

Extreme heat wave warning for 16 districts in the State

Severe heat waves and heat waves would be witnessed in more than 16 districts in the next 24 hours warned Met; alert of thundery activities and gusty winds has been issued by Met for several regions.

Due to Western Disturbance, there are sometimes rainy periods in North India. Along with lightning and thunder, it also rains. It has also rained in the last 10 years.

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also issued an alert of thunderstorm and rain in Betul, Chhindwara, Pandhurna, Seoni, Balaghat on Wednesday.

Maheshwar of Khargone district, people are flocking to the banks of Narmada as the evening approaches. Getting relief from the heat by taking a bath in the river.



Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan during an election campaign in support of BJP candidate for Lok Sabha elections in Jharkhand on Wednesday

Various programmes being held at vehivle factory

Under the cleanliness campaign program run by the Government of India, Ministry of Defence, many programs are being organized at Vehicle Factory Jabalpur, a unit of AVNL.

icallly and mentally. If we make cycling a part of our life, we feel more healthy and confident. Apart from the officers and employees of the vehicle factory, officers and employees of GCF, Khamaria and OFJ, children of various schools and city residents will also participate in the cycle rally and will give the message of cleanliness.

To participate in the cleanliness rally, all the participants will have to fill the registration form issued by the factory. The last date to fill the form is 23 May 2024.

Bhopal BHEL achieves the title of top unit in performance in the year 2023-24

S M Ramanathan, Executive Director, BHEL, Bhopal, while congratulating the employees and officers present in large numbers in the cultural hall on Wednesday for the successful performance of BHEL, Bhopal in the year 2023-24.

current competitive business environment. Addressing the employees, he said that the company has taken care of the interests of all its employees and stakeholders even in the most difficult circumstances and today when it is very difficult to make profit due to competition, BHEL has achieved a respectable turnover & have earned profit.



care that production should never be interrupted due to shortage of material. Ramanathan said that in the next financial year we not only have to achieve more turnover but also have to earn more profit while ensuring all the standards of production.

a testament to the trust and confidence of customers towards BHEL products. He shared information about the performance of various departments of Bhopal Unit and the achievements of the unit.



Hajji pilgrims being given a warm send off by their relatives and family members before they leave for an annual Hajj journey to Mecca shrine, at Stabo Haj House in Bhopal on Wednesday.

CBI inspector axed, three including DSP suspended: College scam

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) terminated the services of inspector Rahul Raj, who was caught red-handed and arrested by the agency while accepting a bribe to give clean chit to nursing colleges affiliated with the Nursing Council of Madhya Pradesh, officials aware of the matter said on Wednesday.

ance policy". "Rahul Raj and Sushil Kumar were arrested after they were caught red-handed while accepting a bribe, while Prasad and Asathe have been removed and will be arrested after the probe", an agency official said.

DGP awards 51 cops for remarkable work

Director General's Commendation Roll (DGCR) Award Ceremony was organized at the Police Officers' Mess of Police Headquarters on Wednesday with the aim of honoring the police officers and employees who have made significant contributions in maintaining law and order in Madhya Pradesh by demonstrating their devotion to duty.

PHQ, DGP Saxena said that in the glorious journey of Madhya Pradesh Police Department since its inception till now, it has played an unforgettable role in maintaining intact the traditions of law and order, peace, mutual love and brotherhood in the state, have contributed.

as well as to improve the working environment. Keep making continuous efforts to increase the efficiency of the police by doing self-assessment and always keep working with full devotion and dedication.

On the orders of High Court, UMC sub-engineer suspended

The sub engineer and former building officer of Ujjain Municipal Corporation has been suspended after a bailable warrant was issued against the Municipal Corporation Commissioner for not removing the encroachment even after the order of the High Court.

which the court ordered action. Jain was then given orders to take action on this. Instead of taking action on the order given in the case number WP 26258/2023 filed in the High Court, Building Officer in-charge Jain had only given notice.

in Lokayukta Police Organization, Bhopal under Section 7 Prevention of Corruption Act. Lokayukta Police had written a letter to the Urban Development and Housing Department to transfer this employee from Barisya Municipality to somewhere else.

Housing Department Commissioner Bharat Yadav has suspended former building officer and sub-engineer Harsh Jain posted in Ujjain Municipal Corporation

Director, Urban Development, Indore, and he will get a living allowance from Ujjain Municipal Corporation. According to the order issued by Yadav, Jain was made the building officer in-charge in the order issued on January 11, 2023.

Maoists asked to suggest rehabilitation scheme

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Home Minister Vijay Sharma on Wednesday urged Maoists to surrender and asked them to suggest a new rehabilitation policy for them in the state.

The Minister issued an e-mail ID and a Google form for this purpose and said the rehabilitation would be done under the Niyad Nellanar scheme of the government.

Talking to the media, Sharma said: "The Maoists must join the mainstream and accept the constitution for playing a key role in making Chhattisgarh a better place."

Chhattisgarh had earlier announced the Niyad Nellanar scheme to boost development in Maoist-affected areas.



According to government, considering the basic needs of these villages, initiatives will be taken for infrastructure as well as all-around development of tribal families there.

Along with the development of basic facilities in Maoists affected areas, villagers there will get benefits of 32 individual schemes. For this, so far, 14 new police camps cum development

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centres have been started in Maoist-affected areas. People living within a five-kilometer radius of these camps are eligible for this scheme.

MLA to adopt 24 children of Kawardha accident victims



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh MLA Bhawna Bohra has announced that she will adopt the 24 children orphaned by an

accident which left 19 people dead at Kawardha. Taking to 'X', Bohra said she has decided to take care of 24 children. "I will take the responsibility for their

"I will take the responsibility for their education, employment and marriage," she said.

She said this after visiting Kukdur village from where the entire accident victims hailed.

Now cashless payments at liquor stores in C'garh

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh government is starting the facility of cashless payment at liquor shops across the state, an official communiqué said on Wednesday.

There have been complaints that many shops sell liquor at higher prices than those fixed by the government.

This has caused a lot of dissatisfaction among consumers.

Presently, liquor is sold by scanning the QR code marked on each bottle and against cash. This system has been proved faulty for many reasons.

With the introduction of a cashless online payment facility through UPI, liquor shops won't be able to charge more than the prescribed amount.

Shop-wise QR codes are being obtained from banks,



which will be pasted outside each shop. After scanning the QR code, liquor can be purchased at the prescribed retail sale rate. Liquor will be sold in a more systematic manner; this will reduce the crowds and get rid of the problem of change as well.

The priority is to curb corruption by ensuring maximum transparency.

In the initial stages, this facility will be started in premium foreign liquor shops. If results are positive, it will be implemented in other shops as well.

Renewal of ration card causing inconvenience to people: Congress



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Congress Chief Deepak Bajaj on Wednesday accused the BJP government of depriving people of food for the last three months. Speaking in Raipur, he

said Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai began renewing ration cards to put his picture on them. Due to this, poor people are unable to get food.

There are 77 lakh ration card holders in the state. More than 14 lakh of them have not been able to renew them, and 56 lakh such people have not received rice for the last three months, he said.

During Congress rule, 35 kg of rice was distributed every month and additional rice was also distributed under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, he said.

The BJP government has reduced the 35 kg ration distribution to 5 kg per person and deprived lakhs of people of food in the name of ration card renewal, he said.

Monsoon likely to arrive early in Chhattisgarh



STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh is going to have a sigh of relief from the scorching sun and intense heat soon as monsoon is expected to arrive early.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Wednesday predicted the arrival of monsoon in Chhattisgarh between June 12 and 15.

There are also chances of pre-monsoon showers by June 5, the IMD said. According to the Department, the monsoon will become active in Kerala by the end of May.

The IMD also predicted heavy rains with thunder and lightning in many parts of Chhattisgarh.

A trough is located from North West Uttar Pradesh to North Bihar which will cause the rains in Chhattisgarh, the IMD said.

Chhattisgarh gears up for World Environment Day

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh is gearing up to hold competitions and awareness campaigns on environmental preservation and climate change on World Environment Day on June 5.

An official communiqué said the state Environment Protection Board will hold a poster-making competition in Raipur on the theme of 'Climate Change: The Biggest Challenge of the Century'.

The competition will be held in four categories. The first will be for children under age 12, the second for 13-17 year olds, the third will be for 18-21 year olds and the fourth category will



be for the disabled. Registration will be done at the competition venue: Naveen Rest House, Civil Line, Raipur. Attractive rewards will be given to those who bag the first three places.

The Environment Protection Board will hold a poster-making competition in Raipur on the theme of 'Climate Change: The Biggest Challenge of the Century'.



Glimpses of vulture buddies working towards the conservation of Griffon vultures in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on International Biodiversity Day on Wednesday. The endangered avians have made a comeback to the region after a long absence.

Family history raises skin cancer risk more than sun exposure



AGENCIES ■

More than exposure to sun, family history or inherited genes play a larger role in the risk of developing melanoma -- skin cancer -- than previously thought, finds a study on Wednesday. Researchers from Cleveland Clinic in the US noted that genetic

screens to assess risk factors for patients with a family history of melanoma are rare as previous, limited studies showed that only 2-2.5 per cent of all cases are genetic. Up to 15 per cent (1 in 7) of patients who received melanoma diagnoses between 2017 and 2020 showed mutations in cancer susceptibility genes, revealed their

results, published in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology.

Joshua Arbesman from the Clinic said that genetic testing can help physicians to "proactively identify, screen and even treat the families" with inherited genes.

He urged physicians and insurance companies "to expand their criteria when it comes to offering genetic testing to individuals with family histories of melanoma".

It is "because inherited predisposition to it isn't nearly as rare as we think it is", he added.

The findings also support an increasingly popular opinion amongst cancer biologists: there are risk factors beyond sun exposure that can influence an individual's chances of developing melanoma.

"Not all of my patients had inherited mutations that made them more susceptible to the sun," Joshua said.

"There's clearly something more going on here and more research is needed," he said.

Depression, anxiety common among attention deficit children

AGENCIES ■

A smaller brain region responsible for control over behaviour, processing of emotion, and communication may explain why about one in two children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is likely to experience depression, anxiety, and explosive outbursts, according to a study on Wednesday.

ADHD affects around one in 14 young people under the age of 18 and in around half of these cases it persists into adulthood.

Mood disorders such as depression, anxiety disorder, and verbal or physical outbursts due to an inability to regulate their emotions in children with ADHD were previously thought to be a result of problems with cognition and motivation.

But in the study, scientists from Fudan University in Shanghai, China, and the University of Cambridge



showed that emotional dysregulation occurs independently of these, and is because of a brain region called pars orbitalis. "The pars orbitalis is a well-connected part of the brain, and if it hasn't developed properly it might make it difficult for individuals to control their emotions and communicate with others appropriately,

especially in social situations," said Barbara Sahakian from the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Cambridge.

For the study, published in the journal Nature Mental Health, the team identified 350 individuals with high symptoms of ADHD and found that more than half (51.4 per cent) had signs of emotion dysregulation and this was independent of

cognitive and motivational problems.

Children with only low-ADHD symptoms but with a high score of emotion dysregulation at age 13 years were 2.85 times more likely to have developed high-ADHD symptoms by age 14 years.

Using brain imaging data, they found that pars orbitalis was smaller among children who scored highly for ADHD and emotional problems.

The research also revealed that the commonly-prescribed drug to help the condition Ritalin appears to be less effective at treating this symptom.

Adding emotional dysregulation as a key part of ADHD will help people better understand the problems the child is experiencing, Sahakian said.

He said this may help advance effective treatments for the regulation of emotion, such as cognitive behavioural therapy.



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

PTI ■ GHATAL (WB)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday launched a blistering attack on the "corrupt INDI alliance" and said the opposition bloc doesn't have any leader who can become Prime Minister. While addressing a rally at Ghatal, Shah said the INDIA bloc leaders just want their dynasty to move ahead and "neither have any leaders to lead the country nor have any intention for the development of the nation."



Shah, while referring to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir said "PoK is part of India and we will take it." "The INDI alliance doesn't have any leaders. The INDI alliance wants five PMs in five years. The INDI alliances neither have leaders nor have any intention for the development of the nation," he said. The BJP leader said the ongoing parliamentary elections are about choosing between "leaders of dynastic politics or honest leader Narendra Modi" who

Congress, SP Pakistan sympathisers: Modi

PTI ■ BASTI (UP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday here called Congress and Samajwadi Party "sympathisers of Pakistan" and alleged that these parties are "scaring the country" with its nuclear power status. Addressing a rally here, Modi alluded to the partnership in UP between Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav in 2017, when the two campaigned together for the Assembly elections — and failed. "I am surprised by the repeated release of flop film of two 'shehzadas' of SP and Congress," Modi said. The Congress this time is contesting from 17 of the 80 Lok Sabha in a seat-sharing agreement with the SP. On Pakistan, Modi said, "This patron of terrorism which once used to dare us in such a condition that its people are hard up even for food grain... Pakistan is finished but its sympathisers, SP and Congress, are busy scaring the country."



"They say one needs to be scared of Pakistan because it has an atom bomb. Don't they know what is 56-inch (chest)? It's not the weak Congress government... But the strong government of Modi," he said at a rally campaigning for BJP's Basti Lok Sabha candidate Harish Dwivedi. "India does not spare those who try to bully it. India today hits them in their own homes," he said. Referring to Akhilesh Yadav's claim that the

Dharma... The shehzada of Congress wants to change the Supreme Court's judgement of Ram Temple. They dream of putting a Babri lock on the Ram temple and want to send Ram Lalla back to the tent," he said. Modi referred to the nearly two-year-long Emergency and said that Congress talks of Constitution but it did not even follow the party's constitution. He claimed that former Congress president Sitaram Kesri, who belonged to a backward community, was locked in a bathroom the day Sonia Gandhi was made the party's president. The PM also accused Congress of trying to change the Constitution and end reservation for the Dalits and backwards. "These people want to snatch the reservation of Dalit and Backwards and give it to those who do Vote Jihad. Congress wants to change the Constitution to give reservation to Muslims. Samajwadi Party is standing with Congress in its anti-Dalit and anti-backward conspiracy," he said. On the SP, Modi said it used to accord goons and rioters special protocol during its government. "Yogi Adityanath and his government had to make efforts to bring UP from the ditch it was thrown in long back," Modi said. Seeking the public's support, the PM said their votes will bury the "politics of appeasement in kabristan" and ensure the future of the country. "We have become the fifth largest economy. When India speaks, the world listens and tries to accompany India in the decisions made by it," he said. Modi was accompanied by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on the stage. Adityanath in his address expressed confidence of thumping victory for the BJP. "When we talk of crossing 400, SP and Congress start fainting because they are not even contesting on 400 seats together." BJP's Harish Dwivedi is pitted against Ram Prasad Chaudhary of Samajwadi Party. Polling in Basti will be held in the sixth phase on May 25.

AP police teams on hunt for YSRCP MLA who damaged EVM

PTI ■ AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Mukesh Kumar Meena on Wednesday said police teams have been formed to look for 'absconding' YSRCP MLA P Ramakrishna Reddy who vandalised an electronic voting machine (EVM) at a polling centre in Macharla constituency of Palnadu district. The CEO said police raided Reddy's residence this morning, but he was not found there. "His (Reddy) house was raided in the morning. He was not found, so several teams are now moving around to arrest him," Meena told media.

Mamata compromising national security for sake of vote bank politics, says Shah

PTI ■ KANTHI/GHATAL/PURULIA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday accused West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of compromising national security for the sake of vote bank politics and "committing a sin" by allowing infiltrators to change the demography of the state. Addressing back-to-back rallies in Kanthi, Ghatal, and Purulia Lok Sabha constituencies, Shah said the TMC will "disintegrate" and there will be a "farewell of Mamata Banerjee's government" after the BJP wins 30 Lok Sabha seats in the state. "Bengal has become a safe haven for infiltrators. Due to infiltration, the state's demography is changing, impacting not only this state,



but the entire country. Banerjee is committing a sin by helping to change the demography of Bengal. She is compromising national security for sake of vote bank politics," he said. Alleging that "infiltrators are the vote bank of the TMC," Shah said Banerjee is opposing the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) to appease her vote bank. "TMC ko ghuspetiyo se pyar

aur CAA pe vaar' (TMC has a love for infiltrators and attacks the CAA). The infiltrators are the vote bank of the TMC," he said. Shah criticised Banerjee's recent comments against certain monks of Ramakrishna Mission and Bharat Sevashram Sangha, asserting that these socio-religious organisations are being threatened to appease the TMC's vote bank. "Banerjee is attacking the Sangha, but she is not aware that had it not been there, Bengal would have been a part of Bangladesh," he said. Addressing an election rally in Goghat under Arambagh LS constituency on Saturday, Banerjee had claimed, "Some monks of Ramakrishna Mission and Bharat Sevashram Sangha are working under the influence of BJP leaders in Delhi.

JD(S) complains to police against Rahul for claiming MP Prajwal raped 400 women

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The JD(S) on Wednesday complained to Karnataka DGP Alok Mohan against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for allegedly claiming that Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of sexual abuse, has "raped 400 women". In a complaint, H M Ramesh Gowda, a former MLC and party's Bengaluru City president has sought registration of a criminal case against Gandhi under section 202 (Intentional omission to give information of an offence by a person legally bound to inform) of the Indian Penal Code for his alleged statement while addressing election rallies in the district headquarters of Shivamogga and Raichur on



May 2. The JD(S) leader also cited the alleged statement by Gandhi in his complaint, "Prajwal Revanna has raped 400 women and made videos. This is not a sex scandal but mass rape. And the Prime Minister, in front of the people of Karnataka, was

supporting and seeking vote for this mass rapist. He is saying that if you vote for this mass rapist, it would help him." The complainant said in the interest of justice for the alleged victims, Gandhi being a public servant is duty bound to give information of offence. "In view of the fact that Gandhi has made a specific statement that Prajwal has raped 400 women, he is aware of the information and details of the 400 women raped and has intentionally failed to disclose the details," he stated in the complaint. The 33-year-old Prajwal, who is the grandson of JD(S) patriarch and former PM H D Deve Gowda and is the NDA's candidate from Hassan Lok Sabha segment, is facing charges of multiple instances of sexually abusing women. The cases came to light after a number of explicit videos of sexual assault allegedly by Prajwal became public. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) is currently probing these cases. "Till date, the SIT has also not issued any notice to Rahul Gandhi calling for such information for the statement made by Rahul Gandhi," the complaint stated. However, no FIR has been registered yet in this regard, police said. Prajwal reportedly left for Germany on April 27, a day after Hassan went to polls, and is still at large. Interpol has also issued a Blue Corner Notice seeking information on his whereabouts.

BJP gains ground as TMC battles to retain foothold in Suvendu Adhikari's backyard

PTI ■ KANTHI (WB)

The future of the Kanthi Lok Sabha constituency in West Bengal appears to be volatile on account of the dual and opposing factors of the BJP sharply gaining political ground and the TMC desperate to retain its sway over voters. While the BJP looks emboldened by its recent rural poll successes and the Adhikari family's defection to the saffron camp, the TMC seems to be counting on its grassroots connections and the state's welfare schemes which the party believes have attained last-mile connectivity with the electorate. Located in Purba Medinipur district, the Kanthi seat exemplifies dynasty politics through the influence of the state's Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari, whose family members have held



other constituencies of the state, featuring a distinctly bipolar electoral landscape where voters face a clear choice between supporting the BJP and its national agenda or favouring the TMC government in Bengal and its welfare schemes. "In Kanthi, the binary nature of the contest underscores the significance of the political stakes involved, as voters will weigh their preferences between national and regional priorities. It will be a vote of 'Yes-BJP or No BJP and Yes-TMC or No-TMC'," political analyst Biswanath Chakraborty said. Known for its fluctuating political affiliations, Kanthi has moved on from being an erstwhile CPI(M) stronghold to a TMC bastion and, more recently, to a key political arena of the BJP. The initial transformation from the Left to the TMC was spurred by the 2007

Nandigram anti-land acquisition movement. The significant shift was driven by a grassroots uprising that followed strong disillusionment with CPI(M)'s land acquisition policies. Since then the Adhikaris, led by the family patriarch Sisir Adhikari and his sons Suvendu, Dibyendu, and Soumendu, have held key political positions within the TMC in the region. A dramatic shift occurred in December 2020, barely months ahead of the state assembly polls, when Suvendu defected from the TMC to the BJP. This move significantly altered the political balance of Kanthi and Purba Medinipur. Suvendu's departure from the TMC meant not just the loss of a key leader of Mamata Banerjee's party but also the transfer of a considerable support base to the BJP.

Latur admin urges LS poll candidates to adhere to EC guidelines during vote counting on June 4

PTI ■ LATUR

The Latur district administration has sought cooperation from all candidates who contested the Lok Sabha polls from here and representatives of various political parties during the counting of votes on June 4. Latur Collector Varsha Thakur-Ghughe held a meeting at her office on Tuesday and appealed to all the candidates and representatives of the political parties to adhere to guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India regarding the counting process. Guideline handbooks for the election representatives were distributed on the occasion. The collector said the district administration here in Maharashtra has completed preparations for the counting of votes. All candidates are requested to inform the collector's office



about names of their representatives for counting. The representatives should be imparted training on the counting process and mobile phone is not allowed at the counting venue, the collector said. The Election Commission of India has appointed two observers for the counting process, she said. Twenty eight candidates contested the election to the Latur Lok Sabha seat May 7. Among the major political parties, the BJP fielded sitting MP Sudhakar Shrangare, the Congress nominated Shivaji Kalge, and the Prakash Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) gave ticket to Narsingrao Nivrutti Udgirkar.

Modi, Shah to undertake another round of campaigning in Odisha

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to visit Odisha on May 29, aiming to provide a final boost to BJP's electioneering efforts in the state, party sources said. Modi's upcoming visit will include addresses at two election rallies in Balasore and Kendrapada Parliamentary constituencies, BJP's election in-charge for Odisha, Vijay Pal Singh Tomar said. This will mark Modi's fourth visit to Odisha within a month, highlighting BJP's concerted efforts to strengthen its electoral prospects in the state. Previously, the PM visited Odisha on May 6, 10, and 19, during which he addressed seven election rallies and held two road shows in Bhubaneswar and Puri.

Vikramaditya, Kangana trade charges over black flag protest against her

PTI ■ MANDI/SHIMLA

Trading barbs over black flags shown to the BJP's Lok Sabha candidate from Mandi Kangana Ranaut in Lahaul and Spiti's Kaza two days back, the Congress' Vikramaditya Singh targeted the actor Wednesday over her remark against the Dalai Lama from April last year. "People of the tribal area worship Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama as their God and if someone passes any remarks against their God, they will surely not like it and protest," Singh, who contesting the election against Ranaut, said in Mandi in response to a question. Hitting back at Singh, Ranaut alleged that the Congress was behind the protest against her. The Congress has stooped to

hooliganism and the Kaza incident would prove to be the last nail in its coffin and contribute to her winning margin, the BJP candidate added. "I feel sad to see such hooliganism which reflects the Congress' character... People have seen the true face of the Congress, which is indulging in violence and hooliganism," she told media persons in Lahaul and Spiti's Udaipur. Singh, however, said his party had nothing to do with the incident and accused the BJP of blaming the Congress as it was losing the elections. They were referring to



black flags being shown to Ranaut by local people and Congress workers in Kaza on Monday. The Congress workers raised anti-Kangana slogans — "Kangana, go back, Kangana Vangana nahi chalegi", apparently enraged over her remarks on the Tibetan spiritual leader. Ranaut had in April last year tweeted a meme featuring the Dalai Lama that said, "The Dalai Lama receives a warm welcome at the White House". The photoshopped picture in the tweet showed the Dalai Lama sticking his tongue out with US President Joe Biden with a comment — Both of them have the same illness. Definitely, they could be friends. Following this, a group of

Buddhists staged a dharna outside her office in Mumbai. Ranaut later apologised, saying she did not mean to hurt anyone and that it was a harmless joke about Biden being friends with the Dalai Lama. After Ranaut faced the protest in Kaza on Monday, the Himachal Pradesh BJP filed a complaint with the state chief electoral officer. The party alleged that stones were pelted at Ranaut's carcade and party worker was injured. It also demanded the transfer of election officials and an investigation into the incident as both the BJP and the Congress were given permission to hold rallies adjacent to each other. However, Lahaul and Spiti SP Mayank Chowdhary told PTI that workers of both the BJP and the

Listing his priorities for the Mandi parliamentary constituency, Vikramaditya Singh, the son of former chief minister Virbhadra Singh and Himachal Congress chief Pratibha Singh, said his focus would be on bringing the municipal corporation of Mandi under the Smart City project and the construction of the Bhubhu Jot and Jalori Jot tunnels and the Kullu Medical College.



FIRST COLUMN

DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF WORKPLACE GASLIGHTING

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



SAKSHI SETHI

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

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



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

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

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

It becomes crucial for the victims to first recognise and validate their experiences, refusing to internalise the gaslighter's manipulations. The use of assertive communication techniques, such as "I" Statements and boundary-setting, can help individuals confront gaslighting behaviour while preserving their self-esteem and dignity. Additionally, fostering a culture of accountability and transparency within organisations empowers employees to speak out against gaslighting tactics without fear of reprisal. Remember, when personal gain takes precedence over ethical conduct, gaslighting may become a tempting strategy. The only way that may benefit the victims of gaslighting is by seeking support from trusted colleagues, mentors or mental health professionals. By creating a workplace culture that promotes open communication, respect and accountability can the organisation help prevent gaslighting and other forms of manipulation from taking hold as left unchecked, it can inflict lasting psychological harm, exacerbating issues of mental health and well-being in the workplace.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Do not withdraw capital support for oil PSUs



UTTAM GUPTA

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



In the Budget for the financial year 2023-24 (April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024) presented on February 1 last year, the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an equity infusion of Rs 30,000 crore in three Central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) viz. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), are majority-owned by the Government of India (GOI). She had also proposed Rs 5,000 crore for buying crude oil to bolster its strategic reserves (SRs) in underground storages at Mangalore in Karnataka and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The equity infusions in IOCL/BPCL/HPCL were meant to support their capital investment plans for the transition to 'Green Energy' and achieve 'Net Zero' objectives. Net zero refers to a situation where the emissions of polluting gases such as carbon dioxide due to human activities and their removals are in balance over a given period. On the other hand, the allocation for SRs was meant to guard against the possibility of any disruption in its supply.

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

Somanathan at a post-budget press conference. As for SRs, the budget documents do not provide any funds either in the revised estimate for FY 2023-24 or during FY 2024-25.

Why did the Government climb down?

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



JUST BECAUSE DURING FY 2023-24, THEY HAVE IMPROVED THEIR PROFITS DUE TO CONTINUING MODERATION IN THE PRICE OF CRUDE OIL, IT WON'T BE LOGICAL TO TRIM THE PROMISED BUDGETARY SUPPORT

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

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

achieve 'Net Zero' by 2040, BPCL and HPCL intend to reach this goal by 2045.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

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

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

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



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

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

ecosystem that is technology savvy, the behaviour of stakeholders being driven by data metrics and accompanying models and influenced by the power of prediction. The impact of AI has been profound in several areas, as the search for the unknown has grown bigger. A report on India's media and entertainment sector published by EY #Reinventin 2024 mentions that AI can provide an Rs 450 billion boost to the Indian M&E sector by 2027. The report also mentions AI and especially Gen AI - gives it the tools the sector has always dreamed of and can result in a 10 per cent revenue growth and 15 per cent cost efficiency. AI is now used for measuring the effectiveness of campaigns, the growth of cus-

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

beings. As a tool for outreach AI supplements outreach with data-focused audience insights which provide practitioners with a feel of audience preferences and behaviours leading to focused and targeted communication strategies. The data processing of the medium also leads to a better and more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder demographics, dynamics, strategy protocols and audience behaviour. There is an urgent need to integrate the communication matrix with the broad themes to ensure a seamless operation of both verticals. AI being futuristic commands the means to create a positive perception of the AI architecture. Some of the themes to be discussed are AI and Machine

Learning in communication networks, AI-powered communication networks: Shaping a greener digital future and including other sectors such as health, environment and education. In all such discussions, the process of communicating the theme will be critical for both policymakers and practitioners. It is also critical that in the era of change, the continuity of technology is weaved with access that is open and democratic. The benefits of positive change must be beneficial to all through the principle of open sourcing; tools, processes, opportunities and community participation. There must be standard operating procedures and processes that ensure the standardisation of algorithms, address

the frailties of human behaviour and integrate the machine and human mind. Technological advancement is only possible if the gap is bridged between the haves and have-nots. AI as a tool for policy formulation and information dissemination should be based on the strong foundations of adaptability, cohesiveness, inclusivity, access and a proper understanding of the complex and diverse social ecosystem of which we are its key constituents. As the impact of AI grows across different terrains, the evolution has to be in sync with human abilities and the irreplaceable human trait that characterises outreach. To ensure a sustainable process, AI needs to follow the five mantras of outreach commu-

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

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

Sindhu sails to Malaysia Masters second round

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR
Returning from a break, two-time Olympic medalist P V Sindhu progressed to the women's singles second round with a straight-game win over Scotland's Kirsty Gilmour at the Malaysia Masters Super 500 badminton tournament here on Wednesday. World No. 15 Sindhu, who had skipped the Uber Cup and Thailand Open, notched up a 21-17 21-16 win over Gilmour, who is ranked 22nd, in the opening-round match that lasted 46 minutes. The fifth-seeded Indian, who last won a title in 2022 Singapore Open, will next face Korea's Sim Yu Jin. In mixed doubles, B Sumeeth Reddy and N Sikki Reddy, world No. 53, also advanced to the second round after outlasting Hong Kong qualifiers Lui Chun Wai and Fu Chi Yan 21-15 12-21 21-17 in 47 minutes. The husband-wife duo will have the task of taming the top



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



Archery World Cup Stage 2

Compound women team in final, men miss bronze medal

PTI ■ YECHAEON (SOUTH KOREA)
World number one Indian women's compound team stormed into the final of the archery World Cup Stage II but the men's team will return empty-handed from the tournament after losing the bronze medal clash to Australia here Wednesday. The trio of Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Parneet Kaur and Aditi Swami, that had clinched gold medal in World Cup Stage I in Shanghai last month, knocked out world number four USA 233-229 in the semi-final. India will now clash with world number seven Turkey in the gold medal clash on Saturday. Turkey had stunned top-seed and local favourites South Korea 234-233 in the other semi-final. It was an overall easy sailing for the Indian women's team, which got a bye into the quarters after finishing second in the qualifying round. They eliminated Italy 236-234 in the last-eight. The world number one men's team of Priyansh, Prathamesh Fuge and veteran Abhishek Verma, who had slipped to fourth in the qualifying round on Tuesday, lost to lowly-ranked Australia 133-133 (10-10*) in a shoot-off. The Aussies, who are world ranked 21st, took the Indian trio by surprise starting with a 59, dropping just one point. The Aussies team of Bailey Wildman, Brandon Hawes and Jonathon Milne continued its fine run and overcame a one-point deficit after the second round to make it 233-all after the regulation four ended. The two teams were 30-all in the ensuing shoot-off but the Aussies edged out the inconsistent Indians by shooting two Xs (arrows closer to centre) to secure the bronze medal. Having started their campaign with an easy 235-212 win over lowly-ranked Vietnam, India overcame tough competition from Denmark and top seed USA, winning both the matches in shoot-off. Meanwhile, the veteran duo of Tarundeep Rai and Deepika Kumari finished fourth and sixth in their respective qualifiers as recurve competition got underway. The 2010 Asian Games silver medalist Rai shot 681 points for a sixth spot in rankings, while Dhiraj Bommadevara narrowly missed a top-10 finish on X (closer to centre) count after five archers shot 678 with the Indian finishing 11th. The Army duo's solid finish ensured Indian recurve men's team No 2 seeding in their title defence. India and top-seeded South Korea will begin their campaign at the opposite ends of the draw. Indian men's team shocked the world champions South Korea for the first time in a World Cup to take the gold in Stage I of the event in Shanghai last month. Deepika missed the top-three finish in the rankings by just one point, shooting 677 as the Korean duo of Lim Sihyeon (685), Jeon Hunyoung (680) and Li Jiaman (678) took the 1-2-3 seedings. The other Indians however fell way short with Bhajan Kaur (653 points) and Ankita Bhakat (646) were the next best Indians at lowly 34th and 49th places respectively. As a result, the women's team seedings could not be better than six. Rai and Deepika combined to get a cumulative 1358 points for the second spot behind South Korea in the recurve mixed team category.



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

AP ■ LUQUE (PARAGUAY)
Coaches at next month's Copa America will be able to make a 6th and extra substitution in cases of suspected head trauma or concussion. South American soccer's governing body CONMEBOL announced the decision Tuesday, making it valid for all its competitions once the Copa America starts in the United States on June 20. CONMEBOL issued a statement saying coaches will need to notify the referee or the 4th match official of the concussion replacement through a pink substitution pass. A similar method was implemented in Major League Soccer in 2021 as part of a FIFA pilot program. The player who leaves the pitch under those conditions will have to go to the locker rooms or a hospital for assessment.

Brazil's Vasco da Gama and 777 Partners in legal battle for control of soccer club

AP ■ SAO PAULO
Brazil's Vasco da Gama and 777 Partners are embroiled in a legal battle after the American company went to court Tuesday to reclaim its rights over the top-flight soccer club. Last week, a Rio de Janeiro judge preemptively removed 777 Partners from Vasco's soccer department's administration after a series of complaints from the club. Brazilian law allows foreign entities to buy the rights to soccer sections of multi-sport clubs, in an operation known as SAF. The preliminary ruling is yet to be confirmed, but the American group stepped up the fight in court and accused the club of not making image rights payments to its players on Monday, as scheduled. "It was the first time that wages or image rights payments have been delayed since we took over 18 months ago," 777 said in a statement Tuesday. "The injunction that momentarily pushes us out of the command of Vasco's SAF stopped us from making a bridge payment, as we did last year in the same period of the year, when soccer revenues are lower." Image rights are part of the payment for footballers.



Vasco executives have said the payment of wages is up to date for all players. The tug of war in Brazil adds to the pressure on the Miami-based company, which has recently faced setbacks in court over its ownership of Belgium's Standard Liege plus other financial problems. A court in Liege last week ruled in favor of Standard's former owner Bruno Venanzi and shareholders of the company holding the club's stadium. They claimed 777 had defaulted on a payment. The legal woes for the 777 add to its period of financial turmoil. The Miami-based investment company has also seen its airline in Australia grounded in recent weeks. It also faces a fraud lawsuit in New York. 777's other clubs include Genoa in Italy's top tier and Hertha Berlin in Germany's second division.

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

PTI ■ STAVANGER (NORWAY)
Having beaten Magnus Carlsen several times in the last couple of years, young Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa feels he will be under no pressure when he takes on the multiple-time world champion in his home turf during the Norway Chess tournament, which gets underway here on May 27. Praggnanandhaa last beat the 33-year-old Carlsen in the Superbet rapid and blitz tournament, a part of the Grand Chess Tour, in Warsaw earlier this month. "I don't think playing Magnus in his home turf is a challenge for me. Usually, it matters to the player playing in his home but it won't matter so much for me," said Praggnanandhaa, who will also have his sister R. Vaishali playing the Norway Chess Women's Tournament for the first time. The 11-day tournament will see a very strong field including the likes of world champion Ding Liren and Hikaru Nakamura besides home favourite Carlsen. Reflecting on his contest with Carlsen at last year's FIDE World Cup where Praggnanandhaa gave the Norwegian a tough challenge, the Indian GM said the experience here would help him in future competitions.



"I always enjoy a good challenge. After the World Cup last year, this will be my first classical game with him. I am quite excited to play him and equally excited to play the others. No doubt the experience here will help me in future tournaments," said Praggnanandhaa in a Norway Chess release. "I am very happy and excited to play in Norway Chess. The field is extremely strong. This is perhaps the strongest field I have played and I see this as an opportunity and a challenge to give my best. "I am also looking forward to play in this time control which I have not played anywhere else," added the 18-year-old. The tournament will be played in a double round-robin format with a time control of 120 minutes. The teenaged Indian GM also expressed happiness with the growth of chess worldwide. "It is a busy schedule this year. After the Norway Chess, we move to Budapest for the Chess Olympiad and I will also be playing the Global Chess League later this year. It is really good to have such an exciting league which I think will definitely help grow the game. "As a chess fan, I'm happy to see this league grow. For now, my focus is on Norway Chess and I am physically and mentally well-prepared to do my best there." With sister Vaishali competing in the women's category, Praggnanandhaa said he will also be tracking her progress in the tournament. "I am happy to see an exclusive women's tournament being introduced in Norway Chess. It is a very good initiative because there are not many tournaments for women. This will encourage other organizations to come up with women's tournaments too.

AP ■ PARIS
Vanessa Peltier got up at dawn and traveled 500 kilometers (310 miles) to Paris from the Creuse region of central France just so she could watch Rafael Nadal practice on Tuesday. Along with thousands of other fans, she lined up outside the main court to catch a glimpse of the Spanish champion at what's expected to be his final appearance at the French Open, a tournament he's won a record 14 times. "I woke up at 6 a.m. And drove from the middle of France to be here," said Peltier, 50. "Nadal has

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

always had my support, and the support of France." The line stretched for 200 meters (yards) as fans queued up for Nadal's second day of practice at Roland Garros. Morgan Chevallier said he waited for 45 minutes to get inside the tennis stadium. "I could not pass on this opportunity. He is almost bigger than the tournament itself," he said. The 37-year-old Nadal was sidelined with injuries for nearly all of last year and much of this season. His loss in the third round of the Italian Open two weeks ago left questions about his fitness. He hasn't yet said whether he's ready for the clay-court tournament. The fans know this may be their last chance to see him at Roland Garros. "I skipped work for Nadal," said Sergiu Popa, 26. Nadal started with low-intensity ball exchanges before playing two sets against his sparring partner for the day, Sebastian Korda of the United States. The crowd erupted in cheers and chants of "Rafa, Rafa" after the Spaniard hit a winning shot. Outside the court, fans took photos in front of the Nadal statue at the entry gate and lined up to pose with a life-size cardboard cutout of

him, with a hole where they could put their own faces. "This way I can imagine what it's like to have the same biceps as him," joked Philippe Charvet as his friend took his picture. In the Roland Garros gift shop, an entire section is dedicated to Nadal merchandise. Frédéric Caubert and his son Gaspar elbowed their way to buy a hat with Nadal's signature for 28 euros (\$30). "It's not cheap, but it will be a nice memory once Nadal leaves us," Caubert said. "It's like he is part of our family. When he's gone, family dinners won't feel the same," he said with a smile.

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

AP ■ NEW YORK
Coach Emma Hayes has selected her first roster for the United States ahead of a pair of friendlies as she prepares to lead the women's national team at the Paris Olympics. Hayes, named U.S. Coach last November, finished her final season as coach of Chelsea on Saturday, winning the team's fifth straight Women's Super League Title with a 6-0 rout of Manchester United. Her first U.S. Roster announced Tuesday includes two National Women's Soccer League players called up to the national team for the first time, Chicago Red Stars defender Sam Staab and Washington Spirit midfielder Hal



Hershfelt. A notable omission from the roster is veteran goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher, who injured her left thigh while playing in a match for the Chicago Red Stars on May 12. The team will play South Korea on June 1 in Commerce City, Colorado, before a rematch on June 4 in St. Paul, Minnesota. The 23-player roster is Hayes' last chance to look at players before she names an 18-player roster for the Olympics. The United States will play a pair of sendoff matches in July. "I expect complete commitment from everyone to absorb very quickly the things that I value as the most important so that we can compete this summer. I know they are a highly coachable group and

resigned from the U.S. Team following last year's disappointing finish in the Women's World Cup. Twila Kilgore led the team in the interim while Hayes finished the season with Chelsea. Kilgore, who went 10-1 with the team, will now serve as an assistant coach under Hayes. Captain Lindsey Horan, among five players from European teams on the roster, will join training camp after her club, Lyon, faces Barcelona for the Champions League title on Saturday. Alex Morgan and Jaedyn Shaw were included on the squad despite missing recent matches with the San Diego Wave because of injuries. Lynn Williams, who was left off the team that played in the SheBelieves Cup, was not on

the latest roster. Crystal Dunn, who has played mostly at outside back for the national team in recent years, was listed by Hayes as a forward. Hayes also added three training players to the roster: Olivia Moultrie of the Portland Thorns and Croix Bethune and Kate Wiesner, who both play for the Washington Spirit. The players are due to report to camp in Colorado on Monday. The U.S. Roster by position with club affiliation: **GOALKEEPERS:** Jane Campbell (Houston Dash), Aubrey Kingsbury (Washington Spirit), Casey Murphy (North Carolina Courage). **DEFENDERS:** Tiarna Davidson (NJ/NY Gotham), Emily Fox (Arsenal), Naomi Girma (San Diego Wave), Casey Krueger (Washington Spirit), Jenna Nighswonger (NJ/NY Gotham), Emily Sonnett (NJ/NY Gotham), Sam Staab (Chicago Red Stars). **MIDFIELDER:** Korbin Albert (Paris Saint-Germain), Sam Coffey (Portland Thorns), Hal Hershfelt (Washington Spirit), Lindsey Horan (Lyon), Rose Lavelle (NJ/NY Gotham), Lily Yohannes (Ajax). **FORWARDS:** Crystal Dunn (NJ/NY Gotham), Catarina Macario (Chelsea), Alex Morgan (San Diego Wave), Trinity Rodman (Washington Spirit), Jaedyn Shaw (San Diego Wave), Sophia Smith (Portland Thorns), Mallory Swanson (Chicago Red Stars).



It's hard to leave ailing mother in hospital but KKR is family too, says Gurbaz

PTI AHMEDABAD

Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz has revealed that he made the difficult choice of leaving his ailing mother in hospital when his IPL franchise Kolkata Knight Riders sought his services ahead of the playoff clash against Sunrisers Hyderabad here as the team is also his "family".

opportunity for you, you should be prepared, well prepared for the opportunity," Gurbaz told the media here after the match. "My mom is still sick. I went (back) there and the call from here was (that) Phil Salt was leaving. They called and they messaged me that 'Gurbaz, we need you, and what is your feedback for us?'" he revealed. "I said, 'yes, I will come.' My mom is still in hospital, and I'm always talking to her, but this is also my family. I should manage both of that, my mom and my KKR family. It's hard, it's tough, but still, I need to manage it," he added.



"We bowled really well, actually. (To get a) team likes Sunrisers all out on 160, that was bowling effort. And then once we came to the batting end, we also not just try to, we should win the circle (powerplay). "(In) my mind was (the) only (thought) that I should win the circle, because sometime in low total like this, you need to have a good circle, otherwise, match can be difficult in the end." Gurbaz said it was the best he had seen KKR pacer Mitchell Starc bowl after the left-arm pacer took three wickets in the powerplay to set up the game for his side. "He was just unbelievable. The way he bowled today, he's one of the best, he has a lot of experience, he knows how to manage the big games. I saw him today totally different than other games," he said.

franchise cricket is something that comes second and doing well for their country is always their priority. "It's all about hard work. It doesn't mean that you come from Afghanistan, you come from India, you come from Australia, whatever. It's all about hard work, I think. If you work hard, if you know what to do, and it's help you in every situation. "Afghanistan is not the same Afghanistan. We know what to do and how can we represent our country. Everything is good for cricket there, and we played really well, the last World Cup, and from the last six-seven years, Afghanistan is doing great," he said. "Our mindset (is) not (just) to play for league cricket, our mindset is always to do something better for our country, and then come the leagues. If you do good for your country, all leagues will pick you, and that's the point that we play all the leagues," he added.



I could not have made better choices: Former RCB owner Mallya on Kohli

PTI NEW DELHI

Former Royal Challengers Bengaluru owner Vijay Mallya on Wednesday said he couldn't have made a better choice when he bid for Virat Kohli in the inaugural IPL auction as he lauded the superstar batter for his brilliant run in the ongoing season.

has so far fetched him 708 runs from 14 innings. RCB will face Rajasthan Royals in the Eliminator on Wednesday night. "When I bid for the RCB franchise and I bid for Virat, my inner instinct told me that I could not have made better choices," Mallya, who currently lives in the United Kingdom and is trying to avoid extradition to India, wrote on 'X'. "My inner instinct tells me that RCB have the best chance to go for the IPL Trophy. Onward and Upward. Best of luck."



30,000 ahead of the 2008 IPL following his title-winning run with India's U19 World Cup. RCB, however, hasn't been able to lift the trophy despite reaching the final three — in 2009, 2011 and 2016. Mallya is accused in a bank loan default matter of over Rs 9,000 crore involving his defunct Kingfisher Airlines. He has been living in the United Kingdom since March 2016. The same year he had to forego his ownership of RCB due to the legal proceedings against him.

Till I play Tests, I will limit franchise appearances to only two events a year: Travis Head

PTI NEW DELHI

Travis Head might have taken this year's IPL by storm but Test cricket remains his top priority and till the time he is playing the format, the Australian big-hitter would like to limit his participation in T20 leagues to just two events per year.

Right now, more than two months of IPL will be followed by World T20 in the Americas. But the southpaw doesn't want to make a big deal about workload management. "I will be home in a couple of days' time once we are done with IPL. Be home for two-three days and make the trip to the West Indies with family and start all over again. "Look, we are very fortunate to do what we do and I am not going to do it forever. So try and make the most of it as we can, we are lucky that we are well looked after."



PTI AHMEDABAD

Legendary Sunil Gavaskar has questioned the "puzzling" batting approach of Sunrisers Hyderabad during the powerplay in the first IPL Qualifier, suggesting their reckless strategy may have cost them the match against Kolkata Knight Riders.

shot down in 13.4 overs to storm into the Sunday's summit clash in Chennai. "It was a terrific performance, no question. Such an impressive display with both the bat and the ball. They took four wickets in the power play, and that's where the Sunrisers were pushed onto the back foot, really on the ropes. They couldn't recover from that," the former Indian captain told Star Sports Cricket Live.

means you can't really expect numbers five, six, seven, eight, and nine to get you to 200. So, that is where they may have lost it. But full credit to Kohli for the way they attacked and took advantage of that pitch as well," Gavaskar said. The former India opener was all praise for Venkatesh Iyer and emphasised his value as a versatile player, a top left-handed batter and a capable medium-pace bowler, even if he hasn't bowled much recently.

OTHER SPORTS

Hina, Kanika strike as India juniors beat Dutch hockey club 2-0

PTI BREDA (NETHERLANDS)

Hina Bano and Kanika Siwach scored a goal each as the Indian junior women's hockey team began their tour of Europe with a 2-0 win against Netherlands club Bredase Hockey Vereniging Push here.



AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED (A SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANK)

Regd. Office: 19-A, Dhuleshwar Garden, Ajmer Road, Jaipur - 302001, Rajasthan, (India). (CIN:L36911RJ1996PLC011381) **APPENDIX-IV-A- [See proviso to rule 8(6)] Sale notice for sale of immovable properties**

Loan A/c No./ Name of Borrowers/Co Borrowers/Mortgagors/Guarantor	Date & Amount of 13(2) Demand Notice	Date of Possession	Description of Property	Reserve Price For Property	Earnest Money For Property	Date & Time Of E-Auction	Date of Bid Submission	E-Auction Place of Tender Submission	Contact Person and Property Visit Date
(Loan A/c No.) L9001060117795190, Manoj Kumar Chandra S/O Gore Lal Chandra (Borrower & Mortgagor), Gore Lal Chandra S/O Jagat Ram Chandra (Co-Borrower), Raj Kumar Chandra S/O Gore Lal Chandra (Co-Borrower & Mortgagor)	19-Dec-19 Rs. 16,63,376/- Rs. Sixteen Lac Sixty Three Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Six only as on 18-Dec-19	27-Mar-24	Survey No. Kh 913/2 915/1 916/1, Ph No 14, Rm Jaijaijpur, Vill. Saini, Th. Jaijaijpur, Dist. Janjgir Champa, Chattisgarh Admeasuring 360 Sq. Mtr.	Rs. 19,60,000/- Rs. Nineteen Lakh Sixty Thousand Only.	Rs. 1,96,000/- Rs. One Lakh Ninety Six Thousand Only.	03-Jul 24 2.00 PM to 4.00 PM with unlimited extension of 5 minutes	On or Before 01-Jul-24	AU Small Finance Bank Ltd., Branch Address :- TP Nagar, Korba, Chhattisgarh India Commercial & Residential Complex, Plot No 82 TP Nagar Korba, Chhattisgarh - 495677	Gopal Das Bairagi & Deepak Jain, 7610210556 9773358234 auctions@aubank.in 28-Jun-24

The terms and conditions of auction sale- (1) The E-Auction sale of Secured Asset is on "as is where is", "as is what is", "whatever there is" and "no recourse" basis for and on behalf of the Secured Creditor viz. AUSFB and there is no known encumbrance which exists on the said property. (2) For participating in online e-auction sale, Bid document, copies of PAN Card, Board Resolution in case of Company and photo ID, address proof are required to be submitted along with EMD, which is payable by way of RTGS/NEFT/DD in the name of MSME AUCION POOL ACCOUNT OF AU Small Finance Bank Limited, Current account No. 192120112171599 AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED Fifth and Sixth Floor Sunny Big Junction STC Kharsa No. 64 to 67, Gram Sukhapura New Atish Market Jaipur 302020, IFSC Code: AUBL0002011, Once an Online Bid is submitted, same cannot be withdrawn. Further any EMD submitted by bidder will be required to send the UTR/Ref no./DD no. of the RTGS/NEFT/DD with a copy of cancelled cheque on the following email IDs i.e. auctions@aubank.in (3) All interested participants / bidders are requested to visit the website https://sarfaesi.auctiontiger.net & https://www.aubank.in/bank-auction for further details including Terms & Conditions, to take part in e-auction sale proceeding and are also advised to contact Mr. Bhanu Pratap Singh, Contact Number 9358002663 and e-mail of auctions@aubank.in Please Note: This is also a 30 days notice Under Rule 8(6) read with Rule 9(1) to the Borrowers/Co Borrowers/Mortgagors of the above said loan account about sale through tender / Inter se bidding on the above-mentioned date. The property will be sold, if their outstanding dues are not repaid in full by the borrower in the given notice period. Date : 22/05/2024 Place : Chhattisgarh Authorized Officer AU Small Finance Bank Limited