CITY 3

YOGI DUBS SP AS SUPPORTER OF TERRORISTS

OPINION 6

DELHI SCHOOL BOMB HOAX

WORLD 10

ISRAEL ORDERS CLOSURE OF

Late City Vol.160 Issue 121 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

REFLECTS RANCOR AL JAZEERA OFFICES **LUCKNOW, MONDAY** MAY 6, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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Campaign ends for 3rd phase LS polls

		TION PHASE 3 SEATS des for States marked in red
STATES STATES	NO. OF SEATS	CONSTITUENCY
GUJARAT	26	Kachchh, Banaskantha, Patan, Mahesana, Sabarkantha, Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad East, Ahmedabad West, Surendranagar, Rajkot, Porbandar, Jamnagar, Junagadh, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Anand, Kheda, Panchmahal, Dahod, Vadodara, Chhota Udaipur, Bharuch, Bardoli, Navsari, Valsad
KARNATAKA	14	Chikkodi, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Raichur, Bidar, Koppal, Bellary, Haveri, Dharwad, Uttara Kannada, Davangere, Shimoga
Maharashtra	11	Baramati, Raigad, Osmanabad, Latur (SC), Solapur (SC), Madha, Sangli, Satara, Ratnagiri- Sindhudurg, Kolhapur, Hatkanangle
Uttar Pradesh	10	Sambhal, Hathras, Agra (SC), Fatehpur Sikri, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etah, Budaun, Aonla, Bareilly
Madhya Pradesh	8	Bhind, Bho <mark>pal, Guna, Gwalior,</mark> Morena, Rajgarh, Sagar, Vidisha
CHHATTISGARH	7	Sarguja, Raigarh, Janjgir-Champa, Korba, Bilaspur, Durg, Raipur
Bihar	5	Jhanjharpur, Supaul, Araria, Madhepura, Khagaria
ASSAM	4	Dhubri, Korajhar, Barpeta, Gauhati
West Bengal	4	Maldaha Uttar, Maldaha Dakshin <mark>,</mark> Jangipur, Murshidabad
GOA	2	North Goa, South Goa
DADRA AND NAGAR Haveli/Daman	2	Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu

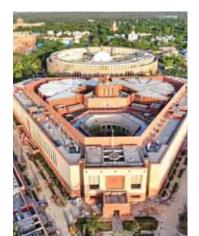
RAJESH KUMAR NEW DELHI

 $T^{\text{he high-octane campaigning for}}_{\text{the third phase of 2024 Lok}}$ Sabha polls in 93 Parliamentary constituencies spread in 12 States and Union Territories came to an end on Sunday evening with top leaders of the BJP-led NDA and the Opposition INDIA bloc making a last-gasp effort to woo voters. The end of the campaigning marks the commencement of a 48-hour silence

A total 1351candidates are in fray in this phase. The third phase of Lok Sabha elections is an important round for Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh. It will decide the political future of three bigwigs - "Maharaja" Jyotiraditya Scindia, from Guna, "bacchon ke mama and behno ke bhaiyya" Shivraj Singh Chouhan from Vidisha and "raja" of

Raghogarh Digvijaya Singh aka Diggy Raja from Rajgarh. Scindia, who lost his family seat of Guna as a Congress candidate in 2019, is hoping to regain the constituency on a BJP ticket this time.

Similarly, this phase will be a test for the Samajwadi Party's (SP) first family as well, with Dimple Yadav, Akshay Yadav and Aditya Yadav contesting from Mainpuri, Firozabad and Budaun respectively. To ensure that the polling percentage is not affected due to the "harsh summer", the poll body has arranged shamianas and tents, additional fans and drinking water facilities to ambulances on standby and using adjacent rooms of the polling booth as waiting areas for the polling days. The stakes are significant for the BJP



in this round as the party had in 2019 won an overwhelming majority of these seats, including all in Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, that will go to

polls on May 7. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the BJP charge, asking the Congress to give in writing that it will not hand over the quota for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes to Muslims.

The Congress and its allies accused the BJP of trying to tamper with the Constitution and do away with reservations.

The principal opposition party, which has promised to remove the 50 per cent cap on reservations, also asked the BJP to clear its stance on the issue.

Baramati in Maharashtra's Pune district is one of the most keenly watched seats in this phase as it is for the first time that two members of

the influential Pawar family contesting against each other. Sharad Pawar's daughter and sitting

MP Supriya Sule and nephew Ajit Pawar's wife Sunetra Pawar have been pitted against each other by the two factions of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) from the constituency.

This is also the first major electoral battle between the factions after the party split in July last year.
Of the 26 Lok Sabha seats in Gujarat,

the BJP's Mukesh Dalal has already won from Surat unopposed after the nomination of Congress' Nilesh Kumbhani was rejected over irregularities in the signature of proposers and other candidates withdrew.

Among the prominent candidates in the fray are Union Home Minister Amit Shah from Gandhinagar, as well as his Cabinet colleagues Mansukh Mandaviva and Parshottam Rupala from Porbandar and Rajkot, respectively. During the campaign, the BJP had to face the ire of the Kshatriya community over a remark made by Rupala in Rajkot. He had claimed several rulers from the community had "roti and beti" (marriage and trade) relations with the British and other foreign invaders.

Rupala is up against former Congress MLA Paresh Dhanani, who had defeated him in the 2002 Assembly polls. The Congress has fielded four sitting and eight former MLAs.

It is contesting the polls in alliance with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). As part of the agreement, the Congress got 24 seats (including Surat), while the AAP has been given Bhavnagar and Bharuch.

Continued on page 8



Security personnel stand quard during cordon-and-search-operation after one soldier was killed and four injured as terrorists ambushed an IAF convoy in Pooch on Saturday

Operations launched to flush out terrorists

MOHIT KANDHARI ■JAMMU

The Indian Army Sunday launched a massive combing and search operation after inducting elite para commandos along with local military units of the Rashtriya Rifles (RR) to avenge the killing of an Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel, who sacrificed his life in the terror attack near Shahsitar in the Surankote area of Poonch district on Saturday.

Senior army officers along with Additional Director General of Police, Jammu, Anand Jain visited the ambush spot in the Surankote area to review the ongoing antiterrorist operations.

A separate meeting was also attended by the senior officers ahead of launching a "hot pursuit" aimed at flushing out foreign terrorists hiding inside natural caves and "safe hideouts". The security forces have also

detained several residents to ascertain the whereabouts of these foreign terrorists hiding in the

area. Meanwhile, the deceased IAF personnel has been identified as Corporal Vikky Pahade. A resident of Nonia-Karbal village, Corporal Pahade hailed from Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district. He was supposed to return home to celebrate his son's birthday on Tuesday. According to the family members, Pahade had visited his family last month to attend his sister's wedding and had joined the unit on April 18. Four other injured IAF personnel were undergoing treatment at a command hospital in Udhampur. "The CAS Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari and all personnel of (the) Indian Air Force salute the braveheart Corporal Vikky Pahade, who made the supreme sacrifice in (the) Poonch Sector, in the service of the nation. Our deepest condolences to the bereaved family. We stand firmly by your side in this hour of grief," read a post on the official X handle of the Indian Air Force

Continued on page 8

Jaishankar blasts Canada for gangland visas, warns of Newton's law

PNS NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Con Sunday slammed Canada for continually issuing visas to people with connection to organised crimes for political purposes and cautioned there will be pushback against what is happening "out there." Newton's law of politics will apply there also, he said.

Terming them as gangland visas, he also said the country had been giving legitimacy to "extremism, separatism and advocates of violence" in the name of free speech. These terse remarks came a day after Canada claimed to have arrested three Indian nationals allegedly involved in Khalistan terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar's murder.

Jaishankar said Justin Trudeau's country thinks there would not be any reaction to its antics of fostering criminals.

"In some countries, these kinds of people have organised themselves politically and become a political lobby and in some of these democratic countries, the politicians of these countries are made to believe that if they defer to these people or pander to these people, these people have some ability to get a community to support them. So, they have tried to create space for themselves in the politics of these countries. I mean, at this time, it's not so much a problem in the US," he said. Jaishankar called Canada India's 'biggest problem" in this regard. "Our biggest problem right now is in Canada. Because in Canada, actually, today the party in power in Canada, and other parties here have given these kinds of extremism, separatism, and advocates of

violence a certain legitimacy in the

name of free speech". he said Continued on page 8

Complaint against Rahul raises question over his nomination

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

complaint has been filed Rahul Gandhi for filing his nomination from the Raebareli seat in Uttar Pradesh. The complaint raises a question about Rahul's nationality and his recent conviction in a defamation case, and how his nomination can be deemed valid by the Election Commission.

The complaint was filed by advocate Ashok Pandey on behalf of Anirudh Pratap Singh. The complaint against Gandhi was registered by the advocate with the Returning Officer of Raebareli, demanding the cancellation of the Congress leader's nomination on the basis of two grounds --his nationality and his conviction.

"First, Rahul Gandhi has been convicted for two years... He is ineligible to contest elections. Even though the Supreme Court



has put a stay on Rahul Gandhi's conviction, it has not given any verdict like Afzal Ansari saying he can contest again... Since his stay on conviction

not involve does permission to contest elections he should back off," Pandey told the media. "Second, back in 2006, Rahul Gandhi once mentioned

his nationality as British. Being British citizen, he cannot Constitutionally contest elections... After my complaint, Rahul Gandhi's representative was called in and my complaint

has been accepted," the advocate further said. Congress leader Ajay Pal Singh

issued a statement regarding the complaint against Rahul, saying that his nomination was held valid before, and still hold valid "There's a candidate who

Rahul Gandhi after the period of complaining was over... The complainant said he has filed a writ challenging Rahul Gandhi's nationality... Rahul Gandhi's nomination was valid previously as well, and it is valid now also,"

registered a complaint against

Ajay added.
Rahul filed his nomination from the Raebareli constituency on Friday, putting an end to the speculation of him contesting the elections from Amethi again. Congress loyalist Kishori Lal Sharma will contest the election from Amethi, against Union Minister and BIP candidate Smriti Irani.

MODI AT RAM TEMPLE



Prime Minister Narendra Modi prostrates before Lord Ram at Ram temple, in Ayodhya

Modi offers prayers at Ram temple, holds roadshow in Ayodhya

PTI ■ AYODHYA

Drime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday offered prayers at the Ram temple in Ayodhya and held a roadshow, on his first visit to the holy town since the consecration at the shrine on January 22.

In a televised ceremony two days ahead of the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections, Modi was seen prostrating before the Ram Lalla idol. Earlier in the day, he had addressed rallies in Etawah and Sitapur.

The entrance gates to the temple were Modi said in post on X. decorated with flowers, with an 'Om' motif formed with yellow petals. Replicas of a bow and an arrow made using flowers were also

Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, Ram Lalla seated in the temple wore a light pink attire on Sundav.

The hearts of the people of Ayodhya are as big as Lord Shri Ram.

Voting in the Faizabad Lok Sabha seat, under which the Ayodhya district falls, will take place in the fifth phase of the elections on May 20. seen at various places. In the third phase of the elections on According to the Shri Ram May 7, polling will take place in 10 constituencies in Uttar Pradesh.

Thirteen seats in the state will go to the polls in the fourth phase on May 13. The prime minister embarked on the roadshow after offering prayers Greetings to the people who came to give blessings in the road show!," at the temple. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and the

BIP's Faizabad candidate Lallu Singh accompanied him.

People from different walks of life lined the road as Modi's motorcade passed through. A group of saree-clad women walked in front of the prime minister's vehicle.

Holding an illuminated lotus (the BJP's election symbol), Modi waved and greeted the people standing on the sides of the road as his vehicle moved past.

Some people who were gathered on the roadside also raised "Jai Sri

Ram" chants and slogans of "Modi, Mangeshkar Chowk, two kilometres Modi". Many were seen taking pictures and making videos with Modi's vehicle as the backdrop.

At several places along the route, small groups performed dances while party workers were seen waving saffron flags. Some people also held up lotus cut-outs and pictures of the prime minister.

The roadshow continued for almost an hour. It began from the temple entrance and concluded at the Naya Ghat crossing, also called the Lata away, party officials said. An idol of the Ram Lalla was consecrated at the Ayodhya temple on January 22, a landmark event led by Modi who also gave a clarion call to go beyond the grand mandir's construction to build the foundation of

The inauguration of the temple marked the culmination of a decades-long campaign, with Modi calling it the advent of a new era.

a "strong, capable and divine" India

of the next 1,000 years.

Punia in tight spot: NADA suspends him for missing dope test

RISHABH MALIK NEW DELHI

Tndian Wrestler Bajrang Punia once Lagain came into the limelight this time as he was handed suspension from any competition in upcoming events by National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA). The suspension came from his failure to submit the urine sample in the trials held at Sonipat on March 10.

This suspension costs Punia any further participation in any upcoming events or Wrestling competitions until NADA has asked to send his reply by

the suspension is lifted by the NADA. The Olympic bronze medallist took to social media to give his version of the

Punia said he never refused to give the sample when the officer came to collect the sample in March during which he asked the officials to give an explanation regarding the use of expired kits which they brought to take my sample. Punia said he was ready to give his sample after they



Tuesday to avoid any further disciplinary action.

The expired kits concern is from last vear in December when Bajrang posted a video in which he stated that the kits being used to take the sample were beyond expiry. Bajrang's lawyer Vidhushpat Singhania said, "Need to access the case file and we'll be filing a reply to NADA soon"

On his suspension, WFI President Sanjay Singh expressed NADA didn't update them about the suspension. In a meeting with DG on April 25 this Istanbul last qualifier. The World Cup Lok Sabha elections.

matter was not shared. Sanjay said he called NADA officials on Sunday morning and had no answers to his questions hence decided to write to NADA and WADA about the matter. "If the wrestler fails to come out clean with his reply he automatically will be out of the race for the qualification of the French Olympics," Sanjay added. Till now India has not won a Paris Olympic quota in the men's category freestyle 65kg weight. Only Sujeet

qualifier starts from May 9 in Turkey and this will be the last chance for wrestlers to place themselves for the upcoming summer Olympics.

Punia came to limelight when he was one of the leading members of the protest against former president of the Indian Wrestling Federation and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh who has been accused of sexual harassment by female wrestlers. With the case against him, Bhushan has been denied a ticket by his party for the ensuing

rams into another

PNS LUCKNOW

Three persons, including a truck driver and a puncture repairer, were killed when the truck rammed into a stationary truck parked at outer ring road, Kisan Path, in Bijnor police station area on Sunday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Shafiq Ahmed (30) of Hamirpur, truck driver Mahendra Jangid (33) and his helper Raju (40), both of Alwar in Rajasthan. The injured was identified as Ram Sewak of Sohramau in Unnao district. He has been admitted to SGPGI trauma centre where his condition is said to be crit-

As per reports, a truck laden with maurang had a flat tyre on the way in Alinagar Khurd vil-

lage at the outer ring road, Kisan Path, and its driver parked the vehicle at one of the sides of road to get the puncture mended. Shafiq Ahmed was mending the puncture and Ram Sewak was helping him. Around noon, another truck whizzed past the road and rammed into the truck

parked there. Truck driver Mahendra Jangid and helper Raju died on the spot while Shafiq came under the wheels of the truck while mending a puncture. He also died on the spot. Ram Sewak also suffered injuries.

Immediately after the incident, commuters called the police. The Bijnor SHO, along with a police team, reached the scene and alerted senior officers

The victims were rushed to

SGPGI trauma centre where three of them were pronounced dead. A spokesman said the family members of the victims had been informed about the incident.

In another case, a woman was In another case, a woman was found hanging from a tree in Mohanlalganj on Sunday morning. Police said the autopsy report would ascertain the cause of death and the investigation would be made accordingly.

As per reports, some of the villagers spotted the body of the woman, identified as Seema of Rae Bhan Khera, hanging from a tree in the outskirts of the village about 250 metres away from her home. Initially, the villagers could not identify the body but later, her husband Hemraj reached the scene and identified the deceased.

duped multiple people by falsely claiming to arrange houses, flats, or land at discounted rates while impersonating a Lucknow Development Authority (LDA)

The accused, identified as Syed Ishan alias Sonu from Jankipuram, works at a wood factory. He collaborated allegedfactory. He collaborated allegedly with his father and a relative in committing these crimes. Earlier, his brother-in-law Qazi Saif Rehman of Jankipuram (Sadbhavana Society), posing as a junior engineer at LDA, was also arrested in connection with the scam. The police received a complaint on April 2 from a vice complaint on April 2 from a victim who was defrauded by Sonu under the guise of facili-

Sonu was apprehended in Rajasthan, where he had been hiding since his involvement in the crime came to light.

Meanwhile, the Husainganj

ed a rape suspect, who had also defrauded the victim of Rs 2 lakh by promising her a job and threatening to defame her with

a compromising video.
The accused, Yashdeep Verma from Gonda district, was apprehended near the Udaiganj tri-section. The victim, in her complaint registered under sections of rape, threatening, and other offences, alleged that the accused lured her with a job, extorted money, raped her, and threatened her with a compromising video to prevent her from reporting the incident to the police.

In a separate incident, a woman was defrauded of nearly Rs 1 lakh in an online scam in Madiaon. The incident took place on March 7, and a case was filed nearly two months later following a complaint to the 1930 Cyber Crime helpline by the victim, Renu Mishra of Sitapur Road Yojna Colony. According to the complainant, she received a call from an unknown number, and the

the latter had instructed a transfer of Rs 25,000. The victim received a false message crediting Rs 70,000 to her Google Pay account, and the fraudster persuaded her to return the excess amount. Subsequently, a total of Rs 94,500 was fraudulently withdrawn from her account in multiple transactions.

PRINCIPAL, TEACHER BOOKED FOR HURTING RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS

An FIR has been registered against the principal and a teacher of a private school run by Christian missionaries in Ballia district for allegedly hurting religious sentiments, police said on Sunday. The FIR was registered at the Rasda police station on Saturday on a complaint from the a student's father, they said. In his com-plaint, he has alleged that his son's "shikha" was cut by his teacher with a pair of scissors on May 2, police said. The "shikha" is a tuff of hair kept at caller claimed to be familiar the back of the head by with her husband, stating that Hindu following tonsure. the back of the head by a

3 killed as one truck | Srivastava braves heat, skips meals!

SHARMILA KRISHNA LUCKNOW

Tt's 8:30 on Sunday morning, and a motley crowd led by the corporator of Paper Mill Colony, Rajesh Singh Gabbar, gathers near his office in a narrow lane, eagerly awaiting the arrival of BJP's Lucknow East Assembly bypoll candidate OP Srivastava.

Clad in saffron caps and scarves adorned with BJP flags, the supporters are prepared for Srivastava's door-to-door visit, animatedly discussing the BJP's prospects in the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Their excitement peaks as a procession of cars arrives. Cheers of 'Jai Shree Ram', 'BJP zindabad', 'OP Bhaiya zindabad', and 'Rajnath Singh zindabad' fill the air as BJP supporters surround Srivastava, adorning him with bright yellow marigold garlands.

Despite the hot weather, Srivastava, fresh from a party meeting, appears calm and

"I start my day at 5 am and often work until 2 am, getting just three hours of sleep," he tells a reporter, adding: "My day is tographs with locals. packed with 'jan sampark' sessions, meetings, and public

LUCKNOW EAST ASSEMBLY BYPOLL



BJP candidate OP Srivastava on a campaigning spree on Sunday

Moving swiftly from door to door, Srivastava distributes pamphlets and warmly greets residents, touching the feet of elders. He also poses for pho-

Rajesh Singh Gabbar, walking briskly alongside Srivastava, urges more residents to come out and meet their candidate.

The serene Sunday morning transforms into a bustling event as supporters parade through the streets, rallying residents from their homes to witness the campaign.

By 9 am, the roads resemble midday due to the fervent activities, yet Srivastava continues without any protective gears or shades. "The heat doesn't bother me, and meals are often forgotten during this hectic

campaign," he remarks. When asked about voter awareness regarding the upcoming Lucknow East Assembly bypoll alongside the Lok Sabha elections, Srivastava expresses confidence in Lucknow's informed

"BJP is committed to public service," Srivastava emphasises, adding: "Our workers engage directly with the people." He notes overwhelming confidence in the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi among voters, expecting robust support on May 20. He particularly mentions strong enthusiasm from women and youth. Regarding the low voter turnout in earlier phases, Srivastava attributes the high turnout in

He lauds the incumbent MP Rajnath Singh for his substantial contributions to Lucknow's development, highlighting significant infrastructure improve-

Lucknow to public support for

Gabbar mentions that the Paper Mill area has over 8,000 voters, mostly BJP supporters with some Samajwadi Party backers. He ensures all voters receive information slips and outlines plans to mobilise voters on polling day, providing transportation to polling stations. While the colony exhibits some

infrastructure challenges, residents generally express satisfaction with the corporator's efforts. "We are pleased with his work," a female resident says.

Fraudster impersonating DA employee arrested

PNS LUCKNOW

The Ghazipur police on Sunday claimed to have arrested a man who allegedly employee.

tating a house.

police claimed to have arrest-

Music therapy for LU students; MoU signed PNS LUCKNOW

The Institute of Women's Studies at Lucknow University and the Music Therapy Cell and Research Centre at Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi, have

announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding understanding (MoU) for academic exchange. This part-nership represents a significant step towards fostering academic collaboration and enhancing the educational experience

for students and faculty at both institutions. Under this MoU, the Music Therapy Cell at Kashi Vidyapith will conduct specialised music therapy sessions for students and faculty mem-

bers at LU. These sessions are designed to promote mental health and emotional wellbeing through the therapeutic use of music. Concurrently, the



Institute of Women's Studies will facilitate gender sensitisation sessions for students at Kashi Vidyapith, Varanasi. The MoU will remain in effect for one year with the potential for renewal to continue this fruitful partnership.

According to eyewitnesses, the SP workers bent the spear in

There is widespread anger dent.

national heroes. Both the parties can only glorify terrorists and the mafia.

Considering the seriousness of the matter, the police have registered a case against 90 to 100 SP workers under sections 147, 188, 295-A, 504 and 171H of the Indian Penal Code. Local people said that a day earlier, at the end of his roadshow in Mainpuri, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had paid floral tributes at the statue of Maharana Pratap. The local people also accused the hooligans of urinating at the statue.

Anger against the SP has also

FIR against **SP** workers for vandalising Maharana statue after the end of the roadshow

A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered in Mainpuri Kotwali against Samajwadi Party workers for vandalising the statue of Maharana Pratap and indulging in hooliganism here on Saturday.

It may be mentioned here that on Saturday, SP president Akhilesh Yadav held a roadshow in Mainpuri in support of his wife and SP candidate Dimple Yadav during which some SP workers allegedly raised indecent slogans at Maharana Pratap Chowk.

After the roadshow, a group of SP workers climbed the statue of Maharana Pratap and vandalised it.

Maharana Pratap's statue and put a SP flag in his hand. They also hurled abuses at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath condemned the incident in harshest terms. He said: "SP and Congress cannot be expected to respect

Agitated over Saturday's incident, hundreds of people staged a protest at Maharana Pratap Chowk on Sunday, raising slogans and demanding immediate arrest of all SP workers involved in the incident, including the party's Lok Sabha and assembly in-charges.

taken the social media by storm with people expressing their ire

media users are targeting Akhilesh Yadav for this incident and demanding a public apology from him. At the same time, the video of Chief Minister Yogi paying floral tributes at the statue of Maharana Pratap and the des-ecration of the statue by mis-creants is also being shared

One user wrote: "Saifs of the Saifai brand Samajwadi Party have insulted national hero Maharana Pratap by vandalising his statue. On the other hand, Chief Minister Yogi ji had paid floral tributes at the statue of the national hero in Mainpuri. The difference is clear." Another social media user, Dr

Richa Singh, wrote: "After Akhilesh's roadshow in Mainpuri, the statue of Maharana Pratap ji was van-dalised. An attempt was made to break his spear. Yogi-Modi were abused. Akhilesh is coming' is no longer just a slogan, it has become a threat."

Arun Rana wrote, "The act of disrespecting the statue of brave Maharana Pratap by SP supporters in Mainpuri is extremely condemnable. Strict action should be taken against all the accused.

Nurturing mafia, rioters and insulting national heroes is policy of SP & Cong: Yogi

hief Minister Yogi Adityanath has expressed shock over this incident and given assurance to the people that the culprits will not be spared under any circumstances.

Chief Minister Yogi said that on the one hand the Samajwadi Party and Congress patronise, encourage and glorify the mafia, rioters and terrorists and on the other, they insult national heroes. He said that the SP, after com-

ing to power in 2012, made a malicious attempt to with-draw the cases of terrorists attacked Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya, Sankatmochan Temple in Kashi, Lucknow courts as well as the CRPF camp in Rampur. "Recently, when a notorious mafia don died, the national president of Samajwadi Party himself visited his house to offer his condolences. How did he behave with Ram devotees during the Ram Janmabhoomi movement in Ayodhya? What was the conduct of Samajwadi Party on the death of Kalyan Singh?

Their disrespectful and contemptuous behaviour towards the statue of national hero Maharana Pratap on Saturday is highly condemnable. I condemn this act."

He added: "This conduct is not exclusive to the Samajwadi Party; similar incidents occurred with Rahul Gandhi in Maharashtra. When a supporter offered him a statue of Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharai, he declined it. It is evident they won't honour national heroes but will instead exalt terrorists. Pakistan, and criminal elements, posing a threat to the safety of women and businessmen. The nation is observing, and they will receive a fitting response in the upcoming elections."

Chief Minister Yogi emphasised that when leaders embrace shamelessness and pursue self-serving politics, their interests often prioritise their families, resulting in such displays. Whether it is the incidents in Mainpuri or Maharashtra, Congress, Samajwadi Party and National Conference exhibit similar tendencies. One cannot expect better things from them, he remarked.

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Juhi Anwar to Shabina Anwar W/O Mohd Anwar R/O 91/80-81 Dalel Purwa Kanpur for future purpose.

NOTICE

I have to changed my name from Haji Avub Khan or Mohammad Ayyoob Khan to Mohammad Avub Khan S/O Mohammad Taqi Khan R/O EWS 27 Ganga Vihar KDA Colony Jajmau Kanpur for future purpose.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from GARIMA PANDEY To GARIMA BAJPAI W/O- AMIT PANDEY R/O 104 A/23 RAMBAGH KANPUR for future purpose

NOTICE

his is informed to that in my Highschool Certificate 2023 my name FAHEEM AHMAD and my father's name TUFAIL AHMAD spelling incorrect by mistake. My correct name FAHEEM AHMED and my father's name is TUFAIL AHMED as per Adhar Card .-Faheem Ahmed S/o Tufail Ahmed, R/o 550A, Dariyabad, Prayagraj.

CITYBRIEFS

एस.एस.जी. कॉलेज ग्राम-पोस्ट मौहार, फतेहपुर (सम्बद्ध- प्रो. राजेन्द्र

आवश्यकता है

(रज्जू भैय्या) विश्वविद्यालय प्रयागराज) आवश्यकता है प्राचार्य एवं प्रवक्ताओं की कल संकाय हेतु– (1) प्राचार्य– एक पद (2) हिन्दी साहित्य– एक पद (३) शिक्षा शास्त्र– एक पद (4) इतिहास– एक पद (5) गृह विज्ञान– एक पद (6) अंग्रेजी साहित्य– एक पद (7) संस्कृत-एक पद (8) समाज शास्त्र– एक पद

विज्ञान संकाय हेतु – (1) वनस्पति विज्ञान एक पद (2) रसायन विज्ञान– एक पद (3) गणित- एक पद (4) भौतिक विज्ञान- एक पद (5) जन्तु विज्ञान– एक पद नोट:– वेतन एवं योग्यता यू.जी.सी. एवं राज्य विश्वविद्यालय मानकानुसार देय होगा। इच्छुक अभ्यर्थी अपना आवेदन विज्ञापन प्रकाशन से 21 दिनों के अन्दर वेद्यालय के पते पर भेजें

मो. 79053 50038, 9648670899

Measures in place to fight heatwave TIPS FOR PROTECTION

The Health department has L taken extensive measures to prevent heatwave conditions, and the public is being educated on how to protect themselves from heat-related issues. Chief Medical Officer Dr Manoj Agarwal assured the people that there is no need to panic, as the department has made comprehensive preparations. All government hospitals are equipped with cold rooms, cold packs, ORS packets, pure drinking water, fans, coolers, and sufficient quantities of medicines to manage heatrelated illnesses.

"To prevent heatwave, the staff at urban and rural community health centres and primary health centres have received online training. Guidelines have been issued to the public on taking necessary precautions during weddings and other events. Private medical institutions have also made arrangements to mitigate heatrelated risks. Temporary shelters with coolers, fans, drinking water, essential medicines like paracetamol, and trained staff have been set up at medical facility entrances," Dr Agarwal explained.

In the interest of public health,

ICAR-CISH TO ESTABISH CLEAN PLANT PRODUCTION CENTRE

A state-of-the-art clean plant produc-

tion centre will be established at the

Central Institute of Horticulture

(ICAR-CISH) to produce disease-free

plants meeting international stan-

dards. Experts recently visited ICAR-

CISH to initiate this endeavour. A

senior scientist said that the

Government of India launched the

Clean Planting Material Production

Programme, in coordination with the

department of Agriculture and

Farmers Welfare, Ministry of

Agriculture and Farmers Welfare,

alongside the National Horticulture

Board and Indian Council of

"A \$20 million project has been approved to develop Clean Planting

Agriculture Research, New Delhi.



free ORS and clean wet cloths for body cooling have been provided. Various institutions and organisations, such as the Uttar Pradesh Housing Development Council, are collaborating to raise awareness. Resident Welfare Associations

This programme is expected to significantly enhance the state's fruit

production system, meeting export

standards and offering higher remu-

neration to farmers in the future," he

emphasised. A team of internation-

al experts (Ioannis Tzanetakis, JE

Martinus, Dipak Paudiyal) and offi-

cials from the National Horticulture

Board (CP Gandhi and Dr SN Sahay)

visited ICAR-CISH to finalise land

selection for the Clean Planting

Material Production Programme

and engage in discussions with scientists. ICAR-CISH director Dr T

Damodaran outlined the potential and necessity for the state to host this

centre and addressed queries regard-

ing mango and guava cultivation

areas and production in UP/India,

planting material requirements, avail-

Avoid unnecessary outdoor activities between 12 noon and

■ If you must go out, cover your head with a wet cloth or scarf. ■ Use an umbrella and carry drinking water. ■ Wear light-coloured, breath-

able clothing.

Stay in well-ventilated rooms and use curtains to block direct

sunlight. ■ Stay hydrated, drink water even if not thirsty.

Consume hydrating foods and drinks like mango panna, bael sherbet, juicy fruits

have been instructed to take measures against heatwave. Rotary Club has been engaged to raise awareness and take preventive measures through its volunteers. Additionally, an awareness meeting was held with Indian Industrial Association officials, chaired by the chief development officer, to educate the employees using

promotional materials. Lucknow Vyapar Mandal has set up drinking water stations, while UPMRC has provided water at platforms, and the Transport department has (orange, watermelon, muskmelon), cucumber, buttermilk, pineapple, coconut water, lemonade, homemade lassi, and ORS solution. ■ Prefer ground floor accom-

modations during the day. Provide shade and sufficient water for animals.

Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and carbonated drinks as they cause dehydration. If working outdoors, avoid

midday hours. ■ Wear loose, light-coloured clothing and shoes when out-

made similar arrangements at

bus stops.

ry fields and progress in quality research for global agricultural advancement. They highlighted that

bolstering ICAR-ĆISH would posi-

tively impact the Asian subtropical

PROF VERMA TAKES CHARGE

Vice-Chancellor of Babasaheb

Bhimrao Ambedkar University

Sanjay Singh handed over the responsibility to Prof NMP Verma,

who took over as acting vice-chan-

cellor. After getting the approval of

President Draupadi Murmu, Sanjay

Singh handed over this responsibil-

ity to Prof Verma, the senior most

teacher of the university and head of

the economics department. Besides,

Sanjay Singh also took over the

AS ACTING VC OF BBAU

fruit industry.

Public awareness campaigns are being conducted through audio-video jingles and hoardings in the metro. The Lucknow Municipal Corporation is disseminating information through hoardings and LED displays across the district, and the District Basic Education Office is training its staff online. The Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram team is educating children about heatwave pro-

tection during school visits.

WORKSHOP

The Centre for Advanced Studies recently organised a five-day workshop titled 'Advanced Legged Robots: Dynamics and Control'. The workshop focused on the hardware and software aspects of building four-legged robots. The participants were introduced to robot construction basics, including kinematics, dynamics, and control for legs, PyBullet simulation, ROS and Gazebo applications, actuators, transmission design, manufacturing challenges, control architecture, and robotics industry insights by dean of academics and workshop coordinator Dr Anuj Kumar Sharma. Another coordinator Dr Rabesh Kumar Singh emphasised the event's benefits for both the institute and students in robotics education, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Technical

University is conducting counseling for the academic session 2024-25 overseeing admissions for engineering, architecture, management, and pharmacy courses in state universities.

ETHICS SESSION In response to a government directive received in PGMER 2023, Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Institute of Medical Sciences organised a course in ethics session to enrich the education of medical students. Director Dr CM Singh emphasised the session's significance, aimed at establishing a solid groundwork in basic medical science, ethics, research methodology, and communication skills. The session featured lectures by faculty members on various topics, including OPD and ward etiquette, ICU rounds, delivering difficult news, patient counseling, medical ethics, and confidentiality.

E-AUCTION NOTICE DAMAGED APPROX. 1,23,880 KG OF MS, CS & CI PARTS, APPROX. 2,620 KG OF SS PARTS AND APPROX 5,900 KG OF ALUMINUM PARTS Interested Buyers are invited to participate in

the e-Auction for the disposal of " Damaged approx. 1,23,880 Kg of MS, CS & CI Parts, approx. 2,620 Kg of SS Parts and approx 5,900 Kg of aluminum Parts" on "Per Kg" Basis. The salvage will be sold on "As is Where is", Whatever there is" and "No Complaint" Basis and belongs to M/s. Zuari Industries Ltd. The materials can be inspected at Vill-Khamaria Pandit, PO-Aira Estate, Distt.-Lakhimpur (Kheri), UP-262722 on working days only between 06-05-24 to 14-05-24 between 10 AM to 5 PM. Kindly contact Mr. Sachida Nand Mishra a 9721456312 for inspection.

E-AUCTION WILL BE HELD ON 15-05-24. Kindly contact Mr. Shamsher Singh at 9709709992 to obtain the form containing terms & conditions of e-Auction or download from website https://www.sealthedeal.co.in/.

Auctioneers: Seal The Deal having registered office at 148, Pocket C2, Sector 5, Rohini, Delhi - 110085

able germplasm, and the institute's importance in this domain. Material Production Centres in five charge as Vice-Chancellor of Dr attracting attendees from various regions across the country. ICAR-Shakuntala Mishra National The visiting experts expressed satisfaction with the institute's laborato-University, CISH is selected as one of these cenesteemed institutions. Meanwhile, Rehabilitation tres for mango, guava, and lychee.

Muslims realise opposition using them as pawns: Modi

Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said Muslims now schemes without discriminaunderstand that the Congress and INDIA bloc are using them as pawns, asserting that the community is distancing itself from them after seeing the development carried out by the BJP. Addressing a rally in support of BJP candidate Rekha Verma in Uttar Pradesh's Dhaurahra, Modi said that the poor and those belonging to the SC, ST and OBC communities have also come to the BJP.

He also addressed an election meeting in Etawah, and offered prayers at the Ram temple in Ayodhya and held a roadshow, on his first visit to the holy town since the consecration at the shrine on January 22. In a televised ceremony two days ahead of the third phase of the Lok Sabha elections, the prime minister was seen prostrating before the Ram Lalla idol at the Ayodhya temple. At the Dhaurahra rally, Modi

said, "Muslim brothers and sisters are seeing that (houses under) PM housing scheme were given to all the needy. Be it water connection or gas cylinder under Ujjwala Yojana, every government benefit was

tion."

"The Muslim community also realises that the Congress and INDI alliance have made them pawns," he said, adding that "that is why the Muslim community is also distancing itself from these contractors of vote bank politics".

Now, to save the Muslim vote bank, these people (opposition) are playing a new game and are out doing appeasement in the open, he said.

In Etawah, the prime minister lashed out at the "dynastic politics" of the Samajwadi Party and the Congress, saying while the opposition alliance partners work only to benefit their own families, he is building a better future for the nation's next generations.

Referring to himself and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, he said, "We don't have children. We are working for your children."

The prime minister also said that he is laying the foundation to ensure that India remains a powerful nation for the next 1,000 years.

"Modi is doing this because



irrespective of whether Modi is there or not, the country will always remain and what are these SP-Congress people doing? They are fighting elections for their future and the future of their children," he

"Now they are trying their best to spread lies about our democracy and our Constitution because Modi has exposed their appeasement of vote banks," he alleged.

The SP and the Congress, both members of the opposition

INDIA bloc, are contesting the polls in UP as allies. In Dhaurahra, Modi said the manifesto of the Congress reflects Muslim League's thinking. BR Ambedkar and even Jawaharlal Nehru had said it clearly that there would be no religionbased reservation, but the Congress and INDIA bloc are "adamant on giving reservation on the basis of religion", he said.
"They don't realise that they are preparing the ground to break the country once again on the basis of religion," the prime minister said.

He went on to say that in Karnataka, Muslims were 'made OBC" overnight and provided reservation from the OBC quota.

"They (Congress) now want to do across the country what they did in Karnataka. They want to rob the reservation for SC, ST and OBC on the basis of religion," he claimed.

Politics of appeasement has become compulsory for the existence of 'shehzade' of SP and Congress," Modi said in an apparent attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and SP president Akhilesh Yadav. 'I will not allow reservation on

the basis of religion...there will be no theft of the reservation for SC, ST and OBC till Modi is alive," said the prime minister. He also alleged that the INDIA bloc has an eye on the people's property. "They say that they will do an X-ray of your prop-erty and take the excess and dis-

PNS LUCKNOW

to polls in the third phase of

hectic roadshows and rallies by

The 10 Lok Sabha constituen-

cies going to polls in the third phase are Sambhal, Hathras,

Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etah, Budaun, Bareilly and Aonla. The fate of 100 candidates will

be decided by 1.88 crore voters

- a little over one crore male

voters, and more than 87 lakh

women voters - in this phase

rival political leaders.

tribute it among their vote bank," he said.

Modi also attacked the opposition over the issue of abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

The SP, Congress and INDI alliance claim that after coming to power they will bring back Article 370. They have disre-spected Babasaheb BR Ambedkar who gave us the Constitution which was for everyone," he said.

But the Congress did not implement it across the country, he added. "The Indian Indian

Constitution was not implemented in Jammu and Kashmir. Dalits, tribals and OBCs did not get reservation there. There was a wall of Article 370. Modi buried this (Article 370) in kabristan (graveyard) after coming to power," said the prime minister. They cannot take out (Article) 370 from the grave and throw it on the forehead of the country," he said. Modi claimed the opposition says that they will stop facilities like free ration scheme and Vande Bharat trains after coming to power. "I want to ask SP and Congress people...will you convert Ram Temple into a hos-

pital after coming to power?

Campaigning ends for 10

Will you run a bulldozer over Vishwanath corridor in Kashi? said the prime minister. He started his speech with the issues of farmers and said, Friends, Lakhimpur Kheri, Sitapur areas are called the sugar bowl of Uttar Pradesh. But the previous SP government during its regime added bitterness to the lives of my sugarcane farmers."

Modi said, "Sugarcane farmers did not get paid for their pro-duce for years. Even if payment was made, the money was given in instalments. All these shortcomings have been removed by the BJP government." At the Dhaurahra rally, the prime minister was accompanied by sitting Dhaurahra MP Rekha Verma, MP from Lakhimpur Ajay Mishra Teni, BJP state president Bhupendra Chaudary and BJP candidate from Sitapur Rajesh Verma.

Polling in Etawah is scheduled on May 7 in the third phase of the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, while Dhaurahra will vote on May 13 (fourth phase). Voting for the Faizabad Lok Sabha seat, under which the Ayodhya district falls, will take place in the fifth phase of the elections on May 20. **PTI**

Yogi dubs SP as supporter of terrorists

PNS HARDOI/ETAWAH/

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday, held two election rallies, one in Hardoi and another in Etawah, where he addressed a massive gathering in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

In Etawah, alongside Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he urged the public to re-elect Bharatiya Janata Party MP and candidate for Misrikh Lok Sabha seat, Ashok Rawat. Additionally, he appealed to the people to ensure resounding victories of local MP and candidate Ramshankar Katheria, MP and candidate from Kannauj, Subrata Pathak, and Jaiveer Singh from Mainpuri.

During the rallies, the chief minister launched a scathing attack on the Samaiwadi Party. the Congress and the entire INDI Alliance. He said, 'Under Prime Minister Modi's leadership, the BJP was recognised for ensuring security, prosperity and dignity for the common people." Addressing people in Misrikh, Chief Minister Yogi said, "During its tenure, the

Samajwadi Party exhibited a keen interest in withdrawing cases against terrorists. They sought to withdraw cases against individuals implicated in attacks on significant sites, including the CRPF camp in Ayodhya, Rampur, Sankatmochan Temple in

Kashi, Lucknow, Ayodhya and the Varanasi court," he said, adding that "the high court even rebuked the party, saying that their next step could possibly be conferring the Padma award on terrorists".

Chief Minister Yogi made a compelling appeal, urging the populace not to support the Samajwadi Party, a party that supports terrorists and disrespects Lord Ram.

Highlighting plans for infra-structure development, the chief minister added, "The PM Shri Textiles Park, equipped with cutting-edge facilities, is going to be built in an expansive area spanning 1.000 acres between Hardoi

and Lucknow. This initiative is expected to generate employment opportunities for thousands of youth in the

region." Chief Minister Yogi emphasised the Ganga Expressway's transformative impact on Hardoi, foreseeing its rise as a developed district upon its completion.

Yogi Adityanath, speaking in Etawah alongside the prime minister, remarked: "A certain family in the country prioritises its interests over the security of India, jeopardizing the future of the youth, fostering a culture of corruption while neglecting the welfare of the poor."

In contrast, he emphasised the virtues of Modi's leadership within the Bharatiya Janata Party, which prioritises the nation's security, dignity and prosperity.

The 'Modi Ka Parivaar', under the leadership of the Bharativa Janata Party, works tirelessly towards India's security, dignity and prosperity. 'Modi Ka Privaar' is a beacon of the nation's heritage,

progress and integrity, propelling the BJP government forward," he said.

The chief minister urged people to actively participate in shaping a brighter future for India by voting and embrac-ing the vision of a developed

ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL FOR NDA CANDIDATES

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party's star campaigner Yogi Adityanath has held election campaigns for several National Democratic Alliance candidates ahead of the third phase of Lok Sabha elections slated for

The NDA has fielded new candidates on five Lok Sabha seats, including Union ministers, two ministers from the Yogi govern-ment, and BJP national leaders for the third phase.

Yogi Adityanath is campaigning for the NDA candidates from March 27.

Chief Minister Yogi urged the electorate to vote for the lotus symbol to secure Narendra Modi's third term as prime minister.

In addition to Uttar Pradesh, he also campaigned in other states. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made multiple efforts to connect with voters on each seat in the third phase, emphasising the importance of their vote.

Ten Lok Sabha constituencies are going to polls in UP in the third phase on May 7.

Chief Minister Yogi has campaigned extensively for all the candidates contesting on these seats in the third phase. In Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister

Yogi Adityanath is considered a symbol of transformation whether it is law and order, or development. Renowned as the 'Bulldozer Baba', Yogi Adityanath receives affection from people across the country.

Chief Minister Yogi has already conducted rallies in Maharashtra, Jammu, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Bihar, of the elections. Out of the 10 constituencies where polling will be held on Tuesday, the Bharatiya Janata Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, and Chhattisgarh. Among these, voting will be held in Bilaspur-Party won eight in 2019 -Hathras, Agra, Firozabad, Fatehpur Sikri, Etah, Budaun, Bareilly and Aonla. The Mainpuri and Sambhal Lok Korba in Chhattisgarh, Guna in Madhya Pradesh, and Solapur, Sangli, and Hatkanangle in Maharashtra on May 7.

Sabha seats were bagged by the Samajwadi Party. The third phase of the Lok Sabha polls assumes signifi-cance, as it will seal the fate of Union Minister SP Singh Baghel, UP Tourism Minister Jaiveer Singh, Minister of State for Revenue Anoop Pradhan Balmiki, and several members of Mulayam Singh Yadav's family. Baghel, Jaiveer and Balmiki are contesting from Agra (SC), Mainpuri, and Hathras (SC)

Lok Sabha seats. This phase of the polls will be a test for the SP first family with Dimple Yadav, Akshay Yadav and Aditya Yadav contesting Mainpuri, Firozabad and Budaun constituencies respec-

In Mainpuri, a SP bastion that the party has never lost, sitting MP Dimple Yadav will take on UP Tourism Minister Jayveer Singh of the BJP. In Firozabad, BJP candidate Chandra Sen Jadon is contesting against Akshay Yadav, son of SP senior leader Ram Gopal Yadav, and in Budaun, Aditya Yadav, son of Shivpal Singh Yadav, is making his electoral debut on SP ticket against Durvijay Shakya

The third phase polls unfold with the emergence of Other Backward Classes (OBCs),

of the BJP.

prominently including Yadavs, and

Lok Sabha seats in UP

Campaigning for the 10 Lok Sabha constituencies going Kachhi/Shakya/Murao communities, exerting influence as decisive factors across varielections on May 7 ended on ous constituencies. Alongside, Sunday evening after days of the enduring impact of Muslim and Jat demographics remains

significant in select areas.
The third phase saw some high-pitched campaigns by leaders of all parties. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath led the BIP campaign against, what they called, dynasty and appeasement politics of the Congress and the Samajwadi SP, and slammed the opposition for declining the invitation for Pran Pratishtha of Ram temple. The SP, which has much at stake in phase three polls, pushed its caste census pitch and focused its campaign on the quota issue, alleging that the BJP will end reservations and hence is seeking 400-plus seats in the Lok Sabha.

Several constituencies, including Sambhal, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Mainpuri and Aonla are witnessing a triangular contest between the National Democratic Alliance, INDIA bloc and the Bahujan Samaj Party while others like Hathras, Firozabad, Etah and Budaun will see a direct contest between the BJP and the SP.

Sambhal, a stronghold of Muslim-Yadav combination, elected Mulayam Singh Yadav to the Lok Sabha twice in 1998 and 1999 and another SP veteran Ram Gopal Yadav in 2004. The BSP won the seat twice in 1996 and 2009. The lotus blossomed in Sambhal only once, in 2014, while the Congress last won this seat in 1984.

The Hathras Lok Sabha constituency is a bastion of the BIP and since 1991 it has uninterruptedly elected the candidates of the party. In 2009, the Rashtriya Lok Dal won this seat

as an ally of the BJP. The BJP has won the Agra reserved seat five times since 1991, three times in a row since 2009. The BJP has won the Fatehpur Sikri Lok Sabha seat twice - in 2019 and 2014 while the BSP won it in 2009. The Firozabad Lok Sabha constituency elected SP chief Akhilesh Yadav in 2009 and his cousin Akshay Yadav in 2014. Raj Babbar of Congress gave a shock defeat to SP's Dimple Yadav in this constituency in a bypoll in 2009.

Mainpuri is one the most keenly contested Lok Sabha seats in the third phase. Mainpuri sent SP founder Mulayam Singh Yadav to the Lok Sabha five times. The SP has been winning this seat since 1996. The Congress last won from here in 1984. In 2019, Mulayam Singh Yadav won by defeating BJP's Prem Singh Shakya. In 2024, BJP's Jaiveer Singh is challenging the SP's Dimple Yadav. Dr Gulshan Dev Shakya is the BSP candidate.

The BIP won the Etah Lok Sabha seat six times since 1989. In between, the SP won this seat twice. In 2009, Kalyan Singh won as an Independent supported by the SP. BJP's Rajveer Singh, son of late Kalyan Singh, won this seat in 2014 and 2019. The party has made him its candidate again in 2024. Devesh Shakya is the SP candidate while BSP has fielded Mohammed Irfan as its candidate.

The SP won the Budaun seat continuously from 1996 to 2014, but it was wrested by the BJP in 2019. This time, BJP has replaced sitting MP Sanghmitra Maurya with Durvijay Shakya. Aditya Yadav, son of Shivpal Yadav, is making his political debut from Budaun. The BSP candidate is Muslim Khan.

The BJP has won the Aonla Lok Sabha seat six times since 1989 and three times since 2009. The SP has won it twice. Dharmendra Kashyap (BJP) Neeraj Maurya (SP) and Abid Ali (BSP) are the main contestants. In the Bareilly constituency, the BJP has replaced its eighttime MP Santosh Gangwar, who continuously won the seat from 1989 till 2019, barring in 2009 when the Congress candidate Praveen Aron defeated him by a thin margin. Chhatrapal Singh Gangwar is the BJP candidate who is pitted against Praveen Aron, now an SP candidate. The nomination of BSP candidate Chhotelal Gangwar was cancelled due to a technical glitch.

Why did BJP say Constitution | INDI Alliance embroiled would be changed: Akhilesh

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday targeted the Bharatiya Janata Party, saying why did it "ask its leaders" to repeatedly say that the "Constitution would be changed".

Addressing an election rally in Jalesar town in Firozabad Lok Sabha constituency, Yadav said that the "lying" BJP government would have to answer the "real questions" of the people in the ongoing elections.
"The public's real question for the BJP is why did it ask its

leaders to repeatedly say that the Constitution given by Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar will be changed? Does the BJP have an answer to this?" the SP chief said.

"Why did the BJP raise the issue of changing the Constitution which protects the exploited, deprived and oppressed to end reservations. These are the real questions of the public, to which the BJP has no answer," he said.

Taking a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Yadav said, "Those who used to talk about 'Mann Ki Baat' should now talk about the Constitution. Now, they cannot do everything according to their whims. Now, the lying BJP government will have to face the true questions of the people."
"If BJP does not have an answer,

it should not be given votes," he

Terming the electoral bonds as a ploy to extort industrialists, Yadav said it led to inflation. The SP chief claimed that the BJP is set to be wiped out in the third phase of polling in Uttar Pradesh scheduled for May 7 because of its "fake talks and false promises to all sections of

"In the third phase of elections on May 7, the public will throw BJP seven miles away. This phase is going to wipe them out. In the first two phases, the



BIP and in the third, the people are going to wipe out these people," The SP chief said. "They will be wiped out because they have not left any

section with which they have not indulged in fake talks. If we take the last ten years into account, all their talks and promises have turned out to be false," Yadav said. "These people were saying that they will double the income of farmers, but today when a

farmer calculates his income, he gets worried that the cost of the produce and profits is not in accordance with inflation. The government is not able to provide what the cost of the produce should be," he said, adding that the result is that even after hard work, our farm-

even after hard work, our farmers are not happy, the people of the villages are not happy. "Those who said they would double the income, brought three black laws for the farmers. Their conspiracy was to take away the land of the farmers and capture their produce also. But we want to congratulate our farmers that they went people have overturned the and staged a protest in Delhi.

The farmers stood firm until the government withdrew all the three black laws," he said. The SP president said the farmers' fight was not over yet. 'These are the same people who are moving away from giv-ing an MSP (minimum support price)," he said.

"This time, the Samajwadi Party and the INDIA bloc have decided that after the formation of the government, they will work to make the poor farmers happy by giving them the legal right to MSP," he said.

We assure our farmer brothers that if the INDIA bloc government is formed, your loans will also be completely waived," he said and added, "If the loans of industrialists can be waived, why can't the loans of our farmers be waived?"

He said the Agnipath scheme would also be abolished and the poor and women will also be given Rs 1 lakh.

Firozabad will go to polls in the third phase on May 7. The Samajwadi Party has fielded Akshay Yaday, son of senior party leader Ram Gopal Yadav,

in controversies since its formation: CM Yogi

Lucknow (PNS): Taking a dig at the Congress-led INDI Alliance on Sunday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that it was surrounded by controversies right since its formation.

Speaking to the media at his residence before addressing public meetings in Hardoi and Etawah, Chief Minister Yogi remarked: "This is the reason why controversial statements of its leaders are continuously coming to the fore. This is nothing new for them. This is their character." He added, "INDI Alliance is an alliance of selfishness. This is the reason why they are constantly making controversial state-ments. The statements are being made by their leaders to please the enemies of India and create discord and disharmony in Indian society for petty political

Chief Minister Yogi further stated that through their state-ments, people of INDI Alliance

are causing irreparable damage to national security and integri-

ty. "This is the character of familybased political parties. The statements of Congress, National Conference and Samajwadi Party leaders encourage antinationals, promote terrorism and threaten national security while insulting the martyrdom of the brave soldiers of India. It is not just during elections that they engage in such behaviour; they consistently make such statements," he stated.

'This act of the INDI Alliance is extremely condemnable. They have no control over any of their leaders. That is why they are using disrespectful language," Yogi added.

The chief minister also highlighted the progress in Jammu and Kashmir towards a more robust democratic environment and a renewed focus on devel-

Maurya may join BSP, contest from Kushinagar Kushinagar seat has been put on hold for now. Instead of Loktantra Bahujan Manch. After this, before the 2017

 $R^{ashtriya}$ Shoshit Samaj Party (RSSP) chief Swami Prasad Maurya may see his comeback to the Bahujan Samaj Party and is likely to be its candidate from the Kushinagar parliamentary

Sources said that talks were going on hence BSP chief Mayawati had so far kept the Kushinagar seat on hold even though only a few days were left for nomination.

The party, however, maintained silence over the issue. The BSP is contesting all the 80 Lok Sabha seats in UP. So far, candidates have been announced for 78 seats. Sources said that there was a

lot of brainstorming on candi-

dates for Deoria and

Kushinagar seats. In this,

considering any other candidate immediately, the results of the talks going on with Swami Prasad Maurya are being awaited. What will be the role of BSP and RSSP in the elections? First the divisional coordinators are deciding the strategy on all these issues. After this, the final decision will be taken by BSP chief Mayawati, sources confirmed here on Sunday.

Nominations will start from May 7 in Kushinagar. Swami Prasad Maurya, who is in the news for his controver-

sial statements, is also known for changing his political destinations. Maurya, who said goodbye to the party in 2016 by making several allegations against the BSP chief, is now desperate to ride the elephant



Swami Prasad Maurya started politics with Lok Dal in the 1980s. After this, he was the state general secretary of Janata Dal from 1991-1995. In 1996, he joined BSP and from there,

the real story of his politics started. In the year 1997, he became a minister in the Bahujan Samaj Party-Bharatiya Bahujan Samaj Party-Bharatiya Janata Party coalition government. After this, in 2001, he was appointed the leader of the opposition. In 2002, he was elected MLA from Padrauna. During this time, he became a minister in the BSP government in the year 2002-2003. After the BSP government fell, Mayawati gave him the responsibility of leader of the opposition. sibility of leader of the oppo-sition. In the year 2007, when BSP won a huge majority in UP, Swami again became a minister and remained in the post till 2012. In 2012, BSP lost the election, however Swami won his election and became the leader of the opposition. In 2016, Swami Prasad Maurya ended his two-decade-old relationship with BSP and formed

assembly elections, he joined the BJP and became a minister in the Yogi Adityanath government. In January 2022, he resigned from the post of BJP and UP cabinet minister. Before the 2022 elections, he joined the Akhilesh Yadavled Samajwadi Party but lost his own election. Still, SP sent him to the legislative council. After this, the rift with SP increased and before the Lok Sabha elections 2024, he became the national president of Rashtriya Shoshit Samaj

BSP's Uttar Pradesh unit president Vishwanath Pal said that Swami Prasad Maurya was a big leader. "Whatever decision will be taken about him, it will be taken by the party's chief only," he added.

RSS pracharak: Voting basis for forming public opinion

Prant Pracharak (Kashi) of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Ramesh said that voting is the basis for forming public opinion. "Voters need to be aware of their duties, otherwise, the personality and exis-tence of all of us will be at stake," he said, adding that there is a need to be cautious of those who do not consider the country as a nation. He was expressing his view at a meeting organised under the auspices of Kashi unit of the Rashtriya Shaikshik Mahasangh (RSM) organised at IIT (BHU) here on Sunday. The topic of the meeting was 'public opinion and voters'.

Presiding over the programme, Chancellor of Central University of Jharkhand, Prof JP Lal said a teacher is the one who can bind the nation together and appealed to them



A meeting of RSM being held at IIT(BHU) in Varanasi on Sunday.

ing started with the recital of Vedic Manglacharan by Dr Saroj Kumar Pandey and Prof Anju Singh welcomed the guests. Introducing the topic, Prof Dinanath Singh said the formation of public opinion is to play their role in nation building with good intention and determination. The meetbased on the awareness of the

duty, he added. The programme was conducted by Dr Jagdish Singh Dixit and the vote of thanks was proposed by Prof Mithilesh Singh. In the programme, former Vice-Chancellor, Central University Manipur Prof Aadya Prasad Pandey, ex-MLC Veena Pandey, Director of IUCTE Prof Prem

Narayan Singh, Prof OP Chaudhary, Prof Raghavendra Pandey, Prof Prabhat Kumar Singh (organiser of the programme), Dr Amitabh Mishra, Dr Sukhpalji Srivastava, Pradeep Kumar Yadav, Dr Raghavendra Singh, Dr Suman Singh, Dr Rajesh Singh Suryavanshi, etc were present.

'Ashirwad samaroh' organised in support of BJP candidate



'Ashirwad Samaroh' was organised in support of BJP candidate on Sunday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

In support of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Kanpur Lok Sabha candidate Ramesh Awasthi, former MLA Ajay Kapoor organised an 'ashirwad samaroh' under the aegis of Bahen Foundation in Saket Nagar on Sunday. Around 4,000 women from all over the city took part in the programme and gave their blessings to the candidate. Former MLA Ajay Kapoor and state assembly speaker Satish Mahana welcomed the candidate Ramesh Awasthi. Speaking on the occasion, Ajay Kapoor said, "as we have to keep our city on top in every matter, we should register highest voting percentage during the polling on May 13. Everyone should take the responsibility of this

task. Therefore, each woman should take the responsibility of 50 votes." The women demanded solution to their problems by candidate Ramesh Awasthi. State assembly speaker Satish Mahana, while describing the achievements of Modi government appealed to the women to cast their vote in

favour of BJP on May 13. YOUTH HANGS SELF: A vouth committed suicide by hanging himself in the Bilhaur police station area on Saturday evening. SHO said the body had been sent for autopsy and on the basis of its report, further action will be initiated. Meanwhile a moving car suddenly caught fire on VIP road under Gwaltoli police area late pm Saturday night. Four persons present in the car saved lves by jumping out.

Rare surgery enables youth to stand, walk after 12 yrs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

A rare orthopedic surgery took place in this holy city helping a 22-year-old youth bedridden for the last 12 years in standing and walking after six complex operations one after another by renowned orthopaedic specialist Dr AK rare orthopedic surgery Rai, a retired professor from Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University (IMS-BHU).

According to Dr Rai, the youth from Mau district met him at PGI Azamgarh a few months ago but as the required facilities and arrangements to see the patient after treatment and operation were not available there, he advised the patient to get admitted to a private hospital near Amra crossing Chitaipur on Varanasi- Chunar road.

The patient was admitted to this private hospital on February 20 last and the first operation of total hip replacement was done on March 4, followed by second also of total hip replacement on March 13, third of total knee operation on March 23, the fourth also of knee operation on April 6, fifth of B/L ankle on April 24 and the final was done later.

on," Dr Rai said, adding that the bedridden patient could not even stand for the last 12 years because his hips, knees and both ankles were totally iammed.

"His operation was a tough challenge even for the experts of the world because the body parts were damaged by injuries and diseases like arthritis and ankylosing spondylosis", Dr Rai said, adding that making this patient stand was no less than a Herculean effort as after six complex operations one after the other, the patient is now able to stand after 12 years.

According to him, the patient was told by some big hospitals earlier that the treatment would cost about ₹7 lakh but he could not be treated due to Covid during the pandemic period. Even in 2017, the patient contacted the experts in Institute of Medical Sciences, BHU, before visiting AIIMS Delhi.

According to him, when the patient could not get the operation done, he was kept on bed and was taking medicines but his condition worsened day by day. Dr Rai claimed that on April 27 last, the patient stood and walked.

House burgled Youth strangles father

The house of a brick kiln owner was burgled in Ghatampur police station area late on Saturday night. Miscreants took away cash and valuables worth lakhs of rupees from there. The incident came to light when the family members woke up on Sunday morning and saw the doors of the room and almirah open. They immediately informed the police which rushed to the spot and carried out a probe. Forensic team was also called for investigations. Inspector Pradip Kumar Singh said efforts are on to work out the case. ACP Ranjit Kumar Singh claimed that the case will be worked out soon.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A youth strangled his father in Maharajpur police station area late on Saturday night. The police arrested the accused. During investigation, it was revealed that the deceased was addicted to liquor and often beat his wife. When the son protested he used to quarrel with him too. On Saturday night the deceased had a fight with wife over cooking and he beat her up. Angered by it the son brutally beat up his father and strangled him.
DCP (East) Shravan

Kumar Singh said the body of Rajendra alias Raju (50) of

Maharajpur, was found about 50 metres away from his house on Sunday morning. The Maharajpur police and foren-sic team rushed to spot. During investigation, police suspected something wrong and took the younger son of the deceased Arun (20) into custody who, on being grilled, revealed the truth. Arun said his father after consuming liquor often beat his mother and asked her to cook non-veg dish. On slight delay in cooking the non-veg, he would again beat her up. On Saturday night also, drunken Rajendra beat up his wife for delay in

cooking food. Angered by it Arun brutally beat up his father and strangled him. Late at night the body was dumped behind the house. The police have arrested the son who, after lodging an FIR, will be sent to jail, DCP East said. He said on coming to know bout the incident, the Maharajpur police and ACP had also reached the spot on Sunday morning. After villagers informed about a quarrel between father and son late on Saturday night, police suspected the involvement of Arun and took him into custody. On being grilled, Arun confessed

Someshpati: PM has strengthened Sanatan culture

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Someshpati Tripathi, grand-son of former Railway Minister and working president of All India Congress Committee (AICC) late Pt Kamalapati Tripathi, said that this Lok Sabha election is not just a general election but it will show our commitment towards the future of our country. Talking to reporters at the parental residence of Pt Kamalapati Tripathi 'Aurangabad House' here on Sunday, Someshpati said that by voting in favour of Prime Minister Narandra Medi wa Minister Narendra Modi, we will fulfil our responsibility

towards our nation.

Someshpati who is the son of late Mangalapati Tripathi, younger son of Pt Kamlapati Tripathi, who was also the for-mer Chief Minister of Uttar mer Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Someshpati has accepted the membership of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in presence of Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak recently. In this election, Aurangabad House, once known as power centre of Congress, seems clearly divided politically as on Monday, another grandson of Pt Kamlapati and ex-MLC Rajeshpati Tripathi, now a TMC leader, will extend his support to INDIA Bloc candidate from Varanasi parliamentary seat Ajay Rai. Rajeshpati is cousin of Someshpati and his son Laliteshpati, ex-MLA and TMC leader, is likely to be

INDIA Bloc candidate from Bhadohi Lok Sabha seat.

Someshpati said during his childhood days, while living with grandfather Kamalapati he observed Indian national politics very closely and got an opportunity to know his views on the importance of Indian nationalism in the eternal culture. "In 2014, when the BJP government was formed under the leadership of Narendra Modi, a change in Indian politics was seen and since then he was watching and understandwas watching and understanding the policies of the prime minister", he said, adding that as time passed, major changes started appearing in the nation as development has become a continuously progressive system. He said that by building a temple in Ayodhya and installing Ram Lala idol there, the PM has strengthened Sanatan culture.

He said after 2014, terrorist attacks almost stopped and the fear that prevailed among common citizens due to terror-ist attacks gradually ended. Today the country is in such a situation when we can say that the wind of development is blowing all over India", he said, requesting the local peo-ple to make Modi victorious again with a record margin.

He also supported the BIP candidate from Chandauli and Union Minister Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey praising his efforts to lay a network of roads, foundation stone of a medical college etc.

'Operation Samvedna' for providing relief to train passengers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

In order to provide relief to the passengers in the scorch-ing heat, 'Operation Samvedna' was run at the major stations of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) on Sunday on the instructions of Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Vineet Kumar Srivastava and Senior Divisional Commercial Manager (SDCM) Sheikh Rehman. Apart from providing relief from heat, a special campaign is being run for crowd control by strictly following the railway rules. In this direction, under the leadership of Divisional Commercial Inspector/Ballia Rajendra Kumar Singh, 400 water packets were distributed to the thirsty passengers in the general coach of 19166 Darbhanga-Ahmedabad Sabarmati Express. Taking a unique and commendable initiative in this campaign, all the commercial department railway employees of Ballia station and nearby sta-

tions have planned to distrib-ute around 500 packets of water daily till June 30 by col-

lecting donations among them-

selves. In this noble initiative,

other departments of Railways

of general coaches, where

drinking water, food packets etc

free of cost are being provided

Many arrangements for better mgmt

like Operating, RPF, Engineering, Signal and Electrical have also assured to cooperate, which is an ideal example of joint coopera-tion for the betterment of railway passengers. Varanasi Division has started 'Operation Samvedna' under which special arrangements are being made for the passengers

with the help of NGOs, selfhelp groups and scouts and guides. Railway employees of Ballia have taken this initiative a notch higher and created the fund through mutual cooperation, which is an example of the commitment of Railway employees to serve the passengers. Under Operation Samvedna the division is also ensuring that drinking water facilities are being provided properly at every station. The working of water taps, hand pumps and water coolers is being checked daily and the departments concerned are working to resolve and fix it. Further, the division has also permitted refreshment rooms and fast food units of IRCTC to set up special stalls near general coaches to provide food and water bottles to the public. Along with this, the help of NGOs, Bharat Scouts and Guides members and other social organisations is being taken to provide free water to the passengers of general coaches of trains passing through various stations of the division. Along with comprehensive arrangements to control the extra rush of passengers during summer season, help

desks have been set up for the

convenience of the pa

Spiritual leader's emphasis on national development

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Founder of the Art of Living Foundation and a globally renowned spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, while addressing a diverse gathering of prominent personalities at Rudraksh Convention Hall (Sigra) here on Saturday evening, shared perspectives on topics related to happiness, mental well-being and spiritu-ality, emphasising their imporanty, emphasising their impor-tant role in national develop-ment. During the discourse, he lauded them for their unique contribution in various fields and urged them to become ambassadors of Viksit Bharat campaign and lead the journey towards a developed India.

After enlightening discourse, Sri Sri held an interactive session where participants asked questions and shared concerns about the essence of happiness and living a fulfilling life. This was the third event during his two-day visit to the city after interacting with the



Spiritual leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar addressing a meeting of intellectuals at Rudraksh in Varanasi on Saturday

youth in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and women in Kashi Vishwanath Temple (KVT) premises. This interaction event with the intellectuals was attended by over 1,100 prominent personalities of the city, including leading entrepreneurs, industrialists, lawyers, chartered accountants, doctors, artistes and Padma awardees. Senior advocate and core member of Team Viksit Bharat Ambassador Hitesh Jain launched the Viksit Bharat initiative and urged everyone to support this transformational journey. Later, at an evening of music and meditation at Sampurnanand Sanskrit University (SSU) grounds attended by thousands in the presence of Sri Sri, famous singers like Gurudas Maan and Anuradha Paudwal mesmerised the audience.

The attendees were seen immersed in the soulful and melodious tunes of 'bhajans', experiencing a deep sense of spirituality. The programme was attended by coordinators Rajesh Trivedi, Siddhanath Sharma, Vaibhav Kapoor, Vishal Trivedi, Deepak Gupta, Amit Agarwal etc.

BHU starts registration process for admission to PG programmes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The Banaras Hindu University (BHU) has start-Banaras Hindu ed the registration process for admission to various Post-Graduate (PG) programmes for the Academic Session 2024for the Academic Session 2024-25 from Saturday. Applicants who have appeared in the CUET 2024 conducted by NTA and are eligible for admission to different programmes can register themselves by paying the required to visit the website are required to visit the website https://www.bhu.ac.in/Site/Ad

missionCounselling/ and click 'Apply Now' given below 'PG registration cum counselling-2024'. Applicants are advised to carefully read the Information Bulletin 2024 available on the web portal and check eligibilweb portal and check eligibility and other relevant details, before starting the admission process. To check the relevant details, applicants should carefully read the BHU Information Bulletin 2024 available on the web portal before proceeding. The registration process will remain tration process will remain open till 11:59 pm on May 25.

Man hacked to death

Amiddle-aged man was hacked to death with a spade in Nauranga Lalpur village under Rura police station area of Kanpur Dehat on area of Kanpur Dehat on Sunday morning. On seeing the irate crowd, assailants escaped from the spot. The police rushed to the spot and carried out a probe with the help of a forensic team. Devendra Singh alias Thakur Yadav (55) of Nauranga Lalpur had a dispute with neighbour Chandrabhan over the drainage of water. On hearing the noise, when residents rushed to the spot, the assailants escaped from their house. On getting informa-tion about the incident, wife of the deceased Rani Devi fell unconscious.

water had come to the fore as the cause of the incident. Raids are on to nail the assailants and on receipt of complaint and the

autopsy report, further action will be initiated in the matter. In another incident after an argument with her husband over some issue a woman allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself in Jamu vil-lage under Vidhnu police sta-tion area late on Saturday evening. Police sent the body for autopsy. Subhash of Jamu village was married to Shivani (23) of Lauwapurwa, Sanigwa, on May 7, 2023. Reports said that Shivani had an argument debate with Subhash over cooking food on Saturday afternoon. Thereafter, Subhash went to the field with family members to harvest the crop. On returning from the field, he found Shivan hanging from the hook of the ceiling. Brother Ashish Kumar rushed to the spot and accused her in-laws of spot and accused her in-laws of killing Shivani and hanging the body. The police have taken her father-in-law and brother-in-law into custody. Station Officer Prem Chandra Kanaujia said on the basis of autopsy report, further action will be initiated in the matter.

tion is showing encouraging results. While presiding over the review meeting held in the Senate Hall of Swatantrata Bhawan regarding various hos-tels of the university here on Saturday, the V-C said when Pandit Madan Mohan Malsviya had conceptualised BHU as a residential university, his idea was that the students would stay in the presence of teachers

as much as possible and keep receiving constant guidance to move their life in the right direction. He said that as teachers, we all have this opportuni-ty to dedicate ourselves and work for the development of students. Prof Jain said that several arrangements have been made for better management and monitoring of hostel relat-ed problems, which has signifed problems, which has significantly changed the situation at the ground level. He said that the university will continue to take strict action against those living unauthorisedly in hostels and the university administration. and the university administra-tion is providing full coopera-tion to the hostels in this regard. He suggested that for effective management in hos-tels, focus should be given to developing an app in which the people associated with the hostel administration can mention the challenges, problems, solutions and improvements apart from seeking feedback from hostel patrons on various para-meters like cleanliness, toilet arrangement, water quality, cleaning and maintenance of

mess, electricity and repair

work, discipline, unauthorised occupants, sports activities,



V-C Prof SK Jain addressing a hostel review meeting at BHU in Varanasi or ment are at the centre of the V-

and gardening. "Keep providing regular updates to ensure continuous improvement in the situation", he suggested. According to him, more work needs to be done towards creating an intellectual environment in the hostels. "Students should feel such a connection with the hostels that they stay with these memories throughout their life and feel proud of the hostel", he said, appreciating the activeness of the Dean of Students Office and University Construction Department for improving the condition of hostels.

Dean of Students Prof Anupam Kumar Nema presented the outline of the activities and progress made in the hostels towards student welfare in the last one year. He said that as a result of the active contribution of the university administration and custodians of the hostels, positive effects were seen as many welfare initiatives started and the students have taken full advantage of the many activities and sessions

organised during this period.
Student Welfare Advisor Commander (Retd) Sayantan Sanyal said that to ensure the quality of food in the hostel messes, FSSAI registration of the mess staff is being done and this work has been completed in many messes. Finance Officer Dr Abhay Thakur said that hostels and their developC's thoughts regarding the development of the university. He said that due to the collective efforts of the university family, there has been a lot of qualitative change in the life and experience of the students in the hostels. He said we should make efforts to increase the awareness and knowledge of various fields among the students in the hostels and we have to see whether our students are getting the necessary exposure to various areas of life in the hostels or not. Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh said in the V-C's view, students and teachers are the important stakeholders and all other arrangements are for their benefit and cooperation. Under this vision, many initiatives have been taken by the V-C to improve the environment of hostels and we can see their positive impact today. The Registrar suggested that interaction programmes of distinguished persons and prominent personalities should be organised with the students in the hostels, which will infuse positive energy among the students and encourage and motivate them to move in the right direction. The directors of various institutions, deans of faculties, administrative custodians of various hostels, patrons, senior university officials and advisors were also present

Captivating performance by students



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

The Kendriya Vidyalaya IIT Kanpur hosted its annual function on Saturday. The event themed 'Anubhuti' was a display of talent, creativity and community spirit. Under the guidance of the Principal Ravish Chandra Pandey, the evening commenced with an enchanting cultural programme featuring mesmerising on the occasion. The gramme was anchored priyanka Tewari and Vidyalong with the students.

performances by students. The highlights of the evening were Welcome Dance by the tiny tots, yoga demonstration, qawwali and Punjabi Tadka.

Dr Manindra Agarwal, Director, IIT Kanpur and Chairman, VMC members and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. The programme was anchored by Priyanka Tewari and Vidyawati MISHAP: A man was fatally knocked down by a speeding vehicle on the Kanpur-Aligarh highway under Chaubepur police station area late on Saturday night. Efforts are on to ascertain the identity of the descend. The michan ty of the deceased. The mishap ty of the deceased. The misnap took place when the man was crossing the road near the Rama Medical College. He was seriously injured. The hospital employees informed the police which rushed to the spot and sent the unconscious man to the CHC where he was declared dead by the doctors. SHO Maharajpur said with the help of body structure, clothes etc. information had been sent to nearby police station areas to ascertain his identity. The body was kept in the mortuary, he said.

On being informed Circle Officer (CO) Sadar Tanu Upadhyaya and inspector SK Singh rushed to spot. CO Sadar said a dispute over drainage of



Poonch attack part of worrying trend: INDIA bloc

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Members of the Opposition and particularly the INDIA bloc partners led by Congress on Sunday said the attack in Poonch is part of a worrying trend of ter-ror attacks in the area and asserted that after Lok Sabha election results the party and its INDIA bloc partners will leave no stone unturned in strengthening the counter-terrorism grid in Jammu and Kashmir.

Kashmir.
While Congress president
Mallikarjun Kharge said the
Congress strongly and unequivocally condemns this "dastardly terror attack" and joins the nation in standing together against terrorism, former party chief Rahul Gandhi said the cowardly terrorist attack on the security personnel convoy in Poonch, Ĵammu and Kasĥmir is "very shameful and sad"

"I pay my humble tribute to the martyred soldier and express my condolences to his bereaved family. I hope for the speedy recovery of the soldiers injured in the attack," he said on X on Saturday. National Conference presi-

dent Farooq Abdullah said the menace of terror is still alive in the Union Territory. Abdullah, a former chief minister, said the BJP government's claim that Article 370 was responsible for terrorism now stands exposed, reiterating his stand that only dialogue between India and Pakistan can end the threat in the region.

"That area has been disturbed for many months. Incidents



Security personnel check vehicles during a search operation after terror attack on IAF convoy

have taken place in Rajouri, Surankote and other adjacent areas," he said and paid his tributes to the dead and prayed for early recovery of the injured.

Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh claimed that while there were "no major incidents of terrorism in this area between 2007 and 2014", the Surankote terrorist attack is part of a worrying trend of terror attacks, particularly against security personnel, in the hilly Rajouri-Poonch areas situated near the Line of Control.

After June 4, the Congress and its INDIA bloc partners will leave no stone unturned in strengthening the counter-terrorism grid by fully supporting our brave soldiers, Ramesh also condemned the attack, calling it "despicable, shameful and cowardly act of the terrorists". He also prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured

AAP leader and Delhi

Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj

Part of the INDIA bloc, Shiv

Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut hit out at the prime minister over the attack in Jammu and Kashmir. "Yesterday, in broad daylight, our soldiers were attacked and killed. He will not talk about this in Ayodhya. (He will) just seek votes in the name of Lord Ram," Raut

RJD leader and former Bihar Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav condemned the militant attack and said he and his party join the nation in standing together against terrorism.

FSSAI refutes claims about permitting higher pesticide residue levels in spices

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

The Food Safety and I Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has refuted recent media reports claiming that it has permitted higher pesticide residue levels in herbs and spices. Labeling these reports as "false and malicious," the food safety regulator

"Some media reports are claiming that the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) allows ten times more pesticide residue in herbs and spices. Such reports are false and malicious," FSSAI said in a statement here.

The top food authority emphasised that India upholds some of the most stringent Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in the world. The authority explained that the MRLs for pesticides are established specifically for various food commodities based on thorough risk assessments. This approach ensures the safety standards are tailored to the dietary consumption patterns of the Indian population and address health concerns across all age groups.

"India has one of the most stringent standards of Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) in the world. Additionally, a pesticide registered on many food com-modities with different Maximum Residue Levels (MRL) is based on risk assessment data," it added.

The FSSAI, a statutory body under the Union Health Ministry, said the MRL of 0.01 mg/kg was applicable in case of pesticides. The limit was increased to 0.1

mg/kg only in cases of spices and is applicable only for those pesticides which are not registered in India by Central Insecticides Board & Registration Committee (CIB & RC). The move was recommended by the Scientific Panel on Pesticide Residues. As per FSSAI, the MRLs fixed by CODEX for Myclobutanil used for Chilli is 20 mg/kg whereas the limit set by FSSAI is 2mg/kg. For Spiromesifen, used for Chilli, Codex limit is 5 mg/kg whereas FSSAI limit is 1 mg/kg. Similarly, Codex standards for Metalaxyl and

mg/kg.
The new Codex MRLs for Dithiocarbamates, Phorate, Triazophos and Profenophos for Fennel is 0.1 mg/kg. FSSAI aligns with the updated standards of MRLs set by Codex Alimentarius Commission (an International Food Safety and Quality Standard setting body created by WHO and FAO of UN) and the European Union, it said.

Metalaxyl-M used for black

pepper is 2mg/kg whereas the limit set by FSSAI is 0.5

The MRLs are dynamic in nature and regularly revised based on the scientific data. This practice is aligned with global standards and ensures that MRL revisions are made on a scientifically valid basis, reflecting the latest findings and international norms.

Priyanka to lead LS poll campaign in Raebareli, Amethi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

ongress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will lead the Lok Sabha poll campaign in Rae Bareli and Amethi, and camp in these parliamentary constituencies in Uttar Pradesh from Monday to ensure the party's victory in the two high-profile seats, according to

Ending days of suspense, the Congress on Friday announced that Rahul Gandhi will contest the Lok Sabha elections from Rae Bareli, the constituency held by his mother Sonia Gandhi for the last two decades, and Kishori Lal Sharma, a close aide of the Gandhi family, will fight from Amethi.AICC sources said Priyanka Gandhi has already taken command of the campaigns and will remain camped



in Rae Bareli and Amethi from Monday onwards, till the end of polls. She will campaign aggressively to ensure the victory of her brother Rahul Gandhi and Sharma.

With Rahul Gandhi campaigning across India, Priyanka Gandhi has taken it upon her-

self to take charge of the campaigns in the two family bastions. The Congress has resolved to ensure victory from Rae Bareli with a big margin and also take back Amethi where BJP leader Smriti Irani had defeated Rahul Gandhi in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, they

'She (Priyanka Gandhi) will spearhead the campaign in Amethi and Rae Bareli. She will be there in the two constituencies till the election in both the constituencies," a source said. Priyanka Gandhi will be holding hundreds of 'nukkad sabhas', meetings and door-to-door campaign programmes, the sources said.

The centre will be Rae Bareli where she will be stationed at a guest house. From booth management to outreach, everything would be handled by her," the source said.

Already outreach has started with freedom fighters' families and those who have had familial ties with the Gandhi family for decades, the sources said. She will also monitor the digital and social media campaign in the two constituencies,

Many discrepancies in Vermula death: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Congress on Sunday said there were many discrepancies in the investigation conducted previously into Rohith Vemula's death in 2016 and asserted that its government in Telangana will leave no stone unturned to ensure justice for his family.

Police in Telangana have filed a closure report before a court in its probe into the death of Rohith Vemula, a student of the University of Hyderabad, claiming he was not a Dalit and died by suicide in 2016 as he feared that his "real caste" would be discovered.

Congress general secretary, organisation, K C Venugopal, said Rohith Vemula's death pletely exposed the "anti-Dalit mindset" of the BJP.

"The Congress, including Rahul Gandhi ji, has stood with Rohith Vemula's family through this difficult period, he said in a post on X.
As has been clarified by the

Telangana Police, the closure report concerned was prepared in June 2023, Venugopal

"There were many discrepancies in the investigation conducted previously.

The Congress government in Telangana will leave no stone unturned to ensure justice for Rohith's family," he asserted. The Congress came to power in the state last year by defeating the Bharat Rashtra Samithi

Courts should not act as mere tape recorders, says SC; flags role of public prosecutors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

ourts have to take a par-Cticipatory role in a trial and not act as "mere tape recorders", the Supreme Court said here and lamented that there is "practically no effective and meaningful cross-examination" by public prosecutors of any hostile witness during hearings of criminal appeals. The apex court said a judge has aid of justice and, even if the prosecutor is remiss or lethargic in some ways, the court should control the proceedings effectively so that the truth is arrived at.

Observing that relations between the public prosecution service and the judiciary are the very cornerstone of the criminal justice system, a bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said time and again, the top court has said

that there should not be any element of political consideration in matters like appointment to post of public prosecutor etc.

The observations by the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, came in a judgement while upholding the conviction and life sentence awarded to a man for murdering his wife in 1995. "It is the duty of the court to the ends of justice. The courts have to take a participatory role in the trial and not act as mere tape recorders to record whatever is being stated by the witnesses," the bench said in its verdict delivered on Friday. It said the court must be conscious of serious pitfalls and dereliction of duty on the part of the prosecuting agency. The bench said a judge is

expected to actively participate in the trial, and elicit necessary

materials from the witnesses in the appropriate context which he feels necessary for reaching the correct conclusion.

It said any crime committed against an individual is a crime against the entire society and in such circumstances, neither the public prosecutor nor the presiding officer of the trial court can afford to remain remiss or lackadaisical in any manner.

making appointments, like for the post of public prosecutor, the only consideration for the government should be the merit of the person.

"The person should be not only competent, but he should also be a man of impeccable character and integrity. He should be a person who should be able to work independentwithout any reservations, dictates or other constraints," it



The bench noted that public prosecutors, who are responsible for conducting prosecutions and may appeal against the court decisions, are one of the judges' natural counterparts in the trial proceedings and also in the broader context of management of the system of crim-

Observing that free and fair trial is the very foundation of criminal jurisprudence, the bench said, "There is a reasonable apprehension in the mind of the public at large that the criminal trial is neither free nor fair with the prosecutor

appointed by the state government conducting the trial in a manner where frequently the prosecution witnesses turn hos-

It noted that over a period of time, the apex court has noticed while hearing criminal appeals that there is practically no effective and meaningful cross-examination by the public prosecutor of a hostile wit-

lic prosecutor would do is to bring the contradictions on record and thereafter prove such contradictions through the evidence of the investigating officer. This is not sufficient," it said.

'What we are trying to convey is that it is the duty of the public prosecutor to cross-examine a hostile witness in detail and try to elucidate the truth and also establish that the witness is speaking a lie and has deliberately resiled from his police statement recorded under section 161 of the CrPC," the bench said. The top court was dealing with

an appeal filed by the convict challenging the May 2014 judgement of the Delhi High Court which had affirmed his conviction and life term awarded to him by the trial court. According to the prosecution,

the appellant had married in 1982 and in December 1995, he murdered his wife due to their strained marital relationship. The police had claimed that his minor daughter, who was five years old at the time of the incident, was the sole eye-witness to the incident.

The bench noted that during the trial, the minor failed to support the prosecution's case and was declared a hostile wit-

While dismissing the appeal, the apex court noted it should not overlook the fact that the appellant had inflicted 12 blows with a knife on the deceased who was unarmed and helpless.

"For all the foregoing reasons, we have reached to the conclusion that the high court committed no error in affirming the judgment and order of conviction passed by the trial court, holding the appellant guilty of the offence of murder of his wife," it said.

Noting that the app undergone almost 11 years of imprisonment so far and is about 65 years old, the bench granted him liberty to prefer an appropriate representation addressed to the state government praying for remission of sentence.

It said if any such representation is filed by the appellant, the state shall look into it and take an appropriate decision in accordance with law within

Low organ donation: States told to monitor cases of brain stem deaths in ICU patients

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

 $T^{\text{he Center has instructed}}_{\text{States to monitor cases of}}$ brain stem deaths in ICU patients, citing poor identification and certification of such cases as a factor contributing to low organ donation rates in the country. The advisory aims to boost organ donation rates, which are currently less than one donor per million population.

The organ donation rate in India continues to be low (less than one donor per million population in a year). One of the key challenges identified in this is poor identification and certification of brain stem death (BSD) cases despite availability of many such potential cases," Director of National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organization (NOTTO) Dr Anil Kumar stated in the letter to the states.

As per provisions of "The Transplantation of Human Organs Tissues Act, 1994", it is required to identify potential brain stem death cases in the ICU.

Further, it is mandatory to enquire whether such potential donors had pledged for organ donation and if not to make the family members aware of the opportunity to other strategic location in the



heart stops under the law, he

The doctor on duty, with the help of transplant coordinator, is required to make the above-mentioned inquiry after certification of such BSD cases, Kumar said in the letter sent to all states and UTs and directors of regional and state organ and tissue transplant organisation (ROTTOs and SOTTOs) last month. Kumar said every institution is requested to facilitate and monitor the certification of BSD cases to ensure compliance of provisions of the Act and Rules.

In his letter, the official attached a template of 'required request display board' that is to be placed outside ICUs, emergency or any

hospital. He also attached a list of information to be collected from the hospitals on a regular monthly basis.

The head of the institution and respective SOTTO should analyse the collected information and the corrective actions must be taken with the aim to maximise organ donation from all potential donors, he said.

Further, all SOTTOs are requested to collect such information as per the list from each registered hospital and send it to the NOTTO by the seventh of every subsequent month, the letter said.

seek your cooperation and support for augmenting the organ donation rate in the country so as to achieve selfsufficiency in the field of deceased organ donation, the letter added.

Researchers develop plant based biocompatible bandage

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

A team of Italian researchers has developed a biocompatible bandage made of plant-based materials that, loaded with vitamin C, can accelerate the healing process of burn wounds. Published in the journal ACS Applied Bio Materials, these findings offer potential for the development of similar products to treat various types of skin injuries, including lacer-Additionally, the new bandage represents a promising, envi-

native to skin patches. Following a burn, the affected area typically undergoes redness and swelling as a result of inflammation, the body's natural defense mechanism. Yet, excessive inflammation can counterproductively trigger the generation of oxygen free radicals, imped-

ronmentally sustainable alter-

ing the healing process.
Addressing this concern, researchers at Istituto Italiano di Tecnologia (IIT) devised a biocompatible bandage capable of blocking an excessive increase in the level of inflammation and reducing the number of free radicals, thus shortening the time needed for healing. Furthermore, the bandage naturally degrades



within a few days, mitigating concerns about additional waste generation.

The bandage is made from a new biodegradable material developed by the team, consisting of zein, a protein obtained from maize; pectin, a sugar found in the peel of many fruits, like for example an apple; and soy lecithin, a substance sourced from the like-named plant.

Exploiting its porous texture, the bandage is impregnated with Vitamin C, renowned for its innate anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.
Once applied to the burn, it gradually releases Vitamin C, thereby stabilizing inflammation levels and mitigating the production of free radi-

The product's compatibility with human cells, a key feature determining its possible future use on human beings, has been demonstrated by in vitro laboratory tests on keratinocytes, the cells that constitute the skin. These tests have also shown

that the levels of three key molecules linked to inflam-mation (interleukins IL-1ß, IL-6, and tumor growing factor TNF-a) decreased by 50% in the presence of the bandage, compared to when it was not in place. To validate these results, a series of preclinical tests were performed. "For this bandage, we began with the idea of using solely materials of natural origin, but now we would like to go even further," said Fabrizio Fiorentini, researcher at the Smart Materials laboratory. "The objective will be to create a very similar product, but using substances derived from food waste in order to satisfy the circular economy con-

'This is just one of the possible applications for this category of smart materials," said Athanassia Athanassiou, Principal Investigator of IIT's Smart Materials Unit. "We are working on other devices capable of speeding up healing, not only of burns, but also various other types of wounds such as lacerations or skin ulcers, pathologies that affect over half a million people in Italy and often limit personal independence."

Rotavirus jabs do not cause outbreaks in NICUs: Report

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Rotavirus vaccines do not cause significant outbreaks of the disease in neonatal intensive care units (NICUs), according to a report to be presented at the ongoing Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS) 2024 Meeting, being held in Toronto. The findings are important, study authors say, because many NICUs avoid vaccinating against rotavirus due to a theoretical risk of transmission, yet some infants are too old to receive the vaccine once discharged from the NICU. The study conducted at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia evaluated the risk of vaccinated patients transferring rotavirus to unvaccinated patients in NICUs that administer the vaccine.

According to researchers, preterm infants are at higher risk of the highly contagious but preventable virus, yet few receive the vaccine in hospital settings. The rotavirus vaccine contains a weakened form of the virus to produce a stronger

immune response. The study found that 99.3% of non-vaccinated patients exposed to vaccinated patients did not test positive for the dis-

Non-vaccinated patients that contracted rotavirus had no symptoms after 14 days, according to the study.

"Immunization with rotavirus vaccine has been standard practice in the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia NICU since 2007, and the safety of this practice was supported by retrospective clinical data published in Pediatrics in 2014 however this remains an uncommon practice in NICUs across the United States," said Kathleen Gibbs, MD, the study's lead neonatologist from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

"Our yearlong, prospective study done in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests that benefits of vaccinating NICU patients against rotavirus outweigh risks. Inpatient vaccination allows protection of a vulnerable population against a common, preventable cause of severe diarrheal illness."

The study analyzed 3,448 weekly stool samples from 774 patients between January 2021-January 2022.

Rotavirus spreads easily among infants and young children. The virus can cause severe watery diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and abdominal pain. Children who get rotavirus disease can become dehydrated and may need to be hospiwww.dailypioneer.com

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Nepal plays the hardball

Nepal is flexing its muscles by depicting Indian territories on its currency notes

n a recent development that has stirred regional tensions, Nepal has included certain disputed territories in its new currency notes. The move not only challenges India's sovereignty claims but also signals a significant alignment shift towards its northern neighbour, China. This seemingly innocuous act of updating currency notes has escalated into a diplomatic standoff and the growing influence of external powers in the region. The inclusion of the disputed territories, namely Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura, has sparked outrage in India, with officials condemning Nepal's actions as a violation of bilateral agreements and provocative steps that can further deteriorate the relations between the two countries. India has urged Nepal to respect sovereignty, return to dialogue and refrain from unjustified assertions. Earlierm the relationship between New Delhi and Kathmandu became strained following Nepal's release of a political map in mid-May 2020, which incorporated territories like Lipulekh,



Kalapani and Limpiyadhura, previously depicted in India's November 2019 map. At the heart of the dispute lies historical ambiguity and differing interpretations of border demarcations. While Nepal claims that the territories rightfully belong to it based on historical treaties and cartographic evidence, India maintains control over these regions, citing its historical precedents and strategic imperatives. The dispute has simmered for decades, occasionally flaring up but never fully resolved.

The present move by Nepal has a lot to do with its new political leadership which is deliberately leveraging its proximity with China to browbeat India.

Besides, many other issues have also cropped up which have been a cause of concern for Kathmandu. India's Agniveer policy has also not gone down well with Nepal. What makes Nepal's move particularly noteworthy is its perceived alignment with China. Over the past few years, Nepal-China relations have strengthened considerably, fuelled by mutual economic interests and strategic cooperation. China has invested heavily in Nepal's infrastructure projects, including roads and telecommunications networks, enhancing connectivity between the two countries. Furthermore, Nepal's participation in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has deepened its economic dependence on Beijing, providing an alternative to traditional ties with India. Against this backdrop, Nepal's decision to incorporate disputed territories in its currency notes could be interpreted as a strategic gesture signalling its independence from Indian influence. It is indeed a reason to set off alarm bells in New Delhi and it should take some immediate steps to stop the drifting away of Nepal and becoming part of Chinese hegemony. It would be India's loss if Nepal also walked the Maldives' path. It is time to leverage historical India-Nepal ties and convince the new leadership that China is only going to use Nepal and suck it dry as it did many other nations.



Anganvadi workers take part in a voting awareness campaign ahead of the polling for Lok Sabha elections, in Jalaun PTI

Delhi school bomb hoax reflects rancor



The extremists might be unaware that their malicious actions could jeopardise the safety of their community. It falls upon the responsible segment of the community to rein in the extremists

he bomb hoax received by up to 285 schools in and around Delhi, reflects the burning anger among extremists. Although the threatening message from a Quranic text was dispatched from a Russian electronic source, evidentially, the email identities were sent from Delhi, most probably from Indians. The email was most offensive to quote; "Did you real think that there would be no answer for all the evil you have done? Since childhood, the fire of jihad has been lit in our hearts, we have become this fire, Inshallah who preside over just retribution". The extremists may not realise that their nefarious activity can endanger the safety of their community. It is for the responsible section or the community to control the extremists. If they think that it is for the law-andorder authorities only to deal with such mischief, they are mistaken. The police and others can do so only much and no more. In short, it is not their function to protect the goodwill of the responsible section of the minority. If they do not do so, the Indian people almost would gain the impression the responsible section is also somewhat sympathetic towards the extremists activi-

Kemember Partition is not a forgotten chapter of India's recent history. Pakistan and Bangladesh are standing minarets of Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Two Nation Theory whereby Hindus and Muslims cannot coexist in the same country. Hardly any Hindus have been allowed to remain in Pakistan, wherein Bangladesh non-Muslims are reducing in numbers by the week. Mohandas Gandhi told Dr Syama Prasad Mookherjee and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur the day before he was assassinated that India was a secular country because the division was a territorial and not religious one. This may have been a kind India if he made Hindus who human gesture to protect the minority, but it was not the truth. Most Hindus, do not believe that it was not a division based on religion. The Hindu heart believes that it was the final settlement between Hindus and Muslims. Yes, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi



and their followers are free to hold their views but that era has passed and a new age has dawned in India.

Following in step with the moving train of time is wise and not getting stuck in the mud of the past. Here, it is also wise to remember that Europe no longer welcomes emigrants and the USA is reportedly slow and shows of much reluctance. The only open space appears to be Africa. One of the loud messages of the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza is that emigrants are no longer welcome even in a West Asian country, whether Egypt, Jordan or any other. No neighbour has lifted their fingers toward the trigger for saving the Gaza Heights. One reminded of the ghazal by Talat Mahmood "Jayein to

Jayein Kahan". Mughal emperor Akbar understood clearly even as a boy it could be easy to rule were 95 per cent of his empire safe, happy and well-treated. As a sign of his impartiality between religions, he went, for Muslims to the extreme extent of not performing sunnat or circumcision on his son Salim who rose to become Jahangir,

PARTITION IS NOT A FORGOTTEN CHAPTER OF INDIA'S RECENT HISTORY. PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH ARE STANDING MINARETS OF MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH'S TWO NATION THEORY, WHEREBY HINDUS AND MUSLIMS CANNOT COEXIST IN THE SAME COUNTRY

Islamic king, if he were not emperor, would have been accused of being a murtad; or apoState, fit for the death penalty. His eventual innovation was called Din-e-Ilahi. By implication, he was replacing Islam with a synthetic religion that would include people of all faiths. In practice, not a great deal happened but it was a ges-ture especially to the Hindus, how much he was prepared to go forward to placate their sentiments. This was not the end of his vision but in a way only the beginning. He abolished the vexatious; jaziya tax which Hindus had to pay to receive protection from the State. Whenever he conquered a Rajput territory Akbar offered the Hindu prince his territory back under the Mughal suzerainty, provided the prince was prepared to align with and even fight for the empire. That indeed was a generous gesture by not dispossessing the Rajput of the kingdom completely and ensuring him of a place in the empire. He often offered to marry a princess of the principality. If his hand was accepted, he did not ask the lady to convert to Islam. There was no better way of touching the

the future emperor. This hearts of the Rajputs. In recorded history, no Muslim conqueror was this generous. In contrast, Aurangzeb was the opposite. He went down to desecrating and demolishing Hindu temples like Vrindavan, Mathura and Banaras. Humiliating Hindus and breaking their hearts was the preferred point in his agenda. To many, it would seem that being emperor and ruling Hindu India was merely his

Alamgir Aurangzeb's vicarious cruelties extended much beyond the demolition of temples. When he brought down the Kashi Vishwanath temple at Banaras, he left the western gate of the Hindu edifice as it was, so that every worshipper would be reminded of what the Mughals had done. When he desecrated the Govind Dev temple at Vrindavan, he demolished the top two floors only, leaving the bottom two for the Hindus to see and feel the humiliation. What benefit could such conduct bring to a ruler? Only Aurangzeb could have known.

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

Mastering self-leadership during work from home



As work dynamics evolve towards multi-location, knowledge-driven autonomy, employees' proactive task management is essential

Thile some suggest that work from home (WFH) offers greater autonomy, leading to increased family time and reduced commuting, others argue that it blurs the boundaries between work and home, potentially diminishing productivity. The co-location of work and home during WFH blurs the traditional separation between the workplace and the family domain. This integration can exacerbate conflicts between work and home responsibilities, resulting in heightened levels of job dissatisfaction, anxiety and disengagement from work.

As individuals possess finite

personal resources such as energy and attention, focusing on one role often depletes resources for another. For instance, individuals working from home full-time may frequently transition between work responsibilities and home duties, such as pausing work to attend to childcare or household tasks. These transitions can further strain individuals' capacity to effectively manage both work and personal responsibilities. Boundary theory has become

increasingly relevant in the context of WFH. Expanding upon this theory, it is observed that employees are more likely to transition between different roles on days when they are telecommuting compared to when they are physically present in the office. When employees work from home, both their work and home roles converge within the same physical space, creating a unique

dvnamic. According to boundary theory, the nature of these role transitions can significantly impact conflicts between work and home domains. Certain types of role transitions may facilitate the blending of work and home responsibilities. For example, interrupting work to attend to familial duties, such as picking up children from school, can lead to conflicts its widespread adoption durarising from the home encroaching upon work time (home-work conflict). Subsequently, resuming work after attending to such responsibilities may trigger conflicts stemming from work encroaching upon home life (work-home conflict).

Organisations play a pivotal role in supporting employees by offering flexibility, particularly on days when they work from home, thereby assisting them in managing conflicts that arise when their work and home roles intersect. However, relying solely on organisational support may not offer a comprehensive solution.

The concept of self-leadership becomes invaluable during periods when employees face challenges arising from the blurred boundaries between work and home, particularly on remote workdays. The considerable expansion of remote and hybrid work in the aftermath of the pandemic underscores the importance for employees to proactively manage their responsibilities. Although remote work was not unprecedented,

ing and following the pandemic has been unmistakable. Evidence suggests that diverse remote work arrangements, encompassing hybrid models and full-time remote setups, are poised to remain prominent in the future of work. While remote work has revealed advantages such as increased flexibility and job satisfaction, its implementation has also presented new hurdles. These include diminished managerial support, which can dampen professional creativity, hinder the willingness to share new ideas and diminish confidence. The complexities of remote

work, ranging from varying locations and home working conditions to frequent interruptions and diminished focus, emphasise the importance of self-leadership in today's professional realm. Moreover, in the remote work setting, there is a heightened need for adaptability and the ability to navigate challenges independently, which harmonises with the fundamental tenets of self-leadership.

(The writer is associated professor, HR&OB, FIIB; views are personal)

POLITICAL DIATRIBE

Madam — Apropos the news article, 'Modi's advice to RaGa: 'Daro mat, bhaago mat' "published on May 5, this is my response. Contesting from Wayanad as well as Rae Bareli is "cowardice" of 'Shehzada' indeed. Still, contesting from Vadodara as well as Varanasi was an act of "supreme bravery" by a certain "Hindu Hriday Samrat"! Relentless stalking of the much-maligned "Pappu" and consistent character assassination of him provide direct testimony of who is in relentless fear of Rahul Gandhi!

If Sonia Gandhi's adoption of the Rajya Sabha route proves her "escapist" mindset; hope this very same formula applies to S.Jaishankars to Ashwini Vaishnaws also! Lots of thanks for shedding a deluge of tears for the "atrocities" upon women in Sandeshkhali; but please let at least a single teardrop make an appearance for the spine-chilling gangrape murder and forced cremation of the Dalit girl in Hathras, murder of the little Kathua girl after gangrape and torture for days within a temple, mass gangrape and murder of women in 2002 Gujarat and gangrape and murder of Kuki women in Manipur after getting paraded naked! A Constitutional representative claimed that Hindus are "second class citizens" in Bengal, implying which community is "first class." This is blatant communalism in our diverse democracy.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

RAHUL'S STRATEGY

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Rae Bareli Rahul's new battlefield," published on May 4, this is my response. Gandhis have ended weeks of suspense with a twist and chose Rae Bareli over Amethi for Rahul Gandhi, there is no doubt Rae Bareli is a safer seat than Amethi in the current electoral context. Putting Kishori Lal Sharma in Amethi, who is an old Congress loyalist and

Pakistan on Indian elections



en Govt: Modi, "The Pioneer, May 3, this is my response. Whatever may be the political rhetoric of PM Modi linking the Congress party to Pakistan, the fact is that the latter desperately wants the Modi-led NDA Government to lose in the ongoing elections for many reasons. In contrast to the Congress party's soft approach against terrorism sponsored by Pakistan, the

Gandhi's absence, has in a sense provided a cakewalk to the Smiriti Irani. It will be after 25 years that there are no Gandhis in the fray from Amethi. Gandhis not contesting from either of these seats would have been a bad political message and would have shattered the confidence of Congress workers. In the eventuality of Rahul Gandhi winning both Wayanad and Rae Bareli, he has to leave either of the two and it would be better if he retains Wayanad to concentrate on the 2026 Kerala assembly elections and leave Rae Bareli for his sister Priaynka Vadhra to contest in the by-poll. With this strategy, Gandhi would be able to revive the Congress in Uttar Pradesh because, without any Gandhi at the helm, Congress could not expect to revive itself in the State.

Bal Govind | Noida full dignity

ALLEGATION RESPONSE

Madam — Apropos to news report, "Woman staffer files complaint against served both Amethi and RaeBareli in Bengal Governor," published on May 3,

Modi Government's zero-tolerance stance has triggered the surgical strike on the Balakot, the den of terrorists, in retaliation to the Pulwama attack in 2019. The abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir by the Modi Government has rattled Pakistan and it even failed to garner the support from the international community on

the matter. Add to this, the NDA Government's categorical stand to not initiate the talks to break the logjam between India and Pakistan as long as the latter aids and finances the terrorists to target India has put Pakistan in a disadvantageous position, even as it is embroiled in the economic turmoil - while it badly needs the trade with India. In these contexts, Pakistan strongly believes the BJP Government under Modi has severely jeopardised its machinations to target India and its interests as well

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

this is my response. A Raj Bhavan employee who works in the telephone room and stays at the residential quarters on the campus itself, complained of molestation against West Bengal (WB) governor C V Ananda Bose on Thursday evening, introducing an element of the unprecedented in Bengal politics and pitting the Trinamool Government and the governor's office in direct conflict in the middle of an election season. It's important to investigate the allegations against Bose carefully.

A central agency should investigate under a Supreme Court judge. If the TMC Government is found to be trying to defame him, it should be scrapped. If there is any truth to the allegations, the Governor should also be punished. The truth must be revealed and the innocent must be treated with

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

SUDARSHAN KRIYA: A KEY TO A PEACEFUL LIFE

A transformative path overcoming addiction with redemption



RAVI VALLURI

ome years ago, while I was posted at Gorakhpur, an Art of Living devotee happened to read my maiden book, The Matter of the Mind, wherein I narrated the efficacy of the Sudarshan Kriya technique and how it extricated me from the cesspool of alcoholism.

Today by the grace of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and the breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya I am sober. The devotee connected me to a psychiatrist and soon along with two other faculty members, we began conducting courses for alcoholics and drug addicts at a rehab centre.

They were around 40 and we were three. Some looked menacing, others disenchanted, a few engulfed by ennui. But in our arsenal was the potent cassette of Sudarshan Kriya enveloped with the divine benediction of Gurudev.

We began with gentle warm-ups. This was followed by pranayama and finally Sudarshan Kriya. A few hardened addicts attempted to derail the Kriya. But the febrile minds gradually settled as the rhythms of Soham resonated in the dingy hall.

Meaning of Sudarshan Kriya

The unique breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya is the fulcrum of the Happiness Programme of the Art of Living. Su means proper, Darshan implies vision and Kriya is a purifying action.

Through the actions of our breath, we appreciate a proper vision of who we are. It is momentous to understand that nature runs on a rhythm. For instance, the sun rises and sets at a particular time, similarly, seasons arrive and exit at predetermined times.

Our emotions, feelings and thoughts are all cast in the symphony of rhythm. We are unable to distinguish between cacophony and symphony in this frenetic pace of life which is cannonaded by innumerable thoughts. When sounds are harmonised by the syllable of Soham we can term it as mag-



Enlightenment is not accruing anything providential but harmonising our whole being rhythmically. During the breathing process participants feel varied sensations, emotions, laughter and weeping among others.

Chanting "Soham" to match one's breath with a Guru's guidance is a relaxation technique that releases stress and promotes relaxation. Studies show that it can improve heart rate, cognitive function, breathing patterns and calmness in both mind and body. It may also have positive impacts on the endocrine system and potentially prevent Alzheimer's disease. This technique increases the body's energy levels.

This wonderful knowledge and wisdom have triggered humaneness to blossom. Every cell and particle of the body overflows with jollity and life is abundant with the glow of love and the body becomes the wick. Love and belongingness become a natural process of our inner being if practised unfailingly.

Several practitioners feel they can practice the breathing technique at home. But that is only walking half the path. It is indispensable and paramount that one must practice the technique daily and attend the followup once a week, where a certified Art of Living teacher plays the chant of Soham in Gurudev's voice as it reinvigorates the body and mind. One should also be wary of imitations available on YouTube these days. Breath is the very kernel of our very existence.

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

Consequences of illusionary conspiracy



The wounds from the Easter Sunday Massacre linger, but within Sri Lankans' resilience lies a beacon of hope, illuminating a path forward amidst profound despair

fter the Easter attack tragedy, there arose a chorus, delving into the search for a "mastermind" behind the barbaric attack. Known as the Easter Sunday Massacre, on 21st April 2019, eight suicide bombers detonated themselves, targeting selected places in Colombo and Batticaloa, resulting in the deaths of over 260 innocent people and injuring hundreds more. A former Attorney General, a key figure in this discourse, ignited speculation by suggesting a possible hidden agenda. However, his evasion of the court and avoidance of investigators seeking clarification on his previous Statements only intensified suspicions. Politicians, social activists, journalists and even ordinary citizens unwittingly propagated a conspira-cy theory based on prejudices and unverified media reports.

From my perspective, this conspiracy theory inadvertently served a unique purpose amid the chaos and irregularities. It acted as a temporary balm, diluting the rising tide of animosity against Muslims and briefly restoring social equilibrium. Without it, the nation risked a recurrence of the 1983 ethnic riots, albeit on a larger scale. Yet, as the conspiracy theory gained traction, it altered the societal psyche, fostering normalcy among diverse ethnic groups, albeit with attempts by some to exploit the situation. What remains lamentable is that this theory misled the public and squandered an opportunity to establish a socio-legal framework for preventing future occur-

During my conversation with Malith Jayathillake, former National List Member of Parliament and head of the Sectoral Oversight Committee on National Security appointed by then-President Maithripala Sirisena, the overlooked reality became stark. The report he presented in February 2020 outlined proposals for formulating and implementing laws to ensure national security, eradicate new terrorism and extremism by fostering unity among races and religions. Regrettably, this invaluable contribution by lawmakers was largely ignored. Jayathillake dismisses the notion of a conspiracy behind the attacks, recognising instead a meticulously planned suicide mission inspired by the ideology of the Islamic State

Concurrently, Dr Ameer Ali from Murdoch University's School of Business and Governance dispels conspiracy notions, attributing the attack to subsequent political manipulation. Yet, in probing the roots of extremism, he identifies a turning point in 1977 when the country embraced the free market. Within certain segments of the Muslim communities, exclusivism emerged, alienating inclusivism and sowing the seeds for the proliferation of extreme ideas within the societal fabric. In the aftermath of the tragedy, about a month later, I engaged in an interview with Jonah Blank, a Principal Investigator and Senior Political Scientist for RAND Corporation. Blank astutely highlighted two critical aspects of the Easter Sunday bombings in Sri Lanka. Firstly, he emphasised that the attack was a result of political negligence rather than being solely classified as an intelligence failure by various parties. Secondly, Blank pointed out that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) did not choose Sri Lanka; rather, Sri Lankan extremists opted for allegiance to ISIS. Addressing the ongoing political crisis in the country, Blank remarked, "When the



acy theories. Complicating matters further, a full four years following the tragic incident, a British television channel not only fuelled baseless speculation but later begrudgingly admitted to a shocking lack of substantial evidence backing the allegations. These unfounded claims stemmed from a lone source purportedly recruited by a United Nations agency, casting a dark shadow over the entire narrative.

counter the persistence of conspir-

Amidst the discourse, I observed a political theatre unfolding, over-shadowing the much-needed societal discussion. Those involved ANNIVERSARY seemed more focused on accusing one another rather than earnestly seeking the truth. In the last five years since this barbaric attack, committees appointed by the President and Parliament have conducted investigations, producing lengthy reports. However, there is a noticeable absence of dialogue about future threats and the potential aftermath.

genuine efforts to understand the

The tragic events unfolded against COLLECTIVE the backdrop of a nation grappling with its political identity and leadership struggles. Blank's insights into political negligence shed light on a systemic issue that extended beyond intelligence failures. Sri Lanka's socio-political terrain, FORTIFY THE marred by internal conflicts and power struggles, created an environment ripe for extremist ideolo-POTENTIAL gies to take root. The intricate web of political discord, coupled with a THREATS failure to prioritise national security, laid the groundwork for the devastating Easter Sunday attacks. As the media frenzy surrounding conspiracy theories intensified,

root causes of the attack were drowned out. Blank's observations about the political crisis resonated deeply, underscoring the importance of unity among leaders during times of national peril. However, the cacophony of blame-shifting and finger-pointing persisted, hin-dering the nation's ability to address the multifaceted challenges posed by this emerging social phenome-

Amid this turbulent period, the fifth anniversary of the Easter massacre serves as a distressing reminder of the collective responsibility to learn from the past and fortify the nation against potential threats. The committees' findings, though crucial, must be more than backdated analyses; they should serve as a foundation for proactive measures and policies to safeguard Sri Lanka's future. The narrative must evolve beyond the immediate aftermath to address the lingering societal scars and instil a renewed sense of resilience and preparedness.

After spending nearly five years immersing myself in a myriad of materials and conducting extensive interviews with numerous sources on this beingus crime. I am compelled to acknowledge the absence of any substantive facts supporting conspiracy theories. Instead, what emerges is the chilling reality of negligence and deliberate ignorance in addressing extremism and the imperative need for robust deradicalisation efforts. I opt to accentuate the triumph of our adversaries—a triumph exacerbated by the gross negligence and underestimation displayed by defenders of national security and political sta-

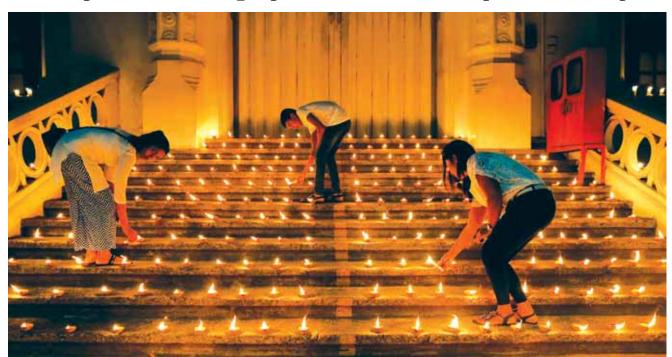
Our genuine focus must now pivot resolutely towards preventing the recurrence of such crimes and sculpting a secure future for our nation, a nation that has too often lived amidst violence rather than peace, grappling with both internal and external threats. The repercussions of the Easter massacre extend

far beyond the economic sphere, infiltrating into an unprecedented degeneration of societal values.

Regrettably, as we mark the fifth anniversary of the attacks, a pressing and profound necessity emerges for a narrative shift—one that moves beyond unsubstantiated accusations aimed at specific individuals. We must transcend the cycle of blame and retrospective scrutiny, opting instead for thorough approaches that delve into the underlying causes of extremism, fanaticism and terrorism regardless of ethnic or religious affiliations. This calls for a holistic approach, encompassing not only the reinforcement of intelligence and security protocols but also the fostering of a society that celebrates inclusivity, empathy and constructive discourse.

The journey toward healing and rebuilding necessitates a sincere effort from all corners of society. Ultimately, the aftermath of the Easter Sunday bombings underscores the resilience of the Sri Lankan people in the face of immense adversity. Looking forward, it is paramount to harness this collective strength and channel it into comprehensive strategies. These must not only confront immediate threats but also lay the foundations for a future characterised by security and harmony. The lessons distilled from this tragedy should propel the nation towards a collective commitment a commitment to unity, understanding and the prevention of recurring horrors. Otherwise, in a society where the majority languishes in a deep slumber, indulging in unproven conspiracies and scapegoating a select few, we will only rouse from our stupor when the next tragedy inevitably befalls us.

This ts the second part of the article on five years of Easter attack in Sri Lanka. concluded (The writer is a Sri Lankan journalist. Views are personal)





AMID THIS TURBULENT PERIOD, THE FIFTH OF THE EASIEK MASSACRE SERVES AS A DISTRESSING

OF THE RESPONSIBILITY TO LEARN FROM NATION AGAINST

REMINDER

THE PAST AND

Pakistani YouTubers: The art of subtle propaganda

As consumers of digital content, it is crucial to discern between genuine discourse and agenda-driven narratives

oday's warfare is increasingly characterised by information warfare tactics. Social media serves as an ideal weapon for conducting modern conflicts where the battle for narratives and perceptions plays a crucial role in shaping outcomes. In this digital context, the emergence of Pakistani YouTubers has garnered significant attention in India over the past five years. Their channels span various genres from reaction videos to those featuring interactions with common people in Pakistan and podcasts and discussions on geopolitics. However, a closer look reveals a subtle yet concerning trend in their content.

sought to attract Indian viewership by praising India



unabashedly. They lauded India's policies and economic growth and even expressed admiration for Prime Minister Modi and the BJP. Their narratives echoed sentiments of unity and regret over the partition, portraying India's economic liberalisation in the 1990s as a commendable Initially, these YouTubers move. This strategic approach garnered them millions of Indian subscribers. Even edu-

cated Indians appreciated such rare, seemingly sane views and analyses from Pakistani

At first, it was perplexing to witness the sudden change in tune from Pakistan, a country historically marred by animosity towards India. Suddenly, Pakistani YouTubers were singing praises for Jawaharlal Nehru as the best Prime Minister and socialism as the ideal policy for India. This abrupt shift raised eyebrows, especially considering Pakistan's track record of hostility towards India over the past 70 years. So, it begged the juestion how was it that Pakistanis have only now discovered virtues in Indian leaders and policies that they previously overlooked or actively opposed? But still, these

YouTubers were embraced by Indians with open arms, evident from the predominance of views and comments on their videos from India.

However, as time passed, their mask began to unravel. Channels focusing on geopolitics gradually began to push agenda subtly. Considering Pakistan's precarious economic situation, these YouTubers advocated for the resumption of trade with India which was halted by their Prime Minister Imran Khan in 2019 as a protest against India's decision to revoke Article 370 in Kashmir. They openly criticised Imran Khan's decision, labelling it as foolish given the adverse impact it had had on Pakistan's economy. However, recently when the

Indian Government did not reciprocate to the India-Pak trade agenda, these YouTubers' tones shifted dra-matically towards anti-India and pro-China propaganda. Suddenly, they started painting India as a regressive Hindu country with an authoritarian Government where minorities as well as the democracy are allegedly in grave danger. Now, they consistently invite guests onto their channel providing them with a platform to perpetuate anti-India and anti-Indian narratives.

It is striking how these Pakistani YouTubers seldom address the pressing issues within their own country. They seem conspicuously silent on the plight of minorities particularly the violence perpetrated against them.

While they are quick to produce videos condemning alleged injustices against Muslims in Palestine and India, they conveniently overlook similar atrocities within Pakistan.

Some YouTubers remain silent on the oppression of Muslims in China, despite evidence of human rights abuses against Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang. This raises questions about the sincerity of their activism and suggests geopolitical influences on their nar-

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that these Pakistani YouTubers also openly criticise their Government and army, a rarity in Pakistan where dissent against the establishment is often met with severe repercussions. This raises suspi-

cions about their affiliations, true intentions and ulterior motives behind their digital presence. One cannot help but wonder if these YouTubers are planted by some foreign agencies to serve as mouthpieces

for their agenda. Here, the concern is that many Indian youths, unaware of this shift, continue to consume their content, inadvertently perpetuating the agenda. Many Indian intellectuals and geopolitical experts have begun to criticise these YouTubers for their manipulative tactics. Interestingly, this manipulation is not only limited to India but has been extended to Bangladesh too as these podcasters churn out videos portraying the 1971 war as a mistake. They label West Pakistan's attempt to

suppress and colonise East Pakistan as evil and this new narrative aims to attract Bangladeshi viewers first and subtly push their agenda later. In the era of information, overload critical thinking is our best defence against manipulation.

Hence, it is imperative to recognise and address this subtle propaganda and analyse the content the Indians consume. As consumers of digital content, it is crucial to discern between genuine discourse and agenda-driven narratives.

Everyone needs to realise and understand that India stands for peace and brotherhood but not at the expense of its national security.

(The writer is an academician; views are personal)

Congress complains to EC against BJP adverts

T N RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

The Opposition Congress on Sunday lodged a complaint with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Maharashtra, against the ruling BJP-led MahaYuti for putting out "inflammatory" advertisements linking the ongoing Lok Sabha elections to Pakistan that carries such content "aimed at sowing seeds of division among communities".

In a complaint submitted to the CEO, Maharashtra, the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) took a strong objection to an advertisement out by the ruling BJP in a leading Marathi newspaper on behalf of the MahaYuti candidates contesting the Lok Sabha polls which read: Because of your vote, where do you want to see celebrations -Índia or Pakistan?"

The MPCC stated in its complaint that the advertisement in question not only violated the sanctity of elections but it also posed a threat to the social fabric of the country.

"The advertisement is not only deeply divisive but also insin-



uates that voting for certain would lead to undesirable consequences akin to the celebrations in Pakistan. Such rhetoric is not only false but also dangerous as it seeks to exploit sentiments of nationalism for political gain," MPCC's chief spokesperson Atul Londhe stated in his complaint.

Londhe said that the advertisement amounted to violation of sections 125 and 123 (3A) of the Representation of People's Act 1951 and sections 153 A and 171 G of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The advertisement should be treated as a corrupt practice as per Model Code of Conduct for

political parties and candidates. "Such behaviour not only undermines the democratic process but also erodes public trust in the electoral system," he said.

Among other things, the MPCC urged the CEO, Maharashtra, to ban/disqualify all candidates affiliated to the ruling BJP and its allies -Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Eknath Shindeled Shiv Sena, prohibit them from contesting any future election and conduct a thorough investigation into the matter to ensure "accountability and deterrence against such

BJP faked torture on women at Sandeshkhali: Mamata

Halleging that mass rape of women of Sandeshkhali was a fake drama hatched by the BJP, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday lambasted the saffron outfit for stooping to any level and using even the women to win votes.

Asking Prime Minister Narendra Modi to shed "crocodile tears" on the mothers and sisters of Sandeshkhali the Chief Minister on Sunday told a rally at Bolpur that "the BJP can stop to any level ... they can even use the women for the sake of playing narrow politics ... I will ask them not to use our mothers and sisters of Sandeshkhali" in this dirty pol-

Earlier the TMC had released a video --- which was promptly rejected as fake by the BJP leadership --- that showed a local Mandal level leader telling someone that Bengal BJP president Suvendu Adhikari had told him to instigate some women to bring charges of rape against the TMC leaders. "He told me to instigate 3-4 women of the village to say that they were raped" by the men of TMC leader Sheikh Shahjahan.



'No one would have imagined that a party would stoop so low to spread untruths like this ... they will go to such level as to dishouour our mothers and sisters just to win votes ... this heinous allegations were leveled against some leaders for the sake of votes only ... and everything was done by splurging some money ... and there some people are shedding crocodile's tears," Banerjee's party to which the alleged video comes as an oasis in the midst of a desert

Her nephew Abhishek Banerjee too asked the top BJP leadership to tender an unconditional apology for what it had done. 'The BJP owes an unconditional apology for what they have done or else the people of Bengal will never spare them ... they will give them a befitting reply in the elections," he said. The BJP was however prompt to react. Even as the alleged saffron

leader from Sandeshkhali went underground Adhikari said he was in his protection because he feared for his security. Adhikari challenged what he called a "fake and paid video" saying, "it is again a TMC's new camera jerks ... it is a fake video," while other saffron leaders said "if 3-4 women had alleged mass rape then how could hundreds of come out on the road for days on end protesting against the land grab and mass molestation ... by doing this the TMC is not only trying to save its leaders but also promoting the rape culture in Bengal."

Meanwhile in a counter-revolution of sorts women paarticularly at Sandeshkhali – I block on Sunday came down in hordes demanding the release of their Bhaijan Sheikh Shahjahan saying he they would not vote if he was not released. "Shahjahan bhai used to be a

protector of the people and he

nelped many poor women in their daughters' marriages but here the BJP has put him in jail by hatching a dirty conspiracy .. we want his release immediately," they said failing to answer however the hundreds of complaints that had been lodged against him on land grab and other crimes including accumulation of arms etc.

Congress leader Arif back as star campaigner in Maharashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA

Reneging on his earlier deci-sion to quit the party's campaigning committee, Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) Working President Arif Naseem Khan has come around to be a Star Campaigner for the fifth phase of Lok Sabha elections in the State, following an interven-tion by party leader Rahul Gandhi and ALCC general Gandhi and AICC general secretary Ramesh secretary Chennithala.

The withdrawal of resignation by Arif Khan comes nine days after he resigned from the MPCC's campaign committee and also from his position being the star campaigner in protest against the lack of Muslim candidates from the party as well as the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance for the LS polls.

Following his decision to campaign for his party, Arif Khan's name has figured in the new list of Star Campaigners for the Congress-MVA-INDIA alliance candidates in the state for the last phase of Lok Sabha

polls in the state scheduled for May 20. Given that there are a large number of Muslim voters in 20-odd Lok Sabha constituencies in the state, the Congress leadership had taken a serious cognisance of Arif Khan's resignation from the party's campaign committee and also from the post of the star campaigner.

After a meeting with Rahul Gandhi and Chennithala who assured him that they would look into his grievances, Arif Khan withdrew his resignation and agreed to be a part of the party's campaign in the Congress.

Arif Khan was lobbying for nomination to contest the Lok Sabha polls from the Mumbai North Central. However, the Congress chose to field city Congress President and former minister Prof. Varsha Gaikwad.

Prof Varsha is taking on Advocate Ujjwal Nikam of the ruling BJP, Advocate Ramzan Chaudhary of the All India Majlis-E-Ittehadul Muslimeen and Santosh Ambulge of the Prakash Ambedkar-led Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA)'s Santosh Ambulge.

TMC at Medinipur Stiff contest between BJP

SAUGAR SENGUPTA

It is "scorching difficult for such beautiful women of the glamour world to brave the glaring sun beating down at 45 degrees --- begging for votes in this village... What these people will do for the poor starving people ... do they understand our problem..." That is how Salku Hansda a school teacher at Egra sub-division expresses his despair for political parties sending "unprofessional candidates" to work for the people's

True Medinipur parliamentary seat is not going to be a cake-walk either for the Trinamool Congress which has fielded June Malia a film actor-turned TMC MLA and Agnimitra Paul a fashion designer par excel-

lence turned BJP MLA. And the Left Front has fielded SK Atta. Both the BIP and the TMC are equally strong in the area in the sense that while BJP snatched the seat from the Trinamool Congress in 2019 when its candidate Dilip Ghosh defeated State minister Manas Bhuniyan by about 89,000 votes. It is another matter that the TMC wrested back all the seven Assembly seats in 2021 Assembly elections when the once mighty Left Front drew a

"Insofar as developmental works are concerned the district has seen nothing more than the Indian Institute of Technology that came up 73 years ago and the Railway Station which makes it equally proud ... or else no party has done anything worthwhile for the area... And

you have the Kalaikunda Airbase here it is for the armed forces and the locals have nothing to do with it," said Padma Rajan a local artist who is a Telugu by origin.

"Yes Telugus live here in huge number and have become naturalised Bengalis ... even they have started fish in great numbers ... besides you have the Punjabis and Marwaris living here ... but the Governments have done nothing for this area ... they could have joined the twin cities of Kharagpur and Midnapore and made it a huge

However, he praises Dilip Ghosh for bringing some development projects for the Railways. "Dilip Da was such person who defeated his oppo-

city of Bengal which they did

not ... why we cannot say," he



nents where ever he went ... but unfortunately he was taken away to Durgapur this time round ... why I don't know ... perhaps this is because of the intra-party feud in BJP," another local businessman and a local BJP leader.

However others say that the BJP was forced to remove Ghosh from Medinipur seat because he had angered the Kurmis who constitute a good 20 percent votes. "In fact they even gheraoed his house ... after which the two sides never had the good relationship that they shared before."

As for Paul, "she is a new comer ... though she is a sitting MLA from nearby constituency in Asansol area and knows the local topography it will be difficult for her to cover the miles ... and then you do not know what the voters who loved Dili

Da would do now," he says.

On the other hand the June Malia an MLA from East Midnapore and a scion of a local Zamindari family has good rapport with her electorate. "She is quite visible in the area and has personal contacts with the people ... she recognises them and visits her constituency regularly ... but that is for her own Assembly seat ... when you talk about the entire seven Assembly segments she will have to build up the relationship afresh," says Mukti Dey a professor adding "this is the reason why the job for both of them is

the history of Indian freedom movement since it has produced many martyrs like Khudiram Bose and intellectual icons and social reformers like Ishwar Chandra Vidya Sagar Midnapore had seldom tolerated misrule and hegemony, says a local college professor. "During the British Raj, the undivided Medinipur became a centre of revolutionary activities and we saw bloody movements like the Chuar Rebellion (1767-1833) and the Bhumij

Insofar as rural issues are concerned Medinipur featured among 250 most backward villages of the country till the last census the villagers at Danton an ancient town say. "We have excavations here

rebellion (1832-1833).

revealing the existence of an

be used to develop it as a historical site ... Danton was a part of Gupta empire and also the Gajapati kings of Odisha ... the Government can do something for tourism," the professor says adding the tribal people of the State that live mostly on forest products are often haunted by the elephants.

ancient settlement and this can

"Many of them are killed when they go to collect forest products ... already the Maoist movement aided by some local parties that then wanted to come to power has ruined the economy of this area ... now if they can concentrate on its development it would be better ... but they are interested in only sending film stars and glamorous people ... but the people want professional politicians who can

Operations launched to flush...

The

reports, the Indian Army conducted aerial surveillance using

helicopter to maintain a tight vigil on the movement support to these foreign of any suspected personnel in the forest area. Additional troops were rushed to the ambush site to plug the possible escape routes. In addition, a general alert was sounded in the area and random checking of vehicles and suspected personnel was conducted to instill a sense of security among the

Since late Saturday evening, the security forces have been tracking the footprints of the terrorists behind the attack. The officials said checking of vehicles has been intensified across the district which is going to polls in the sixth phase of the Lok Sabha election on May 25. Poonch is part of the Anantnag-Rajouri Parliamentary

frightened residents.

Local reports indicated the located less than 1 km from the cold desert region. the area where the attack Statistics revealed a total

took place enroute Sanai number of 35 security

forces

suspected local over-ground workers, active in the area may have extended logistic terrorists besides providing them safe shelter and other help to execute their terror plot at the behest of their handlers sitting across Pakistan. So far the local police have failed to generate any human intelligence to expose the safe hideouts across the vulnerable rural pockets across these frontier districts of Rajouri and

Poonch. According to official they stayed near the ambush sources, between October site to avoid getting on the 2021 and May 4, 2024, the radar of the security forces Indian Army suffered huge collateral damage in these ambushes orchestrated in the areas South of Pir Panjal to spread the "arc of terror" across the Jammu region. The standoff between the

Indian and Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh also terrorists vanished soon impacted the security after the attack without scenario with the shifting of facing any tough resistance. a large number of troops to The nearest habitation was beef up Indian defenses in

action" in different targeted strikes across Jammu and Kashmir during the same period. In contrast, only five terrorists were neutralized in these operations.

Preliminary reports suggested that foreign terrorists adopted the same modus operandi in these "audacious" strikes.

They first conducted a recce of the entire area including its topography, pattern of civilian movement, and likely schedule of convoy movement with the help of a local guide or any overground worker. Secondly, while running away after executing the terror plot. In all these terror attacks that have taken place in the middle of the road, foreign terrorists used similar ammunition and automatic rifles to inflict fatal injuries. Initially, the terrorists also recorded videos and circulated the same on various social media platforms to run propaganda targeting the Indian armed

Jaishankar blasts Canada for gangland...

From Page 1

See, when you tell them something, their answer is no we are a democratic to country but it is free speech," he said.

The External Affairs Minister said there will be pushback against what is happening "out there". He said "Newton's law of politics" will apply.

The point that they need to understand, it is no longer a world that runs as a one-way street. If there are things that happen out there, there will be pushback. Newton's law of politics will apply there also. There will be a reaction. Others will take

steps or counter it," Jaishankar said. Jaishankar also slammed Canada for giving visas to "gangland people" with links to organised crimes in Punjab. "...The fact is that a number of gangland people, a number of people with organised crime links from Punjab, have been made welcome in Canada. We have been telling Canada look these are wanted criminals from India, you have given them visas," he

said. The Minister pointed out

that many of these people go Canada on false documentation but are allowed to stay. He accused the country of importing dubious people for political purposes.
"If you de

you decide to import for political purposes people with very dubious, actually, very negative backgrounds, there will be issues, they have in some cases created problems in their own country as a result of their own policies. No, why would we fear, if something happens there, it is for them to worry about," he added. Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a designated terrorist, was killed by gunmen in Canada's Surrey in June last year. Canada accused the Indian government of being involved in the murder. New Delhi called the allegations absurd.

Canadian authorities have arrested three Indian nationals -- Karanpreet Singh, 28, Kamalpreet Singh, 22 and Karan Brar, 22 -- for allegedly killing Hardeep

I have not lost touch with Chandni Chowk people: Aggarwal

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

Once attributed the title of the most active MP in Delhi", the former five times Parliamentarian Jai Prakash Aggarwal claims that his touch with the people of the Chandni Chowk constituency hasn't gone despite losing two times to the BJP candidate from 2014 to 2024. Aggarwal also didn't shy away from slamming Prime Minister Narendra Modi' on his comment on "magalsutra" by calling it "inauspicious".

The veteran Congress leader, who is contesting the Lok Sabha elections for the eighth time, shared that he felt hurt by PM Modi's speech at a rally in Banswara, aimed to hurt the Congress' prospects in the upcoming Lok Sabha 2024 elections. "What is this language he is using? That too coming from a Prime Minister. The Prime Minister himself sometimes speaks in such a way, which is very inauspicious. I was very hurt by his statements personally," said Aggarwal.

using central investigative agencies like Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against Opposition leaders like Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. "If someone has done something, let the legal system take its own course and punish the culprit. What is this approach of the BJP to use a stick to suppress the opposition? Why is the Government involved in this? You ask people on the streets and they will say 'Modi ne band kara diya Kejriwal ko' (Modi has locked Kejriwal up). Is this the kind of impression you want to leave?" he remarked.

Aggarwal, who is fondly referred to as JP bhai or JP, alleged that no single question has been asked in Parliament regarding the Chandni constituency. "This means there is no single problem in

Chowk the area? They have failed to identify any problems here, that too with seven MPs from the national Capital," he said. The Gandhi confidante said

He also attacked the BJP on that when he was given the responsibility to fight from the seat, he began with looking at the projects that were pending in the area. However, he claims that no

work was started in the area during the ten years of BJP MP Dr Harsh Vardhan. Despite his opponent Praveen Khandelwal having a considerable connect with the trade groups because of his association to Confederation of All Indian Traders (CAIT), Aggarwal states that he hardly cares about what face is on the opposition and more about the work the party or the candidate has done for the area. I do not care who stands opposite me. Merely, saying that I am this or that doesn't matter. It matters what you have done for the people. What has the BJP done for the traders in the area? In fact, their condition has deteriorated. Have you raised a single question for traders? Traders were harassed, shops were closed after 9 pm and to make it even worse you built a mall there to shut down these traders' business," the

Campaign ends for 3rd phase LS...

constituency.

Banaskantha district, has fielded from Banaskantha against BJP's Rekha Chaudhary, making it the only seat in the State where the main contest is

between two women. This phase will witness polling in 10 Lok Sabha constituencies of Uttar Pradesh, including Sambhal, Hathras, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Firozabad, Mainpuri, Etah, Badaun, Bareilly and Aonla. Of the 10 seats that will vote on Tuesday, the BJP won eight in 2019 -- Hathras, Agra, Firozabad, Fatehpur

Geniben Thakor, sitting and Sambhal went to the MLA from Vava in Samajwadi Party It will Banaskantha distriction see seal the fate of Union Minister SP Singh Baghel, UP Tourism Minister Jayveer Singh and Minister of State for Revenue Anoop Pradhan Balmiki.

In Mainpuri, an SP bastion that the party has never lost, sitting MP Dimple Yadav will take on Jaiveer Singh of the BIP. In Firozabad, BJP candidate Chandra Sen Jadon is contesting against Akshav Yadav and in Budaun, Aditya Yadav - the son of Shivpal Yadav -- is against Durvijay Shakya of

won this seat in 2014 and 2019. The party has made him its candidate again in 2024. Devesh Shakya is the SP candidate while BSP has named Mohd Irfan as its candidate. In Badaun, Aditya Yadav, son of Shivpal Yadav, is making his political debut from Budaun. The BSP candidate is Muslim Khan. The third phase unfolds with the emergence of Other Backward Classes (OBCs), prominently including Yadavs, Lodhs, and Kachhi/Shakya/Murao communities, exerting making his electoral debut influence as decisive factors across various constituencies. Sikri, Etah, Badaun, Bareilly BJP. In Etah, BJP's Rajveer Alongside, the enduring

demographics remains significant in select areas. The third phase has also seen high-pitched some campaigns by leaders of all parties.

Kalaburagi Lok Sabha constituency in Karnataka was seen as a bastion of the Congress for years, but after the party's veteran leader M Mallikarjun Kharge lost the 2019 Lok Sabha election from this seat, the political arithmetic changed. This Kalaburagi, Gulbarga, is again under the spotlight because it is not Congress president Kharge but son-in-law

the fray. He will be taking on BJP's incumbent MP Umesh G Jadhav.

In Chhattisgarh, Raipur, Durg, Bilaspur, Janjgir-Champa (Scheduled Caste reserved), Korba, Surguja (ST) and Raigarh (ST), considered as Naxal affected areas, will also vote on May 7. In the third phase, a total of 93 constituencies across 10 States and two UTs will go to the polls which include Assam (4 seats), Bihar (5), Chhattisgarh (7), Goa (2), Gujarat (26), Karnataka (14), Madhya Pradesh (8), Maharashtra (11), Uttar Pradesh (10), West Bengal (4), Dadra and Nagar Haveli Radhakrishna Doddamani in and Daman and Diu (2).

However, the polling date for the Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seats in Jammu and Kashmir has been rescheduled due to various logistical, communication, and natural barriers affecting connectivity. The polling has been rescheduled to May 25, with the vote count scheduled for June 4.

In this phase, Gujarat had a maximum of 658 nomination forms from 26 Parliamentary Constituencies, followed by Maharashtra with 519 nominations from 11 PCs. Osmanabad Parliamentary Constituency in Maharashtra received a maximum of 77 nomination forms followed

Chhattisgarh nomination forms.

The 14 segments going to polls on Tuesday Karnataka are: Bélgaum (Belagavi), Uttara Kannada, Chikkodi, Bagalkot (Bagalkote), Bidar, Haveri, Dharwad, Koppal, Bellari (Ballari), Raichur, Bijapur (Vijayapura), Davangere and Shimoga (Shivamogga) and Gulbarga (Kalaburagi).

Inclement weather affected the last day of campaigning by political parties for the third phase of polling in Assam on Sunday. Voting will take place in four Lok Saha seats in the state-Guwahati, Dhubri, and Bilaspur PC in Kokrajhar and Barpeta--on respectively.

The richest candidate in the South Goa constituency for the BJP, Pallavi Shrinivas Dempo, boasts wealth amounting to Rs 1,361 crore. Meanwhile, Union Minister Jyotiraditya M Scindia, contesting from Guna in Madhya Pradesh, possesses assets worth Rs 424 crore. Voter turnout in Phase 1 and 2 of the Lok Sabha elections

Tuesday.

dipped to 66.14 per cent and 66.71 per cent, respectively, according to the poll body, making a decrease from the 2019 polls, which saw turnouts of 69.43 per cent and 69.17 per cent in the first second

the pioneer SATTLES

Congress playing with fire by attempting Hindu, Muslim divide: Rajnath

Rahul Gandhi has "no fire but the Congress is playing with fire" by to describe India could be removed by the BJP if it retains power. attempting to create a Hindu-Muslim divide for electoral gains, Defence Minister that BJP will "tear up and Rajnath Singh said here even throw as he asserted that the NDA will cross the 400-seat mark in Lok Sabha polls and the BJP will improve its tally in most of the states.

In a free-wheeling interview to PTI, Singh also indicated that the BJP will implement its big-ticket plans like rolling out of Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and the 'One Nation One Election' push in Code (UCC) and the 'One Preamble during the Nation One Election' push in Emergency," the defence its third consecutive term.

The defence minister, who been vigorously campaigning across the country, said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi does not have the fire in his belly to put up a spirited fight in the polls. Singh also said that the BJP government will never change the Constitution or reservations, and

accused the Congress of creating "fear psychosis" and resorting to spreading misinformation for "votebank" politics.

The Preamble to the
Constitution of India Congress for spreading "canards" that the BJP will change the Constitution if it

returns to power and

especially stressed that there

was no question of changing

Preamble of the

His assurance that the Preamble will not be changed

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has been alleging away" Constitution if it retains power. Some other Congress functionaries had expressed apprehensions that the BJP may drop the word "secular" from the Preamble of the Constitution.

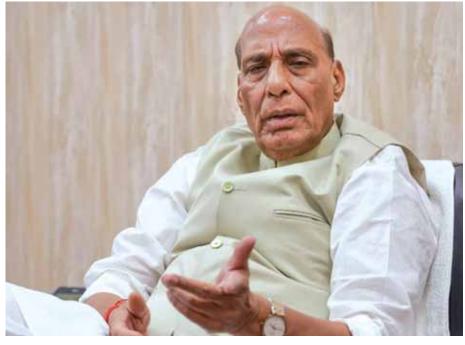
"Congress brought constitutional amendments 80 times. They changed the minister said.

"The BJP will never change Constitution. Constitution- makers never imagined that there would be changes in the Preamble. You (Congress) only acted to hurt the core idea of the Constitution," he said in the interview on Saturday.

There is no question of changing the Preamble of the Constitution. They changed it and now they are making baseless allegations against us," the BJP leader added.

presents the basic principles of the Constitution. The 42nd Amendment in 1976 changed the description of India from a "sovereign democratic republic" to a "sovereign socialist secular democratic republic".

"They (Congress) are trying to get people's support by



instilling fear among the citizens," Singh said.

Attacking Congress, he said former Pakistani minister Chaudhry Fawad Hussain's "praise" of Rahul Gandhi is a matter of "grave concern" and his party must explain the "deep love" for its leader from a country that always attempted to destabilise India.

There must be a reason behind this deep love (agadh prem) from a country that has been trying to destabilise India. It is a matter of grave concern and India wants to know the reason behind this

Chaudhry -- infamous for boasting about Pakistan's hand in the 2019 Pulwama terror attack -- had on May 1 posted on 'X' excerpts from a speech by Gandhi with the caption "Rahul on fire" that drew sharp criticism from

"If a former minister of a country that has been attempting to destabilise India praises (Rahul), then it is a matter of concern. The Congress owes explanation about its relationship with Pakistan,"

the defence minister said.

On the overall political

BJP leaders.

minister Congress of attempting to disturb social harmony and trying to create tensions on the religious lines.

"They are attempting to create a Hindu-Muslim create divide for electoral gains. The Congress is trying to create tensions on the religious lines," he alleged. "The Congress wants to

disturb social harmony. They look at the Muslim community only as a vote bank. I have a suggestion for them -- politics should not be done only for forming governments. The aim of politics should be for nationCongress is playing with

The defence minister also said that he was confident that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) would cross 400 seats and the BJP would get over 370 as these projections were made after a detailed assessment of the ground situation and not made only for public consumption.

Singh said the people of the country will repose their faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP's tally will improve significantly based on the performance of the government in the last five years. "Our seats will increase in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and we will get some seats in Tamil Nadu. Our account will open in Kerala as well. We are winning a good number of seats in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana," he said.

"We will increase our tally in Odisha, Jharkhand and Assam. We are sweeping Chhattisgarh," he said, noting that BJP will cross the 370mark.

The defence minister said the BJP is set to win up to 75 seats in politically crucial Uttar Pradesh.

Asked whether the BJP's seats in Maharashtra will come down, he did not give a direct reply but said there may be some adjustments here and there.

The BJP leader also came

for its plan to "redistribute" wealth, saying it will have disastrous consequences for the country's economy.

concept redistribution of wealth will trigger recession. Argentina and Venezuela implemented it and faced disastrous consequences. The investors will lose confidence in India," Singh said.

On the BJP's big-ticket plans like the implementation of UCC and 'One Nation One Poll' push in if it retains power, Singh said his party fulfils promises that it makes to the people of India.
In its manifesto, the BJP

pledged to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) if it returns to power after the general elections. It also mentioned that the party will move forward with a resolve to realise the idea of 'One Nation, One Election' "We always fulfil our

commitments. We will never allow any question mark on our credibility and will not compromise on the country's unity and integrity. We implement whatever we say in our manifesto. We have to do whatever we say," Singh

"We will go for 'One Nation One Election. We will take views of every quarter including all political parties on it," he said.

On UCC, the defence minister said even the Constitution-makers felt a need for it, as it is mentioned in the directive principles.

create fear psychosis; they want to use the Hindu-Muslim card," he said.

They do not have any issue. They want to form a government by dividing the society in the name of caste, creed and religion and they have always done it," he alleged.

Asked about the relatively lower voting percentage that ranged from 66-67 per cent in the first two phases of the elections, Singh said it was not a matter of concern for the BJP.

The defence minister said the opposition parties are not being able to enthuse their supporters to come out and

On the issue of reservation, Singh alleged that the Congress is misleading the nation.

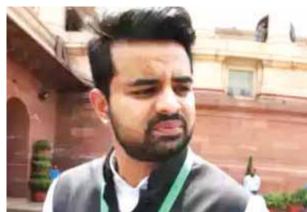
"The Congress is trying to mislead people. There will not be any end to reservations. They are making false allegations against us," Singh said.

The Congress has also asked the BJP leaders to clear the party's stance on whether it would remove the 50 per cent cap on reservation for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes, and the Other Backward Classes.

We will not tinker with the reservations at all," Singh said while replying to a query.

The Congress has promised to remove the 50 per cent cap on reservations for SC, ST

Blue corner notice issued against Prajwal Revanna: Karnataka Home Minister



PTI BENGALURU

rarnataka Home Minister Karnataka rione Managara on Phys Corner Sunday said a Blue Corner notice has been issued and Interpol's help is being taken to bring NDA's Hassan Lok Sabha candidate Prajwal Revanna, who is facing sexual harassment cases, back to

A Blue Corner Notice is issued by the international here. police cooperation body to information from its member said the team is doing its job

in relation to a crime. The minister said the Special Investigation Team formed to probe the sex scandal will decide on how to bring Prajwal back.

countries about a person's

identity, location or activities

"Already Blue Corner notice has been issued. The Interpol will inform all the countries locate Parameshwara told reporters

Appreciating the work of SIT, additional formed to probe the case, he and has acted as per law on the complaints it has

He recalled it has arrested the 'accused,' apparently referring to Prajwal's father HD who apprehended in an abduction

Prajwal's father Revanna, a molestation and kidnapping charges, and has been arrested by the SIT on Saturday.

He was arrested by the sleuths of SIT on Saturday in the kidnapping case linked to sexual abuse allegations against his son Prajwal. He was picked up soon after a court here rejected his

anticipatory bail plea. Explicit video clips allegedly involving the 33-year-old Prajwal, grandson of JD(S) patriarch and former Prime Minister Deve Gowda, had started making the rounds in Hassan in recent days, following which the state government constituted the SIT to probe the sexual abuse allegations against

Tents, fans, ambulances set up at booths to help voters beat heat



PTI BENGALURU

With just two days left for the second phase of the Lok Sabha polls in Karnataka, the Election Commission has made elaborate arrangements to increase voter turnout amid the soaring temperatures in the 14 constituencies that go to the polls

The first phase of the general elections in 14 of Karnataka's 28 Lok Sabha constituencies was held on April 26, and the second, for the rest of the 14 segments, is on May 7. From arranging shamianas and tents, additional fans and drinking water facilities, to keeping ambulances on standby and using adjacent rooms of the polling booth as waiting areas, the Election Commission is making efforts to ensure that the polling percentage is not affected due to the "harsh summer". There are 28,269 polling stations in these 14 constituencies -

Chikkodi, Belgaum, Bagalkot, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Raichur, Bidar, Koppal, Bellary, Haveri, Dharwad, Uttara Kannada, Davangere and Shimoga --which are going to the polls on May 7. In this first phase, Karnataka recorded 69.56 per cent voter turnout. Speaking to PTI, Karnataka Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Kumar Meena said the constituencies where polling will take place on May 7 are in North Karnataka region and the temperature is slightly high there, 'so we have made all necessary arrangements to ensure that people aren't deterred from coming out of their homes to vote." He further said, "It is a harsh summer, so we are making special arrangements to 1,29,83,406 are male, 1,29,67,607 mitigate this temperature, (and the are female and 1,945 are others.

possibility of) stroke, dehydration.. So, we are making special arrangements for shades, drinking water, fans wherever required at the polling stations." The poll body has also roped in ASHA workers and Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) workers to handle any medical emergency that may arise at the polling stations. "We also have local-level health workers including ASHA workers and ANMs from primary health centres, so they will have basic medical kits to ensure that first aid is given to voters and polling officials in case of any medical emergency," he said.

Ambulances have also been kept ready in a cluster of polling stations so that patients requiring more than first aid can be quickly taken to hospital, he added.

The priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of poll officials and voters, especially senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Adequate number of tents and umbrellas for shade, and chairs to seat the officials and voters have been provided at the polling stations to ensure that they are not exposed to direct sunlight. "All arrangements are being done to ensure that people have a pleasant experience and that the harsh summer will not deter them from coming to vote. We will do our best to see that people will not face any problem," the CEO said. There are a total of 2,59,52,958 electors in these 14 constituencies, out of which



Congress has no support left, not even in its bastions: Dhami

PTI ■ BUDAUN (UP)

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Sunday said that Congress has no support left in its onceconsidered bastions.

Attacking Rahul Gandhi contesting from the Amethi Lok Sabha seat this time, Dhami said, "No ground has left for Congress anywhere in the country on seats once considered their traditional seats."

On Fire incidents in Uttarakhand, Dhami, who was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a rally here, said the authorities have filed more than 350 FIRs in this connection.

"We conducted a review meeting on Saturday and responsibilities have been given to officers. We are also working on the Char Dham Yatra, which is about to

Asked about giving a ticket to Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's son from the Kaisergani seat, he said the Samajwadi Party is a dynastic party and not the BJP. Former Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh is accused of sexually assaulting several female wrestlers. A case was filed against him by the Delhi Police last year.

Congress to approach courts for disqualification of MLAs involved in anti-party activities

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Congress general secretary in-charge of Assam Jitendra Singh on Sunday said the party will approach courts disqualification of its MLAs who are involved in "antiparty" activities after the Assembly Speaker "failed" to act on its petitions to cancel their membership of the House.

ongress general secretary

"We have already written to the Speaker seeking disqualification of Congress MLAs indulging in anti-party activities. That the Speaker is not acting against them shows that the BJP government is not following rules," Singh said, addressing a press conference here.

He said the party will now approach the high court and needed, to get these legislators disqualified. principal state's



Daimary seeking disqualification of at least even the Supreme Court, if five MLAs for various "antiparty" activities, like lending

opposition party has in Rajya Sadila poli and submitted multiple petitions to Assembly Speaker Biswajit party candidate in Lok Sabha

On recent show-cause notice to Goalpara (West) MLA Abdul Rashid Mandal, Singh support to the government, said, "There was a complaint voting against party nominee against him and he was He has given his reply. It is being studied and follow up action will be taken." AICC general secretary Ajoy

Kumar, also speaking at the same press meet, claimed that Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma wants to return to the Congress, which he had left for the BJP

"We hear that he wants to return and is evaluating the options, once Narendra Modi loses this election. But the Congress will never accept a turncoat like him," Kumar, the party in-charge for Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, claimed. large-scale

Alleging corruption against Sarma, he said, "I have come from the second most corrupt state (Odisha) to the most corrupt state (Assam) in the country. He claimed that the BJP-led

government has "failed" the

served show-cause notice. state on all fronts, with rising unemployment and corruption in the name of building roads and other infrastructure,

"Unemployment increased by 7 per cent on one hand, and liquor shops are mushrooming on the other hand. The youth, who have no jobs, are getting addicted to the easily available liquor. Sarma has become the 'liquor man of India," Kumar alleged.

The AICC leader alleged that the Modi government has "failed" on economic, employment and national security fronts.

Money is concentrated at the hands of a few people leading to a greater richpoor divide, unemployment is rising and the PM remains silent on China and Pakistan-based militants continue to carry out attacks, he claimed.

One more opportunity for Andhra staff on poll duty who missed voting: CEO



PTI VIZIANAGARAM (ANDHRA PRADESH)

Andhra Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena on Sunday said that the Election Commission will facilitate another opportunity to vote for employees on election duty who missed exercising their franchise.

visit During a Vizianagaram to check voting facilities, the CEO applying for this facility, May 13.

noted that such employees will be given the opportunity

on May 7 and 8. "We are working with the goal to ensure that every discharging employee election duties will be offered the postal ballot facility," said Meena in a

press release. In the event of eligible employees not finding their names on the postal ballot list and also in case of not

Meena said they can still go ahead and include their name to vote by producing the election duty order and identity card at their relevant facilitation centres.

"Home voting and postal ballot voting for all will be completed by (the) 9th of this month (May)," the CEO told PTI. Further, he highlighted that minimum facilities and helpdesks have been arranged at all facilitation centres.

Besides making all the necessary arrangements for conducting polls in the southern state, Meena observed that election staff have already undergone two rounds of training.
Moreover, he noted that

cash, liquor and other inducements worth Rs 450 crore have been seized in the run-up to polls until now. Elections for the 175member Assembly and 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh are scheduled on

Israel orders closure of Al Jazeera offices as Qatar mediates Hamas talks

 \mathbf{I} srael ordered the local offices of Qatar's Al Jazeera satellite news network to close Sunday, escalating a long-running feud between the broadcaster and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hard-line govern-ment as Doha-mediated ceasefire negotiations with Hamas hang in the balance.

The extraordinary order, which includes confiscating broadcast equipment, preventing the broadcast of the channel's reports and blocking its websites, is believed to be the first time Israel has ever shuttered a foreign news outlet.

The network has reported the Israeli-Hamas war nonstop since the militants' initial crossborder attack Oct. 7 and has maintained 24-hour coverage in the Gaza Strip amid Israel's grinding ground offensive that has killed and wounded members of its own staff. While including on-the-ground reporting of the war's casualties, its Arabic arm often publishes verbatim video statements from Hamas and other militant Netanyahu's ire.

Israel's security and incited against soldiers," Netanyahu said in a statement. "It's time to remove the Hamas mouthpiece from our country." Al Jazeera issued a statement

vowing it will "pursue all available legal channels through

international legal institutions in its quest to protect both its rights and journalists, as well as the public's right to information." "Israel's ongoing suppression of the free press, seen as an effort to conceal its actions in the Gaza Strip, stands in contravention of international and humanitarian law," the network said. "Israel's direct targeting and killing of iournalists, arrests, intimidation and threats will not deter Al Jazeera from its commitment to cover, whilst more than 140 Palestinian journalists have been killed since the beginning of the war on Gaza."

Israeli media said the order allows Israel to block the channel from operating in the country for 45 days. The Israeli gov-

groups in the region, drawing ernment has taken action against individual reporters over the decades since its founding "Al Jazeera reporters harmed in 1948, but broadly allows for a rambunctious media scene that includes foreign bureaus from around the world, even from Arab nations. That changed with a law passed last month, which Netanyahu's

office says allows the government to take action against a foreign channel seen as "harming the country."

Immediately after the announcement, Al Jazeera's English arm began broadcasting

a prerecorded message from one of its correspondents from a hotel the channel has used for months in east Jerusalem, which the Palestinians hope to one day have for their future state. "They're also banning any devices — that includes my mobile phone," correspondent Imran Khan said. "If I use that

confiscate it." Al Jazeera went off Israel's main cable provider in the hours after the order. However, its

to do any kind of newsgather-

ing, then the Israelis can simply

website and streaming links across multiple online plat-forms still operated Sunday. The ban did not appear to affect the channel's operations in the occupied West Bank or Gaza Strip, where Israel wields

ereign Israeli territory.
The decision threatens to heighten tensions with Qatar at a time when the Doha government is playing a key role in mediation efforts to halt the war in Gaza, along with Egypt and the United States.

control but which are not sov-

Qatar has had strained ties with Netanyahu in particular since he made comments suggesting that Qatar is not exerting enough pressure on Hamas to prompt it to relent in its terms for a truce deal. Qatar hosts Hamas leaders in exile at a political office in Doha.

The sides appear to be close to striking a deal, but multiple previous rounds of talks have ended with no agreement. In a statement Sunday, Hamas condemned the Israeli government order, calling on international organizations to take

measures against Israel.Shortly after the government's decision, Cabinet members from the National Unity party criticized its timing, saying it "may sabotage the efforts to finalize the negotiations and stems from political considerations." The party said that in general, it supported the decision.

İsrael has long had a rocky relationship with Al Jazeera, accusing it of bias. Relations took a major downturn nearly two vears ago when Al Jazeera correspondent Shireen Abu Akleh was killed during an Israeli military raid in the occupied West Bank. Those relations further deteriorated following the outbreak of Israel's war against Hamas on Oct. 7, when the militant group carried out a crossborder attack in southern Israel that killed 1,200 people and took 250 others hostage. Since then, the Israeli military

campaign in Gaza has killed over 34,000 people, according to local health officials there, who don't break figures down into civilians and combatants.

In December, an Israeli strike

killed an Al Jazeera cameraman as he reported on the war in southern Gaza. The channel's bureau chief in Gaza, Wael Dahdouh, was wounded in the same attack. Dahdouh, a corre-spondent well-known to Palestinians during many wars, later evacuated Gaza but only after Israeli strikes killed his wife, three of his children and

a grandson. Al Jazeera is one of the few international media outlets to remain in Gaza throughout the war, broadcasting bloody scenes of airstrikes and overcrowded hospitals and accusing Israel of massacres. Israel accuses Al Jazeera, funded by Qatar's government, of collaborating with Hamas. Criticism of the channel is not new, however. The US government singled out the broadcaster during America's occupation of Iraq after its 2003 invasion toppled dictator Saddam Hussein and over airing videos of the late al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden.

Al Jazeera has been closed or blocked by other Mideast gov-

Protesters at USC comply with school order to leave their encampment

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Protesters left a Pro-Palestinian encampment at the University of Southern California early Sunday after they were surrounded by police and told they could face arrest if they didn't go. The move, days before commencement events are set to begin on the Los Angeles campus, came after the university said campus safe-ty officers, assisted by the Los Angeles Police Department, were clearing the area.

"If you are in the centre of campus, please leave. People who don't leave could be arrested," USC said on the social media platform X at about 4:15 am. Livestream video from student iournalists showed the encampment had emptied out as police formed a line to move remaining protesters away and stop people from re-entering the

The encampment had restarted after the LAPD first arrested 93 people on April 24. The atmosphere on the private university campus had largely remained calm since, while attention turned to arrests at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Angeles.
At the University of Virginia, 25 people were arrested Saturday for trespassing after police clashed with pro-Palestinian protesters who refused to remove tents from campus, and demonstrators at the University of Michigan chanted anti-war messages and waved flags during commence-

ment ceremonies. USC, a private university, has been the subject of student protests over the war in Gaza as well as the administration's decision to cancel a commencement speech by the valedictorian, a Muslim student who had expressed support for Palestinians. The university made that decision in mid-April, saying they had safety concerns after receiving threats.

Some Jewish groups had criticised the student's selection as speaker.

Administrators later cancelled the entire main-stage com-mencement planned for May 10, when 65,000 people were expected to gather to celebrate graduates. Other commencement activities, including graduation ceremonies for individual schools and colleges, are still scheduled from Thursday through Sunday. Access to the private campus has largely been restricted for people not affiliated with the university since

late April. Videos posted online Saturday evening showed some demonstrators engaging in calm songs and chants in preparation for expected police activity. The encampment has been set up on a campus green space, with dozens of tents surrounded by makeshift fencing covered in signs with various messages of support for Palestinians and criticism of the university and law enforcement.

A university representative read a statement nearby the encamp-ment Saturday saying that it had to come down, according to Annenberg Media, a studentrun campus publication, saying the encampment and unspeci-fied acts of vandalism and theft of university property violated the law.Early Friday, several dozen counter-protesters had set up outside the encampment, playing scenes from the October 7 Hamas attack in Israel on a screen, Annenberg Media reported. In Virginia, student demonstrators began their protest on a lawn outside the school chapel Tuesday. On Saturday, video from WVAW-TV showed police wearing heavy gear and holding shields lined up on the campus in Charlottesville. Protesters chanted "Free Palestine," and university police said on the social platform X that an "unlawful assembly" had been declared in the area.

Driver dies after crashing into WH security barrier

Washington (AP): A driver died after a vehicle crashed into an outer perimeter gate of the White House complex, and the incident late on Saturday was being investigated as a traffic crash, police

President Joe Biden was spending the weekend in Delaware, and the Secret Service said there was no threat to the White House. The male driver, who was not

immediately identified, was found dead in the vehicle following the crash shortly before 10:30 pm, according to a Secret Service statement. The Metropolitan Police

Department said the vehicle crashed into a security barrier at the intersection of 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Police were called to the scene at 10:46 pm and said one adult male was pronounced dead from the crash into a security barrier around the complex.

Shooting in Los Angeles area injures 7

Long Beach (AP): A shooting in the Los Angeles area has left seven people injured, including four who were listed in critical condition.

Long Beach Police Department officers responded to a reported shooting around 11:15 pm Saturday in the area of South Street and Paramount Boulevard, the department said in a statement posted on social media.

At least seven victims suffered gunshot wounds and were transported by emergency responders or self-transported to area hospitals.
In addition to the four critical

victims, three people had injuries that were not life-threatening, police said.

Sunak promises to work 'as hard as ever' after local elections

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday promised to work "as hard as ever" after a disastrous set of election results saw his Conservative Party being unseated across several local authorities and even losing a mayoralty strong-hold in the West Midlands region of England. The British Indian leader admitted his disappointment after Andy Street, the party's popular Mayor of West Midlands, narrowly lost to Labour rival Richard Parker by a mere 1,508 votes after a recount had to be ordered for the knife-edge result. This leaves Sunak with a solo sliver of hope in Ben Houchen, who had held on to the party's mayoralty in Tees Valley on Friday amid a virtual sweep for the Opposition parties, with Labour in the lead.

"It's been disappointing of course to lose dedicated

Conservative councillors and Andy Street in the West Midlands, with his track record of providing great public services and attracting significant investment to the area, but that has redoubled my resolve to continue to make progress on our plan," Sunak said in a statement.

"So we will continue working as hard as ever to take the fight to Labour and deliver a brighter future for our coun-

try," he said.
While Tory rebels have begun circling, the echo this time does not seem to be around replacing Sunak as party leader but piling pressure on him to get tougher on the party's core issues like setting a cap on legal migration and dramatically cutting taxes. Former Home Secretary Suella Braverman is leading this charge and issued a stinging rebuke in 'The Daily Telegraph' to demand that it was time for Sunak to move on from "managerialism" and

show strong leadership. "Let me cut to the chase so no one wastes time over-analysing this: we must not change our leader. Changing leader now won't work: the time to do so came and went. The hole to dig us out is the PM's, and it's time for him to start shovelling," writes the sacked Indian-origin ex-minister, who is at the fore-front of the backbench rebellion."Either we start fighting to win now, or we'll have no one else to blame when this week's political earthquake is made to look like a mere tremor come the general election night," she said. Others have chimed in to say it was time for Sunak to "wake up and smell the coffee" because the local election results show that the Labour Party is on course to stomp to

victory in a general election, expected later this year. Opposition leader Sir Keir Starmer has hailed his party's "phenomenal result", which included Labour's Sadiq Khan

being re-elected for a record third term as London Mayor on Friday. But Starmer also appealed to the voters who had punished the party over its weak stance on the Israel-Gaza conflict, after analysis showed that Labour suffered losses to independents and the anti-war Worker's Party of Britain in areas with large Islamic populations as a result. "I have heard you. I have listened. And I am determined to meet your concerns and to gain your respect and trust again in the future," said Starmer.But on the whole, the Labour camp will be celebrating this weekend as it virtually swept the mayoral elections across England, winning in Liverpool, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, and Greater Manchester.

With most of the results now in for the elections held for local councils on Thursday, Labour looks set to have grabbed over 1,100 seats.

While lacking Martinelli's spunk, Mulino has coasted

on his connection to the exon his connection to the expresident. He is rarely seen without his blue "Martinelli Mulino 2024" cap and promised to help Martinelli if elected. Juan José Tinoco, a 63-year-old bus driver, was among those in line outside a polling station in a seaside area of Panama City. He said he planned to vote for Mulino, because it was the closest thing he could get to

closest thing he could get to Martinelli, adding that he earned a decent amount of money under the former president's leadership. "We have problems with health services, education, we have garbage in the streets ... and corruption that never goes away," Tinoco said. "We have money here, this is a country that has lots of wealth, but we need a leader who dedicates himself to the needs of Panama.

German teen surrenders for assault on EU candidate

Berlin (AP): A teenager surrendered to police on Sunday over an attack on a candidate from the party of Chancellor Olaf Scholz that fueled concern about intimidation and violence in the run-up to next month's election for the European Parliament. The 17year-old, accompanied by a parent, turned himself in at a police station in the eastern city of Dresden at 1 a.m., Saxony state police said. "He admitted the act but didn't go beyond that," police spokeswoman Silvaine Reiche said.Matthias Ecke, a candidate for the Social Democrats in the June 9 election, was attacked by four people while putting up posters in Dresden on Friday evening. The party said he was taken to a hospital and required surgery for his injuries.

Trudeau touts Canada as a 'rule-of-law country' after arrest of three Indians

PTI ■ TORONTO

¬anada is a "rule-of-law →country" with a strong and independent justice system and a fundamental commitment to protect its citizens, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has said, a day after three Indian nationals were charged with the murder of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Nijjar, a Canadian citizen, was shot dead outside a gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia, on June 18, 2023.

Karan Brar, 22, Kamalpreet Singh, 22, and Karanpreet Singh, 28, all Indian nationals residing in Edmonton have been charged on Friday with first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

"This is important because Canada is a rule-of-law country with a strong and independent justice system, as well as

a fundamental commitment to protecting all its citizens," Trudeau said about the arrests on Saturday at a Toronto gala celebrating Sikh heritage and culture.

"As the RCMP stated, the investigation remains ongo-ing, as does a separate and distinct investigation not limited to the involvement of the three people arrested yesterday," Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) quoted Trudeau as saying.

He said that many in

Canada's Sikh community are feeling unsafe following Nijjar's killing, adding: "Every Canadian has the fundamental right to live safely and free from discrimination and threats of violence in Canada."

The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September last year

of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of 45-year-old Nijjar, a Khalistan separatist.
India has dismissed

Trudeau's charges as "absurd" and "motivated."

The presence of Sikh separatist groups in Canada has long frustrated India, which had designated Nijjar a "terrorist."After three Indian nationals were arrested in connection with the murder, Police in Canada said they had worked with US law enforcement agencies, without giving additional details. The police suggested more arrests might be coming. Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Assistant Commissioner David Teboul, the force's commander for the Pacific region, said Friday that he wouldn't comment on the alleged links between the three

men arrested and Indian offi-

cials but noted the force is "investigating connections to the government of India."

Meanwhile, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said what is happening in poll-bound Canada over the killing of Nijjar is mostly due to their internal politics and has nothing to do with India.

He said a section of pro-Khalistan people are using Canada's democracy, creating a lobby and have become a vote

The ruling party in Canada has no majority in Parliament and some parties depend on pro-Khalistan leaders, he said. "We have convinced them

several times not to give visa, legitimacy or political space to such people which is causing problems for them (Canada), for us and also for our relationship," Jaishankar said.

Panamanians vote in election dominated by ex-president

AP PANAMA CITY

Panamanians began voting Sunday in an election that has been consumed by unfolding drama surrounding the country's former president, even though he is not on the ballot.

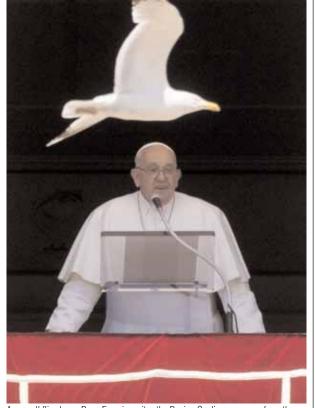
Before the sweltering sun set in, voters in the normally sleepy Central American nation lined up outside of polling stations, set to weigh promises of economic prosperity and migratory crackdowns with a corruption scan-

"Panama's election will be one of the most complex in its modern history. The vote is marked by increased political fragmentation and social discontent under outgoing President Laurentino Cortizo," said Arantza Alonso, senior analyst for the Americas at the risk consulting firm Verisk

Maplecroft before the polling. The presidential race remained in uncertain waters until Friday morning, when Panama's Supreme Court ruled that leading presidential con-tender José Raúl Mulino was permitted to run. It said he was eligible despite allegations that his candidacy wasn't legitimate because he wasn't elected in a primary.

Mulino joined the race late,

replacing former President Ricardo Martinelli as the candidate for the Achieving Goals party. The fiery Martinelli was barred from running in March after he was sentenced to more than 10 years in prison for money laundering. Martinelli has dominated much of the race, campaigning for his for-mer running mate from inside the walls of the Nicaraguan Embassy, where he took refuge in February after receiving political asylum.



A seagull flies by as Pope Francis recites the Regina Coeli noon prayer from the window of his studio overlooking St.Peter's Square, at the Vatican, Sunday. AP/PTI | Feliz, 50 miles (80 kilometers)

Deadly floods ravage southern Brazil: 39 lives lost from the state capital, Porto the National Center for

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Heavy rains in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul killed 39 people, with another 68 still missing, the state civil defence agency said Friday, as record-breaking floods devastated cities and forced thousands to leave their homes. It was the fourth such environmental disaster in a year, following floods in July, September and November 2023 that killed 75 people in total. The flooding statewide has surpassed that seen during a his-toric 1941 deluge, according to the Brazilian Geological Service. In some cities, water levels were at their highest since records began nearly 150 years ago, the agency said. On Thursday, a dam at a hydroelectric plant between the cities

of Bento Goncalves and

Cotipora partially collapsed and entire cities in the Taquari

River valley, like Lajeado and

Estrela, were completely over-

taken by water. In the town of

Alegre, a massively swollen river swept away a bridge that connected it with the neighbouring city of Linha Nova.
Operators reported electricity. communications and water cuts across the state. More than

24,000 people had to leave their homes, according to the civil defence agency. Without internet, telephone service or electricity, residents struggled to provide updates or information to their relatives living in other states. Helicopters flew continually over the cities while stranded families with children awaited rescue on the rooftops. Isolete Neumann, 58, lives in the city of Lajeado in the Taquari River valley and told The Associated Press she has never before seen a scenario like the one she is now experienc-

"People were making barricades in front of hospitals with sand and gravel. It felt like a horror movie," she said by phone. Some people in her region were so desperate, she



A firefighter carries a girl rescued from an area flooded by heavy rains in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul state, Brazil, Saturday.

added, that they threw themselves into the water currents. Neumann's own neighbour-hood wasn't inundated, but has no running water and she hasn't showered since Tuesday. She said she's collecting rainwater in a basin to be able to cook. A clothing store she owns in the

city's central area is flooded, she added. "I don't even know how it must

be. There must be nothing left." The downpour started Monday and is expected to last at least through Saturday, Marcelo Seluchi, chief meteorologist at

public television network Friday.
On Thursday night, Gov.
Eduardo Leite alerted the state's
population — known as gau-

Monitoring and Alerts of

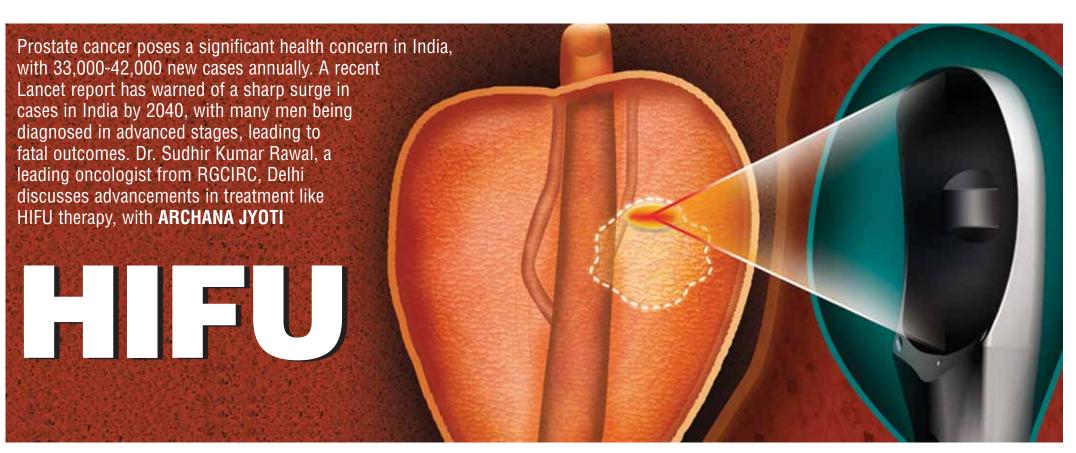
Natural Disasters, told Brazil's

chos — about the persistence of rains and floods. The situation was expected to worsen in Porto Alegre, he said.

"As a human being, I am devastated inside, just like every gaucho is," he said. "But as governor, I am here steadfast and I guarantee that we will not falter. We are doing everything with focus, attention, disci-pline, and outrage, to ensure that everything within our reach is done."

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva acknowledged the flood victims at a press conference on Friday alongside Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida in

The first words from Minister Fumio Kishida in the meeting we held were of solidarity with the people of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, who are victims by one of the largest floods we have ever known. Never before in the history of Brazil had there been such a quantity of rain in one single location," Lula said. Weather across South America is affected by the climate phenomenon El Niño, a periodic, naturally occurring event that warms surface waters in the Equatorial Pacific region. In Brazil, El Niño has historically caused droughts in the north and intense rainfall in the south. This year, the impacts of El Niño have been particularly dramatic, with a historic drought in the Amazon. Scientists say extreme weather is happening more frequently due to human-caused climate change. Karina Lima, a 36-year-old scientist and PhD candidate in climatology at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, told The Associated Press that the state is located in a region with certain characteristics that amplify El Niño's destructive poten-



Dr Rawal, kindly provide us an overview of prostate cancer and its prevalence in India vis-à-vis

rostate cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in men. As per the GLOBOCON report on prostate cancer, an estimated 1.4 million diagnoses and 375,000 deaths worldwide in 2020. The incidence is low in Eastern and South-Central Asia but rising. In India, the projected number of cases for 2020 was 51,979and the numbers are only increasing. It is pertinent to note that there is an underestimation of incidence in India due to a lack of a population-based cancer registry, underreporting, and social stigma of cancer detection among

The prevalence rate of prostate cancer is higher in certain geographies within the country. As per the latest ICMR data Delhi-NCR reported the highest incidence rate of over 11.8 cases/million adults registered followed by Kamrup region of Assam with 10 cases/million adults and Thiruvananthapuram with 9 cases/million adults. Unfortunately, there is no

conclusive data that could support specific preventive or dietary measures that reduce the risk of developing prostate cancer. In such circumstances, individuals should immediately reach out to a urologist in case of any urinary problem and those diagnosis and staging of above 50 years of age should undertake Blood Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA)

cancer, particularly in the context of India?

Prostate cancer is directly linked



DR. (PROF) SUDHIR KUMAR RAWAL Medical Director and Chief of Genito Uro Oncology Services, Super Specialty Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute and Research Centre (RGCIRC), Delhi.

with genetic mutation. So, it can be hereditary as well as familial. In different studies association of different environmental and dietary factors have been found prostate cancer. Hypertension, obesity, and hypercholesterolemia factors have increased risk. Dietary factors like high alcohol intake, coffee, fried fatty food, red meat as well as processed meat have been linked with increased association of prostate cancer. However, no conclusive data exist that could support specific preventive or dietary measures that can reduce the risk of developing prostate cancer.

prostate cancer in your prac Prostate cancer is usually suspected when a patient presents with urinary symptoms and has raised PSA (Prostate-specific What are some of the key risk antigen) or abnormal digital factors associated with prostate rectal examination. With increasing awareness, many asymptomatic people regularly do

routine health checkups. Prostate cancer diagnosis requires prostate biopsy. We have the facility of the latest prostate biopsy techniques including the most precise MRI fusion transperineal biopsy (Artemis System). For local staging biparametric/multiparametric

What treatment options are available for patients with prostate cancer, and how do you decide on the most appropriate for individual approach

MRI. Metastatic staging requires

a PSMA PET CT scan.

patients?

We have all possible treatment options for various stages of prostate cancer. We offer robotic radical prostatectomy/ High intensity-focused ultrasound ablation/ Hormonal therapy + radiotherapy for localized prostate cancer. For metastatic prostate cancer, treatment is hormonal therapy along with antiandrogens chemotherapy or radionuclide therapy. We are currently running a few trials for metastatic prostate cancer. The appropriate approach is individualistic for each patient. It depends on the patient's age, physical performance status, associated comorbid conditions, and disease stage. We always make shared decisions with patients after discussing the merits and demerits of each **How do you approach the** therapy option suitable for them.

> there any emerging trends or advancements in prostate cancer treatment that you find particularly promising?

With the evolution of medical sciences, there are rapid advancements in prostate cancer treatment in India. There are advancements blood PSA testing as part of incorporation of genetic testing

SYMPTOMS

Prostate cancer may cause no signs or symptoms in its early stages.

More advanced prostate cancer may cause signs and symptoms

Trouble urinating

Decreased force in the stream of

Blood in the urine Blood in the semen

Bone pain

Losing weight without trying Erectile dysfunction

and related therapy, robotic technologies, more targeted radiation therapy, non-invasive treatment like ĤÍFU, availability of newer antiandrogens, oral hormonal agents, and genedirectedradionuclide therapy. I am hopeful for new gene-directed therapy that can increase the survival of patients with metastatic disease.

Can you provide an overview of what HIFU (High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound) treatment entails and how it works as a treatment option for prostate cancer?

HIFU works by treating only the portion of the organ affected by cancer with a safe margin while sparing the remaining normal healthy tissue. It precisely delivers ultrasound waves inside the prostate. Ultrasound energy gets converted into thermal energy inside the prostate. Thus, cancer cells get killed by heat. HIFU is typically used as a treatment option for localized prostate cancer. It is also used as a palliative therapy option after the failure of hormonal therapy and radiation therapy

What are the typical eligibility criteria for patients considering HIFU treatment for prostate cancer?

HIFU is a treatment option for a select group of prostate cancer patients. Although there are no strict criteria, it is best suited for low-risk and intermediate-risk prostate cancer patients. Typically, it is done for patients whose PSA is less than 20 ng/ml, Gleason score £ 7, disease has not spread outside the outline of the prostate.

What are the potential benefits of HIFU compared to traditional treatment options such as surgery or radiation therapy? HIFU therapy has various advantages over surgery and radiation therapy:

• Usually done as a daycare procedure

Does not require any skin cuts /incisions

Relatively painless procedure Recovery is usually quick and most men return to their normal activities within twothree weeks.

Treats the small cancer areas with little damage to nearby tissue, nerves and muscles .Consequently the rates of urinary leakage and erectile dysfunction are significantly lower than radical treatments

Even after recurrence, the patient remains eligible for repeat sessions of focal therapy other options (surgery/radiation)

What are the potential risks and side effects associated with it?

HIFU is a relatively safe procedure and has no significant risks associated with it. Longterm cancer survival data(after 10 years) is not yet available for focal therapy. About 20-30% of patients may need a second session of

focal therapy for recurrent cancer. Less than 1 % ofpatients may develop a hole between the rectum and the urinary passage (termed a rectourethral fistula). This may need urethral catheter placement for a few months or surgical repair in case it does not

heal on its own.

Can HIFU be used as a primary treatment for localized prostate cancer, or is it typically recommended as a salvage therapy after other treatments have failed?

HIFU is typically used as treatment for localised prostate cancer. It is also used as salvage therapy after the failure of hormonal and radiation therapy.

Are there any long-term considerations or follow-up care that patients should be aware of undergoing HIFU after treatment?

Follow-up is very important after HIFU like any other intervention. After HIFU, the patient's PSA level is expected to fall and then remain low. PSA testing is performed at 3-6 monthly intervals for the first few years after the procedure. The Urologist may perform imaging in the form of mpMRI at frequent intervals to track the response of the lesion to treatment, and the development of new lesions in the treated area or elsewhere in the prostate. A rising PSA may indicate that the prostate cancer has returned

Finally, what advice would you offer to men regarding prostate cancer prevention and early detection?

If you feel any urinary problems, immediately visit a urologist to get evaluated. Start blood PSA screening from 50 years of age.

AIIMS Resident Doctors' annual academic conclave held

 $\begin{array}{ccc} Resident & \text{Doctors} \\ Association \text{ (RDA) of the} \\ \text{All India Institute of Medical} \end{array}$ Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi, hosted its annual academic conclave, RDACON 2024, bringing together an assembly of professionals in healthcare, health technology, and artificial intelligence.

Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud who graced the occasion, in his address emphasized the essential collaboration between the medical and legal professions, underlining complementary roles in society.

He also spoke on the rights of the LGBTQ community, sharing personal anecdotes and stressed on the importance of inclusivity in healthcare. He also emphasized the crucial role that medical professionals play in shaping a more equitable

The conclave commenced with poster and oral presentations by AIIMS residents and researchers, showcasing the latest advancements in medicine and research. The RDA AIIMS said it remains committed to fostering collaboration, innovation, and inclusivity in healthcare, and looks forward to building on the success of RDACON 2024 in future editions.

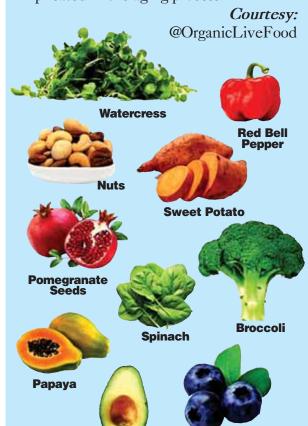
Kids and adolescents find joy in learning new words: Study

Anew research from Royal Holloway University, led by Professor Saloni Krishnan, suggests that children and adolescents, aged 10 to 18, derive intrinsic joy from learning new words. The involved participants who deduced word meanings from sentence contexts across 40 trials.

Notably, participants reported positive emotions happiness excitement during word acquisition, highlighting the motivational learning. published findings, Developmental Science, underscore the importance of leveraging these emotional rewards enhance educational particularly neurodivergent populations like children with dyslexia.

TOP 10 ANTI-AGING FOODS

Anti-aging foods and intermittent fasting could also promote metabolic health by improving insulin sensitivity, reducing inflammation, and enhancing mitochondrial function, which are all implicated in the aging process.



CHHAYA: A contraceptive beyond family planning

Introduction of the CHHAYA pill, approved by the Government, marks a significant step in expanding contraceptive options for women, enhancing accessibility and reproductive autonomy, says DR ASHWINI ANIL KUMAR SIRAPANASETTY

The Government's approval of new **I** contraceptive methods, particularly the non-hormonal contraceptive pill Centchroman, marks a pivotal moment in advancing women's reproductive health rights. Centchroman, known as "Chhaya" in public health facilities, offers women a hormone-free contraceptive option, expanding their choices and accessibility to family planning services. It is available in the market as a "SAHELI" tablet.

Who can use it?

- Can be safely used by all women once it is confirmed that they are not pregnant.
- Can be used by women of any age, including those who are unmarried or who do not have children. Women who had side effects with
- Mala-N/Mala-D can also opt for It can be used by postpartum
- women who are breastfeeding as soon as they feel comfortable after delivery but before 4 weeks. Centchroman does not affect the quantity, quality and composition of breast milk.

BENEFITS

Blueberries

- It causes less bleeding during the monthly period, and also makes the interval between two menstrual cycles longer. This is beneficial for anaemic women.
- Can be adopted as postpartum (earlier than 4 weeks of delivery) or post-abortion contraception



- (within 7 days of completion of abortion).
- It does not impact the quality or quantity of breast milk. Woman can become pregnant
- immediately after discontinuing the method. who Women
- recommended to use hormonal methods can use this method. No interference with sexual

intercourse/ pleasure.

LIMITATIONS

- It does not protect from HIV and RTI/STI.
- Every client should be screened by a trained provider before starting Centchroman, just like other oral

Where can a woman get it and how it should be taken?

It is available in all public health facilities. It is also part of the

ASHA kit. However, the first dose can be provided only after proper screening at a health facility by a trained provider (doctor, CHO, SN, LHV, ANM).

The non-hormonal contraceptive comes in a strip of 8 tablets. To begin the use of Chhaya, the woman is advised to take the first pill on the first day of the period (which is the first day of bleeding) and the second pill three days later (on the 4th day of bleeding).

This pattern of days are repeated through the first 3 months. Starting from the fourth month, the pill is to be taken once a week on the first pill day and should be continued on the weekly schedule regardless of her menstrual cycle.

What in case of 'missed pills'?

You should tell the woman that if she forgets to take the pill, she should take the missed pill as soon as she



DR ASHWINI ANIL KUMAR SIRAPANASETTY Obstetrics/ Gynecologist Surgeon and Senior Counsellor in Army Wives Welfare Association

remembers that it has been missed. If she misses taking the tablet by 1-2 days (less than 7 days), she should

take the missed pill as soon as she remembers and continue the normal schedule. In addition, she should use a backup method like a condom till the next period, just to ensure complete protection.

If she forgets to take pills for more than 7 days, then the current pack should be discarded, condoms should be used till she has her monthly bleeding and then she should start taking a new pack like a new user; that is, twice a week for the first 3 months followed by once a week thereafter.

Unlike traditional contraceptive pills, Centchroman does not contain hormones, making it suitable for women of all ages and reproductive stages. This inclusivity is particularly

significant as it accommodates unmarried women and those without children, empowering them to take control of their reproductive decisions.

Centchroman's safety profile further enhances its appeal. Women who have experienced adverse effects with other contraceptive methods, such as hormonal pills, can turn to Centchroman without concerns about hormonal side effects. Moreover, its compatibility with breastfeeding ensures that women can use it without compromising their lactation or the health of their

newborns. Needless to say Centchroman's reflects India's introduction commitment to promoting reproductive rights and gender equality. By offering women a safe, effective, and accessible contraceptive option, government aims to empower women to make informed choices about their reproductive health. Moreover, it underscores the government's recognition of family planning as a fundamental human right and a key driver of social and economic development.

Moving forward, continued efforts to raise awareness about Centchroman and other contraceptive options will be crucial. Comprehensive sexual and reproductive health education programs can help dispel myths and misconceptions surrounding contraception while empowering women to make informed decisions about their bodies and futures.

Narine stars as KKR humble | Jadeja's heroics propel CSK to 28-run win over PBKS LSG, go to top of table

PTI LUCKNOW

Sunil Narine's sparkling fifty and a collective effort by the bowlers fashioned Kolkata Knight Riders' 98-run win over Lucknow Super Giants in the IPL here on Sunday.

Deciding to bowl first didn't go as per plan for LSG as KKR became the first team to cross the 200-run mark at the Ekana stadium.

Proving his worth with the willow once again, Narine (81 off 38 balls) went on a sixhitting spree, blasting seven maximums and six fours to take the visitors to 235/6.

Chasing an imposing total, LSG batters had to go from the word go but the hosts found it hard to get the big shots and were eventually bundled out for 137 in 16.1

Within the first 10 overs, LSG had lost half the side including skipper KL Rahul (25), Arshin Kulkarni (9), Deepak Hooda (5) and big hitters Marcus Stoinis (36) and Nicholas Pooran (10).

Ashton Turner hit some lusty blows and looked in mood to showcase his batting prowess but the Australian was supremely unlucky as an inside edge deflected off his with Varun

Chakravarthy completing a caught and bowled. With the win KKR moved to the top of the table. They have 16 points, the same as Rajasthan Royals but have



the fifth spot with 12 points from 11 games. Their Net Run Rate also took a massive hit going down from 0.094 to -0.371.

Earlier, the in-form Narine, who was dropped twice in the space of two balls, smoked five boundaries in five balls, setting the tone for the KKR innings. First, he hammered back-to-back fours off Naveen-ul-Haq in the last two balls of the third over. He then attacked the offside, hitting three boundaries on the trot off Mohsin Khan in the fourth over.

Narine and Phil Salt (32) gave played one game more. the two-time champions the LSG, on the other hand, explosive start they have

Together they put up a quick 61-run stand before Naveenul Haq took the pace off the ball to send the Englishman

packing. Medium pacer Yash Thakur then stemmed the flow of runs in the final over of the powerplay, giving away only two runs as KKR reached However, 70/1. unperturbed Narine

continued his onslaught and brought up his fifty off 27 deliveries with a cheeky late dab that sent the ball rolling past short third. He took a particular liking to Marcus Stoinis, sending the ball over the fence three times in the 11th over. But Ravi Bishnoi, dropped out of the top four to come to expect from the duo. on whose bowling Narine was

dropped twice before, was third time lucky as he put an end to the all-rounder's spectacular innings.

The LSG bowlers were able to

rein in the KKR batters as they kept taking wickets. Naveen-ul Haq got rid of Andre Russell (12) before Yudhvir Singh, who came as a concussion sub for Mohsin Khan, picked up young Angkrish Raghuvanshi's (32)

wicket in the next over. The Afghan pacer swung back into action to account for the big-hitting Rinku Singh (16) while Thakur removed Shreyas Iyer (23). But Ramandeep Singh's unbeaten 25 off 6 balls took KKR past the 230-run mark.

Ravindra Jadeja orchestrated masterclass all-round show as Chennai Super Kings regained their winning touch with a comprehensive 28-run win over Punjab Kings in a low-scoring IPL fixture here on Sunday.

Wily leg-spinner Rahul Chahar (3/23) and seamer Harshal Patel (3/24) put up a spirited show but Jadeja made a crucial 43 that came off just 26 balls to prop CSK to a par 167/9 after they were sent in to bat by Sam Curran.

The left-arm spinner then returned to grab three for 20 in four overs in the crucial middle-over phase to derail PBKS' chase, which ended at 139 for nine.

Comeback pacer Tushar Deshpande (2/35) and impact sub Simarjeet Singh (2/16) also

featured among wickets.
Mitchell Santner, who was playing his first match of the season, was brilliant during his tidy 1/10 from three overs.

Eyeing to secure a sixth successive win over CSK in the IPL. PBKS found themselves at 78 for seven against Jadeja's matchturning spell.

Having lost three of their last four matches, the five-time champions CSK thus returned to winning ways and jumped to third place in the standings. CSK now have 12 points with three more matches left to secure their playoff spot. PBKS – eight points from 11 matches – slumped to eighth

spot after enduring their seventh loss of the season. Kiwi left-arm spinner Santner set it up early for CSK. Bowling with the new ball, he gave away just four runs from his two overs and took the key wicket of Shashank Singh (27; 20b,

4x4) against the run of play.

Deshpande inflicted a twin blow, cleaning up Jonny Bairstow (7) and Rilee Rossouw (0) in three balls. catch.

PBKS found some rhythm going as Prabhsimran Singh and the in-form Shashank took the attack to CSK bowlers and collected 31 runs to end the power play on a high.

Prabhsimran smashed Richard Gleeson for one four and a six in a 15-run over, while Prabhsimran took on Deshpande, smacking him for

two fours and one six.
It seemed a one-way traffic for the home side before Santner cleverly varied his pace as Shashank holed out to long-on. Cruising in top gear at 62/2, PBKS went on to lose half of their side in 9.4 overs.

It brought an end to a rollicking 53-run partnership from 36 balls between Shashank and Prabhsimran. Jadeja soon opened his account dismissing Prabhsimran.

Prabhsimran was looking at ease but the opener was enticed by Iadeja's full ball at the stump. The right-hander looked to go inside out but lack of pace

meant he could not clear the long-off where substitute fielder Sameer Rizvi took an easy

Simarjeet chipped in with a wicket in his first over, dismissing Jitesh Sharma for a first-ball duck. Jadeja gave away just three runs in his next over, and completed a decisive spell ousting Curran (7) and the in-form Ashutosh Sharma (3) in the 13th over.

As runs dried up, Curran started to feel the heat and took on Jadeja's widish delivery but he slapped it straight to Santner at long-off.

Ashutosh then perished after mistiming his big hoick to be caught by Simarjeet at thirdman to give Jadeja a three-for. Earlier, at 60/1 in Power Play, CSK were going great guns with skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad (32) and Daryl Mitchell in the middle during an entertaining 57-run partnership when Chahar triggered a collapse taking two wickets in two balls. The partnership was halted as CSK went on to lose three wickets in 11 balls with Harshal

Mitchell (30; 19b, 2x4, 1x6) in a controversial DRS call. Harshal returned at the death to dismiss Shardul Thakur (17) and MS Dhoni for a golden duck as CSK's hopes for a

revival went up in smoke. First, he cleaned up Thakur with a slower off-cutter as the CSK fans in Dharamsala waited for yet another piece of Dhoni magic with eight balls to

But the Yellow Army left in disbelief as the talismanic Dhoni departed in the very first ball, unable to counter Harshal's impeccably executed slow vorker.

With no time to bring his bat down, Dhoni's off-stump was knocked over.

Punjab kept chipping away at wickets but it was Jadeja who remained firm, quietly going about his ways picking the odd boundaries and sixes to take them to a par-score.

After a silent penultimate over that yielded just two runs for two wickets, Jadeja held his nerves and took on Arshdeep in the final over hitting him for taking the dangerous-looking a boundary and a six.

clash against frail MI eye consistency in must win IPL

PTI MUMBAI

confident Sunrisers Hyderabad will look to produce a dominant show against a frail Mumbai Indians outfit and move up in the Indian Premier League points table when the two teams clash here on Monday. Placed fourth in the IPL points table with 12 points in 0 matches with six wins and four losses, SRH will be with 10 points) and a done several times this game in which their bowlers which takes a significant With only three wins in 11 world number 1 T20 batter facing ever since this IPL desperate to produce an all- resurgent Delhi Capitals (6th year. pulled off a thrilling win. amount of pressure off the key matches, MI's challenge is all Suryakumar would be eyeing edition got underway.

improvements especially in their bowling department.

The Pat Cummins-led side is in the midst of an intense battle between multiple teams who are bidding for spots in the final four, with Rajasthan Royals (16 points), Kolkata Knight Riders (14 points) and Lucknow Super Giants (12 points) placed above SRH. hennai Super Kings (5

round show and make with 10 points) are breathing down SRH's neck, a scenario that would force the 2016 winners to shrug off any rust and get ready for an intense

mid-table battle. If a two-paced pitch at the Wankhede Stadium for the previous clash against KKR was an aberration, the freeflowing SRH batters would look to make merry and pile up a huge score as they have

The pitches here generally are batting-friendly and short boundary lengths at this venue make scores in excess of 200 a norm, but the MI-KKR contest played out on a sluggish surface last Friday challenged the batters to dig

SRH would be high on confidence having pipped the table-toppers RR by just one eir previous outing a run in th

Travis Head (396 runs), Abhishek Sharma (315) and Heinrich Klaasen (337) remain the enforcers in SRH's batting but South African Aiden Markram would be keen to make a big score of his own, having had a mixed run so far.

Nitish Kumar Reddy (219 runs) has emerged as one of the most promising players for in last few

T Natarajan's (15 wickets) accuracy would be handy for SRH as the left-arm pacer is chasing Mumbai Indians' Jasprit Bumrah (17) for the purple cap.

Five-time winners Mumbai slipped to the bottom of the pool again when Royal Challengers Bengaluru trumped Gujarat Titans on Saturday night

but over and there is only "pride and name" left to play for by their own admission. However, all is not lost as MI's key India players for the upcoming T20 World Cup, Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav and Hardik Pandya would remain in focus for

nany big scores whereas the

their individual form.

consistency after a fine halfcentury against KKR a few nights ago.

India vice-captain Pandya has being consistently on the receiving end due to his ordinary form with both bat and ball and also his on-field decisions as MI skipper.

The all-rounder, however, Rohit's all-out aggressive would be keen to make approach has not yielded amends and put an end to the criticism that he has been

OTHER SPORTS

Indian men's 4x400m team fails to finish World Relays heat

PTI ■ NASSAU (BAHAMAS)

Second leg runner Rajesh Ramesh pulled out due to cramps as the Indian men's 4x400m team failed to finish its heat race at the World Athletics Relays here on Sunday, during round one of Paris Olympics

qualifications.
The Indian quartet of Muhammed Anas Yahiya, Rajesh Ramesh, Muhammed Ajmal and Amoj Jacob was hoping to book a Paris ticket with a top-two finish in heat number four. but in a utter heartbreak, Ramesh left the race midway while clutching his left leg. Anas had already run the first

leg. "The men's 4x400m relay team had a good start. Muhammad Anas clocked 45.93 seconds in the first leg, but the second runner -- Rajesh Ramesh -- fell down due to cramps in leg muscles at

the first bend," Athletics Federation of India (AFI) said in a statement. Ramesh had run the mixed 4x400m

race three hours before the men's India will have another chance on Monday during round two of Olympics qualifications where all the other teams which finished outside top-two in their respective heats on Sunday will try their luck for another

shot at the Paris Games. The teams are

expected to be divided into three heats

and top two from each of them will

book Paris ticket. The same quartet had set an Asian record of 2 minutes and 59.05 seconds at the 2023 Budapest World Championships. India had failed to get past the heat round in the Tokyo Olympics.



mixed 4x400m relays on the first day India also failed to make the Paris of qualifications. Both the Indian Olympics cut in women's 4x400m and teams of mixed 4x400m and women's

4x400m will have to wait for Monday's round two of Olympics qualifications. In the mixed 4x400m event, the Indian

quartet of Rajesh Ramesh, Rupal Chaudhary, Avinash Krishna Kumar and Jyothika Sri Dandi ran a poor race to finish sixth in heat number two with a time of 3 minutes and 20.36 seconds.

Later, the Indian quartet of Vithya Ramraj, M R Poovamma, Jyothika Śri Dandi and Subha Venkatesan finished fifth in heat number one with a time of 3 minutes and 29.74 seconds.

The top two teams in each of the four heat races here qualify for the Paris Olympics to be held from July 16 to August 11. The remaining teams in all the heats will compete again on Monday in another qualification round for another six Paris Olympics spots.
The format is the same for all the five

relay races -- men's and women's 4x100m, men's and women's 4x400m and mixed 4x400m -- being held here.

Ronaldo scores his 4th hat-trick of Saudi Pro League season

AP ■ RIYADH

Cristiano Ronaldo scored his fourth hat trick of the Saudi Pro League season as Al-Nassr thrashed Al-Wehda 6-0. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner now has 32 league goals this season, two short of Abderrazak Hamdallah's record tally of 34 back in the 2018-19 campaign, with four games still to

Ronaldo opened the scoring in Rivadh in the fifth minute after intercepting a poor clearance from goalkeeper Munir Mohamedi. Seven minutes later, the former Real Madrid and Manchester United star grabbed his second, heading home a cross from Marcelo Brozovic. Early in the second half, Ronaldo's shot from just inside the area secured his hat trick in Al-Nassr's seventh successive win. His fellow Portuguese star Otavio also scored

as did Senegal forward Sadio Mane and Mohammed Al-Fatil.

Terstappen ties Prost's record with 6th pole winning run to open an F

AP ■ MIAMI GARDENS

 $\underset{closer}{M^{ax}} \ \overset{Verstappen}{\text{to}} \ \overset{inched}{\text{a}} \ \overset{third}{\text{the}}$ Miami Grand Prix by continuing his long domination of Formula 1

qualifying.
The three-time reigning F1 champion won his seventh consecutive pole, but first at spot in the first two races around Hard Rock Stadium, yet still won them both.
"I don't know what it is, it going."

every single year we come here I find it extremely difficult to be consistent with the car feeling, with the tire feeling over one lap," Verstappen said. "I think we did OK. It's not the most enjoyable lap of my career, but we're on pole and that's the most important."

The pole-winning run tied Verstappen with Alain Prost Miami, where Verstappen in opening the season with failed to earn the top starting six consecutive poles. Prost did it in 1993.

"Good start," Verstappen radioed his team. "Let's keep



Verstappen opened Saturday with a win in the sprint race and ended the day with his 38th career pole. The Red Bull driver turned a lap at 1 minute, 27.241 seconds to best the Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz Jr. And will lead the field to green on Sunday for the first of F1's three races this year in the United States. Verstappen has won four of

the first five F1 races this season. Sergio Perez, Verstappen's

teammate at Red Bull, qualified fourth and was

followed by McLaren teammates Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri, who were likely disappointed after upgrades brought to Miami has the team hoping to move closer to competition with Red Bull and Ferrari. Mercedes drivers George

Russell and Lewis Hamilton qualified sixth and seventh and were followed by Nico Hülkenberg of Haas and Yuki Tsunoda of Red Bull's iunior team.

It was a terrible session for Tsunoda teammate Daniel Ricciardo, who was having a

decent weekend until he failed to advance out of the first qualifying group. Ricciardo was strong in Friday qualifying for the sprint race and finished fourth in the warm-up race Saturday.

He qualified 18th in the 20driver field but will start last because he must serve a three-spot grid penalty earned in F1's last outing, in China.

It was also a poor qualifying day for American driver Logan Sargeant of Pompano Beach. At his home track,

and while his job with Williams is in clear jeopardy, Sargeant qualified 17th. "Are we in? Please tell me we are in," he radioed his team in hopes he'd advanced out of

the first group. When told he was eliminated, the 23-yearold replied, "that's a shame. Kevin Magnussen of Haas is under FIA investigation for unsportsmanlike behavior for how he raced earlier Saturday in the sprint race. Magnussen was penalized three times in the sprint race and said after that all were

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