resolve the pending problems of the people.

"Do vote for Congress and allow the situation to improve. People from across the world live in Gurugram but during the rainy season I have seen that they face a lot of problems, mainly in commuting," he said.

Meanwhile, Bhupinder Singh Hooda said that this time, the people of Haryana will cast their votes to uproot the BJP from the Centre, and state. Congress candidate from Bhiwani-Mahendragarh Lok Sabha seat, Rao Dan Singh filled his nomination papers before the returning officer in the presence of senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda. Before filing the nomination he and other congress leaders addressed the public meeting.

BJP candidate Arvind Sharma filed his nomination papers before the returning officer in the presence of Union Defense Minister Rajnath Singh and Chief Minister



Congress candidate Raj Babbar filed his nomination for Gurugram seat on Friday. Pioneer Photo

Nayab Singh Saini. Rohtak has long been a bastion of Congress stalwart Bhupinder Singh Hooda before the BJP won it in 2019, as its candidate Arvind Sharma rode the 'Modi wave' to defeat his son Deepender Singh Hooda by a narrow margin of over 7,000 votes.

INLD candidate Sunaina Chautala filed her nomination from Hisar while JJP's candidates Ramesh Khatak, Pala Ram Saini and Dr. Kiran Poonia have filed their nomination from Sirsa, Kurukshetra and Ambala respectively.

Polling will be held in all 10 seats of Haryana in the sixth phase of elections on May 25. The BJP has won all the seats in the last polls.

Those who run away from battle want to lead country: Rajnath Singh's swipe at Rahul Gandhi

Rohtak: Mocking Rahul Gandhi as someone who runs away from the battlefield, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday targeted him for shifting his Lok Sabha constituency to Rae Bareilly and said he could not gather the courage to contest from Amethi.

People like him want to lead the country, the senior BJP leader said in a swipe at the former Congress president at a public meeting here in Rohtak, claiming that many Congress leaders wanted him to contest from Amethi but he chose to run away.

"I am concerned that he may be given a different name after running away from this battle," Singh said.

Gandhi had lost to Union minister and BJP leader Smriti Irani in 2019 after representing the constituency in Lok Sabha for three terms. However, he had won from Wayanad in Kerala.

Singh also slammed the Congress over Pakistani leader Chaudhry Fawad Hussain's praise for Gandhi, noting Hussain had earlier supported terror attacks in India.

The country under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership has given the enemies inside and outside the borders, Singh said, in a reference to India targeting terror camps in Pakistan.

SAD govt instrumental in developing Greater Mohali area and bringing in international airport: Badal

PNS ■ KHARAR/MOHALI

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Friday said the erstwhile SAD government was instrumental in developing the Greater Mohali area which was set to eclipse Gurgaon besides creating world class education and research facilities and a thriving Information Technology sector.

The SAD president also appealed to the people to vote for the SAD to pave the way for expansion of the Greater Mohali area into a metropolis which would further augment employment and generate revenue for the State.

The SAD president made these comments during the ongoing Punjab Bachao Yatra in both Kharar and Mohali assembly constituencies. Badal, who was accompanied by the party's Sri Anandpur Sahib candidate - Prem Singh Chandumajra, interacted with people across both constituencies.

Thanking the people for according welcome to the Punjab Bachao Yatra, Badal said "this is also a reward for

the party which has developed Mohali from a sleepy town into a bustling city which is growing by the day". He said the SAD had not only planned the orderly and scientific expansion of Mohali and Kharar but had also created world class infrastructure and institutions.

Asserting that the international airport established in Mohali by the former SAD government had resulted in the speedy development of the city and resulted in an increase in commerce besides connectivity with the outside world, Badal said "the IT sector has also taken ground in Mohali due to the airport". He also disclosed how he had himself persuaded industry heads to establish the Indian School of Business in Mohali while adding that the previous SAD governments were behind the establishment of the world famous IISER and the Institute of Nano Science and Technology in Mohali. He also disclosed how he had personally visited heads of IT companies in Bangalore and Hyderabad and urged them to establish facilities in Mohali.

Karnal Cong Candidate Budhiraja surrenders, gets bail in 2018 property defacement case

Chandigarh/Panchkula:

In a major relief to the Karnal Congress candidate Divyanshu Budhiraja, a Panchkula court on Friday granted him bail in connection with a 2018 property defacement case in which he had been declared a proclaimed offender.

Divyanshu, 31, who is the president of the Haryana Youth Congress and is contesting against former Haryana chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar of the BJP in the May 25 election, had surrendered before the court a few hours before he was let off on bail. The court of judicial magistrate Arunima Chauhan granted him bail after he furnished a bail bond of Rs 40,000 and a surety of the like amount.

Divyanshu, who was booked for defacement of property in 2018 after he had put up posters regarding unemployment in the state, was declared a proclaimed offender by a Panchkula court on December 15, 2023 after he failed to appear before the court repeatedly.

A criminal case was regis-

tered against him at the Sector-14 police station in Panchkula on January 28, 2018, under the Haryana Prevention of Defacement of Property Act.

A fresh FIR was registered for his failure to appear before the Panchkula court under Section 174-A (failure to appear before court) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) upon the court order by the Sector 14 police station of Panchkula on January 3, 2024.

Divyanshu had even moved the Punjab and Haryana high court, seeking quashing of the charges against him. In his plea, he had termed the 2018 FIR the result of political vendetta and blamed the police for his failure to appear in the proceedings, which resulted in the court declaring him a proclaimed offender. He had sought quashing of the January 3 FIR and consequent proceedings.

Talking to reporters, after getting bail, Divyanshu said, "It was a conspiracy to malign me. Those cases that were being talked about I had taken on for people but today the court has given me bail." (Agencies)

CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, HARYANA

चुनाव का पर्व
DESH KA GARV
LOK SABHA ELECTION 2024

जागरुक नागरिक का REACTION

100 मिनट में ACTION

नागरिकों की सजगता और सहयोग की आवश्यकता है

आचार संहिता उल्लंघन से सम्बन्धित शिकायतों का निपटान 100 मिनट के भीतर

नागरिक चाहें तो अपना नाम दें अथवा गुप्त रखें

मतदान की तिथि
25 मई, 2024

मुख्य निर्वाचन अधिकारी, हरियाणा
30 बेज बिल्डिंग, सेक्टर - 17, चण्डीगढ़
e-Mail: ceo_haryana@eci.gov.in | Website: www.ceoharyana.gov.in

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Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kaushilya Devi Is Mother Of Army No:15213487N RANK: HAV(OPR) Name-Amrit Lal Yadav Presently Posted At Unit: 54 Med Regt Permanent Address: 633/401,Radhapuram Colony Kanchanpur Matiyari, Chinhat, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226028 Have Changed My Date Of Birth From 01/07/1956 To 01/01/1956. Vide Affidavit No-Rd 0021650965 Dated-19/04/2024

I, Army No:15213487N Rank: HAV(OPR) Name-Amrit Lal Yadav Presently Posted At Unit: 54 Med Regt Permanent Address: 633/401,Radhapuram Colony Kanchanpur Matiyari, Chinhat, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226028 Have Changed My Son Name From Adity Yadav To Aaditya Yadav. Vide Affidavit No- Rd 0021650963 Dated-19/04/2024.

I, Army No:15213487N RANK: HAV(OPR) Name-Amrit Lal Yadav Presently Posted At Unit: 54 Med Regt Permanent Address: 633/401, Radhapuram Colony Kanchanpur Matiyari, Chinhat, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226028 Have Changed My Daughter Name From Anjali To Anjali Yadav. Vide Affidavit No- Rd 0021650964 Dated-19/04/2024

I, Prbhulal Is Father Of Army No:15213487N RANK: HAV(OPR) Name-Amrit Lal Yadav Presently Posted At Unit: 54 Med Regt Permanent Address: 633/401, Radhapuram Colony Kanchanpur Matiyari, Chinhat, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh-226028 Have Changed My Date Of Birth From 01/07/1949 To 15/07/1950. Vide Affidavit No-Rd 0021650966 Dated-19/04/2024

I, No-2474712-X, RANK-HAV, Name-Karam Singh. Residence Of - Sukh Sehaj Enclave, Vill-Sahota, Tehsil-Anandpur Sahib, District-Rupnagar, State-Punjab, Declare That I Change My Wife's Name (Jasbir Kaur To Jasvir Kaur) And Wife's Date Of Birth (15-08-1970 To 20-01-1968)

I, No.1542774H Rank Ex. Hav, Name Malkit Singh R/o Village Mehduan, PO. Ghanaur, Tehsil Rajpura, Distt. Patiala, Punjab-140702 declares that in my service records my name is mentioned as Malkiat Singh but my correct name is Malkit Singh.

I, Simran W/o Sh. Rakesh Kumar R/o House No. 48, Star Homez, Near Bhagat Ghat Road, Dashmesh Nagar, Kharar, District S.A.S. Nagar, Punjab have changed my name from Simran to Simran Verma.

I, Harleen Kaur Alias Prabhleen Kaur C/o Bata Singh R/o # 3963/2, Near Ram Ashram, Ghalori Gate, Patiala (Punjab) declare that both above names are mine and of one same person.

I, Chinnammalu is legally Mother of No 15183382M, NK, Telapu Srinu Unit of 627 SATA Bty C/O 56 APO, Ferozepur Cantt, Resident at House No.2, Ramlalayam Street, Village: V J Palem, Po. Kasimkota, Teh. Anakapalli, Distt. Visakhapatnam, (AP) 531031 have changed my Name Chinnammalu to Telapu Achhiyamma & date of birth From 05/02/1977 to 01/01/1975.

I, Bhagyashree Sushil Suradkar is legally Wedded spouse of No. 15793357Y, Hav, Suradkar Sushil Suryabhan Unit 408 Gun MSL Regt C/O 56 APO Residing at Dasalwadi, Dudha, Buldhana State Maharashtra PIN 443106 have changed my name in all documents from Suradkar Bhagyashree Sushil to Bhagyashri Sushil Suradkar. Vide Affidavit Dated 26 February 2024 before at Notary Ferozepur.

I, Krishna Devi is Mother of No. 15795444L, Hav, Akhlesh Kumar of Unit 408 Gun MSL Regt C/O 56 APO Residing at Gram Chaturipur Tehsil Ghatampur District Kanpur Nagar State UP PIN 209308 Declare That my Date of Birth 02.03.1954 Wrongly written in my Son Army Service Records but my correct Date of Birth is 01.01.1962 in my Adhar card and in my Pan Card.

I, Srilaxmi Bammidi is Wife of No. 15328919K, Hav, Akhlesh Kumar of Unit 408 Gun MSL Regt C/O 56 APO Ferozepur Resident at 5-3-102, PasaraPadu, Palasa, Po. Kasibugga Dist. Srikakula, Andhra Pradesh Pin 532222 declare that my Name Srilakshmi in my Husband Army Service record is wrong, but my Correct Name is Srilaxmi Bammidi in all documents.

I, Kisani Legally Mother Of Bhanwar Lal Yadav And Post Sudrashan, Tehsil Didwana, Distt. Nagaur, State Rajasthan, Pin 341551, Have Changed My Name From Kisaini To Kisani Vide Affidavit Dated 03 May 2024 Before At Notray Ferozepur.

I, Reeta Devi is spouse of Army No. 15205654K, Hav, Veeresh Kumar Tripathi Presently Serving Unit 197 Fd Regt C/O 56 APO resident of Village Badkhar Ward No. 12 Post Birla Vikas Tehsil Raghuraj Nagar Distt. Satna Pin- 485005 (M.P) have change my name from Reeta Devi to Reeta Tripathi and Date of Birth 17.08.1989 to 25.07..1988 Vide Affidavit Dated 03 May 2024 before at Executed Magistrate Ferozepur.

I, Meenakshi Panigrahi W/o Rashmiranj Panigrahi R/o Karamula, Ambpada Karamul, Dhenkanal, Odisha- 759014 have changed my name from Meenakshi Panigrahi to Minakshi Panigrahi for all purposes in future.

I, Sharuti W/o Sanjeev Kumar R/o Four Marla Colony Pehowa, Kurukshetra, have changed My Given Sharuti Surname Soni .

I, Phoja Singh S/o Surain Singh R/o Bana Plot Kalsa District Kurukshetra have changed my name from Phoja Singh to Fauja Singh.

I, Naranjan Singh S/O Swaran Singh Village Kalsa, Karah Sahib, Pehowa, Kurukshetra have Changed my Given Name Naranjan Surname Singh.

I, Renu Bala w/o Ravinder Kumar R/o H.No. 60, Nijatam Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Renu Bala to Renu (After Marriage).

I, Himanshu S/O Gurwinder Kumar R/O H.No. 2154, Mohalla Gouns, Nakodar, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab Have Changed My Name From Himanshu To Himanshu Kumar.

I, Vinod W/o Gurwinder Kumar R/O H.No. 2154, Mohalla Gouns, Nakodar, Distt. Jalandhar, Punjab Have Changed My Name From Vinod To Vinod Kumari.

I, Renu Bala W/o Ravinder Kumar R/O H.No.60, Nijatam Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Renu Bala To Renu (After Marriage).

I, Manoj Arora S/O Rajinder Kumar R/O H.No. 229, Dayal Nagar, Jalandhar, Punjab have changed my name from Manoj Arora to Manoj Kumar.

I, Vinod Sissotia S/O Rajesh Kumar R/O 70, Viridh Asharam, Manesar (154), Distt. Gurgaon, Haryana- 122051, have changed the name of my minor Son Dev aged about 14 Years and He shall hereafter be known as Dev sisotia.

I, Dinesh Jain S/O Rajendra Jain R/O H.No. 479/23, Laxmi Garden, Gurgaon, Haryana- 122001, have changed the name of my minor daughter Kiانشa Jain aged about 2 Months and She shall hereafter be known as Kamnika Jain.

I, Attul Ashwani Khera S/O Ashwani Khera, R/O H.No. 555, Sector 8, Faridabad, Haryana- 121006, Declare that name of Mine has been wrongly written as Akshay Satyanarayan Nagde in my minor Son Aagasty, aged about 10 Years, In his Birth Certificate. The actual name of Mine is Attul Ashwani Khera, which may be amended accordingly.

I, Deepleen Kaur Nanda W/o Chetan Kamble, R/O H.No.1824, Phase-5, S.A.S Nagar (Mohali), Rupnagar, Punjab- 160059, have changed the name of my minor Son Viaan Kamble aged about 3 Years and He shall hereafter be known as Kabir Singh.

I, Abhishek S/o Raj Kumar R/O Village Badalyaan, Hoshiarpur, Punjab- 144221, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Abhishek Kumar.

I, Ram Pershad S/o Tulsi Ram, R/O Mukerian, Bhavnal, Po.Sariana, Hoshiarpur, Punjab- 144221, have changed my name and shall hereafter be Known as Ram Prasad.

I, Jaswinder Singh S/o Ashok Kumar R/o Ward No.9, VPO. Begowal, Kapurthala, Punjab- 144621, have changed the name of my minor Son Imran aged about 12 Years and He shall hereafter be known as Armaan Farmaye.

I, hithero Known as Veero W/o Harbhanj Lal R/o Vill. Ganna Pind, Po. Haripur Khsalsa, Tehsil Phillaur, Distt. Jalandhar-144410, Punjab have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Beero Basra.

I, Vijay Kumar S/o Madan Lal R/O 29, Vishal Nagar, Near Bhatia Chakki, Yamunanagar, Haryana- 135001, Declare that name of Mine & My Wife and My Minor Son has been wrongly written as Vijay & Aarti and Ankit in my minor Son Ankit Mehra, aged about 17 Years, In his 10th Class Certificate. The actual name of Mine & My Wife and My Minor Son are Vijay Kumar & Aarti Rani and Ankit Mehra, which may be amended accordingly.

I, No. JC471530M Subedar Vijay son of Baktawar Singh resident of Village Ballab PO Garhi Tehsil Kalanaur, District Rohtak (Haryana) posted at 4 RAJRIF Unit C/O 56 APO have changed my wife name from Babita Devi (existing name) to Babita (Proposed new name) my wife correct/actual DOB is 25.07.1981 as per my wife Aadhaar Card/Pan Card. In future my wife shall may be known/written and called as Babita (DOB: 25.07.1981) for all work purposes, Vide Affidavit dated 01 May 2024 before Notary Public (Rohtak)

I, Narender Singh S/o Sh. Ragbir Singh R/o H.No.1365 Sec-3, Rohtak, Haryana declare that Arshi is my real daughter. Now I have changed her name from Arshi to Arshi Singh . In future her name will be called as Arshi Singh .

I, Jyoti Dhankhar D/o Sh. Bhagwan Singh R/o H.No.1365 Sec-3, Rohtak, Haryana declare as that Jyoti Dhankar & Jyoti Dhankhar both name are same & one person. If any consequences arise I future I will responsible for same.

I, Shikuntla Kumari W/o Sunil Kumar R/o #286 Sunder Nagar Mandour Ambala City that I have changed my name from Sangeeta Alias Shakuntla to Shakuntla Kumari . Both are the names of one and the same person and in future I will be called as Shakuntla Kumari. Concerned note

I, Parveen W/o Avinash Makkar R/o H.no. 29-B Block-B East Prabhu Prem Puram, Ambala Cantt that I have changed my name from Parveen to Parveen Makkar. Concerned note.

I, Sushama spouse of Fonde Uttam Pandurang resident of Village - Dudhebhavi, Post- Chorochi, Tehsil- Kavathe Mahankal, District- Sangli, State- Maharashtra, Pin-416403, have changed my name from Sushama to Sushama Uttam Fonde Vide affidavit No.IN-PB06230118604130W dated 16 April 2024 before notary public Pathankot.

I, Jashanpreet S/O Rakesh Kumar R/O Ward No.07, Balachaur Tehsil Balachaur District S.B.S. Nagar Have Changed My Name From Jashanpreet To Jashanpreet Jhally.

I, Sudarshan Lal S/O Tulsi Ram R/O Vpo. Hardsapur, Tehsil Phagwara, District Kapurthala Have Changed My Name From Sudarshan Lal To Sudershan Lal.

I, Manjeet Kaur W/O Amanveer Bharti R/O H.No.126, Street No.3, Shaheed Udharn Singh Nagar, Phagwara, District Kapurthala Have Changed My Name From Manjeet Kaur To Manjit Kaur.

I, Gursewak Singh S/O Dilbag Singh R/O Village Tola Nangal, Tehsil Ajnala, Amritsar Have Changed My Name To Gursewak As Given Name And Singh As Surname. All Concerned Note.

I, Sher Singh S/O Harbans Lal Singh R/O Village Pandori Sulman P.O. Dhoot Kalan Tehsil And District. Hoshiarpur Have Changed My Name From Sher Singh To Sher Singh Sumal.

I, R Gokula Swetha Prabha D/O Sub. S Ramesh Kannan R/O 127, Poovilathur Kamankottai P.O. Kamankottai District Ramanathapuram Tamil Nadu 623527 Have Changed My Name From R Gogulasvetha Prapa To R Gokula Swetha Prabha Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB00002170755106W Dated 27.03.2024 Before Notary Amritsar.

I Sub. S Ramesh Kannan R/O 127, Poovilathur Kamankottai P.O. Kamankottai District Ramanathapuram Tamil Nadu 623527 Have Changed My Daughter Name From R Josphidha To R Josphitha Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB00002170755106W Dated 27.03.2024 Before Notary Amritsar.

I Saroj Mother Of Sub (Opr) Swayam Prakash Singh R/O Village Rampur Sarsaul Kanpur Nagar Uttar Pradesh 209402 Have Changed My Name From Sharose Singh To Saroj Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB1181877894199W Dated 02.05.2024 Before Notary Amritsar.

I SUB (OPR) Swayam Prakash Singh Father Of Aadarsh R/O Village Rampur Sarsaul Kanpur Nagar Uttar Pradesh 209402 Have Changed My Son Name From Aadarash To Aadarsh Vide Affidavit No.IN-PB06756349773562W Dated 16.04.2024 Before Notary Amritsar.

I Hardip Singh S/O Mohinder Singh R/O Vpo. Saranwali (Ferozepur) Have Changed My Name From Hardip Singh To Hardeep Singh.

I Inderjit Kaur Sahota W/O Lakhbir Singh R/O Patti Bhullar Vpo. Buttar Distt. Moga Punjab Have Changed My Name To Inderjit Kaur.

I Rachpal Kaur W/O Kanwaljit Singh R/O Bhagta Bhai Ka Tehsil Phul Distt. Bathinda Have Changed My Name To Manjeet Kaur Brar.

I Karamjit Kaur And Karmjit Kaur W/O Satpal Singh R/O Nanak Nagri Moga Am Known By Above Both Names And One And The Same Person.

I Harinder Singh S/O Sawinder Singh Kang H/No 135 W/No 03 Bassian Mohalla Dasuya (Hoshiarpur) Have Changed My Name Harinder Singh To Harinder Singh Kang.

I Sandeep Kaur Gill W/O Harinder Singh Kang H/No 135 W/No 03 Bassian Mohalla Dasuya (Hoshiarpur) Have Changed My Name Sandeep Kaur Gill To Sandeep Kaur Kang After marriage.

I Jashanjit Singh S/O Hardeep Singh R/o - Village Kahanghar, Sunam (Sangrur) have changed my name to Jasanjeet Singh.

I, Balwinder Singh alias Bhola Singh S/o Ujagar Singh R/o Vill. Holan Wali (Ferozepur) have changed my name to Balwinder Singh.

I, Harish Chander Singla S/O Mohan Lal R/O Manhor Di Chakki, W.No.13 Gidderbaha Distt. Sri Muktsar Sahib, have changed my name to Harish Chander.

I, Bhura Singh S/O Jang Singh R/o Kharodi Teh Guhla District Kaithal Have Changed My Name From Jagmail Singh To Bhura Singh.

I, Sudhesh Kaur W/O Sarwan Singh R/O Ward No 13, Mahilpur, P.O Mahilpur tehsil Garhshankar, Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab, india, have changed my name Sfrom udhesh Kaur to Sudesh Kaur.

LOST FOUND
I, Anoop Bansal S/o Sh. Ramchandra Bansal, R/o ward no. 15, Assandh Kharli, I declare that I have 190 square yards of land in Assandh which is in the name of my mother Mrs. Krishna Bansal W/o Sh. Ramchandra Bansal, the old registry of the above land is Will No. 1506/1 which is Gulzar S/O Ramphal S/O Sardara & Ramphal S/O karam Singh S/O sunehara it is registered in the name of division, R/o vill. Dupedi, Assandh distt. Karnal, the registry papers of the said land have been lost somewhere in Assandh on 22.04.2024, about which I have filed DDR no. 132310052400645 has been registered in Assandh police station. If anyone finds it please contact the above address.

पब्लिक नोटिस
विषय- मणोराल नौटयु अर्द्ध अर्द्ध. नम्बर SB/SB-06/256 Old & New Property Id No. 3RA2HWB6 को मालकीदार नारायणदेव सिस्सा के रिकर्ड में मुद्रांकित वसीयत तबदील करके दर्ज करने बारे।
आप सभी को इस नोटिस के माध्यम से सूचित किया जाता है कि श्री मीना देवी पत्नी श्री सुरेश कुमार सिर्फ निस्सी सिस्सा लिमि सिस्सा ने इस कानूनन में प्रमाणित पर आधारित करके अर्द्ध. नम्बर SB/SB-06/256 पब्लिक नोटिस के माध्यम से सूचित किया जाता है कि श्री सुरेश कुमार सिर्फ निस्सी सिस्सा लिमि सिस्सा के रिकर्ड में मुद्रांकित वसीयत तबदील करके दर्ज करने बारे।
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सार्वजनिक सूचना
इस पब्लिक नोटिस के माध्यम से...

नगर निगम रोहतक
सार्वजनिक सूचना
सर्व सम्पत्तियों को सूचित किया जाता है...

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Sushil Kumar S/O Harbans Lal Ch/O S.A. Gali No. 5, 4, Ward No. 18, Near Nara Attu Chakki, Tulshi Vihar, Azad Nagar, Hisar is the owner of One Plot bearing No.11.1-A, area measuring 250 Sq. Yards...

DOON VALLEY INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY
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Outside Jundla Gate, Karnal, Email:- trustdoonvalley@gmail.com
Mobile no:- 9996360000
Requires Following Staff:-

सार्वजनिक सूचना
इस पब्लिक नोटिस के माध्यम से...

COURT NOTICE
(U/o 5 Rule 20 CPC)
IN THE COURT OF Dr. Gurpreet Kaur Principal Judge, Family Court, Camp Court at Bholath, Bholath

LOST & FOUND
I, Col. Sanjay Shantil Son of Col. Dhani Ram Shandil, Resident of, Indira Cottage, Summerhill, Tehsil and District Shimla H.P. do hereby inform that I have misplaced Original Sale Deed No. 121 Dated 05.05.1998 pertaining to my property...

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Apply upto 10 May 2024 with complete Bio-data, @ trustdoonvalley@gmail.com, Attested copies of certificates and 2 colored photographs.

AXIS BANK
Branch Office - Axis Bank Limited, SBB LOAN CENTER SCO-221, 2nd Floor, Paramjeet Tower, Sector-12, Karnal-130001 Corporate Office: 3rd Floor, Block-B, Bombay Dyeing Mills Compound, Pandurang Budhakar Marg, Worli, Mumbai-400025 Registered Office: 'Trishul', 3rd Floor, opposite Samartheswar Temple, Law Garden, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad-380006

PUBLIC NOTICE
I Sakshi Handa W/o Amit Handa R/o, 175 Rani Ka Bagh Amritsar Hereby Inform The General Public That I Have Lost/Misplaced The Original Sale Deed Bearing Document No. 9875 Executed On Date 30/08/1989 By Tarlochan Singh S/O Sohan Singh To Vinod Kumar S/O Kharaoti Lal For 126 Sq. Yds. (1/4) Share Of 175 Rani Ka Bagh Amritsar, Punjab-143001.

सार्वजनिक सूचना
सर्व सम्पत्तियों को सूचित किया जाता है...

PUNJAB & HARYANA HIGH COURT ADVOCATES COOPERATIVE HOUSE BUILDING (1ST) SOCIETY LTD.
PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby notified to the General Public that SH. ASHOK KUMAR S/O SH. RAGHU NANDAN PARSAD RO FLAT NO. 377, LB ENCLAVE, SECTOR 49-A, CHANDIGARH has entered into an agreement for purchase of Flat No. 227 (2nd Floor), Category A in PUNJAB & HARYANA HIGH COURT ADVOCATES COOPERATIVE HOUSE BUILDING (1ST) SOCIETY LTD. SECTOR 49-A, CHANDIGARH presently owned by SH. SANJAY MAJITHIA S/O SH. GURBAX RAI MAJITHIA RO 46, SECTOR 9-A, CHANDIGARH Now they have applied for issuance of NOC for Sale & execution of Transfer of Lease Rights by way of sale in their favour.

SMFG India Home Finance Company Ltd.
(Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.)
Corporate Off.: 503 & 504, 5th Floor, G-Block, Inspire BKC, BKC Main Road, Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400051. Regd. Off.: Megh Towers, 3rd Floor, Old No. 307, New No. 165, Poonamallee High Road, Madhavayal, Chennai - 600 095.

सार्वजनिक सूचना
इस पब्लिक नोटिस के माध्यम से...

सार्वजनिक सूचना
इस पब्लिक नोटिस के माध्यम से...

PUBLIC NOTICE
I RAMESH KUMAR S/O RAM CHANDER RO MOHALLA KANAUNG DISTRICT KATHALON DECLARE THAT MY SALE DEED NO. 3206/1 DATED 18.10.2006 HAS BEEN LOST AT PARTAP GATE KATHALON ON DATED 10.03.2024. A DOR NO. 13 2 2 8 0 2 5 2 4 0 0 5 8. A L S O REGISTERED AT POLICE STATION KATHALON REGARDING THIS ANYBODY FOUND PLEASE CONTACT ON ABOVE ADDRESS.

Table with 5 columns: Sl. No., Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) LAN, Description of Secured Assets (Immovable Property), Demand Notice Date & Amount, Date of Possession. Includes entries for Furkan Husain, Govind Pandit, and Mohammad Amir.

ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL
PROTECTING INVESTING FINANCING ADVISING
Adivitya Birla Finance Ltd.
REGISTERED OFFICE: INDIAN RAYON COMPOUND, VERVAL, GUJARAT-362266, BRANCH OFFICE: 1ST FLOOR, VIJAYA BUILDING, PLOT NO.17, BARAKHAMBA ROAD, NEW DELHI-110001

DEMAND NOTICE U/13 (13/2)
You the below mentioned borrower has availed loan by mortgaging the schedule mentioned property and You the below mentioned has stood as borrower/co-borrower guarantor for the loan agreement.

Table with 5 columns: Loan Account No./Name & Address of the Account, Borrower(s) & Guarantor(s), Description of Property/ies, Date of Demand Notice/ NPA Date, Amount due as per demand notice. Includes details for Loan Against Property and Bharat Steel Industries.

STATE BANK OF INDIA
[Rule-8(1)] Possession Notice (For Immovable Property)
Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the State Bank of India, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No.3 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to borrower(s)/guarantor(s), on the date mentioned hereunder, calling upon the borrower(s) / guarantor(s), to repay the amount mentioned in the said Demand Notice...



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PAPER WITH PASSION

School for scandal

With special focus on pro-Palestine protests, several global universities have turned into activism hubs

As more students join anti-Israel protests in countries like the US, England, France and elsewhere, it has spawned a debate regarding the role of educational institutes in shaping political ideologies and influencing global opinion, as well as the question of whether students should get involved in politics. The phenomenon of anti-Israel protests on campuses cannot be viewed in isolation; it reflects broader geopolitical undertones and social movements. However, the specific targeting of educational institutes as platforms for such protests raises important questions about the purpose of universities and their responsibility to foster constructive dialogue versus perpetuating bigotry. One aspect of this development is the clash between freedom of speech and the promotion of inclusivity and diversity. Anti-Israel protests, if not conducted respectfully and with a focus on dialogue rather than confrontation, risk alienating certain student segments. That said, it is also a fact that pro-Israel demonstrations were first witnessed in certain universities of esteem in the US. As Israel launched an offensive in Gaza, a parallel campaign started in these varsities, allegedly at Israel's behest and funding. Indeed, pro-Israel sentiment has been high in the US as well as in Europe; everyone remained tightlipped when Israel indulged in human rights violations in Gaza. Thus, the latest anti-Israel demonstrations are more of a reaction to that. Besides, even Israelites are now fed up with the ongoing war; they are rallying against Netanyahu and his policies towards West Asia in general and Palestine in particular.



As a Sanskrit saying goes: "Ya vidya sa vimuktaye" (Education liberates). Since it is a universal truth, this liberation must manifest itself in the conduct of students. No denying the logical boundaries of any dissent and that violence has no role in such demonstrations. The students must focus on their studies, which is what they are supposed to primarily do on college campuses. But it would be rather an anti-thesis of education if they are not aware of what is happening around them and if they fail to react to correct any wrongdoings around them. It is equally true, they can't remain unaffected by the social milieu around them. Back home, let us not forget it was essentially a student movement under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan that opposed the Emergency. During the struggle for Independence, many leaders quit colleges and jumped into the freedom movement. Bhagat Singh, on the issue of students joining politics, wrote: "Was (the students of England and Germany) quitting colleges and going to war not politics? Where were the preachers then; why didn't they ask those students to study? Only the efforts of students and youth have brought independence to any country which is now free...." The words are prophetic and inspiring; one wishes his essay could be read aloud in the western universities.

Recent events have seen optics like the Philippines charging China in the International Court of Justice, Hague (and winning the plea), dangerous military exercises to assert competitive territorial counterclaims, ramming and shooting with high-pressure water cannons at Filipino boats, disruption to freedom of navigation, denying access etc., hardly the backdrop to assume the word 'trust' between two constantly slug-fisting nations. But the make-believe posturing and incredulously 'cry wolf' terms like 'Gentleman's Agreement' are an age-old Chinese norm, whenever anyone has stood up to expose its bullying and relentless expansionism. The Chinese through their conduct have unilaterally made a mockery of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The Chinese have further upped the ante by dredging up sand to create artificial landmass e.g., around the restive Spratly Islands. This is enough to station a Military base replete with fighter planes and missiles and even anchor its fleet of so-called

PICTALK



Farmers harvest wheat at a village near the Indo-Pak border, on the outskirts of Jammu

Nothing 'gentlemanly' in Chinese diplomacy



BHOPIINDER SINGH

China's recent outcry over the alleged breach of 'Gentleman's Agreement' with the Philippines reveals a profound irony, given the history of its coercion and deceit

There is a huge amount of insincerity and gall involved in the Chinese complaint that the Philippines had torn up the bilateral 'Gentleman's Agreement', between Beijing and Manila. While the term 'Gentleman's Agreement' has an implicit assumption of 'trust' as a fundamental tenet besting a relationship, which may otherwise not be legally binding — to even imagine that there has been any element of 'trust' between these two sparring countries, is to put oneself up to ridicule.

Much of the tensions in the countries around the South China Seas originates from an expansionist instinct in China that seeks to coerce, intimidate and dominate the region with creative, wholly unique and untenable concepts like the 'nine dash line' (called out by the International Court of Justice, Hague, as illegal). But it is not just the Philippines but also other regional countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Brunei etc., that are up in arms over Chinese belligerence.

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The Chinese have further upped the ante by dredging up sand to create artificial landmass e.g., around the restive Spratly Islands. This is enough to station a Military base replete with fighter planes and missiles and even anchor its fleet of so-called



"unsinkable aircraft carriers". All this has been done with sheer impunity and disregard towards any neighbouring countries' territorial claims, sense of security, or socioeconomic concerns. Duplicity and attempting to checkmate (by force or lure) any emerging force that could challenge the Chinese juggernaut is met with its patent falsehoods, sneaky 'salami tactic' encroachment, or even brazen show of force. In the late 70s, the Chinese were more concerned about the Soviet Union, than with the United States of America. Beijing had counterintuitively started engaging with Washington DC to align it towards its side as it went about preparing to attack Vietnam. Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping on a trip to the United States had told US President Jimmy Carter, "The child is getting naughty, it is time he got spanked".

Soon thereafter, China attacked Vietnam in a war that is recalled in Vietnam as Chien tranh chong binh truoiung Trung Hoa (War against Chinese expansionism)! The physical-material superiority in favour of the Chinese PLA notwithstanding, most independent military historians acknowledge the bloody nose inflicted by the plucky, war-experienced and pugnacious



EVEN EARLIER IN THE 1950s, THE CHINESE LAID THE TRAP FOR NEHRU'S COMPLACENCY WHEN CHINESE PREMIER ZHOU ENLAI REFUSED TO CONTEST NEHRU'S RIGHTFUL INSISTENCE ON AKSAI CHIN BY ACCEPTING THAT CHINA HAD NO CLAIM ON IT

Vietnamese forces that led to a rupture between China and Vietnam, that still lingers subliminally. Even earlier in the 50's, the Chinese laid the trap for Nehru's complacency when Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai refused to contest Nehru's rightful insistence on Aksai Chin by accepting that China had no claim on it. But Zhou would renege and contradict his earlier position by later claiming that Aksai Chin was already under the Chinese - they had surreptitiously built a road, while still playing naive and ingenuous, all along. Like all bilateral agreements that the Chinese are always willing to relegate to the bins, the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence was put to the same fate. In yet another act that would soon become a standard Chinese practice over the years, the Chinese cartographical interpretation was revised with newly usurped territories and claims. This template of dubious expansionism led to the 1962 Indo-China War and ensured unsettled status in the region with the Chinese 'updating' their official maps with new territories and new names. That same principle has been applied to sovereign maritime issues in the South China Seas and the ongoing tussle with the Philippines has its roots in the history of China's insatiable

expansionism and unbridled ambition to assert its hegemony.

Propaganda in the highly controlled media of China has been elevated to a fine art. Filipino Defence Secretary was quick to rebut the same by clarifying that he was, "not aware of, nor is it a party to, any internal agreement with China" and that his department had, "not had any contact with any Chinese Government officials since last year". The Chinese have been deft with wordsmithing in order to lay the blame for ongoing tensions in the Philippines by first invoking an alleged 'promise', which then became a 'Gentleman's Agreement' and have most recently morphed into a 'new model' and finally 'internal understanding'.

Gen Jonathan Malaya, of the Philippines National Security Council, put it bluntly, "The propaganda masters are clearly working overtime in Beijing to sow discord and division in our country". But unfortunately for the Chinese, there are fewer takers for their position by the day and there never was, or is, anything 'Gentlemanly' about Chinese diplomacy, for decades.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Deceptive digital dangers



Propos the news article, "Time to curb fake videos in elections," published on May 3, this is my response. The emergence of 'deepfake' technology in political campaigns signals a disturbing trend toward digital deceit. The recent case involving Union Home Minister Amit Shah underscores the potential harm of manipulating videos to spread false narratives. Such malicious acts not only undermine the integrity of elections but also sow seeds of discord in society. The ease with

which these fake videos can be created using advanced technology raises concerns about the erosion of trust in media and public discourse. Moreover, the implications for national security, as highlighted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, cannot be overlooked.

While technological advancements have undoubtedly brought convenience, they also pose significant risks, particularly in cyberspace. Cybersecurity must evolve to address these ever-changing threats, with stringent measures implemented to combat the spread of misinformation and safeguard democratic processes. As citizens, we must remain vigilant against the proliferation of deepfake videos and advocate for robust measures to counter such deceptive practices. Only through collective efforts can we mitigate the dangers posed by digital manipulation and preserve the integrity of our democratic institutions.

Kavya Singh | Kolkata

unchanged: a free press is the bedrock of societal integrity.

However, the journey towards press freedom is far from smooth. Nations like India, with its vibrant media, often find themselves entangled in debates over freedom's extent. The quote by Advani echoes the enduring struggle against undue influence and censorship. Governments must respect press freedom, for civil society to advocate relentlessly and for media organisations to uphold ethical standards unwaveringly. On this day, we salute the bravery of journalists who persist in the face of adversity, reaffirming our commitment to preserving the cornerstone of democracy: a free and independent press.

Dhruv Gupta | Jamshedpur

NATURE'S ARTISTIC SYMPHONY

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Travel Across Enchanted Landscapes," published on May 3, this is my response. 'Paradise Regained' at Palette Art Gallery beautifully intertwines artistic mastery with a profound reverence for nature. The exhibition, curated by Uma Nair, serves as

a poignant tribute to Earth Month, showcasing the diverse interpretations of landscapes by ten exceptional artists. Each artwork is a testament to the artist's deep connection with nature, from Saman Narayanan's fantastical realms to Umesh PK's multilayered odes. Paramjit Singh's vibrant oil paintings and Sanket Viramgami's intricate miniatures offer unique perspectives, while Jayashree Chakravarty and Sumesh Kamballur capture the essence of specific regions with captivating detail.

The exhibition not only celebrates the beauty of nature but also serves as a reminder of our responsibility to protect it. Through their art, the artists convey a message of environmental stewardship, urging viewers to appreciate and preserve the planet's beauty for future generations. 'Paradise Regained' is more than just an art display; it's a call to action to cherish and safeguard the paradise we call home.

Eshaan Kapoor | Delhi

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Leveraging NCERT textbooks for CUET

The textbooks offer varied resources for Common University Entrance Test aspirants, from fundamental concepts to advanced topics



SANTOSH ANAND

The Common University Entrance Test (CUET) is a key gateway for students aspiring to secure admission to undergraduate programmes in various Central and other Participating Universities/Institutions / Organisations across India. Balancing the assessment of core competencies and subject knowledge, CUET presents both challenges and opportunities. As students gear up for their CUET 2024 journey leveraging a crucial resource: your NCERT textbooks is a very good idea.

NCERT textbooks have long served as foundational resources for students across India. Beyond their use within classrooms, they play a vital role in preparing students for competitive exams like CUET. Leveraging NCERT textbooks can significantly enhance your CUET study strategy, providing a sturdy framework to progress from basic to advanced levels.

NCERT textbooks align seamlessly with the CUET syllabus, covering the majority of the necessary topics and concepts in a clear and acces-



sible manner. Building a Strong Foundation NCERT textbooks follow a step-by-step approach to presenting concepts, making them ideal for laying a strong foundation. By breaking down complex subjects into manageable sections, they facilitate effective learning and foster a solid understanding of the fundamentals. As you advance in your CUET preparation, delving deeper into NCERT textbooks reveals more complex topics and advanced concepts. The detailed explanations, illustrative examples and practice questions provided in these textbooks help strengthen your understanding and problem-solving skills. Mastering the content presented in NCERT textbooks equips you to tackle higher-level questions and excel in the CUET exam confidently.

Authorised by subject matter experts and rigorously reviewed, they provide standardised material that ensures all students have access to relevant and quality content. This consistency levels the playing field for CUET aspirants nationwide. To make the most of NCERT textbooks in your CUET preparation, consider these strategies:

Subject-wise Approach: Organise your study schedule around CUET subjects, allocating specific time slots for studying NCERT textbooks related to each subject. This targeted approach allows for in-depth understanding and mastery of key concepts.

Enhance Visual Learning: Make the most of the visuals in NCERT textbooks, such as illustrations, diagrams, tables, graphs, charts, boxed information and examples for accelerated learning. These elements assist in organising information, explaining theoretical concepts and highlighting key points, leading to improved understanding and problem-solving.

Practice and Revision: Regularly solve exercise questions and problems provided

at the end of each chapter in NCERT textbooks. Practice is crucial for reinforcing learning and identifying areas that need further revision.

Supplementary Resources: While NCERT textbooks form the core of your study material, supplement your preparation with reference books, online resources and mock tests to broaden your knowledge and enhance problem-solving abilities.

NCERT textbooks offer a wealth of resources for CUET aspirants, from fundamental concepts to advanced topics. By incorporating them into your study strategy and using them effectively, you can enhance your preparation, boost confidence and maximise your chances of success in the CUET 2024 Exam. ExamFactor stands by to support your CUET journey. Remember, dedication, a strategic approach and the solid foundation provided by NCERT textbooks can empower you to progress from basic to advanced levels in your CUET preparation.

(The author is a Head Content, ExamFactor; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

PROTECTING OUR DIGITAL WORLD

Cybersecurity is all about safeguarding trust, privacy and business interests



SHAINY SHARMA

With the proliferation of connected devices, cloud computing and various other digital platforms, the attack surface of the threats ranging from individual hackers to organised cybercriminal groups has expanded significantly. In the age, where technology pervades every facet of our lives, the importance of cybersecurity cannot be over stated and with the advent of technology, it has been deemed to have the emergence of new threats.

Cybersecurity measures, such as encryption, access controls and data loss prevention, help prevent unauthorised access, theft and misuse of confidential information. In an era of widespread digital connectivity, maintaining privacy, safeguarding personal information and communications from unauthorised surveillance, identifying theft and invasive data collection practices are crucial not only for individuals but for organisations too. The motto 'Protecting our digital world' is a responsibility we all share. Cybersecurity researchers cover a wide range of topics be it understanding the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) of cyber adversaries or focusing on developing methodologies, tools and best practices to integrate security into the software development lifecycle; are aimed at addressing current and emerging challenges in protecting digital assets and infrastructure. Cybersecurity researchers investigate software and hardware vulnerabilities to understand their root causes.

Safeguarding cybersecurity is imperative across all sectors of work be it business or education. Cybersecurity is integral to national security and defence strategies, as cyber threats pose risks to sovereignty, economic stability and public safety in shaping India's economic growth and global competitiveness, particularly in the realm of cybersecurity, the Indian Government has implemented various initiatives and policies such as Cyber Surakshit Bharat, Cyber Swachhta Kendra and many more to combat the cybersecurity challenges in India. These initiatives are aimed at generating awareness about the latest cybercrimes, detection and removal of malicious programs from devices and ultimately combat cyber threats by creating a secure cyber ecosystem.



The digital landscape is constantly evolving, with cyber threats becoming more sophisticated and pervasive. Cybersecurity measures, including threat detection, incident response and vulnerability management help identify, mitigate and contain cyber threats such as malware, phishing, ransomware and denial-of-service attacks.

Effective cybersecurity will build trust and confidence among stakeholders, including customers, partners, investors and the public at large. By demonstrating a commitment to cybersecurity best practices and compliance with regulations, organisations enhance their reputation and credibility in the digital marketplace.

The need for cybersecurity has increased due to the evolving threat landscape, technological advancements, digital transformation initiatives, regulatory requirements, geopolitical tensions and societal reliance on digital technologies. Cybersecurity is not just about safeguarding the data rather it's about safeguarding trust, privacy and freedom in the digital age. It requires a comprehensive and proactive approach involving technology, policies, education, collaboration and investment to address the evolving challenges posed by cyber threats. One needs to stay vigilant, informed and proactive in keeping online space secure. Strong passwords, regular updates and staying cautious of phishing attempts are just a few steps toward cyber resilient community. Despite advancements, cybersecurity does face a lot of challenges, including the constant evolution of cyber threats, the shortage of skilled cybersecurity professionals and the global nature of cybercrime.

(The write is an educator; views are personal)

Global tapestry and impact of terrorism

In an era marked by geopolitical upheavals and regional conflicts, the spectre of terror looms large, transcending borders and threatening stability on a global scale



SUDHIR HINDWAN

At a time when the world political landscape is dealing with a number of regional conflicts such as Israel-Palestine, Russia-Ukraine, skirmishes in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, trans-national terrorism has hogged the limelight world over during the last few years. Similarly at the domestic level terror organisations from across the border have unleashed a wave of terror in Kashmir to attract attention from the media to upturn the diminishing morale of the mercenaries. Seen in this recent perspective are the latest sinister designs of the terror forces in different parts of the world whether in Pakistan, Afghanistan, the Red Sea, Israel, Palestine, Scandinavian Countries, Central Asia or Russia. In the past few days, the insurgency has resulted in numerous killings of innocents and the martyrdom of several Army soldiers in different parts of Jammu and Kashmir on the domestic front in India.

International terrorism, though comparatively less in volume than the domestic variety, has crossed all limitations despite increased Government efforts to combat it. Much blood, if not ink, has flowed since terrorists struck the World Trade Centre and Pentagon in the US. This was followed by an upsurge in terrorist activities across the globe. Repeated terror attacks over the years sometimes after a brief lull have not only exposed the security and intelligence network but also robbed confidence of modern nations in controlling the menace.

Whether terrorism is unleashed at the local, regional, national or international level, it cannot survive for long without international support and collaboration. In a globalised world, the matrices of power turn on the highly visible, inequalitarian structure of the international economy and as such inter-relationships between socio-economic conditions in different parts of the world are becoming more and more obvious. At another level, the post-Cold War international political-economic order is still a victim of the power game that was thrust on the world by the then-big powers. Many seasoned international experts on violence and terror are of the opinion that the power network woven by the hegemonic mighty in the entire West Asian region has provoked the ire of the opposition forces in almost every State where they had an interest-based relationship. Thus, as societies globalise and curtains of opacity are raised through increased inter-societal interaction at the international level, people in under-developed countries are holding the big powers responsible for their inferior socio-economic positions. The Cold War Era leading to interference in crucial areas such as Afghanistan, South-East Asia, Gulf and Latin American countries has resulted in the development of peculiar trends that provided breeding grounds for terrorist activities. Talibanisation of Afghanistan would never have taken place had the powerful nations handled the situation well in the beginning. The consequences of the failure to diagnose this social disease (terrorism) at the early stage can be pernicious for the various countries. The strategies of imposing arms and economic sanctions on the so-called rogue nations during the last few years have been counter-productive



THE STRATEGIES OF IMPOSING ARMS AND ECONOMIC SANCTIONS ON THE SO-CALLED ROGUE NATIONS DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN INEFFICIENT AND RATHER HELPED THESE NATIONS TO GAIN INTERNATIONAL SYMPATHY

and rather helped these nations to gain international sympathy. Although the hope of a permanent solution to the problem of terrorism is still far away, one hopes that the powerful nations will develop a more mature understanding of the phenomenon of terrorism that has assumed alarming proportions. The rapid international transportation and use of sophisticated weapons like AK 47 assault rifles and plastic explosives (RDX) have helped to facilitate the expansion of terrorist networks around the world. Besides, the new suicide squads of terrorists have left the entire security apparatus of the affected States in a State of shock. The recent incidents cannot be viewed in isolation.

A leading anti-terrorism expert, Mr Brian Jenkins, believes that though more articulate and multiplied effort by the police and intelligence can tell us about a possible terrorist attack, there is still confusion over whether such a mechanism is successful in dealing with terrorists driven by fundamentalism. Gradually, religion is becoming the main motivating force for terrorism across the globe. There is a growing nexus between terrorists and internationally organised crime networks. Mr. Alison Jamieson, a British analyst on organised crime and political violence, commented that the distinction between terrorism and organised crime has become very blurred recently. An Italian organised crime expert, Professor Ernesto, says: "The terrorist's goal is an ideological one,

while organised crime's goal is financial, but the instrument is the same.

They both need money and arms". In Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tigers engage in drug trafficking to finance their struggle, in north-eastern India guerrillas kidnap tea planters and hold them to ransom to help fund their fight for independence. In Chechnya, the secessionists were heavily involved in drug distribution.

These days terrorists are more confident than ever before of their access to the vulnerable points before carrying out any of their attacks and they plan their attacks in a heroic manner for the justification and fulfilment of a cause that they think is just. Thus, they attempt, by their acts, to inspire and manipulate fear to achieve a variety of purposes. For effective administrative measures, various sources of terrorism must be found first. There is a need for a truly effective preparedness programme at the Government level.

First, we must know about the people involved in terrorist activities and their motivations.

Dealing with a terrorist incident and mitigating its consequences need to be carefully thought out. Sufficient data about the terrorist-hit area could be of immense use. Intelligence should be able to provide information about terrorist targets, timing and site in advance. But the Government alone cannot do much to stop it. Individuals and groups can make a significant contribution towards improving the general security

environment. On the other hand, there is a need for sophisticated security procedures that can go all the way from airport screening to the border area.

Some kind of positive programmes which can alleviate the frustration of terrorists can prove effective. There is also a need to promote open institutions, including political institutions to absorb the ethnic, religious and political pressure and allow terrorists to vent their feelings in a proper way. This will change their mind and thus encourage them to settle their differences in a peaceful way. Since present-day terrorists are very well organised and more professional than their counterparts a decade ago, new concepts of safety and security should arise. A vigilant and assertive police and paramilitary network should replace the old one. There is an apprehension that with the availability of biological and chemical weapons, terrorists could start their campaign with a renewed vigour.

No civilised political system can progress until terrorism is wiped out, but terrorism cannot be eliminated unless there is a political solution. The need of the hour is the political will to solve problems that generate terrorism. The States affected by terrorism should open up avenues for a negotiated settlement of disputes and exhibit genuine willingness to resolve long-festering problems.

(The author, a recipient of the Bharat Gaurav award, is a professor and expert on strategic affairs; views are personal)

Saffron cultivation: Replicate Poonch's success story

The Government must extend comprehensive support to farmers, fostering significant opportunities for saffron production in similar regions

In the heart of the border district Poonch in Jammu and Kashmir, amidst the rugged terrain and lush valleys, a quiet revolution is underway - the cultivation of saffron. "For the past 5 years, we have been conducting trials of saffron and a year ago, we took the plunge into full-scale cultivation. The results? Astonishing! Our efforts were supported by School of Biotechnology at the University of Jammu, who provided us a generous grant of INR 10 lakhs. With unwavering support from Professor Jyoti and the expertise of the university's scholars, including PhD student Tahlil Bhatti and SDO,



BHARTI DEVI

Horticulture, Mohammad Fareed from Poonch, we started to explore saffron cultivation in Poonch, uncovering the untapped potential of saffron production in the region," shared 35-year-old farmer Ajaz Ahmad from Bayla village, in Mandi tehsil, bordering Poonch. He has made a name for himself as a saffron farmer in the region, moving away from traditional farming over the past few years. In this research, Ajaz found that saffron production can be done in abundance in areas

like Surankote, Arai, Fatehpur, Bayla, Mandi and Mendhar of Poonch. The environment and soil here are almost similar to those in the regions of Jammu and Kashmir where saffron production takes place. Saffron holds the esteemed title of being one of the world's most prized spices. Known as "Kong" in Kashmiri, "Jafran" in Urdu and "Kesar" in Hindi, it is derived from the delicate threads of fragrant flowers. Historically, its cultivation has been confined to specific regions within the Union Territory. While some cultivation occurs in Kishtwar, the Pampore region of Kashmir reigns as its primary producer, renowned for its superior quality. Commanding a premium price, Pampore saffron fetches around 3 lakh rupees

per kilogram. It takes an astonishing quantity of flowers - approximately 160 to 180 - to yield just one gram of saffron. Moreover, a kilogram of this precious spice requires the harvest of about half a million flowers.

Ajaz Ahmad highlights the shifting agricultural landscape in Poonch, noting a traditional focus on seasonal crops like maize. However, he observes a gradual change in mindset among local farmers, with growing enthusiasm for saffron production. "We have procured saffron seeds from Pampore and Kishtwar districts of Kashmir. Now, my desire is that after Pampore and Kishtwar, Poonch becomes the third largest center for saffron production in Jammu and

Kashmir," he said. He advocates for Governmental support in the form of security measures rather than subsidies, citing the comparatively high cost of saffron seeds. Ajaz emphasises the need for crop protection from wildlife, particularly bears that frequently ravage fields, suggesting that fencing could mitigate such risks and safeguard farmers' livelihoods.

It can be easily understood that extensive efforts are required for saffron production. In India, saffron cultivation begins in June and July, while in some regions, it starts in August and September. Flowering usually begins in October. Apart from India, saffron cultivation is mainly done in Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Iran and China. 80 per cent of

the world's total saffron production is concentrated in Spain and Iran alone. For the farmers involved in its production, it is nothing less than a boon because its price in the market ranges from 3 to 3.5 lakh rupees per kilogram.

The allure of saffron extends to both men and women who actively engage in its cultivation. Shamim Akhtar, a 35-year-old farmer from Bayla, shared, "I've been cultivating saffron for several years now and the results have been rewarding. However, the construction of a road through our land resulted in crop damage. Nonetheless, my passion for saffron cultivation remains strong. Despite facing financial constraints to procure seeds, I aspire to continue with this endeavor."

Farmer Abdul Samad from the same village, however, has another concern on his mind. He is worried about agriculture being affected by changing environmental conditions. He explains that due to changing weather patterns, there has been a decrease in saffron production in Kashmir in recent years. It requires rainfall between 1000 to 1500 millimetres, which has decreased and untimely snowfall has had a negative impact on the soil, resulting in reduced saffron production.

Kashmir, which previously yielded up to 15 tons of saffron annually, has seen this output dwindle to 8 to 9 tons, a worrying trend. Despite this setback, Kashmiri saffron remains highly valued for its medicinal properties, known

to alleviate blood pressure and migraines and find use in beauty products. The central Government's attention to Kashmiri saffron is evident through initiatives like the National Saffron Mission (NSM). Aimed at bolstering saffron production and enhancing the socio-economic status of Kashmiri residents, the NSM has notably benefited saffron farmers. Additionally, various other Government schemes also promote saffron cultivation. However, for farmers to swiftly reap the benefits of these programs, they must be executed on a larger scale, given the increasing enthusiasm for saffron cultivation.

(The writer is a grassroots writer from Poonch, J&K. Charkha Features)

Hamas sending delegation to Egypt for further ceasefire talks

AP ■ BEIRUT

Hamas said Thursday that it was sending a delegation to Egypt for further cease-fire talks, in a new sign of progress in attempts by international mediators to hammer out an agreement between Israel and the militant group to end the war in Gaza.

After months of stop-and-start negotiations, the cease-fire efforts appear to have reached a critical stage, with Egyptian and American mediators reporting signs of compromise in recent days. But chances for the deal remain entangled with the key question of whether Israel will accept an end to the war without reaching its stated goal of destroying Hamas.

The stakes in the cease-fire negotiations were made clear in a new UN report that said if the Israel-Hamas war stops today, it will still take until 2040 to rebuild all the homes that have been destroyed by nearly seven months of Israeli bombardment and ground offensives in Gaza. It warned that the impact

of the damage to the economy will set back development for generations and will only get worse with every month fighting continues.

The proposal that US and Egyptian mediators have put to Hamas -- apparently with Israel's acceptance -- sets out a three-stage process that would bring an immediate six-week cease-fire and partial release of Israeli hostages, but also negotiations over a "permanent calm" that includes some sort of Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, according to an Egyptian official. Hamas is seeking guarantees for a full Israeli withdrawal and complete end to the war. Hamas officials have sent mixed signals about the proposal in recent days. But on Thursday, its supreme leader, Ismail Haniyeh, said in a statement that he had spoken to Egypt's intelligence chief and "stressed the positive spirit of the movement in studying the cease-fire proposal."

The statement said that Hamas negotiators would travel to Cairo "to complete the ongoing

discussions with the aim of working forward for an agreement." Haniyeh said he had also spoken to the prime minister of Qatar, another key mediator in the process.

The brokers are hopeful that the deal will bring an end to a conflict that has killed more than 34,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, caused widespread destruction and plunged the territory into a humanitarian crisis. They also hope a deal will avert an Israeli attack on Rafah, where more than half of Gaza's 2.3 million people have sought shelter after fleeing battle zones elsewhere in the territory.

If Israel does agree to end the war in return for a full hostage release, it would be a major turnaround. Since Hamas' October 7 attack stunned Israel, its leaders have vowed not to stop their bombardment and ground offensives until the militant group is destroyed. They also say Israel must keep a military presence in Gaza and security control after the war to ensure Hamas doesn't rebuild.

Turkiye halts all trade with Israel over military actions in Gaza

AP ■ ANKARA

Turkiye on Thursday suspended all imports and exports to Israel citing the country's ongoing military action in Gaza and vowed to continue to impose the measures until the Israeli government allows the flow of humanitarian aid to the region.

A Turkish Trade Ministry statement said "export and import transactions in relation to Israel have been stopped, covering all products."

Turkish officials would coordinate with Palestinian authorities to ensure that Palestinians are not affected by the suspension of imports and exports, the ministry said.

The ministry described the step as the "second phase" of measures against Israel, adding that the steps would remain in



Palestinians stand in the ruins of the Chahine family home, after an overnight Israeli strike that killed at least two adults and five boys and girls under the age of 16 in Rafah, southern Gaza Strip, Friday. An Israeli strike on the city of Rafah on the southern edge of the Gaza Strip killed several people, including children, hospital officials said Friday.

force until Israel "allows an uninterrupted and sufficient flow of humanitarian aid to Gaza."

Publicly at least, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to insist that is the only acceptable endgame.

He has vowed that even if a cease-fire is reached, Israel will eventually attack Rafah, which he says is Hamas' last stronghold in Gaza.

He repeated his determination to do so in talks Wednesday with US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who was in Israel on a regional tour to push the deal through.

The agreement's immediate fate hinges on whether Hamas will accept uncertainty over the final phases to bring the initial six-week pause in fighting -- and at least postpone what it is feared would be a devastating assault on Rafah.

Egypt has been privately assuring Hamas that the deal will mean a total end to the war. But the Egyptian official said Hamas says the text's language is too vague and wants it to specify a complete Israeli pull-out from all of Gaza.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity to talk about the

internal deliberations.

On Wednesday evening, however, the news looked less positive as Osama Hamdan, a top Hamas official, expressed scepticism, saying the group's initial position was "negative."

Speaking to Hezbollah's Al-Manar TV, he said that talks were still ongoing but would stop if Israel invades Rafah.

Blinken hiked up pressure on Hamas to accept, saying Israel had made "very important" compromises. "There's no time for further haggling. The deal is there," Blinken said Wednesday before leaving for the US.

An Israeli airstrike, meanwhile, killed at least five people, including a child, in Deir al-Balah in central Gaza. The bodies were seen and counted by Associated Press journalists at a hospital. The war broke out on October 7 when Hamas militants broke into southern Israel and killed over 1,200 people, mostly Israelis, taking around 250 others hostage, some released during a cease-fire on November.

Sunak under pressure amid dire local election results for his party

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's leadership is under severe pressure on Friday as the results of local elections and a crucial by-election poured in overnight, delivering what is being characterised as one of the worst poll outcomes for the governing Conservative Party in 40 years.

Rebels from within his party are expected to renew their attacks on the British Indian leader after the Opposition Labour Party made definitive gains, including overturning the Tory majority in the Blackpool South by-election which was necessitated following a resignation amid a lobbying law. Labour Leader Sir Keir Starmer declared the result as a "seismic" victory and an overall poll verdict in favour of the party as it comes on the eve of a general election, expected later this year.

"Blackpool speaks for the whole country... This is the one

Boris Johnson turned away from polling station

London (AP) — Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was turned away from a polling station after forgetting to bring ID to vote in the UK's local elections. British media reported Friday that Johnson -- who introduced the requirement for voters to provide ID with a photo when he was in office -- was told by polling station staff in South Oxfordshire Thursday that he would not be able to vote without proving his identity. Sky News reported that Johnson, who served as Conservative prime minister from 2019 to 2022, was later able to cast his ballot and that he voted Conservative. Johnson introduced the Elections Act requiring photo ID in 2022 which was implemented last year.



contest where voters had the chance to send a message to Rishi Sunak's Conservatives directly, and that message is an overwhelming vote for change," said Starmer of the by-election.

"The message to Rishi Sunak is clear. It's time for change, it's time for a general election," he said. The Labour candidate in Blackpool South, Chris Webb, defeated Conservative David Jones in the constituency which the Tories had won from Labour under former prime minister Boris Johnson in 2019. The swing of 26 per cent from

the Tories to Labour has been characterised as the third biggest in a by-election since 1945.

"We're probably looking at certainly one of the worst, if not the worst, Conservative performance in local government elections for the last 40 years," eminent pollster Professor John Curtice told the BBC. The by-election took place alongside local elections around England and Wales, in which voters elected their local councillors who manage day to day issues such as waste collection, roads and local infrastructure as well as crime fighting.

The results will continue to pour in over the weekend, with the overall picture expected to be clear by Sunday. But the early indications are that Labour has taken control of a number of local authorities in the regions that had turned away from the party in favour of the Tories over its anti-Brexit stance.

Prosecutors present recorded conversation as key evidence

AP ■ NEW YORK

The prosecution's star witness has yet to take the stand in Donald Trump's hush money trial. But jurors are already hearing Michael Cohen's words as prosecutors work to directly tie Trump to payments to silence women with damaging claims about him before the 2016 election.

The second week of testimony in the case will wrap up Friday after jurors heard a potentially crucial piece of evidence: a recording of Trump and Cohen, then his attorney, discussing a plan to pay off an ex-Playboy model who claimed to have an affair with Trump. The former president denies the affair. Prosecutors have spent the week using detailed testimony about meetings, email exchanges, business transactions and bank accounts to build on the foundation of their case accusing the pre-

TRUMP HUSH MONEY TRIAL



sumptive Republican presidential nominee of a scheme to illegally influence the 2016 election. They are setting the stage for pivotal testimony from Cohen, who paid porn actor Stormy Daniels USD 1,300,000 for her silence before he went to prison for the hush money scheme.

Trump's defense has worked

to poke holes in the credibility of prosecutors' witnesses, and show that Trump was trying to protect his reputation and family -- not his campaign -- by keeping the women quiet.

The defense also suggested while questioning an attorney who represented two women in hush money negotiations that Trump was, in fact, the victim of extortion. The recording played Thursday was secretly made by Cohen shortly before the 2016 election.

Cohen is heard telling Trump about a plan to purchase the rights to former Playboy model Karen McDougal's story from the National Enquirer so that it would never come out. The tabloid had previously bought McDougal's story to bury it on Trump's behalf.

WH defends Joe Biden's 'xenophobic' remarks on India, China

Washington (PTI) — The United States is a country of immigrants, the White House said, defending President Joe Biden's remarks calling two of his QUAD partners -- India and Japan -- as well as Russia and China "xenophobic" nations, asserting that none of these countries, unlike the US, welcome immigrants.

Responding to a question about the remarks made by Biden at an election fundraiser on Wednesday, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said that the president was making a "broader point." "He was making a broader point. Our allies and partners know very well that -- how much this president respects them," Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news conference on Thursday.

"As you know, in regard to Japan, they were just here for the state visit. The US-Japan relationship is an important relationship. It's a deep, enduring alliance," she said.

"He (Biden) was making a more broad comment, speaking about this country and speaking about how important it is to be a country of immigrants and how it makes our country stronger. And so, that's what he was talking about," she said. "It relates to our relationship with our allies, that continues. Obviously, we have a strong relationship with India (and) with Japan. And the President, if you just look at the last three years, has certainly focused on those diplomatic relationships," Jean-Pierre said.

"He was talking about who we are as a country. He was talking about the importance of being in a country of immigrants, especially as you see the attacks that we have seen very recently, in the last couple of years, those attacks on immigrants, in particular," the White House Press Secretary said, defending the president. "The President is always going to be really clear on speaking to issues that matter to the American people."

Kenya president postpones reopening of schools

AP ■ NAIROBI

Kenyan President William Ruto has postponed next week's planned reopening of schools until further notice, as heavy rains and floods that have killed more than 200 people continue.

The president, in his state of the nation address on Friday, said that "meteorological reports paint a dire picture," citing the possibility of Cyclone Hidaya hitting coastal Kenya in coming days. Kenya and other parts of East Africa have been overwhelmed by flooding, with more than 1,500,000 displaced people living in camps across the country.

Schools originally were to reopen this week, but the education ministry postponed that by a week. Students will now wait for the announcement of new reopening dates as some



dams and reservoirs that are either full or nearly full to evacuate or be forcefully moved. Water levels at two major hydroelectric dams have reached historic highs and the government has warned those living downstream along the Tana River.

Last week, a boat capsized on the river, which flows to the Indian Ocean, leaving seven people dead and 13 others missing. A passenger bus was also swept off a bridge along the same river last month. The government has been accused of an inadequate response to the floods.

The flooding has left more than 155 people dead in neighboring Tanzania, where Cyclone Hidaya is expected to hit coastal areas. Hundreds of people have been affected in Burundi, Ethiopia and Somalia as well.

schools remain flooded and others have been damaged. Some displaced people have been living in schools while the government prepares to relocate them to camps.

The government has ordered people living near 178

Denmark to liberalise its abortion law to allow procedure until 18th week of pregnancy

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

Denmark's government said Friday it is relaxing its restrictions on abortion for the first time in 50 years to make it legal for women to terminate pregnancies up to the 18th week from the previous 12th week. Officials said the law will also be changed to allow girls between 15 and 17 years old to have an abortion without parental consent.

Marie Bjerre, the gender equality minister, said Denmark is strengthening women's rights while they are being rolled back in other parts of the world. "It is about the individual woman's freedom, about the right to decide over her own body and her own life. It is a historic day for women's equality," she said. Free abortion was introduced in Denmark in

1973. The limit was set at up to 12 weeks because "at that time all abortions were performed surgically, and at that time an abortion after the 12th week entailed a greater risk of complications," the health ministry said.

"After 50 years, it is time for the abortion rules to keep up with the times," Health Minister Sophie Lohde said.

She said neighbouring Sweden, which set the legal limit at 18 weeks of gestation in 1996, has not experienced a significant increase in the number of abortions or when they are carried out.

The three-party centre government agreed on the move with two left-leaning groups, the Socialist People's Party and the Red-Green Alliance, and two centre parties, the Social Liberals and the Alternative. The deal is to be sealed by a

vote in parliament. No date for that was announced, but it is all but certain to pass because the government has a majority.

The change is expected to enter into force on June 1, 2025. The health ministry said the legal age of consent in Denmark is 15, and a 15-year-old girl can make her own choices about her own body.

Bjerre said that she hoped that "young women can find support from their parents. But if there is disagreement, it must ultimately be the young woman's own decision whether she wants to be a mother. It is her body and her life."

Lawmaker Mette Thiesen, from a populist, anti-immigration party that was not part of the deal, called it "a terrible day. It's a terrible new law."

There is a "very fine balance between the woman's right to her own body, but also the right

to life of the little life that lies in the mother's womb," she told Danish broadcaster DR. "In week 18, we are talking about a small person with fingers and toes, which you can feel inside the womb."

Figures from the Danish Health Data Authority show that the total number of abortions in Denmark has been stable in recent years. In 2022 there were 14,700 medical abortions, compared to 14,500 in 2017. It peaked in 1975 when 27,900 abortions were performed.

While abortion is a deeply divisive issue in the United States, it is broadly legal across Europe.

France inscribed the guaranteed right to abortion in its constitution in a world first this year, sending a powerful message of support to women around the globe. Meanwhile, Poland's parliament held a

China launches probe mission to Moon's far side

AP ■ BEIJING/ WENCHANG

China on Friday successfully launched a 53-day-long lunar probe mission to collect samples for the first time from the far side of the Moon and bring them for scientific studies. The Chang'e-6 mission is tasked with collecting and then returning samples from the moon's far side to Earth -- the first endeavour of its kind in the history of human lunar exploration, China National Space Administration (CNSA) said.

The entire mission would last for 53 days. The far side of the moon is not visible from Earth. An hour after the launch, an official announced that Chang'e-6's launch was "a complete success."

The CNSA has announced that scientific instruments from France, Italy and the European Space Agency/Sweden will be on board the lander of the Chang'e-6 mission and a

Pakistani payload on the orbiter. This is the first time that China has included an orbiter from its all-weather ally Pakistan in its moon mission. According to reports from Pakistan quoting the Institute of Space Technology (IST), the satellite ICUBE-Q has been designed and developed by IST in collaboration with China's Shanghai University SJTU and Pakistan's national space agency Suparco. ICUBE-Q orbiter carries two optical cameras to image the lunar surface.

The lunar probe was carried by a Long March-5 Y8 rocket blasted off smoothly from the Wenchang Space Launch Site on the coast of China's southern island province of Hainan. The launch was telecast live by state-run television.

Change 6 consists of four components: an orbiter, a lander, an ascender and a re-entry moon, including landing a rover. China has also sent a rover to Mars and built a space station, which is currently in

operation. Earlier, China announced plans for a manned lunar landing by 2030.

India became the first country to land near the little-explored lunar south pole region last year when its Chandrayaan-3's lander, carrying the Pragyaan rover successfully landed there. "Collecting and returning samples from the far side of the moon is an unprecedented feat. Now we know very little about the moon's far side. If the Chang'e-6 mission can achieve its goal, it will provide scientists with the first direct evidence to understand the environment and material composition of the far side of the moon, which is of great significance," said Wu Weiren, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and chief designer of China's lunar exploration programme.

After the spacecraft reaches the moon, it will make a soft landing on the far side. Within 48 hours after landing, a robotic

arm will be extended to scoop rocks and soil from the lunar surface, and a drill will bore into the ground. Scientific detection work will be carried out simultaneously.

After the samples are sealed in a container, the ascender will take off from the moon and dock with the orbiter in lunar orbit. The orbiter will then carry the samples back to Earth, landing in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. The entire flight is expected to last about 53 days, the CNSA is quoted as saying by the state-run Xinhua news agency.

Remote-sensing images show the moon's two sides are very different. The near side is relatively flat, while the far side is thickly dotted with impact craters of different sizes and has much fewer lunar maria than the near side. Scientists infer that the lunar crust on the far side is much thicker than that on the near side. But why that is so remains a mystery.

Maryland officials release cost estimate for rebuilding bridge

AP ■ ANNAPOLIS

Maryland plans to rebuild the Francis Scott Key Bridge in just over four years at an estimated cost between USD 1.7 billion and USD 1.9 billion, a state transportation official said Thursday. The state plans to build a new span by fall of 2028, said David Broughton, a spokesperson for the Maryland Department of Transportation. He said the cost estimate is preliminary, and detailed engineering specifics have not been confirmed.

As salvage efforts continue, authorities also announced late Wednesday they had recovered the body of a fifth person who was missing after the bridge's March 26 collapse, which shut down the port of Baltimore, one of the busiest ports in the country. Six members of a roadwork crew plunged to their deaths when a container ship lost power and crashed into one of the bridge's supporting columns.

The Key Bridge Response Unified Command announced that the victim found Wednesday was identified as Miguel Angel Luna Gonzalez, 49, of Glen Burnie, Maryland. All of the victims were Latino immigrants who came to the United States from Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

"We continue to pray for Miguel Angel Luna Gonzalez, his family and all those who love him, acknowledging the anguish they have experienced since the Key Bridge collapsed," Gov. Wes Moore said in a statement Thursday. "We pray for comfort, we pray for healing, and we pray for peace in knowing that their loved one has finally come home."

Salvage teams found one of the missing construction vehicles Wednesday and notified the Maryland State Police, officials said. State police investigators and Maryland Transportation Authority Police officers and the FBI responded to the scene and recovered the body inside a red

truck. The state police underwater recovery team and crime scene unit also assisted.

Meanwhile, the broker for the bridge's insurance policy confirmed Thursday that a USD 350 million payout will be made to the state of Maryland in what is expected to be the first of many payouts related to the collapse. Chubb, the company that insured the bridge, is preparing to make the USD 350 million payment, according to WTWH, the broker. Douglas Menelly, a spokesperson for WTWH, on Thursday confirmed plans for the payout, which was first reported by The Wall Street Journal. Chubb did not immediately respond to a request for comment Thursday. The Maryland Transportation Authority said Thursday that the state's treasurer filed a claim on the day of the bridge's collapse "against our USD 350 million property policy and put on notice our USD 150 million liability policy first tier carrier on behalf of MDTA."

Ukraine, trade likely to top agenda as Xi visits Europe

AP ■ TAIPEI

Ukraine, trade and investment are expected to dominate Chinese leader Xi Jinping's first trip to Europe in five years, as the Asian giant rebuilds its foreign relations after a prolonged absence during the Covid-19 pandemic. Xi will start the tour in Paris on Monday, meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron, who has been stressing the idea of European strategic autonomy from the US. On a visit to Beijing last year, Macron courted controversy by saying France would not necessarily always align with the US in foreign policy, an apparent reference to American support for the self-governing republic of Taiwan, which China claims as its own territory to be annexed by force if necessary. After leaving France, Xi will visit Hungary and Serbia, both seen as China-friendly and close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, rebuffing Western criticism of his full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Xi's European visits will be closely followed in Washington for signs of diminishing support for its key foreign policy goals. The Chinese leader will arrive in France just as Paris is putting the finishing touches on its preparations for hosting the Summer Olympics, an event in which China invests huge amount of national prestige. France sees Xi's visit, which officially marks 60 years of French-Chinese diplomatic relations, as an important diplomatic moment, and wants to focus on China's broader relations with the EU. Macron invited European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to the talks Monday. It comes a month before Macron, who positions himself as the diplomatic leader of Europe, hosts Biden for a similar state visit. It is also a sign of "the good vibes from Macron's visit to China in April last year," said Kerry Brown, professor of Chinese Studies



and director of the Lau China Institute at King's College London. "This is a highly strategic visit to Europe by Xi. And in his itinerary you can divine the runes of Chinese policy on Europe now, bolstering the traditional links as far as possible, and reinforcing new ones," Brown said. Xi is also visiting Budapest, where Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, in power for 14 years, is facing political challenges from the opposition over his authoritarian style. Hungary has straddled a middle ground between its membership in the EU and NATO and an unusual openness to diplomatic and trade relationships with eastern autocracies such as Russia and China. Orbán, a right-wing populist who has forged close ties with Russia, delayed Sweden's entry into NATO for months. China has cited NATO expansion as provoking Russia to invade Ukraine. Hungary is the first EU member to participate in Xi's signature Belt and Road Initiative that seeks to build billions of dollars of roads, ports, power plants and other infrastructure across Asia, Africa and beyond. Orbán was the only EU leader to attend a conference in Beijing on the BRI, which has been criticized for burying participating countries in debt and failing to deliver on

promised investments, something that prompted Italy to drop out last year. Despite that, Hungary's government has deepened its economic ties with China, with the proliferation of Chinese electric vehicle (EV) battery factories across the country gaining the most attention. Near Debrecen, Hungary's second-largest city, construction is underway of a nearly 550-acre, 7.3 billion euro (\$7.9 billion) EV battery plant, Hungary's largest-ever foreign direct investment. China has also invested heavily in infrastructure to link Hungary with its southern neighbor Serbia, Xi's next stop on his European tour. In 2014, Hungary and Serbia concluded an agreement with Beijing to modernize the railway between their capitals of Budapest and Belgrade, part of a Belt and Road plan to link up with the Chinese-controlled port of Piraeus in Greece, to the south, an entry point for Chinese goods to Central and Eastern Europe. The more than \$2 billion project is expected to be completed in 2026, after numerous delays. In Serbia, Xi will hold talks with President Aleksandar Vucic, with whose government China has built strong relations. The two countries have a long history of friendship, particularly since 1999, when NATO bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, killing three Chinese nationals, during the

air war to end Serbia's brutal crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists in Kosovo. The US apologized, saying faulty target selection was to blame, but the incident led to violent attacks on US diplomatic installations in China and fueled anti-American sentiment in both countries that endures to this day. In 2022, shortly after the Russian assault on Ukraine, Serbia took semi-secret delivery of a sophisticated Chinese anti-aircraft system flown in on six Chinese Air Force Y-20 transport planes. The arms delivery over the territory of at least two NATO member states, Turkey and Bulgaria, was seen by experts as a demonstration of China's growing global reach. China claims neutrality in the Ukraine conflict but Xi and Putin declared their governments had a "no limits friendship" before Moscow's attack on Ukraine. China has refused to call the Russian assault an invasion and has been accused of bolstering Russia's capacity to produce weapons and its military advantage against Ukraine, which is awaiting tens of billions in Western military aid. A US military aid bill passed last week allots \$61 billion for Ukraine, as well as \$8 billion to counter Chinese threats in Taiwan and the Indo-Pacific, which China has condemned as a dangerous provocation. China's foreign ministry said the US position on Chinese defense trade with Russia was hypocritical when considered alongside the amount of military assistance Washington is providing to Kyiv. China denies selling arms to Russia and the US says it has found no direct evidence of such evidence of such. However, China does sell machine tools, microelectronics and other technology that Moscow in turn is using to produce missiles, tanks, aircraft and other weaponry for use in its war against Ukraine, according to a US assessment.

All that is left for Pak Army is to 'murder me', Imran Khan writes from prison

PTI ■ LONDON/ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan has lamented the sorry state of affairs in the country where political leaders like him languish in jail and said all that is left for the powerful military leadership was to "murder" him. In a column for the UK's 'Daily Telegraph' newspaper, penned from the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi where he is being held for disputed corruption charges, the 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician reiterated his previous assertion that if anything happens to him or his wife, General Asim Munir - the Chief of Army Staff, will be responsible. The founder of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party said the cash-strapped country was at a "dangerous crossroads", with the government a "laughing stock". "The military establishment has done all they could against

me. All that is left for them is to now murder me," writes Khan. "I have stated publicly that if anything happens to me or my wife (Bushra Bibi), Gen. Asim Munir will be responsible. But I am not afraid because my faith is strong. I would prefer death over slavery," he says. The powerful army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half of its 75-plus years of existence, has wielded considerable power in matters of security and foreign policy. However, the military has denied meddling in the country's politics. Khan warned that the state was treading the same path it trod in 1971, when it lost East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. "At the same time, it is seeing an upsurge in terrorism and a growing alienation in Balochistan where the issue of enforced disappearances is growing in severity. On Pakistan's borders, India has already admitted to undertak-



ing assassinations inside of Pakistan and the international border with Afghanistan remains volatile," he notes. Khan notes the military establishment's expectation of "unquestioning support" from the US, in return for the provision of access to airspace and related facilities to the US for military purposes, has been punctured after the publication of the latest US State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, which highlights the many human rights violations in Pakistan.

"With an economy in crisis, spiralling prices and a people politically angry at having their electoral mandate stolen and being economically beleaguered, the state stands isolated," he writes. Khan hailed the "democratic revenge" of the February 8 general election, during which people came out and "voted overwhelmingly" for candidates supported by his party. "Unfortunately, instead of accepting the people's mandate, the military establishment went into a fit of rage and electoral results were manipulated to bring into power the losers. The same vote tampering was seen in the recent by-elections," he notes. The PTI founder also praised the six "brave judges" of the Islamabad High Court who have written a letter to the Chief Justice of Pakistan highlighting instances of harassment and blackmail including of their families by intelligence agencies.

20 die in NW Pak bus mishap

Peshawar (PTI): At least 20 people were killed and 21 others injured when a passenger bus skidded off a mountainous terrain and plunged into a ravine in northwest Pakistan's Gilgit Baltistan region on Friday, authorities said. The incident occurred around 5:30 am on the Karakoram Highway in Diamer district when the bus was on its way from Rawalpindi to Hunza, a police official said. The driver lost control of the vehicle which then overturned and landed near the banks of the Indus River, the official said. As many as 43 passengers were aboard the bus when the incident took place, the official said. The injured were moved to the Chilas hospital, the official said. The official said the rescue efforts assisted by army helicopters were over and the dead and injured were moved to the hospital. The source said the death toll was expected to rise further as many of the



injured were in critical condition. Gilgit Baltistan Chief Minister Haji Gulbar Khan expressed condolences over the incident and directed the administration to provide immediate medical aid to the injured. Gilgit-Baltistan government spokesperson Faizullah Faraq said an emergency was declared at the Chilas Hospital after the acci-

SL PM says direct pvt investment from China welcome

Colombo (PTI): Sri Lankan Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena has welcomed direct private investments from China and greater Chinese participation in sectors like agriculture, renewable energy, IT and education. The issue of direct private investment came during a meeting of Prime Minister Gunawardena and Chinese Ambassador to Sri Lanka Qi Zhenhong on Thursday when they discussed ways for the early implementation of the agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) reached between the two countries during the former's official visit to Beijing in March. A statement from the Prime Minister's Media Office said Gunawardena and Qi met at the Temple Trees, the official residence of the Sri Lankan prime minister.

dent. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief on the loss of lives and conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved families. He instructed authorities to provide the injured with "every possible medical treatment". Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi also expressed his condolences on the incident and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Kremlin critics say Russia targeting foes abroad

AP ■ MOSCOW

The military defector was killed in a hail of gunfire and then run over by a car in Spain. The opposition figure was struck repeatedly with a hammer in Lithuania. The journalist fell ill from a suspected poisoning in Germany. Since President Vladimir Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine, attacks and harassment of Russians — prominent or not — have been blamed on Moscow's intelligence operatives across Europe and elsewhere. Despite attempts by Western governments to dismantle Russian spy networks, experts say the Kremlin apparently is still able to pursue those it perceives as traitors abroad in an attempt to silence dissent. Opponents of Putin increasingly fear the long arm of Moscow's security services, including in countries they once thought were safe. "We just escaped Russia and had this illusion that we've escaped prison," said journalist Irina Dolinina, who works for the independent outlet Important Stories, based in the Czech capital of Prague. Dolinina and colleague Alesya Marokhovskaya were harassed



in 2023, leading to fears they were under surveillance. They were sent threatening messages via comments on the media outlet's website and told not to travel to a conference in Sweden. To underscore the point, the threat included their airline ticket numbers, seat locations and hotel booking. "It was a mistake for us to think that here, we are safe," Dolinina told The Associated Press. The Kremlin, which routinely denies going after its opponents abroad, has been blamed for decades for such attacks. The most famous cases include Soviet revolutionary-turned-exiled dissident Leon Trotsky, who was killed in 1940 in Mexico after being attacked

with an ice ax by a Soviet agent, and Georgi Markov, a dissident working for the BBC's Bulgarian language service, who died in 1978 in London after being jabbed with a poison-tipped umbrella. Britain was the site of other poisonings blamed on Russian security services under Putin. Defector and former intelligence officer Alexander Litvinenko died after drinking tea laced with radioactive polonium-210 in 2006, and former spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter fell gravely ill but recovered following an attack with a Soviet-era nerve agent in 2018. The Kremlin repeatedly denied involvement in the British cases.

Kremlin says comments on Ukraine by Macron, Cameron 'dangerous'

Kyiv (AP): Recent statements by France's president and Britain's foreign secretary about the war in Ukraine are "dangerous" and will deepen international tension around the conflict, the Kremlin's spokesman said on Friday. French President Emmanuel Macron, in an interview published Thursday, repeated an earlier comment that he doesn't exclude sending troops to Ukraine. UK Foreign Secretary David Cameron, meanwhile, said during a visit to Kyiv the same day that Ukraine will be able to use British long-range weapons to strike targets inside Russia — a possibility that some other NATO countries providing weapons have balked at. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov branded Macron's comment "a very important and very dangerous statement." Remarks by Macron about possible direct French engagement in the conflict represent a "very dangerous trend," he said. Cameron's statement about Ukraine's right to use British weapons provided to strike facilities inside Russia is "another very dangerous statement," Peskov told reporters. "This is a direct escalation of

tensions around the Ukrainian conflict, which potentially may threaten European security, the entire European security architecture," Peskov said. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 significantly heightened tension between the Kremlin and NATO countries. The alliance countries have provided much of the military hardware that Kyiv is using to fight Russia, ensuring that the tension has continued to simmer. Russia, in turn, has sought help from China, Iran and North Korea, according to the US. As Russia heaps battlefield pressure on depleted Ukrainian forces and appears poised to launch a major offensive, that antagonism has become sharper. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu claimed Friday that Russian troops had captured more than 500 square kilometers (200 square miles) of territory from Ukrainian forces since the start of the year. "The Russian groups of forces continue to break through the enemy's strongholds along the entire line of contact," Shoigu said at a meeting with top military brass.

Cyberattack: Germany warns Russia of consequences

Sydney (AP): German's top diplomat on Friday said Russia will face consequences after accusing its military intelligence service of masterminding an "absolutely intolerable" cyberattack. Relations between the two European countries were already tense, with Germany providing military support to Ukraine in its ongoing war with Russia. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said Russian state hackers were behind a cyberattack last year that targeted the Social Democrats, the leading party in the governing coalition. "Russian state hackers attacked Germany in cyberspace," she said at a news conference in the Australian city of Adelaide. "We can attribute this attack to the group called APT28, which is steered by the military intelligence service of Russia." "This is absolutely intolerable and unacceptable and will have consequences," she said. Baerbock is visiting Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. "The defense cooperation between Germany and Australia is close and we would like to deepen it further and together expand it, because we are in a situation where we face similar threats," said Baerbock, who is the first German foreign minister to visit Australia in 13 years.

Pakistan's debut lunar orbiter lifts off from China

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's debut lunar satellite mission was launched Friday on board China's first lunar probe mission to collect samples from the far side of the Moon. The 53-day-long Change-6 mission will collect samples for the first time from the far side of the moon and bring them for scientific studies. This is the first time that China has included an orbiter from its all-weather ally Pakistan in its moon mission. According to the Institute of Space Technology (IST), Pakistan's ICUBE-Q satellite has been designed and developed by IST in collaboration with China's Shanghai University SJTU and Pakistan's national space agency Suparco. ICUBE-Q orbiter carries two optical cameras to image the lunar surface. The Change-6 mission is tasked with collecting and then returning samples from the moon's far side to Earth — the first endeavour of its kind in the history of human lunar exploration. Following the launch, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated the nation and the sci-

entists for launching the first lunar orbit mission. In a statement, Sharif said the ICUBE-Q satellite is Pakistan's first step into space. "Just as in the nuclear field, our scientists, engineers, and talented individuals are diligently striving in this field," he said. "This achievement will bolster Pakistan's satellite communication capabilities and pave the way for new opportunities in scientific research, economic development, and national security," the prime minister said. Congratulating students and scientists on the launch of the lunar orbital mission, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar posted on X, "Today's launch from Hainan in China, is a good example of countries and organisations coming together for space cooperation and shared benefits. It shows the promise of Pakistani youth." Quoting IST Core Committee member Dr Khurram Khurshid, Geo News reported that CubeSat Satellite ICUBE-Q will reach the lunar orbit in five days and will circle the moon for three to six months.

Damaged in war, vibrant church in Ukraine rises as symbol of faith, culture

AP ■ LYPYVKA (UKRAINE)

This Orthodox Easter season, an extraordinary new church is bringing spiritual comfort to war-weary residents of the Ukrainian village of Lypivka. Two years ago, it also provided physical refuge from the horrors outside. Almost 100 residents sheltered in a basement chapel at the Church of the Intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary while Russian troops occupied the village in March 2022 as they closed in on Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, 40 miles (60 kilometers) to the east. "The fighting was right here," the Rev. Hennadii Kharkivskiy said. He pointed to the churchyard, where a memorial stone commemorates six Ukrainian soldiers killed in the battle for

and work to finish the solid building topped by red domes that towers over the village, with its scarred and damaged buildings, blooming fruit trees and fields that the Russians left littered with land mines. For many of those involved — including a tenacious priest, a wealthy philanthropist, a famous artist and a team of craftspeople — rebuilding this church plays a part in Ukraine's struggle for culture, identity and its very existence. The building, a striking fusion of the ancient and the modern, reflects a country determined to express its soul even in wartime. The building's austere exterior masks a blaze of color inside. The vibrant red, blue, orange and gold panels decorating walls and ceiling are the work

of Anatoliy Kryvolap, an artist whose bold, modernist images of saints and angels make this church unique in Ukraine. The 77-year-old Kryvolap, whose abstract paintings sell for tens of thousands of dollars at auction, said that he wanted to eschew the severe-looking icons he'd seen in many



Orthodox churches. "It seems to me that going to church to meet God should be a celebration," he said. There has been a church on this site for more than 300 years. An earlier building was destroyed by shelling during World War II. The small wooden church that replaced it was put to more

workaday uses in Soviet times, when religion was suppressed. Kharkivskiy reopened the parish in 1992 following the collapse of the Soviet Union, and set about rebuilding the church, spiritually and physically, with funding from Bohdan Batruk, a Ukrainian film producer and distributor. Work stopped when Russian troops launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Moscow's forces reached the fringes of Kyiv before being driven back. Lypivka was liberated by the start of April. Since then, fighting has been concentrated in the east and south of Ukraine, though aerial attacks with rockets, missiles and drones are a constant threat across the country. By May 2022, work-

ers had resumed work on the church. It has been slow going. Millions of Ukrainians fled the country when war erupted, including builders and craftspeople. Hundreds of thousands of others have joined the military. Inside the church, a tower of wooden scaffolding climbs up to the dome, where a red and gold image of Christ raises a hand in blessing. For now, services take place in the smaller basement, where the priest, in white and gold robes, recently conducted a service for a couple of dozen parishioners as the smell of incense wafted through the candlelit room. He is expecting a large crowd for Easter, which falls on Sunday. Eastern Orthodox Christians usually celebrate Easter later than Catholic and

Protestant churches, because they use a different method of calculating the date for the holy day that marks Christ's resurrection. A majority of Ukrainians identify as Orthodox Christians, though the church is divided. Many belong to the independent Orthodox Church of Ukraine, with which the Lypivka church is affiliated. The rival Ukrainian Orthodox Church was loyal to the patriarch in Moscow until splitting from Russia after the 2022 invasion and is viewed with suspicion by many Ukrainians. Kharkivskiy says the size of his congregation has remained stable even though the population of the village has shrunk dramatically since the war began. In tough times, he says, people turn to religion.

Sensex tumbles 700 points

Amid broadbased selloff; Nifty slips from record

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex plummeted over 700 points to sink below the 74,000 level and Nifty retreated from a record high on Friday as investors pared exposure to telecom, capital goods and tech stocks. Heavy selling pressure in Reliance Industries, L&T and HDFC bank counters also pulled indices down, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 732.96 points or 0.98 per cent to settle at 73,878.15 after soaring 484.07 points earlier in the day. From its intra-day high of 75,095.18, the benchmark tanked 1,627.45 points to the day's low of 73,467.73. The NSE Nifty also declined 172.35 points or 0.76 per cent to 22,475.85. The benchmark hit a record 22,794.70 in the early trade, up 146.5 points or 0.64 per cent. From the Sensex basket, Larsen & Toubro, Maruti, Reliance Industries, Nestle, Bharti Airtel, UltraTech Cement, Kotak Mahindra Bank and JSW Steel were among the major laggards. Bajaj Finance climbed nearly 1 per cent higher. The Reserve



Bank of India (RBI) has lifted restrictions on Bajaj Finance on sanctioning and disbursement of loans through eCOM and Insta EMI Card, the company said in a regulatory filing on Thursday. In November last year, the central bank directed Bajaj Finance to stop sanction and disbursement of loans under its two lending products — eCOM and Insta EMI Card — due to the company's non-adherence to the extant provisions of digital lending guidelines. Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, State Bank of India, ICICI Bank and Infosys

were among the other gainers. "Profit-booking and a degree of caution ahead of the release of the US non-farm payroll resulted in selling pressure in the market. However, the absence of significant negative surprises in Q4 earnings thus far, along with a decline in oil prices, might help to mitigate the downside. "Though the correction was broad-based, the large-cap stock was the key underperformer due to the moderation of FII's exposure to the domestic market," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Sebi facilitates ease in digital onboarding process

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Friday relaxed the digital onboarding process for clients of portfolio managers, a move aimed at facilitating ease of doing business. While onboarding clients, portfolio managers will have to ensure that new clients use a typed or electronically written note saying that they have understood the fee structure rather than the current practice that focuses on clients giving the same in their own handwriting. The change, aimed at making digital onboarding easier, would become effective from October 1, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular. The move came after Sebi observed certain operational challenges in complying with the requirement of a handwritten note on the annexure of fees in the agreements, including the non-availability of a stylus at the location of the investors. This requirement was creating a hindrance towards the complete digital onboarding of the clients. "While on-boarding a client, portfolio manager shall



ensure that the new client has separately signed the annexure on fees and charges and added a note, that they have understood the structure for fees and charges in handwritten in case the client is on-boarded through physical mode and typed using keyboard or written electronically using fingers/a stylus pen, in case the client is on-boarded through digital mode," Sebi said. Also, the regulator said that the standard procedure for onboarding of clients through digital mode would be specified by the industry body Association of Portfolio Managers in India (APMI) in consultation with the markets

regulator. Sebi said that portfolio managers will have to provide an annexure detailing the fee calculation. To facilitate ease of understanding of the critical aspects of the portfolio manager-client relationship, Sebi asked portfolio manager to additionally provide its client 'Most Important Terms and Conditions' document, which needs to be duly acknowledged by the client. On Thursday, Sebi decided to promote collective oversight of PMS' (Portfolio Management Services) distributors by making registration with the APMI mandatory for them.

ADB open to funding space sector in India: VP Bhargava

PTI ■ TBILISI (GEORGIA)

The Asian Development Bank is open to funding the space sector in India in addition to focusing on climate finance to mitigate the associated risks, said its Vice President Bhargava Dasgupta on Friday. ADB has done some projects in satellite in the Asia Pacific region, but has not provided any assistance in the Indian space sector. "We have not done much till now. We are always open to look at new areas... We understand it has been opened up and there is lot of interest on startup side... If we find alignment with our objectives in terms of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we will look at it," he said. Last month, the government notified amendments to the foreign direct investment policy in the space sector to attract offshore investors in satellite manufacturing and satellite launch vehicles segments. Talking about initiatives in India, Dasgupta said, "We are very excited about the work that is happening in the country including recently

launched rooftop solar projects, large solar projects, pump hydro, and battery storage. "We are talking to many sponsors in these segment and we will be happy to see how many of them we can finance." Besides, he said there is a lot of interest in the corporate sector in energy transmission, conversion of older coal-fired power projects into green energy units. Dasgupta, former MD and CEO of ICICI Lombard, was appointed Vice President of ADB in September last year. He is responsible for management of ADB's Private Sector Operations Department and Office of Markets Development and Public Private Partnerships. ADB, established in 1966, is owned by 68 members, 49 from the region. It is committed to achieving a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific, while sustaining its efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. India, a founding member of ADB, is now ADB's fourth largest shareholder and its top borrower since 2010.

Rupee rises 3 paise to end at 83.43 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated 3 paise to settle at 83.43 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, tracking a weak American currency and retreating crude oil prices. Forex traders said a massive selling in the domestic equity market and outflow of foreign funds capped the gains in the local currency. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 83.40 and moved in the range of 83.34 and 83.44 against the greenback during the session. The local unit finally settled at 83.43 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a rise of 3 paise from its previous close. The rupee had settled 3 paise lower at 83.46 against the dollar on Thursday. Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Sharekhan by BNP



Paribas, said the rupee gained on a weak US dollar and a decline in crude oil prices. However, weak domestic markets and FII outflows capped sharp gains. The weak dollar was

attributed to the US Federal Reserve's decision to keep the key interest rate unchanged for the sixth consecutive time, citing slower progress on the inflation front. Choudhary further said the

rupee is expected to trade with a slight negative bias on weak domestic markets and selling pressure from foreign investors. However, a weak tone and a soft US dollar may support the rupee at lower levels. "Traders may remain cautious ahead of non-farm payrolls report and ISM services PMI data from the US today. Encouraging non-farm payrolls may support the dollar while dismal data may weigh on the greenback. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83.20 to Rs 83.60," he added. India's manufacturing PMI fell to 58.8 in April 2024 from 59.1 in the previous month, a monthly survey said on Thursday. The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index

(PMI), however, recorded the second fastest improvement in operating conditions in three-and-a-half years supported by buoyant demand. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, declined 0.10 per cent to 105.07. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, slipped 0.04 per cent to USD 83.64 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex tumbled 732.96 points, or 0.98 per cent, to settle at 73,878.15, and Nifty tanked 172.35 points, or 0.76 per cent, to close at 22,475.85. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Thursday, as they sold shares worth Rs 964.47 crore on a net basis, according to exchange data.

India's fossil fuel capacity grows 2.44 per cent in FY24: Data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's fossil fuel-based power generation capacity increased 2.44 per cent to 243.22 GW in FY24 from 237.27 GW in March 2023, according to official figures. There was a 10.79 per cent rise in non-fossil fuel based capacity (renewable energy sources) addition at 190.57 gigawatt (GW) in 2023-24 over 172.01 GW in 2022-23, the government data showed. While the fossil fuel-based capacity includes coal, lignite, gas and diesel sources, the non-fossil fuel includes power generated from solar, wind and hydropower. The nuclear power capacity



added rose to 8.18 GW from 6.78 GW in the last fiscal year, posting a year-on-year rise of 20.64 per cent. In FY24, India's total power generation capacity rose 6.22 per cent to 441.97 GW over 416.06 GW, the data showed. The coal-based capacity increased around 3 per cent to 210.97 GW from 205.24 GW in the last financial year, and gas capacity rose marginally to

25.04 GW from 24.82 GW in FY23. The lignite- and diesel-based capacity were at 6.62 GW and 0.59 GW, respectively, in FY24. The renewable energy sources capacity increased to 143.64 GW, up 14.76 per cent over 125.16 GW in FY23. Hydropower capacity also increased to 46.93 GW from 46.85 GW in the last fiscal year.

Report: Majority of Indians surveyed got to know about podcasts recently



PTI ■ MUMBAI

India has emerged as the third-largest market for podcast listeners globally even as around 78 per cent of people surveyed got to know about this media recently, a report said on Thursday. According to the report, around 82 per cent of respondents were initially unaware of podcasts, highlighting a significant opportunity for awareness-building efforts. "78 per cent of consumers discovered podcasts less than a year ago, indicating a recent surge in interest," the report, The Podcast Pulse: Unveiling India's Podcast Landscape, stated. India has surged to become the third-largest market for podcast listeners globally, yet only 12 per cent of Indians are currently engaged, leaving a vast untapped audience waiting to be explored, the report prepared by UNPAC Research (OPC) in support of Ideabrew Studios said. Authenticity and vulnerability in podcast conversations are highly valued by listeners, fostering

a deeper connection with hosts and content, it said. The report is based on responses from 2,170 individuals across 10 cities in India, including Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Indore, Patna, and Jaipur, the report gauged awareness and listenership statistics. Additionally, detailed interviews with 1,800 active listeners provided invaluable insights into their behaviour and preferences. Sheetal Choksi, Director, UNPAC Research said that the Podcast Pulse is a comprehensive report on podcast consumption in India. Regional podcasts are identified as a driving force in shaping the industry's future, offering audiences a more relatable and culturally resonant listening experience, he added. The Unpac Research (OPC) Pvt. Ltd. is a full service qualitative research agency. Ideabrew Studios is a podcast production and full-service content solutions company.

Apple clinches strong double digit growth in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Apple CEO Tim Cook on Friday said the company grew strong double-digit in India, clinching a new March quarter revenue record amid an "incredibly exciting market". Describing India market as a "major focus", Cook said Apple is working on the entire ecosystem from developer to the market to operations, and that he is "very pleased" with the growth numbers. "We did grow strong double-digit (in India). And so we were very, very pleased about it. It was a new March quarter

revenue record for us. As you know, as I've said before, I see it as an incredibly exciting market and it's a major focus for us," he said in India specific call-outs during the tech titan's Q2 earnings. Cook further added: "In terms of the operational side or supply chain side, we are producing there; from a pragmatic point of view, you need to produce there to be competitive." The Cupertino-based iPhone maker has set revenue records in more than a dozen countries and regions. These include, among others, March quarter records in India, Latin America and the Middle East, as well as



Canada, Spain, and Turkey. On Apple's India report card, Cook said the company has both operational things going on and go-to-market, alongside various initiatives. "We just opened a couple of

stores as last year, and we see enormous opportunity there," he said. Apple continues to expand its channels, and is also working on the developer ecosystem. "And we've been very pleased

that there is a rapidly-growing base of developers there. And so, we're working all of the entire ecosystem from developer to the market to operations, the whole thing. And I just — I could not be more excited and enthusiastic about it," he said. Apple is also investing in new solar and wind power in the US and Europe, both to power its growing operations and users' devices. "And we're working with partners in India and the US to replenish 100 per cent of the water we use in places that need it most, with the goal of delivering billions of gallons of water benefits over the next

two decades," Cook said. Announcing its financial results for its fiscal 2024 second quarter ended March, Apple said it posted a quarterly revenue of USD 90.8 billion, down 4 per cent year on year. Luca Maestri, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Apple, said the company is particularly pleased with strong momentum in emerging markets, "as we set first-half revenue records in several countries and regions including Latin America, the Middle East, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Turkey."

Sri Lanka rupee makes gains over major currencies: Minister

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's rupee, which suffered severe depreciation because of the island nation's unprecedented economic crisis since 2022, has started to make gains in comparison to other currencies, State Minister for Finance Ranjith Siyambalapatiya said on Friday. He said during the first four months of the year, the Sri Lankan rupee had appreciated by 9.1 per cent against the US dollar, 12.7 per cent against the Euro, 10.8 per cent against the UK pound, 11.4 per cent against the Chinese Yuan, 21 per cent against the Yen, 9.5 per cent against the Indian rupee and 14.2 per cent against the Australian dollar. When the Sri Lankan economy slumped during the first quarter of 2022, which led to the announcement of its first-ever sovereign default, Sri Lanka was assisted by



India for imports of essentials. The Sri Lankan rupee was boosted by the Reserve Bank of India's extended currency swaps. The Indian assistance was worth over USD 4 billion which provided a lifeline to the ailing economy until the deal for an IMF bailout of USD 2.9 billion was sealed in March 2023. Siyambalapatiya on Thursday said the country has maintained strict financial discipline while taking unpopular decisions to facilitate economic recovery and continues to service its

multilateral debt despite the default announced in 2022. He said USD 2.5 billion debt in 2022 and USD 2.6 billion debt in 2023 had been repaid to multilaterals such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Only the bilateral external debt payments had been suspended with the announcement of the debt default in mid-2022. "We have maintained strict financial discipline while taking unpopular decisions to facilitate economic recovery," Siyambalapatiya said.

Forex reserves drop USD 2.41 billion to USD 637.92 billion

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's forex reserves dropped USD 2.41 billion to USD 637.92 billion as on April 26, in the third consecutive weekly decline in the reserves, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had declined USD 2.28 billion to USD 640.33 billion. For the week ended April 5, the reserves had hit an all-time high of USD 648.562 billion following multiple weeks of increases. The earlier high of USD 642.453 billion achieved in September 2021 got surpassed in March this year. For the week ended April 26, the foreign currency assets — a major component of the reserves — decreased USD 1.159 billion to USD 559.701 billion, the data released on Friday showed.

BUSINESS BRIEF



RESULTS ANNOUNCED
New Delhi: The result of Vellore Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Examination (VITEEE) has been declared. Vellore Institute of Technology Entrance Examination (VITEEE) for admissions to B.Tech programme was conducted from April 19 to April 30, 2024 as a computer-based proctored examination in 125 cities in India and six cities abroad (Dubai, Kuwait, Muscat, Qatar, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore). Applicants from all States and Union Territories of India participated in VITEEE-2024. The results are available in the portal "https://ugresults.vit.ac.in/viteee" which can also be accessed through VIT website vit.ac.in. First Rank was obtained by Rupinder Singh of Haryana, second rank by Bhanu Mahesh Chekuri of Rajasthan, third rank by A Vedaanth of Andhra Pradesh, fourth rank by Aayushi Baid of Assam, fifth rank by Sanvi Singh from Uttar Pradesh, sixth rank by Abhiraj Ramakant Yadav from Maharashtra, seventh rank by Chaitanya Ramesh Bochre of Uttarakhand, eighth rank by Vicky Kumar Singh of Uttar Pradesh, ninth rank by Sohan Hazra of Himachal Pradesh and tenth rank by Sahil of Bihar.

ELECTRIC MOTORCYCLE LAUNCHED
New Delhi: Ferrato, the premium brand of Okaya EV, has launched its electric motorcycle Disruptor at Rs 1,59,999. The newly launched vehicle has a 3.97 kWh battery which provides a range of 129 km on a single charge. The bike runs at a low cost of 25 paise per km, a company statement said.



A well-timed book, *Modi's North East Story*, enumerating the development story of the North East, is an inspiration for those genuinely wishing to connect with this hitherto remote region of India, says **KUMAR CHELLAPPAN**

NARENDRA MODI INTRODUCES INDIA TO ITS ASHTALAKSHMIS



It is election time and television news channels across the country are on a roll as spokespersons of various Opposition parties try their best to churn out the "failures" of the NDA Government that has been in power for the past 10 years even as representatives of the ruling coalition vociferously list out the achievements of the BJP-led Government at the Centre. This is an age-old practice since the first General Elections held in India from October 1951 to February 1952. Although the ruling Congress party back then had nothing major to list out as achievements, the party continued to roll out new promises. From the basic provision of drinking water to all villages, establishment of schools in all districts of the country, to subsidised ration to the poorer sections of society, all topped the list of electoral promises. These so-called promises continued till the 1990s. In fact, in the 1960s, people were asked to forego a day's meal owing to the severe famine the nation faced back then. A lot has been written about the Green Revolution but the sad truth is that despite the much publicised initiative, hunger and malnutrition continued to haunt India. There was no serious attempt from the Governments of the day to increase productivity of our farm lands. India's

"pluralism" and "vivid nature" were on full display during the summer as well as rainy seasons. While the scorching heat of the summer played havoc in South India with most of the rivers going dry, the North experienced floods and deluge. Every year hundreds were drowned in the recurring floods as the snow in the Himalayas melted causing severe deluges in the mighty Brahmaputra which resulted in village after village in States like Bengal, Assam and Bihar getting completely devoured by flood waters. While the northern part of the country was battered by floods, the southern States were crying for drinking water. Rivers like the Kavery and the Krishna routinely run dry whenever the South West Monsoon fails to hit the Indian coast. The drought in the Kaveri River has severe implications for Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry as farming operations come to a complete standstill due to non-availability of water for irrigation. Although a lot of experts ranging from Sir Arthur Cotton and Captain Dastur to CP Ramaswamy Iyer and VK Rao had suggested the interlinking of Indian rivers no Government took note of the proposal. Every year the west flowing rivers in Karnataka and Maharashtra discharge thousands of cubic feet water into the Arabian Sea while the Godavari discharges an equal

or more quantity of flood water into the Bay of Bengal. Had a responsible Government taken adequate measures to divert these river waters into the Mettur Dam or other parts of water-starved regions, Tamil Nadu would have come out of its perpetual struggle with water scarcity. The Supreme Court in 2002 ruled that the Government of India should take the initiative and interlink the rivers in the country so that the perpetual flood, drought and water scarcity problems would be resolved once and for all. Although we did get governments that worked while other governments worked faster, nothing permanent was done to sort out the issue for good. In fact, we even witnessed a Chennai-based Gandhian write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi immediately after the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, asking him not to take up the post of Prime Minister as the latter had no mandate to rule the country. Indeed, the priority of our politicians was at variance with that of the requirements of the common man. Till 1998, the country had not heard about a four-lane highway linking Kanyakumari and Kashmir and Surat to Silchar. Nobody took the initiative to bring down the travelling time between New Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram when train travelers had to toil for almost 52 hours to cover the 2900 km. There was no highway

MODI'S NORTH EAST STORY
 Author : Tuhin Sinha and Aditya Pittie
 Publisher: Rupa
 www.rupapublications.co.in
 Price: ₹595.00

between Chennai and Kochi and a bus journey took literally two days to reach the destination. If this was the situation in mainland India, the condition in the North East India was far worse. Insurgency grew by leaps and bounds. The Nagas, the people of Manipur, and other North Eastern states of India considered themselves as citizens of a separate country altogether. So much so, that a so-called government in exile is functioning from some European countries claiming to be the lone representative of the Nagas. Most of the youth of the North Eastern States are even misled to believe that they do not belong to India. Making matters worse, those in power in these regions never wanted to disprove this notion. Immediately after Independence from our British colonial masters, what the new rulers did instead was to create yet another problem, this time in Kashmir. A separate entity by the name North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) was formed with the objective of uplifting the seven sisters of Brahmaputra (as Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Assam, Nagaland and Mizoram were known initially). Unfortunately, the Congress Government that ruled post-Independence till 1977, 1980-1989, 1991-1996 and 2004-2014 did nothing for the economic and social development of these States. In 1998, when Atal Bihari

Vajpayee was sworn in as Prime Minister, he renamed the Seven Sisters of Brahmaputra as Ashtalakshmi by including Sikkim in the group and some long-needed efforts were made to bring these eight States into the national mainstream. Till then, news emanating from these States dwelt mainly on secessionism-related issues. Bodoland, AASU, the Maoists of Manipur and the National Socialist Council of Nagalim and the turf war between various terrorist organisations formed the crux of news broadcasts from the North East. However, when the BJP Government came to power in 2014, it launched a plethora of missions to harness the real potential of the North East. In fact, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the one to comprehend the vast opportunities and immense potential offered by this hitherto unexplored region of India. It is in this context that *Modi's North East Story* authored by two young professionals, Tuhin A. Sinha and Aditya Pittie, deserves appreciation and immediate attention. The 196-page book offers a panoramic view of the eight North Eastern States and the path-breaking developments that have taken place in this long neglected region in the past decade. It has witnessed an unprecedented development in infrastructure, the number of

airports have increased manifold and the entire region today has rail and communication connectivity to boast of. Clearly, neither Prime Minister Modi nor his team are the kind to rest on their achievements. Instead they are continuing furiously on the path of development and work is going on at a frenetic pace to develop these States with world class infrastructure facilities even as they ensure that the essence and unique culture and heritage of these regions remain untouched. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Kiren Rijju, the energetic and youthful Union Minister from Arunachal Pradesh and Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, and a host of such dynamic leaders and policy makers have made their mark in the holistic development of the North East. The authors of *Modi's North East Story* deserve kudos as make the readers travel straight to these scenic States with the story of the coming of age of the eight States, the *Ashtalakshmis*. Even an old and ailing person like this writer felt inspired to fly to these abodes of the God and Goddesses. The words penned down by Tuhin Sinha and Pittie come straight from the heart and indeed inspire their readers to visit the North East, behold its serene landscape and meet the people long alienated from the country's mainstream.

A Breathtaking Journey into the Heart of Nature

Ompal Sansanwal's passion for trees and nature shines through every page of his book. His art whispers tales of resilience and interconnectedness - a heartfelt tribute to nature's enduring grace, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

Meditations on Trees by Ompal Sansanwal, co-published by Aleph Book Company and Black Cube Gallery, is a breathtaking journey into the heart of nature's timeless beauty and spiritual significance. Through a masterful fusion of art and philosophy, Sansanwal invites readers to contemplate the majesty of trees and their profound connection to human experience. At the core of Sansanwal's work are his stunning paintings of banyan trees which serve as powerful symbols of life, growth, and unity. With each brushstroke, the artist captures the essence of these ancient trees, infusing them with a sense of liveliness and wisdom that transcends time. His cityscapes, devoid of human figures yet brimming with life, offer a poignant reflection on the harmony between urban development and the natural world. *Meditations on Trees* offers a profound exploration of an artist's deeper connection with nature, particularly with trees, as a source of inspiration and reflection. Through a rich collection of artworks and insightful commentary, the book takes readers on a visual and spiritual journey, inviting them to contemplate the beauty and significance of trees in our lives. One of the key themes that resonate through the book is Sansanwal's view of trees as metaphors for life.

MEDITATIONS ON TREES
 Author : Ompal Sansanwal
 Publisher: ALEPH Book Company
 www.alephbookcompany.com
 AVAILABLE ON DEMAND

He sees them as symbols of strength, resilience, and interconnectedness, much like the complexities of human existence. This perspective is beautifully captured in his depiction of ancient banyan trees, with their aerial prop roots and sprawling trunks, mirroring the intricate web of relationships and experiences that shape our lives. The book also delves into Sansanwal's exploration of urban landscapes, particularly cityscapes. These paintings, characterised by softened hues and the gentle play of light, offer a serene glimpse into the rhythm of urban life, highlighting the harmony that exists between man-made structures and the natural world. Central to Sansanwal's artistic vision is his deep spiritual connection with nature. His paintings of the Nataraja using the banyan tree's branches and his portrayal of Krishna lifting Govardhan Hill are symbolic of his reverence for the divine in nature. His art not only celebrates the aesthetics of the natural world but also invites viewers to contemplate the deeper spiritual meanings embedded in them. In addition to his spiritual reflections, Sansanwal's artistic process is also explored in the book. His meticulous studies of trees and foliage in monochromatic pen and ink drawings reveal his keen observation of nature's intricate

details. These studies, combined with his use of light and shadow, showcase his mastery of technique and his ability to evoke a sense of wonder and awe in the viewer. The book also pays tribute to the influences the artist draws his inspirations from, which include French artist Georges Seurat and German writer Hermann Hesse. His study of Seurat's work inspired his techniques and processes, while Hesse's writings on nature resonated deeply with his own

around us. His artwork is not just images on canvases, they are windows to a world where the boundaries between man and nature, art and spirituality reveal the timeless truths that lie at the core of our existence. Arguably, *Meditations on Trees* is a beautifully crafted book that celebrates the profound wisdom of nature. The heart of this book is Ompal Sansanwal's deep spiritual connection with nature, reflected in his exquisite artworks and insightful commentary. This timeless treasure resonates with readers of all ages, be it a nature lover, an art enthusiast, or one simply seeking a moment of reflection, making it a must-have for your library.



RCB, GT EYE MUST WIN TO KEEP PLAYOFF HOPES ALIVE

PTI ■ BENGALURU

From a maths perspective, Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Gujarat Titans can still reach the IPL playoffs, but they need to ward off inner gremlins on Saturday to notch a mandatory win to keep that dream flickering.

The Royal Challengers are the bottom-dwellers with six points from 10 matches, while the Titans are placed eighth with eight points from 10 matches.

However, the floundering outings of Chennai Super Kings and Delhi Capitals (10 points each) have fuelled the hopes of these two teams of sneaking into the middle tier of the points table and from there to the knockouts.

But both RCB and GT will know that keeping their own house in order is a better option than depending on other teams to stay afloat as the IPL group stage is entering its business end.

In that context, the Faf du Plessis-led side will feel a tad more confident than their opponents after registering wins in their last two matches.

They have also found new heroes across these two games - Will Jacks powered his way to a match-winning century against GT, while Cameron Green finally lived up to his tag of all-rounder with crucial runs and wickets against Hyderabad.

RCB would hope for an encore from them at the home venue as well. At the top, Virat Kohli continues to be a run-making presence as he recently became the first batter to go past 500-run mark in this edition of the IPL, and RCB will certainly like a few more from his willow.

However, the Royal Challengers will ask for some more consistency from their bowlers. The likes of Mohammed Siraj, who has been drafted into India's T20 World Cup squad, Yash Dayal, Karn Sharma and Swapnil Singh were on the money against SRH. But against



GT at Ahmedabad, they returned to their profligate ways, allowing them to whittle a 200-run total. They will have to tidy up their act at the unforgiving M Chinnaswamy Stadium, as despite all their inconsistencies GT have the tools to punish them. But to the Titans' dismay, those tools have malfunctioned more often than not, and it aptly mirrored in their two successive defeats against Delhi Capitals and RCB. Shubman Gill and Bhardwaj Sai Sudharsan have run an exclusive store of runs for Gujarat, amassing over 700 runs between them. Other than them, the likes of Wriddhiman Saha, David Miller, Rahul Tewatia, Vijay Shankar and Shahrukh Khan have not managed to even touch 200 this season, imparting a brittle look to GT's middle and lower order. Their bowling group too has been vastly underwhelming, and none reflected it more than Rashid Khan. The star spinner has taken just eight

wickets across 10 matches while giving eight runs an over, a significantly higher economy rate than his overall 6.7 in IPL since 2017. In IPL 2023, Rashid had given away 8.24 runs an over but the Afghan took 27 wickets from 17 matches. This year, the wicket column too remained barren. The pace bowlers offer a similar storyline. In the absence of Mohammed Shami, who is recuperating after a surgery, the Titans' most experienced duo of Umesh Yadav and Mohit Sharma have gone for plenty. Mohit has taken 10 wickets in as many matches, the highest so far this season for GT, but leaked nearly 11 runs an over, while Yadav's economy stands at 10.5 for seven wickets. The back-up options such as Sandeep Warrier, Noor Ahmad, R Sai Kishore and Azmatullah Omarzai too have not covered themselves with glory either, conceding way too many runs for minimal returns.

TEAMS (FROM):
RCB: Faf du Plessis (c), Glenn Maxwell, Virat Kohli, Rajat Patidar, Anuj Rawat, Dinesh Karthik, Suyash Prabhudessai, Will Jacks, Mahipal Lomror, Karn Sharma, Manoj Bhandage, Mayank Dagar, Vijaykumar Vyshak, Akash Deep, Mohammed Siraj, Reece Topley, Himanshu Sharma, Rajan Kumar, Cameron Green, Alzarri Joseph, Yash Dayal, Tom Curran, Lockie Ferguson, Swapnil Singh, Saurav Chauhan.
GT: Shubman Gill (c), David Miller, Matthew Wade, Wriddhiman Saha, Kane Williamson, Abhinav Manohar, B. Sai Sudharsan, Darshan Nalkande, Vijay Shankar, Jayant Yadav, Rahul Tewatia, Noor Ahmad, Sai Kishore, Rashid Khan, Joshua Little, Mohit Sharma, Azmatullah Omarzai, Umesh Yadav, Shahrukh Khan, Sushant Mishra, Kartik Tyagi, Manav Suthar, Spencer Johnson, Sandeep Warrier, BR Sharath.

My role is to carry on till 14th over so that Klaasen gets license to play freely: Nitish

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Entrusted with the task of shepherding Sunrisers Hyderabad's middle-order, young Nitish Reddy has been doing the job with aplomb at a time when he is seen by many as a future India all-rounder, thanks to his ability to bowl lively medium pace.

Opting to bat in the IPL game against table-toppers Rajasthan Royals here on Thursday, Reddy (76 not out) and Travis Head (58) produced explosive fifties, while Heinrich Klaasen made an unbeaten 19-ball 42 to power SRH to 201 for three. Experienced seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar then did the star turn with a sensational final over as SRH pulled off a heist, stunning RR by just one run in a last-ball thriller to keep their playoff hopes alive. Nitish, 20, stated that his role was to rebuild the innings after quick wickets.

"From the last two matches, we are losing quick wickets and I have to go. My role is to carry on till the 13th and 14th over so that Klaasen gets a license to bang. There is no point in Klaasen and Samad coming early, but not getting to score freely," said Nitish at the post-match press conference.

The all-rounder hailed Bhuvneshwar after the veteran pacer bowled a brilliant final over to help Hyderabad seal a dramatic win.

Nitish said he was hopeful that Bhuvneshwar would be able to defend 13 runs in the last over. "I was looking at who was going to bowl. When I saw Bhuvneshwar was going to bowl, I got the confidence that he was going to pull it off."

"During his prime, he had done it so many times. I did not think we were going to



win, I thought either we'd lose or tie. But that last-ball wicket, I felt so happy," Nitish said. During his explosive knock, Nitish smashed RR's in-form Yuzvendra Chahal for two fours and two sixes in the 13th over. Nitish said that he backed himself to attack the seasoned leg-spinner. Reddy also said the victory against RR, following losses to Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Chennai Super Kings, is important. "Beating RR will boost our confidence, they are at the top of the points table," he concluded.

NOT IN MY BEST FORM: PARAG: Rajasthan Royals batter Riyan Parag returned to the top five in the Orange Cape race after striking his fourth fifty of the season. The 22-year-old Parag slammed 77 off 49 balls but could not help his side chase down the target set by SRH. Despite his breakout season with the franchise, Parag said he was not in his best form since he could not finish the game. "I got a lot of areas to improve. I am not in my best form, I would have finished the game otherwise. "I got a lot of areas to perfect. I try to learn from my mistakes and not repeat them. Is it my best innings? No. I would say that if I get a hundred," Parag told reporters. The Assam player said the loss was "dramatic", adding that his team made a few errors. "It is never good to end on the losing side. We did a lot of things right. We will focus on them more rather than dwelling on our mistakes. We are at a good position in the points table. Just one bad game I guess. "We made a few errors in two-three overs and it cost us the game. That is how T20 is, IPL is," he said.

OTHER SPORTS



After strong 2023, Indian athletes hope to make impact in World Relays

PTI ■ NASSAU (BAHAMAS)

A 15-member strong Indian Athletics contingent will look to make an impact in scenic Nassau and hope to qualify for the Paris Olympics in three events when the two-day World Athletics Relays Bahamas 24 commences here on Saturday.

The Indian men's 4x400m relay team has been making waves of late, coming up with impressive performances at the 2021 Olympics in Tokyo and following it up by challenging the USA's aura of invincibility at the World Championships in Budapest last August.

The team then lived up to the billing by clinching gold at the Hangzhou Asian Games with a tremendous run of 3:01.58.

On a high following those superb performances last year, India would be hoping to reset the national and Asian record of 2:59.05 seconds set by the quartet of Mohammed Anas Yahiya, Amoj Jacob, Muhammad Ajmal and Rajesh Ramesh in Budapest.

The quartet will, however, have to work really hard to achieve that feat, given that its best this season is only 3:05.71 seconds, which is nearly four seconds adrift of their gold medal-winning performance in Hangzhou.

As per the World Relay format for Paris, the two top teams in each heat on Saturday will advance to the final a day later. They will also secure Paris 2024 Olympic quotas in the process. The Olympic lane seeding positions will be decided in the finals on Sunday and those will also be competing for medals.

All the other teams will compete in an additional round on Sunday where the top-two teams in each heat will also qualify for Paris. India will be fielding teams in men's, women's and mixed 4x400m, with the men's quartet the best placed to qualify for Paris based on their performances last year. India has sent an eight-member men's 4x400m relay team here, including the Asian Games gold-medallist quartet of Amoj Jacob, Muhammad Anas Yahiya, Muhammad Ajmal and Rajesh Ramesh.

The squad also includes 2018 Jakarta Asian Games mixed relay gold medallist Rajiv Arokia, Noah Nirmal Tom, Yashas Palaksha and Avinash Krishna Kumar. Amoj, Arokia Rajiv, Nirmal and Anas had also competed at the Tokyo Olympics, where they put up a commendable performance but missed out on a place in the final by a whisker on way to setting an Asian record of 3:00.25.

India has also entered a seasoned seven-member squad for the women's 4x400m relay event, led by multiple Asian Games gold-medal winner MR Poovamma. The squad also has the Hangzhou Asian Games silver medal-winning team of Vithya Ramraj, Aishwarya Mishra, Prachi and Subha Venkatesan.

Rupal and Jyothika Sri Dandi are the other Indian members. India will also have high hopes in the mixed 4x400m relay event following their silver medal-winning performance at the Hangzhou Asian Games.

Swiatek returns to Madrid Open final by beating Keys

AP ■ MADRID

Iga Swiatek cruised to a straight-sets semifinal win over Madison Keys to reach the Madrid Open final and a rematch against No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka. Top-ranked Swiatek beat No. 20 Keys 6-1, 6-3 and will next face the defending champion Sabalenka, who rallied to overcome No. 4-ranked Elena Rybakina 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (5). The Madrid Open is the only high-profile European clay-court title that Swiatek is yet to win.

"It was a pretty clean performance and really solid game from myself," she said. "I'm happy with everything." It will be the third final of the year for Swiatek after titles in Indian Wells and Doha. "I'm happy that we can play a final against the top players," Swiatek said. "It shows consistency. For sure it's going to be a challenge, whoever it's going to be, and a tough match. I will be ready. I will focus on myself"



Sabalenka, who needed three sets to defeat Swiatek in the Madrid final last year, is into her third Madrid final after ending Rybakina's 16-match clay-court winning streak. "I was just trying to fight for every point," Sabalenka said. "I was hoping that I'll have opportunity to turn this match around, and yeah, super happy that I was able to do that." Keys said she was disappointed but there were "a lot of really

great things to take from the tournament" in the Spanish capital. "It's been a while since I have won four matches in a row. Lots to build on. It's obviously great momentum going into Rome next week," she said. "It's obviously only my fourth tournament back after the shoulder injury, so to do so well here and to be able to play some tough matches and have some three-set matches and be

physically 100% still and being able to look forward to Rome and hopefully play some good tennis there is a huge positive."

MEDVEDEV INJURED: Daniil Medvedev retired from his quarterfinal match after losing the first set 6-4, sending the 31st-ranked Jiri Lehecka into a semifinal against 35th-ranked Felix Auger-Aliassime. No. 4-ranked Medvedev needed treatment on his upper right leg while leading 3-2, complaining about having trouble moving to his right. He also needed treatment at 4-3, and after Lehecka broke serve in the ninth game to win the set, Medvedev decided not to continue.

"It's never easy in a match like this," Lehecka said of Medvedev's retirement. "If I were to choose the way how to win this match, it wouldn't be like that. So of course, it's never easy to see your opponent struggling, but at that moment, you just need to focus on yourself, trying to get the maximum level out of yourself."

Klopp says he has no problem with Salah after touchline spat

AP ■ LIVERPOOL (ENGLAND)

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp insisted Friday his spat with Mohamed Salah has been "completely resolved," saying his long history with the star forward ensured there was no lasting damage to their relationship. Klopp and Salah were involved in a touchline confrontation during the 2-2 draw at West Ham on Saturday. When Salah was asked after the game to comment on the incident, the Egyptian international was heard saying: "There's going to be a fire today if I speak." Nearly a week later, Klopp said the matter was a "non-story." "There's no problem," said Klopp, who was speaking ahead of Liverpool's home match with Tottenham in the Premier League on Sunday. "If



we wouldn't know each other for that long, I don't know how we would deal with it but we know each other for that long and respect each other too much that it's really no problem." The incident happened as Salah was preparing to come on as a substitute, having been selected on the bench for the second time in three games.

AP ■ LONDON

Tottenham's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League are getting thinner by the day. By falling 2-0 at Chelsea on Thursday, Tottenham slumped to a second loss to a London rival in the space of four days in the Premier League - after a 3-2 home defeat to Arsenal in the north London derby on Sunday.

In between those losses came confirmation that England will have just four places in next season's expanded Champions League, and not five. That's another blow to Spurs, who are fifth and stayed seven points behind fourth-place Aston Villa with one game in hand. They still have to play Liverpool and Manchester City in their remaining four games so it is looking increasingly unlikely they will close the gap to Villa. "We lacked belief and conviction in our game," Tottenham manager Ange Postecoglou said. "I don't know if it's low confidence but we're not playing with the mindset we need to play the football we

Tottenham Champions League hopes hit further by 2-0 loss at Chelsea in Premier League

want to and that's something I have to look at." Headed goals by Trevoh Chalobah in the 24th and Nicolas Jackson in the 72nd were enough for Chelsea, which could yet salvage a place in one of the minor European competitions from what has been an underwhelming Premier League campaign for a squad assembled at a cost of more than \$1 billion. Chelsea climbed above West Ham and into eighth place, two points behind Newcastle and three behind Manchester United in sixth. It's likely that two of those three teams will be playing in either the Europa League or Europa Conference League next season. Chelsea manager Mauricio Pochettino said it was the best feeling he had had all season about his team. "It's the moment, after 10 months, that we start to



realize how we compete," Pochettino said. "It showed we're doing things well. "We showed it's not about names. It's about being competitive." Pochettino, however, didn't sound convinced he had the

backing of Chelsea's American owners to be around next season. "It's difficult to see I am under scrutiny and judgment every week," he said, adding: "We'll see if I have time to build after today."

Tottenham has now won just one of its past 34 away league games against Chelsea, making it one of the most one-sided top-flight fixtures. The sole victory came in 2018, when Pochettino was in charge of Spurs.

Chalobah got on the end of a free kick by Conor Gallagher to loop a header over Tottenham goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario and into the net to give Chelsea the lead. It was a 15th goal this season conceded from a set piece by Spurs and that is becoming a major issue under Postecoglou. Jackson, who had a shot partially saved by Vicario and subsequently cleared off the line by Micky van de Ven in the first half, eventually got his goal when he was quickest to react after Cole Palmer's free kick rebounded out off the crossbar. Jackson did well to head the ball over two Tottenham defenders who were retreating toward their own goal line. Tottenham is six points clear of Man United and might have to settle for a fifth-place finish, which would earn a spot in next season's Europa League.