RNI No. 53466/91, REGD. No. DL (C)-05/1219/2021-23 Posted at DRMS Delhi 6

DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR

Late City Vol.34 Issue 142 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH

Published From



OPINION 6 WORLD 8 IRAN'S SUPREME LEADER PRAYS EPIC ELECTION BATTLE **ENTERS DECISIVE PHASE**

FOR LATE PRESIDENT, OTHERS

MARKETS CLIMB ON BUYING IN RELIANCE, INFOSYS

MONEY 10

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY MAY 23, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

Established 1864

the pioneer

GURBAZ SAYS KKR IS FAMILY TOO

12 SPORTS

www.dailypioneer.com

EC makes its presence felt

Underlines nation's inviolable socio-cultural milieu

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Tith only two phases of the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections remaining, the Election Commission has now upped the ante against political parties particularly the BJP and the Congress asking them to desist from campaigning along caste, community, language, and religious lines, asserting that India' sociocultural milieu cannot be made a casualty to elections.

The two phases will see polls on 115 seats including in Delhi on Saturday. The Election Commission on Wednesday in a stern warning to both the BJP and the Congress, the EC has also directed them to issue a formal notice to its "star campaigners' disallowing them from making statements that "divide the society and may cause tension between different castes and communities. The EC had last month issued notices to JP Nadda on Opposition charges that Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a divisive speech in Rajasthan's Banswara. A similar notice had been issued to Mallikarjun Kharge, too, based on the complaints filed by the BJP against him and the main Opposition party's senior leader Rahul Gandhi regarding their remarks. The commission rejected the defence by Nadda and Kharge and asked them to instruct their parties' star campaigners to desist from campaigning along caste, community, language, and religious

The EC also asked the Congress not to politicise defence forces and potentially



socioregarding statements economic composition armed forces.

The EC had broken from norms when it issued notices to the BJP and Congress presidents on April 25 on complaints against Modi by the Opposition and against Rahul and Kharge by the ruling party. While the EC did not name Modi or Rahul, it asked Nadda and Kharge for their "comments" on the "star campaigners" alleged MCC violations. "Elections are periodic exercises,

they come and go, but political parties like yours endure; even more enduring preserve is India's socio-cultural milieu; political parties are in the task of nurturing leaders for the country for present and future," the commission said. It also asked the Congress to ensure that its star campaigners and candidates do not make statements which give false impression that the Constitution may be abolished or sold. The EC asked the presidents divisive of the two national parties to issue

notes to their campaigners to correct their discourse, exercise care and maintain decorum.

Referring to their respective replies to the notices issued to them on April 25, the election authority said technical loopholes or extreme interpretations of other political utterances" discharge the parties and their campaigners from the core

responsibility of their own content which ought to be corrective to the ongoing discourse "and not further plummeting the quality of campaign discourse"

It reminded the two parties of provisions of the model code which state that no party or candidate will include in any activity which may aggravate existing differences or create mutual hatred or cause tension between different castes and communities, religious or

Continued on Page 2



Voter sympathy for Kejriwal ebbs

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Rafter the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) seems to have lost its advantages after the alleged assault on Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal in the run up for the seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi.

The Maliwal incident has dented Kejriwal's image badly, who is facing corruption charges in the excise policy scam case, which is visible in the party's campaign. The saffron party seems to have an upper hand in all seven seats as this has not gone well among the women voters.

Top BJP leaders are confident to repeat the 2019 results. The BJP, which is banking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma and corruption free administration in his 10 years rule, has now focussed its strategy, utilising the alleged assault on Maliwal, to portray its top leadership, including Kejriwal, as responsible — first through

"silence", acceptance, and then a "direct attack" on Maliwal — for "denigration" and "assault" of their own women colleagues. On the other hand, Kejriwal who has

maintained radio silence, seems to be on back foot, hurting the party's electoral prospects. The BJP's campaign strategy to counter the INDIA Bloc in Delhi has been to target the AAP

more than the Congress.
Besides, the BJP has consistently raked up corruption allegations against the AAP, including the now-scrapped excise policy and 10 other alleged scams. AAP hopes Kejriwal's arrest will generate sympathy for the party in the general elections and help it win maximum seats in Delhi and Punjab.

Continued on Page 2



Bharat Mandapam and the world-class Yashobhoomi **Convention Centre have transformed** Delhi into an international hub of conference tourism

Network of expressways around Delhi has eased traffic

Pucca house ownership provided to 3,100 slum dwellers and over 30 thousand poor families in Delhi

Delhi Metro's network has doubled in the past 10 years

National War Memorial honors our brave heroes

Removed the signs of colonialism, embraced our national identity



Press the lotus button (Make BJP win



Modi rips into INDIA Bloc's Communal plank

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

P Modi on Wednesday tore into the INDIA Bloc accusing of being extremely "communal, extremely casteist and extremely nepotistic" as he alleged that the Congress is to be blamed for the anti-Sikh

Addressing a rally in West Delhi's Dwarka sector 14, the Prime Minister said the BJP's development model is committed to 'nation first' but for the Congress and the INDIA grouping, the only agenda is family first'.

denounced Modi communal and casteist agendas of the INDIA Bloc, accusing them of prioritising vote-bank politics over the welfare of the nation. He criticised their divisive tactics and highlighted instances of communal violence and corruption under their rule.

"The country also understands



Delhiites throng Dwarka sector 14 to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday

that if by mistake any vote is saying in one voice 'Phir Ek cast in favour of the INDIA Baar Modi Sarkar'," he said. alliance, that vote is not going to be of any use to the country. Every vote given to BJP will strengthen the resolve of 'Viksit Bharat'. That is why this huge sea of people is also first. This INDI alliance is a

Baar Modi Sarkar'," he said. He said, development model says, Nation First. On the other

> parts of West Rajasthan, in many/some pockets over Punjab, Haryana-

Rajasthan and West

Palawat,

East

Chandigarh,

symbol of every evil that exists

in the country today. They are highly communal, casteist, and family-oriented. Our Delhi has been a direct witness to their communalism."

Attacking the Congress and the INDIA Bloc, he referred

were burnt alive. "It was in this very Delhi that my Sikh injustice perpetuated by the brothers and sisters were burned alive with burning tires around their necks. Whose crime was this? Congress. Today, every party standing under the Congress umbrella is guilty of the Sikh riots. It is Modi who is delivering justice to the victims of the Sikh

riots. As soon as Modi came to power, an SIT was formed. Hundreds of cases were reopened. The Congress leaders who were roaming freely have been punished by us," he said.

During his speech, Modi emphasised the stark differences between the governance models of the BJP and the Congress-led INDIA Bloc. He underscored the BJP's commitment to fast-paced development and efficient Congress and its allies.

Speaking about the Congress and INDIA Bloc's misrule and caste-based politics, Modi said, "Who doesn't know about the prestigious Jamia Millia Islamia, a Central University in Delhi? For 60 years, it remained a

regular educational institution, even Dalits, there, backward classes, and tribals used to get reservations. But in 2011, the Congress

Government played a trick. Suddenly Jamia was declared minority institution. This imposed a 50 per cent reservation for Muslims in Jamia. Earlier, all SC/ST/OBCs used to get reservations in admissions.

SC slams Soren for half to 1984 riots when Sikhs governance, contrasting it with truths, he withdraws plea

NEW DELHI

Tailed former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Wednesday failed to get any relief from the Supreme Court which pulled him up for "suppressing material facts" in his plea against his arrest in a money laundering case linked to an alleged land scam.

A vacation bench of justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma allowed Soren's counsel Kapil Sibal to withdraw the pleas for interim bail for Lok Sabha poll campaigning and against his arrest after the apex court indicated that it would dismiss them as Soren has not approached the court with clean hands. The court pointed out that

Now even that has been restricted based on religion."

Continued on Page 2

The court pointed out that Soren did not apprise it of the April 4 order of the special



court cognisance of the prosecution complaint, which is the Enforcement Directorate's equivalent to a charge sheet, and also that his regular bail petition was filed on April 15 and dismissed on May 13.

.. You had approached two courts for the same relief... We have doubts that your client (Soren) was acting in a bonafide manner...," it said.

Continued on Page 2

WORST NOT OVER YET! Brace up for more fire from the skies

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

With the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issuing a red alert in Delhi forecasting the city to sizzle at 47 degrees Celsius on May 25, the day of the Lok Sabha polls, political parties are grappling with speculations about voter participation. A million dollar question is: Whether or not voter turnout in Delhi will surpass the 60 per cent mark recorded in 2019 general elections. This phase six involves 58 Lok

Sabha constituencies across six States, including Delhi, Haryana, Odisha, and Bihar, as well as two Union Territories. All seven seats in Delhi and all ten seats in Haryana will be contested in this phase amid fear of blistering heat with temperature going up. According to senior IMD



severe heatwave conditions are very likely in most particularly in Rajasthan, have prompted the issuance of red alerts, indicating extreme heatwave conditions. In Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh, while there has Uttar Pradesh, in isolated been a slight decrease in pockets of northwest Madhya temperatures due to a western disturbance, the mercury is Pradesh and Delhi till Sunday. expected to rise again in the Mahesh

president of Skymet Weather and a private Indian weather forecaster, was quoted by a media report that, "Our warning indicates that temperatures are likely to reach high heatwave levels in the national Capital." The apprehension surrounding voter turnout in

Delhi's upcoming elections is likely to be compounded by the heat index, which measures the apparent temperature that people feel outside due to a combination of high temperature and humidity.

For example on Wednesday Delhi faced scorching Delhi faced scorching temperatures at 42 degrees Celsius, however, the heat index sound to index soared to a staggering degrees Celsius, highlighting the severe heat stress and discomfort endured by residents.

Israel honours Kerala caregivers KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Naor Gilon, the Ambassador of Israel to India, while celebrating National Day of Israel in India

said both the Government and the people of India stood on the side of Israel since October 7. Gilon thanked the Government of India and the people for standing with the Jewish nation in its hour of crisis. "From October 7, both the Government and the people of India stood on the side of Israel. And this we will never forget. The amount of support we get here is nothing short of amazing. It's a

testimony of the extraordinary relations between the Indian and the Jewish people," said the Israeli Ambassador. Ambassador also tributes to two Keralites who They have



heroism of people of Indian descent: Meera and Sabitha, caregivers from Kerala, who saved an elderly couple during the terror attack; and Romi (6), an Israeli child of Indian descent, whose parents were murdered in front of her, tried to protect her little sister — Lia (3) during the attack. shown extraordinary courage and a nd discomfort endured ents.

risked lives to save aged extraordinary courage and a couple during the attack by strong spirit, inspiring the entire nation of Israel," said

The 76th anniversary of Israel was observed on Tuesday at New Delhi with a call to the Hamas to release the 128 citizens of Israel who were taken hostage by the Hamas on October 7, 2023. Israel's National Day was organised by the Embassy of Israel in India with Vinay Mohan Kwatra, the foreign secretary of India, gracing the occasion as chief guest. Despite the deep wounds inflicted by the

Hamas terrorists on Israeli people, the Ambassador paid glowing tributes to the two caregivers from Kerala who saved an aged couple from the jaws of death. that this He stated Independence Day was complicated and painful. "But

our resolve is strong. While we mark this Independence Day, our thoughts are with the 128 loved ones who are still held captive. Their immediate release remains our sincere hope and ongoing mission. Speaking at the event, Foreign Secretary Kwatra said, "We join the people of Israel to celebrate this momentous occasion. It is deeply inspiring that the extraordinary journey of a nation that has not only survived and thrived against all odds, but also transformed itself into a

and growth. Continued on Page 2

advancement,

flourishing landscape of

innovation,

Only Modi, not Rahul can bring back PoK: Shah

SAUGAR SENGUPTA **KOLKATA**

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said that only Prime Minister Narendra Modi and not Rahul Gandhi was capable of wresting Pakistan Occupied Kashmir back from that country because the Congress leader was afraid of the north-western neighbor.

Addressing an election rally at Purulia the Home Minister said that "Pakistan Occupied Kashmir always belonged to India, it continues to belong to India and will continue to be so," adding "Rahul Baba does not want to get it back as he can never get it back for India because he," like the erstwhile Manmohan Singh Government "is afraid that Pakistan is an atomic power.'

Like Prime Minister Narendra Modi did away with the Article 370 from the Indian Constitution "it is Modi ji's job to wrest PoK back" and he was determined to do so, Shah



Addressing more than one election rallies at Purulia, Ghatal and Kanthi the Home Minister attacked the Indian National Democratic Inclusive Alliance leadership saying they did not have a single candidate who could assume the role of the Prime Minister.

There is no one Prime Ministerial candidate for the INDIA alliance ... they want to have five candidates for five years which means that they will have rotational Prime Ministers," which would be against the national interest," Shah said insisting "in any case it is Narendra Modi who is once again going to form the

Saying that the leaders of the INDIA bloc were interested only in promoting their own dynastic interests he said, while in Maharashtra Sharad Pawar wants his daughter to be the Chief Minister whereas in Bengal Mamata Banerjee wants her nephew to succeed her ... In Tamil Nadu Stalin wants to see his son as the Chief

Minister whereas Sonia Gandhi

to become the Prime Minister."

wants Rahul Baba

Attacking Mamata Banerjee for allowing unchecked infiltration he said, how the Bengal Chief Minister was "committing a sin by allowing infiltration to serve her vote bank politics." "Bengal is today a safe haven for infiltrators which is why the demography of the State is changing, impacting not only Bengal but the entire country," Shah said once again slamming the Chief Minister for attacking the monks of Ramakrishna Mission and Bharat Sevashram Sangha accusing them for their alleged BJP connections.

High profile Anantnag seat to witness multi corner contest

From the North Kashmir battle ground the focus has now shifted to the South Kashmir Parliamentary constituency of Anantnag-Rajouri in the last leg of the Lok Sabha polls in Jammu and Kashmir. The high-profile seat is also witnessing a multi-corner contest between the National Conference, the Peoples Democratic Party and the JKAPNI party candidate on ground zero.

The JKNC has fielded the tallest Gujjar leader Mian Altaf Ahmad, five-time MLA from the Kangan Assembly seat while former Chief Minister and PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti is testing political waters from the newly carved out Lok Sabha seat. For the PDP Chief, it is turning out to be a 'do or die' battle ahead of the much-awaited Assembly polls. Mehbooba Mufti won the seat in 2004 and 2014 before the scrapping of Article 370. Her father and former Union Home Minister, the Late Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, won the

Masoodi of the National Conference won the seat in 2019 and in 2009 Mehboob Beg emerged victorious. Another unique feature of the

contest is the role of the BIP in this close contest. After BIP decided not to field its candidate in the fray, the party high command deployed several senior party leaders to jointly organize campaign meetings in support of the APNI party candidate Zaffar Iqbal Manhas. Since last week BJP leaders have been seen conducting door-to-door campaigns distributing handbills and attending joint public meetings with the APNI party leaders.

On the other hand, both JKNC and PDP are also trying to woo Pahari voters to emerge victorious. Zaffar Iqbal Manhas of the APNI party is expected to disturb the apple cart of the winning candidate by eating considerably into the share of Pahari voters. As some of the former PDP legislators are currently members of the JKAPNI party they are also helping Manhas with the support of the BJP cadre to garner maximum votes from the seven Assembly



segments of Rajouri and Poonch.

According to official sources, a total of 18,16,371 voters comprising 9,23,434 men and 8,92,910 women are expected to exercise their right to vote on Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary seat.

Out of them, as many as 7,29,830 voters are distributed across seven assembly segments of Rajouri and Poonch districts, while the remaining 10,86, 541 voters are in eleven constituencies of three districts-Shopian, Kulgam and Anantnag of South Kashmir. Approximately 60 percent of the total 7,29,830 voters in Rajouri and Poonch districts belong to the Pahari community while the remaining 40 percent are Gujjar and Bakerwal community votes.

munity are expected to tilt the balance of power in the favour of the winning candidate. The National Conference relies

heavily on the charisma of Mian Altaf Ahmad. As he hails from a family with political and spiritual influence on the tribal community across Jammu and Kashmir he is expected to garner majority votes among the Gujjar, Bakerwal and Pahadi communities.

Camping in the region for the last two days PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti is leveling serious allegations about how the ruling party is misusing the official machinery to create fear psychosis among the bureaucracy to help and support a candidate of their choice and on the other hand the National Conference is playing the religion card to terrorize voters if they voted against their party candidate. Addressing a series of meetings and during her interaction with the members of the civil society and other associations, Mufti appealed to them to exercise their right to vote on pure merit to ensure their voice is heard in the Parliament.

GNDU ranks in top 9.3 per cent worldwide

PNS AMRITSAR

Nanak University ranks in the top 9.3 per cent (at 1975 out of 20966 universities) worldwide according to the 2024 edition of the outcone-basef Global 2000 list released by the Centre for World

University Ranking. The ranking is based on four objective indicators i.e. education, employbility, faculty, and research. The Ranking is based on 62 million outcomebased data points. According to the survey, GNDU ranks at 767th place in Asia. It's employbility and research ranks are placed at 1541st and 1899th rank respectively.

GNDU is the only multi-specialty State University of Northern Region (Jammu, Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh) to attain these outstanding achievements. Vice Chancellor Prof. (Dr.) Jaspal Singh Sandhu congratulated the faculty, staff, research scholars, and the students for taking the university to high peaks worldwide.

Bangladesh MP found dead in Kolkata

ABangladesh ruling party MP Anwarul Azim was found dead on Wednesday inside a rented apartment at up market New Town area in the north-eastern fringes of Kolkata, police said adding they were investigating the claims that he had been murdered. Azim reportedly an Awami League MP who had come to India on May 12 for medical treatment had gone missing for the past a few

News agencies quoted Bangladesh Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan calling the MP's killing a "planned murder." They also said that the Bangladesh Police had already arrested three Bangladeshi nationals in that connection. Gopal Biswas a friend of the deceased person in Kolkata

said that he had been contacted by the MP's daughter after she failed to contact him. As he could not be contacted the said friend of the MP lodged a missing complaint at

Bidhannagar Police Station. Meanwhile Akhilesh Chaturvedi IG CID said depending upon "reliable inputs" that Anwar "may have been murdered," adding "we had no prior intimation of the Bangladeshi MP's arrival to this city... We only came to know about him after his acquaintance in Kolkata filed a missing diary on May 18." According to sources the apartment the MP was living in at was visited by several person

Congress rule. Though the Court would not including some women, sources said. The police were taking all angles into consideration to crack the case, sources said but they would not comment on the statements Bangladesh Minister.

issued by Mamata Government based on the certificates would not be taken back. "This means SAUGAR SENGUPTA

 N^{ow} in the midst of the ongoing general elections an OBC certificate scam seems them," said an advocate. "The PIL filed (in 2011) to have burst in the face of the

Mamata Banerjee Government. In yet another embarrassment for the Bengal Government in the election season the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday ordered cancellation of all the Other Backward Caste certificates issued during Trinamool The Division Bench decision

take the name of the Government directly the timing of the stated OBC certificates would suggest that they relate to the present regime. The certificates were meant for the period post 2010 the present Government came to power in the first half of 2011. The Court however said that the benefits derived thus far that the people who might have got any job based on these certificates will not lose

HC cancels all OBC certificates

claimed that all OBC certificates given out after 2010 bypassed the 1993 (West Bengal Backward Class Commission) Act. Those actually from backward class were not offered their due certifi-

today annulled all OBC certificates given out after 2010. Those with OBC certificate

before 2010 will not bear the brunt of the Calcutta HC hearing," Advocate Sudipta Dasgupta said. Earlier a Division Bench of

Justice Tapabrata Chakrabarty and Rajasekhar Mantha delivering a judgment on a Public Interest Litigation challenging

the process of granting OBC certificates ruled that procedures through which such certificates were issued were "ille-

The Court directed that new list of OBCs be prepared based on the West Bengal Commission for Backward Classes Act of 1993. The li8st would be prepared by the West Bengal Commission for Backward Classes. Reacting to the Wednesday's

order Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said that it was all the handiwork of the BJP which was trying to malign her Government and added that her Government would move higher courts on appeal.

"This is a BJP's order and we are not accepting it... Why don't they talk about policies in BJP- ruled states ... OBC reservation will continue... This is a dark chapter in the country,": she said adding certificates too."

however that the entire classification was done not by her but by a former minister Upen Biswas who was also the Joint Director of CBI who cracked the animal husbandry case. By the Wednesday's verdict about 5 lakh people would be affected, sources said adding, "others who had applied for such certificates too would be

When asked to comment on the Wednesday's development State BJP leader Pronoy Roy said, "Mamata Banerjee sees the ghost of BJP everywhere because she knows that she will soon be deposed by the BJP." CPI(M) leadership too said that "whatever Mamata

affected."

Baneriee touches starts to stink there is no field that is free from corruption ... this is another such area and investigation may reveal that money changed hands while issuing

CDS Chauhan attends Exercise Cyber Suraksha PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

hief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Wednesday attended 'Exercise Cyber Suraksha - 2024'and underscored the importance of strengthening India's cyber defence capabilities. The comprehensive cyber

defence exercise is being conducted by Defence Cyber Agency from May 20-24. It aims to further develop cyber defence capability of all cyber security organisations and promote synergy amongst all stakeholders, defence ministry said here. The exercise focusses on enhancing collaboration and integration among participants from various military and prominent national organizations

The CDS highlighted the critical need for jointness among all stakeholders in the cyber domain and praised the initia-

tive for fostering a collaborative environment to tackle emerging cyber threats. He commended the participants and staff for their dedication and efforts in organizing the Exercise. which aims to empower participants by enhancing their cyber defence skills, techniques and capabilities; share best practices, and work towards a unified and robust cyber defence posture. It will promote jointmanship and synergy in planning and preparation of a Cyber Defence Framework. The event reaffirms the commitment of the Indian Armed Forces to safeguarding national security in the increasingly important

Voter sympathy for Kejriwal ebbs

From Page 1

The BJP hopes that Kejriwal's arrest has dented his image and the image of a party with a difference (AAP), and it would not get any sympathy votes in Delhi. BJP leaders in Delhi, however, are confident of retaining all the seven seats the party has held since 2014.

According to political pundits, the election is being contested between two personalities -Modi and Kejriwal in Delhi. This is for the first time that an election is being fought without any issues. Interestingly, there is no anti-incumbency factor against the Modi Government at the Centre. The BJP has crafted its electoral campaign well planned to corner the Kejriwal Government.

The BJP has also sought to balance the caste factor in announcing its candidates -fielding Harsh Malhotra a Punjabi from East Delhi against AAP candidate Kuldeep Kumar. Baniya leader Praveen Khandelwal from Chandni Chowk against Congress veteran Jai Prakash Aggarwal, MLA and Gujjar leader Ramvir Singh Bidhuri from South Delhi and AAP candidate Sahiram Pehalwan, Jat leader Kamaljeet Sehrawat from West Delhi against AAP leader and former Congress MP Mahabal Mishra and Dalit leader Yogendra Chandolia from the against Congress leader Udit

Manoj Tiwari from North East Delhi where Congress has Kanhaiya Kumar.

posed some challenges to BJP candidates while Kumar is the campaign. Kumar is collecting money through crowdfunding. The alliance of AAP and Congress, which are fighting jointly in Delhi, also seems to have not worked.

competitor established political parties. However, it gradually lost its determination remained

reserved North West Delhi seat

Congress. Similarly, Congress supporters are also against the AAP. Besides, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has also fielded seven candidates here with an aim for a stronger showing. In the early 2000s, the BSP emerged as a significant Delhi's support and voter share to the AAP and onwards. Despite this setback, the BSP's resilience and

It has retained sitting MP

Aggarwal and Mishra have

facing a financial crunch to run Insiders said AAP supporters do not want to revive the

The party has this time given a ticket to former Delhi Minister Raaj Kumar Anand, who resigned from Government and AAP in April, from New Delhi

Delhi, it has fielded Md Waqar Choudhary who earlier claimed to have campaigned for AAP. The BSP has given tickets to Muslim candidates on two more seats - Abul Kalam Azad, fielded former JNU president a lawyer, in Chandni Chowk and Abdul Basit in South Delhi.

The other candidates include Vishakha, the lone woman in the BSP's line up, from West Delhi, Vijay Bauddh from the reserved constituency of North West Delhi and Ashok Kumar in North East Delhi. The party sent 17 Councillors to MCD in 2007, 15 in 2012 and

three in 2017. It, however, failed to open the account in 2022. Delhi has witnessed split voting in the past 10 years, voters the backing overwhelmingly in national elections and the AAP in Assembly Elections. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP again swept Delhi, winning all seven seats. The AAP's vote share fell to 18 per cent, while

the BJP's improved to 57 per

In the 2019 elections, the BJP had secured 56.5 per cent of the polled votes in the national Capital, the Congress 22 per cent, and the AAP 18.1 per cent. In the 2020 Vidhan Sabha elections, the AAP again won 62 of the 70 seats, its vote share jumping to 54 per cent, while the BJP's declining to 39 per Lok Sabha constituency. In East cent.

Israel honours Kerala caregivers

"Over the years, our partnership has grown exponentially and is marked by mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration across various sectors.'

'The terror attacks on October 7 have left us all shaken. India itself is a victim of crossborder terrorism and has a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. There can be no justifications for acts of terror. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the hostages and innocent lives lost in these heinous acts," he

The national anthems of India and Israel were played along with a special video message by the Isaac Herzog, the President of Israel. Elsewhere in Kerala, the Christian Alliance and Action for Social Action reiterated its commitment to Israel in fighting the terrorists attacking the Jewish State. "Our hearts are with the people of Israel. We pray for the safe return of the 128 hostages at the earliest," said Kevin Peter, CASA's president.

SC slams...

From Page 1

"This is not the way you try to come before the court, without disclosing material facts... Your conduct is not fully without a blemish," it said. Sibal claimed it was a "mistake" by him but he had no intention to mislead the court and his client Soren had no role in it. The ED had earlier told the apex court that Soren's arrest on January 31 has been upheld by the Jharkhand High Court and his regular bail application was dismissed by the trial

court on May 13.
On May 13, Soren had referred to the top court's order granting interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister and convenor Arvind Kejriwal in the money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise scam and sought identical relief for himself. As the court rebuked Soren Wednesday, Sibal tried to defend the JMM chief saying that he was in custody and nobody was in touch with him. Soren is currently lodged in judicial custody in Ranchi's Birsa Munda

Modi rips

From page 1

"Earlier, the authority of the Minority Educational Institution Commission was limited to colleges. But Congress suddenly included universities as well. Now you tell me. It has been almost a decade and a half, hundreds of admissions have happened, hundreds of recruitments have taken place, but all SC/ST/OBCs are not getting their rights. This is what they want to implement across the country," he

Discarding Congress and INDIA Bloc's appeasement and vote bank politics, Modi said, "Just today, the Calcutta High Court has given a big slap to this INDI alliance. The court has canceled all OBC

certificates issued since 2010. Why? Because they issued unwarranted OBC certificates to Muslims. They have crossed every limit in their obsession with appeasement."

Highlighting deep-rooted corruption in Congress and the INDIA Bloc, the Prime Minister said, "Many times, even though speaking thousands of lies, the truth eventually comes out of Shehzada's mouth. Today, the Shehzada of Congress has accepted a big truth. The Shehzada has admitted that the system established during his grandmother's, father's, and mother's

time, was vehemently opposed to Dalits, backward classes, and tribals. destroyed many generations of SC-ST-OBC. Today, Shehzada himself has acknowledged this fact."

cyber domain.

Modi said the Congress "tarnished' the image of the 2010 Commonwealth Games by "looting" Delhi. Recalling the CWG scam, Modi attacked the Congress and INDIA Bloc for looting the people.

"In 10 years, 36 lakh crores have been given to the beneficiaries. If Congress was here then 31 lakh crores would have been eaten by the middle men. Who can forget CWG? Congress had the opportunity to showcase India's capabilities in front of the world but Congress looted the people of Delhi. You have seen that in this very Delhi G20 was organised. In the whole world, India was praised. Tell me how it happen? This happened because of une development of the BJP."

In an apparent attack on Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, he said in Delhi, a game of 'kattar bhrastachari' is

being played out. "These people have left no stone unturned to loot the people of Delhi and even courts are stunned by this.

The people who came to change politics did the biggest betrayal," he said, adding that all INDIA Bloc members are "extremely corrupt". Modi warned that after returning for a third term, he will do an X-ray of corrupt people's wealth.

Brace up for more fire from the skies

From Page 1

expected to soar at record 47 degrees Celsius, the heat index is also likely to notch a higher reading, authorities said. On its part, the EC has assured elaborate measures taken to ensure that polling stations are adequately equipped with amenities such as drinking water and cool shades to mitigate the effects of high temperatures. Efforts have been taken to adjust hours accommodate voters more

On May 25 when mercury is

comfortably and ensure a smooth electoral process. At the same time, political parties have intensified their voter mobilisation efforts, using digital platforms, social media, and community outreach to remind and motivate voters to participate despite the heat. Some are considering providing transportation to polling stations to facilitate easier access for voters.

The IMD officials said the heatwave situation

Chandigarh, Harvana, Rajasthan, and western Uttar Pradesh, is reaching critical levels. This has pushed power demand to a seasonal high of 234 gigawatts (GW) on Tuesday, exceeding the Government's projected range of 225-235 GW for May. The demand is anticipated to rise further in June, reaching between 235-240 GW.

The impact of the heatwave is not confined to one region, as neighbouring States like Madhya Pradesh are also northern India, particularly in under observation, with an States like Delhi, Punjab, orange alert issued for

northern parts, as per the IMD. This widespread widespread phenomenon underscores the staying importance of taking informed and necessary precautions to mitigate the risks associated with extreme heat. "Vulnerable populations, such

as the elderly and children, should be protected from the adverse effects of the heatwave," said Dr Ajay Chauhan, Professor of Internal Medicine at Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital. He said due to heatwave conditions, there is

a very high likelihood of developing heat illness and heat stroke in all ages. If RML has recently opened

its first heat stroke unit amid

rising temperatures, featuring state-of-the-art facilities and a dedicated team, to enhance emergency responses and public health preparedness during the heatwave season, many hospitals across the country too have geared up to prepare for heat-related illnesses with dedicated beds, education, and emergency measures to treat patients

EC makes its...

In his reply to the notice, Nadda had maintained that the statements of BJP's star campaigners

rely on facts to expose the "mal intent" of the Congress to the nation. He had also told the EC that the Congress and the INDIA Bloc, in pursuance of vote-bank politics, have begun opposing India as a nation, its identity, its original Hindu religion. The poll body rejected Nadda's defence describing it as "not-tenable" and asked him and his

party's star campaigners to desist from campaigning on religious and communal lines. It also asked the BJP to stop campaign speeches that may divide society. "The commission expects BJP, as the ruling party at the Centre, to fully align the campaign methods to the practical aspects of the composite and sensitive fabric of India.

Delhiites brave scorching heat to attend Modi rally

mid a scorching temperature of 43.4 degrees Celsius and prevailing heat wave prevailing conditions that have ruined many campaigning programmes, nothing deterred the people in the national Capital on Wednesday to

witness Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressing them in West Delhi's Dwarka. Donning saffron clothes, a massive crowd from across Delhi and neighbouring areas braved the summer heat to gather at the BJP's poll rally site in sector 14 well in advance to listen to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Many sported shirts with quotes like 'phir ek baar modi sarkaar' and 'Modi ka

sarkaar' and 'Modi ka Pariwaar' to show their unwavering support to the BJP. Two female friends wearing saffron sarees sat eagerly with a big grin on their face to meet their beloved PM. Seema, a 45 year old woman, said that she is sitting in the heat to just get a glimpse of Modi once.

"I want to really see him. I can bear the heat if it means I get to witness him here. The reason I am voting for BJP this time is because I believe that I'll be voting for development and women empowerment," she said, while adding that woman



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed during a public meeting in support of BJP candidates for Lok Sabha polls, at Dwarka in New Delhi, on Wednesday Photo: Ranjan Dimri / The Pionee

have been empowered during the 10 year regime of Prime

Ankush Kumar, a resident of Gurgaon in Haryana where polling would be held in the sixth phase on May 25 along with Delhi, said that he reached the rally site, close to Sector 14 Dwarka Metro Station, around 2 pm.

"I came here just to see the prime minister," he said. The national capital on

Wednesday recorded maximum temperature of 43.4 degrees Celsius, three notches above the season's average, and remained in the 'Yellow' alert

Chants of "Modi, Modi" and "Jai Shree Ram" rent the air while many, including women, danced to drum beats as the prime minister reached the stage around 6.15 pm. They waved their mobiles with flashlights on while chanting

"Modi ji ko Jai Shree Ram" and "Abki baar 400 paar" to greet "Not only from Delhi, people have arrived from different parts of the country the listen to PM Modi's speech," said Krishna Devi, who reached the rally site from Shahdara.

Another person at the rally, Karan Singh, said, "We want a 'Majboot (strong) sarkar', not a 'majboor (helples) sarkar'. We are witnessing development across the country, look at the expressways. A huge gathering like this is always expected at the PM's address irrespective of the weather."

Karuna Singh, a Delhi resident, mentioned the consecration ceremony at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the 2016 surgical strike and the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 to say, "We are lucky to nave witnessed moments." such

For our unemployed youth For the backbreaking inflation For our suffering farmers For our molested women For the attacks on reservation

THE ANSWER IS IN YOUR VOTE



HAATH BADLEGA HALAAT

AAP putting pressure on its leaders to do fake sting operation on me: Maliwal

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

AP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal, who was allegedly assaulted by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar, Arvind claimed on Wednesday that the party was putting pressure on everyone to leak her personal photos and do "fake sting operations". She said that she got a call from a senior leader of the party on Tuesday. "He told me how there is a lot of pressure on everyone, they have to speak dirty things against Swati, they have to break her by leaking her personal photos," she said.

Wednesday Maliwal on claimed that there is a conspiracy within the Aam Aadmi Party to malign her by In a post on X, Maliwal, who has accused Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal's personal secretary Bibhav Kumar of assaulting her, alleged that AAP leaders are under immense pressure to speak ill of her.

She stated, "Yesterday, I got a call from a senior leader of the party. He told me how there is a lot of pressure on everyone, they have to speak dirty things against Swati, they have to break her by leaking her personal photos. It is being said that whoever supports her will be expelled from the party. Someone has been given the duty of doing PC and someone else has been given the duty of

tweeting."
Maliwal further claimed that party members have been assigned various tasks to undermine her, such as volunteers in contacting America to gather information against her and preparing fake sting operations through beat



reporters close to the accused. Without naming anyone specifically, Maliwal alleged that a woman minister of Delhi was maligning her character. "I am not angry with them, the man. Even the biggest leaders are afraid of him. No one has the courage to take a stand against him. I don't even expect anything from anyone. I feel sad that the woman minister of Delhi is smilingly maligning the character of an old female colleague of the party, she said.

"I have started a fight for my self-respect, I will continue to fight until I get justice. I am completely alone in this fight but I will not give up," she

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police has brought back Bibhav Kumar from Mumbai, where he had been taken for data discovery from his iPhone. Kumar is currently in a fiveday police custody in connection with the alleged assault on Swati Maliwal at the Delhi CM's residence. His phones, laptop, and CCTV recordings from Kejriwal's house have been sent for forensic examination

What BJP did to AAP, it will do to other Opposition parties: Kejriwal **STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday alleged Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working on a special project of 'one nation, one leader' and claimed that what was happening with the AAP is an experiment that will be replicated with other Opposition parties.

Addressing the Adhivakta Sammelan organised by the Aam Aadmi party (AAP) legal cell, Kejriwal, who is out on interim bail till June 1, appealed to the lawyers to "save the country". "I have no personal grudge against Prime Minister Modi. Ensure that PM Modi should not form government again. Lawyers contributed in a big way to freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru,

Baba Saheb Ambedkar, Moti Lal Nehru — all of them were lawyers. "There is little time left. Whatever you can do for campaigning in Delhi and across the country, please participate," he said. Kejriwal told the gathering that he was not there to ask for votes but to appeal to them to "save the country". "What is happening in the

country is dangerous. They arrested me. The PM is working on a special project, 'one nation one leader," he said. Kejriwal said the opposition leaders who speak against him will be put in jail. He named Jharkhand chief Hemant Soren, Jharkhand former minister Delhi ministers former Satyendar Jain and Manish Sisodia and himself who were put behind bars.

They have put many ministers



Mamata didi (Banerjee) in jail. They can put Tejashwi Yadav or Pinaryai Vijayan in jail. No opposition chief minister will be left. They split the NCP and the Shiv Sena in two parts," he

of West Bengal Chief Minister Putin either imprisoned the opposition leaders or got them killed and won the elections. Likewise, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina put the opposition leaders in jail in Bangladesh and won with majority

The chief minister said in "Even in Pakistan, Imran Khan Russia, President Vladimir was sent to jail and his party

Something similar can happen here. Either they will not get elections conducted or even if they will, all the opposition leaders will be in jail," he claimed. "This is going to happen in our country. The AAP is just an experiment. They have made a plan to crush our party," he charged. "But I want to say that the AAP Stressing that there has been no money trail found in the excise policy case, he said there is a theory that has been floated that the money went to Goa. "Did it vanish in thin air? Three days before the Punjab assembly elections, the prime minister said in Abohar that

prime minister. What is this? Is it toys' play?
"Despite this, we got 92 seats

demand

Kejriwal wants to break the

country in two parts, wants to

make Khalistan and become its

takes him seriously. The way this is comical, in the same way the excise policy case is comical," he asserted. He said the AAP has been made an accused in the excise policy case and claimed that this "model will be replicated on other parties too".

is no longer a four-member party. People love the AAP not because of me but because of our work. The AAP resides in hearts of 140 crore people. It is a thought that is spreading. "If you freeze our bank accounts, people will deposit crores of rupees in multiple ban accounts in the country. If you shut our office, people will open hundreds of offices across the country. It is impossible to trample the

AÂP," he asserted.

BJP winning all seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi: Puri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

enior BJP leader and Union Minister, Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday claimed that BJP is winning all seven Lok Sabha seats of Delhi. Addressing the media here he said that the party has completed several development works worth 54 thousand crore rupees in the last 10 year in the national

capital. Slamming the Arvind Kejriwal led Delhi Government for apathy towards its citizens, he said that Aam Aadmi Party did not implement central flagships like Ayushman Bharat scheme and Pradhan Mantri Awash Yojana in Delhi but the Chief Minister had built luxurious houses for himself.

Ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in the national capital, he

enlisted the details of the projects approved by the Centre in the last one decade. He said that Rs 16.188.29 crores have been approved for crores have been approved for DDA/MCD/UDF projects, Rs 31,436.74 crores for Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) during 2014-2024 and Rs 6,422 crores allotted through MoHUA missions. for the national capital

Constituency-wise, Puri said, North West Delhi had received Rs 7560.36 crore for 44 projects of DDA/MCD/UDF, New Delhi (Rs 1,144.86 crore) for 51 projects, South Delhi (Rs 1,832.60 crore) for 111 projects, Chandni Ćhowk (Rs 271.93 crore) for 18 projects, North East Delhi (Rs 89.98 crore) for 11 projects, East constituency 3,039.48 crore) for 32 projects, West Delhi (Rs 2,232.48 crore) for 332 projects.

highest ever 8,000 MW

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Scorching heat wave in Delhi pushed the power demand to 8,000 MW on Wednesday which is the highest ever in the history of the national capital, according to the State Load Despatch Centre(SLDC)data. It added the demand broke the record created a day earlier. This is the fifth day in a row Delhi's peak power demand has crossed the 7000 MW and broken the previous all time May high of 7070 MW, recorded on May 19, 2022. On their part, BRPL and BYPL

successfully met the peak power demand in their respective areas. Tata Power-DDL served an all-time peak power demand of 2,268 MW without any outages and

network constraints, according to its spokesperson. Delhi Power Minister Atishi on Wednesday said the city government successfully met the peak power demand of 7,717 MW on May 21 without any power outages. She further stressed that even if the figures touch 8000 MW in the coming months, they will take all measures to meet it. Addressing a press conference, Atishi said despite peak demand, there was no problem with the power supply. "Despite that peak demand,

we are giving 24-hour electricity. There is no load shedding and no blackouts. I would like to recall that in 2014 when Delhi was reeling under a heatwave, the peak power demand had reached



5925 MW. At that time, there were six to eight-hour-long blackouts," she said. She congratulated the power department, the three discoms and their employees for successfully meeting the power demand.

On Tuesday afternoon, the power demand surged to an all-time high of 7717 MW, breaking the previous record

of 7695 MW set on June 29, 2022. Remarkably, just hours later at 23:01, this record was surpassed again, reaching 7726 MW In fact, during April 2024, the peak power demand was higher on 83% of the corresponding days compared to April 2023, with a difference of up to 32%. This disparity highlights the profound impact that weather can have on a city's power consumption patterns. The power demand can be attributed to weather conditions that led residents to use more air conditioning / coolers, leading to an increase in electricity consumption. It is interesting to know you know, air conditioning can contribute to 30-50% of a household's or company's yearly energy expense?

Political powerhouse South Delhi to see Bidhuri vs Pehalwan battle

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

South Delhi Lok Sabha Constituency in Delhi is a political powerhouse renowned for its significant influence in Indian politics. The plush farmhouses on barren lands in Chhatarpur, the vast rural belt behind them, the planned neighbourhoods such as Saket and Vasant Kunj and the congested unauthorised colonies in Sangam Vihar and Palam all reflect the wide variety in demography and topography of South Delhi Parliamentary constituency which will witness a direct contest between BJP's Ramvir Singh Bidhuri and AAP's Sahi Ram Pehalwan who is the INDIA bloc candidate. The election is being fought on the issue

of 'Abki baar Modi Sarkar". In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the AAP and Congress have forged an alliance in Delhi which has seven Lok Sabha seats. The South Delhi Lok Sabha constituency constituted

in 1966, comprises Bijwasan, Palam, Mehrauli, Chhattarpur, Deoli (SC), Ambedkar Nagar (SC), Sangam Vihar, Kalkaji, Tughlakabad and Badarpur assembly segments.

On vote share parameter, there are three major players - Gujjars, Jats Purvanchalis. Together, according to the numbers pegged by the political parties, Jats, Gujjars and Purvanchalis make almost onethird of the total voting population in South Delhi. And in this Jat-Gujjar-Purvanchali mix, Purvanchalis form one half, and the Gujjars and Jats taken together form another.Delimitation

immigration have affected vote multiple_ ways. Traditionally, Badarpur, Chhatarpur, Tughlakabad, Bijwasan Badarpur, and parts of Mehrauli are Gurjar dominated while Jat-dominated areas are Bijwasan, Palam and parts of Deoli and Sangam Vihar. Caste has been an important factor in elections as well. For instance,



Bijwasan has always had an MLA who is a Jat. In the past two decades, several villages in Chhatarpur and Badarpur have transformed from Gujjardominated villages to Purvanchalidominated pockets. Some have resulted in the formation of urbanised slums such as Aya Nagar and Palam Village. The biggest unauthorised colony in Delhi such

as Sangam Vihar are now a melting pot of identities. Currently, the rural belt where most such villages are located are marked by the frequest presence of posh farmhouses, some of them paving way for villages in the interiors.

Bidhuri, a seasoned politician, is currently an MLA from the Badarpur Assembly segment and the Leader of the Opposition in the elected the Leader of the BJP

Delhi Assembly. Bidhuri listed the development work for Delhi done by the Modi government, including peripheral roads, Eco Park, six-lane National Highway, India Gate Tunnel, National War Memorial, Kartavya Marg, new Parliament building, and the statue of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose at India Gate. During his election speech, Bidhuri has focused on corruption cases of Arvind Kejriwal. BJP candidate started his political

journey in 1970 as an ABVP member. He was associated with Jana Sangh till 1974 as an active member. He was the Chairman of the Haryana State Warehousing Corporation with the rank of Cabinet Minister from 1981-85. He was elected to the first Legislative Assembly of Delhi in 1993 and since then has been elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly four times. After being elected MLA for the fourth time in 2020, he was

Legislature Party and became the Leader of the Opposition with the rank of a cabinet minister. Bidhuri was nominated as a member of the National Executive of the BJP in

Sahi Ram Pehalwan is a two-time MLA from Tughlakabad and a Gujjar leader. Earlier, he was with the BSP and was a two-time councillor. Pehalwan was also the Deputy Mayor of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Lack of schools, colleges, healthcare facilities, poor roads, water and drainage are among the top issues that echo across all 10 assembly segments in South Delhi constituency. But the priorities differ from place to place and, often, from one community to another in

the same place. In 2008, when delimitation was carried out for Delhi's parliamentary constituencies, all assembly segments in erstwhile South Delhi, except Kalkaji, went to the current Lok Sabha segments of New Delhi, East Delhi and the newly formed West Delhi. The assembly constituencies that the old South Delhi seat had to part with include Janakpuri, Tilak Nagar, Hari Nagar, Rajouri Garden, Delhi Cantonment, R K Puram, Hauz Khas, Malviya Nagar and Okhla. South Delhi Lok Sabl constituency, established in 1966, is

among Delhi's seven parliamentary seats. Initially a Bharatiya Janata Party stronghold, it transitioned to Indian National Congress post-2009 delimitation. Ramesh Bidhuri, BJP's representative, has held the Member of Parliament position since 2014. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, BJP's Ramesh Bidhuri won the South Delhi Lok Sabha seat bagging 56.68 per cent of the votes polled. The BJP won all seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi in 2019. In 2009, AAP's Candidate Raghav Chadha Lost Against BJP's Ramesh Bidhuri From The South Delhi Seat.

2024 LS elections have 8,360 candidates, highest since 1996

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

total of 8,360 candidates are con-A testing the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, the highest since 1996, according to an analysis of official data.

In the 2019 polls, there were 8,039 candidates, and in 1996, a record 13,952 candidates were in the fray for 543 seats of the Lower House of Parliament.

The 2024 general elections are being held in seven phases, with five rounds of polling completed. The sixth and last rounds will be held on May 25 and June 1, respectively. Counting of votes will be taken up on June 4.

The fourth phase of the elections held on May 13 had the highest number of candidates in the fray, 1,717 in 96 parliamentary constituencies in 10 states and Union Territories (UTs). The first phase held on April 19 had 1,625 candidates in 102 constituencies in 21 states and UTs, according to Election Commission (EC) data.

There were 1,198 candidates in the second phase on April 26 in 89 constituencies across 13 states and UTs, 1,352 candidates in the third phase on May 7 in 94 constituencies in 12 states and UTs and 695 candidates in the fifth phase on May 20 in 49 constituencies across eight states and UTs.



are 869 and 904 candidates, according to the EC data. Fifty-seven constituencies are going to polls in

seven and eight states and UTs on phases on May 25 and June 1, there May 25 and June 1, respectively. The number of candidates contesting the Lok Sabha polls has seen a rise of over four times from 1,874

were held -- to 8,360 in 2024, and the average number of candidates per constituency has increased from 4.67 to 15.39 on an average, according to official data.

There used to be only around three to five contestants per Lok Sabha seats on an average fill as late as the sixth Lok Sabha elections in 1977 but in the previous elections 14.8 candidates contested per constituency across the country.

There has been a marked increase in the total number of candidates contesting the elections over the years. While in 1952 there were 1,874 candidates for 489 seats with an average of 3.83 contestants per constituency, the number steadily increased to 2,784 candidates in 1971 with an average of 5.37 per constituency, according to official

ed and average candidates per constituency stood at 4.5. The 1980 elections saw an increase in the number of candidates to 4,629 with an average of 8.54 per seat, the data showed. In 1984-85, the eighth general elections, had 5,492 candidates with an average of 10.13 contestants per constituency.

The ninth general elections in 1989 had 6,160 candidates in the fray with an average of 11.34 per Lok Sabha seat while in the tenth general elections in 1991-92, 8,668 candidates contested for 543 seats with an average of 15.96 per constituency, according to official

There were a record 13,952 candidates in the fray for 543 Lok Sabha seats in 1996 with the average contestants per seat increasing to 25.69 from 16.38 in the previous

The increasing of security deposit from Rs 500 to Rs 10,000 by the EC apparently helped in bringing down the number of contestants 1998 Lok Sabha elections.

per seat to 8.75 candidates in the It was after a long gap that the total number of contestants was less than 5,000 (4,750) that only increased marginally in the 1999 general elec-

tions to 4,648 candidates, averag-

ing 8.56 candidates per seat. In 2004, the number of contestants again crossed the 5,000-mark with 5,435 contestants in the fray for 543 Lok Sabha seats, averaging just over 10 contestants per seat.

The 2009 general elections saw a 8,070 candidates with the average of contestants per seat sharply increasing to 14.86. A total of 8,251 candidates are in the fray in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

BHARAT BHUSHAN FINANCE & COMMODITY BROKERS LIMITED CIN-L67120DL1992PLC049038, Tel No: 011-49800900

Email: commodities@bharatbhushan.com, Website:www.bbinvestments.in Regd. Office: 503, Rohit House, 3 Tolstoy Marg, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110001 AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Par et al.	Q	uarter End	Year Ended		
Particulars	31-Mar-24	31-Dec-23	31-Mar-23	31-Mar-24	31-Mar-23
	(Audited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)	(Audited)	(Audited)
1. Total Income from operations	21.40	14.87	18.29	71.34	58.09
Net Profit for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	9.44	3.35	4.09	27.98	17.23
Net Profit for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	9.44	3.35	4.09	27.98	17.23
Net Profit for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	9.55	1.38	4.40	21.77	11.61
5. Total Comprehensive Income for the period [comprising profit for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	63.37	170.01	-13.83	472.42	59.88
6. Equity Share Capital	338.04	338.04	338.04	338.04	338.04
7. Earnings Per Share (Face Value of Rs. 10/- each) (for continuing and discontinuing operations)					
-Basic	0.28	0.04	0.13	0.64	0.34
- Diluted	0.28	0.04	0.13	0.64	0.34

- . The above is an extract of the detailed format of Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31st, 2024 which have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by Board of Directors and filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the aforesaid Audited Financial Results for the Quarter and Year ended March 31st, 2024 is available on the Stock Exchange website (www.bseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.bbinvestments.in)
- The above Audited Financial Results have been prepared in accordance with Ind AS notified under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with relevant rule made thereunder and other accounting principles to the extent applicable The above financial results were reviewed and recommended by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at their meeting held on 22.05.2024
- The figures of the previous period have been regrouped/reclassified, wherever considered necessary.
- i. The figures of the last quarter of the current year and of the previous year are the balancing figures between the audited figures for the full financial year and the published year to date figures up to the third quarter of the respective financial

Place : New Delhi Date : 22.05.2024

Reasons as to why other individuals without criminal antecedents

could not be selected as candidates (not more than 100 words)

Sd/-	
Vijay Bhushan	
Director	
DIN: 00002421	

JINDAL LEASEFIN LIMITED CIN: L74899DL1994PLC059252 Regd. Office: 110, Babar Road, New Delhi 110001						
EXTRACT OF STATEMENT OF STANDALONE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS						
	FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31.03.2024 (Rs. in Lacs)					
		Three M	Ionths Quarte	Year Ended		
SI.	Particulars	31.03.2024	31.12.2023	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023
No.		Audited	Unaudited	Audited	Audited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	0.73	0	0.76	0.73	0.76
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax,					
	Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items)	-9.71	-2.07	-1.48	-18.56	-11.92
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax					
	(after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items)	-9.71	-2.07	-1.48	-18.56	-11.92
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax					
	(after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items)	-9.22	-1.53	-1.13	-15.77	-10.1

Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax and Other Comprehensive Income) 300.89 300.89 300.89 300.89 300.89 Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as 495.37 525.86 522.44 495.37 525.86 Earning per Share (face Value of Rs.10/- each)

NOTES:

. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Annual Financial Results for the guarter and year ended March 31 2024 filed with the Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Annual Financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com . The same is also available on the Company's website www.jindalleasefin.in

Cases againist at he candidate are political motivated and charges have NOT been framed

. The above results duly reviewed by the Audit Committee, were approved by the Board of Directors in their meeting held on 22.05.2024. For Jindal Leasefin Limited

(SURENDER KUMAR JINDAL

(For political parties to publish in the newspapers, social imedia platforms & websites of the party,)

Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal cases, have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal cases, have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal cases, have been selected as candidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal cases. nal could not be selected as cnadidates

(As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated13.02.2020 of. the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Contempt Petition(C) no. 2192 of2018 in WP(C) no.536 of 2011.)

Name of Political Party: INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Name of S Name of t	llection: General Election to Lo tate/UT: NCT of Delhi he Constituency:02- Northeast Candidate: KANHAIYA KUMA	Delhi FORMAT:CT
SI No.		
1.	Nature of offences	1. Charge sheet filed under section 124A/143/147/149/323/120 B IPC. This was a case arising out of the candidates alleged involvement in an incident relating to ok allegedly seditious slogans made by students of Jawaharlal Nehru University. In the present case, the Candidate was summoned, as an accused by the Court of Ld. CMM, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi in February 2021. The case was later committed to the court of Ld. ASI, Patiala House Court. However, in the meantime, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, vide order dated 11.05.2022 in Writ Petition (C) No. 682 of 2021, titled S.G. Wombarkere v Union of India had stayed the operation of frials under section 124A, IPC, which is also one of the sections that the Candidate was charge sheeted under in the p'esent case by the Investigating Agency, Owing to the said directions of the Hon'ble-Supreme Court of India. Subsequent to the same, vide order12.09. 2023, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Subsequent to the same, vide order12.09. 2023, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Subsequent to the same, vide order12.09. 2023, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. Subsequent to the same, vide order12.09. 2023, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India referred the matter in WritPetition (C)No. 682 of 2021, titled S.G. Vombarkere vUnion of India to a 5-judge ConstitutionalBench and continued the operations ofdirections passed by it vide earlier orderdated 11.05.2022 in the same matter as aresult of which, the trial in the present caseremains stayed. The next date of hearing inthe matter, as on the date of filling, of this form, is 22.07.2024. 2. Named in FIR No. 856/18 u/s 1.43/353/379/504/506 IPC registered at PSPhulwari Sh'rif, District Patna. This wasa case aising out of allegedmisconduct by the Candidate with aDoctor-on-Duty at A1 India Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna However, the Candidate has neither been summoned nor ishe aware of being charge-sheet das an Accused in the present case. This case hasbeen mentioned as a measure of abundant 3. Named in FIR No. 34
		moned toappear before the Court in the said matter. This case has been mentioned as aas a measure of abundant caution.

1. Sessions Case No, 116/2022 (FIR No.0110/2016; PS Vasant Kunj Noth (Investigated by Special Cell, Delhi Police) 2. FIR No. 856/18: PS Phulwari Sharif, District Patna. The candidate is unaware whether theFIR has been formally registered with a CaseNumber by the Court subsequently. 3. FIR No. 34/2019; PS Mansurchak, DistrictBegusarai. (Later registered as GR No.1069/2019) 4. FIR No. 73/2019; PS Bachchwada, DistrictBegusarai. (Later registered as GR No.1397/2019) 5. FIR No. 53/2019; PS Bachchwada, DistrictBegusarai; Trial No. 1613/2020 (GR No.1046/19), Judicial Magistrate-I, Civil Court, Begusara, Bihar FIR No. 55/2024; PS Basistha, District-Kamrup (M). Case is in the Investigation phase.
 FIR No. 214/2018; PS Bhagwanpur, DistrictBegusarai, (Later registered as GR No.4533/2018) Name of the court 1. Kiran Gupta, Additional Sessions Judge 04, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi District, New Delhi. 2. As per last information available with the candidate at the time of filing this Form, pending before the Court of Sub-Judge XV,Patna
3. As per last information available with the candidate at the time of filing this Form, pending in the Court of Additional CJM-1stClass, Begusarai 4. As per last information available with the candidate at the time of filing this Form, ipending in the Court of Additional CJM-1stClass, Begu sarai 5. As per last information available with thecandidate at the time of fling thisom, Judicial Magistrate-1, Civil Court, Begusarai, Bihar 6. As per last information avalable with the c?ndidate at the time of fling this Form, SDJM (Sadar No. 2), Kamrup (M), DistrictGuwahati 7. As per last information available with the candidate at the time of filing this Form, pending in the Court of CJM, Begusarai Whether charges have been framed or not (Yes/No) No No No Date of conviction, if any Not applicable Date of punishment undegone, if any Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable Not applicable NOT APPLICABLE Any other information required to be given The candidate has a long-standing record of political activity, He has a Doctorate in The reasons for theselection of the candidate. Philosophy in the fieldarea of International Relations and socio-political ransformation. He Selection shall be withreference to the has served as elected President qualifications, achievements of Jawaharlal Nehru University Students Union. Theand merit of the candidate, candidate possesses brilliant organizational, politicaand electoral acumen.

any of the cases

In the case of election to Council of States or States or election to Legislative Council EAs, mention the election concerned in place of the name of Constityency

Women less than 10 per cent of LS picks: ADR PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Less than 10 per cent of the candidates contesting in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections are women, according to an analysis of data shared by the poll rights body Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). Of the 8,337 candidates analysed, only 797 are women, representing a mere 9.5 per cent of the total candidates contesting across the seven phases of the elections.

This is the first election since the passage of the women's reservation bill to reserve one-third of seats in Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women, reviving a bill pending for 27 years for want of consensus among parties. The bill is yet to come into

During the first phase of the elections, out of 1,618 candidates, only 135 were women. This pattern continued in the subsequent phases, with women candidates remaining a small fraction of the total. Phase 2 saw 1,192 candidates of

which affidavits of 1,198 candidates were analysed and as many as 100 were women. Phase 3 had 1,352 candidates,

including 123 women and 244 with criminal cases. In phase 4, affidavits of 1,710 out of 1.717 candidates were

analysed and 170 were women. Phase 5 had the fewest candidates at 695, with 82 women, while in phase 6, affidavits of 866 out of 869 candidates were analysed, and there were 92



women. In phase 7, there will be 904 candidates candidates, with only 95 women.

This significant gender imbalance has sparked criticism from political analysts and activists, who question why political parties are waiting for the women's reservation bill to be implemented instead of proactively issuing tickets to women.Dr. Sushila Ramaswamy, Professor at Delhi University's Jesus and Mary College, has emphasised that political parties should take concrete steps to promote women's candidacy.

'Political parties should have been more proactive and fielded more women candidates," she said, highlighting the effectiveness of seat reservations for women within party structures, as seen in Britain's Labour Party. With women constituting nearly half of India's electorate, their under-representation in the candidate pool raises broader questions about the barriers hindering women's full participation in the political sphere, Dr. Iftekhar Ahmad Ansari, Associate Professor at Aligarh

Muslim University (AMU), said. Beyond symbolic gestures and promises, he stressed the importance of structural reforms to ensure equal opportunities for women in politics, underscoring the critical role of party leadership in promoting gender diversity. "Political parties must prioritise gender inclusion in candidate selection and provide adequate support to women aspirants," he emphasised.

The issue of women's political representation extends beyond numerical quotas to encompass systemic changes in party dynamics and electoral processes, noted Farhat Jahan, a retired faculty member at Abdullah Women's College at AMU.

Prof. Mohammad Aftab Alam from the political science department at AMU pointed out the challenges women often face in forming independent political opinions amidst societal influences. "Even those elected are often relegated to symbolic roles," he said, highlighting broader issues of token representation.

Congress questions EC over difference in voter turnout data

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

The Congress on Wednesday raised questions over the difference between the real time voter turnout data and the final figures released by the Election Commission, and said voters are worried over the "strange goings-on" in the poll body. Congress leader and head of media and publicity department of the party Pawan Khera said the difference is around 1.7 crore votes, and termed it as unprecedented. "Voters are worried about the strange goings on in the Election Commission through the four phases of voting. First, the Election Commission takes 10-11 days to bring out the final figure of voting and then the difference between real time data and final figure turns out to be 1.7 crore votes. This is truly unprecedented," Khera said on X. "Unanswered questions about the missing EVMs are also very worrying," he added. AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "This difference of 1.07 crore overall translates into an increase of 28,000 in each LS seat. This is HUGE." "The discrepancy is maximum in states where BJP is

expected to lose seats heavily. What is happening?" Ramesh asked.

Other opposition parties have also raised questions over the delay in release of final voter turnout. Lok Sabha polls are being held in seven phases and the results will be declared on



IAF chief inaugurates emergency medical helpline for Air Force staff

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

▼n order to provide expert **I**guidance and definitive care during medical emergencies of serving personnel and their families of the Indian Air Force (IAF) across the nation, an **Emergency Medical Response** System (EMRS), was inaugurated by IAF chief V R Chaudhari at Command Hospital Air Force, Bengaluru on Tuesday, IAF officials said here on Wednesday. The EMRS is a first of its kind

24/7 telephonic medical helpline for serving IAF personnel and their families across India. The system aims to provide prompt response by a team of medical and paramedical professionals to the caller experiencing the emergency anywhere across the

The responding medical professional shall provide immediate advise to the caller, while

country.

simultaneously getting in touch with the IAF medical facility nearest to the caller. This facility symbolises IAF's commitment towards incorporating technology to deliver high quality healthcare in the event of an emergency. The sole aim of EMRS is to save valuable lives. The event featured a demonstration of the system's capability and outreach, highlighting the ease with which expert guidance would be provided to the distressed caller, as well as expeditious launch of a medical support team from the nearest medical echelon. IAF chief, who originally envisioned this concept, highlighted the importance of the EMRS and further added "this initiative is not just a milestone for the Indian Air Force but a significant advancement in medical readiness, representing a critical step forward in the ongoing efforts to provide immediate and expert medical care during emergencies".

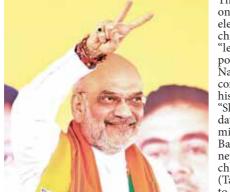
Shah: INDIA Bloc does not have any leader who can become PM

Union Minister Shah on Wednesday launched a blistering attack on the "corrupt INDI alliance" and said the opposition bloc doesn't have any leader who can become Prime Minister.

While addressing a rally at Ghatal, Shah said the INDIA bloc leaders just want their dynasty to move ahead and "neither have any leaders to lead the country nor have any intention for the development of the nation. Shah, while referring to

Pakistan-occupied Kashmir said "PoK is part of India and we will take it".

The INDI alliance doesn't have any leaders. The INDI alliance wants five PMs in five years. The INDI alliances neither have leaders nor have any intention for the development of the



family," he said. Hitting out at Congress leaders for not supporting the demand of taking over PoK, Shah said, "Congress leaders say it should not be done as they have an atom

are about choosing between of dynastic "leaders politics or honest leader Narendra Modi" who considers the country as his family.

'Sharad Pawar wants his daughter to be the chief minister. Mamata Banerjee wants her nephew to succeed her as chief minister. Stalin (Tamil Nadu CM) wants to see his son succeed him. Sonia Gandhi wants Rahul Baba to become the Prime Minister of the country. On the other side, there is Narendra Modi Ji who considers the entire country as his

bomb. But let me say this Pakistan-occupied Kashmir is part of India, was part of India, and

Congress, SP Pakistan sympathisers: Modi

PTI ■ BASTI (UP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday here Congress and Party Samajwadi "sympathisers of Pakistan" and alleged that these parties are "scaring the country" with its nuclear power status. Addressing a rally here, Modi

alluded to the partnership in UP between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav in 2017, when the two campaigned together for the Assembly elections — and failed. "I am surprised by the repeated release of flop film of two 'shehzadas' of SP and Congress," Modi said.

The Congress this time is contesting from 17 of the 80 Lok Sabha in a seatsharing agreement with the

On Pakistan, Modi said, "This patron of terrorism which once used to dare us is in such a condition that its people are hard up even for food grain... Pakistan is finished but it's sympathisers, Congress, are busy scaring the



"They say one needs to be scared of Pakistan because it has an atom bomb. Don't they know what is 56-inch (chest)? It's not the weak Congress government ... But the strong government of Modi," he said at a rally campaigning for BJP's Basti Lok Sabha candidate Harish Dwivedi.

"India does not spare those who try to bully it. India today hits them in their own homes," he said.

Referring to Akhilesh Yadav's claim that the INDIA bloc is winning 79 seats in the state,

LOST & FOUND

I, KUSUM MITTAL W/o OF SHRI D.P. MITTAL R/o FF-41/AA, F-BLOCK EXTENSION, LAXMI NAGAR, DELHI-

EXTENSION, LAXMI NAGAR, DELHI-110092, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare Thal I am the Owner of Top Floor Portion with roof right, Measuring Area 100 Sq. Yards approx. a Part of Property No. F-41/AA, Out of Khasra No. 60/9/1, Situated at the abadi of F-Block Extension,

PUBLIC NOTICE

Modi said, "People of UP on June 4 will wake the SP and Congress up from their slumber. They will then blame EVM for defeat.

He lambasted the two parties for their refusing to accept the invitation to attend the Ram temple in Ayodhya, and alleged that Congress had designs to get the Supreme Court to overturn its verdict on the temple. "These people talk of destroying Sanatan Dharma... The shehzada of Congress wants to change the Supreme Court's judgement

PUBLIC NOTICE We **Anuranjan Nagpal** S/o Sh

Madan Lal Nagpal and Pooja

Nagpal W/o Anuranjan Nagpal R/o 149 (UGF) Ambica Vihar

Delhi-87 declare that our daughter

Tanvi Nagpal is out of our control. We debarred & disowned her from

our all movable and immovable

properties. Anybody deals with her

of Ram Temple. They dream of putting a Babri lock on the Ram temple and want to send Ram Lalla back to the tent," he said. Modi referred to the nearly two-year-long Emergency and said that Congress talks Constitution but it did not

even follow the party's constitution. He claimed that former

Congress president Sitaram Kesri, who belonged to a backward community, was locked in a bathroom the day Sonia Gandhi was made the party's president.

The PM also accused Congress of trying to change the Constitution and end reservation for the Dalits and backwards.

These people want to snatch the reservation of Dalit and Backwards and give it to those who do Vote Jihad. Congress wants to change Constitution give reservation to Muslims. Samajwadi Party is standing with Congress in its anti-Dalit anti-backward conspiracy," he said.

On the SP, Modi said it used to accord goons and rioters

RAMPUR FERTILIZERS LTD.

CIN: L15136UP1988PLC010084

Email id- rkumar@rampurfert.com Regd. Off.: Judges Bareilly Road, Rampur-244901 U.P.

NOTICE OF BOARD MEETING

pursuance of Regulation 47 of SEBI (LODR) 115, Notice is hereby given that the meeting of

ne Board of Directors will be held on Thursday,

of board of Directors will be neit of I flursday, 3dth Day of May 2024, at 4:00 P.M. at: Judges Bareilly Road, Rampur-244901 U.P., inter alia, to consider, approve and adopt audited standalone and consolidated Financial Results/ Statements for the quarterand year ended on 31st March, 2024 pursuant to Regulation 33 of 140 DD 345 Thursday 13 of 140 DD 345 Thursday 13 of 140 DD 345 Thursday 150 DD 345 Thur

LODR) 2015. The said information is also

special protocol during its government.

Yogi Adityanath and his government had to make efforts to bring UP from the ditch it was thrown in long

back," Modi said. Seeking the public's support, the PM said their votes will "politics of bury the appeasement in kabristan" and ensure the future of the

country.

'We have become the fifth largest economy. When India speaks, the world listens and tries to accompany India in the decisions made by it," he said. Modi was accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on the stage.

Adityanath in his address expressed confidence of thumping victory for the BJP. "When we talk of crossing 400, SP and Congress start fainting because they are not even contesting on 400 seats together."

BJP's Harish Dwivedi is pitted against Ram Prasad Chaudhary of Samajwadi Party. Polling in Basti will be held in the sixth phase on May 25.

This is to inform the general public that Sh. Himanshu Chaudhary is the sole owner of Land area measuring 50 sq. yds. out of Khasra No. 206 min situated in Roop Nagar village Dharoti Khurd Pargana Loni Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad U.P. This ownership was legally acquired through a GPA dated 14.05.2018 executed by Sh. Gher Pal in foreur of Sh. Himanshu Chaudhar Chaudhar.

Sh. Himanshu Chaudhary intends to transfer the ownership by way of Sale Deed of aforementioned Property to Sh. Sarfaraj & Mohd. Iliyas. Subsequently, Sh. Sarfaraj & Mohd. Iliyas is in the process of mortgaging the said SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. (Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd.) Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of OT days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this OT-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client.

Mamata compromising national security for sake of vote bank politics, says Shah politics," he said. Alleging that the CAA). The infiltrators are

PTI ■ KANTHI/GHATAL/PURULIA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of compromising national security for the sake of vote bank politics and "committing a sin" by allowing infiltrators to change the demography of the

Addressing back-to-back rallies in Kanthi, Ghatal, and Purulia Lok Sabha constituencies, Shah said the TMC will "disintegrate" and there will be a "farewell of Mamata Banerjee's government" after the BJP wins 30 Lok Sabha seats in the

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Wife late CHANDER PRABHA ARORA booked Plot No: D-109 in project called Supertech L COUNTRY , Plot no. TS-I, SECTOR-17A , YAMUNA now after her Demise I have requested to M/s Supertech Limited to Remove he name the said plot. If anybody has an objection, in this regard he/she may contact to M/s Supertech Limited office at Plot No C-2, Sector 96, Noida, Ultar Pradesh 201303 within 15 days of the Published notice RAVINDER KUMAR ARORA notice RAVINDER KUMAR ARORA (co-Applicant)S/O SH. PRAKASH CHAND R/C D-167,SECTOR -108, NOIDA

DIWAKAR JHA(Advocate) M-9711299945 Ch. No. 45, Sub-Registrar Compound, Sec.-33, Noida-201301(u.p.

PUBLIC NOTICE The state of the s y.Director,(LAB)HG/HBM Housing,(LAB ikas Sadan, New Delhi-110023.

PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all, DEEPA SHARMA W/o SH R.S. SHARMA R/o FLAT NO.6, RAMA KRISHNA APARTMENT, PLOT NO.10, SECTOR-9, ROHINI DELHI-110085 PUrchaser/Owner of FLAT NO 6,RAMA KRISHNA CGHS LTD., PLOT NO.10 6 RAMA KRISHNA CGHS ITD., PLOT NO. 13 SECTOR-9, ROHINI, DELHI-110085 have applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from least hold to free hold in DDA.The original documents. ESHARE CERTIFICATE issued by society of the above said flat has been lost. An LR No. 17541 9/2024 dated 22/05/2024 to this effect habeen lodged in Ps. Scrime Branch, Delhi Lamperson (\$5/claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents may write/contact, with above any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 6667345991 within 15 days from the date of oublication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to President/Secretary,Rama Krishna CGHS Ltd. or Deputy Director (Group Housing) or Director (Group Housing) and Director (Group Housing).



Through this Notice, the concerned and general public at large are hereby informed that MR. ANURAG KUMAR with last known address C-12, Mehala Mohalla, Madanpu Khadar, Sarita Vihar, South, Delhi - 110076 who was an employee of AEON Credit Service India Private Limited ("Company") designated as Sales Promoter has been inated from the employment. It has been found that MR. ANURAG KUMAR was involved in criminal malpractices and fraudulent activities and has defraud various companies. A Police Complaint in this regards has also been filed.

General public is hereby cautioned that he has no authority of whatsoever nature to transact any business or to receive any money on behalf of the Company i.e., AEON Credit Service India Private Limited. General Public is hereby alerted, not to enter an transaction with MR. ANURAG KUMAR where MR. ANURAG KUMAR is represented. representing on behalf of the Company., Any person dealing with him shall do so at his/her own risk and responsibility. The Company shall not be responsible for the unauthorized and unlawful actions of MR. ANURAG

KUMAR in any manner.

AEON Credit Service India Private Limite

"Bengal has become a safe haven for infiltrators. Due to infiltration, the state's demography is changing, state's impacting not only this state, but the entire country. Banerjee is committing a sin by helping to change the demography of Bengal. She is compromising national security for sake of vote bank

Change of Name

I Dilip Gupta S/o Shrinath Das Gupta R/O Ward Number 015, Press Colony Pachore, Rajgarh, MP have changed my name to Dilip Kumar Gupta for all purposes for all future purposes

ATHE PIONEER A

• CHANGE OF NAME I. Shabana Parween W/o

Sh.Sandeep Sharma R/o G-111, Gali No.7, Near Vishwakarma Mandir, Jai Vihar Extn., Phase-3, Baprola, Najafgarh, Delhi-110043 do hereby solemnly affirm & declare that I have embraced HINDUISM and renounced ISLAM with effect from 29.04.2024 and also changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Simran Sharma.

PD(464)C

I, Mohammad Ameerullah Khan, S/o. Mohd Asadullah Khan, R/o. B-37, Abul Fazal Enclave-II, Shaheen Bagh, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025 declare that my wife's name wrongly mentioned in my passport as Shagufta Parveen instead of Shagufta Khan.

PD(467)A

I, Shagufta Khan, W/o. Mohammad Ameerullah Khan, R/o. B-37, Abul Fazal Enclave-II, Shaheen Bagh, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025 declare that my husband's name wrongly mentioned in my passport as Ameerullah Khan instead of Mohammad Ameerullah Khan.

PD(468)A

I, hitherto known as Ramakant Behera Alias Ramakanta Behera S/o Jalendra Behera R/o Kh. No. 15, C-174, Trishul Colony, Chhawla, South West Delhi, Delhi-110071 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as Ramakanta Behera. PD(469)A

I, Monika w/o Dilawar

Singh R/o 506, Baba faridpur, West Patel Nagar, Delhi declared that Monika and jagwanti both name's are of the same person.

PD(470)C

THANKSGIVING

Thank you holly spirit for all the blessings Celine. PD(471)C

infiltrators are the vote bank of the TMC," Shah said Banerjee is opposing the implementation of Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) to appease her vote

""TMC ko ghuspetiyo se pyar aur CAA pe vaar' (TMC has a love for infiltrators and attacks

Whoever finds these documents, that Police

- Auction forms are invited from interested buyers for disposal, strictly on "As Is Where

ls" basis, on 'Per Kg basis', for damaged

salvage "Wet Damaged Rice Stock Due To

Strom" belonging Sohan Lal Commodity

Management Pvt. Ltd., Warehouse - A

Chander Kant Bansal, Khasra No. 72/16,

Last date for inspection & EMD Deposit- 24/05/2024.

E-Auction to be held on 27/05/2024.

For E-Auction forms,

Contact Mr. Maneesh Kumar at Mob: - +91- 85271 91308

Bid2win Private Limited (Auctioneer) For More Details: www.bid2win.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Indoor Medical Records of the

patients admitted during period

of 01.04.2020 to 31.03.2021

(financial year 2020-2021) are

scheduled to be disposed of as

Any person requiring his/her

Medical Records may approach

the undersigned within 30 days,

failing which the records will be

disposed of without further

Kailash Hospital & Heart Institute

COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL MAINTENANCE

WORKS

Tender Notice No. : Sr. DEE/LMG/07 o

2024-25, dtd. 20-05-2024; E-Tender are

wited by the undersigned for the following

ork; Tender No.: EL/LM/24-25/05: Nam

of Work: Comprehensive Annual Maintenance (CAMC), operation and

ound the clock monitoring of Tunnel no.-9 hrough SCADA system under the

urisdiction of SSE/P/New Haflong

ncluding, indoor & outdoor electrica ssets in connection with Tunnel no.-9 fo

period of 3 years (1095 days). Tender

Alue: ₹.89,78,603.66; Earnest Money: 1.1,79,600/-; Date & time of closing of ender at 11:00 hrs. and opening at 11:30

rs. on 04-06-2024. The complete

bove e-tender will be available up to

11:00 hrs. on 04-06-2024 in website

Sr. DEE, Lumding
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Public Notice BIHAR BANDHU CO-OPERATIVE GROUP HOUSING SOCIETY LTD Flat No.3, Pocket-

DDA Flats, Sector-12, Dwarka, Delhi-110078 n accordance with rule 19(2) of DCS

rules, 2007, it is to inform publicly that the

10 members of the Bihar Bandhu CGHS

Ltd. have resigned from the society and

they have been paid their share money &

contributions. The names of resigned

nember are 1. Sh. Sanjay Kumar (M.No.

178) 2. Ms. Sapna Sharma (M. No.179)

. Śh. Rohit Adya (M.No. 180) 4. Ms

Vineeta Sharma (M.No. 187) 5. Sh

Rajender Prasad Sharma (M.No. 197) 5. Shiv Kala (M.No. 199) 7. Sh. Amit Kala

(M.No. 207) 8. Jatinder Pal Singh (M.No. 209) 9. Sh. Rajiv Adya (M.No. 216)

10. Sh. Manoj Pandey (M.No. 240). If

anyone who is having objections, may

lodge objections at the society office, which is located at Flat No.3, Pocket-5,

DDA Flats, Sector-12, Dwarka, New Delh

110078 or at the RCS Office, Parliament

Street, New Delhi within 15 Days from the

Secretary - Bihar Bandhu CGHS Ltd

date of publication of the public notice.

http://www.ireps.gov.in.

Medical Record Officer

H-33. Sector 27 Noida

per hospital policy.

Village Alipur, Delhi-110036.

Station Ankur Vihar Loni. inform in.

the vote bank of the TMC," he said.Shah criticised Banerjee's recent comments against certain monks Ramakrishna Mission and Bharat Sevashram Sangha, asserting that these socio-

the TMC's vote bank. PUBLIC NOTICE Rampark Loni Ghaziabad On 8/5/2024 my Scooty UP14FC6511 was stolen from outside my house in which was my bank check book, ATM and also my property apers in which my gift was. There was also a deed whose application number was 02401028020448, same number 1, page 359 to 382 of volume number 2066, serial number 7669, was registered on date

Borrower/ Loar

Name of the

Borrower/ Loar

Account Number

Sudhir Bhargaya/

Date: May 23, 2024

Place: Gurgaon

Saurabh Malik/

PUBLIC NOTICE Please be informed that M/s Bright Motors

religious organisations are

being threatened to appease

station (Mass Code 0885) having its Registered office at C-263, Peeragarhi Outer Ring Road, New Delhi-110087 have reconstituted its Board of directors. Mr. Puneet Thukral and Mr. Anil Arora have/had een appointed as directors and Mr. Hans Rai Thakral and Mr. Krishan Lal has resigned from the directorship of the Board o Directors of the company For Bright Motors India Pvt Ltd

Puneet Thukral (Director)

Situated at the abadi of 1-Block Extension Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-92. The Original Copy of General Power of Attorney dated 28/8/2001 being the Previous Chain of the above said property has beer lost/misplaced and is not traceable. That FIR/LR No. 1751726/2024 DT. 21/5/2024 has been lodged in respect of the above said lost documents. **KUSUM MITTAL**

The attention of Shri Vivek Kumar Rai Membership No. 746, a illegal member of Nav Sansad Vihar CGHS Ltd., is invited to the three notices sent by the Society to, is invited to the inter-induces sent by use Society or explaining his case for obtaining dual membership of the Society by submitting fraudulent declaration. The office of the Society has not received any ossitive response from Shri Vivek Kurnar Rai on the above matter in the stipulated time period. Hence, the Managing Committee in its meeting held on 02/05/2024 exercising the powers as per provisions 02/00/2024 exercising the powers as per provisory of DCS Acts 2003 and DCS Rules 2007, has expelled Sh. Vivek Kumar Rai from the membership of the Society. The matter is now being referred to the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies (RCS) for necessary action and approval. Shri Vivek Vivers Del is beauty informatic to personal transfer. Kumar Rai is hereby informed to be present in persor r through the authorized representative before the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Govt. of Nationa anital of Territory of Delhi on the date which will be

Secretary, NAV SANSAD VIHAR CO-OP GROUP HOUSING Society Ltd.,Plot No 4 Sector 22 Dwarka New Delhi 110075

PHYSICAL POSSESSION NOTICE

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upor

the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of

Description of Property/

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

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction

of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred

under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand

notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general

that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of

powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the

below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal

with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Description of Property/

Date of Symbolic Possession

Flat No. 4122, 12th Floor Type B, Tower 4, Ats

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else

the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per

Marigold Sector 89A Gurgaon 122001 (Along

LBDEL00002445634 | With 2nos Of Car Parking Space)/ May 21, 2024

the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road,

Plot No. F5/03, The Westerlies, Experion,

Komita Singh/ TBGUR00006255766 | Gurgaon, Haryana- 122002/ May 21, 2024

Rarol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

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

of his/her own risk. We are not responsible for her acts. Ramesh Chander Anand (Advocate), Ch. No-68 Western Wing Tis Hazari Court Delhi PUBLIC NOTICE

The attention of Shri Alok Rai Membership No. 687, a illegal member of Nav Sansad Vihar CGHS Ltd., is invited to the three notices sent by the Society for explaining his case for obtaining dual membership of the Society by submitting fraudulent declaration. The office of the Society has not received any positive response from Shri Alok Rai on the above positive response from Snri Alok Kai on the above matter in the stipulated time period. Hence, the Managing Committee in its meeting held on 02/05/2024 exercising the powers as per provisions of DCS Acts 2003 and DCS Rules 2007, has expelled Sh. Alok Rai from the membership of the Society. The matter is now being referred to the office of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. Stri Alok Rai and approval. Shri Alok (RCS) for necessary action and approval. Shri Alok Rai is hereby informed to be present in person of through the authorized representative before the unlough the authorized representative before the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, Govt. of National Capital of Territory of Delhi on the date which will be informed to him for the final hearing. Secretary. NAV SANSAD VIHAR CO-OP GROUP HOUSING SOCIETY LTD.,PLOT NO 4 SECTOR 22 DWARKA NEW BEI HI 110075.

in Demand Notice (Rs.)

1,67,03,272/-

in Demand Notice (Rs.)

1.31.75.303/-

December 15, 2023 Kanpur/

December 30, 2023 Gurgaon

Authorized Officer

Branch

of Branch

Gurgaor

Authorized Office

ICICI Bank Limited

If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 07-day period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-44/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101883; e-mail: www.msei.in. By order of Board

available on the Company's website at www.rampurfert.com and the same has been also sent to CSE to upload on its website i.e. www.cse-india.com and MSE on its website i.e. Date: 22.05.2024

FORMAT C-7

(FOR POLITICAL PARTIES TO PUBLISH IN THE NEWSPAPERS, SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS & WEBSITES OF THEPARTY.) Information regarding individuals with pending criminal cases, who have been

selected ascandidates, along with the reasons for such selection, as also as to why other individuals without criminal 'antecedent could not be selected as candidates' (As per the Commission's directions issued in pursuance of the Order dated 13.02.2020 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Contempt Petition(C) no. 2192 of 2018 in WP(C) no. 536 of 2011.)'

Name of the Political Party Name of the Election Name of State/UT

Criminal antecedents

: INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS : GENERAL ELECTION LOK SABHA 2024

Criminal U/S188/269/283 IPC R/WSEC 3

: NORTH-WEST DELHI

(1) Name of the Constituency DR. UDIT RAJ

EpidemicDiseases Act R/W 51(b)Disaster As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited. Criminal U/S 188 IPC 3. Criminal U/S 153 IPCR/W61(D) IT ACT FIR NO. 150/21 Dated12/08/2021Parliament Street PS-FIR NO. 12/24 Dated 22/02/2024 PS-Parliament Street, and so

FIRNO.158/2021 PS-Kotwali Sadar, Unnao Case FIR No 150/2021 was pending in the Court Name of the Court Ms. Anamika, MM,PHC but Vide orderdated 28/

02/2024 the case was transferred for the Court Rouse Avenue and Vide order dated 05/03/ 2024Ld. Principal District Judge sent the same to Delhi High Court for the assignment in MP, MLA Court but till date no court has been as

signed for the adjudication of the case. Charge-sheet has not been filed in Case FIR No.12/2024 PS-Parliament Street and matter is pending investigation at PS-

Parliament-street. Charge has not been framed in case FIR no.158/ 2021 PS kotwali sadar.

Whether Charges have been Framed

Detail of punishmen undergone, if any Any other

or not (Yes/No)

The above-stated cases are false, fabricated information required and politically motivated, to be given The reasons for the Dr. Udit Raj is former IRS and his vast

Udit Raj is former candidate. Selection shall be with reference IRS and his vastto the qualifications, achievements and Knowledge and merit of the qualifications achievements

selection of the Dr.

knowledge in public service and impeachable character were inter-alia reasons for his selection as Candidate for North-West constituency.

experience in Public and merit of the candidate, and not mere service and impeccable winnability" at the polls (not more than 100 words)

Reasons as to why

other individuals

without criminal

antecedents could

not be selected as

candidates (not

more than 100

words)

Dr. Udit Raj is former member of Parliament and Common People of North -West Delhi Constituency loved his

works for the welfare of the Common people and hence on the demand of the people of North-West Delhi, he was preferred

(2) Name of the constituency- NORTH-WEST DELHI Name of the Candidate: DR. UDIT RAJ

.and so In the case of election to council of states of states or election to Legislative Coun-

cil by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency. Signature of office bearer of the political party Name and designation

PHYSICAL POSSESSION NOTICE

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

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the belowmentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the Name of the

inch ICR elhi/ CR else

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

property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited. Description of Property/

l	IVO.	Account Number	bate of Filysioai Fossession	Notice (Rs.)	Bran	
	1.	Sanjay Kapoor / Airvoice Aviations Pvt Ltd/ Anamika Kapoor/ LBDEL00001801026	Two Servant Quarters On The Terrace As Part Of The Mortgaged Property I.E. House No-S 569, Front Portion 3rd Floor, Greater Kailash Part II, Delhi/ May 20, 2024.	June 19, 2021 Rs. 40,48,623/-	Dell NC	
		Aviations Pvt Ltd/ Anamika Kapoor/ LBDEL00002447141/ LBDEL00003155923/	Two Servant Quarters On The Terrace As Part Of The Mortgaged Property I.E. House No-S 569, Front Portion 3rd Floor, Greater Kailash Part II, Delhi/ May 20, 2024.	June 23, 2021 Rs. 1,77,98,784/-	Dell NC	
	The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, e the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as					

the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 Date: May 23, 2024

Authorized Officer **ICICI Bank Limited** www.dailypioneer.com

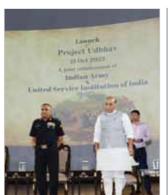
facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Warcraft for all

Project Udbhav celebrates India's rich heritage in military statecraft and makes it citizen-inclusive

The adage, "If you want peace, be prepared for war," reflects a longstanding philosophy in India. Historically, India has maintained peace while staying strong, refraining from warmongering unless provoked. This approach stems from ancient Indian wisdom, emphasising the importance of advancement in warfare to deter any potential threats. India's rich and ancient heritage in military statecraft, rooted in the Vedas, Puranas and the Mahabharata, forms a significant yet often overlooked aspect of its cultural legacy. The Army's Project Udbhav aims to bring this historical wealth into the public eye, engaging citizens in the defence domain and fostering a deeper understanding of India's strategic and military traditions. The Vedas, among the oldest sacred texts, provide early references to warfare, strategy and the ethical dimensions of combat. The Puranas, a genre of ancient Indian literature, elaborated on the principles of statecraft and warfare. Texts like the Vishnu Purana and Agni Purana offer insights into military



organisation, the roles and responsibilities of warriors and the strategic use of resources. The Mahabharata, one of the greatest epics in world literature, is a treasure trove of military wisdom. The epic not only narrates the Kurukshetra war but also delves into detailed discussions on strategy, the art of war and the moral dilemmas faced by warriors.

Other ancient Indian texts offer timeless wisdom adaptable to modern defence strategies, such as intelligence, psychological warfare and ethical conduct. Launched last year, Project Udbhav delves deep into these ancient texts and aims to promote indigenous discourse in the Army by integrating India's ancient strategic acumen

into contemporary military domain, ensuring that the force remains future-ready. It is also an endeavour to involve our citizens and educate them about warfare for any eventuality. Involving citizens in understanding warfare and being prepared is crucial for several reasons. It fosters national pride and identity by highlighting India's intellectual and strategic achievements, countering one-dimensional portrayals of its history. Under Project Udbhav, workshops, seminars and online courses will educate citizens about ancient Indian military texts and their modern relevance. Collaborations with universities and research institutions will ensure academic rigour and accessibility. Additionally, a series of books, documentaries and articles will highlight various aspects of Indian military statecraft, including translations and commentaries on key texts for a broader audience. Project Udbhav is laudable as it represents an endeavour to weave a strategic vocabulary and conceptual framework deeply embedded in India's philosophical and cultural heritage. This initiative underscores the importance of understanding and valuing the rich military heritage that has shaped India's strategic culture, offering invaluable lessons for contemporary and future defence strategies. It is indeed a praiseworthy effort to revive ancient wisdom lest it is lost.



Epic election battle enters decisive phase SIDHARTH MISHRA



The ultimate battleground is UP, where Yogi Adityanath's unwavering leadership is crucial in the BJP's fight to maintain its stronghold

nother 10 days to go and the two-monthelection process would be over. These elections would be remembered for the spearhead of the ruling party, Narendra Modi and of the opposition, Rahul Gandhi battling the heat and dust of the famed Indian summer to spur their cadres to give the best performance.

In the national media, what's being discussed is the punishing schedule of the Prime Minister and the Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president JP Nadda trying to match him with almost equal vigour. From the opposition side, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has ensured to create the perspective that the campaign just did not rest on the shoulder's of the Gandhi family.

In any war, there always is a clinching battle that decides who won and who lost. In World War II, the Battle for Berlin proved to be the most crucial. It's the image of the Soviet soldiers putting the flag of the USSR on the Reichstag in Berlin in May 1945 which marked the defeat of Germany under Adolf Hitler.

Similarly, the general elections of 2024 will always be remembered and will be decided on who wins the battle of Uttar Pradesh. With 80 seats, Uttar Pradesh is the citadel of the BJP monolith, which has a dominant presence in the Hindi heartland States of Bihar, UP, Madhya Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Haryana.

Unlike MP, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Haryana, in Uttar Pradesh the BJP is not in a direct contest with the Congress but a strong regional outfit — Samajwadi Party. UP also cannot be compared to Bihar, where it's fighting another strong regional party - the Rashtriya Janata Dal but in the companionship of another strong regional outfit — the Janata Dal (United).

Thus in Uttar Pradesh, the BJP is completely on its own with paign has been faulted severnowhere else to look forward to but its cadres and leaders. Here concern among his supportthe role of Uttar Pradesh chief ers for allowing the achieve-

minister Yogi Adityanath becomes crucial. The Mahanth of the Goraknath Math has been in campaign mode ever since he retained power with a thumping majority in 2022.

He first delivered the Ram temple at Ayodhya. The consecration of the idol at Ramlalla temple in January this year has been the biggest-ever achievement of the right-wing schema in the country. This would not have been possible but for the determined, firm and passionate execution of the construction plan by the Uttar Pradesh Government of not just the temple complex but the whole of the city of Ayodhya.

The second has been to galvanise the cadres and keep them functioning for a full two months to ensure that the rivals are stopped and checked in their determined assault. He started the polls campaign with the Prabudh Jan Sammelan on March 27 and would continue it till May-end the last phase of polling.

Prime Minister Modi's cam al times and has also caused

ments of the past ten years to be pushed to the background in pursuing a very polarising agenda. The campaign has not aligned with Modi's espousal of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas" (Collective Efforts, Inclusive Growth, Everyone's Trust) slogan, which encapsulates an inclusive approach aimed at fostering economic growth and social cohesion.

Prime Minister's initiatives, such as Make in India, Digital India and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission), which underscore his commitment to modernising India's economy and infrastructure, have seldom found space in his speeches. This has somewhere allowed the opposition to attack the Government. On the other hand, Yogi Adityanath, who in the past seven years has combined his vision with a strong emphasis on law and order and cultural nationalism (Hindutva), has continued to keep his campaign on the same track. His leadership in Uttar Pradesh is characterised by a drive to restore cultural heritage and end minority appeasement, as seen in initiatives like the grand celebration of Diwali

ing of places to reflect their historical Hindu signifi-

The lynchpin of his gover-

nance has been the emphasis on strict law enforcement, aiming to improve safety and reduce crime, which resonates even with many of his non-Hindu constituents. His determined perusal of anti-crime drives has found a fan following that goes beyond the traditional Hindutva admirers. Coming back to the battle of Uttar Pradesh, it would take the collective strength of the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Uttar Pradesh chief minister to make the BJP bandwagon have a safe journey to the national Capital. Modi and Yogi are both distinct personalities and both have significantly impacted Indian politics and governance, albeit in different ways. On June 4, in the event of the BJP unfurl-

(The writer is the author and president of The Centre for Reforms, Development & Justice; views expressed are personal)

ing its flag, the contributions

of the Uttar Pradesh chief

minister would as much be

accounted for as that of the



YOGI ADITYANATH,

WHO IN THE PAST SEVEN YEARS HAS **COMBINED HIS** VISION WITH A STRONG EMPHASIS ON LAW AND ORDER AND CULTURAL **NATIONALISM** (HINDUTVA), HAS CONTINUED TO KEEP HIS CAMPAIGN ON THE SAME TRACK

Prime Minister.

THE EDITOR

Fighting age fraud for Indian football's integrity ARYAN RAJVANSH



From local matches to the big leagues, age falsification distorts fair play and erodes the essence of sportsmanship

⊣he issue of age fraud has plagued Indian football for decades. This persistent dishonesty has not only undermined the integrity of the sport but has also stunted the growth of genuine talent, ultimately leading to India's poor performance at the senior team level.

For the last 50 years, age fraud has been an open secret within the football community. Players, coaches and officials are all aware of it, yet the problem persists unchecked. From local tournaments to State, district and national leagues, age fraud is rampant. Shockingly, it even extends to the national team, where overage players take the field under pretences. This systemic dishonesty is a national disgrace. The lack of genuineness and honesty in our footballing ecosystem is a national embarrass-

My personal experience highlights this issue vividly. When I was 14, I shared accommodation with much older players-some even 24-yet they possessed fake birth certificates claiming not only robs honest play-

they were my age. These older players competed alongside me in national leagues, creating an uneven playing

field and undermining the credibility of the competitions. This personal encounter opened my eyes to the widespread nature of

this fraud. The impact of age fraud is profound. Young, talented players who play by the rules find their careers destroyed by those who cheat the system. Genuine athletes are overshadowed by older players who dominate youth categories through sheer physical C cognitive advantage. This

ers of opportunities but also skews the development pathway, leaving India with a senior team that lacks the authentic experience and growth needed to compete

internationally. Cases of age fraud emerge regularly from all corners of the country, yet there is little action from authorities. Until the Government takes decisive measures to eradicate this issue, Indian football will remain stagnant. The current State of affairs ensures that we will never achieve success on the international stage. It is a profound shame and it undermines the spirit of the sport. The rigged system favours deceit over talent and honesty, leaving the sport in shambles. It is time for a rigorous overhaul, strict enforcement of age verification processes and a zero-tolerance policy towards fraud. Only through a genuine commitment to integrity can Indian football hope to reclaim its lost potential and earn respect on the global stage. Until then, we must

acknowledge this harsh reality: as long as we continue to cheat, we will never truly win. The future of Indian football depends on our ability to foster a culture of honesty and fairness, giving every player a fair chance to shine based on merit, not deception. The future of Indian football hinges on our commitment to integrity. We must give every player a fair chance to succeed based on their true abilities. Until we do, our dreams of footballing glory will remain just thatdreams. The time for change is now, for the sake of our sport and the gener-

ations of players to come. (The writer is a football coach; views are personal)

AMOEBA KILLS

Madam — Strange are the ways of meeting death for a young soul. A five-yearold girl has died of brain-eating amoeba after taking a bath in a pond in Malappuram district of Kerala. She was undergoing treatment at the Kozhikode Medical College of Institute of Maternal and Child Health. She had taken a dip in the pond on May 1 and started showing symptoms of fever, headache and vomiting on May 10. The girl, afflicted by amoebic meningoencephalitis, a rare brain infection caused by a free-living amoeba found in contaminated waters, Still waters are dangerous. Don't let go.

This is not the first case reported. Amebiasis is an intestinal (bowel) illness caused by a microscopic (tiny) parasite called Entamoeba histolytica, which is spread through human feces (poop). Often there are no symptoms, but sometimes it causes diarrhoea (loose stool/poop), nausea (a feeling of sickness in the stomach) and weight loss. The main symptoms of the disease are fever, headache, vomiting and seizures. All infected patients have lost their lives due to the disease so far, as the mortality rate for this rare brain infection is 100 per-

Jayanthi Subramaniam | Mumbai

DRONES IN AGRICULTURE Madam — Apropos the article, "Promise and challenges of drones in agriculture", published on May 20, this is my response. Drones, or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) are becoming increasingly popular in India's agricultural sector. Drones offer a range of benefits to farmers, like improved efficiency and enhanced crop yields. However, some challenges may hinder the adoption of drone technology such as fear of job loss, lack of knowledge and training and regulatory barriers. Drones can capture high-resolution images and provide information on crop health, growth and

Leadership vacuum in Iran

in Ayodhya and the renam-



propos to the front page article, "Iran Pres Adies in chopper crash after stinging Israel," published on May 21. The shocking death of the President in a helicopter crash had left Iran in the lurch and uncertainty from

This can help farmers to identify issues early and take corrective measures to optimise their inputs and outputs. But, drones are expensive and many farmers may not have the financial resources to invest in this technology. Hence, there is a need for more subsidies incentives and economical financing options to make drones more affordable and attractive to farmers. It requires a coordinated effort from the Government, the industry, farmers and the civil society to create a conducive and supportive environment for the use of drones in agriculture. There is little doubt that drones can be a powerful tool for transforming Indian agriculture and ensuring the country's food security and prosperity.

MUSEUMS PRESERVE HISTORY

Madam — Apropos of the article "Museums are pillars of culture and education," published on May 21. Museums

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

all sides. For the last three years; after he took the Presidential position in 2021, Mr Raisi has managed to frame Iran as a Shia Muslim leader block of the world with his conservative cler-

His sudden death had created a leadership vacuum in Iran in the devil's time. The US and Israel are among the direct culprits of Tehran's current situation, despite their denial on personal grounds respectively. Iran needs time to cope with all the big losses it has suffered recently, according to the according to the President, Foreign Minister and other key authorities. The recent death incident had scratched the old scars of Iran when it lost its Revolutionary Gaurd General Qasem Soleimani. Iran has been a victim of targeted killings especially for VVIPs, ever since its bitter relationship with the US over the last two decades. Time will heal everything itself, the domestic and international uncertainty will shed away for Iran with time and normalcy will be restored.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

are an inevitable part of our lives as they depict culture, history and artefacts. They tell us about the evolution of man and let us get familiar with the historical and scientific facts as well. But these days, people, especially children, hardly show interest in visiting museums as

they find it boring. The educational institutions must include visits to museums in the curriculum to enable students to broaden their horizons and get valuable knowledge. Museums are a great source of understanding our civilisation, culture and heritage and help explore various branches of research work. The Government should take the initiative to help the masses visit museums as they are the storehouses for preserving our ancient history and heritage.

Abhilasha Gupta | Mohali

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneér@gmail.com www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

FIRST COLUMN

DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE GASLIGHTING

It is a menace that undermines individuals' perceptions, beliefs and reality



n the network of modern workplaces, emerges a shadowy spectre, threatening the very fabric of organisational culture and well-being -Gaslighting, a form of psychological manipulation in which one person seeks to undermine another person's perceptions, beliefs or reality often done regularly or subtly making the victim doubt their perception, memories or sanity by shifting blame or responsibility onto the vic-

Gaslighting can create a hostile work environment where employees feel anxious and confused and at times even question their competence causing a detrimental effect on themselves, their teams and organisational culture. It is a form of psychological manipulation that can have serious consequences for the well-being and productivity of those involved. When talked about the workplace, the term Gaslight can manifest in myriad forms, often subtle and insidious. It may begin with seemingly innoxious comments undermining an individual's contributions or abilities and may gradually lead to dealing with small instances of manipulation that escalate over time. Gaslighting tactics often target an individual's sense of self-worth, competence and confidence resulting in significant emotional distress, including feelings of anxiety, depression and confusion. It even isolates victims from their support networks by undermining their relationships with coworkers, friends and even fam-



It is often believed that toxic workplace gaslighting can stem from various causes that are often rooted in systemic issues, interpersonal dynamics or individual motivations such as power imbalances, insecure leadership, lack of accountability, interpersonal conflicts and many more. When communication breaks down, tensions escalate, egos clash and employees/individuals start resorting to gaslighting as a means of gaining leverage or inflicting harm.

Addressing the toxic workplace gaslighting requires a comprehensive approach that involves raising awareness, fostering a culture of respect and accountability and providing support for those impacted. Promoting transparency, accountability and psychological safety in organisations is crucial to recognise toxic gaslighting behaviour effectively.

Undoubtedly, workplace gaslighting thrives on power imbalances and psychological manipulation. Victims of gaslighting suffer immense stress, anxiety and identity erosion. Prolonged exposure leads to physical health issues like headaches, GI problems and sleep disturbances, weakening immunity and increasing illness risks.

It becomes crucial for the victims to first recognise and validate their experiences, refusing to internalise the gaslighter's manipulations. The use of assertive communication techniques, such as "I" Statements and boundary-setting, can help individuals confront gaslighting behaviour while preserving their self-esteem and dignity. Additionally, fostering a culture of accountability and transparency within organisations empowers employees to speak out against gaslighting tactics without fear of reprisal.

Remember, when personal gain takes precede over ethical conduct, gaslighting may become a tempting strategy. The only way that may benefit the victims of gaslighting is by seeking support from trusted colleagues, mentors or mental health professionals. By creating a workplace culture that promotes open communication, respect and accountability can the organisation help prevent gaslighting and other forms of manipulation from taking hold as left unchecked, it can inflict lasting psychological harm, exacerbating issues of mental health and well-being in the workplace.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Do not withdraw capital support for oil PSUs



UTTAM GUPTA

The Government slashes equity infusions for three major oil sector CPSUs by 50 per cent, contradicting its 2023–24 budget commitments



n the Budget for the financial year 2023-24 (April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024) presented on February 1 last year, the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an equity infusion of Rs 30,000 crore in three Central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) viz. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), are majority-owned by the Government of India (GOI). She had also proposed Rs 5,000 crore for buying crude oil to bolster its strategic reserves (SRs) in underground storages at Mangalore in Karnataka and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

The equity infusions in IOCL/BPCL/HPCL were meant to support their capital investment plans for the transition to 'Green Energy' and achieve 'Net Zero' objectives. Net zero refers to a situation where the emissions of polluting gases such as carbon dioxide due to human activities and their removals are in balance over a given period. On the other hand, the allocation for SRs was meant to guard against the possiollity of any disruption in its su

Under the above, IOCL and BPCL had done necessary spade work including approval by their respective boards for coming up with 'rights issues' of requisite amounts to enable the Union Government to give effect to its capital contribution (albeit by way of equity) promised in the budget. In the case of HPCL, the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) having acquired majority equity shares from the GOI in FY 2017-18 was to come up with the issue of the preferential issue to give effect to the latter's budgetary intention. However, in a big climb down, in November 2023, the Government reduced the amount of equity infusion to the trio by 50 per cent to Rs 15,000 crore even while deferring implementation of the budgetary announcement on the SRs. Meanwhile, the Interim Budget for FY 2024-25 presented by Sitharaman on February 1, 2024, didn't show any allocation for equity infusion for FY 2023-24. The said amount has been earmarked for the FY 2024-25. This was confirmed by Finance Secretary T V



JUST BECAUSE **DURING** FY 2023-24, THEY HAVE **IMPROVED** THEIR PROFITS DUE TO

CONTINUING MODERATION IN THE PRICE OF CRUDE OIL, IT WON'T BE LOGICAL TO TRIM THE PROMISED **BUDGETARY SUPPORT**

Somanathan at a post-budget press conference. As for SRs, the budget documents do not provide any funds either in the revised estimate for FY 2023-24 or during FY 2024-

Why did the Government climb

Even as the Ministry of Finance (MoF) hasn't given any reason, it seems the decision was prompted by a significant boost to their profitability during 2023-24. The IOCL posted a standalone net profit of close to Rs 40,000 crore as against a profit of a little over Rs 8000 crore during 2022-23. The BPCL posted a net profit of around Rs 26,500 crore in 2023-24, compared to about Rs 1,850 crore profit during 2022-23. The HPCL posted a profit of around Rs 14,500 crore during 2023-24 against a loss of about Rs 9,000 crore in 2022-23.

When the companies can generate good profits hence, a good investible surplus for meeting their investment commitments, why do they need the Government's budgetary support? But, there is much more than what meets the eye on a plain reading of the profit numbers. First, out of the net profit, a substantial amount is paid as dividends to the shareholders. For instance, in case IOCL @Rs 7 on a share of Rs 10 each, the payout during 2023-24 on a total of 1,412 crore outstanding shares would be around Rs 10,000

Second, these undertakings are engaged in the business of refining crude oil to produce a range of finished products such as petrol, diesel, LPG etc besides importing them to meet their demand. That makes their operations highly capitalintensive. Consequently, their investment requirements for expansion and growth are heavy. This is exacerbated by their commitments regarding the transition to 'Green Energy'. While IOCL has decided to

achieve 'Net Zero' by 2040, BPCL and HPCL intend to reach this goal Third, the most potent reason as to

why the Government shouldn't backtrack on the capital support once promised to oil PSUs has to do with the loss the latter had suffered during FY 2022-23, courtesy of directions given by the former regarding setting retail prices of petrol and diesel. To understand the full ramifications of such orders, let us look at some basics.

Petrol and diesel were deregulated long back in June 2010 and November 2014 respectively. As a result, oil PSUs got the freedom to fix their retail prices. The price is fixed as refinery-gate price or RGP (import parity price or IPP and export parity price or EPP of the fuel in the ratio of 80:20) plus freight, marketing costs, marketing margin, dealers' commission taxes and duties. Considering that over 85 per cent of India's crude oil needed for making refined products is imported (the balance 15 per cent is sourced from domestic companies such as ONGC, Oil India Limited or OIL) etc, an increase/decrease in its international price should lead to corresponding increase/decrease in the retail price of petrol and diesel but only if the marketing PSUs are allowed to fix the price strictly as per the formula. But, this is rarely done. The Government issues tacit instructions to IOCL/BPCL/HPCL (together, they account for around 90 per cent of the domestic fuel retail network in the country) to fix the retail price. This is driven by extraneous considerations. Ever since the start of the Ukraine war in February 2022, the international price of oil has been on the boil. The average of the basket of crude oil that India imports during April-September 2022 was \$ 103.7 per barrel against the \$90 per barrel that

these PSUs were told to keep the price of petrol and diesel unchanged for six months. This led to substantial under-recovery from the sale of these products.

For instance, in June 2022, the price of petrol in Delhi remained at Rs 97 per litre corresponding to the prewar crude price of US\$ 90 per barrel. This was despite the price of crude jumping to US\$ 116 per barrel of the price of th rel which would have required the price to be set at Rs 112 per litre. Consequently, on the sale of petrol during June 2022, the PSUs suffered under-recovery of Rs 15 per litre (112-97).

Cumulatively, the three PSUs incurred a loss of around Rs 40,000 crore during the first half of FY 2022-23. As the crude price started to decrease from October 2022 onward, their finances became a shade better during the second half. For the whole year, they posted a meagre profit of Rs 850 crore. The capital infusion of Rs 30,000 crore proposed in the budget ioi 2023-24 was meant to help them offset the losses incurred in the previous year.

Just because during FY 2023-24, they have improved their profits due to continuing moderation in the price of crude oil, it won't be logical to trim the promised budgetary support. Moreover, they need some cushion to guard against crude prices moving north yet again; that possibility is not ruled out considering the continuing tense geo-political situation. For the same reason, the Government shouldn't defer bolstering the strategic buffer of crude

In sync with its emphasis on 'predictability' and 'stability' of the policy, having deregulated petrol and diesel, the Government shouldn't interfere in the process of setting prices by the oil PSUs.

(The writer is a policy analyst;

Is AI a game changer or a disruptor in the communication landscape?

Artificial Intelligence has introduced complex dilemmas, balancing data-driven insights with human ingenuity and profoundly impacting various sectors

¬he growing tentacles of AI have become a push factor for change, innovation and disruption in the borderless world that we live in today. AI tools, processes and its vast architecture have been billed as game changers, influencing a vast range of stakeholders including policymakers, Governments, multilateral bodies, agencies and institutions, which are responsible for carving out the road ahead. The debate today hovers around whether AI has become a disruptor or a transformative catalyst leading to a new normal, which is unpredictable, tech-driven and bereft of the necessary human connection. It has disrupted the new normal driving the communication engagement matrix to a terrain that at



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

times is daunting, unpredictable, spontaneous and instant.In the given context, it is important to understand that AI has truly created layers of dilemma, a tug-of-war related to ideas, content, data analysis and the conflict between human minds and data-driven mindsets. We are in a situation perhaps where and 15 per cent cost efficienwe over-depend on machines, their learning tools & pre-

ecosystem that is technology savvy, the behaviour of stakeholders being driven by data metrics and accompanying models and influenced by the power of prediction. The impact of AI has been profound in several areas, as the search for the unknown has grown bigger. A report on ndia's media and entertainment sector published by EY #Reinventin 2024 mentions that AI can provide an Rs 450 billion boost to the Indian M&E sector by 2027. The report also mentions AI and especially Gen AI - gives it the tools the sector has always dreamed of and can result in a 10 pr cent revenue growth cy. AI is now used for measuring the effectiveness of camdictability leading to an paigns, the growth of cus-

tomised solutions for addressing issues, analysing data for data-driven narratives and stakeholder engagement and changing equations in the context of the client-agency relationship. There is a need to balance human competence with tech tools and the fear of the unknown in the future. For AI to succeed its performance indicators must be based on open, transparent and inclusive. Its tools are reengineered to reflect the spirit of "Oneness", and "The World is One Family" and the social and economic impact is studied and analysed. As far as outreach is con-

cerned, the need is to balance the technology push that characterises AI outlining its operational efficiency and the creative quotient of human

AI supplements outreach with data-focused audience insights which provide practitioners with a feel of audience preferences and behaviours leading to focused and targeted communication strategies.

The data processing of the medium also leads to a better and more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder demographics, dynamics, strategy protocols and audience behaviour. There is an urgent need to

integrate the communication matrix with the broad themes to ensure a seamless operation of both verticals. AI being futuristic commands the means to create a positive perception of the AI architecture. Some of the themes to be discussed are AI and Machine ation of algorithms, address mantras of outreach commu-

beings. As a tool for outreach Learning in communication networks, AI-powered communication networks: Shaping a greener digital future and including other sectors such as health, environment and education.

In all such discussions, the process of communicating the theme will be critical for both policymakers and practitioners.It is also critical that in the era of change, the continuity of technology is weaved with access that is open and democratic. The benefits of positive change must be beneficial to all through the principle of open sourcing: tools, processes, opportunities and commu-

nity participation. There must be standard operating procedures and processes that ensure the standardisthe frailties of human behaviour and integrate the machine human mind.

Technological advancement is only possible if the gap is bridged between the haves and have-nots. AI as a tool for policy formulation and information dissemination should be based on the strong foundations of adaptability, cohesiveness, inclusivity, access and a proper understanding of the complex and diverse social ecosystem of which we are its key constituents.

As the impact of AI grows across different terrains, the evolution has to be in sync with human abilities and the irreplaceable human trait that characterises outreach.. To ensure a sustainable process, AI needs to follow the five

nication: Being Receptive, Responsive, Responsible and Reciprocal and Reconcile to the needs and requirements of an ecosystem that believes in equity, equal participation, mutual recognition and collaboration. The success of communication depends on the balance between perception, tools and trust i.e. positioned across different platforms and sectors. A model of this nature will certainly ensure a perfect symphony between AI and the communication landscape bringing forth an effective and lasting communication process.

(The writer is a former civil servant. Views are Personal. Inputs by Vaishnavie Srinivasan and Zoya Ahmad)

Norway, Ireland and Spain give recognition to Palestinian state

Norway, Ireland and Spain said on Wednesday they are recognizing a Palestinian state, in a historic but largely symbolic move that deepens Israel's isolation more than seven months into its grinding war against Hamas in Gaza The announcements came as the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his defense minister and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is considering allegations of genocide that Israel has strenuously denied.

Palestinians welcomed the announcements as an affirmation of their decades-long quest for statehood in east Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip — territories Israel seized in the 1967 Mideast war and still controls. Israel recalled its ambassadors to the three countries and summoned their envoys. accusing the Europeans of rewarding the militant Hamas group for its October 7 attack that triggered the war. Netanyahu's government, is opposed to Palestinian statehood, says the conflict can only be resolved through direct negotiations, which last collapsed over 15

As if to underline the point, Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir paid a provocative visit Wednesday to a flashpoint holy site in Jerusalem sacred to Jews and Muslims in a move that could escalate tensions across the region.

Ben-Gvir said the visit was a response to the move by the three European countries. "We will not even allow a statement about a Palestinian state," he

The Al-Aqsa mosque compound is the third holiest site in Islam, and the hilltop on which it stands is the holiest site for Jews, who refer to it as the Temple Mount.

With their formal recognition, planned for May 28, the three countries will join some 140 — more than two-thirds of the United Nations — that



Demonstrators display Palestinian flags and chant slogans while marching Tuesday

"This recognition is not against

anyone, it is not against the

Israeli people," Sanchez said. "It

is an act in favor of peace, jus-

tice and moral consistency." He

said it was clear that

Netanyahu "does not have a

project for peace," while

acknowledging that "the fight

against the terrorist group

Israel's government harshly

condemned the decision taken

by the three countries. Foreign

Minister Israel Katz recalled

Israel's ambassadors and sum-

moned the three countries

envoys in Israel. He said they

would watch grisly video

"History will remember that

footage of the October 7 attack

Spain, Norway, and Ireland

decided to award a gold medal

to Hamas murderers and

rapists," he said. He also said

the announcement would

undermine talks aimed at a

cease-fire and hostage release

in Gaza that came to a stand-

President Mahmoud Abbas,

the leader of the Palestinian

Authority, which administers

parts of the Israeli-occupied

West Bank, welcomed the

moves toward recognition, say-

ing they would contribute to

efforts to bring about a two-

state solution. Hamas also wel-

comed the decisions and called

on other nations to "recognize

our legitimate rights and sup-

port the struggle of our people

for liberation and indepen-

dence, and ending the Zionist

still earlier this month.

Hamas is legitimate."

have recognized the state of Palestine over the years. The United States and Britain, among others, have backed the idea of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel but say it should come as part of a negotiated settlement. The announcements from Europe came in a swift cascade. Norway, which helped broker the Oslo accords that kicked off the peace process in the 1990s, was the first to announce its decision, with Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store saying "there cannot be peace in the Middle East if there is no recognition.

Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris called it an "historic and important day for Ireland and for Palestine," saying the announcements had been coordinated and that other countries might join "in the weeks ahead.

The international community has long viewed the creation of a Palestinian state alongside Israel as the only realistic way to resolve the conflict, and in past weeks several European Union countries have indicated they plan to recognize a Palestinian state to further those efforts. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, who announced his country's decision before parliament, has spent months touring European and Middle Eastern countries to garner support for recognition, as well as for a possible cease-fire in Gaza.

'Israel addresses Biden's concerns over Rafah op'

Cairo (AP): Israel has addressed many of President Joe Biden's concerns over its long-simmering plan to carry out a widescale military operation in the southern Gaza city of Rafah aimed at rooting ou Hamas, a senior Biden administration official said Tuesday

The official, who was not authorized to comment publicly and requested anonymity said that in talks over the weekend with White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan, Israeli officials incorporated many changes into their planning that seem to meet concerns about deepening an operation in an area that has been flooded with Palestinian refugees during the seven-month war.

Biden had previously said he opposed a widescale operation in Rafah that did not prioritize the safety of innocen-Palestinian civilians.

The official said the administration stopped short of green-lighting the Israeli plan but said Israeli officials' altered planning suggested they were taking the American administration's concerns seriously

About 900,000 Palestinians have fled Rafah in recent weeks after the population swelled to about 1.5 million.

occupation of our land." Hamas, which Western countries and Israel view as a terrorist group, does not recognize Israel's existence but has indicated it might agree to a state on the 1967 lines, at least on an interim basis.

The announcements are unlikely to have any impact on the ground. Israel annexed east Jerusalem and considers it part of its capital, and in the occupied West Bank it has build scores of Jewish settlements that are now home to over 5,00,000 Israelis. The settlers have Israeli citizenship, while the 3 million Palestinians in the West Bank live under seemingly open-ended Israeli

Singapore Airlines cooperating in severe turbulence probe

Singapore Airlines on Wednesday said it is fully cooperating with relevant authorities in the investigation into the London to Singapore flight which encountered severe turbulence, leading to the death of one passenger and injuring nearly 60 others. Geoffrey Kitchen, a 73year-old British passenger, died likely due to a ĥeart attack on the Singapore Airlines (SIA) flight SQ321, operating from London (Heathrow) to Singapore on Tuesday, said Kittipong Kittikachorn, Manager General Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok, to where the flight was diverted under emergency. Nearly 60 passengers were injured after the flight on May 21 encountered "sudden extreme turbulence over the Irrawaddy Basin at 37,000 feet about 10 hours after departure". The carrier said the remaining

passengers aboard the Boeing 777-300ER aircraft carrying 229 people were examined and treated at the airport.

The SIA is fully cooperating with the relevant authorities in probing this incident, the flag carrier's Chief Executive Officer, Goh Choon Phong, As many as 58 people are still

receiving medical treatment in three hospitals in Bangkok, Channel News Asia reported, citing officials at the Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital. At least 20 injured passengers

are being treated in intensive care units, while 38 passengers are receiving in-patient care, the report said. The Samitivej Srinakarin

Hospital has 41 patients, while 15 patients are in the Samitive Sukhumvit Hospital, and two are in Bangkok Hospital, it said. Of the patients in Samitivej Srinakarin Hospital, nine successfully underwent surgery on Tuesday and five more are

Wednesday, it added.
As many as 131 passengers and 12 crew members, who earlier arrived in Singapore via a relief flight on May 22, were received at Changi Airport by Goh. The SIA, in its latest update,

confirmed an additional five passengers and one crew member on board the SQ321 flight will return to Singapore on Wednesday.

Another 74 passengers and six crew members, including those receiving medical care and their family members and loved ones who were on the flight, were still in Bangkok. "For passengers with onward connections, we have rebooked them on alternative flights. We have also arranged hotel accommodation or lounge access for them to rest until their next flight," Singapore's flag carrier said. "On behalf of the Singapore Airlines Board,

I extend my deepest condo-lences to the family and loved

ones of our passenger who passed away on May 21, 2024, in the SQ321 incident. I assure all passengers and crew members who were on board the aircraft that we are committed to supporting them during this difficult time," said Peter Seah, Chairman of Singapore Airlines.

"I also wish to express my gratitude to everyone in Singapore, Thailand, and around the world who are assisting those affected by this incident," Seah said. The nationalities of the passengers are as follows: 56 from Australia, three Indians, two from Canada, one from Germany, two Indonesians, one from Iceland, four from Ireland, one from Israel, 16 from Malaysia, two from Myanmar, 23 from New Zealand, five from the Philippines, 41 Singaporeans, one South Korean, two from Spain, 47 from the United Kingdom, and four from the

UK hails drop in visas as stranded Indian workers appeal for help

up-to-date picture of visa lev-

els, showing that on current

trajectories legal migration

continues to fall across key

routes," said UK Home

The British people deserve an

immigration system that puts

their interests first. Our

approach is about control and

fairness; to the highly skilled

coming here who deserve a

decent wage, to taxpayers who

shouldn't be relied on to sup-

port them, and to British work

ers who shouldn't be undercut,"

Secretary James Cleverly.

The UK government on Wednesday hailed a significant drop in healthcare visa applications following its restrictions on family dependants, even as hundreds of Indian care workers who find themselves unfairly stranded in the country appeal for help. Latest Home Office statistics

reveal a 76 per cent drop in overseas workers applying for jobs in the UK's care sector and a 58 per cent fall in family dependents in the Health and Care visa category in the first full month since restrictions were in place, compared with April 2023. Indian nationals topped the Health and Care visa grants last year. The number of dependents, or spouses and children, in the student visa category, also registered a significant drop of 79 per cent over the same period since those new rules came into force earlier this year. "This monthly data is the most

he said. The monthly data was released to reflect the impact of changes by the Prime Minister Rishi

Sunak-led government, which is keen to show falling immigration numbers ahead of a general election later this year. Since March, previously unmonitored care providers in England acting as sponsors for migrants are required to register with industry regulator Care Quality Commission

(CQC) – a move the govern-

ment said will address worker exploitation and abuse within the sector.

Indian nationals have topped the Health and Care visa grants, with 38,866 given out last year. and are now facing the brunt of these previously lax rules governing dubious recruitment agencies. "Some of these victims had borrowed thousands of pounds to get the visas and now face deportation for no fault of theirs," said the National Council of Gujarati Organisations (NCGO) UK, which is lobbying on behalf of these workers, many of whom are from Gujarat.

"Some of these agencies are bogus and operate from a hired desk at serviced offices. The majority of them were not checked for their genuineness by the Home Office and were issued with quotas like confetti," said Kanti Nagda of the NCGO UK, which is now seeking a meeting with the Home Secretary to appeal on behalf of

Four accused of killing Nijjar appear before Canada court

Ottawa(PTI): Four Indian nationals accused of killing Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar last year in Surrey were ordered by a Canadian court to have no contact with several people in the community, as they made their first joint appearance before it in the case that has severely strained ties between India and Canada.

Three of the four suspects – Karan Brar (22), Kamalpreet Singh (22) and 28-year-old Karanpreet Singh — appeared in person for the first time in B.C. Provincial Court in Surrey. The fourth suspect — Amandeep Singh, 22, appeared by video link. Amandeep Singh remains in custody in Ontario where he was facing unrelated weapons offences before being arrested on May 10 for Nijjar's killing. Judge Mark Jette spoke to the men through an interpreter as he placed them under a nocontact order, before adjourning until the suspects' next appearance on June 25, CBC

News reported.

Prosecutor Marcel Daigle said the time until the next hearing will allow the Crown to fulfil its evidentiary disclosure obligations to the suspects' lawyers. wore red prison sweatsuits as they entered the courtroom. Richard Fowler, the lawyer representing Karan Brar, told the Vancouver Sun," it's completely understandable given the context why there is an enormous amount of community interest in this case. That level of community interest makes me...to ensure that

Attendees at the latest hearing for the men were searched before entering the courthouse, while the supporters of Nijjar

Sheriffs at the hearing placed peoples' phones in plastic zipper bags and kept them outside the courtroom in plastic bins, with the judge warning observers that recording audio and taking pictures was prohibited, the report added. Nijjar, 45, was killed outside

Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia on June 18, 2023.

Buddhist devotees gather to pour water at the foot of a banyan tree during the Full Moon day of "Kasone," known as Buddha's Birthday, at Botataung pagoda

Iran's supreme leader prays for late president, others

Tran's supreme leader prayed Wednesday over the coffins of eign minister and other officials who were killed in a helicopter crash earlier this week. Later, hundreds of thousands of people followed a procession hon-ouring the dead down Tehran's main boulevard. Iran's Shiite theocracy views

mass demonstrations as crucial evidence of its legitimacy and the people's support. Still, Wednesday's funeral service for President Ebrahim Raisi and others saw a turnout that onlookers described as noticeably lower than the 2020 procession honouring Revolutionary Guard general Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in a US drone strike in Baghdad. Many of the participants said they came to Tehran for the ceremony from other cities and towns across the Islamic Republic, an indication of how those in Iran's capital viewed Raisi, who won the presidency in a record low turnout and later oversaw repeated crackidowns on all dissent — including in the



Iranians follow a truck carrying coffins of the late President Ebrahim Raisi and his companions who were killed in a helicopter crash on Sunday in a mountainous region of the country's northwest, during a funeral ceremony for them in Tehran, Iran,

wake of the 2022 death of Mahsa Amini that sparked street protests over Iran's mandatory hijab, or headscarf Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who openly wept for Soleimani, also remained composed while reciting the stan-

 $D_{\text{money trial moved into a}}^{\text{onald Trump's hush}}$

new phase Tuesday, drawing

closer to the moment when the

jury will begin deciding his fate

after testimony concluded

without the former president

taking the stand in his own

"Your honor, the defense rests,"

Trump lawyer Todd Blanche

told the judge. Trump's team

ended with a former federal

prosecutor who was called to

attack the credibility of the

prosecution's key witness, one

of two people summoned to

the stand by the defense. The

Manhattan district attorney's

office called 20 witnesses over

15 days of testimony before

The jury was sent home for a

week, until May 28, when clos-

resting its case Monday.

AP ■ NEW YORK

defense.

dard prayer for the dead. "Oh Allah, we didn't see anything but good from him," Khamenei said in Arabic, the language of Islam's holy book, the Quran. He soon left and the crowd inside rushed to the front, reaching out to touch the

Mohammad Mokhber, stood nearby and openly cried.

Amirabdollahian and six others in the crash on Sunday comes at a politically sensitive moment for Iran, both at home and abroad. Raisi, who was 63, had been dis-

cussed as a possible successor to Iran's supreme leader, the 85year-old Khamenei. None of Iran's living past presidents other than Khamenei, who was president from 1981 until 1989 could be seen in state television footage of Wednesday's prayers. The authorities gave no explanation for their apparent

Following the deadly helicopter crash, Iran set June 28 as the next presidential election. For now, there's no clear favourite for the position among Iran's political elite — particularly no one who is a Shiite cleric, like Raisi. During Raisi's term in office, Iran launched an unprecedented attack on Israel last month as its war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip rages on. Iran has supported Hamas through-

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh The death of Raisi, Foreign attended the prayers Wednesday International Criminal Court's prosecutor said he'd seek an arrest warrant for him and others over the October 7 attack that sparked the latest Israel-Hamas war. In the unprecedented assault on southern Israel. Hamas-led militants killed 1,200 people and seized 250 hostage. The ICC prosecutor is also seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for their conduct in the war, which has seen more than 35,000 Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip and also hundreds in the

out the war and provided

weaponry to the militants.

Haniyeh recounted meeting Raisi earlier this year in Tehran during Ramadan, the holy Muslim fasting month, and heard the president say the Palestinian issue remains the key one for the Muslim world. Hé also described Raisi calling the October 7 attack an "earthquake in the heart of the Zionist

West Bank.

those charged with these offences have a fair trial." held a protest outside.

Nepalese climber Kami Rita climbs Everest for 30th time

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal's veteran summiteer Kami Rita Sherpa made history on Wednesday by scaling Mt Everest for the 30th time, breaking his own record that he made 10 days ago for the highest number of ascents on the world's highest peak.

The 54-year-old legendary mountaineer reached the 8,849-metre peak at 7:49 am local time, according to Tashi Lakpa Sherpa, Chief Executive Officer at the 14 Peaks Expedition high-altitude sports

company. Kami summited the peak for the 29th time only 10 days ago. "He has scaled Everest on May 12 for the 29th time," The Himalayan Times newspaper quoted Tashi Lakpa as saying.



at the 14 Peaks Expedition and Seven Summit Treks, climbed Mt Everest for the first time in May 1994, the report said. He was born on January 17, 1970, and his mountaineering journey began in 1992 when he

joined an expedition to the highest peak as a supporting staff. Kami developed a deep passion for climbing from a young age and has been scaling mountains for over two decades, Tashi Lakpa said. Besides Mt Everest, he has also conquered Mt K2, Cho Oyu, Lhotse, and Manaslu.

Last year, he successfully scaled Mt Everest for the 27th and 28th times in the same sea-

His closest rival, 46-year-old Pasand Dawa Sherpa of Solukhumbu, also completed his 27th summit of Everest last year. Altogether, 414 climbers from 41 expeditions have acquired permission to scale Everest this season.

Official data from 2023 showed that since 1953's Hillary-Norgay summit, around 7,000 mountaineers have successfully scaled Mt Everest while over 300 have lost their lives.

the courtroom to debate how the judge will instruct jurors on deliberations, a sort of road map meant to help them apply the law to the evidence and tes-timony. The two sides haggled over word choices, legal phrases and how to describe various

campaign-related issues. Trump, the first former American president to be tried criminally, did not answer questions about why he did not

Trump had previously said he wanted to take the witness stand in his own defense, but there was no requirement or even expectation that he do so. Defendants routinely decline to testify. His attorneys, instead of mounting an effort to demonstrate Trump's innocence to jurors, focused on attacking the

ing arguments are expected, credibility of the prosecution but the attorneys returned to witnesses. That's a routine defense strategy; the burden of proof in a criminal case lies with the prosecution. The defense doesn't have to prove a

Trump hush money trial concludes without his testimony

thing. Yet even as Trump denounces the trial as a politically motivated travesty of justice, he has been working to turn the proceedings into an offshoot of his presidential campaign. He's capitalized on the trial as a fundraising pitch, used his time in front of the cameras to criticize President Joe Biden and showcased a parade of his own political supporters.

Prosecutors have accused the presumptive Republican presidential nominee of a scheme to scoop up and bury negative stories in an illegal effort to influence the 2016 presidential election. Trump has pleaded not guilty to falsifying business records to conceal the alleged scheme and denied any wrongdoing. It's the first of Trump's four criminal cases to go to trial, and quite possibly the only one before the 2024 presidential election.

"They have no case," Trump said outside court. "There's no crime."

He also again attacked the prosecutor, despite repeated warnings from Judge Juan M. Merchan not to violate a gag order that bars him from publicly commenting on witnesses, prosecutors, court staff or the judge's family.

Jurors have been given a lesson on the underbelly of the tabloid business world, where Trump allies at the National Enquirer launched a plan to keep seamy, sometimes outrageous stories about Trump out of the public

eye by paying tens of thousands of dollars to "catch and kill" them. They watched as a porn actress, Stormy Daniels, recounted in discomfiting detail an alleged sexual encounter with Trump in a hotel room. Trump says nothing sexual happened between And they sat intently in the jury

box as Trump's former-lawyerturned-foe Michel Cohen placed Trump in the middle of the scheme to buy Daniels' story to keep it from going public in the waning weeks before the 2016 presidential election. During that time, Republicans were wringing their hands in distress over the potential political fallout from the infamous "Access Hollywood" tape, where Trump bragged about grabbing women sexually without asking permission.

Russian attacks on Ukraine power grid hit Kyiv with blackouts

Sustained Russian attacks on Ukraine's power grid in recent weeks have forced leaders of the war-ravaged country to institute nationwide rolling blackouts. Without adequate air defences to counter assaults and allow for repairs, though, the shortages could still worsen as need spikes in late summer and the bitter-cold winter.

The Russian airstrikes targeting the grid since March have meant blackouts have even returned to the capital, Kyiv, which hadn't experienced them since the first year of the war. Among the strikes were an April barrage that damaged Kyiv's largest thermal power plant and a massive attack on May 8 that targeted power generation and transmission facil-

In all, half of Ukraine's energy system was damaged, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said. Entire apartment blocks in the capital went dark. The city's

ities in several regions

military administration said at least 10 per cent of consumers were disconnected.

For many, it is a taste of what might be in store if Ukraine doesn't find other electricity sources before winter. With no end in sight to the attacks on the power grid and without a way to adequately defend against them, there are no quick fixes to the electricity shortages, Energy Minister Herman Halushchenko explained. Ukraine is appealing to Western allies for more air defence systems and spare parts to fix its Soviet-era plants

"With each attack we lose additional power generation, so it just goes minus, minus, minus," . Halushchenko said on Tuesday while standing outside a coalfired plant in central Ukraine that was destroyed in an April 11 attack.

Any efforts to repair the plant would be futile until the military can defend it from another attack. "Should we repair (power stations) just for them while we are unable to defend ourselves?" the minister asked. German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock's joined him on the plant visit, underscoring Ukraine's desperation to close the power gap as quickly as possible.

The first major test of the grid will come in July and August, when consumption can mirror levels in the sub-freezing winter months, the minister said. By mid-May, Kyiv's residents began to feel the consequences of Russia's attacks. A cold snap drove up consumption, forcing Ukrenergo, the main transmission system operator, to intro-duce controlled blackouts throughout the country Ukraine can't generate enough power to cover evening peaks, and the shortage is greater than the country's ability to import electricity from Poland,

Slovakia and Romania. The April 11 attack on the plant destroyed generators, transformers and turbines — every necessary part to generate electricity, said Yevhen Harkavyi the technical director of Centerenergo, which operates the plant.

Five missiles hit the facility that day, and workers were still clearing away rubble on Tuesday as snow-like tufts of poplar cotton fell through a hole in the roof.

The plan for winter is to restore power generation as much as possible, said Harkavyi. How that will happen isn't clear, he conceded: "The situation is already too difficult."

Ukraine is hoping to acquire

parts from long-decommissioned German plants. Harkavyi said Ukrainian teams recently went to Germany to evaluate the equipment, which was taken offline because it doesn't meet European Union environmental standards. It remains to be seen how willing European allies will be to invest in Ukraine's coal-fuelled energy sector given their own green-

Pak court rejects plea to disqualify Imran for concealing alleged daughter's name in 2018 nomination papers

Pakistani court has reject-Aed a petition seeking the disqualification of former prime minister Imran Khan for concealing his alleged daughter Tyrian White while submitting his nomination papers for the 2018 general elections. The Islamabad High Court

(IHC) took up the petition on Tuesday after a gap of almost a year, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The petition alleged that the 71-year-old Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) party founder had not disclosed his alleged daughter — Tyrian White — in his nomination papers for contesting the 2018 general elec-Khan's PTI party won the 2018

general elections, and the former cricketer-turned-politician served as the prime minister of Pakistan from August 2018 to April 2022. The IHC rejected the petition after noting that a three-judge bench had previously dismissed it, the

eport said.Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri read the opinion of the two judges given last year and ruled that the case has already been dis-

On May 10, 2023, a three-member bench of the court

hearing the case was dissolved by IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq after the opinion of two of the three judges — supporting the petitions dismissal was uploaded on the court's

The majority judgement was

deleted from the website minutes after it was uploaded, and the IHC chief justice dissolved the bench

Khan's party welcomed the judgement, saying that the two judges had already decided the case, but the IHC chief jus-tice "tried to keep it alive on

technicalities". Senior lawyers questioned the constitution of a fresh bench when the case had been decid-

ed earlier, according to the The petition said that even though Khan had three chil-dren, he had mentioned only

two in the papers and concealed the existence of his third child. It also alleged that Khan did

not marry his alleged girl-friend Sita White, mother of Tvrian, because her father told Khan that he would not get a "penny" from his wealth if he married Sita.

The PTI founder initially joined the proceedings but later backtracked after he was asked to undergo a blood test,

Vietnam's top security official confirmed as pres

AP BANGKOK

Tietnam's top security official To Lam was confirmed on Wednesday as the nation's new president. He oversaw police and intelligence operations over a period when rights groups say basic liberties have been systematically suppressed, and its secret service was accused of violating international law.

Lam was confirmed by Vietnam's National Assembly after his predecessor resigned amid an ongoing anti-corrup tion campaign that has shaken the country's political establishment and business elites and has resulted in multiple toplevel changes in government. Vietnam's presidency is largely ceremonial, but his new role as head of state puts the 66year-old in a "very strong position" to become the next Communist Party general secretary, the most important political position in the country, said Nguyen Khac Giang, an analyst at Singapore's ISEAS Yusof Ishak Institute. Communist Party General

Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong



was elected to a third term in 2021, but at age 80, he may not seek another term after 2026. Trong is an an ideologue who views corruption as the gravest threat facing the party. As Vietnam's top security official, Lam has led Trong's sweeping anti-graft campaign. Lam spent more than four decades in the Ministry of Public Security before becoming the minister in 2016. His rise took place while Vietnam's politburo lost of six of its 18 members amid the expanding anti-graft campaign, including two former presidents and Vietnam's par-

liamentary head Lam was behind many of the investigations into high-profile politicians, said Giang. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh is seen as the other major contender to possibly succeed Trong, Giang said.

The current vice-speaker of Vietnam's parliament was confirmed on Monday as the National Assembly speaker after his predecessor, Vuong Dinh Hue, resigned amid the anti-graft campaign. Until his resignation, Hue was also widely seen as a potential successor

to Trong. This unprecedented instability in Vietnam's political system has spooked investors as the country tries to position itself as an alternative for companies looking to shift their supply chains away from China.

A flood of foreign investment, especially in manufacturing of high-tech products like smartphones and computers, raised expectations it could join the "Four Asian Tigers" — Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, whose economies underwent rapid industrialization and posted high growth

But the scandals and uncertainty — including the death sentence for a real estate tycoon accused of embezzling nearly 3 per cent of the country's 2022 GDP — have brought with them uncertainty and bureaucratic reticence to make decisions. Economic growth slipped to 5.1 per cent last year from 8 per cent in 2022 as

exports slowed. During Lam's years heading the Public Security Ministry, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and other watchdog organisations have strongly criticised Vietnam for its harassment and intimidation of critics. In 2021, courts convicted at least 32 people for posting critical opinions about the govern-ment and sentenced them to multiple years in prison, while police arrested at least 26 others on fabricated charges, according to Human Rights

Under Tam's watch as Vietnam's top security boss, civil society faced further curbs, foreign aid restrictions introduced in 2021 were tightened in 2023, the country jailed climate activists, and laws were introduced to censor social media, said Ben Swanton of The 88 Project, a group that advocates for freedom of expression in Vietnam. "With To Lam's ascent to the presidency, Vietnam is now a literal police state," said Swanton, adding that the Vietnamese ruling Politburo was now dominated by current and former security officials. He said he expected further intensification of repression and censorship.

of repression and censorship. While Vietnam was under a COVID-19 lockdown in 2021, a video surfaced showing Turkish chef Nusret Gokce, popularly known as Salt Bae, feeding Tam a gold-encrusted steak in London. Despite efforts to censor it, the video went to censor it, the video went viral, stoking widespread anger from people enduring virus lockdowns that exacerbated deprivations. economic Meantime, a Vietnamese noodle vendor named Bui Tuan Lam, who followed the video with a parody of Salt Bae, was arrested on charges of spreading anti-state propaganda and sentenced to five years in

Ît was also under Lam's tenure as public security minister, in 2017, when German authorities say Vietnamese businessperson and former politician Trinh Xuan Thanh and a companion were abducted and dragged into a van in downtown Berlin, in what officials there called "an unprecedented and flagrant violation of German and inter national law".

India, China agree to cooperate in paying in local currency for imports: Maldives

PTI ■ MALE

The Maldives on Wednesday said both India and China have agreed to cooperate in efforts to pay for imports in their respective countries' currency instead of the US dollar, which is likely to help Male save almost 50 per cent of the annual USD 1.5 million imports bill from the two countries.

Maldives' Economic Development Minister Mohamed Saeed said he met with the Indian High Munu Commissioner Mahawar two weeks ago, who in turn, said that New Delhi would support and cooperate in arranging for the settlement of import payments in Indian Rupee. Similarly, Saeed said, he received a letter from China's Commerce Ministry, two days ago, in which Beijing provided assurance it will cooperate in allowing the option to settle Chinese currency, as requested by President Mohamed Muizzu.

Annually, Maldives imports goods worth USD 780 million and USD 720 million from India and China respectively, the minister had said in April when he had first announced that the Maldives was discussing with India and China if the island nation can make payments for its imports from the country in Maldivian Rufivaa.

International trade between two countries in local currency is a mutually beneficial mechanism as it helps in saving each other's foreign exchange reserves. Moreover, the move will mark a significant shift away from the dominant use of the US dollar in international transac-

In July 2023, the Government of India declared that Maldives was among the 22 countries that were permitted by the Reserve Bank of India to open Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) as part of efforts to promote bilateral trade in local currencies. News portal Sun.mv on

Wednesday quoted Saeed as speaking with state-run PSM Media: "Maldives imports between USD 600-700 million in commodities from both India and China, each year. Therefore, we import around USD 1.4 billion to USD 1.5 billion in commodities annually, from both markets combined."

'We are negotiating with both sides to make arrangements for us so that, for example, for imports from China, the shipping company can bring the invoice and the payment can be settled by converting Maldivian Rufiyaa to their local currency through the banks, instead of US dollar," Saeed said, adding, it will save up to 50 per cent from the annual USD 1.5 million in imports from the two coun-"If we can arrange up to USD

300 million from each country, that means USD 700 mil-

lion. This means we can elimlars by that amount in the future. That will reduce the demand for dollars. And the future demand for dollars will continue to fall," Saeed was quoted as saying by Sun.mv. Saeed blamed the poor state of finances on the former administration and agreed that challenges persist as foreign countries are still skeptical about the Maldives but "it is slowly improving." The new Maldivian administration has said that the country's economic situation was "alarming", but that the government was implementing strong fiscal reforms to rectify the issue, including stop-

ping printing money. Earlier in April, during campaigning ahead of the parliamentary polls, Saeed had said that if the ruling party was able to secure a majority in Parliament, they would be able to bring "the dollar rate back down to official market values within approximately two years."

President Muizzu-led People's National Congress (PNC) secured a clear majority in the 87-member People's

'Lanka's presidential election first, parliamentary polls later'

PTI ■ COLOMBO

President Wickremesinghe Ranil Wednesday reiterated his intention to hold the next presidential election this year ahead of the parliamentary election Sources confirmed that he told the Cabinet meeting earlier in the day that financial allocations have only been reserved so far for the conduct of the presidential poll. Despite speculation that a

General Election will precede a Presidential election, Wickremesinghe informed the Cabinet that the Presidential election will be held first this

According to the Election Act, the presidential election should happen first. The next parliamentary election is not due before August 2025. The Elections Commission

earlier this month said the presidential election would be conducted at a date between September 17 and October 16. The ruling Sri Lanka People's Front, commonly known by its Sinhalese name Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP),



which has the current parliamentary majority, had pressed Wickremesinghe to hold the parliamentary election ahead of the presidential poll. Wickremesinghe, 75, is yet to announce his candidacy despite

declarations by two other main opposition leaders: Sajith Premadasa the main opposition leader, and the Marxist JVP leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake.

Wickremesinghe, from the arch-rival party United National Party (UNP), succeeded SLPP-elected president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to become president for the rest of Rajapaksa's term when the lat-

was taken by police to her

brother Zhang Ju's home on May

13, the day she finished her sen-

"I want to thank everyone for

their help and concern," she said

in a soft voice, standing in what

ter was ousted, after the island nation declared first international default, during street protests which lasted between April and July of 2022.

Rajapaksa gave in to calls for his resignation due to his inability to handle the unprecedented economic crisis.

The Rajapaksa administration announced Sri Lanka's firstever sovereign default as forex shortages caused long queues for essentials and fuel.

Wickremesinghe since taking over has steered the economy to safety by securing an IMF bailout. Analysts, however, feel that Sri Lanka is not completely out of the woods yet.

Pak govt forms committee to probe attack on PTI leader

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan's Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on Wednesday said an inquiry committee has been formed to investigate an attack on a senior leader of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party a day earlier. Terming the attack as "regrettable and sad", the law minister while speaking in a Senate session today said such attacks should not happen. "The government is seriously investigating the attack on Raoof Hasan," Tarar said, according to Geo News. An FIR on charges of murder and attempted murder concerning the attack on Imran Khan's party's Information Secretary Raoof Hasan has been registered at Islamabad's Abpara police station, the Express Tribune newspaper reported. Hasan was allegedly attacked by a group of around four apparently transgender persons in the capital. It drew strong condemnation from his party, however it remains unclear why the politician was attacked

UK lawmaker returns to work as 'bionic MP' after losing his hands and feet to sepsis

London (AP): Britain's fractious politicians shared a rare Health Service, which treated him and saved his life, to offer tious politicians shared a rare moment of unity on Wednesday, when Conservative lawmaker returned to work six months after sepsis put him in a coma and forced the amputation of his hands and feet. As Conservative legislator Craig Mackinlay walked unaided into the House of Commons before the weekly Prime Minister's Questions session, government and opposition lawmakers alike rose in a standing ovation. "As you know, we don't allow clapping," Speaker Lindsay Hoyle said as Mackinlay's wife and 4year-old daughter watching from the public gallery. "But this is an exception." Mackinlay, 57, said he wants to be known as "the hisraic MD" He public to the wants to be the wants of the wants to be watched to the wants of the as "the bionic MP." He plans to campaign for greater awareness of the signs of sepsis, and for Britain's state-funded National

better treatment and prosthet ics to people who have lost more than one limb.

Addressing his fellow lawmakers in the Commons chamber, Mackinlay thanked Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Hoyle for visiting him while he was in hospital. Referring to the speaker's formal black tailcoat, he joked that "the rest of the hospital thought I must be dreadfully ill, because they said that guy's got the funeral director in already.

He asked Sunak to ensure the health service would "embed recognition of early signs of sepsis." If we can stop some-body ending up like this, I would say that is a job well done," Mackinlay said.

He also called on health ministers to ensure the "provision of appropriate prosthetics."

Chinese journalist released from prison after 4 years

AP BANGKOK

Thang Zhan was released Lifrom prison after serving four years for charges related to reporting on the COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan, according to a video statement she released Tuesday, eight days after her sentence ended.

Zhang was sentenced to four years in prison on charges of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble," a vaguely defined charge often used in political cases, and served her full term. Yet, on the day of her release, her former lawyers could not reach her or her family. Shanghai police had paid visits to activists and her former lawyers in the



appeared to be a hallway of an apartment building.

The video was posted by Jane Wang, an overseas activist who launched the Free Zhang Zhan campaign in the United Kingdom and is in contact with one of Zhang's former lawyers. However, Wang said in a statement that Zhang still has limited freedom. They became concerned that Zhang would be kept under further control by police even if she

was no longer in prison. The United States Department of State also issued a statement of concern over Zhang's status in the days after she was due to be released.

Ren Quanniu represented Zhang before being stripped of his license in February 2021. He said he confirmed the video was true by speaking with Zhang's family. During her detention at Shanghai's Women Prison, Zhang staged a hunger strike and was hospitalised at one point in 2021. Zhang's family, who could often only speak to her by phone, faced police pressure during her incarceration, and her parents refused to speak to news outlets.

Zhang was among a handful of citizen journalists who travelled to the central Chinese city of Wuhan after the government put it under total lockdown in February 2020, in the early days of the pandemic.

She walked around the city to document public life as fears grew about the novel coron-

Others spent time in jail for documenting the early days of the pandemic, including Fang Bin, who published videos of overcrowded hospitals and bodies

during the outbreak. Fang was sentenced to three years in prison and released in April 2023. Chen Qiushi, another citizen journalist, disappeared in February 2020 while filming in Wuhan.

Chen resurfaced in September 2021 on a friend's live video feed on YouTube, saying he had suffered from depression. He did not provide details about his disappearance.

The coronavirus remains a sensitive topic in China. In the first week of May, the Chinese scientist who first published a sequence of the COVID-19 virus protested authorities barring him from his lab, after years of demotions and setbacks.

TATA POWER DELHI DISTRIBUTION LIMITED Tel: 66112222, Fax: 27468042, Email: TPDDL@tatapower-ddl.com CIN No.: U40109DL2001PLC111526, Website: www.tatapower-ddl.com

TATA Power-DDL invites tenders as per following details

Tender Enquiry No. Work Description	Estimated Cost/EMD (Rs.)	Availability of Bid Document	of Bid Submission/	
DL/ENGG/ENQ/200001677/24-25 Contract for Supply of 4G based Smart Meter	44.17 Crs/ 24,00,000		13.06.2024;1500 Hrs/ 13.06.2024;1530 Hrs	
CORRIGENDUM / TENDER DATE EXTENTION				

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

CORRIGENDUM / TENDER DATE EXTENTION						
Tender Enquiry No. Work Description	Previously Published Date	Revised Due Date & Time of Bid Submission/ Date & time of opening of bids				
DDL/ENGG/ENQ/200001669/24-25 30.04.2024 27.05.2024 at 1500 Hrs/27.05.2024 at 1530 Hrs/27.05.2024 at 1530 Hrs thout Wiring Harness 30.04.2024 27.05.2024 at 1530 Hrs/27.05.2024 At 1530 Hrs/27.05.2						
mplete tender and corrigendum document is available on our						

Tender / Corrigendum Docum Contracts - 011-66112222

Mahindra Finance

corporate agent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

gets IRDAI nod to sell

insurance products as

Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services on

Wednesday said it has

received corporate agency

licence from insurance regulator IRDAI, which will

enable it to sell life and

general insurance policies

The registration shall be valid

offered by various insurers.

Markets climb on buying in Reliance, Infosys



PTI MUMBA

 $E_{ended\ with\ gains\ on}$ Wednesday amid buying in blue-chips Reliance Industries and Infosys amid mixed cues from global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 267.75 points or 0.36 per cent to settle at 74,221.06. During the day, it jumped 354.48 points or 0.47 per cent to 74,307.79. Similarly, the NSE Nifty advanced 68.75 points or 0.31 per cent to finish at 22,597.80.

"Despite mixed global market sentiments ahead of the US Fed minutes, Indian markets exhibited a subtle positive trend. Investors are optimistic about stable Q4 earnings and easing election jitters that had increased

"Interest in the FMCG sector has risen due to the potential for an early onset of monsoon. Nevertheless, markets may underperform in the short term as they wait for the election outcome, with FIIs staying on the sidelines,"

Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. Among the Sensex firms, Hindustan Unilever, Reliance Industries, Infosys, Asian Paints, ITC and UltraTech Cement were the

major gainers.
State Bank of India, JSW Steel,
Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, Tata Steel and Tata Motors were among the laggards.

In Asian markets, Shanghai settled in the positive territory while Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong ended lower. European markets were trading lower. Wall Street ended in the green on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.84 per cent to USD 82.18 a barrel.

Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,874.54 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark declined 52.63 points or 0.07 per cent to settle at 73,953.31 on Tuesday. The Nifty, however, ended higher by 27.05 points or 0.12 per cent to 22,529.05.

Rupee rises 3 paise to close at 83.28 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated by 3 paise to settle at 83.28 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday amid softening crude oil prices. Forex traders said the local unit consolidated in a narrow range weighed down by

foreign fund outflows. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 83.29 and moved in the range of 83.22 and 83.29 against the greenback during the session.

The local unit finally settled at 83.28 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a rise of 3

paise from its previous close. The Indian rupee gained on positive domestic markets and a decline in crude oil prices. However, mixed to positive US Dollar and FII outflows capped sharp gains, said Anuj Choudhary — Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias as the US Dollar may recover from lower levels if the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting minutes are Choudhary said.

FII outflows may also weigh on the rupee. However, a



positive tone in the domestic markets and weakness in crude oil prices may support the rupee at lower levels, Choudhary added.

Investors may cautious ahead of PMI data from the US this week. USDINR spot price

added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, advanced 0.09 per cent to 104.75, as most Fed officials warned of cutting interest rates too early and need more data to cut rates. Brent crude futures, the

global oil benchmark, slipped 0.69 per cent to USD 82.31 per barrel.

On the domestic equity market front, Sensex market front, advanced 267.75 points, or 0.36 per cent, to settle at 74,221.06 points, and Nifty

expected to trade in a range of Rs 83 to Rs 83.55, Choudhary cent, to close at 22,597.80 points.

Institutional Foreign Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Tuesday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,874.54 crore, according to exchange

On the macroeconomic front, according to an article in the RBI's May Bulletin released on Tuesday, India is likely to grow by 7.5 per cent in the first quarter of the current financial year, driven by rising aggregate demand and nonfood spending in the rural

from May 21, 2024 to May 20, 2027, Mahindra Finance said in a regulatory filing. The registration as 'Corporate Agent (Composite)' will enable the company to undertake supplemental business activity of soliciting and procuring insurance business in the areas of life, health and general insurance — both group and individual,

it said. The process would augment company's existing sources of revenue and profits as it would deploy its common infrastructure of branch network and feet on

Mahindra Finance Managing Director & CEO Raul Rebello said, "This diversification will open new revenue models for while delivering personalized services to customers across Mahindra Finance's 1360+ branches, thereby enhancing their experience." The corporate agency licence will enable Mahindra Finance to solicit, procure and carry on the business of advertising, distribution, marketing of all kinds of insurance products/ services, including life insurance, health insurance, and general

insurance, on behalf of

various insurance companies

as a corporate agent as permitted by IRDAI, it said.

Suzlon bags new orders of 402 MW wind energy from Juniper Green Energy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $R^{\text{enewable energy solutions}}_{\text{provider Suzlon Group on}}$ Wednesday said it has bagged new orders for the development of 402 MW wind energy projects from Juniper Green Energy.

Suzlon will install a total of 134 turbine generators (WTGs) with a Hybrid Lattice Tubular (HLT) tower and a rated capacity of 3 MW for both projects at the Suzlon proposed site at Fatehgarh in Rajasthan, company statement said.

As part of the agreement, Suzlon will supply the wind turbines and execute the project including foundation, erection, and commissioning. Suzlon will also undertake comprehensive operations and maintenance services postcommissioning.

"Juniper Green Energy has been a long-term, repeat



customer for us, and we are delighted to partner with them again. This order helps us expand our footprint in Rajasthan," Girish Tanti, Vice Chairman, Suzlon Group, said in the statement.

The electricity generated from these projects will help realise the vision of the Rajasthan government to serve the people of the state with green energy, he added.

The generated power will be provided under FDRE (Firm IPMA said. and Dispatchable Renewable Energy) Hybrid and Merchant projects. Projects of this size can provide electricity to 3.31 lakh households and curb 13.07 lakh tonnes of

Paper, paperboard imports up 34 per cent in FY24: IPMA

Imports of paper and paperboard in the country rose by 34 per cent to 19.3 lakh tonnes in 2023-24, driven by higher shipments from ASEAN countries, an industry association said on Wednesday Indian Paper

Manufacturers Association (IPMA) in a statement said that the increasing imports of these products are hurting the domestic industry.

paperboard Paper and imports, as per the commerce ministry data, were 14.3 lakh tonnes in the financial year ended on March 31, 2023, the

"ASEAN has come to account for the largest chunk in the paper import pie in the country accounting for 27 per cent share. Paper imports from ASEAN, which enter the country at zero import duty under the ASEAN-India free In value terms, paper imports

India exports over

after lifting ban

45,000 tonnes onion

5.1 lakh tonnes during the year from 2.7 lakh tonnes in FY23," the association said citing commerce ministry

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a 10-member members include Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos



"The unprecedented imports of paper and paperboard pose a significant threat to India's Make-in-India initiative

FY21, the body said.

Aatmanirbhar Bharat," IPMA The major paper grades

FY24 from Rs 6,140 crore in

which are coming from these nations include printing paper, coated paper, and paperboard.

IPMA said that this surge comes despite substantial investments by the domestic

industry in recent years to

upgrade technology, improve

product quality, and enhance agro / farm forestry practices. These investments are now at risk due to the influx of duty-free imports," it claimed. IPMA has urged the government to increase the basic customs duty (BCD) on the import of paper and paperboard from 10 per cent to 25 per cent.

Housing prices near peak level, nominal growth seen in coming years, says C&W India head

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

rowth in housing prices is Gexpected to be nominal in short to medium term after rising sharply over the last two years due to surge in demand post the COVID pandemic, according to Cushman & Wakefield India head Anshul Jain.

Jain, the Chief Executive India & South East Asia and APAC Tenant Representation, Cushman & Wakefield, said the housing demand would continue to be strong in view of high economic growth and a growing desire to own homes among consumers especially, young population. "Housing demand in India



was quite muted from 2013-2014, all the way to 2019. The prices were stagnant. There was a wave at that point in where people, particularly youngsters did not want to own anything. We talking about Uberisation of the residential sector where people wanted to rent and did not want to sort of regimes India had seen for a

make a commitment," Jain

said. However, he noted that the COVID pandemic changed that mindset. "People realised the stability of having their own house. Plus people wanted larger houses, and combining that with one of the lowest interest rate while really spurred the demand for housing," he said. Jain noted that housing sales and prices went up driven by end-user demand.

Seeing the prices going up the investors came into the market. So, a combination of that became a perfect cocktail, for a very strong demand post COVID from a housing Going forward, he said there would be nominal growth in

been strong,

. Clearly there has been a very significant price rise in the last two years. But if you normalize that, over about 10 odd years, 2013- 2014 to now, I think the price rise has still

PTI ■ NEW DELHI India has exported more Lthan 45,000 tonnes of onion since the ban on outbound shipments was lifted early this

month, a top government official said on Wednesday. These exports provided relief to farmers after curbs were imposed to keep domestic supplies steady ahead of

general elections. The world's biggest vegetable exporter banned exports of the bulb last December and then extended it in March, after a rise in prices triggered by sluggish production.

"Since the ban was lifted, more than 45,000 tonnes of onions have been exported, mostly to the Middle East and Bangladesh," Nidhi Khare, Secretary of the Consumer Affairs Ministry, told PTI.

keep onion prices affordable during the election price (MEP) of USD 550 per

Khare said the forecast of a good monsoon this year will ensure better sowing of kharif (summer) crops, including onion from June onwards.

country's The onion production is expected to fall 16 per cent from a year earlier to 25.47 million tonnes in the 2023-24 crop year due to lower output in key growing regions like Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, according to the Agriculture Ministry's first

And permanent disruption because of the PPBL embargo. Paytm reported a revenue of Rs 2,267 crore, a modest decline of 3 per cent Y-o-Y (year-on-year). contribution margin was 57 per cent including UPI incentives, and 51 per cent excluding UPI incentives,"

filing.

Paytm said in a statement. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) barred Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL) from accepting deposits, credit transactions or top-ups in any customer accounts, wallets, and FASTags, keeping in view

the interest of customers,

including merchants from

March 15 onwards.
"PPBL products like the Paytm wallet and FASTag were distributed by Paytm. Due to the current embargo on these products, we anticipate the steady state annualised direct impact on EBITDA to be around Rs 500 crore, as previously disclosed. Most of this impact will be in the first quarter as these products were operational during most part of the fourth quarter of FY24,"

The company during the reported quarter wrote off Rs 227 crore investment for a 39 per cent stake in PPBL following future uncertainties associated with the bank's business operations including the uncertainty of any other regulatory development etc. 'PPBL, the management, on a

that the value of the

statement said.

Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) during February and March. "This is expected to have an incremental EBITDA impact

of Rs 100-150 crore, in the first quarter of FY25 and should start recovering from the second quarter as we are seeing stabilisation or growth in consumer and merchant base metrics from April/May, the statement said.

enthusiastically along with the NHPC employees. NHPC is observing 'Swachhta Pakhwada 2024' at

PNS NEW DELHI

 N^{HPC} organised a Shramdaan programme for cleanliness campaign under 'Swachhata Pakhwada 2024' on 21st May 2024. RP Goyal, CMD, NHPC, Shri Uttam Lal, Director (Personnel), NHPC and RK Chaudhary, Director (Technical & Projects), NHPC, senior NHPC officers and employees performed

NTPC

impressive

an

milestone by securing the 3rd

rank globally at the ATD BEST

Award 2024, the highest ranking among all Indian companies. Notably, NTPC is the only PSU to have received

this prestigious award seven

times in the past eight years.

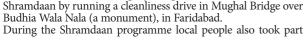
The accolade was accepted by

Rachana Singh Bhal, CGM (Strategic HR & Talent

New Delhi:

Management),

achieved



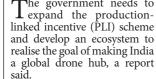


NHPC organises Shramdaan programme under Swachhata Pakhwada 2024

its Corporate Office and all its Regional Offices, Projects and Power Stations across the country from 16th May to 31st May 2024 as per guidelines issued by the Government of India. During this Pakhwada, NHPC is organising various activities as cleanliness awareness programmes, tree/ sapling plantation, skit

presentation, cleaning kit/ sanitary pad distribution, awareness programmes on hygiene, drawing and painting competitions etc.

Government needs to further expand scheme to make India global drone hub, says report



An incentive of Rs 120 crore spread over three financial years was provided for Indian manufacturers of drone and drone components under the PLI Scheme notified on September 30, 2021.

As per the Ministry of Civil Aviation projections, the Indian drone manufacturing industry is expected to reach Rs 900 crore by 2025 from just Rs 60 crore in 2020-21, according to a study conducted by Nexgen Exhibitions. It also noted that the Indian

distinguished ceremony held drone market is expected to The application of drones is grow at 22.15 per cent CAGR already proven in the fields of in New Orleans, USA, on May



(compounded annual growth rate) during the 2024-30

innovation expansion of its application portfolio, India has the potential of becoming the global drone hub by 2030, it stated.

The study highlighted that the key to realising India's vision lies in boosting the domestic drone ecosystem. Other major factors are the expansion of the PLI scheme, government procurement, and pushing the Make in India initiative, it

The application of drones is

Border Surveillance, Rescue Disaster Management, and COVID management etc. The drone services industry's

operations in logistics, data processing, and traffic management etc are far bigger in scale and will outshine the other related sectors very soon, the report highlighted on Tuesday.

Around drones and unmanned systems manufacturers, anti-drone radar, guns and jammers innovators, component, wires, CCTV sensors, suppliers, software developers for drones and unmanned systems, drones as service providing companies, GPS and Geospatial solutions providers participated in the survey. Institutes developing drones, defence research

developers were also part of the survey. The survey was conducted across 10 states

control,

Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The survey also reached out to

foreign companies from the Middle East, Europe, the UK, the US and Australia. Drone International Expo 2024, which will be held on

July 4-5, is a premium expo for drones unmanned systems (land and water), counter drones, LiDAR geospatial artificial intelligence and air taxi. It is one of Asia's biggest drone sector platforms for buyers, industry representatives

manufacturing drones, and stakeholders from across the aerospace companies like flight board to connect.

period, the government on May 4 lifted the ban but

imposed a minimum export tonne.

State-owned agencies have started procuring onions from the recent rabi (winter) harvest to build a targeted 5,00,000-tonne buffer stock for the current year, she added.

estimates.

POWERGRID wins prestigious award for third time and simulator



Gurugram: Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID), a Maharatna CPSE under Ministry of Power, Government of India, has been conferred the prestigious ATD BEST Award 2024 for strategic approach to talent development driving business results. The award was conferred by the world's leading Learning Development (L&Ď) body, Talent Association Development (ATD), USA. PNS | accordingly, has recorded an

intech firm PCommunications, which owns the Paytm brand, on Wednesday said its loss in the fourth quarter of the financial year 2023-24 has widened to ban imposed by the RBI on transactions related to its payments bank.

crore in Q4

The company had posted a loss of Rs 167.5 crore in the impairment provision of Rs same period a year ago, the company said in a regulatory 2,271 crore, representing the carrying value investment in PPBL and "Our fourth quarter FY24 results were impacted by disclosed the same as impairment of investment in associate," the company said temporary disruption on account of UPI transition etc.

Paytm net loss

widens to ₹550

in an audit note. Paytm Founder and CEO Vijay Shekhar Sharma holds 51 per cent in PPBL.

The company for the first time posted operational profit before Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) cost for the full year. 'FY24 has been a landmark year for the company as we achieved our first full year of

EBITDA before profitability (since IPO) of Rs 559 crore. We demonstrated strong revenue momentum (up 25 per cent) and continued our disciplined focus on profitability (EBITDA before ESOP margin up by 8 per cent), in spite of regulatory action on our associate entity, Paytm Payment Bank Ltd," Sharma said in a letter to shareholders. The revenue from operations of Paytm declined by 2.8 per

cent to Rs 2,267.1 crore during the reported quarter from Rs 2,464.6 crore in the corresponding quarter of the financial year (FY) 2023. Paytm said that there were temporary disruptions in operating metrics like operating metrics like Monthly Transacting Users (MTU), merchant base, and

prudent basis, has determined company's investment in PPBL is impaired and,

NTPC secures third rank at ATD BEST Award 2024 PTI NEW DELHI The government needs to expand the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme

Sindhu sails to Malaysia Masters second round

Returning from a break, two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu progressed to the women's singles second round with a straight-game win over Scotland's Kirsty Gilmour at the Malaysia Masters Super 500 badminton tournament here on Wednesday.

World No. 15 Sindhu, who had skipped the Uber Cup and Thailand Open, notched up a 21-17 21-16 win over Gilmour, who is ranked 22nd, in the opening-round match that lasted 46 minutes.

The fifth-seeded Indian, who last won a title in 2022 Singapore Open, will next face Korea's Sim Yu Jin.

In mixed doubles, B Sumeeth Reddy and N Sikki Reddy, world No. 53, also advanced to the second round after outlasting Hong Kong qualifiers Lui Chun Wai and Fu Chi Yan 21-15 12-21 21-17 in 47 minutes

The husband-wife duo will have the task of taming the top



seeds Chen Tang Jie and Toh Ee Wei of Malaysia next. For Sindhu, it was her third win over Gilmour, a two-time medallist Commonwealth Games.

The 28-year-old Sindhu was quick to open up a 7-1 lead but Gilmour managed to claw back at 14-14 and 15-15. The Indian, however, dashed her hopes of a challenge as she grabbed six of the next eight points to take the first game. After the change of sides, Sindhu was more ruthless as she didn't allow her opponent to make any comeback after once again gaining an early 3-0 lead. Sindhu was 11-6 at the break and kept moving ahead to grab eight match points. To her credit, Gilmour saved four match points before Sindhu sealed the match comfortably. Sindhu, a former world champion, has endured a series of narrow losses ever since returning from a knee injury early this year. She is eyeing a good show here to boost her confidence ahead of the Paris



Archery World Cup Stage 2

Compound women team in final, men miss bronze medal

PTI YECHEON (SOUTH

World number one Indian women's VV Indian women's compound team stormed into the final of the archery World Cup Stage II but the men's team will return empty-handed from the tournament after losing the bronze medal clash to Australia here Wednesday. The trio of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Parneet Kaur and Aditi Swami, that had clinched gold medal in World Cup Stage 1 in Shanghai leg last month, knocked out world number four USA 233-229 in the semi-final

India will now clash with world number seven Turkey in the gold medal clash on Saturday. Turkey had stunned top-seed and local favourites South Korea 234-233 in the other semi-final.

It was an overall easy sailing for the Indian women's team, which got a bye into the quarters after finishing second in the qualifying round. They eliminated Italy 236-234 in the last-eight.
The world number one

men's team of Priyansh, Prathamesh Fuge and veteran Abhishek Verma, who had slipped to fourth in the qualifying round on Tuesday, lost to lowly-ranked Australia 133-133 $(10-10^*)$ in a shoot-off.

The Aussies, who are world ranked 21st, took the Indian trio by surprise starting with a 59, dropping just one point.

The Aussies team of Bailey Wildman, Brandon Hawes Jonathon Milne continued its fine run and overcame a one-point deficit after the second round to make it 233-all after the regulation four

ended. The two teams were 30-all in the ensuing shoot-off but the Aussies edged out the

shooting two Xs (arrows closer to centre) to secure the bronze medal. started Having

campaign with an easy 235-212 win over lowly-ranked Vietnam, India overcame tough competition from Denmark and top seed USA, winning both the matches in shoot-off. Meanwhile, the veteran

duo of Tarundeep Rai and Deepika Kumari finished fourth and sixth in their respective qualifiers as recurve competition got underway. The 2010 Asian Games

silver medalist Rai shot 681 points for a sixth spot in rankings, while Dhiraj Bommadevara narrowly missed a top-10 finish on X (closer to centre) count after five archers shot 678 with the Indian finishing 11th.

The Army duo's solid finish ensured Indian recurve men's team No 2 seeding in their title defence. India and top-seeded South Korea will begin their campaign at the opposite ends of the draw.

Indian men's team shocked the world champions South Korea for the first time in a World Cup to take the gold in Stage 1 of the event in Shanghai last month.

Deepika missed the topthree finish in the rankings by just one point, shooting 677 as the Korean duo of Lim Sihyeon (685), Jeon Hunyoung (680) and Li Jiaman (678) took the 1-2-3 seedings.

The of fell way short with Bhajan Kaur (653 points) and Ankita Bhakat (646) were the next best Indians at lowly 34th and 49th places respectively. As a result, the women's team seedings could not be better than six Rai and Deepika combined to get a cumulative 1358 points for the second spot behind South Korea in the mixed team

Concussion replacements added for Copa America under the pink substitution pass system

AP ■ LUQUE (PARAGUAY)

Coaches at next month's Copa America will be able to make a 6th and extra substitution in cases of suspected head trauma or concussion.

South American soccer's governing body CONMEBOL announced the decision Tuesday, making it valid for all America starts in the United States on June 20.

CONMEBOL issued statement saying coaches will need to notify the referee or the 4th match official of the replacement concussion through a pink substitution pass. A similar method was implemented in Major League Soccer in 2021 as part of a

FIFA pilot program.

The player who leaves the pitch under those conditions will have to go to the locker rooms or a hospital for assessment.

substitution "The concussion will take place regardless of the number of substitutions until the moment happens," CONMEBOL said. "When the concussion substitution takes place, the opposing team will automatically be allowed to additional substitution." Team doctors who detect a

suspected concussion or head trauma on the pitch will have up to 24 hours to send a medical report CONMEBOL, the medical South American body said.

AP PARIS

are lower.'

Vanessa Peltier got up at dawn and traveled 500 kilometers (310 miles) to Paris from the Creuse region of central France just so she could watch Rafael Nadal practice on Tuesday.

Along with thousands of other fans, she lined up outside the main court to catch a glimpse of the Spanish champion at what's expected to be his final appearance at the French Open, a tournament he's won a record 14 times.

"I woke up at 6 a.M. And drove from the middle of France to be here," said Peltier, 50. "Nadal has



Brazil's Vasco da Gama and

777 Partners in legal battle

for control of soccer club

AP SAO PAULO

flight soccer club.

as SAF.

Brazil's Vasco da Gama and embattled investment

group 777 Partners are

intensifying their legal battle

after the American company

went to court Tuesday to

reclaim its rights over the top-

Last week, a Rio de Janeiro

judge preemptively removed 777 Partners from Vasco's

administration after a series

of complaints from the club.

Brazilian law allows foreign

entities to buy the rights to

soccer sections of multi-sport

clubs, in an operation known

The preliminary ruling is yet

to be confirmed, but the

American group stepped up

the fight in court and accused

the club of not making image

rights payments to its players

was the first time th

wages or image rights

payments have been delayed

since we took over 18 months

ago," 777 said in a statement

Tuesday. "The injunction that

momentarily pushes us out of

the command of Vasco's SAF

stopped us from making a

bridge payment, as we did last

year in the same period of the

year, when soccer revenues

Image rights are part of the

payment for footballers.

on Monday, as scheduled.

department's

Vasco executives have said the payment of wages is up to date for all players.

The tug of war in Brazil adds to the pressure on the Miamibased company, which has recently faced setbacks in court over its ownership of Belgium's Standard Liège plus other financial problems.

A court in Liege last week ruled in favor of Standard's former owner Bruno Venanzi and shareholders of the company holding the cli stadium. They claimed 777 had defaulted on a payment. The legal woes for the 777 add to its period of financial turmoil. The Miami-based investment company has also seen its airline in Australia grounded in recent weeks. It also faces a fraud lawsuit in New York.

777's other clubs include Genoa in Italy's top tier and Hertha Berlin in Germany's second division.

Playing Carlsen in his home turf not a challenge for me: Praggnanandhaa

PTI ■ STAVANGER (NORWAY)

Having beaten Magnus Carlsen several times in the last couple of years, young Indian Grandmaster Praggnanandhaa feels he will be under no pressure when he takes on the multiple-time world champion in his home turf during the Norway Chess tournament, which gets underway here on May 27. Praggnanandhaa last beat the 33-year-old Carlsen in the Superbet rapid and blitz

tournament, a part of the Grand Chess Tour, in Warsaw earlier this month. "I don't think playing Magnus

in his home turf is a challenge for me. Usually, it matters to the player playing in his home but it won't matter so much me," Praggnanandhaa, who will

also have his sister R. Vaishali playing the Norway Chess Women's Tournament for the first time The 11-day tournament will

see a very strong field including the likes of world champion Ding Liren and Hikaru Nakamura besides home favourite Carlsen. Reflecting on his contest with

Carlsen at last year's FIDE World Cup where Praggnanandhaa gave the Norwegian a tough challenge, the Indian GM said the experience here would help him in future competitions.

"I always enjoy a good challenge. After the World Cup last year, this will be my first classical game with him. I am quite excited to play him and equally excited to play the others. No doubt the experience here will help me in future tournaments," said Praggnanandhaa in a Norway

"I am very happy and excited to play in Norway Chess. The field is extremely strong. This is perhaps the strongest field I opportunity and challenge to give my best. "I am also looking forward to play in this time control which

Chess release.

I have not played anywhere else," added the 18-year-old. The tournament will be played in a double roundrobin format with a time control of 120 minutes.

The teenaged Indian GM also expressed happiness with the growth of chess worldwide.
"It is a busy schedule this year.

move to Budapest for the Chess Olympiad and I will also be playing the Global Chess League later this year. It is really good to have such an exciting league which I think will definitely help grow the game. "As a chess fan, I'm happy to see this league grow. For now, my focus is on Norway Chess and I am physically and mentally wellprepared to do my best there. With sister Vaishal Vaishali competing in th Praggnanandhaa category, said he will also be tracking her progress tournament

After the Norway Chess, we

"I am happy to see an exclusive women's tournament being introduced in Norway Chess. It is a very good initiative because there are not many tournaments for women. This will encourage other organizations to come up with women's tournaments

recurve inconsistent Indians by category.

Thousands of fans come to see Nadal practice ahead of the French Open

always had my support, and the support of France." opportunity. He is almost bigger than the tournament itself," he said.

The line stretched for 200 meters (yards) as fans queued up for Nadal's second day of practice at Roland Garros. Morgan Chevallier said he waited for 45 minutes to get inside the tennis stadium.

"I could not pass on this

The 37-year-old Nadal was sidelined with injuries for nearly all of last year and much of this season. His loss in the third round of the Italian Open two weeks ago left questions about his fitness. He hasn't yet said whether he's ready

for the clav-court tournament. The fans know this may be their last chance to see him at Roland Garros

Sergiu Popa, 26.

Nadal started with low-intensity ball exchanges before playing two sets against his sparring partner for

"I skipped work for Nadal," said

the day, Sebastian Korda of the United States. The crowd erupted in cheers and chants of "Rafa, Rafa' after the Spaniard hit a winning

Outside the court, fans took photos in front of the Nadal statue at the entry gate and lined up to pose with a life-size cardboard cutout of

him, with a hole where they could put their own faces. This way I can imagine what it's like to have the same biceps as him," joked Philippe Charvet as his friend took his picture.

In the Roland Garros gift shop, an artise section is dedicated to Nodel.

entire section is dedicated to Nadal merchandise. Frédéric Caubert and his son Gaspar elbowed their way to buy a hat with Nadal's signature for 28 euros (\$30).

"It's not cheap, but it will be a nice memory once Nadal leaves us," Caubert said. "It's like he is part of our family. When he's gone, family dinners won't feel the same," he said with a smile.

Emma Hayes' first roster as coach of the US women team includes two first time call ups

AP ■ NEW YORK

∼oach Emma Hayes has selected her first roster for the United States ahead of a pair of friendlies as she prepares to lead the women's national team at the

Paris Olympics Hayes, named U.S. Coach last November, finished her final season as coach of Chelsea on Saturday, winning the team's fifth straight Women's Super League Title with a 6-0 rout of Manchester

United. Her first U.S. Roster announced Tuesday includes two National Women's Soccer League players called up to the national team for the first time, Chicago Red Stars defender Sam Staab and Washington Spirit midfielder Hal

Hershfelt. A notable omission from the roster is veteran goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher, who injured her left thigh while playing in a match for the Chicago Red Stars on May 12.

The team will play South Korea on June 1 in Commerce City, Colorado, before a rematch on June 4 in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The 23-player roster is Hayes' last chance to look at players before she names an 18-player roster for the Olympics. The United States will play a pair of sendoff matches in July.

"I expect complete commitment from everyone to absorb very quickly the things that I value as the most important so that we can compete this summer. I know they are a highly coachable group and



I'm looking forward to challenging them," Hayes said in a statement. "It's time to go to work. I can't wait to meet the fans and it's really time to get behind the team as we get

closer to putting a roster together for the Olympics

Hayes is expected to announce her Olympic roster in late June.

Former coach Vlatko Andonovski

Twila Kilgore led the team in the interim while Hayes finished the season with Chelsea. Kilgore, who went 10-1 with the team, will now serve as an assistant coach under Captain Lindsey Horan, among five players from European teams

resigned from the U.S. Team following last year's disappointing finish in the Women's World Cup.

on the roster, will join training camp after her club, Lyon, faces Barcelona for the Champions League title on Saturday.

Alex Morgan and Jaedyn Shaw were included on the squad despite missing recent matches with the San Diego Wave because of injuries. Lynn Williams, who

was left off the team that played in

the SheBelieves Cup, was not on

the latest roster.

Crystal Dunn, who has played mostly at outside back for the national team in recent years, was listed by Hayes as a forward.

Hayes also added three training players to the roster: Olivia Moultrie of the Portland Thorns and Croix Bethune and Kate Wiesner, who both play for the Washington Spirit.

The players are due to report to camp in Colorado on Monday. The U.S. Roster by position with

club affiliation: GOALKEEPERS: Jane Campbell (Houston Dash), Aubrey Kingsbury (Washington Spirit),

Casey Murphy (North Carolina Courage) **DEFENDERS:** Tierna Davidson (NJ/NY Gotham), Emily Fox (Washington Spirit), Jenna Nighswonger (NJ/NY Gotham), Emily Sonnett (NJ/NY Gotham), Sam Staab (Chicago Red Stars). MIDFIELDER: Korbin Albert (Paris Saint-Germain), Sam Coffey (Portland Thorns), Hal Hershfelt (Washington Spirit), Lindsey Horan (Lyon), Rose Lavelle (NJ/NY Gotham), Lily Yohannes (Ajax). FORWARDS: Crystal Dunn

(Arsenal), Naomi Girma (San Diego Wave), Casey Krueger

(NJ/NY Gotham), Catarina Macario (Chelsea), Alex Morgan (San Diego Wave), Trinity Rodman (Washington Spirit), Jaedyn Shaw (San Diego Wave), Sophia Smith (Portland Thorns), Mallory Swanson (Chicago Red

It's hard to leave ailing mother in hospital but KKR is family too, says Gurbaz

fghanistan wicketkeeperbatter Rahmanullah Gurbaz has revealed that he made the difficult choice of leaving his ailing mother in hospital when his IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders sought his services ahead of the playoff clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad here as the team is also his "family"

Gurbaz, in his maiden game of the season, played a vital role in KKR's win over SRH by taking two vital catches and giving his side a blazing start with a 14-ball 23 on Tuesday. He replaced Englishman Phil Salt at the top and hit the ground running to help the two-time champions enter the IPL final with their comfortable eight-wicket victory here on Tuesday.

"As a cricketer, you (should) know, what to do. (In) League cricket, only a fewer players can play. If there is opportunity for you, you should do best. If there's no opportunity for you, you should be prepared, well prepared for the opportunity," Gurbaz told the media here after the match.

"My mom is still sick. I went (back) there and the call from here was (that) Phil Salt was leaving. They called and they messaged me that 'Gurbaz, we need you, and what is your feedback for us?," he revealed. 'I said, 'yes, I will come'. My mom is

still in hospital, and I'm always talking to her, but this is also my family. I should manage both of that, my mom and my KKR family. It's hard, it's tough, but still, I need to manage it," he added.

SRH skipper Pat Cummins' decision to bat first backfired.

Gurbaz said KKR had planned to

bowl first had they won the toss. "We all (had) decided that we

should go and we should bowl first, because in this kind of moment, and team likes Sunrisers that have a strong batting side and you should know what (is) the total and then you go for it," he said.



'We bowled really well, actually. (To get a) team likes Sunrisers all out on 160, that was bowling effort. And then once we come to the batting end, we also not just try to, we should win the circle (powerplay).

"(In) my mind was (the) only (thought) that I should win the circle, because sometime in low

circle, because sometime in low total like this, you need to have a good circle, otherwise, match can be difficult in the end."

Gurbaz said it was the best he had seen KKR pacer Mitchell Starc bowl after the left-arm pacer took three wickets in the powerplay to set up the game for his side.
"He was just unbelievable. The way he bowled today, he's one of the best has a lat of experience the

best, he has a lot of experience, he knows how to manage the big games. I saw him today totally different than other games," he

Gurbaz said Afghanistan players are preparing well for the T20 World Cup next month. He said

franchise cricket is something that comes second and doing well for their country is always their

It's all about hard work. It doesn't mean that you come from Afghanistan, you come from India, you come from Australia, whatever. Ít's all about hard work, I think. If you work hard, if you know what to do, and it's help you in every

"Afghanistan is not the same Afghanistan. We know what to do and how can we represent our country. Everything is good for cricket there, and we played really well, the last World Cup, and from the last six-seven years, Afghanistan is doing great," he said.

situation.

"Our mindset (is) not (just) to play for league cricket, our mindset is always to do something better for our country, and then come the leagues. If you do good for your country, all leagues will pick you, and that's the point that we play all the leagues," he added.

Till I play Tests, I will limit franchise appearances to only two events a year: Travis Head

be, and (focus on) Test cricket."

The last 10 months have been

very hectic for Head starting

with the WTC final, followed

by the Ashes and then the World Cup where he came in during the second half after

recovering from a hand injury.

Right now, more than two months of IPL will be followed

by World T20 in the Americas.

But the southpaw doesn't want

to make a big deal about

days' time once we are done

with IPL. Be home for two-

three days and make the trip to

"Look, we are very fortunate to

do what we do and I am not

going to do it forever. So try

and make the most of it as we

can, we are lucky that we are

He then tried to put things in

perspective.
"I know in a few years, I can retire and do nothing, I will have plenty of time to look back and wish I was back on tour, I would like to be in the

moment, keep batting through

and stay in the moment, enjoying the moment."
CRACKING THE 'INDIA

CODE': The performance that

Head has delivered over the

past few months, he believes that the seeds of it were sown

early in 2023 when he came

with the Test team, a hard-

fought series that Australia lost

"I think a lot of of that has

come from the Test tour last

year, spending time here and

working on things and also a bit older, understanding my game and its blueprint and be-

its blueprint and how you want to go about it and being

content and my family being

around, all those things," he

explained.
"In IPL, I have evolved continuously while getting better but I still have some

work to do," he seemed

His national team skipper Pat Cummins has been his SRH

skipper and he says they have

developed a chemistry where

both know what to expect of

"We are just close friends and

just enjoy each other's company. Not too much game

stuff and over time when you

build relationships, he now

knows how I will go about it

(my job)...," he said.

explained.

confident.

each other.

Indies with

workload management. "I will be home in a couple of

and start all over again.

well looked after."

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Travis Head might have taken this year's IPL by storm but Test cricket remains his top priority and till the time he is playing the format, the Australian big-hitter would like to limit his participation in T20 leagues to just two events

per year. Head, who has enjoyed an incredible last 10 months, has been a nemesis for India with centuries in both the World Test Championship and the ODI World Cup finals. Currently, He has blazed to 533 forging a fabulous opening partnership with uncapped Indian Abhishek Sharma.

Needless to say he is sought after and asked how he plans to manage the lucrative T20 offers with his commitment for the 'Baggy Green', Head said it's a no brainer.

"This has been the first year in IPL for me in quite a while (since 2017). I would put all my eggs in Test basket for the moment, I will continue to do that," Head told PTI during an exclusive interview organised by Prime Video ahead of their upcoming docu-series, 'The Test Season 3', featuring the Australian team's tour of

England last year. "After Tests, I will pick formats, and see in which different ways I am available for selection."

T20 events have mushroomed across the world with some like West Indies' Andre Russell and Sunil Narine appearing in multiple events, adding up to more than five a year.

Having had a great run for the 'Orange Army' this season, Head is keen on coming back to IPL next year too.

"At this stage, I would like to be back here in IPL next year. Like I will play Major League Cricket (MLC in USA) this year right after the World T20 but next year might just look a lot different.

"Each year, you prioritise what you can and can't do. Next year, Test cricket is around, we tour the West Indies and probably I will not feature in many other franchises," the 30-year-old

was categorical. "Look, in few years when I am finished with Test cricket, then probably there will be few more opportunities to play a bit more franchise cricket. But at this time, I would try to limit it to a couple of franchise may

I could not have made better choices: Former RCB owner Mallya on Kohli

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Challengers $F_{\text{Bengaluru owner Vijay Mallya on}}^{\text{ormer Royal Challengers}}$ Wednesday said he couldn't have made a better choice when he bid for Virat Kohli in the inaugural IPL auction as he lauded the superstar batter for his brilliant run in the ongoing season.

RCB have made a tremendous comeback after losing seven out of their first eight games to qualify for the playoffs with six straight victories, riding on Kohli's sublime form which has so far fetched him 708 runs from

14 innings. RCB will face Rajasthan Royals in the Eliminator on Wednesday night.
"When I bid for the RCB franchise

and I bid for Virat, my inner instinct told me that I could not have made better choices," Mallya, who currently lives in the United Kingdom and is trying to avoid extradition to India, wrote on 'X'. "My inner instinct tells me that RCB have the best chance to go for the IPL Trophy. Onward and Upward. Best of luck.'

Kohli was bought by RCB for USD



30,000 ahead of the 2008 IPL following his title-winning run with India's U19 World Cup.
RCB, however, hasn't been able to lift

the trophy despite reaching the final thrice — in 2009, 2011 and 2016. Mallya is accused in a bank loan default matter of over Rs 9,000 crore

involving his defunct Kingfisher Airlines.

He has been living in the United Kingdom since March 2016. The same year he had to forego his ownership of RCB due to the legal proceedings against him.

Sunrisers Hyderabad batting approach was puzzling: Gavaskar

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Legendary Sunil Gavaskar has questioned the "puzzling" batting approach of Sunrisers Hyderabad during the powerplay in the first IPL Qualifier, suggesting their reckless strategy may have cost them the match against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Having cleaned up his fellow Australian Travis Head with a peach of a delivery with his second ball, Mitchell Starc blew away the SRH top-order in his opening spell of 3-0-22-

SRH lost four wickets inside the powerplay to be dismissed shot down in 13.4 overs to storm into the Sunday's summit clash in Chennai.

"It was a terrific performance, no question. Such an impressive display with both the bat and the ball. They took four wickets in the power play,



and that's where the Sunrisers were pushed onto the back foot, really on the ropes. They couldn't recover from that," the former Indian captain told Star Sports Cricket Live.

sorts, but to me, the approach of the SRH batters in those first six overs was puzzling." Vaibhav With Arora key wickets, SRH's batters dismissing

"There was a partnership of Abhishek Sharma in the next over, SRH's explosive opening pair were out for 13 runs. Gavaskar said after losing two

should have played more

which led to further losses and ultimately cost them the match. "When you've lost two wickets

and the two who have been scoring runs for you, a certain amount of caution is required. Sure, don't miss out on scoring opportunities, but don't look to throw your bat at everything. That's what we saw. 'They lost those four wickets,

and losing four top batters means you can't really expect numbers five, six, seven, eight, and nine to get you to 200. So, that is where they may have lost it. But full credit to Kolkata took advantage of that pitch as well," Gavaskar said.

The former India opener was all praise for Venkatesh Iyer and emphasised his value as a versatile player, a top left-handed batter and a capable medium-pace bowler, even if

cautiously. Instead, they he hasn't bowled much continued to play aggressively, recently.

Venkatesh struck a 28-ball 51 not out in an unbroken partnership with his skipper Shreyas Iyer (58 not out; 24b) to seal their eight-wicket win with 38 balls to spare.

"He's been a very good player for such a long time. His first season, a couple of seasons ago, was outstanding. Then, as it happens to everybody, the second season is harder because opponents have a better idea of how to bowl to you," Gavaskar said.

But Venkatesh is the kind of cricketer you want in your team. He's a top batter, a lefthanded batter, an medium pace. We haven't seen him bowl much recently, but he's a very good medium-paced bowler. He might not always pick up wickets, but he can bowl those few overs that can make a significant difference," he added.

OTHER SPORTS

Khilari defends gold at World Para Athletics, India surpasses best ever tally

PTI ■ KOBE (JAPAN)

India's Sachin Sarjerao Khilari defended his gold medal in the men's shot put F46 category with an Asian record at the World Para Athletics Athletics Championship as the country surpassed its best-ever haul in the global competition here on Wednesday.

India, now have 11 medals, five of them gold. They bettered their previous best tally of 10 (3 gold, 4 silver and 3 bronze) in the 2023 edition in Paris.

Sachin heaved the iron ball to a distance of 16.30 metres, bettering his own Asian record of 16.21 metres set during the Para World Athletics Championship in Paris last year. The F46 category in para athletics events is for those with moderately affected movement in one or both arms or the absence of limbs. These athletes have to transmit power from hips and legs into the throw.

In the case of Sachin, who hails from Karagani village in Maharashtra's Sangli district, he suffered a mishap during his school days leading to disability in his left hand. The stocky 34-year-old lost his



gangrene and despite multiple surgeries, his arm never recovered.

On Tuesday, India had reaped a rich haul of five medals to swell its tally to 10 (4 gold, 4 silver, 2 bronze). China is currently leading the medals tally followed by Brazil.

The Hangzhou Asian Games gold-medallist thrower told PTI that he was confident of taking the top podium spot.

muscles from the elbow due to "I was expecting the gold here and I am happy. I have also qualified for Paris Olympics and hope to win gold there also," Sachin said from Kobe. With three more days still to go, India are in with a chance of winning a few more medals including gold and head coach Satyanarayan said he was quite optimistic. "We are expecting two more gold medals and hoping to touch the 17-medal

mark," said Satyanarayan.

On Tuesday, Reigning Paralympics champion Sumit Antil had defended his F64 javelin throw world title, while Thangavelu Mariyappan and Ekta Bhyan also grabbed gold medals in their respective events as India jumped to third place in the World Para Athletics Championships here. Antil, who had won_gold medals in the Tokyo Paralympics and 2023 World Para Athletics Championships, sent his spear to a distance of 69.50m to stand on top of the podium.

The 25-year-old Haryana athlete thus continued his global domination in the F64 javelin event. He is the current world record holder also, courtesy his massive 73.29m throw while winning gold in the Para Asian Games in Hangzhou, China last year.

He also holds the World Para Championships Athletics record of 70.83m which he had produced while winning the gold in the last edition in Paris in 2023. Compatriot Sandeep won the bronze medal in the same event with a throw of 60.41m. Sri Lanka's Dulan Kodithuwakku took the silver with a throw of 66.49m.



Hina, Kanika strike as India juniors beat Dutch hockey club 2-0

PTI ■ BREDA (NETHERLANDS)

Hina Bano and Kanika Siwach scored a goal each as the Indian junior women's hockey team began their tour of Europe with a 2-0 win against Netherlands club Bredase Hockey Vereniging Push here.

After a goalless first half on Tuesday, which saw both sides testing each others' strengths, India broke the deadlock with Hina scoring off a penalty corner after three failed attempts with the set-pieces in

the second quarter. Bredase Hockey Vereniging pushed aggressively for the equaliser but success eluded them despite the hosts earning three PCs in the third quarter. Kanika Siwach found the back of the net to double India's lead in the fourth quarter following

few minutes. The Indian junior team will play their next match against Belgium in Breda, Netherlands later on Wednesday.

which the defenders did well to

ward off several spirited attacks

from the opponents in the last

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements

Printed and published by Shobori Ganguli for and on behalf of CMYK Printech Ltd., Regd Office:-100k Milap Bhawan, 8/A Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110 002, Phone: 011-40110455, Corporate Office:- 201-205, 2nd Floor, Pratap Bhawan 5, B.S.Z. Marg, New Delhi-110002 Phone: 011-69342500 and printed at Jagran Prakashan Ltd, D-210, 211 Sector-63, Noida (U.P.). Editor-in-Chief Shobori Ganguli AIR SURCHARGE of ₹ 2.00 East: Calcutta, North: Leh West: Mumbai & Ahmedabad South: Bangalore & Chennai. Central: Khajuraho. Lucknow Office: 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow-226 016. Telephones: 0522-2346443, 2346444, 2346445.