DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR

RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH

Late City Vol.160 Issue 129 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Published From

OPINION 6

REGIME CHANGE ON CARDS IN NEPAL?

WORLD 8

PRO-PALESTINIAN PROTESTS **DWINDLE ON CAMPUSES**

LUCKNOW, TUESDAY MAY 14, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

Established 1864 the pione

FOCUS ON KL RAHUL AS LSG FACE DC 12 SPORTS

www.dailypioneer.com

Voter fatigue deepens in Phase IV

OTER TURNOUT OVER 63 PER CENT IN PHASE IV POLLS SRINAGAR IMPROVES THREE DECADES VOTERS SCORE

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

intense voters' awareness programmes for increasing the turnout remained futile as the phase four general elections on Monday saw the average plummeting to over 63 per cent till 8.30 pm on Monday. The voter turnout in the first three phases was 66.14 per cent, 66.71 per cent and 65.68

per cent, respectively.

Interestingly the good news came in from Jammu and Kashmir which saw voting after abrogation of Article 370. Srinagar recorded 36.88 per cent voter average. This figure is higher than Srinagar's turnout in 2019 when it saw a turnout of 14.43 per cent. The figures for 2014, 2009, 2004 and 1999 are 25.86 per cent, 25.55 per cent, 18.57 per cent and 11.93 per cent respectively.

Elections were held in 96 constituencies spread over 10 violence between Trinamool Congress and BJP workers in West Bengal, while YSRCP and TDP cadres came to blows at multiple locations in Andhra Pradesh as well as reports of poll boycott in



Voters display identity cards while standing in queue to cast their votes during the phase IV of general elections, in Berhampur, Odisha, on Monday

EVMs has reports of malfunctioning at some booths in West Bengal and States and UTs amid incidents Odisha. This schedule was a critical round for the turnout in Indore Congress and not much for the BIP.

According to the Election Commission, polling was held smoothly and peacefully. With the fourth phase, the polling for the 379 out of 543

been Interestingly, amid Congress demand to vote for NOTA, voter was recorded 56.53 per cent, lowest in Madhya Pradesh where the Congress

nominated candidate withdrew from the polls. 52.93per cent, Odisha West Bengal witnessed over 63.85 per cent, Telangana some Uttar Pradesh villages. polling for the 379 out of 543 West Bengal witnessed over 63.85 per cent, Telangana Besides, there were also parliamentary constituencies 76.02 per cent turnout, the 61.54 per cent and Uttar

completed. highest among all States amid the polling. Among other States, Pradesh recorded 68.16 per cent polling, Bihar 55.92 per cent 55.92 per cent, Jharkhand 63.50 per cent, Madhya Pradesh 68.90 per Maharashtra cent.

Pradesh 58 per cent. In Telangana, Hyderabad which is considered a stronghold of Asaduddin Owaisi, witnessed 39.17 per cent polling which is lowest in the State.

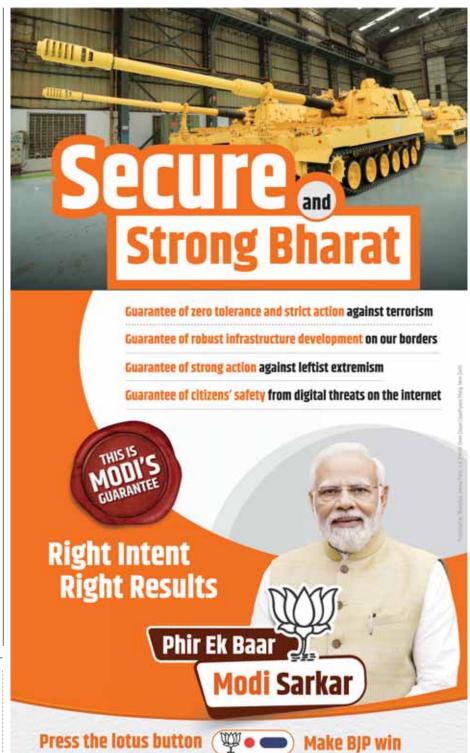
In Bengal, where violence marred previous rounds of voting, a Trinamool Congress worker was killed in a crude bomb attack. The incident took place in the Bolpur Lok Sabha constituency, mere hours before polling was

scheduled to begin.

Amid claims of West Bengal
Chief Electoral Officer that voting has been peaceful so far, clashes broke out between supporters of TMC and BJP in Monteswar's Susunia area of Bardhaman-Durgapur Lok Sabha seat around noon, as BIP candidate Dilip Ghosh was on his way to a polling booth following complaints of booth jamming. Ghosh was allegedly heckled by the TMC activists, sources claimed.

BJP candidate in Telangana's Hyderabad Lok Sabha seat K Madhavi Latha was booked by election authorities after a video clip surfaced online in which she was purportedly seen asking burqa-clad women voters to show their faces to compare with the photo identity cards.

Continued on Page 8



THE PIONEER REPORTS FROM **GROUND ZERO**

WEST BENGAL

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Stray incidents of violence marked the fourth-phase polling in West Bengal's eight constituencies that went to the polls on Monday, with a little more than 75 per cent voter turnout reported by the Flection Commission of India. The EC said the polling percentage could increase by a few percentage points in the final count.
While Behrampore — from where Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury is contesting against TMC's Yusuf Pathan — Krishnagar, Ranaghat and Burdwan East was comparatively peaceful with a couple of incidents of "stick-fighting" being recorded from Krishnagar. Some areas of Burdwan-Durgapur seat from where former BJP State president Dilip Ghosh is contesting against TMC's Kirti Azad witnessed sporadic violence, sources said. A Trinamool Congress supporter at Monteshwar in Burrdwan-Durgapur seat was hurt after he was allegedly beaten up by the Central forces guarding the booth.

A similar incident took place at Burdwan city when Ghosh rushed to a polling booth hearing that the booth had been blocked by the TMC men. After he was returning from the area, local TMC workers resorted to brickbatting. In the melee the back windshield of one of the vehicles in his convoy got smashed and a CAPF jawan sustained injuries, sources said. He was rushed to the hospital.

"The TMC goons do it every year ... they capture booths and chase away voters ... they do not allow people to



vote year after year ... as they are being stopped from doing so this year they are getting hostile," Ghosh said.

At Tehatta in Krishnagar, the BJP men fought with their TMC counterparts with bamboos, in which several saffron workers were injured. Elsewhere a CPI(M) worker got a fractured forehead in a clash with TMC men, sources said. Reports from Palashi Para surfaced of defective EVMs where every vote pressed for the TMC was reportedly going to the BJP, sources said. Subsequently the machine was changed but 255 votes that had already been polled would be counted, ECI sources said. A total of 1,45,30,017 voters were eligible to exercise their franchise in 15,507 polling stations. A total of 75.66 per cent voters exercised their franchise till 5 pm. According to latest reports while Bolpur Lok Sabha constituency registered 77.77 per cent, neighbouring Birbhum saw 75.45 per cent voter

MAHARASHTRA

TN RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

Amid a complaint by the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) about the alleged use of money to "purchase" votes in three constituencies, an average 52.75 per ent of 2.28 crore voters exercise their franchise till 5 pm in eleven Lok Sabha constituencies in the fourth phase of polls held on Monday. Except that the tribal-dominated

constituency of Nandurbar constituencies in north Maharashtra Nandurbar witnessed 60.60 per cent voting till 5 pm, the polling in other ten constituencies ranged from 43.80 per cent to 58.65 per cent, a percentage that was in line with similar pattern of voting witnessed in the first three phases of Lok Sabha polls in the State. Apart from Nandurbar where high polling percentage was expected considering that the constituency had witnessed 66.77 per cent 68.65 per cent polling respectively in 2014 and 2019 polls, the other ten constituencies recorded the following polling percentages till 5 pm: Ahmednagar (52.27), Aurangabad (55.38), Beed (58.37), Jalgaon (51.98), Jalna (59.44), Maval (46.03), Pune (44.90), Raver (56.16), Shirdi(55.27) and Shirur (43.89).

The low polling percentages in constituencies like Pune, Shirur and Maval were a cause for worry for all the political parties.

In a related development, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi leaders made a sensational allegation Continued on Page 8 that large amount of cash were



reportedly being transferred to and fro, ostensibly to buy votes in the Lok

Sabha elections Shiv Sena (UBT) spokesperson Sanjay Raut, NCP (Sharad Pawar) MLA Rohit R Pawar and Congress MLA Ravindra Dhangekar who is contesting from Pune, targeted the ruling BJP-led MahaYuti and alleged that the money might be used to "purchase" votes in Pune, Ahmednagar and Nashik LS Pune, constituencies.

Putting out a purported video of Chief Minister Eknath Shinde alighting from a helicopter in Nashik with two security personnel lugging at least two heavy bags, Raut demanded to know why the CM travelled

with such bulky luggage for just a two-hour long poll campaign trip.
Rohit Pawar posted another video showing bundles of cash lying on a road in the Ahmednagar LS constituency and claimed that it contained 'prasad' for disbursing

among the voters. Continued on Page 8

UTTAR PRADESH

PNS LUCKNOW

A voter turnout of 58.9 per cent was recorded till 6 pm in the 13 Lok Sabha constituencies of Uttar Pradesh where polling was held in the fourth phase of the parliamentary elections on Monday.

The polling commenced at 7 am and

concluded at 6 pm. Uttar Pradesh's Chief Electoral Officer Navdeep Rinwa said here on Monday that 58.9 per cent turnout of voters was recorded by 6 pm. He said the voter turnout marginally would increase after final tabulation of the data which would be available

by Tuesday morning. Polling for the by-election to Dadraul constituency Assembly Shahjahanpur was also held on

Monday. The constituencies where polling was held on Monday included Shahjahanpur, Kheri, Dhaurahra, included Sitapur, Hardoi, Misrikh, Unnao, Farrukhabad, Etawah, Kannauj, Kanpur,

Akbarpur and Bahraich. With the conclusion of the fourth phase of polling, 39 of the State's 80 Lok Sabha constituencies have voted, while polling for the remaining 41 seats will be held in fifth, sixth and seventh phases.

Continued on Page 8

BIHAR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA

Over 54 per cent of around 95 lakh voters in five Lok Sabha constituencies in Bihar exercised their franchise till 5 pm on Monday, the officials said. Voting held was

Begusarai, Ujiarpur, Samastipur, Munger Darbhanga and

constituencies in the fourth phase of the Lok Sabha elections.

Union Minister Giriraj Singh is seeking re-election from Begusarai where his primary opponent is CPI's Awadhesh Rai.

Singh had defeated former JNU Students' Union president Kanhaiya Kumar in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls in the same seat.

In Ujiarpur, which has the lowest number of voters at 17.48 lakh but hosts the maximum of 13 candidates, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai aims for a third consecutive term. His principal rival is Alok Mehta, a senior RJD leader and a former State

Minister. Samastipur, formerly known as Rosera, presents a battleground for two debutants — Congress' Sunny Hazari and Shambhavi Choudhary of LJP (Ram Vilas) - both offspring of senior JD(U) leaders and Ministers in the Nitish Kumar Cabinet.

Continued on Page 8

Modi shows the road to 2024 conquest

RAMESH K SINGH WARANASI

 $T^{\text{he ancient holy city of Kashi}}_{\text{witnessed a sea of crowds on}}$ the five-kilometre-long route from Malviya statue near Banaras Hindu University main gate (Lanka) to Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham, parallel to river Ganga, during the roadshow of Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Monday evening, a day prior to his nomination from Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency, seeking a hat-trick of victories as a Bharatiya Janata Party candidate.

Modi reached Malviya statue around 5 pm as his helicopter landed at the BHU helipad. Attired in saffron kurta and a white half jacket, Modi paid floral tributes with folded hands to BHU founder Bharat Ratna Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and then, responding to

the cheers of followers present in thousands, he along with UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and BJP state president Bhupendra Chaudhary took out his roadshow almost from the same route as it was taken out in 2019, the only difference being the culminating point as this time he went straight to Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham to offer prayers whereas five years ago, Modi had turned right from Godowlia crossing to Dashashwamedh Ghat for Ganga aarti.

turnout.

The roadshow was a reflection of unity in diversity as Banarasis from various regions welcomed the prime minister by presenting their traditional folk dances, wearing traditional costumes. For more than a century, thousands of families of Tamils, Gujaratis, Marathis, Bengalis, Marwaris, Sindhis, Punjabis, Khatris, Biharis,



Nepalese and others are living here and most of them have their separate localities located close to the river Ganga. Realising the attachment of the local people with the river Ganga, when in 2014 Modi began his parliamentary innings from Varanasi he had said 'Maa Ganga ne bulaya hai'. Passing through the densely-populated localities like Saint Ravidas Gate, Assi, Shivala, Sonarpura, Pandey Haveli, Madanpura, Jangambadi, Godowlia and Bansphatak of this ancient city, Modi reached Kashi Vishwanath temple amidst the sound of shehnai, conch shell, drums, damru and many other traditional musical instruments as the

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a road show for Lok Sabha elections people crowded on roadsides and rooftops showered flowers and welcomed him with the slogans of 'Har Har Mahadev', 'Har Har Modi, Ghar Ghar Modi'. At about 100 places, the artistes of different regions presented their folk musical shows to welcome Modi. Throughout the route there was not an inch of space left and due to the heavy rush. It was a tough time for the security personnel to control the crowds despite elaborate arrangements and barricading on roadsides. On the route, the reflection of the rich cultural heritage was also

seen apart from the hoardings of great local personalities. The entire route was flooded with saffron flags.

The atmosphere was festive, showing the unmatched popularity of Modi in his parliamentary constituency.

Achievers say self-study, revision of classroom lessons important

The achievers of CBSE Class 10 and Class 12 were brimming with joy over their impressive percentages.

Naina Bhargava, who secured 96 per cent in Class 12, attributed her success to self-study and diligent revision of class-



NOTICE

By mistake my name has been mentioned in my passport as Mohmmad Adnan but this to inform you that my correct name is MOHD Adnan S/o Riyajuddin and also I lost my passoport some where in gomti nagar R/o-1/944 Vishal khand gomti nagar Lucknow

NOTICE

it is informed that my neme is in my adhaar card,pan card driving Licence and passport written as Pulkit Khattri that is not correct.My correct name is Pulkit Kapoor.Pulkit Kapoor R/o 448/250 Ka/16 Hardoi Road Balak Das Puram, Thakurgani Lucknow.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Mohammad Yusuf to Mohd Yusuf for all future purposess. Which is already mention in my all records- Mohd Yusuf S/o Mohd Aslam R/o H-No-25, Qaziyana khurd,Jayas, Tah-Tilloi, District-Amethi Uttar Pradesh.

NOTICE

NASRA PRAVEEN to NASRA PARVEEN. In future I Shall be known as NASRA PARVEEN. NASRA PARVEEN W/o Mahtab Alam 177/122A, Mehdauri Gaon, Teliyarganj, Prayagraj

NOTICE

I have changed my daughter's name from RUBA PRAVEEN to RUBA PARVEEN. In future she Shall be known as RUBA PARVEEN. NASRA PARVEEN W/o Mahtab Alam 177/122A, Mehdauri Gaon, Teliyarganj, Prayagraj

NOTICE

I have changed my son's name from ALBAB AHMAD to ALBAB ALAM. In future he Shall be known as ALBAB ALAM. NASRA PARVEEN W/o Mahtab Alam 177/122A, Mehdauri Gaon, Teliyargani,

NOTICE

I have changed my name from IMMAMUDDIN IMMAMUDDIN AHAMAD. In future I Shall be known as IMMAMUDDIN AHAMAD. IMMAMUDDIN AHAMAD S/o Ali Hussain Ahmed, 84A/11B/1A, Madhuban Vihar Colony, Umarpur Neewa, Dhoomanganj, Prayagraj

सूचना

सूचना

मै, लल्लू राम पुत्र श्री बनवारी लाल निवासी काजीपुर ३ फतेहपुर जनपद बाराबंकी घोषणा करता हूँ कि मैने एक भूखण्ड संख्या 184 खसरा सं0 403 मिनजुमला को श्री माधव प्रसाद भीमसरिया पुत्र स्व० राधेश्याम भीमसरिया से क्रय किया था जिसकी श्रृंखला मूल दस्तावेज जो कि बैग में था रास्ते में कही गिर गया है। जिसका विवरण निम्नवत है-दिनांक 20/9/2004 जिल्द सं0 4557 क्रमांक सं० ७६५७ पृष्ठ संख्या १६८ से १७९ तक विक्रेता यशार्थ पार्थ बिल्डर्स प्रा०लि० द्वारा प्रबन्ध निदेशक राजेश कुमार सिंह क्रेता माधव प्रसाद भीमसरिया

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE Original allotment letter No.D/2746/DS-3/2014-15 dated 9.10.2014 of my property Plot No.50, Block MIG, Yojana Tatyatope Nagar, Phase-3, Kanpur, has been lost somewhere. Any use of which will be illegal. Sunil Kumar Srivastava S/o Late Vishva Nath Saran Srivastava. I wish to create mortgage on the said property for housing loan with State Bank of India Branch Yashoda Nagar (Code 11330). Also, I have lodged FIR for the same YED LAR No.20240000266975 dated

11.04.2024.

CBSE CLASS 10 AND CLASS 12 RESULTS DECLARED



Students jubilant at Rani Laxmi Bai School (left) and DPS. Indiranagar on Monday

room lessons. She emphasised the importance of attending weekly tests and avoiding social media distractions. Naina aspires to become an engineer and aims to excel in her chosen field while being a responsible cit-

Anushka Pathak, another

Class 12 achiever with 94.8 per cent, shared her strategy of focusing on NCERT books physics, a challenging subject. Anushka, who plans to crack JEE, said she pursued her studies with dedication, avoiding social media except for necessary communication

through WhatsApp. Anuradha Yadav, who secured 91 per cent in Class 12, and giving special attention to emphasised the value of regular practice and addressing weaknesses consistently.

Aspiring to become an advocate, she aims to appear for CLAT and contribute towards supporting the economically

needy and promoting education. Anuradha said she engaged in

extracurricular activities like learning French through YouTube while steering clear of other social media plat-

Anjali, who scored 91.6 per cent in Class 12, credited her

success to consistent hard work and the support of her teachers. She said she dreams of becoming a chartered accountant and contributing

to the nation's progress.

Anushree Jaiswal, who secured 93.5 per cent, acknowledged her mother as her inspiration and empha-

sised disciplined study and revision. Anushree said she aims to pursue a career as a neurologist and has her sights set on

AIIMS, Delhi.

Manavi Sharma, who scored 94.7 per cent in Class 10, expressed happiness and a strong aspiration to become a

her country diligently. Despite occasionally skipping study sessions, Manavi said she remains determined to excel in her chosen field.

Meanwhile, Lucknow Public Collegiate celebrated out-standing achievements with 100 per cent students securing higher first division and first division marks in the CBSE Class 10 exams. Several students from Class 12 also excelled, with Dev Chhabra, Kartik Mandhani, and others achieving impressive percent-

At DPS Eldeco, Abhay Singh, Stailla Agarwal, and Tanya Bhandari topped Class 12 with 96 per cent, followed by Namya Awasthi and Yashika Chandra showcasing remark-

able performances.
Delhi Public School, Indira
Nagar, celebrated notable accomplishments, including Gauravi Srivastava's 99.2% in Class 10. Yash Srivastava scored 100 in English, while others excelled in subjects like maths, science, and artificial intelligence.
At Red Rose Senior

Secondary School, the Class 10 toppers included Satyaki Narayan Tewari (96.6 per cent), Priyanshu Prajapati (94.6 per cent), Arpit Singh (94.6 per cent), Piyush Singh (94.6 per cent), Manvi Gupta (93.80 per cent), Pragya (93.8 per cent), Mohammed Taaha (93.40 per cent), Anant Singh (92.40 percent), Akansha (92.4 per cent), Srishthi Awasthi (92 per cent), and Aadish Yadav (92 per cent).

Surreal moment for toppers

SHARMILA KRISHNA

With the CBSE results for Class 10 and Class 12 announced on Monday afternoon, the top-scorers shared their insights on achieving success, attributing it primarily to hard work. Gauravi Srivastava from DPS

Indiranagar, who secured an impressive 99.2 per cent in Class 10, said she was at a loss for words at her achievement. She credited her success to consistent efforts and adhering to the guidance provided by her school and coaching teachers. Gauravi emphasised that Class 10 wasn't just about academics; it also involved enjoying fun and friendships, which contributed to her overall wellbeing and academic performance. She expressed her aspiration to pursue BTech in Aeronautical Engineering and dreams of joining ISRO.

Ditva Sharma, the commerce stream topper from Rani Laxmi Bai School with 98.6 per cent, expressed her happiness at achieving a high percentage. Interestingly, Ditya is passionate about interior designing and will pursue this field in her career, despite her proficiency in commerce. She stressed the importance of focus and concentration in studies, advising against distractions. She said social media served as a brief stress reliever for her, limiting her usage to maintain focus on

Aarti Yadav, also from Rani Laxmi Bai School, secured 98.6 per cent in Class 12 and expressed surprise at her high

studies.



Gauravi Srivastava from DPS, Indiranagar, secured 99.2 per cent in Class 10

score. She emphasised the significance of consistency and hard work in achieving academic success, particularly stressing the need for daily practice in subjects like accounts. Aarti aspires to become a chartered accountant and aims to join Delhi University to pursue her goals of success and aiding those in

Pranya Srivastava, the science stream topper with 97.8 per cent from Rani Laxmi Bai School, expressed immense joy at her achievement. She highlighted the importance of heeding teachers' advice and focusing solely on NCERT books for studies, avoiding distractions like social media. Pranya aims to become a software engineer and has appeared for the JEE, stressing the value of self-study and dedication in achieving academic goals. Harsh Singh, the topscoring boy in the science

Delhi. Samriddhi Tewari, who topped

Class X from Rani Laxmi Bai

stream with 97.4 per cent in Class 12, shared his excitement at the accomplishment. He credited his success to consistent practice and thorough revision of topics, especially those he found challenging. Harsh aspires to become a doctor and serve the nation, having recently attempted NEET with a desire to join AIIMS,

School with 98.2 per cent, expressed happiness at her achievement. She emphasised the importance of daily study habits and avoiding procrastination, advocating for a stress-free approach to learning. Samriddhi aims to join the National Defence

Academyand has plans for a career in Civil Services as a backup. She mentioned removing social media accounts to maintain focus on her academic goals.

Panic after bomb | Maya reiterates resolve hoax at four private schools

PNS LUCKNOW

Aday after Chaudhary Charan Singh ACharan Singh International Airport received a bomb threat via email, four private schools in the city were targeted with similar hoax bomb threats on Monday. Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) Prabal Pratap Singh confirmed that bomb threats were received by schools located in PGI,

Alambagh, Gomti Nagar, and Vibhuti Khand police areas. The emails received at these schools originated from the same sender. Upon receiving the informa-

tion, bomb disposal and detec-tion squads and anti-sabotage teams were dispatched to investigate these schools. However, no suspicious items were found during the searches. The schools were thoroughly inspected, and parents who wished to take their children home were allowed to do so. This incident follows a bomb threat received by the Lucknow airport on Sunday, prompting authorities to conduct a comprehensive search operation with bomb disposal and detection squads, CISF, and local police involvement. Earlier occurrences include

similar hoax bomb threats received by a prestigious school in Sushant Golf City on May 10

BOMB THREATS WERE RECEIVED BY SCHOOLS LOCATED IN PGI, ALAMBAGH, GOMTI NAGAR, AND VIBHUTI KHAND

and another one in the Vrindavan Yojana area on May 1. The purported email address used to send these threats has been shared with the cyber police team for investigation. he Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force and Anti-Terrorist Squad have also been enlisted to solve the case. Meanwhile, the Delhi Police's

special cell has registered an FIR and is investigating possible connections to a joint conspiracy involving China and ISI. Counter-intelligence team, special cell and IFSO units are tracing the origin of the emails, with IP addresses indicating links to Russia.

Upon receiving the threatening emails, schools promptly alerted parents to collect their children, causing understandable panic among families. A principal from a school in Gomti Nagar issued a message informing parents of the bomb threat and the closure of the school for the day to ensure student safety and security.

Expressing confidence in the party's electoral prospects,

for separate statehood

Lucknow (PNS): BSP president Mayawati, during a rally in Lucknow on Monday, reiterated her resolve and outlined her party's vision and agenda for the Awadh region. "Awadh, which also constitutes Lucknow, will be made a separate state if our party comes to power," she said.

Mayawati also emphasised the BSP's track record in Lucknow, highlighting their role in beautification and infrastructure development. She stated, "It was our party that beautified Lucknow, developed hospitals, iails, and roads in the city." This assertion underscores the party's proactive approach to urban development and public service.

In her address Mayawati cautioned the public, urging them not to be swayed by false promises made by rival parties in their election manifestos. "Don't get swayed by the false promises made in the election manifestos of other parties. We must prevent such parties from coming to power," she

Regarding the BSP's electoral strategy, Mayawati reiterated that her party is not forging alliances with other major political entities such as the BJP or Congress. She asserted, "The BSP is not working in alliance with any party like the BJP or Congress; we are fighting the elections on our own strength." Mayawati emphasised the inclusive nature of ticket distribution within the BSP, ensuring representation from all segments of society. She noted, "We have included people from all societies in ticket distribution, ensuring equal participation. Our party workers are striving hard to ensure victory for these candidates."



Mayawati remarked, "Looking at the enthusiasm of the crowd support, I am certain that our candidates will achieve a good result in the Lok Sabha elections.

Critiquing the policies of rival parties, particularly the BJP, Mayawati flayed their approach to governance and public welfare. "The BJP's gimmickry and false promises will not work in their favour. The public has realised that the 'acche din' promised to the poor and middle class have not materialised," she added.

On the topic of BJP's distribution of free ration, Mayawati said, "They are misleading the public by giving the impression that they are funding this from their own pockets. This is public tax money; don't be misled." Mayawati reaffirmed the BSP's commitment to governance that prioritises social harmony and development without succumbing to divisive tactics. "During our governance, there were no Hindu-Muslim riots," she claimed.

Explosion in oxygen plant claims one life

Lucknow (PNS): At least one employee was killed and several sustained injuries after a massive explosion took place at an oxygen plant located in Barabanki district on Monday. The sudden blast at the oxygen plant led to chaos at the site. On getting information, the local police, fire officials rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation. All the victims were shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment by ambulances. The condition of a few injured was said to be critical.

As per the reports, the blast was so intense that the people around were flung into air and fell at a distance. The plant was also badly damaged by the blast. District Magistrate Satyendra Kumar Jha said the explosion took place at the unit of Sarang Plastic Private Limited located in Safedabad under Nagar Kotwali area when cylinder refilling work was underway. The deceased was identified as Lalji.

Meanwhile, three people died when a tanker collided with a car on the Moradabad-Aligarh National Highway in Moradabad on Monday, reports said. The victims were dentified as Axis Bank manager Saurabh Srivastava, cashier Divyanshu and one Amit Rana. According to a report, Saurabh

Srivastava and his co-workers were heading towards Chandausi in a car when he took a sharp turn to save a monkey which suddenly appeared on the road. As a result, the car crashed into a tanker coming from the opposite direction. The tanker driver fled the spot soon after the accident. The police retrieved the bodies trapped inside the mangled remains of the car and sent them for post-mortem. Further investigations are on. In Sambhal, three people were killed and 17 others injured after their tractor-trolley collided with a container truck on the Sambhal-Hasanpur road, police said on Monday.

The accident occurred on Sunday night near Deep Pur Tanda, which falls under the area of the Rajpura police station, they said. The victims were returning from a funeral, police

Woman returning from morning stroll robbed of gold chain

PNS LUCKNOW

victim.

Two bike-borne men looted a gold chain from a woman who was returning from a morning stroll in morning stroll in Mohanlalganj. The incident took place in the service lane of outer ring road in the area. When the victim raised an alarm, the youth of the village chased the robbers but they managed to escape while driving their vehicle fast on the ring road. Police registered a case on the complaint of the

The victim, identified as Gayatri of Puranpur in Mohanlalganj, was returning from the morning walk on Sunday. According to Gayatri, the two bike-borne youths wearing helmets came from behind and asked for the address of a person. Gayatri told them that she did not know any person by the name they were asking, and continued to walk towards her home. The robbers caught her by her neck from behind and snatched her gold chain before fleeing towards the Harikansh Garhi

locality in the area and located on the outer ring road. Hearing her screams, the villagers came out of their houses and later started chasing the robbers who accelerated their bike and disappeared. Victim's husband Sanjay tried chasing the miscreants, but in vain. The villagers searched the forest cover and other places but could not find the chainsnatchers. The police said that an FIR had been registered and the accused were being hunt-

Meanwhile, police heaved a sigh of relief on Monday following the recovery of two kid-napped girl students from Kasmandi locality in Dubagga after hours of hectic search for them. DCP (West) Durgesh Kumar said, "A man filed a complaint with the police stating that his daughter and her classmate were kidnapped by two car-borne persons outside their school immediately after it gave over. A team working under ACP (Kakori) Shakil Ahmed and Dubagga SHO started the hunt for the accused and located them at Kasmandi

road in the area," he said. He said the police arrested the accused, identified as Ayan, and also detained the minor offender for aiding in the crime.

BODY FOUND The mutilated body of a 65-

year-old woman, identified as Ranno Devi of Machal Khera, was recovered from railway tracks near Dilkusha Block Hut New Station in Cantonment police station area on Monday. The body was discovered just ten minutes after she left her house in a huff. Police said they were investigating whether she committed suicide or was hit by a train while crossing the tracks. Her son Dilip identified the body upon reaching the scene. He informed the police that his mother had been upset about something and had left the house around 9 am on Monday. He recounted how he went searching for her and found people gathered near the railway tracks where her body was discovered. The police sent the body for autopsy and started further investigations.

जनपद फतेहपुर में संस्था द्वारा ओल्ड एज होम के निर्माण कार्य में प्रयोग होने वाली मौरंग ,गिट्टी, सरिया, सीमेंट व अन्य निर्माण सम्बन्धित सामग्री आपूर्ति तथा श्रमिक आपूर्ति के लिए, वित्तीय वर्ष 2024— 25 हेतु निविदा आमंत्रित की जा रही है। निविदा प्रपत्र क मूल्य रू— 1000/—ं नियत किया गया है व निविदा पत्र में सभी शर्तों का उल्लेख दिया . गया है। निविदा पत्र संख्या को पंजीकृत कार्यालय में दिनाँक 15—05—2024 को दोपहर 12:00 बजे से क्रय किया जा सकता है। निविदा पत्र दिनाँक 30—05—2024 को सांय 04:00 बजे तक कार्यालय में जमा करना होगा, जिसे निविदा समिति द्वारा 02–06–2024 को ही निविदादाताओं की उपस्थिति / अनपस्थिति दोनों दशाओं में सांय 05:00 बजे खोला जायेगा नेविदा समिति बिना कारण बताये निविदा निरस्त कर सकती है।

सोसाईटी फॉर वालन्ट्री एक्शन,एन्ड रिसर्च ई-309, सेक्टर-आई, एल.डी.ए.कालोनी कानपुर रोड लखनऊ (उ.प्र.)

TECHNO INSTITUTE OF HIGHER STUDIES Courses Offered: B.Com (Hons.), B.A.-J.M.C. B.B.A.. B.Com. B.Ed., B.Sc. (Bio/Maths). B.V.A. (Paint./App. Arts), M.A-J.M.C. M.Com (Commerce)

Requires Principal (01 Post), Qualification, Experience & salary as per U.G.C./Lucknow University Norms.

Application alongwith photocopies of Mark Sheets & Experience Certificates should reach at the given address through Post/email/Personal in 21 days.



331, Anaura, Near Indira Canal, Ayodhya Road, Lucknow-226028 Email: contact@tims.edu.in Contact: 8810724912

'Ab jaldi hi karni padegi', Rahul on marriage

A midst political heat and fighting the prestigious battle to save the family bastion Rae Bareli, former president of Congress, Rahul Gandhi, on Monday, once again tried to strike a familial chord with the people of his mother's constituency when faced with a familiar query; When is he getting married? He responded

During a rally in Rae Bareli, Congress candidate Rahul Gandhi, accompanied by party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, addressed various issues concerning the constituency. Amidst the fervour of political discourse, an unexpected question arose about Rahul Gandhi's marital status, to which he responded with a lighthearted remark. When someone in the crowd asked about his marriage, Rahul Gandhi quipped, "Now I will have to do it soon (Ab jaldi hi karni padegi)." This response added a moment of levity to the serious political discussions that dom-

inated the event. Speaking at the rally, Rahul Gandhi also took the opportunity to reflect on his family's long standing relationship with Rae Bareli. He highlighted the historical ties dating back a century, mentioning the pivotal role Rae Bareli played in shaping the political landscape of India. He stated, "Rae Bareli and my family have a very old relationship. This relationship of ours is 100 years old. My great grandfather Jawaharlal Nehru ji had come here earlier. I can say that the people of Rae Bareli taught politics to Jawaharlal

Nehru ji. Then when Jawaharlal Nehru became the prime minister of the country, he laid the foundation of the country. That is, the political foundation of the country was laid by the people of Rae Bareli. Then Indira Gandhi ji and Sonia Gandhi ji came here, they did many big works and now I have come

The Member of Parliament from Wayanad asserted that he was contesting from Rae Bareli as this was the 'karma bhoomi' of his grandmother and mother. "...Ours is a 100-year-old relationship with Rae Bareli. A few days ago, when I was sitting with my mother, I told her that I said in a video that I have two mothers - Sonia ji and Indira ji. My mother did not like this, but I explained to her that a mother is the one who shows the path to the child and also protects her. Both my mother and Indira Ii did this for me. This is the 'karma bhoomi' of both my mothers. This is the reason I have come to contest from Rae Bareli," the Congress leader

Rahul Gandhi said his family had always worked for the people of the Rae Bareli parliamentary constituency, unlike Prime Minister Narendra Modi who works in the "interest of Adani and Ambani".

Hitting out at the Modi government, he claimed that loans amounting to Rs 16 lakh crore, which is equal to 24 years of money allotted under the MGNREGA, have been waived for 22-25 top industrialists. He outlined his vision for

addressing economic disparities, promising financial support to economically disadvantaged



Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi during a public meeting for Lok Sabha elections in Rae Bareli

families. Rahul Gandhi articulated, "There are 22 people who own the money of 70 who own the money of 70 crore people. Their loans are being waived. The prime minister's salary is Rs 2.5 lakh. How does he wear suits worth

lakh rupees every day? Who is buying suits for him? I asked

farmers, youths during the Bharat Jodo Yatra what are the

issues in the country? I got three

answers -youths said unemployment, farmers said inadequate price for crops, labourers said inadequate money. We decided to make crores of lakhpatis. We will make a list of poor families. One woman from the family will be given one lakh rupees. Crores of people will be getting money on July 1 morning. It will continue every month."

"If Narendra Modi can create 22 millionaires then Rahul Gandhi can create millions of millionaires. We will create a list of economically weak families and from each family, we will select one woman and her account will be created with Rs 1 lakh annually (Rs 8,500 per month)," he asserted.

He further assured that if

power, he will waive loans to poor farmers. "I promise that if the Congress-INDIA bloc comes to power at the Centre, then my first job will be to waive the loans of poor farmers," the Congress leader said.

He reiterated that the Agniveer scheme of short-duration recruitment in the defence forces would be done away and youngsters would be provided permanent jobs in the armed forces with pension provisions. Rahul Gandhi said youngsters would get one year of apprenticeship in public sector organ-isations and later, based on their merit, permanent government jobs.

During the rally, Rahul Gandhi also attacked the Bharatiya Janata Party and said that the people of the saffron party and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Śangh want to end the Constitution. "First time in the history of our country, the BJP-RSS people want to end our Constitution. Their leaders have clearly said that if they come to power they will change the Constitution," he said. In the Lok Sabha election 2024, Rahul Gandhi is contesting from Rae Bareli which has been the parliamentary constituency of his mother, Sonia Gandhi, in the past along with his existing Wayanad seat in Kerala. He is facing BJP's Dinesh Pratap Singh.

The Rae Bareli constituency goes to the polls on May 20 in the fifth phase. In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi won the constituency by securing 5,34,918 votes. Her closest rival, Dinesh Pratap Singh, put up a formidable challenge, gathering 3,67,740

so you can imagine the scale of

victory here. Everyone is await-

ing June 4," he said, referring to

the date of counting of votes. Gehlot also claimed that the

Congress is going to win par-liamentary seats in double dig-

its in his state and exuded con-

fidence that an INDIA bloc

government would be formed

at the Centre as "winds of

change" were blowing in the

Along with Gehlot and former

Chhattisgarh chief minister

Bhupesh Baghel, who is senior

AICC observer for Rae Bareli.

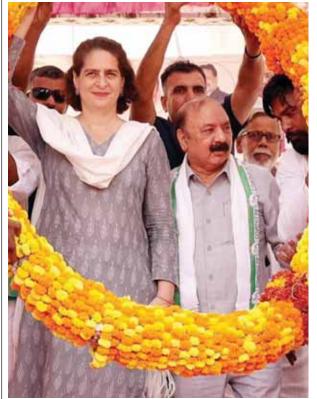
Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is

Amethi till polls are held in the

two seats on May 20. She is

country.

Rahul won't ever deviate from path of truth: Priyanka



Rae Bareli/Amethi: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday said Rahul Gandhi has embarked on the path of truth, and will always walk on this path. Addressing an elec-tion rally on the mela ground in Maharajganj, Priyanka praised her elder brother and said, "In politics and in life, the person who speaks the truth and does not shy away from the truth, always has importance in the society. People look at him

with respect." Speaking in his presence on the stage, Priyanka said, "My brother will always speak the truth ... Even in childhood, if while playing any kid would say bad words to someone else or do injustice, he would always fight for him. My brother has always fought for justice. Never backed down."

It would be difficult to find such a "fearless and big-hearted" person in the country, "especially in politics," she said about her brother. The Congress general secretary, who was campaigning for Rahul, who is contesting from Rae Bareli seat, said, he is the only leader in the country who walked 4,000 kilometres from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, during his Bharat Iodo Yatra.

"After that, he travelled from Mumbai to Manipur to give a message to the country that camped in Rae Bareli and every person of the country is a brother, development will come to the country only when the unity of the country

Priyanka attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he has nothing to do with unemployed youths, farmers, women, and the poor and accused him of selling the jobcreating establishments to Ambani and Adani.

"He has nothing to do with people but keeps worrying about his clothes. He is worried about keeping his clothes clean so that no mud sticks to them. I don't understand what the prime minister applies to his face that it keeps shining. You will not see mud stains on his clothes anywhere," she said. When it comes to waiving the loans of farmers, the prime

minister says that the country does not have money, but his government managed to waive loans of industrialists, she alleged. Priyanka also criticised the

Agniveer scheme for soldiers, saying that under the scheme, if they die in the line of duty, youths don't get the status of martyrs and they get unemployed after four years. "This is a big joke with the youth and a fraud." She said that under the Modi government, 70 crore people became unemployed and 30 lakh posts are lying vacant in government jobs.

Rae Bareli and Amethi will go to polls in the fifth phase of Lok oha elections in the state on May 20. Amethi, a Congress bastion, fell in 2019 when BJP's Smriti Irani defeated Rahul Gandhi. Congress has fielded KL Sharma from the constituency this time.

Brij Bhushan voices opposition to UP's 'bulldozer policy'

PNS LUCKNOW

Bharatiya Janata Party's Member of Parliament Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh voiced his opposition to the "bulldozer policy" of Uttar Pradesh government during a rally in Gonda district.

He expressed his concerns regarding the challenges faced in building homes under this policy while seeking support for his son, Karan Bhushan Singh, who is contesting on a BJP ticket from Kaiserganj.

Speaking passionately to crowd, Brij Bhushan emphasised the difficulties encountered in constructing homes under the current policy regime, stating, "I am against the bulldozer policy; it is very difficult to build a home."

He portrayed himself as someone who empathises with the public's struggles, asserting, Brij Bhushan Singh is the kind of person who understands your pain and sorrow." In a move aimed at garnering wider support, Brij Bhushan also appealed to the Muslim

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday said that after the four phases of election, BJP is

BJP's chances of forming the

After 4 phases, BJP left

with 0% chance: Akhilesh

left with "zero per cent" more enthusiasm than in the chance to form the govern- four phases to defeat BJP and

ment. "After 4 phases, the public has made 4' disappear from BJP's claim of 400 and against BJP till the last

now only double zero is left phase on June 1st. The public

for the double-engine people. making INDIA bloc win," he



claiming that "Muslims have also made up their minds" to support the BJP in the ongoing Lok Sabha polls.

It is worth noting that Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the incumbent MP from Kaiserganj, was replaced by his son as the BJP candidate for the Lok Sabha polls from the same constituency.

Earlier also he opposed the policy of the government and had once given a memorandum to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

government are 00 per cent,

"In the upcoming three phas-

es also, people will vote with

he said in a post on X.

When Sharma can defeat Irani what's the need for fielding Rahul: Gehlot winning in the whole country,

Amethi: The Congress fielded Kishori Lal Sharma from Amethi as part of its political strategy and since he can defeat Bharatiya Janata Party's Smriti Irani, "then what is the need for fielding a big national leader" like Rahul Gandhi", party veteran Ashok Gehlot has said. Gehlot, who is here as the senior AICC observer for the Amethi parliamentary seat in Uttar Pradesh, also exuded confidence that the Congress will win both Amethi and Rae Bareli Lok Sabha seats by big

While former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi is contesting Singh in Rae Bareli, Gandhi family aide Sharma is taking on BIP's Irani in Amethi.

On no Gandhi family member contesting from Amethi for the first time in 25 years, Gehlot said the situation is such that there are five assembly segments in this parliamentary constituency and if one asks anyone in each of these segments, one would know that this is a "one-sided" election in

favour of the Congress. "The Congress is fighting the polls from here, our candidate is fighting, but the people have taken it upon themselves to fight this election," the former chief minister of Rajasthan

said. Asked about Irani, who defeated Rahul Gandhi here last time, claiming that he ran away to a safer seat, Gehlot said. "We have already answered when K L Sharma ji is sufficient to take on Smriti Irani then why are people talking about Rahul Gandhi."

"This is part of the Congress' political strategy and he (Sharma) has been given a ticket after much thought going into it. So they can say whatever they want to. When we know that KL Sharma ji can make us win the election here then there was no need of field-ing Rahul Gandhi," Gehlot argued.

Noting that Sharma had been a Congress worker for 40 years, Gehlot stated the Congress has sent out a message to the whole country by giving him a chance to contest elections.

"A message has gone out in the whole country and the decision of fielding him is being welcomed. When he can defeat Smriti Irani ji, then Rahul Gandhi is a big national leader, and there is no need of fielding him," the veteran Congress leader said

On "Priyanka Gandhi's clerk" and "Gandhi family"s peon" jibe at Sharma by BJP Rae Bareli candidate Dinesh Singh, Gehlot said such statements had not been liked by the people of Amethi and there is a reaction to it. "All these comments will increase the margin of victory," he added. Gehlot exuded confidence that

the Congress will win in both the constituencies.

'There is a reason for it. Smriti Irani after losing in 2014, worked to mislead people for five years. Rahul Gandhi kept on working in people" interest and raised issues of unemployment and price rise. They (the BJP) kept misleading people and in the elections in 2019, an environment was created post-Balakot ... the BJP won everywhere, there was 25-0 in Rajasthan, in Madhya Pradesh also they won big and won all seats in Gujarat. That environment was different," he

Gehlot claimed that after five years of her term as an MP here, Irani could neither bring any investments nor institutions that would benefit people, Amethi remained

"I heard IIIT was coming but went to Prayagraj. The hospital here was closed and then reopened only after high court orders. Wherever I go, I hear about allegations against her (Irani) that work was not done and she did not meet people," Gehlot said.

He said people expect three things from an MP — that he or she stays amongst people, stands by them in their happier or sad times, and does development. Gehlot claimed that Irani had

failed on all the three counts as an MP. "There is so much reaction among people. There will be very few candidates against whom such opposition would be there," he said. Asked about Union Home Minister Amit Shah's remarks in Rae Bareli that the Gandhi family did not do development in the constituency and did not stand by people in their happiness and sorrows, Gehlot said, "Amit Shah has no knowledge of these things. He only makes comments without giving it any thought."

"Someone should ask him, I came here in 1981 for a by-election and stayed for one month in Rae Bareli and Amethi. I have come now and one cannot recognise the place, it has transformed," he said.

"All this talk that nothing has happened in 70 years, these 'jumlas' Shah has borrowed from PM (Narendra Modi). What all has not happened? Roads have been constructed, water, electricity, education, health, airport...all this development was done here under Gandhi family's period. So no one believes in their talk," the Congress leader said.

We will win Amethi and Rae Bareli by a big margin. The Congress and INDIA bloc is addressing back-to-back corner meetings in various villages of Rae Bareli and Amethi. PTI In another rally in Amethi, इंडियन बेंक

(भारत सरकार का उपक्रम)

🗘 इलाहाबाद



Indian Bank
(A Govt. of India Undertaking) **ALLAHABAD**

POSSESSION NOTICE (for Immovable Property) [Under Rule-8 (1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002]

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002, (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3, 8 and 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice as detailed here in below calling upon the borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The Borrowers/Guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/ Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him / her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 and 9 of the said Rules.

The Borrowers in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charges of the Indian Bank.

The Borrower's / Guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

This Possession Notice is being served to the Borrower (s), Guarantor (s) & Mortgagor (s) to deposit the said dues.

S. N.	Name & Address of the Borrower (s)/ Guarantor (s)/ Proprietor / Mortgagors	Description of the Immovable Property	Dt. of Demand Notice Dt. of Possession Outstanding Amount	
Е	ranch: Sainik Nagar Branch			
		All that part and parcel of the property consisting of House on Plot No 489C Abhishek Udyan II Eldeco Sharda Nagar Yojna Lucknow (Area:229.74 sqr mtr) Sale deed registered at Bahi No 1 ziid No 19389 Pg 1 to 20 S No 15413 dated 07.08.2015 with sub registrar—I st Lucknow Bounded by:-North: 12.00 mtr wide road, South: H No 490, East: H No 514, West: 9.00 mtr wide road	20.02.2024 08.05.2024 Rs. 24,67,437.00 and interest thereon	

BJP leader shot dead, couple found dead

PNS LUCKNOW

Unidentified motorcycle-borne assailants, on Monday morning, shot dead Bharatiya Janata Party leader Ashutosh Srivastava in Sabharhad market in Kotwali area of Jaunpur district.

According to reports, Ashutosh Srivastava (45), a journalist and BJP worker, had gone out on a motorcycle in the morning for campaigning. Around 9 am, an unknown motorcycle rider stopped him and four others came and shot him. Ashutosh was taken to Shahganj community health centre where the doctors pronounced him

After the incident, Shahganj MLA Ramesh Singh and other BJP leaders reached there. Circle Officer Ajit Singh Chauhan said that a murder case had been registered and was

being investigated. Meanwhile in Barabanki, the

decomposed bodies of an elderly couple were found lying inside their locked house under Dewa police station on Sunday night, the police said on Monday. Police said that preliminary investigations suggested that the murder

might have been committed around five days back since the bodies were badly decomposed with insects breeding on them. The couple was murdered after being hit on the head with some

blunt object. Barabanki Circle Officer Jagat Ram Kannaujia identified the deceased as Majid Hussain Warsi, 65, and his wife Mashrat Jahan, 62, both natives of Budaun. They had been living in Dewa after having purchased a

house eight months ago. The CO said Majid initially ran a of any forced entry. He added the



business dealing in mattresses and covers but had also entered the real estate business for the past few years. Kannaujia felt it was a clear case of double murder and that the assailants might have been known to the victims as there was no sign

assailants would have locked the door from outside after murdering the couple. The CO said the couple's three sons

- Arif, Javed and Naved – stay in Delhi while the fourth one Parvez lives in Faridabad. Their daughter Tabbassum along with her husband Sageer lives in Aligarh. He added that Sageer was the first to inform the police that he was unable to reach out to his in-laws. After this, the police went to check up at the elderly couple's residence but returned on seeing a lock on the door. He said the police again went to the house after being informed by locals about a foul smell emanating from the house. Subsequently, the police personnel forced their entry after breaking the door lock to find Majid lying dead near the staircase and his wife Mashrat lying dead on the bed.

लखनऊ विकास प्राधिकरण (ISO 14001 : 2004, ISO 9001 : 2008 प्रमाणित संस्था) प्राधिकरण भवन, विपिन खण्ड, गोमती नगर, लखनऊ (उ०प्र०)। टोल-फ्री : 1800 1800 5000, वेबसाइट : www.ldaonline.co.ii

सार्वजनिक सुचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण की आवासीय/व्यावसायिक/रेन्ट/नजूल/इम्प्रूवमेन्ट-ट्रस्ट योजनाओं के निम्नलिखित आवेदकों द्वारा उनके नाम के सामने अंकित सम्पत्ति का हस्तानांतरण / नामांकरण किये जाने हेतु प्राधिकरण में प्रार्थना–पत्र प्रस्तुत किया गया है :-

क्र. सं.	मूल आवंटी का नाम	भवन/भूखण्ड संख्या	योजना का नाम	मृत्यु दिनांक	मूल आवंटी के उत्तर अथवा आवेदक व		उत्तराधिकारी के पक्ष में अनापित्तकर्ताओं के नाम		मूल आवंटी से (मृतक) का सम्बन्ध
1	2	3	4	5 6			7		पुत्र
1.	श्री दीपक अवस्थी पुत्र स्व० आर०एन० अवस्थी	दुकान सं०-जी०एफ०-33, उदयन-2, रक्षा खण्ड	शारदा नगर योजना	04.11.2023			वसीयत वार पर		
2.	स्व० हनुमान प्रसाद श्रीवास्तव (मृतक)	भूखण्ड संख्या-386	बशीरतगंज योजना	27.05.1988	श्री अतुल श्रीवास्तव पुत्र स्व० सतीश चन्द्र श्रीवास्तव पुत्र स्व० हनुमान प्रसाद श्रीवास्तव			पौत्र	
3.	श्री कौशल किशोर टंडन	भूखण्ड संख्या-एम-4/74, विपुल खण्ड	गोमती नगर योजना	05.01.2009	श्रीमती निशि टंडन, श्रीमती स्वाती टंडन, श्रीमती स्मृति टंडन				पत्नी, पुत्री, पुत्री
4.	स्व० रवीन्द्र नाथ वर्मा	भवन संख्या-01/271, विराम खण्ड	गोमती नगर योजना	27.06.2014	श्रीमती सोहिनी वर्मा, श्री अरविन्द कुमार, श्री अनिल कुमार, श्रीमती अर्चना लाल			पत्नी, पुत्र, पुत्र, पुत्री	
5.	स्व० लोकेन्द्र यादव	भूखण्ड संख्या-2/162, विकल्प खण्ड	गोमती नगर योजना	17.07.2015	श्रीमती ज्योत्सना यादव	0.0			माता, पुत्र

उपर्युक्त नामान्तरण के आवेदन के सम्बन्ध में यदि किसी भी व्यक्ति को कोई आपत्ति हो तो वह साक्ष्य सहित प्रकाशन तिथि से 30 दिनों के अन्दर अधोहस्ताक्षरकर्ता के कार्यालय में प्राप्त करा दें। निर्धारित तिथि तक कोई आपत्ति प्राप्त न होने पर प्राधिकरण अभिलेखों में कॉलम-6 पर लिखित व्यक्ति का नाम दर्ज कर लिया जायेगा तथा उसके बाद किसी आपत्ति पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।

Barring minor skirmishes, polling 6 more candidates file papers peaceful in Kanpur, Akbarpur

 $B_{\text{mishes, the polling in}}^{\text{arring a few minor skirmishes, the polling in Kanpur and Akbarpur Lok}$ Sabha constituencies passed

off peacefully on Monday.

The BJP activists staged an agitation in Barra-6 while voters of booth No 126 in a composite school in Jalala village of Ghatampur (Akbarpur) boycotted the polling due to police 'inaction' in working out the murder case of a liquor shop salesman who was shot dead on March 22. Resentment also prevailed among the voters when after the start of polling, 40 EVM and 37 VVPAT suddenly went out of order in both the constituencies till 9 am. BJP district unit president Deepu Pandey had an altercation with a sub-inspector when the latter asked the former put off the strip displaying 'Jai Shriram' before entering the polling booth at Kanpur Public Inter College, Navin Nagar. Pandey alleged that after casting the vote, the SI misbehaved with his wife. He lodged a complaint with the Joint Commissioner of Police.

Meanwhile, BJP activists staged an agitation before a polling booth in Mapple Wood School, Barra-6. District working committee member Rajiv Trivedi alleged that when he was asking the party's polling agent about voting percentage



People waiting in queues to cast their vote at a polling station during the fourth phase of Lok Sabha elections in Kanpur on

an SSB constable thrashed Mandal President Sumit Pawa and misbehaved with him. On a woman polling worker asking voters to support those who could provide job, dozens of BJP activists staged an agitation in front the polling booth. The issue was pacified after the SSB constable was removed from the spot. On the other hand, Divisional Commissioner Amit Gupta took the officials to task when the data about the receipt of complaints in the control

room and their disposal was not made available to him till 12 noon. The importance of casting vote came to fore when it failed to deter Banarsi Lal Misra (59) from doing so even after the sad demise of his brother. Immediately after he reached to cast vote at RK Mission School gate in Ramkrishna Nagar for Akbarpur Lok Sabha seat, his cousin Srinivas informed him about the death of his elder brother Karuna Shanker Misra.

Banarsi Lal burst into tears but only after casting his vote he proceeded to performing the last rites of his brother. Besides, a pregnant woman got the delivery date extended by two days only to exercise her franchise in a polling booth at Saraswati Shishu Mandir Inter College, Bagahi, Babupurwa. The doctors had fixed the date of delivery as May 11. She said it is important to cast vote for the first time and now she will go to the hospital for delivery.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

s many as six more candi-Adates filed their nomination papers on the fifth day of nomination for the 77-Varanasi parliamentary constituency in the Lok Sabha General Election-2024 here on Monday. On the last day on Tuesday Prime Minister and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) candidate Narendra Modi is all set to file his nomination papers.

With this a total of 14 candidates have filed their nominations so far. Those who filed nomination papers during the day were Sonia Jain (Independent), Vikas Kumar Singh (Independent), Sachin Kumar Sonkar (Independent), Neeraj Singh (Independent),



A candidate filing nomination papers for Varanasi Lok Sabha seat on Monday

Kumar Amit Singh (Independent) and Shivam Singh (Independent). Apart from this, four persons, includ-

(Independent), Rupesh Kumar Sharma (Independent), Rani Devi (Alhind Party) and Vijay Nandan (Janhit Kisan Party) received nomination papers

whereas people have also received eight treasury challans. Earlier, on the first and second day, two candidates each had filed papers while no one had filed papers on the third day. As many as four candidates had filed papers on the fourth day. The others who had already joined the fray earlier were Ajay (Indian National Congress), Athar Jamal Lari (Bahujan Samaj Party), Sanjay Kumar Tiwari (Independent), Avachit Shamrao Sayam (Jansewa Godwana Party), Gagan Prakash (Apna Dal Kamerawali), Paras Nath Keshari (Rashtriya Samajwadi Jan Kranti Party), Koli Shetty Shivakumar (Independent) and Abhishek Prajapati (Bahadur

Many Kashi areas struggling with basic problems: Sharma

All India Committee India Congress (AICC) spokesperson Alok Sharma criticised the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his failure to solve the basic issues of Kashi. Talking to reporters at Paradkar Bhawan here on Sunday evening, he said this holy city could not see real development even when its MP was the PM for the last 10

He said Kashi is an ancient city of education and art, but it could not make any contribution towards institutional



AICC spokesman Alok Sharma addressing a press conference in Varanasi on Sunday evening

development in any field like industry, trade etc. "Some or the other work of infrastructure development has been happening in all the cities and some such work may have been done in Varanasi, but despite that, many areas of the city are struggling with basic problems related to roads, sewers etc", he said, adding that in the recent past, a sanitation worker lost his life while working inside sewer line without basic

MP, Varanasi could not get any university, educational institute, factory or opportunities for employment promotion. "All the construction and Smart City works done here were in the hands of Guiarati companies. Even the entire election and political management of the prime minister was done by the people of Gujarat as he did not trust any local person", Sharma said. The Congress leader said in view of the changes going on across the country, the voters of Varanasi should also choose the change and the political worker among them.

resources. Sharma said despite

the prime minister being an

CBSE class X, XII students excel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

There was a mood of jubilation among the students of X and XII classes in almost all the schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) here on Monday when both the results were declared. Most of the leading schools, including Sunbeam, Sunbeam Academy, DALIMSS, Central Hindu Boys School, Central Hindu Girls School, DPS, Little Flower School, Happy Model School, SHPS, Sant Atulanand, MR Seth Jaipuria School Babatpur, all the branches of Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) and many others fared superbly well in the examinations.

Overall school topper of Central Hindu Boys School (CHBS), a school run by Banaras Hindu University (BHU), was Badal Kumar wit 97.20 per cent, followed by Ashish Kumar 479

The 2531st birth anniversary of Adi Bhagwatpad Shankaracharya, known as

Shankar Bhagwatpad, was cel-

ebrated on the occasion of

Vaishakh Shukla Panchami at

Srividva Math here on Sunday.

In the beginning, the idol of Adi Shankaracharya was wor-

shiped amidst the chanting of

traditional Vedic mantras and

then the Vedic students recit-

ed Manglacharan. A meeting

was organised at the venue in

which scholars expressed their views. While addressing the devotees, Brahmachari

Parmatmanand, a disciple of Shankaracharya of Jyotish

Avimukeshwaranand

Saraswati, said that Adi



Jubilant students of a CBSF-affiliated school in Varanasi after the results were declared on Monday.

Keshav Kant (94.80 per cent). The Sunbeam Education examination results. According to group chairman Deepak Madhok, this year a total of 1,202 students appeared in CBSE class XII examination. Pavani Agarwal (Humanities (95.80 per cent), Mohit Raj (95.80 per cent), Kartikey Agrawal (94.80 per cent) and securing 98.6 per cent. marks.

chool Varuna proved excel-

Anshika Rai (Humanities stream) of Sunbeam Suncity proved excellence in their respective schools by scoring 97.6 per cent marks.

On the spectacular success, secretary of Sunbeam Academy Jagdeep Madhok said the students of group created history by performing brilliantly in the class XII and class X board exams. Like every year, this year too the school's result was 100 percent, he said, adding that this year, a total of 222 stu-dents in class XII and 214 students in class X appeared in the board examination in which all the students secured good marks. He added that a total of 38 students created history by scoring more than 90 per cent marks in class XII board. Sneha Kumari of the commerce stream of the school brought laurels to the school by securing 97.6 per cent marks and Pratyaksha Agarwal of class X brought laurels to the school by securing

excelled with 98.4 per cent Group performed excellently in the merit list of CBSE class XII marks and Sumit Kumar Gupta

Sunbeam Bhagwanpur's Rishabh Singh (Biology) (Mathematics) excelled with 98.2 per cent marks. Urja Pal (Humanities) of Sunbeam lence in their respective schools by securing 98 per cent marks, Vaibhavi Jaiswal (Commerce

'Adi Shankaracharya enlightened entire world' Shankaracharya had composed his popular 'Soundarya Lahari'. While presiding over the func-tion, Sadhvi Purnamba Didi said the Jyotish Peeth

95.8 per cent marks.

Shankaracharya is running a historic religious campaign to declare cow as the 'Mother of the Nation' and by joining the same every 'Sanatan Dharmi' person should give his best contribution. The meeting was conducted by Pt Shambhu Sharan Pandey. Prominent among others who were also present were Sadhvi Shardamba Didi, Brahmachari Sidhanand from Dwarka, Acharya Anant Bhatt, Om Prakash Pandey, Deepesh Dubey, Balendu Mishra, Harishchandra Sharma, Ravi Trivedi, Lata Pandey, Neelam Dubey, Savitri Pandey, Prema

Man's body recovered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

The body of a man who had gone to his in-laws' house was found in Kaundhiara area on Monday. The villagers spotted the body of Bharat Bharti alias Chhotu (30) near Naugawan canal and informed the police. The police said the cause of death will be clear from the post-mortem examination report. The in-laws are being interrogated. Bharat of Bhichkuri under Kaundhiyara police station area had gone to his in-laws' house in Kuan village on Sunday to participate in the 'terhavi' programme. He left for his house at 8 pm from there. However, he did not reach home at night and his body was found near Naugawan canal on Monday morning. His bike was found in the canal at some distance

There were injury marks on his face and head. He was the third among four brothers. He has two children. He was married to Mona Devi in 2019. After the body was found, the aggrieved family members reached the spot there weeping and wailing. ADCP Abhijeet Kumar and ACP Kaundhiara Vivek Yadav too reached the

village. Meanwhile, a youth injured in an accident in Tikri village of Utraon police station area died in a hospital here on Monday. He was identified as Akash Bhartiya (21). The police conducted the post-mortem on Monday. The body was handed over to the family. Akash Bhartiya, Shivam and Satish Gupta of Tikri village, had gone to the Raghupur Handia on May 1. They were returning home at night when an unknown vehicle hit their bike near Bheski village. All three were seriously injured. Satish Gupta died during treatment on May 3. The second seriously injured youth, Akash, died on Monday.

Cong intensifies poll campaigning

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The local Congress workers have intensified the poll campaigning in favour of party's candidate Ajay Rai, sup-ported by INDIA Bloc. The Congressmen are distributing and filling Congress guarantee cards contacting the voters door to door.

distributing Congress guarantee cards, apprising the people about party's election manifesto which promises youth justice, job for every youth, ₹1 lakh to the senior woman of every family, Minimum Support Price (MSP) and loan waiver to the farmers, daily minimum wage of ₹400, social justice survey etc. Along with explaining the details of party guarantee, the party workers are also approaching the voters to fill

The party workers while the forms. Besides, the Congress Central Election

Office is working on the strategy of directly reaching out to the people with the guarantee cards by visiting door to door. Shantanu Rai, son of the

party candidate Ajay Rai, is sending two to three such teams every day while his younger sister Aastha Rai is training the teams on all five guarantees before leaving for this campaign. She is also explaining the guarantees to the

Country's economy has strengthened under PM Modi's leadership: Patel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Gujarat MLA Hardik Patel met workers at Phulpur central election office located at Georgetown Club during his stay here on Monday. Hardik said, "Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, Lalu Yadav, Mamata Banerjee, Mayawati and all the leaders of the Indi Alliance are doing politics for their families."

He said under the leadership of PM Modi, the country's economy has strengthened and India has established itself as a powerful nation in the whole Mother India. Media in charge Master with immediate effect. Rajesh Kesarwani said Gujarat Mohd Zaid alias Master was A BIP MLA Hardik Patel will stay in Prayagraj for a week and will campaign in favour of the party candidates. On his arrival here the workers welcomed him. Phulpur Lok Sabha Convener MLA Guru Prasad Maurya, district spokesperson Rajesh Kesarwani, Anand Vaishya Sudarshan among others were with him.

SUSPENDED: Action was taken against Ashraf's brotherin-law Zaid aka Master who is absconding. The management

world. Hardik said for PM of Sherwani Inter College Modi, politics is to serve Sallapur suspended Zaid lecturer IN the History Department. Along with Zaid Master, another college employee, Atiq's relative Tariq was also suspended. A case was registered against Zaid Master for allegedly usurping property worth ₹50 crore of Waqf Board. Besides, the police is also looking for Zaid in the case of threatening Mutawalli and demanding extortion. Zaid is a resident of Hatwa area here. Along with him, Ashraf's wife Zainab is also named in the case.

25-year-old youth drowns

A²⁵-year-old youth drowned while bathing at Dashashwamedh Ghat in Sangam on Monday afternoon. The water police recovered his body after an hour of effort. The youth was identified from the documents found with him. The Daraganj police took legal action in the matter. The police said Umashankar of Phulpur had come to the city

from the village on Monday. He reached Daraganj with his friends and they went to Dashashwamedh Ghat for bathing in Sangam. According to the police, this Umashankar suddenly got trapped in the strong current of Ganga. When he started drowning, his companions ran away. The people present at the ghat informed the water police. Daraganj police also reached the spot. Water police in-charge JP Sahni

said the youth had crossed the jetty and after about an hour of effort, the diver took out Umashankar's body. On being taken to the hospital the doctors declared him dead. The police said with the help of Aadhar card, his family was informed. Meanwhile Abhishek Kumar of Rampur Umri, Soraon, preparing for competitive examinations here committed suicide by hanging himself in his room on Monday.

Exercise, meditation tips given in programme

Śwami

 $T_{\text{gramme was organised by the Senior Citizen Trust of}}^{\text{he 'Just Be Alive' programme}}$ India at IMA premises located in Lahurabir here on Sunday. It was a programme to help the participants to stay healthy and happy in this fast-paced life by getting exercise and meditation tips by senior doctors. It it the participants were made aware of various methods to transform humanity, healing techniques and meditation.

Speaking on the occasion, senior orthopaedist Dr Ajit Saigal said that the objective of this programme is to inform the people that how can we remain healthy and happy in our busy life, how can we keep our thoughts healthy and how can we make ourselves such

love people and do something good for the society. In this direction, he said there are many exercises and meditations by which we can bring a meaningful change in our life by positive thinking.
Trainer Dr Smita Chandra

that people love us and we can

Shankaracharya enlightened

the entire world, including

India with Advaita philosophy

and re-established Sanatan

Dharma by defeating more than 72 sects in debate. He fur-

ther said that Shankaracharya

tied the country to the thread of

said that the programme 'Just Be Alive' has been specially organised for the age group above 60 years and in this we teach people how to be happy and healthy both mentally and physically.

On the occasion Dr Kusum Chandra, Manju Singh, Dr Bela Saigal, Dr Anand Sharma, Ashish Basak, Pawan Agarwal, Ranjit Chadha, Tapas Das, Dr Rita Tripathi, Dr Atul, Dr Rajendra Srivastava, Dr Daya, Arun Saraf, Ramesh Sarna etc

22-year-old youth commits suicide PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

spiritual and cultural unity by

establishing four peethas in four

directions which became the

basis of unity of the entire coun-

try. He added that we are fortu-

nate that we are celebrating the

birth anniversary at the historical place where of Adi

A youth committed suicide by hanging himself. His body was found hanging from a peepal tree here on Monday. He had returned from Bihar two days ago. The police is try-ing to find out the circumstances under which he took this extreme step. His body has been sent for the post-mortem examination. Vishal Shah (22) of Khagaria district of Bihar, used to work as a labourer on a bridge under construction in Jhunsi. He committed suicide by hanging himself. Jhunsi Station House Officer (SHO) Upendra Pratap Singh said that prima facie it appeared that the youth had committed sui-cide by hanging himself. His family has informed and the exact cause of the death will be clear only after the post mortem report comes.

JK Cement presents financial results

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Tiwari and Vijaya Tiwari.

The JK Cement Limited has presented the financial results for the fourth quarter and annual financial year 2024. The company reported a total revenue of ₹3,151.35 crore for the fourth quarter, compared to ₹2,815.85 crore earned in the same period last fiscal year. The net profit after tax for the quarter stood at ₹219.68 crore, compared to ₹107.34 crore in the previous year. The company earned an EPS of ₹28.44 for the quarter. For the entire fiscal year 2024, the company reported a total revenue of ₹11,701.06 crore and a net profit after tax of ₹789.93 crore. The EPS for the fiscal year was ₹102.35. The board recommended a dividend

of ₹20 per equity share and spe-

cial dividends of ₹5 per share on the occasion of completing 40 years of Golden Jubilee and the commencement of grey and white cement production. Additionally, the board proposed to raise ₹500 crore through private

vate placement of secured/non-convertible debentures for a period of one year, subject to shareholders' approval. The merger plan with JK Max Paints Limited and Acro Paints Limited has been approved by the Regional Director (NR), with management in the process of obtaining PF/ESIC registration and other necessary legal formalities. The plan will become effective upon completion of all legal formalities and submission of certified copies to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs within 30 days from May 3.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KANPUR

Two persons died while another was seriously injured when a speeding vehi-cle ran over them near Umra village under Khaga Kotwali police station area on the Kanpur-Prayagraj highway in Fatehpur on Sunday night. The trio was repairing their tractor at the time of incident. The police and kin of the deceased and injured rushed to the spot. The bodies were sent for autopsy, while the injured was admitted to a private hospital. Rinku Yadav (27) of Iradatpur Dharmgadpur village in Sultanpur Ghosh police station area along with elder brother Janesh alias Kajjal Yadav (35) and friend Shanker Raidas (40) of Bichhhar village, under Hathgam police station, was returning home with the wheat on his tractor on Sunday night. Around 11 pm after their trac-

tor suddenly developed a technical snag near Bala Ka Purwa village, Rinku parked it on the roadside and all the three started repairing it. Meanwhile, the unidentified speeding vehicle coming from Fatehpur ran over them and escaped. As a result Rinku Yadav and his friend Shanker Raidas were killed on the spot while Janesh alias Kajjal was seriously injured. The kotwali police rushed to the spot and informed the kin of the deceased. The latter took the injured Janesh to the CHC and then admitted him to a private hospital in Fatehpur. Rinku's uncle Sumer Singh lodged a complaint with the police in this connection. Inspector Khaga Tej Bahadur Singh said raids are being con-

ducted in search of the vehicle. Meanwhile a property dealer was killed in a road mishap in the Vidhnu police

station area. He was admitted to LLR (Hallet) Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment. Arun Singh alias Sujay Singh (37) of Poni Road, Indira Nagar, Gangaghat Kotwali police area of Unnao, had gone to the house of his maternal uncle Jagdish Singh in Nabedi Parachand, Ghatampur, on May 7. After two days he left for Shuklaganj (Unnao) at night on the bike but met with a mishap on the way. The Vidhnu police got him admitted to LLR (Hallet) hospital and the kin were informed. During treatment, he succumbed to his injuries and the body was brought to home on Monday.

Meanwhile a youth was electrocuted after coming in contact with the electric current flowing in the pedestal fan in Bhadras village under Ghatampur police station area on Sunday night. At the time of incident, he was alone in the house.

Plea in SC seeks review of EVM VVPAT verdict

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

plea has been filed in the A Supreme Court seeking review of its April 26 judgement by which it had rejected the demand for reverting to the old paper ballot system and the complete cross-verification of votes cast using EVMs with a Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT). The review petition was filed by Arun Kumar Agrawal, who had filed the PIL on the issue earlier, through lawyer Neha Rathi.

The review plea filed on May 10 said, "There are mistakes and errors apparent on the face of the impugned order..., and as such there are sufficient reasons which require review of the impugned order/judgment...

"The petitioner respectfully seeks review on the following issues as have been dealt with in judgment dated April 26, 2024: i) Feasibility of count-

in terms of time to be taken and additional manpower, ii) Vulnerability of SLU (symbol loading units) and iii) Percentage of VVPAT slips counted for tallying with votes after C h a n d r a b a b u Naidu...Judgment." The plea dealt with the feasi-

bility of counting of all VVPAT paper slips in terms of time to be taken and additional manpower and referred to the relevant portion of the judgement. During the course of hear-

ing, it was suggested that instead of physically counting the VVPAT slips, they can be counted by a counting machine. This suggestion, including the suggestion that bar-coding of the symbols loaded in the VVPATs may be helpful in machine counting, may be examined by the ECI," the top court had said in the

the plea said the counting of all VVPAT slips can be done "accurately with a fraction of the employees and at a fraction of cost and within five to eight hours".

It said the VVPAT paper is of the same size as the thermal print out received when a credit or debit card is swiped on making a payment.

The counting of the slips after they have been sorted candidate-wise, is in fact easier than counting normal paper because the VVPAT paper slip is sightly curled on account of being thermally printed from a roll. The curling makes the picking up of the paper slip from the surface of a table easy.

"Each slip can be counted while being picked to make bundles of 25 slips as mandated under instructions given in the ECI's Manual on EVM and VVPAT, 2023," the



It said EVMs do not allow voters to verify that their votes have been accurately

"Furthermore, given their

very nature, EVMs are especially vulnerable to malicious changes by insiders such as designers, programmers, in light of the above there are apparent errors on the face of the impugned order dated April 26, 2024 and the impugned judgment, is liable to be reviewed," it said.

On April 26, a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta had termed the suspicion of manipulation of the EVMs "unfounded" and trashed the demand for reverting to the old paper ballot system.

The bench had said that the polling devices were "secure" and eliminated booth capturing and bogus voting. However, the judgement had

opened a window for aggrieved unsuccessful candidates securing second and third places in poll results and allowed them to seek verification of micro-controller chips embedded in five per cent EVMs per assembly con-

It had directed that from May 1, the symbol loading units should be sealed and secured in a container and stored in a strongroom along with the EVMs for a minimum period of 45 days post-declaration of results.

By the judgement, the top court had dismissed the PILs which had also sought a direction to return to the ballot paper system.

"A voting mechanism must uphold and adhere to the principles of security, accountability, and accuracy. An over complex voting system may engender doubt and uncertainty, thereby easing the chances of manipulation. In our considered opinion, the EVMs are simple, secure and user-friendly. The voters, candidates and their representatives, and the officials of the ECI are aware of the stituency on a written request upon payment of a fee to the upon payment of a fee to the

integrity," the bench had said. It had said the possibility of hacking or tampering with the agnostic firmware in the burnt memory of EVMs to tutor or favour results is "unfounded".

"Accordingly, the suspicion that the EVMs can be configured or manipulated for repeated or wrong recording of vote(s) to favour a particular candidate should be rejected," the bench had said. It had said the incorporation of the VVPAT, an independent vote verification system which enables electors to see whether their votes have been recorded correctly, fortifies the principle of vote verifiability, thereby enhancing the overall accountability of the electoral process.

The seven-phase Lok Sabha polls began on April 19 and will conclude with the announcement of results on

SC notice to Himachal HC on plea of two district judges who question HC Collegium decision

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday sought a response from the Registrar General of the Himachal Pradesh High Court on a plea of two senior most district and sessions judges alleging that their merit and seniority were not considered by the High Court collegium in selection of names for HC judgeship.

A bench comprising justices Hrishikesh Roy and Prashant Kumar Mishra took note of the submissions of senior advocate Arvind Datar, appearing for the two district and sessions judges, that the judicial officers, who are junior to them, had been recommended for the high court judgeship under the inservice quota.

The petition was filed by Chirag Bhanu Singh and Arvind Malhotra, who are presently serving as the district and sessions judges at Bilaspur and Solan, respectively in the state, alleging non-consideration of their names by the high court collegium for the judge-

The senior lawyer referred to a collegium resolution of January 4, 2024 of the apex court and the subsequent communication of the Union Ministry of Law and Justice to the Himachal Pradesh High Court and said that as per these, the names of the petitioner judicial officers should have been considered by

the high court collegium. "The petitioners are the senior most judicial officers in the state and they have unblemished records," Datar said. The plea questioned the selec-

tion process of the judicial officers by the high court collegiums for elevation to as HC judges and said their merit and seniority were ignored despite the issue being specifically referred to in the apex court collegium's resolution.

The plea said the apex court collegium's decision to send their names for reconsideration by the HC collegiums was followed by a communication from Union law minister to the Chief Justice of the high court urging him to reconsider the names of the petitioner judicial

Congress guarantees will change circumstances of people: Sonia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ongress Parliamentary Congress Farmanne Gandhi on Monday assured people that the "guarantees" listed by the party in its Lok Sabha poll manifesto will change their circumstances in this "difficult time".

In a video message, which was shared by the Congress on social media, she said women of the country are facing tough times in the wake of a "severe crisis" and the party's 'Mahalakshmi scheme' for them will help change their

"My dear sisters, women have made a huge contribution, from the freedom struggle to the creation of modern India. However, today our women are facing a crisis amid severe inflation. To do justice to their hard work and penance, the Congress has come up with a revolutionary guarantee," Sonia Gandhi said.

"The Congress' 'Mahalakshmi' scheme guarantees that we will give Rs 1 lakh every year to a



woman from a poor family," she said in her message, an appeal to people voting in the ongoing fourth round of the seven-phase general elections to support the Congress. Sonia Gandhi said the

Congress' "guarantees" have already changed the lives of crores of families in Karnataka and Telangana, where it has also implemented the scheme. The Congress is in power in these two southern states.

"Be it MGNREGA, Right to Information, Right to Education or through schemes like Food Security, the Congress party has empowered millions of Indians. The 'Mahalakshmi' is the latest guarantee to take our work forward," Sonia Gandhi said.

"In this difficult time, I want to assure you that the hand of Congress is with you and this hand will change your cir-cumstances. Thank you. Jai Hind," the former Congress president said, referring to her party's symbol.

Her appeal was shared by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, former party president Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on their X handles.

Rahul Gandhi, while sharing his mother's message, said, 'Women from poor families remember — your one vote is equal to Rs 1 lakh annually in your account." "The Congress' 'Mahalaxmi' scheme is going to be a lifesaver for women struggling amid terrible inflation and unemployment. With Rs 8,500 being déposited directly into bank accounts every month, women of India will become free from financial dependence and will be able to write their own family's destiny," he said. "So vote and change your circumstances," Rahul Gandhi said while sharing Sonia Gandhi's message.

Seventh edition of exercise Shakti between India, France begins in Meghalaya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

The seventh edition of the 'Exercise Shakti' between India and France began in Meghalaya on Monday with an aim to enhance joint military capability of both sides to undertake multi-domain operations in a sub-conventional scenario, the defence ministry

The joint military exercise also seeks to enhance the level of defence cooperation between the two friendly nations and boost their bilateral ties. Exercise Shakti, being held from May 13-26, will enable the two sides to share their best practices in tactics, techniques and procedures of conducting joint operations, the Ministry of Defence said in a state-

Tactical drills to be practiced during the exercise will include response to a terrorist action of capturing a defined territory, setting up of a joint command post, establishment of an intelligence and surveillance centre, securing a helipad or landing



extraction, special heliborne operations, cordon and search operations besides employment of drones and counterdrone systems among others, it Exercise Shakti is a biennial

training event conducted alternatively in India and France. The last edition was conducted in France in November

The seventh edition of the exercise commenced on Monday at Umroi, in a fully developed and modern foreign training node in Meghalaya.

tate developing inter-operability, bonhomie and camaraderie between armed forces personnel of the two countries. This will also enhance the level

of defence cooperation, further

fostering bilateral relations between the two friendly nations," the statement said. The opening ceremony of the joint exercise was attended by Γhierry Mathou, Ambassador of France to India and Major General Prasanna Sudhakar Joshi, General Officer Commanding 51 Sub Area, the ministry said.

Kissa Kursi Ka: Why Maliwal was assaulted

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DELHI

Days after he stepped out of Tihar jail on interim bail, more trouble mounts for AAP and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal as the party's Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal went to the Civil Lines police station on Monday and alleged that Kejriwal's 'controversial' personal assistant, Bibhav Kumar, 'assaulted' her at the Chief Minister's official

Though an official complaint is yet to be made in this regard, sources said AAP leaders, including Kejriwal, have been annoyed with Maliwal due to her prolonged absence and not making at least a courtesy visit when Kejriwal was in jail facing a probe on the multicrore liquor case.

Senior AAP leaders Manish Sisodia, Satyender Jain are still in jail in the same case being probed by Enforcement Directorate while party's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh is on bail.

Sources also said due to widening rift between Maliwal and the AAP, she is being forced

by the party to resign from the Rajya Sabha as the top leadership of AAP are in a mood to give the RS berth to a top lawyer helping Kejriwal and others in the case.

Earlier in the day as per DCP of North M K Meena, they received a PCR call at 9.34 am from a woman who said she had been assaulted at the Delhi Chief Minister's residence. "I am a lady calling from the Chief Minister's official residence. His PA has beaten me up badly on his saying," the PCR call report received by the MP read. However, she has not filed any official complaint as of yet. "After some time, MP madam

came to the police station. However, she left stating she will give a complaint later," the DCP told reporters. According to sources, she said she is not in good condition as of now and hence, will file the complaint later. The call was from Maliwal's mobile number, said another officer, stating that she was the one on the other side of the line.

A team from the Civil Lines police station reached the Chief Minister's residence soon after



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal with Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal

the call. The SHO met Maliwal there and she told him she would soon be going to the police station, the officer said. Maliwal went to the police station at 10 am.

"In the police station, she was informed that a medical examination is necessary to file an assault FIR. She was at the police station for five minutes and left without filing any formal complaint. She said she would be back later," he said. According to an official, she also cried at the police station.

The Rajya Sabha MP and former chairperson of the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) for nine years has not

yet said anything officially and gave no response to messages and calls made to her for her comment.

There is also no reaction from either the Chief Minister's residence or from Delhi's ruling Aam Aadmi Party.

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly and BJP South Delhi candidate Ramvir Singh Bidhuri has condemned the assault on Maliwal and said the accusation is indeed alarming. Earlier, the Chief Secretary had been beaten in a similar manner, and several incidents of scuffles have occurred with many senior leaders of the Aam Aadmi Party, Bidhuri said.

In-charge of BJP's National Information & Technology Department Amit Malviya said, "AĀP RS MP and former DCW chief Swati Maliwal alleges that Delhi CM's PA assaulted her. Call made from Delhi CM's House. Remember, Swati had maintained silence on Kejriwal's arrest. She was in fact not even in India at that time

and didn't return for a long National Further, Commision of Women (NCW) has issued a statement in this regard on its official X (formerly Twitter) and said it will be sending an enquiry team to look into the alleged assault of Maliwal. It will also send a formal letter to the Delhi Police

to send an action taken report (ATR) in the matter. "Maliwal reportedly assaulted the Delhi CM's residence. The NCW vows action, demanding justice from the Delhi Police and sending an enquiry team. Perpetrators must be held accountable. The NCW will be sending a formal letter to Delhi Police to send an ATR in this matter in 3 days," commission said.

Measles jab single dose 2.6 times more likely to be ineffective in kids born via C section: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

A single dose of the measles vaccine is up to 2.6 times more likely to be completely ineffective in children born by C-section, compared to those born naturally, a study has said, emphasising the importance of tailoring vaccination strategies to address the differences in vaccine effectiveness based on birth method.

Measles is a highly infectious disease preventable by vaccines. However, failure of the jab can significantly increase the risk of an outbreak.

The study led by a team of researchers from the universities of Cambridge, UK, and Fudan in China, showed that a second measles jab is vital and induces a robust immunity against measles in children born via C-section.

The study, published in the journal Nature Microbiology, found that the vaccine's effect is linked to the development of the child's gut microbiome —



the vast collection of microbes that naturally live inside the gut. Vaginal birth is known to transfer a greater variety of microbes from mother to baby, which can boost the immune system."We've discovered that the way we're born — either by C-section or natural birth has long-term consequences on our immunity to diseases as we grow up," said Professor Henrik Salje in the University of Cambridge's Department of Genetics.

"Infants born by C-section are

the ones we really want to be following up to make sure they get their second measles jab because their first jab is much more likely to fail," he

added. At least 95 per cent of the population needs to be fully vaccinated to keep measles under

control. For the study, the team used data from previous studies of over 1,500 children in Hunan, China, which included blood samples taken every few weeks from birth to the age of 12.

Over 9,600 children wrongly incarcerated in adult Indian prisons between 2016-2021: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

 $M^{
m ore\ than\ 9,600\ children}_{
m were\ wrongly\ incarcer-}$ ated in adult prisons across India between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2021, a new study has found. The data for the study --Prisons in India" -- was obtained under the Right to

Information (RTI) Act. The study by legal rights body iProbono sheds light on a deeply concerning issue affecting the juvenile justice system in India. The data indicates that at least 9,681 children were wrongly incarcerated in adult prisons between January 1, 2016, and

December 31, 2021.

over 1,600 children were transferred out of prisons across the country every year," the study said, referring to the children identified by Juvenile Justice Boards (JJB) and moved to juvenile homes from adult jails. This figure was ascertained on

"Incarceration of Children in the basis of responses to RTI requests by 285 district and central prisons out of a total of 570. This also does not include the 749 other prisons from which we did not request data, including sub jails, women's prisons, open prisons, special prisons, borstal schools and other prisons. It also, as previously mentioned, only includes those who were successfully identified and transferred,

niles at the time of their alleged offence, including those identified by prison visitors, families or through self-identification," it said. Several states failed to adequately respond to enquiries, with notable non-compliance from Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Nagaland and the Union Territory of Ladakh. Among the states that responded, the study said the figures reveal alarming pat-

With a response rate -- jails that provided data -- of 71 per cent, Uttar Pradesh reported that 2,914 children were transferred from prisons to juvenile homes. However, the data indicates discrepancies, with some prisons showing



high numbers of detained children despite no visits from

In Bihar, where 34 per cent of prisons responded, 1,518 chil-

dren were transferred out of adult jails. Instances were noted of more children being identified by JJBs than those transferred. Madhya Pradesh

RTI Act. West Bengal also provided no data.

Responses from 35 per cent of prisons in Maharashtra revealed that only 34 children were transferred, significantly lower than those identified by JJBs. The study found that Delhi demonstrated a highly organised approach to juvenile justice, with clear directives from Delhi High Court aimed at preventing the incarceration of children in adult facilities.

Haryana -- where data was provided by 90 per cent of prisons -- transferred 1,621 children, correlating well with the number identified during JJB visits. In Rajasthan, 108 children were transferred,

repeated appeals under the cent of its prisons, with a notable lack of information on children identified during

Chhattisgarh transferred 159 children, data from 44 per cent of its jails showed, revealing disparities in JJB visitation patterns across prisons. harkhand transferred 1,115 children, also highlighting discrepancies in IJB visitations and identification practices, with 60 per cent of its prisons responding to RTI

queries for the study.
Prisons in Odisha and Tamil Nadu demonstrated extremely low response rates to the queries, with no children reported to have been transferred from prisons to juvenile homes. The report relied

Section 6 of the RTI Act, which pertains to the Request for Obtaining Information. Between April 2022 and March 2023, 124 RTI applications were filed across 28 states and two Union Territories, primarily directed to Prison Headquarters, except for Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, where applications were filed in each district and central jail at the directions of the Prison Headquarters. The data excludes the Union

Territory jurisdictions of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, and Lakshadweep due to the absence of district and central

www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

Frenemies

India seeks to neutralise China's economic hold but it beats US to become India's biggest trading partner

n the realm of global economics, the dynamics of trade relationships often override geopolitics. India's growing trade affinity with China is a living example of that: China has become India's largest trading partner in 2023-24. This development brings little joy to the nation aspiring to become an alternative to China and striving to bolster its manufacturing sector, with the Prime Minister's 'Make in India' call. Despite the Indian Government's rhetoric urging caution in dealings with China, economic imperatives seem to be reshaping the contours of bilateral trade. Their trade relationship has long been characterised by a mix of competition and cooperation. Both nations are regional powerhouses with vast consumer markets and burgeoning manufacturing sectors, though China is much ahead of India in terms of economy and infrastructure size. Over the years, China has emerged as a crucial supplier of goods to the world, including India, ranging from electronics and machinery to pharmaceuticals and textiles. Concurrently, India



has also found a receptive market for its exports in China, particularly in sectors like raw materials, agricultural products and IT services. But the real problem is the lopsidedness of the trade. We are a net importer of Chinese goods, that too at the cost of our local industry.

Most traders take the easy import route, often substandard but cheap, and make decent profits. This leads to job losses and closure of several MSME manufacturing units. Besides, the nations are not the best of neighbours; relying on China in this scenario is indeed fraught with danger. But where wealth flows, interests follow and that explains India's rising trade ties with

China. The trajectory of bilateral trade has been influenced by several factors. One, the sheer size and harmony of their economies create natural synergies to drive trade volumes. Despite occasional border disputes and geopolitical issues, economic pragmatism often prevails, fostering trade ties. Two, China's manufacturing prowess and cost competitiveness have made it an attractive destination for Indian importers, especially in sectors where domestic production struggles to meet demand. Moreover, the persistent trade deficit with China underscores India's reliance on their goods and highlights the challenges in achieving more equitable trade ties. The geopolitical dimension of India-China trade cannot be overlooked either. The Indian Government must emphasise the need for strategic autonomy and self-reliance in key sectors. Initiatives such as 'Make in India' and Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) must be given further fillip. Additionally, efforts to diversify trade partnerships by nurturing ties with countries like the US, Japan and Australia must be accorded priority and a diversified trade portfolio maintained. Achieving a fundamental rebalancing of India-China trade dynamics is a multifaceted challenge that requires nuanced handling and necessitates a calibrated and pragmatic policy approach.



Flamingoes at the Thol Bird Sanctuary in Mehsana district

Regime change on cards in Nepal?

ASHOK K MEHTA



Amid strained India-Nepal relations, speculation swirls around a potential regime change in Nepal

epal's late Foreign Minister Rishikesh Shah would say that Kathmandu is the rumour capital of the world and also the fount of speculation. Our own Madhuri Dikshit once hailed Nepal as a beautiful country adding: "We're lucky it is part of India". This created a furore but the story appeared with tasteful embellishments in Nepal. Delhi's Chief Minister Madan Lal Khurana waxed eloquent about the sterling qualities of Nepalis working in India and what great servants they made. This led to fireworks in Nepal and bush telegraphy produced several ugly distortions. Hrithik Roshan never said he did not like Nepalese but Indian films were banned and other collateral damage followed. India is usually at the receiving end of Nepal's woes and wrath.

China has begun to feature negatively only recently. India-bashing was at its peak following the economic blockade in 2015 and the rekindling of border dispute when Kalapani, LipuLekh and Limpiyadhura were incorporated into Nepal's map after India included Kalapani in a new map. Chinese Ambassador Hou Yanxi who made her mark rough-shodding Nepalese politicians was targeted by the Indian media. Yanxi became central to a duel between Indian and Nepalese media. How poorly informed political class. celebrities and even the media about Nepal were apparent. This longish backgrounder is a necessary prelude to describe last week's rumour and speculation about another attempt at regime change in Nepal. The report about the split in JSP (N) took place when its supremo, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health and Population Upendra Yadav was visiting the US. The story goes that NC leader Sher Bahadur Deuba attempted to topple the Left coalition led by Prachanda by lrawing out Yaday (12 lawmak ers) and Madhav Nepal of Unified Socialists (10 lawmakers). 20 plus lawmakers are necessary for the NC-led Democratic Alliance to make a comeback. The attempt failed as UML's KP Oli preempted the plan by splitting JSP(N) by



getting former colleague and lawmaker Ashok Rai to walk away from Yaday with seven of 12 lawmakers. The inside story is different: Yadav had plans to overwhelm numerically the Hill Nepalese with Madhesis in the approaching party national convention. This upset the Hill and Madhesis members unhappy with Yadav. Rai approached the Election Commission and registered a new party JSP sans N for Nepal. Yadav has decided to fight the Rai faction in court. Rai has pledged support for Prachanda. Reports about Deuba's deal vary: offering Yadav Premiership and/or a shared term with Madhav Nepal. This deal too fizzled out as Unified Socialists were already divided between two former PMs, Nepal and Ihalanath Khanal. India figured in the regime change as Deuba. Operation Topple requires either RSP (21 law-

COUNTRIES AS UNILATERALISM HAS CREPT **NEIGHBOURHOOD** makers) or JSP(N) and Unified Socialists together to desert the DIPLOMACY. ruling dispensation. The kingmaker for this great game is the WHILE NEPAL HAS CPN Maoists with 31 lawmak-DONE A TIT-FOR-TAT ers that both NC and UMI. would need to stay in power. OVER THE MAP, The threat to the Prachandaled coalition will lurk in the CHINA HAS nooks and corners of UNILATERALLY Parliament posed by parties with double-digit strength.

declare a truce to infuse a modicum of political stability. It has been blocking parliamentary proceedings for more than a month over the cooperative fund fraud in which Home Minister Rabi Lamichhane, RSP is involved. It has demanded a parliamentary probe into the alleged wrongdoings of Lamichhane. Prachanda has agreed to an enquiry in which others involved in the scam are also investigated. Parliament resumed after a short recess but NC is not allowing it to function. The budget has to be passed shortly and maybe the government will be forced to take the ordinance route.In India too it is time for regime change but through the world's longest election process. The BJP excels in toppling opposi-tion governments with Operation Lotus. India has played a pivotal role in introducing democracy and its restoration in Nepal. Foreign Minister Jaishankar who has become a rock star in the election campaign is sharing pearls

of wisdom on every conceiv-

able subject, especially India's

Neighbourhood First Policy.

He said that politics may go up

or down in the neighbourhood

but India is regarded as a

friend by the people. Later, he admitted that in diplomacy as

Every vote counts

MIND GAMES

PLAYED

IN BOTH

ARE REGULARLY

- it's part of the game. The latest setback in India-Nepal relations is the resurfacing of the festering border dispute. Having incorporated it in its state emblem the government has ordered the new map to be printed on Rs 100 bank notes about which Jaishankar observed that Nepal unilaterally took some measures but they can't change reality on the ground, adding 'discussions are ongoing through an established platform. As far as is known, no discussion has taken place. For Prachanda and Oli, nationalism is the magic mantra. When Prachanda came to India on an official visit last June during the joint press statement, PM Modi said that the border dispute would be resolved through a joint mechanism. Strangely this fact was not mentioned in the press release of the joint statement. Mind games are regularly played in both countries as unilateralism has crept into neighbourhood diplomacy. While Nepal has done a tit-for-tat over the map, China has unilaterally changed the LAC with India

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are

CHANGED THE LAC NC, the single-largest party is in business there are setbacks E EDITOR

SC judgments have strengthened democracy



Democratic spectacle owes its strength and boldness to a series of landmark legal judgments that have fortified its foundations

lections, serving as the cornerstone of democracy, offer a platform for citizens to voice their opinions, hold leaders accountable, and actively engage in shaping the future of their nation. In India, elections transcend mere political proceedings; they evolve into grand festivals, embodying the collective will and aspirations of over a billion people. India's electoral odyssey, marked by its vast scale, diversity, and intricacy, has been fortified by a series of seminal legal rulings. These decisions have been instrumental in shaping and reinforcing the democratic framework of India, ensuring fairness, transparency, and inclusivity in the electoral process. Among the plethora of cases that demonstrate the resilience of the legal system, five stand out as pillars that have fortified India's electoral journey.

Fundamental Right to Vote: At the core of India's electoral democracy lies the fundamental right to vote, enshrined in the Constitution. Over time, the judiciary has steadfastly upheld and safeguarded this right through



various legal pronouncements. In the landmark 1977 case of Mohinder Singh Gill v. The Chief Election Commissioner, the Supreme Court of India unequivocally affirmed that the right to vote is sacrosanct and any arbitrary deprivation of this right is unconstitutional.

The crux of this case revolved around assessing the constitutional validity of electoral laws that might encroach upon the fundamental right

Electoral Reforms and Transparency: Ensuring transparency and accountability in the electoral process has been an ongoing endeavour, guided by judicial interventions aimed at curbing malpractices and fostering electoral integrity. The 2002 case of Association for Democratic Reforms v. Union of India marked a significant milestone in this journey.

This case presented the chal-

lenge of reconciling the right marginalised communities to privacy of political candidates with the public's right to information, necessitating a delicate balance between transparency in electoral processes and individual privacy rights.

Inclusive Representation

and Minority Rights: The diverse social fabric of India underscores the necessity for inclusive representation and safeguarding minority rights in the electoral arena. Legal judgments have played a pivotal role in upholding these principles and ensuring equitable participation for all segments of society. The 1991 case of Indra Sawhney v. Union of India, commonly known as the Mandal Commission case, stands as a testament to this commitment.

This case grappled with the challenge of affirmative action and reservation policies, striking a balance between equitable representation of marginalised communities and the principles of meritocracy enshrined in the Indian Constitution. The landmark judgment underscored the commitment to inclusive representation, empowering

and fostering social justice in the electoral process.

Effective Electoral Disputes Resolution: Efficient resolution of electoral disputes is indispensable for upholding the sanctity of elections and fostering public trust in the democratic process. This judgment bolstered the credibility of the electoral process, ensuring expeditious and impartial resolution of dis-

putes. Safeguarding Electoral Rights and Freedoms: Preserving electoral rights and freedoms is paramount for the integrity of the electoral process. Legal judgments have been instrumental in protecting these rights and holding authorities accountable for any infringements. The 2015 case of Mohd. Sattar v. State of Rajasthan serves as a poignant example. The judgment reaffirmed the principle of universal suffrage, ensuring that every citizen's voice s heard.

(The writer is corporate and legal advisor and founder of AŬ Corporate Advisory and Legal Services; views are

ELECTION GUARANTEES

Madam — This election season in India is filled with a plethora of extended guarantees from different political parties and their renowned leaders. Initially, it was only PM Narendra Modi who extended oral guarantees termed as 'Modi ki Guarantee'. Now, to compete with him, recently released Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal has also presented his list of 10 guarantees to script a 'new India'. However, Mr. Arvind made it clear that he didn't want to be the Prime Minister of India. Nevertheless, his support for the INDIA bloc has grown stronger, especially after he was sentenced to Tihar Jail by the apex court.

Elections have a historic relationship with political guarantees and promises. But we all already know how many of these guarantees are actually fulfilled. The irony is that people don't need guarantees to survive and ensure their well-being; instead, we need commitment and actions for the actual general welfare of every section of our society.Since Mr. Kejriwal is on interim bail until June 1st, considering the short duration of time he is outside the jail, he is trying his best to reach out to the maximum public with his statements, social media posts, press conference conversations, and other personal interactions with the countrymen to challenge the BJP in general and PM Modi in particular for his arrest during this peculiar time of elections. Now that it is a fight between the guarantees of the two biggest political parties, it is up to the people to decide whom they will choose in the tough fight of the Lok Sabha elec-

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

CONTROVERSIAL CONTEST

Madam — The Eurovision Western Music Contest has been held in various countries across Europe for the last 68 years. The youth there enjoy this competition, and spectators and music lovers are often seen in a dancing mood throughout the event. However, this year's event, which concluded late on Saturday night, can be termed as the most political, controversial, chaot-



midst the dynamic political landscape, where elections have been completed in some places and others are still pending, it's crucial to acknowledge that not all leaders hoist the banner of public welfare. Merely casting a ballot doesn't guarantee the orchestration of effective governance. Instead of succumbing to the illusion that voting alone resolves everything, let's dispel such notions. The real-

ic, discriminatory, and tense event in its history. For this, we have to thank the security personnel of Sweden and the officials of Malmö city, who were ultimately successful in bringing this event to its destination. As a result, Swiss singer Nemo was declared the winner for his song

'The Code'. Otherwise, as soon as people came to know that Israeli singer Eden Golan had also been included in this competition, a round of protests started in the

It seemed as if Malmö, Sweden's thirdlargest city, had been divided into two parts, with 70 percent of people against Israel and 30 percent in favor of the Israeli singer. In the context of the ongoing war in Gaza, Dutch singer and contender Joost Klein was expelled from the competition due to

a backstage dispute. The world seems to be deeply divided due to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and the Russian attack on Ukraine. England's daily 'The Telegraph' rightly ran the headline 'This is the most poisonous Eurovision

in history' Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

resources in disarray. If you're still clinging to the belief that all politicians are solely motivated by altruism, it's a precarious innocence to maintain. However, rather than consigning voting to oblivion, let's approach it with discernment. Let's seek out candidates who sway to the tune of integrity and genuinely prioritize the welfare of the people. And let's not overlook the importance of advocating for electoral reforms, weaving a fabric of transparency, accountabil

ity, and fairness in the political sphere. Your vote,

fellow citizens, carries weight, especially when

interwoven with others who aspire to a more

just and equitable society. Remember, in the

intricate tapestry of democracy, every thread

ity often reveals a different narrative, where

power dynamics favour those with deep pock-

ets and questionable tactics, leaving trust and

contributes to a brighter future for us all **Imdadullah** | Hyderabad

KEJRIWAL'S ELECTIONEERING

Madam — This is wtih reference to your Editorial "Wild card" (May 13). The national convenor of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Arvind Kejriwal will campaign in favour of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) candidates across the country, Sandeep Pathak, the party's national general secretary said in a statement on Sunday, 12 May. Kejriwal will campaign in Lucknow on May 15, in Jamshedpur on May 16 and in Mumbai on May 17, he added. Kejriwal, who came out of Tihar Jail earlier this week, said he will work tirelessly and campaign across the country to end the "dictatorship" of the Modi government at the Centre. All the INDIA bloc constituents want Kejriwal to visit their states and campaign for them.

The Supreme Court has granted interim bail to the AAP leader to participate in the Lok Sabha poll campaigning.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

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

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

FIRST COLUMN

THE RISE OF **ROBOTS**

Robots are emerging as the next frontier, but can they replace humans?



arious research and studies have shown that the next frontier in Artificial intelligence is the Robots. Much more added to it are the big names- Jeff Bezos, Microsoft and many others who are investing in human robots according to people with knowledge of the situation, as part of a scramble to find new applications for the so-called Al Technology. Undoubtedly, robots have increasingly become an integral part of our lives in this century, impacting various aspects of society, industry and everyday activities. The robots have revolutionized in many key sectors be it industrial, healthcare, agricultural, transportation or any other. The science of robots is revolutionizing day by day and scientists are making innovations in robots. Research studies show that by 2050, robots will overcome human beings as they will develop strong intel-

Many developing nations are involving the use of robots. In the industrial sector robots are performing the tasks such as assembling, welding, painting and packaging in factories thereby increasing efficiency, precision and productivity. In the healthcare sector, robots can perform tasks such as surgery, patient care, rehabilitation and medication dispensing with great precision and even provide support and assistance to elderly or disabled individuals. Talking about the automobile industry, autonomous vehicles- including cars, drones and delivery robots, are transforming transportation and logistics while self-driven car makers are promising to make transportation safer, more efficient and accessible to people who are unable to drive. In the agricultural sector, agricultural robots such as drones



and automated harvesters can help optimise farming practices by monitoring crops, applying fertilizers and pesticides precisely and thereby harvesting crops efficiently which ultimately improves yields, reduces labour costs and minimizes environmental impact. Not only these but the robots are doing jobs and servings in restaurants too. The robots have taken down the responsibility of the pizza boy in pizza shops and even are performing tasks such as customer service, cleaning, and inventory management. They enhance operational efficiency and provide novel experiences for customers.

Robots are indeed reshaping various aspects of everyone's lives, from how individuals work to how they interact with technology and each other. Today, educational robots are gaining an advantage in classrooms over teachers, engineering, and other STEM concepts in a hands-on manner.

Overall, robots are transforming the way we live, work and interact with the world around us. With advancements in robotics technology continuing to expand their capabilities and applications, the question of whether robots will replace humans in various tasks and roles is a complex one. While robots and automation have the potential to replace humans in some repetitive and routine tasks, they also create new opportunities and roles for humans in other areas. However, many tasks and roles require human creativity, empathy, and problem-solving skills, which are difficult for robots

There is no denying the fact that the evolution of robots will profoundly impact society, offering new opportunities for innovation, collaboration, and improving quality of life. However, it will also raise the important ethical, social and economic considerations that must be carefully addressed with time. As robotics technology continues to advance, it will further transform society and open new possibilities for innovation and human-machine collaboration.

(The writer is an educator, views are personal)

The plight of unwed mothers of Kolam tribe



The stigmatisation of 'Kumari Matas' in the Kolam tribe highlights their struggle for social acceptance and economic empowerment



olam, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) of the Dravidian race is known for its unique culture, language, indigenous knowledge and matrilineal society. They reside predominantly in the Yavatmal, Chandrapur, some parts of Amravati, Wardha and Nanded districts of Maharashtra and in some parts of Adilabad of Telangana. They have histor-ical roots in Andhra Pradesh and later migrated to the regions of Vidarbha and Marathwada. This Proto- Australoid tribe is often highlighted for its unwed mothers. As per the reports of The Marathwada TRIBE, CLASSIFIED MAS A Indian Express, there are at least 45 registered unwed mothers and over 450 unregistered unwed mothers only in the three blocks named Maregaon, Pandarkawada and JhariJamini of Yavatmal. Being a matriarchal society, the Kolams of Yavatmalhave always celebrated womanhood. They celebrate the first mensuration of girls they worship "Gabhuri", the mother Goddess as their main deity to uphold their matriarchal societal roots. However, the situation is changing.

Though the unwed mothers have been renamed as the "KumariMaata" due to their assimilation with mainstream society yet due to their rising inclination towards the male-dominated society, patriarchal tenets are growing in these traditions. Therefore, the position of women is also declining consequently and those unwed mothers who used to live a normal life previously are now considered "Bad character women". There are various case studies and stories of women of the Kolam tribe where the elite in the society or financially stronger like contractors, outsiders visit the areas for work purposes, establish physical interactions with the women in their communities and refuse to marry them when they are expecting a child. Women are frequently conned by marriage promises because they are socially, emotionally and economically vulnerable. The woman is held liable for the premarital pregnancy, whereas the responsible males are exclud-



PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUP GRAPPLING WITH A SIGNIFICANT ISSUE OF UNWED MOTHERS, EMPHASISING THE **URGENCY FOR** INTERVENTIONS

TO TACKLE THEIR COMPLEX SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL STRUGGLES

ed from this process. Most of these Kolam women work

as agricultural labourers, construction labourers and other low-wage activities due to which it becomes very easy for the traders and other outsiders to abuse them physically. For example, according to Deshpande (2016) "border districts of Maharashtra, such as Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Bhandara, Buldhana, Amravati, Nagpur and Gondia too have unwed mothers, the numbers in Yavatmal are higher because of AS A its proximity to the chilli fields of Telangana, where work (for the poor) is available throughout the year. A number of unwed mothers say they were lured by neighbouring state's men who promise marriage but left when they became pregnant."

being a minor whereas others are due to their backwardness. Though in most tribal societies, giving birth to a child is a biological phenomenon and hence considered pious but yet due to the assimilation with the conventional societies they are also recognizing childbirth as a structural process where the consent of society, kin and kith is necessarv. These structural changes are pushing unwed mothers toward various other socio-cultural and economic problems.

The most important among these is that unwed mothers are not accepted within the community nor do they find any other groom, as they are considered obscene. As a result, for the entire period of life, they serve as a single mother due to which the pressure of childbearing increases among them. The problems are more serious as being unwed mothers they often face disgrace in the newly constructed norms of patriarchal society. Sometimes they need to records like ration cards, Aadhar

leave the village and stay in the outskirts whereas in many cases the other women are not allowed to talk to them or join them for any occasion, as they are believed to be malignant due to their pre-marital physical relations. The consequences are economic and occupational also. As a daily wage labourer, their leisure time is very little but being single mothers they need breaks for breastfeeding and childcare due to which they face pay cuts. Sometimes they need to pay a fine to the panchayats also

for their "misconduct".

These unknown pregnancies among the women of Kolam are a crucial issue.

These indicate the lack of awareness about contraceptive measures, education, economic weakness and social vulnerability that Some of them get pregnant while often attract these women to fake marriage conversations and other luring proposals. As per the report of Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University (2018-2019) in Yavatmal, "28.84 per cent Kumari Matas are in the age range of 26 years.36 30

centKumariMatas having education up to Fourth standard, 67.30 per cent Kumari Matas are belonging to 'Kolam' caste, 82.69 per cent are homeless. 51.09 per cent are pregnant due to outsiders, 82.07 per cent children of Kumari Matas are admitted in the school by furnishing the name of mother only, 92.30 per cent had delivery at home,61.63 per cent getting help from Government schemes".

The subject is more critical as many of them are uncounted because most of them do not come forward to speak due to socio-cultural stigma and thus their stories remain untold. This has again a negative impact on them as their complete family details are not mentioned in the Government

cards, etc. which deprives them of getting the benefits of many Government schemes that can make their life easier.

As per the report of Pune Times Mirror, "a survey of such victims is conducted every year by a woman and child development (WCD) officer with the help of Anganwadi workers and a junior protection officer at the taluka level." Further, the Anganwadi workers help these unwed mothers by teaching them the methods of nutrition and hygiene. The Bombay High Court has already directed the state to the need for the rehabilitation of young unwed mothers among the Kolam tribe. The Government of Kerala is also running a similar kind of scheme called "Snehasparsham" which offers unwed mothers ?1000/per month to lessen the financial urden of these economically vulnerable unwed mothers. The need of the hour is to initiate some projects and schemes for them so the Kumari Matas of Yavatmala can be included in the parameters of Government benefits at a large

The infrastructural facilities like schools and primary health care centres, are the basic needs of these regions. Endeavours should also be taken to open basic schools and training centres for vocational courses like sewing, beautician, etc. The awareness about Self-Self-help groups can make them financially independent through various micro-level businesses like horticulture, bee-keeping, jelly-making etc. Further, documentation of unwed mothers can give them a social identity and make them live a life of dignity and self-respect.

(The writer is Vice Chancellor, Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh; views are personal)

Kejriwal's bail: Unveiling political prophecies post-release

The Delhi CM's release sparks controversy with ominous predictions and bold political statements, fuelling nationwide debate on democracy's future

Persons accused of criminal cases getting arrested and the courts granting them bail is nothing new. Even if the person happens to be the reigning chief minister of a State or a former union minister of finance, the bail does not absolve the accused of the charges. The Supreme Court order that released the Delhi Chief Minister on bail from the custody of the Enforcement Directorate says it is a provisional arrangement so that he could participate in the election campaign as the Lok Sabha poll comes once in

five years. So far, so good. But what came after the Delhi Chief Minister was released on bail needs to be analyzed threadbare. On Saturday, he worshipped at Lord Anjaneya Modi is likely to retire in 2025



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

Temple and addressed a press meeting. What he said during the press meeting is shocking and capable of causing fear in the minds of the people. He said if the BJP wins the 2024 Lok Sabha election and comes back to power, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will send all Opposition leaders to jail. Kejriwal also claimed that Amit Shah is being groomed as the next Prime Minister as when he turns 75. Yet another disclosure made by the Delhi Chief Minister was that Yogi Adityanath would be removed as chief minister of Uttar Pradesh within two months of the BJP coming back to power.

The national and international media are celebrating Kejriwal's bail and his prophecies. A major section of the media forgot the fact that they were the ones to give running commentaries of Live events without joining the game as players. The media in Kerala and Tamil Nadu are on Cloud Nine reporting that there is going to be a change of Government at the Centre after 4 June 2024. Well, let's leave it to the voters who are in the process of electing their representatives. It is good to see

that doubts about tampering the electronic voting machines have taken a stage and the Opposition leaders have started working on the modalities of Government formation. Saturday's press meeting by the Delhi Chief Minister took one to 2019 when the same had claimed that if the BJP wins the

General Election and returns to power, there would not be any more elections in India. "The 2019 General Election would be the last poll the country will see if Narendra Modi returns to power," these were the words of Kejriwal in

After the 2019 general election, Narendra Modi returned to power with a larger majority and the country saw regular elections to all the State assemblies that completed their mandatory five-year tenure. Though the claim fell flat on all fours, neither the media that flashed Kejriwal's warning about the "last" general elections nor our political pundits remembered the same.

Once the results were announced and the BJP was returned to power, that became the news, and everything else was forgotten (at least till 2024). Yet another battlefront has

been opened by the Opposition and that is the One Nation, One Leader concept, the brand new slogan coined by Kejriwal. Wasn't it George Santayana, the Spanish-American philosopher who said in 1863 that "those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"? Narendra Modi, I am sure

does know this adage quite well and hence there is no possibility of following the slogan coined by Kejriwal.

The entire media in the country is unanimous in their opinion that elections are the festivals of democracy. But the festivals will certainly lose their charm if they are fueled by half-lies and full lies. One is at a loss to understand the logic behind the claim by certain leaders that the BJP government would subvert the

Who derailed the Constitution much against the order of the Supreme Court that the basic structure of the Constitution should never be tampered with. It was in 1976 that then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi altered the preamble of the Constitution by incorporating

the words secularism, socialism etc. India survived as a nation from 1947 to 1976 without the terms secularism and socialism in its Constitution. B R Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, was totally against the inclusion of these terms when it was drafted for the first time. It was after the introduction of these terms that communal riots and terrorism peaked in India.

Accusations and allegations are fine because they add to the intensity of the campaigning. But baseless allegations rob the beauty of the election process. Interestingly, the leaders named by the Delhi chief minister as potential victims of the Modi regime are not saints or beatified ones. Reports from Delhi say that Kejriwal

times by the ED for questioning in connection with money laundering. The Chief Minister chose to ignore the same with contempt. He might not know the truth that the reigning Prime Minister cooperated with the Supreme Court-appointed Special Investigation Team under the chairmanship of R K Raghavan, a former CBI director to grill him about the Gujarat riots. For 19 hours, the then Gujarat Chief Minister sat through the grilling and answered all the queries they asked. That is what we call honesty and integrity. People still hope that Kejriwal too is honest.

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

LS elections: Srinagar sees highest voter turnout since 1996

MOHIT KANDHARI

Over 36 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the Srinagar Lok Sabha seat where enthusiastic voters participated peacefully in the festival of democracy' to elect their public representative amid tight security arrangements on Monday.

Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir PK Pole addressing media in Srinagar said, "Over 36.1 per cent voter turnout was recorded till 5.00 is most likely to touch 40 percent, the highest ever voter turnout in the Srinagar Referring to the participation

since 1989". He said there was no poll boycott call, and no other untoward incident of stone pelting was reported from anywhere across 18 Assembly segments falling under the Srinagar Lok Sabha

So far the highest ever figure of 40.94 per cent voter turnout was recorded in the 1996 Lok Sabha polls.

In 2019, 14.43 percent voter turnout was recorded, 25.86 percent in 2014, 25.55 percent turnout was recorded till 5.00 in 2009, 18.57 percent turnout pm and the final tally of votes was recorded in 2004, 11.93 percent in 1999, and 30.06 in 1998 Lok Sabha polls.



of Kashmiri migrant voters in the poll process, CEO PK Pole Kashmir migrant voters



(approximately 6000 out of franchise across 26 special 52100) exercised their right to polling booths set up in

Of 18 Assembly constituencies falling in the Srinagar Lok Sabha seat, only two Char-e-Shareef and Kangan assembly segments recorded over 50 percent voter turnout till 5.00

On the other hand, the Habba Kadal Assembly segment in the heart of Srinagar recorded the lowest voter turnout of 13.

25 percent till 5.00 p.m. Lal Chowk and Hazrat Bal Assembly segments recorded a little over 26 percent polling while Khanyar recorded 23 percent polling. The South Kashmir districts of Shopian and Pulwama recorded over

while the central Kashmir district of Ganderbal recorded around 45 percent polling. This is the first major poll in Kashmir since J&K special status was abrogated by the BJP government on August 5, 2019 and the erstwhile state was also downgraded into two union territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir.

The main contest here is between the National Conference's influential Shia leader Ruhullah Mehdi, Peoples Democratic Party's youth leader Waheed Para, who is out on bail in a terrorrelated case and Apni Party's Mohammad Ashraf Mir.

CBSE Board results: Over 93 per cent pass in Class X, 87.98 per cent in Class XII

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

entral Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Monday declared the results for Classes 10 and 12 on Monday. The pass percentage in Class 10 was 93.60 and the pass percentage in the Class 12 exams increased marginally and stood at 87.98 per cent. The percentage of passing for both classes has increased marginally from last year. The top-scored subject was Mathematics in Class 10 and Painting in Class 12. The results of both the classes were declared on the official website

In the declared results for Classes 10 and 12, the girls have outshone the boys, as 94.75 per cent girls have cleared the 10th exams and more than 91 per cent girls pass exams in the 12th class. The CBSE announced that there would be no merit list to "avoid unhealthy competition" and the rise in pass percentage is due to an increase in the number of competency-based questions in the exams this

For Class 12, more than 16.21 lakh students appeared in the

examination, 1.16 lakh students scored above 90 per cent and 24,068 students scored above 95 per cent. The Government-aided and government schools have achieved a pass percentage of 91.42 and 88.23 respectively, leaving behind the Private schools with a pass percentage of 87.70. The passing percentage for Class 10 has been 93.60 which was a rise of 0.48 percentage points from last year. More than 2.12 lakh students in Class 10, passed with above 90 per cent, and 47,000 students have scored above 95 per cent marks. Although more than 1.32 lakh students have been placed in 'compartment', but the number has decreased

from last year. Class 10 saw the highest number of full marks scorers in the subject of Mathematics, with 11,253 students followed by subjects of Sanskrit with 6,700 and Artificial Intelligence with 6,269 top scorers. While the maximum number of full marks scorers in Class 12 were in the subject of Painting with 10,402 followed by Chemistry at 2,152 and Psychology at 2,134 students.

To praise and increase the confidence of the students, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, congratulated them by referring to them as "exam warriors". He tweeted on 'X'

saying, "Dear #ExamWarriors Congratulations to all of you who have successfully passed the CBSE Class XII exams! I am immensely proud of your accomplishment and your relentless dedication. I also acknowledge the efforts of your supportive families and dedicated educators, whose unwavering support has been crucial to this success."

The Prime Minister further tweeted for the students who were not able to score as much marks as they wanted, by saying "this is just one milestone in your journey." Heartily congratulate my young friends who have successfully cleared the #CBSE Class X and Class XII examinations. While you cherish the success and enjoy the fruits of your labour, do also utilise this time to make an effective plan for higher studies." said Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Education, Government of

Many other leaders like Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, and Union Minister Prakash Javadekar also congratulated the students for passing with flying colors.

Admission starts in apparel, textile technology courses

PNS AMRITSAR

Department of Apparel and Textile technology of Guru Nanak Dev University has started admissions to undergraduate as well as post graduate programmes like BTech (Textile Processing Technology), M Sc Fashion Designing (2 years) and M.Sc. Fashion Designing (FYIP). The programmes are blend of theory, practical, industrial training and research in various aspects of dye chemistry, dyeing/printing/finishing technology to the control of nology, textile testing, garment manufacturing, colour measurements and analysis and waste management.

Dr Varinder Kaur, Head and Associate Professor, Department of Apparel and Textile Technology, said that in the current session, two students of B. Tech (Textile Processing Technology) semester IV got selected as interns under National Technical Textile Mission, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India and are offered Rs. 40,000 Internship for two months under GIST 2.0 Scheme. Seven students of B.

Tech (Textile Processing Technology) VIIIth Semester are undertaking 6 months industrial training(as part of their curriculum) with internship of Rs. 25000/ month in one of the leading textile industry of India, Trident Group. Other students are also undertaking training at other renowned textile industries of India with handsome stipend. He said the prominent recruiters are Abhishek Group of Industries Ltd (Trident), Vardhman Groups of Companies, Arvind Mills, Alok Industries ltd., Dystar India Ltd., JCT Ltd., NaharGroups of Inds. Ltd., Welspun Ltd., Atul Ltd, Jayshree textiles, Orient Craft Itd, Raymonds Ltd., Malwa Industries Ltd., Reliance Industries Ltd., Sarla Textiles, OCM Textiles Ltd., Saluja group of Industries, Donear etc. The institute ensures 100 per cent placements and exhaustive industrial training of the students, the course of B Tech in textile Processing Technology is in high demand. The admission process for all the programmes has started. Details

are available on website.

Will be back from Tihar on June 5 if INDIA Bloc wins: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said he will be back from Tiĥar jail on June 5 if the INDIA Bloc comes to power after the election results are announced. Arrested in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam, Kejriwal has been granted interim bail by the Supreme Court till June 1 to campaign in the Lok Sabha elections. He will have to surrender and go back to jail on June 2. June 1 is the last day of the seven-phase elections and the votes will be counted on June 4.

Addressing his Aam Aadmi Party councillors, Kejriwal alleged that efforts were made to break and humiliate him during judicial custody in Tihar. This was his first meeting with the councillors after his release from jail. He called upon the councillors to engage in the cleanliness work of Delhi with more hard work and dedication.

There were two CCTV cameras inside my cell in Tihar and the feed was monitored by 13 officers. It was said that the CCTV feed was also provided to PMO. Modi ji was monitoring me... I do not know what grudge Modi has against me," he claimed. Kejriwal said the AAP leaders are respected and loved by BJP because of our work".

election results inside jail on June 4. If the INDIA bloc What is this? This is a miracomes to power, I will be back cle; this is God's grace."

on June 5," he told party councillors.

The AAP National Convenor said they (BJP-led Central government) tried their best to harass him (Kejriwal) in various ways inside the jail, sometimes used to insult him. "They did not give me insulin for 15 days. I have been suffering from diabetes for 20 years and have been on insulin for 10 years. I have very high sugar levels, and I take 52 units of insulin daily, which is a lot. "When I went to jail, my

sugar level was increasing daily, sometimes it was 300, sometimes 325. It was then that I started getting worried because if the sugar level remains this high for a long time, then it gradually starts affecting your organs like kidney and liver, and it can lead to permanent damage. I used to keep requesting the doctors to give me insulin, but they kept delaying," he said are not betting whether they (BJP) will get over 400 seats, "I have to go back to jail on (BJP) will get over 400 seats, June 2. I will be watching the the bet is that whether they

promised free gas but has Shah to campaign increased its price ... so all his guarantees are acts of 420," said Mamata, adding "the BJP is for BJP candidate going out of power this time round ... the people have understood this and are voting

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

With only 12 days left for the Lok Sabha general elections, senior leaders of the BJP, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, is going to address a public meeting in Gurgaon

place for this huge rally," BJP district president Kamal Yadav said, after addressing a meeting with the party's factionary at the party office Gurukamal on Monday. Haryana will go to polls on May 25 and incumbent MP Rao Inderjit Singh is eyeing a third win from the

in Gurugram

on Thursday evening in sup-port of party candidate and Gurgaon seat, after having won



incumbent MP Rao Inderjit Singh.

Senior party functionaries said on Monday, that thousands of people are expected to attend the rally that will be held at Huda Ground in Sector-5 in Gurgaon. "The party is embarking towards a historic win and to top that Amit Shah ji is coming to the city to shower us with his guidance.

from there in the 2014 and 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Yadav also asked all the officials to bring as many people as possible to the rally.

He asked the workers to go door-to-door and invite people to the rally. "The workers would go door to door and tell people about the achievements of the Modi government and also urge them to come to Shah's Security and management is in rally," on May 16.

Voter fatigue...

The YSRCP alleged that party agent Suresh Reddy was stabbed at Mandi stabbed at Mandi Krishnapuram village in Chittoor's Gudipala mandal. It also alleged that TDP supporters attacked party member B Anji Reddy at Aravallipadu in the Darsi constituency. Polling for 175 Assembly seats and 25 Lok Sabha constituencies in the coastal state is taking place

simultaneously. TDP MLC Mohammed Ahmed Shariff wrote a letter to Chief Electoral Officer Mukesh Kumar Meena, complaining about alleged attacks by YSRCP cadres on number of displaced Kashmiri TDP supporters at Rentala village in Rentichintala mandal of Palnadu district.

Maoists to obstruct voter Latha and Owaisi are facing off in Hyderabad, which the felling a tree and blocking a latter won by a sizeable margin road leading to remote Sonapi West Singhbhum district. Khunti in Jharkhand recorded

highest voter turnout of 68.40 per cent followed by Singhbhum at 68.00 per cent while Palamau recorded lowest at 60.59 per cent Samastipur seat in Bihar recorded highest voter turnout of 58.32 per cent followed by Ujairpur at 57.50 per cent while Munger recorded lowest at 53.41 per centVoting was progressing peacefully in Jammu and Kashmir where generations of the Abdullah to cast their vote as their In Jharkhand, security forces names were missing from the thwarted an attempt by electoral rolls.

BIHAR

Sunny is the son of Maheshwar Hazari who had won the seat on a JD(U) ticket in 2009, while Shambhavi is the daughter of Ashok

Choudhary, a Minister in the Nitish Kumar Cabinet in Bihar. According to the Election Commission data, 56.36 per cent of voters exercised their franchise in Samastipur, 54.93 per cent in Ujiarpur, 54.28 per cent in Darbhanga, 54.08 per cent in Begusarai and 51.44 per cent in Munger till 5 pm. The voter turnout in the five Lok Sabha seats was recorded at 54.14 per cent till 5 pm, the officials said. Polling for the five Lok Sabha seats in the State will decide the fate of 55 candidates, they said. A voter in Bihar's Munger claimed she was not allowed to cast her vote after authorities asserted that her name was not registered in the voter list. However, elders in her family, who passed away several years ago, still had their names on the list.

WEST BENGAL

This was followed by Ranaghat with 77.46 per cent and neighbouring Krishnagar 77.29 per cent voters casting their

While 77.36 per cent voters exercised their franchise at Bardhaman- East, Baharampur from where Chowdhury is contesting witnessed 75.36 per cent polling. Asansol from where Shatrughan Sinha is contesting against SS Ahluwalia witnessed surprisingly low 69.43 per cent polling. Even as a comparatively

ow turnout of voters tended to

keep all sides guessing experts said things could hurt the Trinamool Congress the most. "While in 2019 and 2021 elections the polling was around 82 per cent "in panchayat elections, Bengal saw 85 per cent polling of which at least 8-10 per cent was bogus ... now this is the real percentage and the TMC will have to face it," said PCC leader Ashutosh adding, "TMC knows what they will face now." Meanwhile, in a related development Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday attacked Prime

Minister Narendra Modi saying his guarantees were all "acts of 420" (cheating) and asked him first to fulfill his earlier promises.

"Modi is giving guarantees after guarantees, but the question is what about the promises that he made in the past 10 years... Did anyone of you get Rs 15 lakh in your accounts that he promised ... did he provide yearly 2 crore and in total 20 crore jobs ... Is he giving free gas, free ration and free water which he claims ... we are giving free ration and he is taking the credit ... he

without fear."

She, however, raised the EVM issue once again saying how some machines had been tampered with. "Today also I got a report that people are pressing TMC's symbol and the vote is going to the BJP ... this is the BJP is planning to win the elections," she said adding they will be defeated in any case.

MAHARASHTRA

From Page 1

'Today, a packet arrived here in the name of everyone called 'Raja' with the 'prasad' and a plea by the guardian minister to vote for his party. The irony is that in many villages, the local refused to accept the 'prasad' and in others, the village elders siphoned off half the 'prasad," Rohit Pawar said, while taking a dig at the BJP's candidate Ahmednagar Dr. Sujay R. Vikhe-Patil Dr Sujay is taking on Nilesh D. Lanke of the NCP (Sharad Pawar)

Dhangekar alleged that last night in Pune, a large amount of cash was distributed during the weekend to lure the voters in the Sahakar Nagar slums in his constituency reportedly supporters of the ruling reportedly MahaYuti

The ruling BJP is battling hard to retain seven seats that it had won in the 2019 polls, while the feuding factions of the Shiv Sena are slugging it out in three constituencies -

The two factions of the NCP led by Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar - are locked in a keen contest at Shirur, where sitting NCP (SP) Dr Amol Kolhe is taking Shivajirao Adalrao Patil. Shivajirao Patil

who was earlier with Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena switched over to the Ajit Pawar-led NCP a few weeks ago, just to contest the polls on NCP (Ajit Pawar) ticket. Unlike in the earlier three phases, there are not many known faces. The only relatively familiar face is Pankaja Munde, who is the eldest daughter of late BJP leader Gopinath Munde and niece of BJP national leader Pramod Mahajan.

Pankaja is locked in a direct contest against Bhajrang Sonawane of the NCP (Sharad Pawar). Mundes hail from the Vanjari community and has an excellent following among the OBC community members, while Sonawane is a Maratha.

contest in Aurangabad, Maval and neighbouring Aurangabad Gowal Padvi of the Congress. were immediately addressed

seat which is currently held by Imtiyaz Jaleel of the Asaduddiun Owaisi-led All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) has evoked considerable interest. Jaleel had surprised many in the State political circles by winning the Aurangabad seat for the first time. He had earlier in 2014 been elected the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly from Aurangabad Central constituency.

This time around, Jaleel is involved in a three-cornered contest against Sandeeprao Bhumare of the Shiv Sena (Eknath Shinde) and former MP Chandrakant Khaire of Shiv Sena (UBT). It remains to be seen if the AIMIM candidate will be able to retain Aurangabad seat in this election.

In Nandurbar where both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi addressed election rallies, the BJP sitting MP Dr Haseena Haseena Gavit is taking on

From Page 1 The last phase of polling will be held on June 1. The voters turnout in 13 Lok

UTTAR PRADESH

Sabha constituencies by 6 pm was 53.24 per cent in Shahjahanpur, 64.73 per cent in Kheri, 64.45 per cent in Dhaurahra, 61.91 per cent in Sitapur, 57.57 per cent in Hardoi, 55.79 per cent in Misrikh, 55.79 per cent in Unnao, 55.40 per cent in Farrukhabad, 56.38 per cent in Etawah, 61 per cent in Kannauj, 53.06 per cent in Kanpur, 57.66 per cent in Akbarpur and 57.45 per cent in Bahraich.

The voter turnout in Dadraul Assembly bypoll was 53.31 per cent.
The CEO said polling in all 13 Lok Sabha constituencies was peaceful and no

untoward incident was reported from any place. He said close to 150 complaints were received from 13 constituencies, the maximum 70 complaints from Kannauj, by his office in Lucknow. He said all the complaints

(EVM) malfunction, slow polling process, attempts of fake voting using fake identity. He said till 6 pm 53 ballot units, 53 control units and 201 Voter verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) units were replaced. The CEO said for the free fair

and transparent polling the Election Commission of arrangements for webcasting at 14,126 polling booths and it was monitored by the district election officers, chief electoral officer at Lucknow and Election Commission of India at New Delhi.

He said arrangements for videography were also made in 5,420 polling booths. For keeping close watch on the election process, the poll

panel had deployed 13 general observers, nine police observers and 17 expenditure observers. Besides these 2,250 sector magistrates 287 zonal magistrates 111 static

and resolved. He said the complaints related to observers were also deployed. electronic voting machine Samajwadi Party chief Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav is the most high-profile candidate in the fourth phase election in UP. Pitted against Yadav in Kannauj is the Bharatiya Janata Party's incumbent Member of Parliament from Kannauj, Subrat Pathak. In 2019, Pathak had defeated

Akhilesh Yadav's wife Dimple in Kannauj in a close contest. In Kannauj, Akhilesh is contesting to reclaim his family legacy as BJP's Subrat Pathak tries to repeat his 2019 win. The Kannauj constituency

has been considered a stronghold of the SP since 1998, but it witnessed a significant shift in the 2019 election when BJP's Subrat Pathak wrested this Lok Sabha seat from the SP.

The Bahujan Samaj Party has fielded Imran Bin Zafar. Subrat Pathak has been a consistent contender for the BJP, having contested the Lok Sabha elections Kannauj since 2009.

INDIA Bloc leaders scared of Pakistan's nuclear power: Modi

MUZAFFARPUR/HAJIPUR/SARAN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday lashed out at the opposition INDIA bloc, calling its leaders "cowards" who were "scared of Pakistan's nuclear power".

Addressing three back-to-back rallies in Bihar's Hajipur,

Muzaffarpur and Saran Lok Sabha constituencies, Modi made an apparent reference to a recent statement of National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, without

mentioning him by name. 'The INDIA bloc seems to have leaders who are scared of Pakistan and have nightmares of its nuclear power," he said. The remarks come in the

wearing bangles.
"If Pakistan does not wear

bangles, we will make the country wear these. I knew they did not have foodgrains. Now, I come to know they do not even have adequate supply of bangles," the PM said. "But, we must look carefully at the opposition which seems to be full of cowards and timid people, who give a clean chit to Pakistan on terrorism, raise doubts on surgical strikes... their Left allies even want our nuclear arsenal to dismantled," he said.

Modi maintained that the INDIA bloc had worked out a formula, which would allow five of its leaders, if the coalition came to power, to enjoy a year of premiership



the bloc's plan to have a different PM, every year, for five years, succeeds. However, backdrop of comments by
Abdullah about Pakistan
having atom bombs and not

Abdullah about Pakistan
having atom bombs and not

Abdullah about Pakistan
mess we would get to see if

Abdullah about Pakistan
mess we would get to see if

Abdullah about Pakistan
mess we would get to see if

"The current elections are for having a government that will give a further boost to the standing and clout enjoyed by the country," the PM said.

Modi also said the money recovered in raids against politicians "belonged to the country's poor".
"I will tell you why they are During the previous Congress regime, the ED seized only Rs 35 lakh, which could be contained in a school bag. Ever since we took over, the agency has recovered Rs 2,200 crore, which would require 70 small trucks to be carried," said Modi. The prime minister said unlike his opponents, who were concerned about promoting their offspring, "I have no 'waaris' (successor). The common people are my He reiterated the charge that

parties like the Congress and RJD will "give away reservations" to Muslims "to pursue their vote bank politics", but added that "as long as I am alive, I will not let this happen".

"Kidnapping and extortion flourished during the RJD

social justice, 60 per cent Union ministers from OBC/SC/ST categories," he asserted.

"It has been several days since I challenged the Congress-led opposition to give it in writing that it will not give reservations on religious lines. They are yet to

respond," Modi said.
The PM also alleged that the opposition had plans to impose "inheritance tax" but "Modi would stand like a wall in their way, thwarting attempts to rob people of their wealth".

He accused the opposition parties of "deliberately hurting people's sentiments by making obnoxious statements about the Ram temple in Ayodhya".

Targeting RJD leaders Lalu Prasad and his son and heir

mentioning neither by name, Modi referred to the fodder scam, the "land for jobs scam" and "attempts to take credit for work done by our ally (Chief Minister and JD(U) president) Nitish Kumar".

Speaking on a day when the fourth phase of Lok Sabha elections were underway, he urged the people to turn out in large numbers and vote for the NDA to enable formation of a strong government.

In his speech, Modi also touched upon his government's track record on development, citing construction of highways at a rapid rate and underscoring commitment to social justice and empowerment, while accusing the opposition of trying to put hurdles in the way of measures like women's

Rahul did not visit Ram temple for fear of losing vote bank, says Shah

PTI MUMBAI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi did not visit the Ram temple in Ayodhya as he feared losing his vote bank. Addressing a rally in Maharashtra's Dhule district,

Shah also said Gandhi opposed the abrogation of Article 370, which provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir, and sought to know the views of Shiv Sena (UBT) head Uddhav Thackeray on the Congress leader's stand. The Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Sharad Pawarled NCP (SP) are constituents of the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in the state and the INDIA alliance at the national level.

The consecration of Lord Ram's idol was held at the Ayodhya temple in January this year.

Shah said Prime Minister Narendra Modi not only helped in the resolution of the Ram temple issue but also facilitated its construction. "Rahul Gandhi was invited the Ram temple

inauguration), but he did not visit because he feared losing his vote bank. The BJP does not have any such fear," he

The Congress did not remove Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir because of the same appeasement politics, the

Thackeray have to say about it?" he asked.

"I also want a clarification from Uddhav Thackeray. One of the constituents of the opposition INDIA bloc is DMK led by M K Stalin, and his son Udhayanidhi Stalin has insulted Sanatan Dharma.

Does Uddhav agree with them?" Shah sought to know. Further targeting the Congress and the Wayanad MP, the Union minister said 20 attempts were made to "launch and relaunch" Rahul Gandhi as a leader.

"How can he (Gandhi) even launch Chandrayaan to the moon? Can he or his government ever give a befitting response to Pakistan? Can they end Naxalism or terrorism in the country? Can they make India prosperous?" he asked. Shah was campaigning for BJP's Dhule Lok Sabha seat candidate Subhash Bhamre, the former Union Minister of State for Defence.

The Congress has fielded former MLA Shobha Bachhav against Bhamre in Dhule, where polling will be held on May 20.

Congress holding PM responsible for Nehru's mistakes: Jaishankar on China issue

PTI ■ MUMBAI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday said the Congress holds Prime Minister Narendra Modi accountable for the mistakes made by first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru when making comments on China while believing the party has no culpability for

the past acts.
On Chinese belligerence in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, Jaishankar said Indian land was taken by China between 1958 and 1962, and some of it before 1958 as well.

Attacking Rahul Gandhi, Jaishankar said it is "very very sad" to "gun down your own forces".

"When you keep saying land taken by China, it was lost in 1962. I see efforts made to mislead the country," he said in response to a question at a news conference here. China and India have been witnessing an unease in ties, especially after the Galwan Valley incident of June 2020 when Chinese and Indian soldiers clashed, resulting in



casualties on both sides. Since then India-China relations have been in an "abnormal state", with both sides amassing its troops along the

The External Affairs Minister said people are saying Chinese are building villages on the border, but it is in a place called Longiu (along Line of Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh), which the Chinese attacked and occupied in 1959.

"If you look at the Google map, please look at that village and triangulate it with what Nehru said to the Jaishankar said. Congress leader Rahul

Gandhi and his party talk about a bridge being built by China in Pangong Tso in Ladakh but the bridge is being built at a place where the Chinese came in 1958 and then retook in 1962, Jaishankar asserted.

A Congress spokesperson recently said the Chinese have built a road in Shaksgam Valley and claimed this has created concerns for Siachen, the EAM said.

"Possibly it has concerns for Siachen. Shaksgam Valley was

of POK and the Pakistanis handed it over to China in 1963. The Congress party is holding Modi responsible for Nehru's actions in 1949 and Nehru's actions in 1949 and for (Pakistani premier Zulfikar Ali) Bhutto's actions in 1963 but apparently they (Congress) have no culpability," Jaishankar said. The EAM admitted there is a challenge from China, which has violated bilateral agreements and sent a large number of troops to the border. But one should take pride in the fact that despite the COVID-19 pandemic, India counter deployed and sent a record number of troops to the border, he said. Those troops today are at a great height and in great cold

allowed by Nehru to be part

Pradesh (in 2022) when (in reality) we pushed back the Chinese. Gunning down your system, your forces is a very very sad thing," he added.

and are defending the country

in very tough conditions,

Jaishankar pointed out. "So

when I hear Rahul Gandhi

(say) our soldiers were beaten

in Yangtse in Arunachal

opposing Modi, claims Yogi



PTI RAE BARELI/BARABANKI

Uttar Pradesh Chief In Barabanki, Adityanath Minister Yogi Adityanath said under the leadership of said Monday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will again form the government, asserting that even Lord Ram wants his "ardent devotee" to

He was addressing rallies in Barabanki and Rae Bareli, from where Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is contesting the Lok Sabha elections. "Only 'Ramdrohis'

"Only 'Ramdrohis' or Pakistanis are opposing Modi ji," Adityanath said at a public meeting in Rae Bareli constituency. "I cannot understand what is Rahul Gandhi's relationship with Pakistan. He lives in India, seeks votes in Rae Bareli and gets support from Pakistan." He alleged that the voices from Pakistan and that of Ramdrohis have become similar. "A Pakistani minister was supporting the incident in which soldiers were martyred in Pulwama... Now he has made a statement in support of the Congress candidate from Rae Bareli,

Taking a dig at Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi who has sought to know from PM Modi what he has done for Raebareli in the past 10 years, the Uttar

Adityanath said.

Pradesh chief minister asked, What has the Congress done in 65 years (of rule)?'

Prime Minister Modi, everyone, irrespective of their caste and community, benefitted from the development schemes. "Our beloved Lord Ram also

wants his ardent devotee to take over the reins of the country once again," the Uttar Pradesh chief minister said. With the fourth phase of voting underway, the "Modi wave has now turned into a tsunami," he said.

Hitting out the Congress and Samajwadi Party, he said, "They have a history of scams. These people are making big claims, but the truth is that during their time people used to die of hunger. people used to die of hunger, farmers used to commit suicide and youth used to

migrate." But we are all witnesses to the change that took place in the last 10 years under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. For the last four years, 80 crore people have been getting free ration, 12 crore farmers have got the benefit of Kisan Samman Nidhi,"

Adityanath said. Voting in Barabanki and Rae Bareli Lok Sabha seats will be held in the fifth phase on May

Thackeray what are his views on Gandhi's stand. Gandhi Congress insulted (Hindutva ideologue) Veer

"Gandhi opposed the abrogation of Article 370. I

want to ask his ally Uddhav

senior BJP leader said.

Only Ramdrohis **Electors cast vote fearlessly for first time at former Maoist hothed Budha Pahad booth**

PTI ■ BUDHA PAHAD around 13 km from my (JHARKHAND)

Thirty-seven-year-old Halkan Kisan on Monday exercised his vote for the first time at his own booth at 'Budha Pahad'—a former Maoist hotbed, which falls under Palamu Lok Sabha constituency.

Located along Jharkhand's Latehar and Garhwa districts, Budha Pahad was freed recently from the red rebels' control by security forces after over three decades.

Kisan cast his vote at booth no 420 in government's Upgraded middle school, Hesatu, along with hundreds of voters from different villages fearlessly.
"I have exercised my vote at

my own booth for the first time in my life. Earlier, our booth used to be relocated,

village, due to impact of the Maoist in the locality. Very few voters used to go to vote in relocated place. Now, the area has become free from are enthusiastically exercising their votes," Kisan, a resident of Hesatu village under Bargarh block, told PTI.

Medininagar sub-divisional officer (SDO) Anurag Tiwary said that the voting at the polling station is being conducted amid deployment of heavy security. "The polling officials and security personals were air dropped on Sunday at Budha Pahad to conduct the polls," Tiwary

told PTI. A total of 771 electors are eligible to exercise their votes at the booth. By 1 pm, the booth has registered 68 per cent polling.



Vikram Yadav, 50, another I came to the booth walking voter, told PTI, "I have given around 5 km from my my vote without any trouble.

village Saurat and I found no

security issue even on the way as there are deployment of security forces.

Block programming officer, Bargarh, Md Hashim Ansari told PTI, "Several told arrangements have been made for voters such as shed, drinking water and ambulance. Besides, vehicles have also been arranged for the elderly and physically

challenged voters.

The polling was conducted at booth no 420 after the visit of Jharkhand Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) K Ravi Kumar along with senior police officers on April 20.

Kumar had then said that the voters here would exercise their franchise for the first time at their places after many decades. He gave credit to security forces for making this place terror-

However, excluding booth no 420, other three booths in Budha Pahad have been relocated due to security reasons, a senior official said.

Voting is being held in four Lok Sabha constituencies in Jharkhand — Singhbhum, Lohardaga, Khunti and Palamu on Monday.

The exercise to free Budha Pahad from left-wing extremists was carried out through three special operations that were

launched since the beginning of April 2022. A total of 14 Maoists were killed, while 590 others were either apprehended or had surrendered during these operations, the officials said. Earlier attempts to drive out the red rebels from 'Budha Pahad' did not materialise due to its difficult terrain, another police officer said.

Union Minister Anurag Thakur, Congress candidate file nomination papers in HP

PTI ■ HAMIRPUR/SHIMLA (HP)

Union Minister Anurag Thakur and Congress candidate Vinod Sultanpuri filed their nominations for Hamirpur and Shimla (SC) Lok Sabha seat, respectively on Monday.

Thakur was accompanied by senior BJP leaders and his brother Arun Dhumal, the chairman of the Indian Premier League as he submitted is nomination papers. The senior BJP leader is seeking a fifth term in the Lok Sabha from the Hamirpur seat in Himachal Pradesh.

Before filing his nomination, Thakur paid obeisance at the temple of Maa Awahdevi and addressed people at several places. Hundreds of party functionaries and locals greeted him with garlands and wished him luck.
The Congress has fielded



Satpal Raizada, a former MLA of Una, as its candidate against Anurag Thakur.
In Shimla, sitting MLA from
Kasauli Vinod Sultanpuri
filed his nomination from Shimla (SC) Lok Sabha seat. The Congress candidate was accompanied by Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh

Sukhu, party's state unit chief Pratibha Singh and Cabinet

Harshwardhan Chauhan, among others. Talking to media person after Sultanpuri submitted his papers, Sukhu said all four Congress candidates contesting Lok Sabha polls in the state have filed their nominations.

This is not a normal election. It is an election to save democracy and give the politics of the country a direction," the chief minister said and alleged that the BJP used money power to try to topple the Congress government in Himachal Pradesh.

Polling in all four Lok Sabha seats in Himachal Pradesh will be held in the last of the seven-phase Lok Sabha elections on June 1. Bypolls to six assembly seats in the state, which fell vacant following the disqualification of rebel Congress MLAs, will be held simultaneously.

EC suspends two polling officials for dereliction of duty in Odisha

The Election Commission (EC) has suspended two polling officials in Odisha for dereliction of duty, Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Nikunja Bihari Dhal said here on Monday.

One polling official from Narla assembly constituency in Kalahandi district and another polling official in Ganjam district have been suspended for dereliction of duty, he said.

"We are monitoring the poll process in our webcasting room. A minor group clash-like incident was reported from Chikiti area in Ganjam district. I have personally spoken to SP Berhampur and Ganjam Collector and asked them to ensure that the polling goes on smoothly in Berhampur LS constituency eespecially in the Chikiti area," Dhal told media persons.

As voter turnout was a little low in the Berhampur Lok Sabha constituency, the CEO appealed to the voters to come out in large numbers and exercise their franchise.



Nabarangpur, and Kalahandi parliamentary constituencies along with 28 assembly segments within the jurisdiction of these Lok Sabha seats.

Till 11 am around 23.28 per cent of the 62.87 lakh voters have exercised their franchise, officials said, adding that the highest voter turnout was recorded in tribal-dominated Kalahandi Lok Sabha seat at 25.38 per cent Some technical glitches were reported in EVMs in some places during initial hours. However, the situation has stabilised, the CEO said.

Voting started at 7 am in Berhampur, Koraput,

Kaianandi Lok Sabha seat at 25.38 per cent followed by Koraput (24.43 per cent), Nabarangpur (24.3 per cent) and Berhampur (18.99 per cent), he said. Lok Sabha and Assembly elections are being held simultaneously in Odisha.

Misery deepens in Rafah as Israeli troops press op

Aid workers are struggling to distribute dwindling food and other supplies to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians displaced by what Israel says is a limited operation in Rafah, as the two main crossings near the southern Gaza city remain closed.

The United Nations' agency for Palestinian refugees said 360,000 Palestinians have fled Rafah over the past week, out of 1.3 million who were sheltering there before the opera-tion began, most of whom had already fled fighting elsewhere over the course of the 7-month war between Israel and Hamas.

Israel has portrayed Rafah as the last stronghold of the militant group, brushing off warnings from the United States and other allies that any major operation there would be catastrophic for civilians. Hamas has meanwhile regrouped in some of the most devastated parts of Gaza that Israel had previously claimed to have

ment and ground operations. Thirty-eight trucks of flour arrived through the Western Erez Crossing, a second access point to northern Gaza, Abeer Etefa, a spokeswoman for the UN's World Food Program, said Monday. Israel had announced the opening of the crossing on Sunday.
But no food has entered the

But no food has entered the two main crossings in southern Gaza for the past week. The Rafah crossing into Egypt has been closed since Israeli troops seized it a week ago. Fighting in Rafah city has made it impossible for aid groups to access the pearly groups to access the nearby Kerem Shalom crossing with Israel, though Israel says it is allowing supply trucks to enter from its side.

For the past week, the Israeli military has inten-sified bombardment and other operations in Rafah, while ordering the population to evacuate from parts of the city. Israel insists it is a limited operation focused on rooting out tunnels and other mil-



itant infrastructure along the border with Egypt.
Israeli forces were also battling
Palestinian militants in

food from its remaining stocks in the areas of Khan Younis and Deir Balah further north to which many of those escap-Zeitoun and the urban Jabaliya ing Rafah have fled. Inside refugee camp in northern Rafah, only two organizations partnering with WFP were still able to distribute food, and Gaza, areas where the army had launched major operations

"The majority of distributions

have stopped due to the evac-uation orders, displacement, and running out of food," she said. "The situation is becoming increasingly unsustainable."

Almost the entire population of Gaza relies on humanitarian groups' distribution of food and other supplies to survive. Amid Israeli restrictions and obstacles to aid distribution from violence, some 1.1 million Palestinians in Gaza face catastrophic levels of hunger, on the brink of starvation, and a "full-blown famine" is

taking place in the north, according to the U.N.
The director of the Kuwait Hospital, one of the last functioning medical centers in Rafah, said medical staff and residents living near the facility have been told to evacuate. Sohaib al-Hams warned that any evacuation of the hospital itself would have "catastrophic consequences."

Israel has also ordered new

evacuations in northern Gaza, even after hundreds of thou-sands of people fled in the opening weeks of the war. Mahmoud Shalabi, the senior

Mahmoud Shalabi, the senior program manager for Medical Aid for Palestinians, a U.K.-based charity, said he was recently ordered to relocate from Beit Lahiya in the far north to Gaza City.
"I have left my house several times now, along with my parents, who are both older than 70, my three children and my wife," he said. "The journey of terror and displacement is beyond words."

beyond words."

beyond words."
The war began when Hamas and other militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct. 7, killing around 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking another 250 hostage. Militants still hold about 100 captives and the remains of more than and the remains of more than 30 after most of the rest were released during a cease-fire last year. Israel's offensive has killed more than 35,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't distin-

guish between civilians and combatants in its figures. Israel says it has killed over 13,000 militants, without providing evidence.

Israel marked an especially somber Memorial Day on Monday, with ceremonies across the country commemorating fallen soldiers, including the more than 600 killed since Oct. 7, most in the initial attack. During the day's opening cer-

emony at Mount Herzl cemetery on the outskirts of Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed once again to defeat Hamas. "We are determined to win this struggle. We exacted and will exact a high price from the enemy for their criminal acts. We will realize the goals of victory and at the center of them the return of all our hostages home," he said. At 11:00 A.M. on Monday, sirens announced two minutes of silence, and a formation of four fighter planes flew over Jerusalem and the surrounding

3 charged under UK's National Security Act

London (PTI): Three men in the UK have been charged under the National Security Act with assisting the Hong Kong intelligence service and foreign interference. All three will appear in custody at Westminster Magistrates' Court later, the BBC reported on Monday. The Metropolitan Police said the Hong Kong investigation was not related to a separate case involving Russia.

As part of the investigation, 11 people were detained under Section 27 of the National Security Act.

The three men charged are Chi Leung (Peter) Wai, 38, of Staines-upon-Thames; Matthew Trickett, 37, of Maidenhead; and Chung Biu Yuen, 63, of Hackney. Commander Dominic Murphy, head of the Met's Counter Terrorism Command, said, "I want to reassure the public that we do not believe there to be any wider threat to

Trump's hush money trial arrives at pivotal moment

The star prosecution witness in Donald Trump's hush money trial, Michael Cohen, took the stand on Monday, and his testimony could help shape the outcome of the first criminal case against

an American president. Cohen, Trump's former lawyer and personal fixer, is by far the Manhattan district attorney's most important witness in the case, and his appearance signals that the trial is entering its final stretch. Prosecutors say they may wrap up their presentation of evidence by the end of the

Cohen is expected to testify about his role in arranging hush money payments on Trump's behalf during his first presidential campaign, including to porn actor Stormy Daniels, who told jurors last week that the USD 130,000 that she received in 2016 was meant to prevent her from going public about a sexual encounter she says she had with Trump in a hotel suite a decade earlier.

He also matters because the reimbursements he received form the basis of the charges — 34 felony counts of falsifying

business records — against Trump. Prosecutors say the reimbursements were logged as legal expenses to conceal the payments' true purpose.

Defence lawyers have teed up

a bruising cross-examination of Cohen, telling jurors during opening statements that the fixer-turned-foe is an "admitted liar" with an "obsession to get President Trump".

The testimony of a witness with such intimate knowledge of Trump's activities could heighten the legal exposure of the presumptive Republican presidential nominee if jurors deem him sufficiently credible. But politically, prosecutors' reliance on

a witness with such a checkered past — Cohen pleaded guilty to federal charges related to the payments and to lying to Congress — could be a boon for Trump as he fundraises off his legal woes and paints the case as the product of a tainted criminal justice system. Either way, his role as star prosecution witness further

cements the disintegration of a mutually beneficial relationship that was once so close that Cohen famously said he'd "take a bullet for Trump".

After Cohen's home and office were raided by the FBI in 2018, Trump showered him with affection on social media, praising him as a "fine person with a wonderful family" and

Etefa said WFP is distributing

with a wonderful family" and predicting — incorrectly — that Cohen would not "flip". Months later, Cohen did exactly that, pleading guilty that August to federal campaignfinance charges in which he implicated Trump. By that point, the relationship was irrevocably broken, with Trump posting on the social media platform then known as Twitter: "If anyone is looking Twitter: "If anyone is looking for a good lawyer, I would strongly suggest that you don't retain the services of Michael Cohen!"

Cohen later admitted lying to Congress about a Moscow real estate project that he had pursued on Trump's behalf during the heat of the 2016 Republican campaign. He said he lied to be consistent with Trump's "polit-

ical messaging".
Prosecutors are expected to elicit detailed testimony from Cohen about his past crimes in hopes of blunting the impact of defense lawyers' questioning and showing that they're not trying to hide his misdeeds. But it's unclear how effective that will be, given that defence lawyers will be prepared to exploit all the challenges that

accompany a witness like

Cohen. Besides painting Cohen as untrustworthy, they're also expected to cast him as vindictive, vengeful and agenda-driven. Since their fallout, Cohen has emerged as a relentless and sometimes crude critic of Trump, appearing as recently as last week in a live TikTok wearing a shirt featuring a figure resembling Trump with his hands cuffed, behind bars. The judge on Friday urged prosecu-tors to tell him to refrain from making any more statements about the case or Trump.
"He has talked extensively

about his desire to see President Trump go to prison," Trump attorney Todd Blanche said during opening statements. "He has talked extensively about his desire to see President Trump's family go to prison. He has talked extensively about President Trump getting convicted in this case."

No matter how his testimony unfolds, Cohen is indisputably central to the case, as evidenced by the fact that his name was mentioned in the jury's presence during opening statements more than 130 times — more than any other person.

Other witnesses, including former National Enquirer publisher David Pecker and former r David Pecker and former Trump adviser Hope Hicks, have testified at length about the role Cohen played in arranging to stifle stories that were feared to be harmful to Trump's 2016 candidacy. And jurors heard an audio recording of Trump and Cohen discussing a plan to purchase the rights to a story of a Playboy model, Karen McDougal, who has said she had an affair with Trump.

During a massive rally on Saturday in the southern New Jersey resort town of Wildwood, Trump revived his Wildwood, Trump revived his criticism of the case, wrongly blaming President Joe Biden for orchestrating the New York charges, calling the case a "Biden show trial". That argument ignores the reality that the hush money case was filed by local procedures in Manhattan local prosecutors in Manhattan who do not work for the Justice Department or any other White House office. The Justice Department has said the White House has had no involvement in the two criminal cases against Trump brought by special counsel Jack Smith.

False narratives being created about India in West: Barai

Misinformation and false nar-ratives are being created about Indian democracy in the West in the middle of an election cycle in India, a prominent Indian-American oncologist has said, observing that some people in the West continue to have a colonial mentality. Chicagobased Dr Baharat Barai, in an interview on Sunday, hit out at Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for not taking action against Sikh separatists who are "openly planning and supporting violence inside India and Indian leaders".

"The Khalistan problem is only in Canada, maybe a little bit in the US. If the US government wants to give them a piece of land, let them be happy. After all, they're foreign citizens. They're either citizens of the US or citizens of Canada What right do zens of Canada. What right do they have to interfere in what is happening in India?" Dr Barai told PTI in an interview here. "If they want a separate land for them, let (Canadian Prime Minister Justin) Trudeau give it to them. If the US thinks that that's a good idea (let them do



so)...we are standing right in front of Abraham Lincoln (memorial in Washington DC). What did he do when the South (US) wanted to secede? We had a civil war. In Washington DC, he is being celebrated as the father of the nation," he said. "This (Khalistan) is not a problem of India. Indian Sikhs don't want to have anything to do with it. It is the foreign-born or foreign-living Sikhs and only a very tiny fraction of them." Dr Barai said. Referring to the number of news articles and commentaries appearing in the Western press, including that of the US, raising questions about democracy, freedom of expression, and human

More bodies found after flash floods kill dozens in Indonesia

Rescuers recovered more bodies Monday after monsoon rains triggered flash floods on Indonesia's Sumatra Island, bringing down torrents of cold lava and mud, leaving 43 people dead and another 15 missing. The heavy rains, along with a landslide of mud and cold lava from Mount Marapi, caused a river to breach its banks.

The deluge tore through mountainside villages along four districts in West Sumatra province just before midnight Saturday. The floods swept away people and submerged hundreds of houses and buildings, while forcing more than 3,100 people to flee to temporary government shelters in Agam and Tanah Datar districts, said National Disaster Management Agency spokesperson Abdul

Cold lava, also known as lahar, is a mixture of volcanic mate-



rial and pebbles that flows down a volcano's slopes in the rain. Rescuers on Monday recovered more bodies, mostly from villages that were worst hit in Agam and Tanah Datar districts, bringing the death toll to 43, Muhari said in a statement. At least 19 people were injured in the flash floods and rescuers were searching for 15 villagers reported missing, he said. Television reports showed relatives wailing as they

watched rescuers pull a mudcaked body from a devastated hamlet. It was placed in an orange and black bag and taken away for burial. Authorities struggled to get tractors and other heavy equipment to the area over washed-out roads after flash floods brought mud and rocks onto the hilly hamlets, said Abdul Malik, who heads the search and rescue office in Padang, the provincial

of church stabbing

Melbourne (AP): An Australian judge Monday lifted a ban on the social media platform X showing Australians a video of a bishop being stabbed in a Sydney church.

The temporary ban was put in place April 22, but the judge rejected the application from Australia's eSafety Commission to extend the court order that would have expired Monday. Australian Federal Court Justice Geoffrey Kennett said he would publish his reasons for imposing and lifting the order later. The decision was a win for the company rebranded by billionaire Elon Musk when he bought Twitter last year. X was alone among social media platforms in refusing to remove video of Bishop Mar Mari Emmanuel being stabbed. Musk has argued that he is standing up for a free-dom of speech principle. Australian lawmakers have accused him of arrogance and of lacking a sense of social responsibility.

"Not trying to win anything. I just don't think we should be suppressing Australian's rights to free speech," Musk posted on

X after the ruling.
X is also taking a separate court action against eSafety Commissioner Julie Inman Grant, a former Twitter employee, that challenges the the platform to remove video of the April 15 attack in an Assyrian Orthodox church. The judge is expected to consider setting a hearing date

Wednesday.
Assistant Treasurer Stephen
Jones said the government
might consider changing Australian law after reading Kennett's reasons for removing his order that required X to hide the video from users. "There's a fundamental principle at stake and that is, if you're a company or anybody operating in Australia, then you've got to abide by Australian laws," Jones

Judge lifts ban on video 'Fires used as weapon of war in Sudan destroyed 72 villages'

 $F_{\text{fighting in Sudan destroyed}}^{\text{ires}} \text{ resulting from the} \\ \text{or damaged 72 villages and}$ settlements last month, a UKbased rights group said Monday, highlighting the use of fire as a weapon of war in the conflict in the African country.

Investigators from Sudan Witness, an open-source project run by the non-profit Center for Information Resilience, say that more blazes than in any other month since the war started in mid-April 2023. The number also brings to 201 the total number of fires in Sudan since fighting broke out between Sudan's military and the rival paramilitary force. The analysis didn't provide any

casualty figures from the fires. In the war in Sudan, the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces have often used fire, setting

Cellphones of Indian crew on board seized

entire villages ablaze, especially in Sudan's western Darfur region. The war has wrecked the country and pushed its population to the brink of famine. More than 14,000 people have been killed and thousands have been wounded. Hundreds of thousands have been displaced.

The Center for Information Resilience said the number of fires surged particularly in the north and west of el-Fasher, the capital city of North Darfur state that faces an imminent attack.

El-Fasher saw intense fighting on Friday between the Sudanese military and the paramilitary RSF and their allies. At least 27 people were killed and dozens injured, said the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA. More than 800 were displaced. Sudan's military launched an

close to a pediatric hospital in el-Fasher, killing two children and a caregiver, according to Doctors Without Borders. In its analysis, the Center for Information Resilience esti-

airstrike the next day that hit

mated that 31 settlements villages and towns - were affected by fires in April, with an over 50 per cent destruction rate. "We've documented the patterns of numerous fires and the continuing devastation to settlements around western Sudan, large and small," Anouk Theunissen, Sudan Witness project director, said in a news release.

"When we see reports of fighting or airstrikes coinciding with clusters of fires it indicates that fire is being used indiscriminately as a weapon of war. The trend is worsening and continues to lead to the mass displacement of Sudanese people," Theunissen

Amazon's self-driving robotaxi under investigation

Detroit (AP): Amazon's self-driving robotaxi unit is being investigated by the US government's highway safety agency after two of its vehicles braked suddenly and were rear-ended by motorcyclists. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said in documents posted on its website Monday it will evaluate the automated driving system developed by Zoox. Both crashes happened during the daytime hours and the motorcyclists suffered minor injuries. In both cases, the agency confirmed that each of the Amazon vehicles was operating in autonomous mode leading up to the crashes.

Thousands protest in Georgia

AP TBILISI

Georgia's parliament green-lit a final vote on a proposed law that critics see as a threat to media freedom and the country's aspirations to join the European Union on Monday, a day after police dispersed the latest protests against it. The bill would require media and non-governmental organisations and other non-profits to register as "pursuing the interests of a foreign power" if they receive more than 20 per cent of their funding from abroad.

The opposition denounces the bill as "the Russian law" because Moscow uses similar legislation to crack down on independent news media, non-profits and activists critical of the Kremlin. The bill is nearly identical to one that the governing Georgian Dream party was pressured to



withdraw last year after street protests. Renewed demonstrations have rocked Georgia for weeks, with demonstrators scuffling with police, who used tear gas and water cannons to disperse the crowds. The government says the bill is necessary to stem what it deems as harmful foreign influence over the country's politics and to prevent unspecified foreign actors from trying to destabilise it.

Huge crowds marched through Europe Square in the capital, Tbilisi, on Saturday, with demonstrators wrapped in Georgian and European Union flags and chanting "Georgia!" On Sunday, the protesters gathered in front of parliament for an overnight rally and tried to block entrances into the building, where a committee of lawmakers were expected to discuss the bill once again on Monday.

as part of probe: Non-profit organisation PTI NEW YORK

The FBI has seized the cell-

■ phones of the mostly Indian crew on board a crippled cargo ship in Baltimore as part of the investigation into the deadly bridge accident in the US city, a non-profit organisation in touch with the personnel said. The 2.6-km-long, four-lane Francis Scott Key Bridge over the Patapsco River came crashing down on March 26 after the 984-foot ship 'Dali' collided against it. The crew on board Dali included 20 Indians and one Sri Lankan. The crew has been on the ship since the accident and has been cooperating with the investigation. Executive Director of the Baltimore International

Seafarers' Centre The Rev. Joshua Messick told PTI that he is working with all of the relevant organisations to make sure the crew has what they need and that their rights are being upheld. "They are well cared for with the sole exception that their cell-phones were seized as part of the FBI's investigation and have not been returned," he said.

Messick said he is in "contact with the crew to purchase some SIM cards for them and to plan trips ashore when they are able to have shore leave". The Baltimore International Seafarers' Centre is a non-profit organisation serving seafarers that call on the Port of Baltimore from all over the world. The mission of the organisation is to "facilitate the well-being of crew

members by offering transporta-tion ashore," according to information on its website. Last month, US authorities

opened a criminal investigation into the Baltimore bridge col-lapse incident that killed six construction crew workers, who were repairing potholes on the bridge when the collision occurred. The Washington Post had said that the FBI opened the criminal investigation "focusing on the massive container ship that brought down the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore last month — a probe that will look at least in part at whether the crew left the port knowing the vessel had serious systems problems".

The Key Bridge Response Unified Command is sched-

uled to use precision cuts made with small charges to remove a large section of the Francis Scott Key Bridge wreckage from on top of the Dali. For safety reasons, the con-

trolled demolition to remove the bridge section resting on the deck of the Dali has tentatively been scheduled for Monday. Due to weather conditions producing lightning within 10 miles of the M/V Dali, remaining daylight, and rising tide, Unified Command has moved the demolition to Monday. The Key Bridge Response Unified Command said in a statement that the safest and swiftest method to remove the bridge piece from on top of the Dali is by "precision cuts made with

NEERAJ CHOPRA, KISHORE JENA TO COMPETE DIRECTLY IN FED CUP FINALS

PTI BHUBANESWAR

tar Indian javelin throwers Neeraj Chopra and Kishore Jena have been Kishore Jena have been given direct entry into the Federation Cup finals here on May 15, having already bettered the minimum qualification mark of 75m multiple times in their careers. Olympic and world champion Chopra is coming off a fairly good outing at the Doha Diamond League last week where he finished second with a throw of 88.38m. Asian a throw of 88.38m. Asian Games silver-winner Jena's Diamond League debut, however, ended in disappointment as he was eliminated after three rounds

eliminated after unce with 76.31m being his best.
DP Manu, who finished sixth the 2023 World Championships and who is looking to qualify for the upcoming Paris Olympics by breaching the 85.50m mark, will also compete directly in will also compete directly in the finals.

"All those who have crossed 75m will not compete in the qualifying round on Tuesday.

Inere are nine of them from among those who had made entries, including Neeraj and Jena. They will directly compete in the final on Wednesday," Indian athletics head coach Radhakrishnan Naireaid gueting the Athletic Nair said, quoting the Athletics Federation qualification rules.

"The remaining who have below 75m mark will compete in the qualifying round and the top three will join the nine above-75m throwers in the final."

The AFI is quite looking forward to 26-year-old Chopra's first home competitive outing in three

The AFI is not at all surprised at Neeraj taking part in the Federation Cup. His participation in domestic event is no doubt a very good thing for Indian athletics," a top official of the AFI told PTI. It is learnt that the AFI wanted

Chopra to compete in a domestic event after he won gold in Tokyo Olympics and before the Paris Games. He did not take part in any



2023 as he was training or competing abroad. His last domestic event was the Federation Cup in March 2021. It is learnt that Chopra has reached India from Doha but will land here only on Tuesday. Asian Games medallist Jena is arriving here later on Monday. arriving here later on Monday. Nair played down the injury to men's 4x400m relay squad member Rajesh Ramesh who pulled out midway during the second leg of the first round qualifying heat in Bahamas earlier this month.

Ramesh was replaced by Arokia Rajiv, who was also not fully fit, in the second round of the Olympic qualifying heat and the Indian team booked a Paris ticket.

"Ramesh's injury is not a hamstring pull, it's related to tendon in thigh. So, it is not a major injury. He is expected to start training in 10-15 days. Rajiv will also be alright soon," Náir said.

"There should not be any problem in Olympics preparation." A total of 19 track and field and Nair said the team will train in Spala in Poland for four weeks before travelling to Paris for the Olympics. Track and field events starting on August 1.

The team will train in Spala before Olympics and we will reach Paris three or four days before the competition starts. he said.

Indian athletes have trained in

Spala many times in the past. Nair also said the AFI is still hopeful of the mixed 4x400m relay team's Paris qualification despite its failure in Bahamas during the World Relays. Only two slots remain up for grabs. "Our mixed 4x400m team will take part in the Asian Relays (May 20-21 in Bangkok) and we can qualify for Paris if we run below 3 minutes 14 seconds and we feel can do

Meanwhile, it is learnt that the AFI will shortly come out with a strategic plan with the target of winning multiple medals in the 2036 Olympics. The target is irrespective of India winning the right to host the Games.



Shyaamnikhil ends 12 years wait, becomes India's 85th GM

PTI DUBAI

PShayaamnikhil became later during the Indian championship as a 19-yearby completing his third and final GM norm in the just- the rating requirement in early concluded Dubai Police 2012. Masters chess tournament, It was Dubai open in 2012 ending a 12-year-wait for the where Nikhil missed a big player who took to the sport as

an eight-year-old. Shyaamnikhil needed just one win and eight draws to complete the long-overdue GM title which he achieved in the tournament.

The 31-year-old conjured the requisité 2500 ELÓ rating points, the minimum requirement to be a GM, way back in 2012 with two Grandmaster norms but for the third one, he had to wait

for 12 years. "I started playing at the age of eight, my parents taught me but I could not play any tournament for three years. Winning the under-13 State championship opened up opportunities for me as I could play Asian and age group world championship," recalled

Shayaamnikhil. Hailing from Nagarcoil in Tamil Nadu this was not an easy ride for the player, who was known as one of the finest

talents of his time. "He shifted his base to Chennai to pursue chess despite coming from a modest background and stayed with me," said his former coach K

Visweswaran. Making his first GM norm in

Mumbai Mayors Cup 2011 and the second one some time old, Shayaamnikhil completed

chance to score his final norm and then a series of missed opportunities led to a long

draught in his career. "It was only in 2017 that I tournaments in played Europe, till then I was trying to play in Vietnam or UAE trying to make the final norm but these places are not so easy as the tournaments are very

strong," he said. The 2022 Commonwealth champion said that he had come here prepared and missed a norm again in a tournament in France just before the Dubai Police

"I needed a win in the last round but I drew again and missed the norm again," he said when asked about how he felt about three missed opportunities.

Masters.

"I wanted to play Chess as enjoyment, I like Mikhail Tal and Garry Kasparov. I would like to dedicate this to my parents, who have waited a long time for this title, my trainer Visweswaran sir also helped a great Shyaamnikhil added. helped

"Now that the title is done, I can play more freely," he

Whoa Nelly! Rose Zhang wins Founders Cup to end Korda's record tying LPGA Tour winning streak

reat things have been expected from Rose Zhang from the moment the two-time NCAA champion won in her professional debut last year and joined the

professional debut last year and joined the LPGA Tour the following week.

The 20-year-old finally delivered again Sunday, birdieing four of the final five holes to win the Cognizant Founders Cup. She beat Madelene Sagstrom by two strokes while putting an official end to Nelly Korda's record-tying LPGA Tour winning streak winning streak.

"I was able to grow so much throughout the journey in this past year," Zhang said. "I don't know, it's crazy to come out here. Didn't have any expectation of having to win because I realize that it's all just noise and I really just have to be able to work at it myself and try my best to put myself in positions like this.

"But no matter what happened this week, I would've been very satisfied and it reignited my passion for the game once again," she added after winning on Mother's Day.

Zhang, who was talking to her mom coming into the media room, actually had a funny start to her round. The Stanford product almost fell on her rear end taking a shot from an ackward stance on the first hole. The shot could have gone anywhere. It hit the pin and she made par.

"I just thought to myself, wow, I mean, today is probably going to be a lucky day." said Zhang, who played with Sagstrom in a stroke-play duel with the rest of the field "But just to do that with all the 71. Peiyun Chien of Taiwan and Ruoning far back. "Maybe I can get something competition out here is super, super Yin and Xiyu Lin of China tied at 8 under.



going. Would not have imagined myself being who are now, especially after 12.
Sagstrom birdied that hole to take a threeshot lead and things did not look good for

Zhang.
It got better in the event that honors the 13 founding members of the tour.

Zhang, who shot a 6-under 66, birdied Nos. 14, 15, 17 and 18 at Upper Montclair Country Club, while Sagstrom bogeyed the 16th in finished two back. Korda, who struggled the final two days

after playing magnificently in winning the

five straight events she entered, began the day 11 strokes back and shot her second straight 73 to tie for seventh at 7 under. She had no regrets. She hopes someone will join her and Hall of Famers Nancy Lopez and Annika Sorenstam in winning five straight or even more.

rewarding with how much work that I've put in," the 25-year-old Korda said. "So I think to get a streak like that in any sport that it appears to a program with the amount of think to get a streak like that in any sport in general is amazing with the amount of talent that I feel like every athlete has in their sport. Just an amazing feeling and hopefully one day it'll sink in."

It was a heart-breaking end for Sagstrom, the 31-year-old Swede who started the day with a one-shot lead and was looking for her first victory since 2020 and second

her first victory since 2020 and second overall on tour.

"I struck it so nicely this week. I've worked really hard for a long time," Sagstrom said.
"I putted incredible. It's really high up there. That's probably why it hurts more. Nothing against Rose. She played incredible. I kind of wish I gave myself a few more chances at the end there. Didn't want it to end that way. This is probably the best golf I played in years."
Sagstrom led by three after 13, but Zhang

curled in a birdie putt at 14 and made an 8-footer on the next to draw within one. They were tied after after 16, with

Sagstrom missing a 10-foot par putt after a bad chip from the back fringe.

After Sagstrom saved par at the par-3 17th with a fast, downhill 25-footer, Zhang took the lead with a short birdie putt and she lead things out on the final hole with closed things out on the final hole with Sagstrom waiting to make a birdie attempt. Zhang, who won last year at nearby Liberty National in her pro debut, finished at 24 under 264.

Rookie Gabriela Ruffels of Australia third at 9 under, her best finish. She shot



Wanted to be a doctor but opted for athletics due to father passion: Olympic bound Jyothika

n academically-inclined Achild is a dream realised in most Indian households and that's why Olympic-bound runner Jyothika Sri Dandi aspired to be a doctor before she realised that her father would be happier seeing her excel in sports.

The 23-year-old from Tanuku town in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, secured 97 per cent in Class X while studying at the Montessori School at her home town.

But, her father Srinivasa Rao, a body-builder in his younger days, nudged her into taking interest in sports as he wanted to see her in the Olympics some day. That dream is going to be a reality in less than three months' time.

Jyothika was part of the Indian women's 4x400m relay team that qualified for the Paris Olympics during the World Relays in Bahamas earlier this month.

"I got 97 per cent in class X and when I was in school I actually when I was in school I actually wanted to be a doctor. But, once I started doing sports, I could not go back and think about becoming a doctor," Jyothika, who is taking part in the Federation Cup here, told PTI in an interview.

"My father felt I have the talent to do well in athletics and bring laurels for the country in the Olympics. Seeing his sacrifice and passion to mould me into a successful athlete, I decided to follow his dreams.

"I did not tell him that I wanted to be a doctor because I want to make him happy. Till 2017, I did not have interest in sports but around 2020 I began taking

Her mother is a home-maker and she has an elder sister who got married recently. "My father was a bodybuilder when he was young but stopped as there was no support from family. Now he is a businessman. He is very much interested in sports and he pushed me a lot and he wants me to be in the Olympics.

"Because of him, I did not have to struggle much. He takes care of everything. So, now I want to fulfil his dream of seeing me do well in the Olympics," said Ivothika who has a personal best of 52.73 seconds in individual 400m.

It all started after Jyothika won races in school meets and that was when her father realised the talent of his daughter. "I used to finish first in annual

school sports competitions in 200m and 400m and even in some races organised by clubs. "He took me to the school PET teacher when I was in seventh class (around 12 years of age). I ran on the mud tracks at a college ground in my place. I started taking part in district and state meets when I was in ninth class in 2014."

Between 2014 and 2021, Jyothika trained under Sports Authority of India coach Vinayak Prasad in Vijaywada. In 2021, she trained under Ramesh Nagpuri, current national junior team head coach, in Hyderabad for one year during which she ran her then personal best of 53.05 seconds after which she was called for the national camp. "I got national medals, I went

to World School Games and Asian Youth Championships but interest in sports, I did not have. Till 2017, I did not have interest in sports.

Wonder goal for Ella Toone as Manchester United wins Women FA Cup with 4-0 rout of Tottenham It is the first time since

Manchester United won its first major trophy by routing Tottenham 4-0 in the Women's FA Cup final at Wembley. Ella Toone's stunning long-range strike in first-half stoppage time set up victory for Marc Skinner's team. United cruised to victory after the break through two goals from Lucia Garcia and another from Rachel Williams. United quickly made up for defeat to Chelsea in last year's final by lifting the trophy 12 months on.

Toone's wonder goal broke Tottenham's resistance when she curled the ball into the top corner from around 20 yards (meters) in the third minute of time added on in the first half.



Williams doubled United's lead with a powerful header nine minutes after the break. United effectively sealed victory three minutes later, this time through Garcia, who was named player of the

Seizing on a weak clearance from Spurs goalkeeper Becky Spencer, Garcia pounced to score from close range. She added her second and

United's fourth in the 74th minute by lifting a shot into the top corner from inside the

difficult campaign this time round with United set to finish fifth. Skinner's contract is set to expire this summer. Asked if he expected to carry on next season, the 41-year-old Skinner said: "I hope so ... But

> moment. "I believe in myself fully and I my career.

am still only a baby in terms of

Birmingham's victory in 2012 that the cup hasn't been won

by one of Arsenal, Chelsea or

Manchester City.
Victory eases the pressure on

Skinner, who guided the club

to second place in the

Women's Super League last

season but has endured a

we've created history and I have got to live in that

Djokovic follows Nadal to early exit at Italian Open in first match after being hit by water bottle

Novak Djokovic's performance was so poor Djokovic's that even the 24-time Grand Slam champion admitted it was "concerning."

Djokovic put on one of his worst displays at one of his favorite tournaments as he was upset by 29th-seeded Alejandro Tabilo in the third

round of the Italian Open. It was Djokovic's first match since accidentally getting knocked on the head by a water bottle while signing autographs after his opening

win on Friday.
"I managed to sleep okay. I had headaches. The next day or vesterday was pretty fine, so I

the court today was just completely like a different player entered into my shoes. Just no rhythm, no tempo, no balance whatsoever on any shot. It's a bit concerning."

Djokovic started off with a double-fault and it didn't get much better for the six-time Rome champion.

The top-ranked Djokovic lost his first two service games and went on to lose the match 6-2, 6-3 in just 68 minutes, handing Tabilo the victory when he double-faulted - his fifth of the match - amid boos at the Foro Italico.

"I'm trying to soak it all in and wake up right now," Tabilo said after the biggest win of his thought it's okay. Maybe it is okay. Maybe it's not," Djokovic keep my nerves in and keep

said. "I mean, the way I felt on swinging. Towards the end my arms were getting tired but I was trying not to think about

> "It's crazy, I just can't believe what's happened. I can't believe it right now. I don't think anyone can believe it." The third-round loss marked Djokovic's worst performance at the Italian Open. He had lost only once before to an opponent outside the top 10 in Rome, where he had never out before the gone quarterfinals.

> Djokovic followed Rafael Nadal to an early exit after the record 10-time Rome champion lost his third-round 10-time match to Hubert Hurkacz 6-1,

> 6-3 on Saturday. While Djokovic had said he was "fine" after the water



bottle incident, it was an off-key unusually performance from the Serb as he tries to step up his game on clay before attempting to defend his title at the French Open, which starts on May 26. "I was going for kind of easy training yesterday. I didn't feel anything, but I also didn't feel the same," Djokovic said.
"Today under high stress, it

was quite bad - not in terms of pain, but in terms of this balance. Just no coordination. Completely different player from two nights ago ... I don't know. I have to do medical checkups and see what's going on." Djokovic had 12 unforced errors to Tabilo's four and produced 14 winners to his opponent's 22. It was also a rare occasion when he had

zero break point chances. He was broken four times in the match, including in the final game, and Djokovic could only shake his head when another unforced error handed Tabilo match point.

Djokovic is still without a title this year - the first time he's reached May without a trophy since 2018, when he was returning from a right elbow iniury.

Tabilo next faces 16th-seeded Karen Khachanov, who beat Francisco Cerundolo 6-2, 6-4. Third-seeded Alexander Zverev advanced after the 2017 Rome champion beat Luciano Darderi of Italy 7-6 (3), 6-2. Grigor Dimitrov and Thiago Monteiro also advanced, while Taylor Fritz

beat American compatriot

Sebastian Korda 6-3, 6-4, American, Ben lost to Zhang Another Shelton, Zhizhen. In the women's tournament, second-seeded Aryna Sabalenka eased through to the fourth round with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Dayana Yastremska. American Sofia Kenin, who won the Australian Open in 2020 and also reached the final at Roland Garros the same year, was upset by Slovakian qualifier Rebecca Sramkova 6-4, 4-6, 6-4.

American Danielle Collins is safely through after beating Caroline Garcia 6-3, 6-3. Also advancing in third-round matches were Maria Sakkari, Irina-Camelia Begu, Jelena Ostapenko, Victoria Azarenka and Elina Svitolina.

Focus on KL Rahul as LSG face DC in playoff battle

Pocus will be on skipper KL Rahul as a struggling Lucknow Super Giants look to keep their slim IPL playoff chances alive when they face an equally desperate Delhi Capitals in a must-win game here on Tuesday.

Delhi Capitals in a must-win game here on Tuesday.
There has been a lot of speculations about Rahul's future as LSG skipper after his "public reprimand" by team owner Sanjiv Goenka following their 10-wicket hammering by Sunrisers Hyderabad last Wednesday.

Speculations are rife that Rahul

Speculations are rife that Rahul may step down as captain or perhaps he will do his duties for the remaining two games before leaving LSG. In either case, the India batter would look to answer with his bat and end things on a high.

Rahul hasn't been in the best of form and it's not only cost him a place in India's T20 squad but also left LSG at the seventh spot with 12 points with RCB

sixth respectively.

Five days is a lot of time to introspect and Rahul and Co.

Will look to come out all guns blazing when they face DC, who are also on 12 points and who are also on 12 points and are coming into the match after a loss against RCB on Sunday night. Besides Rahul, Quinton De Kock's poor form this season has left LSG struggling in the powerplay, putting pressure on the likes of Marcus Stoinis and Nicholas Pooran, who haven't got the freedom to unleash their big shots.

Although Pooran and Ayush Badoni managed to rescue the team in the last match, the bowlers failed miserably against the formidable SRH pair of Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma, who racked up 167 in 9.4 overs, a T20I

record by any team.
The loss of tearaway pacer
Mayank Yadav to injury has
left a big hole which Yash Thakur and Naveen-ul-Haq haven't been able to fill. Also



Mohsin Khan picked up an injury and didn't play last

The spin duo of Krunal Pandya and Ravi Bishnoi too have been to do a lot of soul

searching after being punished by SRH. Delhi Capitals, on the other hand, will hope the return of skipper Rishabh Pant after a one-match suspension due to slow overrate against

Rajasthan Royals will help them to end things on a high. Delhi sans Pant paid the price for their fielding lapses as those drop catches and misfields came back to haunt them

While the bowlers let RCB off the hook after a good start, the batting once again came unstuck as they lost four wickets inside 4 overs to be bowled out for their lowest innings score this IPL.

But this is the same team which scored four 200 plus totals this season and they will have to find their mark in their last game to salvage any slim hopes of a top four. Jack Fraser-McGurk, with 330

runs from seven matches at an impressive strike-rate of 237.41, has been their most impactful batter. While Abhishek Porel (269, 156.39), Pant (413, 156.43) and Tristan Stubbs (321, 185.54) too have been among runs this season. In the bowling department, the spin duo of Kuldeep Yadav (15) and Axar Patel (10) have shared 25 wickets, while pacers Khaleel Ahmed (16 wickets) and Mukesh Kumar (16) too them

available for PBKS' last two matches of the tournament

against Rajasthan Royals (May

15) and Sunrisers Hyderabad

The injury is not of serious nature but the England

management, as per ESPNCricinfo, decided to give

(May 19).

management,

Rains wash away GT playoff hopes

Gujarat Titans' hopes of qualifying for the Indian Premier League play-offs was dashed on Monday as rain washed out their must-win match against Kolkata Knight Riders here without a ball

attitude.

"GG (Gautam Gambhir) has been pretty solid with how he wants us to play as a team. He stressed on us to come here and still look for two points," said Kolkata's opener Phil Salt as the teams waited for the



being bowled.

It meant KKR were assured of a top two finish with 19 points from 13 games and a place in the Qualifier 1. GT, the last year's runners-up and 2022 champions, are out of the play-off race, garnering 11 points from 13 matches.
The toss didn't happen at scheduled time of 7 pm due to

incessant lightning, which was followed by slight drizzle that became heavier as time passed by.

The cut-off time was 10:56 PM for a five-over contest but the official decided to abandon the match, a first in this IPL, because of the consistently intensifying rain and wet outfield.

The chat before the game (vs GT) was about not letting up,

rain to subside.

their place in the play-offs after they defeated Mumbai Indians in their previous fixture. Rajasthan Royals are second in the standings with 16 points from 12 games, while defending champions Chennai Super Kings are placed third with 14 points

Sunrisers Hyderabad are placed fourth with 14 points from 12 matches, while Royal

games.
With 12 points from as many games, Lucknow Super Giants are still in the play-off race, while Delhi Capitals are "It is a big achievement for us. virtually out of the reckoning with 12 points from 13 matc

RCB have demonstrated ability to deliver when it counts: Moody

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Royal Challengers
Bengaluru have shown the
ability to perform when it
matters most, said former
Australian all-rounder Tom Challengers Moody after their fifth straight win in the IPL.

Languishing at the bottom of the points table 10 days ago, Virat Kohli and Co have found their mojo back. Their winning streak has given them a fighting chance to make the knockout stage. knockout stage.

"Once again, RCB has demonstrated their ability to deliver when it counts, setting the stage for what promises to be a thrilling encounter between the two teams," Moody said on Star Sports. They will take on MS Dhoni's

Chennai Super Kings, who are also in contention for a playoff berth, in their final league game at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday.
"It's iconic for the entire IPL,

truly. You've got two colossal names in cricket here in India and in world cricket-Dhoni



and Kohli. "They're both dominant figures, leaving a huge legacy wherever they've been. And the interesting thing is anything can still happen on that table.

Barring Kolkata Kinght Riders, who have already qualified, as many as seven teams are still in contention for a playoffs berth. "After the weekend, I was assuming that a couple of results will sort of fall the way they should fall and then we'll have a clear idea who's going to end up in that top four.

"Yet, it's still anyone's game. Any team could clinch a spot

in that coveted top four," Moody said. After a sedate start to the

season, RCB batter Rajat Patidar has found his groove, scoring five fifties in the last seven innings at a quick pace. "Patidar, in particular, has been a revelation in the past five or six games, notching up several quick-fire half-centuries.

"His aggressive approach has consistently put pressure on the opposition's bowling attack, making it incredibly challenging for them to get back into the contest," Moody

PBKS' Livingstone returns to England to address knee niggle ahead of T20 WC

Punjab Kings' all-rounder Liam Livingstone on Monday returned to England from the ongoing IPL to undergo a knee recuperation ahead of the next month's T20 World Cup.

The Kings are already eliminated from this IPL after managing just four wins from 12 matches and they are currently at the bottom of the table with eight points.
"IPL done for another year, had to get my knee sorted for the upcoming World Cup," Livingstone wrote on his Instagram wall.

"Thanks once again to the Punjab Kings fans for all their love and support. Disappointing season as a team and personally, but as always blood over wington."

him more time to get it treated prior to their home T20I series against Pakistan, beginning on May 22. always, I loved every minute of playing in the IPL," he added. Hence, Livingstone will not be



After that series, the defending champions will travel to the West Indies for their T20 World Cup engagements, starting on June 4 against Scotland in Bridgetown, Barbados.

Livingstone had a lean IPL this

season, scoring 111 runs from seven matches and took just three wickets. three wickets.

Meanwhile, other England players in the IPL who are part of their World Cup squad — Moeen Ali (CSK), Sam Curran, Jonny Bairstow (PBKS), Jos Buttler (RR), Will Jacks, Reece Topley (RCB) and Phil Salt (KKR) - will be homebound the coming weekend

bound the coming weekend

KKR has already secured

from 13 matches.

Challengers Bengaluru are on fifth with 12 points from 13

We have switched on the attacking mode: RCB pacer Dayal

Pace bowler Yash Dayal attributed the renaissance of Royal Challengers Bengaluru in the second half of the IPL to them "switching on the attacking After six consecutive defeats, Royal

Challengers won five matches on the bounce to remain in contention for a playoff berth.

In the last game, RCB defeated Delhi Capitals by 47 runs here on Sunday to leap to fifth spot on the table with 12 points from 13 matches.
"Our performances have markedly improved in the last few matches. I think

we have switched on that attacking mode in the last few matches. It has been a big positive for us," said Dayal, who took three for 20 against DC, during the post-

The left-arm quick said even while RCB were going through a losing streak, the dressing room remained a thickly-knit "When you lose matches continuously,

like it happened with us, morale will come down a bit. But we took it in our stride and bounced back well. "But even when we were losing, fingers were not pointed at anyone. We have

remained positive throughout the season," he added. The resurgence of RCB is directly linked with the improved performance of their bowling unit, which was all over the

place in the first half of the season. Daval credited team bowling coach Adam Griffith for that turnaround. "The credit goes to our bowling coach.

He engages us in specific drills,



visualising particular opposition batsmen and we discuss this a lot. When I go out to bowl, I just think about how to get the batter out or save some runs. All of us think the same way," he added.

"GAVE TOO MANY RUNS": James Hopes, the DC bowling coach, said dropped catches allowed RCB to add a few more runs and reach an over-par total.

Rajat Patidar, who made a quick fifty, and Will Jacks, who scored a fluent 41, were dropped multiple times on Sunday. "They got one too many and we dropped

four catches and had we taken them we could have probably restricted them to

"But that's fine and if you are not going to put it together with the bat you are not going to win too many games in this

tournament," said Hopes. The Delhi side now has 12 points from 13 matches and it now needs a massive win over Lucknow Super Giants on Tuesday to keep their playoff hopes alive. The former Australian all-rounder was confident of achieving it in their home

ground. We have to win big now. But fortunately, we are going back to Delhi where big scores have been the norm for the season. "So, we are going to ask them to put a big score on the board and keep them a fair way below us to have any chance to advance in this tournament," he said. However, Hopes rued the missed

opportunity against RCB. But today was our chance to really get into the mix for playing finals, and now we've left it up to fight, which you don't

really want to do in this tournament."

OTHER SPORTS

Satwik, Chirag look to regain competitive edge as Thailand Open begins

PTI ■ BANGKOK

Star shuttlers Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will look to regain their competitive edge as they spearhead the Indian challenge at the Thailand Open Super 500 tournament, beginning here on Tuesday.

The top seeded Indian pair, who are one of the favourites to win a gold at the Paris Olympics, found it a tad difficult to negotiate the variety of serves dished out by the Indonesians and Chinese at the Thomas Cup. Both shuttlers will look to

address the slight drop in their health issues this season.

level this week when they begin their campaign against Malaysia's Nur Mohd Azriyn Ayub Azriyn and Tan Wee Kiong.
With the Olympic-bound

shuttlers looking to fine-tune their skills ahead of the Paris Games, the BWF world tour events will offer the perfect platform for them to test those new strokes or tweaks that they make to their games. India's top player in singles, HS

Prannoy, a world championships and Asian Games bronze medallist, too will have to find his best footing after being troubled by



Anthony Ginting was a trouble him as he needs to confidence booster but the loss close out such narrow games to

His win over Indonesia's against China's Shi Yuqi will

get into the best mental shape ahead of the Olympics. Kiran George and Sathish Kumar Karunakaran are also in fray, while Lakshya Sen and PV Sindhu had pulled out before the draw was announced last week. While Kiran will face China's Australia Open winner Weng Hong Yang, Sathish, who had claimed the Odisha Masters title last December, takes on a qualifier in their respective opening matches. In Sindhu's absence, Ashmita Chaliha, Malvika Bansod and Aakarshi Kashyap will look to keep India's flag fluttering with a solid show in women's singles. Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any

Atletico Madrid moves closer to securing Champions League spot after beating Celta Vigo

AP ■ MADRID

Atletico Madrid moved closer to securing the fourth and final Champions League spot with a 1-0 win over Celta Vigo in the Spanish league.

Rodrigo De Paul scored an 84th-minute winner for Atletico, which opened an eight-point gap to fifth-place
Athletic Bilbao with three rounds remaining.

Athletic was held at home to a 2-2 draw with

Osasuna on Saturday.
"You know me, we have to keep improving until the end," Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone said. "We have to keep fighting no matter what." It was the third win in a row for Atletico, which is three points behind third-place Barcelona. The Catalan club hosts seventh-place Real



Celta, which has lost three of its last five games, dropped to 17th place and five points above the relegation zone. Rayo Vallecano moved to

eighth-place Valencia. BETIS WINS: Real Betis beat last-place Almeria 3-2 at home to move to sixth place and strengthen its hold on the European

16th, also five points from danger, after a 0-0 draw at

qualifying spots.
Pablo Fornals, Isco and Ayoze Pérez scored for Betis, which has won four of its last five matches. Almeria was coming off only its second win of

the season in the league, at Rayo Vallecano. **CADIZ HOPEFUL:** Cadiz, sitting in 18th place, kept alive its hopes of escaping demotion with a 1-0 win against midtable Getafe.

damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements. Printed and Published by Shobori Ganguli for and on behalf of CMYK Printech Ltd., 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow-226016 and Printed at Tin Tin Printech Pvt Ltd., C-33 Amausi Industrial Area, Nadarganj, Lucknow. Editor-in-Chief Shobori Ganguli, Resident